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The 2021– 2023 ILO/Korea Partnership Programme funded projects in ASEAN, Cambodia and Lao PDR

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9 Joint evaluation agencies: N/A

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Table of Contents

Table of Contents	ii
List of Tables, Figures and Boxes	iv
List of Abbreviations.....	v
Executive Summary	vii
1 Introduction	1
1.1 Background and Objectives of the three Projects	1
1.2 Purpose and Scope of the Final Independent Evaluation	5
1.3 Contents of the Report.....	6
2 Methodology of the Evaluation.....	7
2.1 Conceptual Framework.....	7
2.2 Methodology, Key Deliverables and Work Plan	9
3 Overall Findings	13
3.1 Relevance and Strategic Fit.....	13
3.2 Coherence and Validity of Design	15
3.3 Effectiveness.....	17
3.4 Effectiveness of Management Arrangements.....	23
3.5 Efficiency of Resource Use.....	25
3.6 Impact	28
3.7 Sustainability	29
3.8 ILO Cross-cutting Themes.....	31
3.9 SWOT Analysis.....	33
3.10 Comparative Analysis of the three projects	35
4 Conclusions and Recommendations	39
4.1 Conclusions	39
4.2 Recommendations	45
5 Lessons Learned and Good Practices.....	49
ANNEXES	50
Annex 1: Terms of Reference (TOR)	51
Annex 2: Direct stakeholders.....	66
Annex 3: M&E Frameworks for the three Projects.....	67
Annex 4: Data Collection Worksheet	70
Annex 5: Data Collection Schedule	73
Annex 6: Evaluation Work Plan	81

Annex 7: Geographical scope of the activities	82
Annex 8: Comparative Analysis.....	86
Annex 9: Recommendations of previous Evaluations and Follow-up by ILO	88
Annex 10: Lessons Learned (LL) and Good Practices (GP).....	91
Annex 11: Documents Consulted	95

List of Tables, Figures and Boxes

Tables:

1	Details of the three Projects of the ILO/Korea Partnership Programme 2021-2023.	2
2	The Outcomes of the three projects.	3
3	The Allocation of financial resources and the Expenditures (actuals plus encumbrances) as per 21 July 2023.	26
4	The Expenditures (actuals plus encumbrances) and balance by Outcome and Expenditure Categories as per 21 July 2023.	27
5	SWOT Analysis of the OSH Project.	34
6	SWOT Analysis of the Social Protection Project.	34-35
7	SWOT Analysis of the Skills Project.	35
8	Comparative Analysis of the three ILO/Korea Projects: Average scores on the eight Evaluation Criteria (for the individual scores on the 24 Evaluation Questions see Annex 8).	36

Figure:

1	Comparative Analysis of the three ILO/Korea Projects: Average scores on the eight Evaluation Criteria.	37
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Box:

1	The five priority areas of the 3rd National OSH Programme in Lao PDR (2022-26).	17
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List of Abbreviations

ACE	ASEAN Confederation of Employers
ACMW	ASEAN Committee on the Implementation of the ASEAN Declaration on the Protection and Promotion of the Rights of Migrant Workers
ACT/EMP	Bureau on Employers' Activities (ILO)
ACTRAV	Bureau of Workers' Activities (ILO)
ADB	Asian Development Bank
AEC	ASEAN Economic Community
AGP	ASEAN Guiding Principles for Quality Assurance and Recognition of Competency Certification Systems
ALM	ASEAN Labour Ministers
AMS	ASEAN Member States
APEC	Asia-Pacific Economic Cooperation
AQRF	ASEAN Qualifications Reference Framework
ASEAN	Association of Southeast Asian Nations
ASEC	ASEAN Secretariat
ASC	ASEAN Skills Competition
ATC	ASEAN TVET Council
BNSP	Badan Nasional Sertifikasi Profesi (International Professional Certification Authority)
CIMT	Centre for IMT-GT Subregional Cooperation
CLM	Cambodia, Lao PDR, Myanmar
COMWEL	Korea Workers' Compensation and Welfare Service
COVID-19	Coronavirus Disease 2019
DGTJET	Directorate General of Technical Vocational Education and Training (Cambodia)
DSD	Department of Skills Development (Thailand)
DSDE	Department of Skills Development and Employment (Lao PDR)
EBMO	Employers' and Business Member Organizations
ECM	Executive Committee Meeting
EHT	École d'Hôtellerie et de Tourisme Paul Dubrulle (Cambodia)
EI	Employment (unemployment) Insurance
EII	Employment Injury Insurance
EQ	Evaluation Question
GEEW	Gender Equality and Empowerment of Women
GoL	Government of Lao PDR
HRD	Human Resources Development
ILO	International Labour Organization
ILS	International Labour Standards
IOM	International Organization for Migration
IMT-GT	Indonesia, Malaysia, Thailand – Growth Triangle
ITC-ILO	International Training Centre-ILO
JAIF	Japan-ASEAN Integration Fund
KEIS	Korea Employment Information Service
KII	Key Informant Interview
LABADMIN/OSH	Labour Administration, Labour Inspection and Occupational Safety and Health Branch
Lao PDR	Lao People's Democratic Republic
LCCI	Lao Chamber of Commerce and Industry
LFTU	Lao Federation of Trade Unions
LSSO	Lao Social Security Organisation
MOEL/ROK	Ministry of Employment and Labor of the Republic of Korea
MoH	Ministry of Health
MoL	Ministry of Labour (Thailand)
MoLIP	Ministry of Labour, Immigration and Population (Myanmar)
MoLISA	Ministry of Labour, Invalids and Social Affairs (Vietnam)

MoLSW	Ministry of Labour and Social Welfare (Lao PDR)
MoLVT	Ministry of Labour and Vocational Training (Cambodia)
MRA	Mutual Recognition Arrangement
MRS	Mutual Recognition of Skills
NILE	National Institute for Lifelong Education
NSSA	National Skills Standards Authority (Myanmar)
NSSF	National Social Security Fund
NQRF	National Qualifications Reference Framework
NVIB	National Vocational Institute of Battambang (Cambodia)
OPM	Oxford Policy Management
OSH	Occupational Safety and Health
P&B	Program and Budget (ILO)
PDR	People's Democratic Republic
PRODOC	Project Document
PSC	Project Steering Committee
PSC	Programme Support Costs
PSE	Pour Sourir D'enfants (Cambodia)
RMCS	Regional Model Competencies Standards
ROAP	Regional Office for Asia and the Pacific
RPL	Recognition of Prior Learning
RSTWG	Regional Skills Technical Working Group
SDG	Sustainable Development Goal
SKILLS	Skills and Employability Branch
SLOM	Senior Labour Officials Meeting
SLOM-WG	SLOM Working Group on Progressive Labour Practices to Enhance the Competitiveness of ASEAN
SOCIAL PROTECTION	Social Protection Department
SP&PFM	Improving Synergies Between Social Protection and Public Finance Management Project
TESDA	Technical Education and Skills Development Authority (Philippines)
ToC	Theory of Change
TOR	Terms of Reference
TPR	Technical Progress Report
TVET	Technical and Vocational Education and Training
UN	United Nations
UNCT	United Nations Country Team
UNDAF	United Nations Development Assistance Frameworks
UN-DESA	UN Department of Economic and Social Affairs based in New York
UNDP	United Nations Development Programme
UNEG	United Nations Evaluation Group
UNEP	United Nations Environment Programme
UNJP	UN Joint Program
UNSDCF	United Nations Sustainable Development Cooperation Framework
UN-SWAP	UN System-Wide Action Plan on GEEW
UN Women	United Nations Entity for Gender Equality and the Empowerment of Women
USD	United States Dollars
VFM	Value for Money
WEP	Women Empowerment Principles (UN Women)
WHO	World Health Organization

Executive Summary

Background and project description

The present evaluation report is mandated by the Terms of Reference (ToR) for the Final Independent Cluster Evaluation of the programme entitled “**The 2021– 2023 ILO/Korea Partnership Programme funded projects in ASEAN, Cambodia and Lao PDR**” (Annex 1). By focusing resources and expertise on those countries most in need, the ILO/Korea Partnership Programme in the Asia-Pacific region aims to maximize its contribution to the realization of the Decent Work in Asia-Pacific. Originally designed as a 3-year programme from 1 June 2021 until 31 December 2023, it was managed by the CTA, under the guidance of the ILO Regional Office for Asia and the Pacific (ROAP), which works in close collaboration with ILO specialists in ILO Decent Work Team (DWT), Bangkok. It encompasses three Asia-Pacific Regional projects in the areas of Skills, Social Protection and OSH. It was financed by the Republic of Korea with a total budget for the three projects of US\$ 2,153,937, and it was implemented in Lao PDR, Cambodia, and other countries in ASEAN and in Asia and Pacific Region, including regional components.

Purpose, Scope and Methodology of the Evaluation

The present evaluation’s *purpose* is for accountability and learning for programme improvement. The *scope* of the Evaluation covers the implementation of all three-funded Asia-Pacific Regional projects and covers all the geographic areas involved in the three projects, including Cambodia, Lao PDR and ASEAN. The evaluation also examines the Project’s performance in relation to all relevant ILO’s *cross-cutting issues* including gender equality and non-discrimination. The *primary clients* are the ILO/Korea Partnership Programme team, ROAP, DWT-Bangkok, and MoEL/ROK. Secondary clients are tripartite constituents and the project counterparts in the project countries, as well as the partner institutions in Korea. The *methodology* includes a desk study of the relevant documents and primary data collection through 37 interviews with stakeholders conducted online and offline. In addition, the international evaluator made field visits to Lao PDR, Cambodia and Thailand. In Lao and Cambodia national consultants supported the international evaluator. The participatory methodology further includes a critical reflection process by the key stakeholders in particular through the online stakeholders’ workshop and the inputs by stakeholders to the draft report. *Key deliverables* are the inception report, the preliminary presentation of findings at the online stakeholders’ workshop, the draft report, and the present final report taking into consideration the feedback on the draft report.

Findings

The conclusions of the present final independent cluster evaluation are below analysed according to the eight evaluation criteria used throughout this report. It will also summarise the SWOT and Comparative analyses. With respect to the first evaluation criteria, **Relevance and Strategic Fit**, the Evaluation found that the three ILO/Korea projects were highly relevant and have responded to the needs and priorities of the tripartite stakeholders and beneficiaries. In terms of **Strategic Fit**, it was found that the projects were at least to a substantial degree unique. There were various other projects dealing with broadly similar technical areas but in each of those projects the focus was just a bit different. The national stakeholders interviewed all underlined that the areas selected (within the topics of OSH, social protection and SKILLS), are very crucial areas for their respective countries and *that more support is needed for these areas*. The *priority areas* for *policies* within the three projects on which interventions should be zeroed in are according to the respective national stakeholders as follows: the development of the OSH Law and the further development and implementation of the Social Security Law both in Lao PDR, and the focus of ASEAN Member States (AMS) on stimulating policies on labour mobilisation.

Concerning the second evaluation criteria, **Coherence**, the evaluation found that the ILO/Korea projects did each individually contribute in various ways to leveraging synergies and partnerships to enhance the projects' effectiveness. In addition, there was close cooperation with several **Korea partner institutes**. The **Design** of the three projects was considered appropriate as underlined by the stakeholders during the interviews undertaken for this evaluation, and also the two MTE's on Skills and Social Protection undertaken in early 2023 found that the design remained generally valid.

The investigations into the **Effectiveness** of the ILO/Korea projects shows that they have been making *important progress in specific areas* towards their planned results, although it should at the same time be underlined that the implementation has generally been slow with lots of activities concentrated in the present, final programme year. A review of the indicators at the Outcome level in the Logical Framework of the PRODOC of each of the three projects resulted in the assessment that the outcomes have been partially achieved. The slow progress especially in the first year of the project was due to a series of **Challenges** encountered such as the COVID-19 pandemic, the political situation in Myanmar, and the complex management structure of the programme. Overall, it was found that the project staff addressed the challenges satisfactorily. Next to the challenges there were also several pertinent **enabling or success factors**, such as the continuity of the ILO/Korea Partnership, the strong commitment and support of the main government partners, the commitment and technical competence of ILO staff involved, and the important contributions made by the Seconded and loaned staff from Korea.

The **Management Arrangements** and the lines of accountability have been somewhat complex in this project: While the management was undertaken by the CTA, seconded from the MOEL/ROK, and the ILO Deputy Regional Director of ROAP, the *technical* leads were left to the lead specialists from the ILO DWT Team in Bangkok who backstop dozens or more projects in Asia and the Pacific, as well as to the in-country teams (mostly part-time) based in Vientiane for Osh and Social Protection, and in Bangkok for Skills. The driving of the implementation of the *regional components* of the three projects at the technical level generally seems to be the responsibility of the DWT experts. The ILO/Korea projects have collected some data that help track the relevant **gender concerns**, and efforts were made to have equal numbers of women and men in all activities (see further below).

In terms of the **Efficiency of Resource Use**, two Mid-Term Evaluations (MTE) found that the programme's resources have been strategically *allocated* to achieve expected results and were generally utilized efficiently including savings due to more online work. The actual **spending** of the funding being slow in the first year but picked up rapidly after that especially since mid 2022. Nevertheless, the implementation rates (expenditures plus encumbrances) are still quite modest with an overall 62.9% as of 21 July 2023. An overall balance of 37% of the total budget with over five months left in the project is not unusual though in (ILO) projects, as spending always *accelerates* towards the end. In this case also a series of major milestones is planned for the coming months. Expenditures differed substantially among Outcomes as is indicated in Table 4 with especially a low implementation rates for the regional components. In terms of expenditures, the largest category in all three projects is for Project Management (36.0%) of the total budget closely followed by the Outcome 1 activities in each project (29.8%).

In terms of **Impact**, the ILO/Korea programme has made several important steps. While in the **skills** project there are currently no actual beneficiaries yet (i.e., migrant workers using MRS), because the MRS System should be put in place before that, but a few important inroads towards

impact have been made: a positive change in the mindset of technical staff of the MoLVT in Cambodia; buy-in from Thai employers and ECOT into the MRS Roadmap; students have acquired enhanced and more up-to-date skills; and at the regional level the MRS is well-known in ASEAN SLOM, increasingly becoming a central issue in the ASEAN TVET Council. In **social protection** it is difficult to see a clear tangible impact (i.e., an increase in coverage of social protection), which is related to the incipient stage of Lao's development in this area, but a positive impact is that politics in Lao has become more constructive towards Social Protection and the government initiated the reform of the Social Security Law. In addition, the innovative sensitization work with Members of the National Assembly has a substantial potential impact on ongoing and future Law Revisions. In the **OSH** project the legal framework was enhanced in Lao PDR; the LNCCI will disseminate the acquired knowledge to their members and their workers and the LFTU is training OSH workers; and awareness has been increased among all stakeholders.

An important element of **Sustainability** is National/Local **Ownership**, and the ILO/Korea projects have fostered it in a number different ways resulting in substantial ownership at selected national organizations. Despite the fact that all stakeholders indicated that *continued support* will be quite essential for the sustainability of the results **after the projects have ended**, the evaluation identified specific signs of sustainability, such as the series of capacity building activities in all three projects. In addition, MRS is part of the ASEAN-SLOM Agenda, while some countries are already using the MRS Roadmap without ILO involvement. In Cambodia, the MoLVT has developed a series of MRS indicators for the next five years plan and requested a budget allocation for that. The connection between the RSTWG and the ATC ensures an institutionalized setting. In social protection, the establishment of a national Actuarial Working Committee linked to the NSSF is likely to be sustainable, and this applies also to the awareness raising. With respect to OSH in Lao PDR, support from the government budget has been *proposed* by the OSH Center, and a sustainable Reporting/Notification System on occupational diseases and accidents is in development. In addition, social and tripartite dialogue was strengthened in the area of OSH, and awareness and understanding of OSH increased.

The last evaluation criteria concern the **ILO Cross-cutting Themes**, of which **gender equality and non-discrimination** have been addressed in a somewhat generic way both in the design and in the implementation of the ILO/Korea projects. There were no specific activities focussed on gender and non-discrimination and there was no dedicated budget allocated for that. While most of the previous evaluations recommended to put more emphasis on gender, neither the PRODOC's nor the implementation followed-up on that. Considerations for **people with disability** as well as interventions on the **Environment** were generally not explicitly included. Attention was paid to ILS, in particular to the relevant ILO Conventions, while **Tripartism** and **Social Dialogue** were mostly integrated.

The evaluation has conducted a **SWOT Analysis** of each of the three ILO/Korea projects from which it was concluded that for each of the three projects there are serious internal *Weaknesses* and external *Threats*. At the same time, the internal *Strengths* are also quite powerful, and the external *Opportunities* identified for all three projects are very substantial and realistic. This analysis was combined with a **Comparative Analysis** of the three projects. Albeit a word of caution was given on the subjectivity of the scoring, etc., it was found that the scoring of the three projects provides quite similar results with a marginally higher average score for the Social Protection project. This is in part also logical as the three projects are implemented under one and the same programme sharing a lot of crucial common aspects. Based on the SWOT and the Comparative analysis, it is recommended to continue both Social Protection and OSH in Lao PDR. It is further recommended to phase out gradually the work on *MRS* by agreeing to fund one

last phase of another 3 years, in particular to take advantage of the Opportunity (cf. SWOT) to complete the last part of the MRS Roadmap from Step 5 to Step 7 for both Corridors 1 and 2. For the Skills Outcome 2 on *Digital Learning* it is recommended to develop a more integrated plan for this technical area as part of a PRODOC. Lastly, the *Regional Components* of each of the three projects are potentially important for embedding activities and outcomes into the ASEAN Institutions and Workplans, as well as for sharing Good Practices and for enhancing cooperation among countries in general.

Recommendations

The recommendations formulated on the basis of the findings of the present final independent evaluation are as follows:

1. **Make sure to request for a no-cost extension for January-May 2024 by submitting a substantiated request with a revised M&E Framework and an updated budget** to MOEL/ROK through PARTNERSHIPS, Geneva, because the Korea budget year runs until December and a request for a no-cost extension has not yet been submitted.
2. **Continue the ILO-Korea Partnership Programme where appropriate with funding for another programme phase.** All stakeholders interviewed as well as the ILO do appreciate very much the long-term continuity of the partnership, and to continue that into the future would enhance the sustainability of the work conducted so far. It is further recommended to start consultations with the involved Tripartite Constituents in an early stage (well *before* the PRODOC is developed).
3. **Continue the work in Lao PDR and Cambodia** based on the SWOT analysis in Section 3.9 combined with the Comparative analysis in Section 3.10. In addition, until and including the present phase of the Partnership the priority of MOEL/ROK was with the lower-income countries, and it is more than likely that this will continue, which also supports the inclusion of in particular Lao PDR and Cambodia in a possible next phase. Monitor the situation in **Myanmar** and make provisions to have dedicated activities there once the UN decides to allow activities again in the country. Include **other ASEAN Member States and other Asia and the Pacific countries** where appropriate.
4. **With respect to the three technical topics, it is recommended to:**
 - a) **Continue both OSH and Social Protection in Lao PDR** (based on the SWOT analysis in Section 3.9 and the Comparative analysis in Section 3.10). In addition, these two areas are related to two outputs of outcomes of the ILO DWCP of Lao PDR 2022-26.
 - b) **Phase-out gradually the work on MRS by agreeing to fund one last phase of 3 years**, in particular to take advantage of the Opportunity (cf. the SWOT analysis) to complete the last part of the MRS Roadmap from Step 5 to Step 7 for both Corridors 1 and 2. This will be **conditional upon** the inclusion in the new PRODOC of a solid and comprehensive Exit/Sustainability Plan, as well as models for replication of MRS.
 - c) **Develop for the Skills Outcome 2 on Digitalisation of skills and TEVT a more integrated plan** as part of a PRODOC and include a solid Exit Plan.
 - d) **Continue the Regional Components of each of the three projects** as they are potentially important for embedding activities and outcomes into the **ASEAN** Institutions and Workplans, as well as for sharing knowledge and Good Practices and for enhancing cooperation among countries.
 - e) **Investigate the possibility of integrated OSH/Social Protection/Skills interventions** to maximize the impact of the programme (as e.g., has been done in the current phase between the OSH and Social protection projects in Lao PDR).

5. **Make sure to install a Programme/Project Steering Committee (PSC) and to conduct a meeting every half year** in a possible next phase of the Partnership. This was found to be *essential* because of the specific complex structure of the programme management with different layers of management and different layers of (regional and/or in-country) technical leads who are not dedicated leads but at best part-time. Such a regular PSC would also enhance communication and can oversee and drive progress. In addition, related donors (Japan, China, EU, SDC, etc.) could be invited whenever appropriate to enhance coordination and coherence. Lastly, it is recommended to organise the first PSC meeting within three months from the start of the project.
6. **Involve the workers' and employers' organisations more systematically in the consultations for a new phase of the programme** and provide capacity building with a dedicated budget to key staff of these organisations including a minimum number of female staff members.
7. **Develop a Gender Equality Strategy in a next phase from the design stage**, and make sure to identify specific outcomes/outputs on gender, and in particular make sure that the project design will address pertinent strategic needs of women. In addition, make sure to allocate dedicated resources to such a Strategy.
8. **Conduct a sustainability workshop ('Closing Event') in early 2024** in order to consolidate the Outcomes and Results by discussing long-term strategies with key high-level stakeholders (including ASEC), and to investigate ways to keep the momentum going that was created by the projects.
9. **Strengthen relationship with the ASEAN Secretariat (ASEC)** in order to enhance the linkages with regional priorities.

In addition, several recommendations have been formulated which are *specific* for each of the three projects (see section 4.2).

Lessons Learned and Good Practices

From the experience gained by evaluating the present project two Lessons Learned (LL) and two Good Practices (GP) have been identified in this report as follows:

- **LL1** – *In a complicated management environment with different levels of management and different levels of technical leads coordination involves bringing all stakeholders together at regular intervals in order to drive progress and to enhance cooperation, coherence and communication.*
- **LL2** – *Inclusion from private sectors in the MRS processes is crucial in harnessing timely and relevant outcomes.*
- **GP1** – *Adding a Regional component to Outcomes/Outputs specific for one or two countries has the clear potential to enhance knowledge sharing, learning and mutual understanding between countries and to involve different ASEAN Institutions.*
- **GP2** – *Adaptability and flexibility of ILO-ROAP, the Programme Team, the DWT experts, the in-country teams, as well as of the Donor is critical for progress in project implementation especially in times of crisis.*

The details are discussed in Chapter 5 of the present report, while the ILO/EVAL *Templates* with the full description of these LL and GP are provided in *Annex 12*.

1 Introduction

The present report concerns the Final Independent Cluster Evaluation of “**The 2021– 2023 ILO/Korea Partnership Programme funded projects in ASEAN, Cambodia and Lao PDR**”, and it is based on the Terms of Reference for this evaluation (see Annex 1). This Partnership Programme encompasses **three Asia-Pacific Regional projects** as follows:

- 1) Improved Mechanisms for Skills Recognition and TVET Digitisation in ASEAN (RAS/21/50/KOR)
- 2) Supporting the Implementation of Sustainable Social Protection Floors for the Workers and their Families in ASEAN - Phase III (RAS/21/52/KOR)
- 3) Enhancing and Implementing Occupational Safety and Health Standards in Lao PDR (RAS/21/51/KOR)

The final independent cluster evaluation of the programme will be undertaken in line with the funding agreement between the Ministry of Employment and Labor of the Republic of Korea (MoEL/ROK) and the ILO and complies with the ILO policy guidelines for results-based evaluation: Principles, rationale, planning and managing for evaluations, 4th ed.¹ The evaluation process and report will follow the ILO guidelines and the ILO Evaluation Office will approve the final evaluation report. The evaluation will comply with the United National Evaluation Group (UNEG)’s Evaluation Norms and Standards.²

1.1 Background and Objectives of the three Projects

ILO/Korea Partnership

The Republic of Korea has a longstanding partnership with the ILO in the field of development cooperation since 2003 when the Ministry of Employment and Labor of the Republic of Korea (MoEL/ROK) signed a memorandum of understanding with the ILO to formalize their partnership for development. In 2004, the Government of Korea provided funding to institutionalize the ILO/Korea Partnership Programme, which focused on realizing the objectives set out in the Asian Decent Work Decade. Through the ILO/Korea Partnership Programme, the Republic of Korea supports the ILO’s mandate to promote decent work goals. The year 2023 marks the 19th year of collaboration between the ILO and Republic of Korea.

By focusing resources and expertise on those countries **most in need**, the ILO/Korea Partnership Programme in the Asia-Pacific region aims to maximize its contribution to the realization of the Decent Work in Asia-Pacific.

The ILO/Korea Partnership Programme is managed by the CTA, under the guidance of the ILO Regional Office for Asia and the Pacific (ROAP), which works in close collaboration with ILO specialists in ILO Decent Work Team (DWT), Bangkok.

¹ https://www.ilo.org/eval/Evaluationpolicy/WCMS_571339/lang--en/index.htm

² <http://www.uneval.org/document/guidance-documents>

The ILO/Korea's areas of work are closely tied with the Korean Partner Institutions to extend knowledge and technical expertise, providing training programmes and institutional network in the project implementation. The current Korean partner institutions include:

- Human Resource Development Service of Korea (HRD Korea; Skills).
- Korea Employment Information service (KEIS; Social Protection).
- Korea Occupational Safety and Health Agency (KOSHA; OSH).
- Korea University of Technology and Education (KOREATECH; Skills).
- Korea Workers' Compensation and Welfare Service (COMWEL; Social Protection).

To provide the final evaluation report to the donor until the end of 2023 according to the Letter of Agreement (LoA) between ILO and the donor, the present final cluster evaluation for the ILO Korea Partnership programme 2021-2023 will be conducted between July and September 2023.

ILO/Korea Partnership Programme in Asia and the Pacific for 2021– 2023

The ILO Korea Partnership programme in Asia and the Pacific for 2021-2023 commenced on 1 June 2021, according to the Arrangement between MOEL/ROK and ILO, which was signed on 6 May 2021. With the total budget of US\$ 2,153,937.09, the MOEL/ROK and the ILO agreed that the budget allocation was made to three priority areas/projects and countries as given in Table 1.

Table 1: Details of the three Projects of the ILO/Korea Partnership Programme 2021-2023.

Priority Areas	Projects	Implementation area	Budget (USD)
Skills/ TVET	Improved mechanisms for skills recognition and TVET digitisation in ASEAN (RAS/21/50/KOR)	Cambodia, Myanmar, Lao PDR and ASEAN	921,149.04
Social Protection	Supporting the Implementation of Sustainable Social Protection Floors for the Workers and their Families in ASEAN - Phase III (RAS/21/52/KOR)	Lao PDR and Asia and Pacific Region	921,149.04
OSH	Establishing and implementing Occupational Safety and Health Standards in Lao PDR (RAS/21/51/KOR)	Lao PDR and ASEAN	311,639.01
TOTAL			2,153,937.09

Skills development/TVET

The ILO Korea partnership programme has supported skills development in the ASEAN countries since 2010, when the ILO established strong working relationships with constituents and focal points of skills development/TVET in each ASEAN country as well as the ASEAN Secretariat. With funding from the ILO Korea partnership programme, the ILO has made a significant contribution to the Mutual Recognition of Skills (MRS) initiatives which have been recognized as one of the three key regional initiatives for promoting skills recognition in ASEAN. This project aims to enhance mechanisms for national and regional skills recognition and TVET digitisation as well as enhanced knowledge sharing and partnership building in ASEAN. The project also aims to enhance the skills and lifelong learning of women, men, youth, vulnerable workers and migrant workers, in order to facilitate their access to ASEAN labour markets. To achieve the Project's objective, **three Outcomes** have been identified (see Table 2), and the **M&E Framework/Log Frame** developed was included in the PRODOC and includes next to these three Outcomes, in total also 8 Outputs and 13 Activities; a summary is provided in Annex 3A.

Table 2: The Outcomes of the three projects.

Skills/ MRS	<ul style="list-style-type: none">▪ Outcome 1: Enhanced mutual recognition of skills (<u>MRS</u>) system in <u>ASEAN</u> piloted and agreed for future scaling up▪ Outcome 2: Improved and enhanced <u>digital learning</u> and skills recognition infrastructure in <u>CLM</u> to ensure employability for people affected by the economic impacts of COVID-19, incl. women, youth, migrant workers and disadvantaged workers▪ Outcome 3: Strengthened mechanisms and forward looking frameworks to enhance <u>partnerships, regional dialogue and knowledge sharing</u> on skills recognition, skills digitization and other future of work related aspects in place for the <u>ASEAN</u>
Social Protection	<ul style="list-style-type: none">▪ Outcome 1: Comprehensive and sustainable social protection for all with increased coverage in <u>Lao PDR</u>.▪ Outcome 2: Better understanding and increased awareness on the importance of social protection in <u>Asia/Pacific</u>.
OSH	<ul style="list-style-type: none">▪ Outcome 1: National OSH system is strengthened in <u>Lao PDR</u> through development of promotional framework.▪ Outcome 2: Awareness, knowledge and skills on OSH at the national and enterprise levels are strengthened in <u>Lao PDR and ASEAN</u>.

Social protection

The ILO/Korea partnership programme has supported social protection in ASEAN countries since 2008, and in particular since 2015 through the different phases of the “Supporting the Implementation of Sustainable Social Protection Floors for the Workers and their Families in ASEAN”. This ILO-led initiative aims to strengthen and gradually build comprehensive, sustainable social protection systems for all by increasing the system’s coverage, effectiveness and efficiency. The project that is implemented in the current programme cycle (2021 -2023) is Phase III. This project brings experiences and lessons from its previous phases, which focus on barriers to access to social security among workers and extending social security coverage to more workers, especially the self-employed and the workers in rural areas, in Lao PDR. The project focuses on reducing administrative barriers to access. In addition, it also develops activities to increase countries’ understanding and awareness about the importance of social protection. The expected objective is that “more women and men in Lao PDR, as well as other countries in the region, are covered by a more effective, efficient, sustainable and gender-sensitive social protection system”. To achieve the Project’s objective, **two Outcomes** have been identified (see Table 2), and the **M&E Framework/Log Frame** developed was included in the PRODOC and includes next to these two Outcomes, in total also 6 Outputs and 12 Activities; a summary is provided in Annex 3B.

Occupational Safety and Health (OSH)

The ILO Korea partnership programme has supported OSH in the ASEAN countries since 2010. Major contributions of the ILO Korea partnership programme in the areas of OSH in Lao PDR include the 3rd National OSH Programme in Lao PDR (2022 – 2026), and the 2nd National OSH Profile. The current project aims to enhance an overall OSH framework in Lao PDR, and it builds upon the experience of *another* ILO/Korea OSH project of the 2018-2020 phase “Establishing and enhancing an overall Occupational Safety and Health framework in Myanmar and Lao People's Democratic Republic” and on other OSH related projects, and it is aligned with the ILO’s Flagship programme: SAFETY+HEALTH FOR ALL. The project design and implementation explore potential areas of collaboration with existing projects on OSH and social protection, other UN

agencies and the country's national plan. In addition, the project strengthens cooperation with the Korean partner institution, Korea Occupational Safety and Health Agency (KOSHA), which is making its own budget contribution to the initiative. To achieve the Project's objective, **two Outcomes** have been identified (see Table 2), and the **M&E Framework/Log Frame** developed was included in the PRODOC and includes next to these two Outcomes, in total also 6 Outputs and 13 Activities; a summary is provided in Annex 3C.

Intersectional analysis of the specific social groups affected by the issue and relevant normative instruments or policies related to gender equality

None of the PRODOC's of the three projects outlined above provide an intersectional analysis of the specific social groups affected by the issues concerned in each project, and in particular the strategic needs of women. The analysis made for this section was derived from key informant interviews and reviews of secondary data, including ILO DWCP document and of findings from relevant published studies that are available online.

OSH project

In the OSH project, which aims to enhance an overall OSH framework in Lao PDR, the PRODOC refers to the ILO Convention 190 on Violence and Harassment in the workplace. This is aligned with the DWCP for Lao PDR 2022-2026 that acknowledged that Gender-based violence and harassment remain a serious issue, including in workplaces.³ A 2017 research study that conducted in depth interviews with men and women in Lao PDR, found that women had high percentage from sexual harassment in the workplace with 90% of the women interviewed experiencing sexual harassment in their workplace.⁴

Skills development project

The project aims to enhance the skills and lifelong learning of women, men, youth, vulnerable workers and migrant workers, in order to facilitate their access to ASEAN labour markets. Document reviews indicate that the labour market in Cambodia is still influenced by gender norms. Women are generally disadvantaged in the labour market because of job segregation and 'women's' work is generally less remunerated than 'men's' work. Looking at the construction industry for an example, this sector has long been dominated by men, although recently it has been attracting more female workers due to the construction boom across the country. About 20–40 percent of workers in the construction field are women; most have limited education and are nearly illiterate, and they have few job opportunities. These forced them to do work in the construction sector and do physically demanding work. Most women are working as plaster mixers, i.e., unskilled helpers for construction workers, most of whom are male. Bricklaying/plastering work is dominated by male and is generally better paid and has a higher status.

Social protection project

The project aims to expand and increase social coverage among hard-to-reach populations and informal workers of both sexes through strengthening of gender-responsive legal, institutional and financial frameworks as well as operational guidance to support implementation of the Social Security Scheme. Both men and women workers in the informal sector are often earning an income just above the poverty line or engaging in subsistence agriculture or fishing rather than income generation activities and are not protected by social protection. With the very limited social

³ Decent Work Country Programme for the Lao People's Democratic Republic, 2022–2026 https://www.ilo.org/wcmsp5/groups/public/---ed_mas/---program/documents/genericdocument/wcms_856980.pdf

⁴ "Research Report Sexual Harassment in Workplace in Vientiane Capital Association for Development of Women and Legal Education (ADWLE)" March 2017, <https://www.researchgate.net/publication/317232021>.

assistance in Lao PDR, their meagre incomes mean that they have no savings and extremely vulnerable to lifecycle risks and macro-economic shocks. Women also constitute majority of workers in the informal sector in Lao PDR. Of the total employed females, over 87.5 per cent are self-employed.⁵

Programme Management

The Programme Management is comprised of a CTA based at the ILO Regional Office for Asia and the Pacific (ROAP) in Bangkok, under the guidance of the ILO Deputy Regional Director. The CTA of the ILO/Korea Partnership Programme, seconded from the MOEL/ROK, coordinates and monitors the Programme implementation and reporting requirements, provides administrative and programme support, and liaises with the donor and the ILO relevant departments on related matters. A Programme Officer and an Administrative Secretary support the work of the CTA.

For implementation of the Programme's priority areas/projects, the ILO designates a lead specialist per priority area of the Programme to ensure that activities planned and outputs delivered under different projects are inter-related and well-coordinated with other initiatives at the country and regional levels, and support the achievements of regional outcomes and Decent Work Country Programmes (DWCPs). The lead specialists coordinate and mobilize support of other specialists in related disciplines (OSH, social protection, skills) for smooth delivery. Partner Institutions are advised on their counterparts for specific Programme areas and fully participate in planning and design of project activities. The lead specialists also coordinate with Decent Work Technical Support teams (DWTs), country offices and headquarters technical units for effective delivery of the Programmes.

Direct Stakeholders

The list of direct stakeholders of the three projects is included in Annex 2.

Geographic Scope of Activities

The 2021– 2023 ILO/Korea Partnership Programme targets countries in Asia and the Pacific, and in particular Lao PDR, Cambodia and ASEAN (including the ASEAN Secretariat, ASEC).

1.2 Purpose and Scope of the Final Independent Evaluation

Purpose and Objectives of the Evaluation

The main purpose of the independent final cluster evaluation is for accountability and learning for programme improvement. The evaluation reviewed the effectiveness, efficiency and impact orientations and sustainability of the overall ILO/Korea programme interventions. The evaluation also examined the relevance of and future demands for the project interventions, as well as assessed factors that have contributed to, or that are likely to contributed or impeded achievement. The aim of the programme evaluation was to draw out and document key lessons learnt as well as to provide a set of recommendations to inform future directions of the ILO/Korea programme and to inform better allocation of resources for the portfolio of the ILO/Korea partnership programme.

⁵ Lao's Centre for Development Policy Research of the Ministry of Planning and Investment, UNICEF and UNFPA 2021 "Impact of COVID 19 : reimagining gender", https://lao.unfpa.org/sites/default/files/pub-pdf/covid-19_impact_assessment_lao_pdr_brief_gender.pdf

Specific objectives of the independent final cluster evaluation were to:

- i. Assess if there are changes in the needs and priorities of the national stakeholders and beneficiaries in the areas of OSH, skills and social protection and (new/existing) areas or components that should be strategically zeroed-in, reduced or restructured by the ILO Korea Partnership programme to optimize performance excellence.
- ii. Assess effectiveness and efficiency of the three ILO/Korea-funded Asia-Pacific Regional projects, including the progress in achieving results vis-à-vis their original plans, the challenges affecting the achievement of the results, factors that hindered or facilitated achievement so far, and effectiveness of management arrangement.
- iii. Identify both internal and external factors that (positively and negatively; currently and potentially) contribute to or constrain the achievement of the projects' outcomes and objectives, and assess performance of the three projects, and the technical backstopping support, using a Strengths-Weaknesses-Opportunities-Threats (SWOT) analysis.
- iv. Identify factors that influenced (positively or negatively) the sustainability of the outputs delivered by the three ILO/Korea-funded Asia-Pacific Regional projects.
- v. Identify lessons learned that need to be considered in the design and implementation of similar projects and the ILO Korea partnership programme.
- vi. Identify good practices at the Programme and project levels that should be replicated.
- vii. To conduct a comparative analysis on how well each project has performed.
- viii. To assess the extent to which *gender equality and non-discrimination* were addressed and mainstreamed in the design and in the implementation of the ILO/Korea projects.

Scope of the Evaluation

The evaluation covered the three priority areas administered by ROAP and implementation of all three-funded Asia-Pacific Regional projects. The evaluation covered all the geographic coverage of the three projects, including Cambodia, Lao PDR and ASEAN.

Clients of the Evaluation

The primary clients of this evaluation are as follows: the ILO/Korea Partnership Programme team, ROAP, DWT-Bangkok, and MoEL/ROK. Secondary clients are tripartite constituents and the project counterparts in the project countries, as well as the partner institutions in Korea.

1.3 Contents of the Report

The present Evaluation Report provides in the next section an overview of the Conceptual Framework based on the eight Evaluation Criteria as well as of the methodology, deliverables, management arrangements and work plan. In Chapter 3 the findings will be presented for each of the eight evaluation criteria identified; in addition, a SWOT and a Comparative Analysis will be conducted. The Conclusions and Recommendations will be presented in Chapter 4, while the final Chapter (5) will discuss the Lessons Learned and the Good Practices identified.

2 Methodology of the Evaluation

2.1 Conceptual Framework

The Evaluation has been conducted in compliance with the UNEG Evaluation's Norms and Standards and the OECD/DAC evaluation criteria as well as with the principle for programme evaluation set forth in the ILO policy guidelines for evaluation: Principles, rationale, planning and managing for evaluations, 4th edition (November 2020).⁶ It has also included the core ILO cross-cutting priorities. The ToR for the present evaluation identified the following eight **Evaluation Criteria** (cf. Annex 1, Section IV):

- A. Relevance and Strategic Fit
- C. Coherence (including Validity of Design)
- D. Effectiveness
- E. Effectiveness of Management Arrangements
- F. Efficiency of Resource Use
- F. Impact
- G. Sustainability
- H. ILO Cross-cutting themes, in particular Gender Equality and Non-Discrimination

For each of these eight criteria, a series of **Evaluation Questions** (in total **24** questions) were identified in the Inception Report (dated 18 July 2023) as follows:

A. Relevance and Strategic Fit

- 1) To what extent and how well have the ILO/Korea projects responded to the needs and priorities of the national stakeholders and social partners, and beneficiaries?
- 2) How unique were the ILO/Korea projects supported by the ILO Korea partnership programme to partner government priorities, as well as the need of social partners and beneficiaries (as compared with other ILO projects)?
- 3) Are the areas of focus of the ILO/Korea projects the most demanding areas?
- 4) Are there any other areas (within OSH, social protection and SKILLS) that are more in-demand, and therefore should have received more attention/support/funding (as they are important but are under-resourced) as viewed by national stakeholders?
- 5) What are the priority areas of interventions /components (within OSH, social protection and SKILLS) for the TVET policy, OSH policy and social protection policy that should be zeroed in and why?

B. Coherence (including Validity of Design)

- 6) To what extent has the ILO/Korea projects leveraged synergies and partnerships (among the ILO/Korea Programme-supported projects, Korea partner institutions, and other ILO programs/projects, constituents, other donors, Government, social partners, national institutions, and other UN/development agencies) to enhance the projects' effectiveness and impact and maximize its contribution to realize decent work goals?
- 7) To what extent and how well do the ILO/Korea projects complement and fit with the policies, programmes and/or priorities of the constituents?
- 8) With the benefit of hindsight, was the project design appropriate? What would you change?

C. Effectiveness

- 9) To what extent have the ILO/Korea projects been making sufficient progress towards their planned results?
- 10) What are the contributing and impeding factors (both internal and external factors,) that affect (or may affect) the performance and effectiveness of the ILO/Korea projects?
- 11) How well have (or how could) these issues been addressed?

⁶ https://www.ilo.org/eval/Evaluationpolicy/WCMS_571339/lang--en/index.htm

D. Effectiveness of Management Arrangements

- 12) What are the management issues (both internal and external management) that affected the performance of the ILO/Korea projects?
- 13) Identify the Strengths-Weaknesses-Opportunities-Threats of each of the projects and the ILO/Korea partnership programme (Based on SWOT analysis that analyses all criteria and factors that are identified under this evaluation (both external and internal))
- 14) To what extent are the tripartite constituents and the project counterparts satisfied with the services and deliverables and outputs delivered by each of the ILO/Korea projects and why?
- 15) Have the ILO/Korea projects collected information/data that help track/capture the relevant gender concerns? Is information being collected and analysed to help assess the different effects of an intervention on both men and women? In how far did the project integrate the criteria of the UN-SWAP on Gender Equality and Empowerment of Women (GEEW)? (cf. UNEG 2018).

E. Efficiency of Resource Use

- 16) Have resources (funds, human resources, time, expertise, etc.) been allocated strategically to achieve expected results within the ILO/Korea projects? Could they have been allocated more effectively and if so, how?
- 17) Are there any duplications of efforts with other projects run by ILO and other partners?
- 18) Have the resources been used efficiently? Are there any ways to make the ILO/Korea projects more efficient and effective?

F. Impact

- 19) To what extent and how well have the ILO/Korea projects resulted in changes in policies and legislations/ regulations as well as improved service provisions in the target countries?
- 20) How well have the ILO Korea projects delivered impact or had high impact oriented intervention?

G. Sustainability

- 21) How effective have the ILO/Korea projects been in establishing and fostering national/local ownership?
- 22) How likely will the results be sustained beyond the current ILO/Korea projects through the action of Government and other stakeholders? Are there any factors that constrained their ability to do so?

H. ILO Cross-cutting themes

- 23) To what extent have gender equality and non-discrimination been addressed in the design and in the implementation of the ILO/Korea projects? What are practical actions that could be done to improve gender equality and non-discrimination? In how far did the project integrate the criteria of the UN-SWAP on GEEW? (cf. UNEG 2018).
- 24) To what extent have other cross-cutting themes been addressed in the design and in the implementation of the ILO/Korea projects, including ILS, tripartism and social dialogue, and a just transition to environmental sustainability? (additional question)

Data Collection Worksheet

The ILO Template for the *Data Collection Worksheet* describes the way that the chosen data collection methods, data sources, sampling and indicators support the evaluation questions identified above. In the Inception Report (18 July 2023) it has been discussed in detail, and the Data Collection Worksheet itself is included here in Annex 4. This annex has in particular also been used as *the interview guide*.

2.2 Methodology, Key Deliverables and Work Plan

Methodology

The evaluation complied with evaluation norms, standards and follow ethical safeguards, as specified in the ILO's evaluation procedures, which adheres to the United Nations system of evaluation norms and standards as well as to the OECD/DAC Evaluation Quality Standards.⁷

A mixed method approach was used for this evaluation, including both qualitative and quantitative data, and primary and secondary data. Attempts were made to collect data from different sources by different methods for each evaluation question and findings were triangulated to draw valid and reliable conclusions. Data were disaggregated by sex where possible and appropriate. The evaluation fieldwork was participatory in nature, and this participatory nature of the evaluation contributed to the sense of ownership among stakeholders.

The evaluation methodology was implemented through the following **three phases**:

1) Inception Phase

A desk review analysed project documentation including the Arrangement between MOEL/ROK and ILO of May 2021, the three project documents (PRODOCs), the Log Frames and Theories of Change, the Technical Progress Reports (TPR), the project websites, the Mid-Term Internal Evaluation (MTE) reports of the skills and social protection projects, the evaluation reports of previous phases of the ILO/Korea Partnership programme, and other relevant documents. The evaluators also reviewed other documentation including project products, financial reports, DWCPs, UNSDCFs and other relevant documents (see Annex 11). The international evaluator has further conducted several briefings with the evaluation manager and the project team to plan the data collection and understand project expectations. The writing of the Inception report was also part of this phase; it was reviewed and approved by the evaluation manager on 18 July 2023 prior to the Data Collection Phase.

2) Data Collection Phase

Interviews were conducted with the key stakeholders of the project, including the Project team, the ILO management at country, regional, and headquarters levels, the ILO tripartite constituents and the implementing partners. Part of these interviews were conducted online, and part were in person during the missions/field visits. The Data Collection Time Schedule has been added as Annex 5. For the field mission three countries were selected: Lao PDR because all three projects have activities in this country; Cambodia because many activities in the skills project took place here; and Thailand because the project team and ROAP/DWT are located here and because key activities took place here with government agencies in the skills project. A summary of the field mission is as follows:

- **Mission to Vientiane, Lao PDR (24-28 July 2023):** Interviews were conducted with the relevant stakeholders (cf. Annex 5), and the International Evaluator attended as observer the social protection workshop on 27 July 2023 entitled "Validation of Research findings on Understanding Informality and Expanding Social Security Coverage".
- **Mission to Phnom Penh, Cambodia (31 July – 2 August 2023):** Interviews were conducted with the relevant stakeholders.

⁷ <https://www.oecd.org/dac/evaluation/revised-evaluation-criteria-dec-2019.pdf>

- **Mission to Bangkok, Thailand (3 – 8 August 2023):** Interviews were conducted with the relevant stakeholders.

The **list of stakeholders** interviewed was developed by the project team and the evaluation manager with inputs by the evaluators and is incorporated in Annex 5. In total 37 interviews were conducted (mostly with one person but in many instances also with two or more persons), which is quite a large number considering the time frame given by the ToR (see further the paragraph on the Workplan below).

The **criteria** for selecting these particular stakeholders for interviews were based on purposive sampling based on their level of involvement and engagement in the preparation and implementation of the project, while also taking into account the gender aspect (see below under “Gender Dimension of the Methodology”). The **questions** asked to these stakeholders relate to all of the eight Evaluation Criteria, whereby the 24 Evaluation Questions listed in Section 2.1 above will be used as a checklist for these interviews. Annex 4 has been developed as the interview guide. **Direct observations** during the field visits were another important source of information and data.

A **SWOT Analysis** was conducted to assess the performance of each of the three projects (see Section 3.9).

A **Comparative Analysis** to compare the performance of the three projects was also proposed in the ToR, and it is included in Section 3.10.

After the data collection phase was completed, the initial, preliminary findings were presented to all key stakeholders for validation in **a virtual stakeholders’ workshop** on 12 September 2023. One of the workshop’s main purposes was also to provide feedback to be included in the draft report.

3) **Data Analysis and Reporting Phase**

The final phase included the **data analysis** and the **triangulation** of data where possible, as well as the developing of the **Draft** and **Final Evaluation Reports**. The evaluators submitted the first draft of the report to the evaluation manager, who circulated it to the backstopping units, the donor, the key national partners, and relevant stakeholders for their comments. The evaluation manager collected the feedback on the first draft, consolidated and sent it to the evaluators who incorporated the feedback as appropriate, and submitted the final report to the evaluation manager. The evaluation manager and the ILO Evaluation Unit in ROAP assured the quality of the report following ILO EVAL guidelines. ILO Eval in Geneva provided the final approval of the report which was then submitted to the key stakeholders and uploaded in the EVAL public repository of evaluation reports (e-discovery).

Gender Dimension of the Methodology

The **Gender Dimension** was mainstreamed as a cross-cutting concern throughout the methodology, deliverables and final report of the evaluation. The evaluation addressed as much as possible the criteria of the UN System-Wide Action Plan (UN-SWAP) on Gender Equality and Empowerment of Women (GEEW) spearheaded by UN Women (UNEG 2018). A specific stand-alone inquiry on gender sensitive intervention and advancing gender equality was undertaken through two Evaluation Questions (EQ 15 and EQ23; see Annex 4). In terms of this evaluation,

this implied involving both men and women in the consultation, evaluation analysis and evaluation team/evaluation manager. The data collection tried to integrate gender considerations in the consultation by making sure that sufficient women were among the respondents; in fact, of the 61 respondents present during the 37 interviews, 26 or 42.6% were women (cf. Annex 5). Moreover, the evaluators reviewed data and information that was disaggregated by sex and gender and assessed the relevance and effectiveness of gender-related strategies and outcomes to improve the lives of women and men. The analysis methods integrated gender considerations by identifying relevant data to provide a picture of the gender equality situation in the countries involved, and by drawing on existing qualitative and quantitative research findings as a basis for evidence-based data. While the selected evaluation team was all-male, the evaluation manager was female. Gender concerns were addressed in accordance with ILO Guidance Note 4: (“Considering gender in the monitoring and evaluation of programmes”), *in particular*, the evaluation team made sure that women's views and perceptions were also reflected in the interviews, focus group discussions and that gender-specific questions were included.

Deliverables

The evaluators provided the following four deliverables:

Deliverable 1: Inception report.

The Inception Report has been prepared as per the ILO Checklist 4.8: Writing the inception report (cf. Annex 1), and it includes a Work Plan (Section 4.4). It was approved by the evaluation manager on 18 July 2023.

Deliverable 2: Stakeholder Workshop.

An online Stakeholder Workshop with all project stakeholders was conducted on 12 September 2023, to validate information and data collected through various methods and to share the preliminary findings and to complete data gaps with key stakeholders. The feedback served as **inputs** in the draft report. The International Evaluator developed and presented a PowerPoint Presentation at this workshop which was well-attended with well over 30 participants.

Deliverable 3: First draft evaluation report.

The draft evaluation report was prepared in accordance with the ILO Checklist 4.2: Preparing the Evaluation Report and included Recommendations, as well as Lessons Learned and Good Practices in the standard templates as per ILO EVAL guidelines.

Deliverable 4: Final evaluation report with evaluation summary.

The evaluators incorporated as appropriate the comments received from ILO and other key stakeholders into the final report. The report was finalized as per the ILO Checklist 4.2: Preparing the Evaluation Report. The quality of the report and of the stand-alone evaluation summary (In ILO Template) were assessed against the ILO Checklists 4.9.

Management Arrangements

The evaluation manager, Ms. Rattanaporn Pongpattana, M&E Officer at ILO ROAP, who had no prior involvement in the project managed this independent evaluation with oversight provided by the ILO Evaluation Office in ROAP. The ToR provides a detailed list of tasks of the evaluation manager (see Annex 1, Section VII). An international consultant, Mr. Theo van der Loop, was commissioned to lead this evaluation with support from Mr. Chanhsy Samavong and Mr. Somith Sok (National Evaluators for respectively Lao PDR and Cambodia). The international consultant

led the evaluation and had the final responsibility for delivering the above evaluation deliverables. The evaluation team reported to the evaluation manager.

The evaluation was funded from the ILO/Korea Partnership Programme budget. The ILO/Korea programme management team and relevant ILO officials handled administrative contractual arrangements with the evaluators and provided any logistical and other assistance as required. The ToR provides a detailed list of tasks of the ILO/Korea programme management team and relevant ILO officials (see Annex 1, Section VII). As it was a participatory evaluation, the key stakeholders were consulted throughout the evaluation process.

Work Plan

The final evaluation was carried out between July and September 2023, and a detailed workplan is provided in Annex 6. This Annex also provides the breakdown of the number of working days for the International Evaluator (IE) and for the National Evaluators (NE) by tasks and phases.

Legal and ethical matters

The evaluation complied with UN Norms and Standards. UN Evaluation Group (UNEG) ethical guidelines were also followed. The evaluators abided by the EVAL's Code of Conduct for carrying out the evaluations. Evaluators demonstrated personal and professional integrity and abided by the UNEG Ethical Guidelines for evaluation and the Code of Conduct for Evaluation in the UN system to ensure that the rights of individuals involved in an evaluation are respected. Evaluators acted with cultural sensitivity and paid particular attention to protocols, codes and recommendations that may be relevant to their interactions with women. Evaluators signed the respective ILO Code of Conduct to show that they have read and understood the UNEG Code of Conduct for Evaluation in the UN System process.

Limitations

The Evaluation assignment is clearly laid out in the ToR (Annex 1) and the list of stakeholders to be interviewed is comprehensive and is considered to be representative of the main stakeholders. As indicated in the above, the sheer number of interviews conducted (37) is quite large and the document review related to three different projects is quite extensive. In combination with three different Results (M&E) Frameworks including in total seven Outcomes, 20 Outputs and 38 Activities spread over a series of countries and regions, the timeframe for the present evaluation is quite tight.

3 Overall Findings

For the Final Independent Cluster Evaluation of the programme entitled “The 2021– 2023 ILO/Korea Partnership Programme funded projects in ASEAN, Cambodia and Lao PDR”, **eight Evaluation Criteria** have been identified in the previous chapter which will be discussed in depth in the present chapter (Sections 3.1 – 3.8). These criteria have been analysed with the help of the **24 Evaluation Questions** (listed in Section 2.1 above). In addition, a SWOT analysis as well as a Comparative Analysis were conducted (see Sections 3.9 and 3.10).

3.1 Relevance and Strategic Fit

Relevance

The Evaluation found that the three ILO/Korea projects were highly relevant and have responded to the needs and priorities of the tripartite stakeholders and beneficiaries. The stakeholders interviewed all underlined explicitly the relevance of the projects in question. The more specific issues on relevance for each of the three projects are as follows.

The **OSH** project is fully aligned with the national development priorities of Lao PDR, especially to the Five-Year Plan (2021-2025) and the national agenda to develop the OSH Law (in the coming 3 years) which is based on the OSH Decree endorsed in 2019. Lao PDR's National OSH System is in urgent need of development, in particular to work towards the OSH Law. The trade union (LFTU) underlined that the project is also in line with their priorities. The recent Ratifications by LAO PDR of the two ILO Fundamental Conventions on OSH (155 and 187) shows the commitment of the Government towards OSH; the implementation of the regulations of the Conventions will require substantial external support in view of a lack of capacity in this area in the country.

The **Social Protection** project is aligned to the Lao Social Protection Strategy endorsed in 2020; this resulted in the establishment of National and Local Social Protection *Committees*. Actual work on Social Protection itself was quite new. The coverage of social protection is quite low with only 11% of the population, and therefore the project is very relevant for the people as well as for the MSMEs targeted which were suffering from COVID and from the economic crisis. As a result of these crises the budget of the government contracted, and therefore there was no funding available especially not for non-contributory schemes. In addition, the project was very timely because of the revisions of the Social Security Law and the Health Insurance Law. The employers' organisation (LNCCI) underscored that the project is also in line with their priorities.

The **Skills** project was relevant because MRS is important for Cambodia to be able to send migrant workers to Thailand and have work opportunities there conform their skill level. For Thailand MRS is relevant because Thailand needs workers from outside for construction (cf. the MoL/DSD of Thailand). The project was also timely since the ASEAN countries were at the time of the design trying to stimulate labour mobilisation. The Employers in ASEAN (including the ASEAN Confederation of Employers/ACE) were interested in MRS because of the labour shortages in various countries (e.g. in Malaysia and Thailand).

Alignment to International priorities of the Republic of Korea, ILO and UN

The **ILO/Korea Programme as a whole** is aligned to the priority of MOEL/ROK to support the demands for support from the countries in Asia and the Pacific, and in particular from the lower income countries (CLM). At the regional level the priority is on ASEAN. Furthermore, the three projects are part of **a broader ILO-Korea Programme** coordinated through ILO-PARTNERSHIPS in Geneva. Apart from the three projects in Asia reviewed in the current evaluation report, there are **four other projects**: Two global projects (one Research project on OSH Qualification Framework, and one on Labour standards for platform workers with NORMES), one in Asia (Social solidarity and economy), and one in Africa (Strengthening Public Employment Services in English Speaking African countries). In addition, there are two newly launched projects, i.e., one in Bangladesh and one on Global Accelerator. The total budget of the nine projects is about US\$ 5 million (including the 2.15 million of the three projects discussed here). In addition, there is a Korean Secondment for OSH in ILO-Geneva. The common factor for the three projects under evaluation here is that they are coordinated by one CTA based in Bangkok who is seconded from Korea for that purpose.

The projects also align closely with the ILO strategic policy and country outcomes as well as with the UN SDG's and UNDAF as follows:

Linkages	OSH	Social protection	Skills
ILO Strategic Policy Outcome:	7	8	5
ILO Country Programme Outcome:	RAS153; LAO201	RAS 101; LAO 226	KHM 202; MMR 130; LAO 177; RAS177
UN Sustainable Development Goal:	SDG 8, Target 8.8, Indicator 8.8.1	1, 3, 5, 8, 10, 16, 17	8, 10, 17
UNDAF Outcome:	---	UNSDCF 2022-26: Outcome 2: Inclusive Prosperity (LAO PDR)	KHM 2019-23: 2 – Expanding economic opportunities LAO 2017-21: 1 – Decent livelihoods MMR 2018-22: 1 – Peace and governance

Strategic Fit

The second Evaluation Question (EQ2), asking how *unique* the three projects were as compared with other ILO projects (cf. Section 2.1), is difficult to answer without a broader study of other ILO projects which was not part of the methodology in the ToR. In general, it was found that the projects were at least to a substantial degree unique. There were various other projects dealing with broadly similar technical areas, but in each of those projects the focus was just a bit different. Examples are **UNJP** (Establishing the basis for social protection floors in Lao PDR), **SOLAR/EU** (Social protection and OSH for coffee and tea workers), **EU/SP&PFM** (Improving Synergies between Social Protection and Public Finance Management), the **SHP ILO-Luxembourg** project (Building Social Protection Floors for All: Support to the Extension of Social Health Protection in Asia), the **ILO/Japan** programme (deals with a range of national concerns such as unemployment, social protection, child labour, labour migration, occupational safety and health, green business practices and the formalization of informal economies), and the new **ILO-China** programme (focus on supporting inclusive digitalization of skills and Life-Long Learning (LLL) systems, promoting public-private partnerships, and developing inclusive policies on skills mobility in Cambodia). The specific outputs and activities conducted in the three projects under

the present evaluation are different from these as we will see when discussing the Outcomes and Outputs of the M&E systems in detail in Section 3.3 (see also Annex 3).

The areas of focus of the ILO/Korea projects are quite demanding indeed (EQ3) for different reasons. Some were areas not very well-known to the respective governments at the time of the programme design, such as OSH and Social Protection in Lao PDR, and the digitalisation of learning in Cambodia. Some other areas concerned the building up of a complete national system, such as in Social Protection in Lao PDR. Lastly, other areas demanded the building of trust and mutual agreement *between countries* on MRS (as in Corridors 1 and 2).

The national stakeholders interviewed all underlined that the areas selected (within the topics of OSH, social protection and SKILLS), are very crucial areas for their respective countries and *that more support is needed for these areas*. In other words, there are no *other* areas that are more in-demand according to them (EQ4). Areas that were mentioned by DWT-experts and by a TVET school as requiring much more attention are employment policy in Lao PDR (as it is a predominantly agrarian society), Green Skills, and the selection of occupations for MRS with a majority of *female* workers (e.g., Food Processing in Battambang).

The priority areas for *policies* within the three projects on which interventions should be zeroed in (EQ5) are according to the respective national stakeholders as follows: the development of the OSH Law and the further development and implementation of the Social Security Law both in Lao PDR, and the focus of ASEAN Member States (AMS) on stimulating policies on labour mobilisation.

3.2 Coherence and Validity of Design

Coherence

The evaluation found that the ILO/Korea projects did contribute in various ways to leveraging synergies and partnerships to enhance the projects' effectiveness and impact and to maximize its contribution to realize decent work goals.

The **OSH** project is well aligned with the objective of ILO's Flagship programme, SAFETY+HEALTH FOR ALL, as well as with the ASEAN OSHNET (a network of OSH experts). Moreover, there was cooperation between ILO and WHO using resources jointly on the Recording and Notification System on occupational diseases and accidents, for which a staff member of the LNCCI attended a training in ITC under the project.

In Lao, **OSH and Social Protection** are combined within the SOLAR project targeting coffee and tea workers (EU-funded; November 2021-August 2024). In addition, the project manager of SOLAR is the same as the Program Manager of the Country Team of the Social Protection project of ILO/Korea, while also the NPC of the OSH project is part of the Social Protection team of the ILO/Korea project. Therefore, coherence is quite substantial in Lao PDR.

With respect to **Social Protection**, several donors are active in Lao PDR, such as UNJP (already closed), EU (SOLAR and SP&PFM), ILO-China, UN-DESA/ILO (this programme is about to start, and the Program Manager will also be the same as the manager of the Social Protection project). Hereby, it should be realized that Social Protection is quite a broad area consisting of: 1) Health insurance (e.g. WHO); 2) Social Security (e.g. ILO/Korea); and 3) Social Welfare/Assistance (e.g.

UNICEF). There is close coordination with all the above-mentioned projects through the in-country ILO project team. In addition, the Lao Federation of Trade Unions (LFTU) worked with Oxfam on social protection. The interventions of UN organisations are coordinated under the UNSDCF especially through the UN Social Protection Working Group. Lastly, ILO/Korea cooperated with UNICEF and WHO on the work with the National Assembly (discussed in Section 3.3).

The **Skills** project has been cooperating closely with the ASEAN TVET Council (ATC) for the Regional Skills Technical Working Groups (RSTWG). There was also cooperation with IOM (co-organisation with ILO of the recent mission to Cambodia), with Japan (on AGP), and with ILO's TRIANGLE in ASEAN funded by Australia (DFAT) and Canada (GAC).

Lastly, there was close cooperation on many activities with several **Korea partner institutes** in particular through the secondments/loan arrangements of staff of these institutes to the ILO DWT office in Bangkok, the details of which will be discussed further in Section 3.3.

Alignment with the priorities of the constituents

The extent to which the ILO/Korea projects complement and fit with the policies, programmes and/or priorities of the constituents (cf. EQ7, Section 2.1) has already been analysed in the above in Section 3.1 under 'Relevance'.

Validity of Design

The design of the three projects was considered appropriate as underlined by the stakeholders during the interviews undertaken for this evaluation.

The **MTE on Skills** found in March 2023 (p.19) that the project design applied remains generally valid, and that it fits well with ASEAN as an established institution which has unique resources and is willing to mobilize them (especially for Corridor 3 and the regional component). The MTE recommended to connect the MRS (Outcome 1) and digital learning (Outcome 2) components more closely, although the MTE also admitted that the two components might not be intended to be connected when the project was designed. The project responded that Corridors 1 and 2 are being brought together in the *MRS Operating Manual* which will review the best practices and lessons learned from both.

The **MTE on Social Protection** found in Jan. 2023 (p.11) that the design included somewhat generic impact and outcomes while the outputs and activities are more specific, and that this was *intentional* in order to provide the *flexibility* to include activities which were not specifically envisaged in the PRODOC including e.g., the actuarial assessment. One must also consider the fact that the design was planned during COVID when it was difficult to predict what precisely would occur in the coming period. The present evaluation found that the design was appropriate at the Outcome and Output levels where it was closely aligned with the LSSO workplan, but less so at the activities level: it was difficult to get the precise requests from the GoL despite lots of consultations.

Concerning the **OSH project**, the present evaluation found that the simple design with two Outcomes and six outputs was appropriate considering the small size of the budget compared to the other two projects. Outputs 1.1 – 1.3 and 2.1 - 2.2 (Annex 3C) all concern activities in Lao PDR, while the last Output (2.3) concerns a regional component, including for example the ASEAN OSHNET and the Training in Korea with KOSHA.

For all three projects some consultations were conducted especially with the national governments involved but less so with the social partners. Some employers found for example that they were not involved early enough in the design phase. The LFTU underlined that the project design was very appropriate. It needs to be considered that in Lao, the employers' and workers' organisations are not as independent as in many other countries, although it has changed according to the LNCCI, which used to be integrated with the Ministry of Industry but have now become independent. Generally, the cooperation among social partners was quite good.

3.3 Effectiveness

Achievements/Progress

The ILO/Korea projects have been making *important progress in specific areas* towards their planned results, although it should at the same time be underlined that the implementation has generally been slow with lots of activities concentrated in the present, final programme year. Below is an overview of some of the main achievements for each project. A more comprehensive overview of the activities undertaken by each project and by *geographical coverage* (individual ASEAN Member States, ASEAN as a whole and Regional) is provided in Annex 7.

Achievements on OSH:

- The 2nd National OSH *Profile* of Lao PDR was endorsed by the Ministry of Labour and Social Welfare (MoLSW) on 15 July 2021.
- The 3rd National OSH *Programme* in Lao PDR (2022-26) was developed and officially adopted by the Minister of MoLSW on 21 December 2022. It serves as a significant milestone for the development of a national OSH system and the promotion of preventative safety and health culture in line with the two Fundamental Conventions on OSH (see Box 1).
- Gap analysis (June 2023) related to the ratifications in July 2022 by Lao PDR of the two Fundamental Conventions on OSH: "Occupational Safety and Health Convention, 1981 (No.155)" and "Promotional Framework for Occupational Safety and Health Convention, 2006 (No. 187)".
- Capacity Building of National OSH Committee members.
- The development of the Standard Operating Procedure (SOP) for business reopening and recovery in the new normal, which is simple enough for MSME's to use. The SOP can in future be updated and used for a possible other crisis.
- Awareness raising activities, such as the Safe Day Event in Lao in May 2022.
- System for Reporting, Recording & Notification of occupational accidents and diseases, including training for employers' and workers' organisations (this is a focus area in ILO P&B 2022-23 related to OSH statistics for reporting on SDG indicator 8.8.1).
- Lao regularly participated in the ASEAN OSHNET events and shared Good Practices.
- *Key activities to be planned in the coming months:* the OSH Training Workshop in Korea (Ulsan) with KOSHA, and fellowships in KOSHA from several ASEAN countries.

Box 1: The five priority areas of the 3rd National OSH Programme in Lao PDR (2022-26):

- 1) Develop legal and policy framework on occupational safety and health,
- 2) Build capacity on OSH at all levels,
- 3) Establish and develop a system of collecting, managing, and disseminating data and information on occupational accidents, injuries and diseases,
- 4) Promote OSH management system at the workplace, and
- 5) Improve compliance of employers and workers with OSH laws and policies including OSH regulations in all workplaces.

Reviewing the indicators at the **Outcome** level in the Logical Framework of the PRODOC on OSH, leads to the following assessments. For Outcome 1 (see Annex 3C) the indicator is “OSH legal framework is improved”. The achievements above show that a number of preparatory steps have been taken to improve the legal framework in the future, but the framework itself has not been improved yet (e.g., the OSH law was postponed to next year or so). With respect to Outcome 2, the indicator is “Level of satisfaction and awareness on OSH of OSH Committee is improved”, and this has been mostly achieved through the training of the OSH committee members. In sum, the outcomes have been partially achieved.

Achievements on Social Protection:

- Law Revision support, including an actuarial valuation of the National Social Security Fund (NSSF) to provide reform options and inputs to the amendment of the Social Security Law and the setting up of a National Actuarial Working Committee (cost-shared with EU/SP&PFM & ILO/Luxembourg).
- The research on understanding informality and recommendations for expanding Social Security coverage in Lao (with three focus sectors: Coffee, Drinking water manufacturing, and Logistics).
- Support to LSSO, including an Action Plan for the National Social Protection Strategy.
- Several capacity building events were organised, including for over 100 MPs of the National Assembly co-funded by UNICEF which was quite an innovative activity.
- Tripartite Regional Meeting jointly with ILO Japan was held in Bangkok in November 2022 on promoting formalization.
- Study visit to Indonesia in August 2023 for Tripartite Constituents to learn from Indonesia especially how to reach people in remote areas and to open decentralised Offices.
- The pilot of the Mobile Registration Desk to reach agricultural workers (so far 3 villages).
- Training workshop on Employment Insurance and Employment Injury Insurance (EI/EII) in Seoul on 21-25 November 2022 involving ILO, COMWEL (EII), KEIS (EI) and ITC. It was attended by 16 trainees from seven ASEAN countries.
- *Planned for the coming months:* (i) The annual workshop in Seoul with COMWEL and KEIS will also be held in November of this year in a partially revised format. (ii) ITC’s Social Security Academy for which the project will assign tripartite staff (who know sufficient English). (iii) Tripartite meeting on best practices in digitalisation in Social Protection in December 2023.

Reviewing the indicators at the **Outcome** level in the Logical Framework of the PRODOC on Social Protection, leads to the following assessments. For Outcome 1 (see Annex 3B) the indicator is “Number of beneficiaries with expansion of the coverage of social security systems in the region”, and this has not yet been achieved although a number of important preparatory activities towards this goal were conducted as was shown through the achievements in the above (see further Section 3.6). With respect to Outcome 2, the indicator is “Number of knowledge-sharing events, and dissemination of the information produced by studies and events”, and this was partly achieved. Overall, therefore, the outcomes have been partially achieved.

Achievements on Skills:

- Outcome 1 on MRS:
- Corridor-1: MRS in bricklaying/plastering in Cambodia and Thailand up to Step 5 of the MRS Roadmap (from a total of 7 Steps). The Technical Assessment Report is a crucial achievement since it is a document *signed* by both countries.

- Corridor-2 deals with MRS in the Logistics sector for warehousing and forklift operations in Thailand and the Philippines; it has also resulted in a signed document. This went much faster since the standards of the two countries were closer together and showed less gaps (than in Corridor-1): It went from Step 1 to Step 5 of the MRS Roadmap in just 1 year.
- The 6th RSTWG in March 2022 co-hosted by the ASEAN TVET Council (ATC).
- Furthering the collaboration with the Indonesia-Malaysia-Thailand Growth Triangle (IMT-GT) with the Thailand International Cooperation Agency (TICA) of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs as the focal point on the common welders' scheme and exploring the use of international reference framework (ISO).
- Outcome 2 on Digitalisation:
- Several Technical Assistance activities to prepare the involved organisations for the digital transformation of TVET in Cambodia through E-learning and coaching.
- Support the development of blended vocational training packages by the TVET institutions for the construction and hospitality sectors in Cambodia in 2023.
- ToT training for teachers and curriculum developers from Cambodia on delivering blended and green TVET programmes including eRPL.
- Study tour to Korea on digitalisation of TVET with KOREATECH in mid-September 2023.
- Develop a global Guideline "Digitizing TVET programmes", currently being edited in Geneva before publication.
- Outcome 3 on Partnerships and Regional Dialogue (ASEAN):
- The IMT-Growth Triangle developed a Quality Manual in Thai on welders' certification; ILO Translated it in English in July/August 2021.
- Work with the ASEAN Secretariat (ASEC) and implemented by the independent "Badan Nasional Sertifikasi Profesi" (BNSP/International Professional Certification Authority) of Indonesia on the ASEAN Guiding Principles-3 (AGP3) in relation to the MRS work. Co-funded by Japan.
- *Planned for the coming months:* The 7th RSTWG on 28-29 September 2023 and a regional TVET Forum in November 2023.

Reviewing the indicators at the **Outcome** level in the Logical Framework of the PRODOC on Skills, leads to the following assessments. For Outcome 1 (see Annex 3A) the indicator is "Number of member states appraising the MRS pilot positively and agree on its upscaling". We have seen in the above that several countries appreciate the MRS pilot and participate in it, while the agreement on upscaling will have to be taken in an ASEAN SLOM meeting (maybe later this year). With respect to Outcome 2, the indicator is "Level of satisfaction expressed by enterprises in the improved quality of incoming workers (especially those displaced and impacted by COVID-19 – women, migrant workers, disadvantaged workers) whose skills are recognized and/or certified through digital learning modules or e-RPL, respectively". Most blended vocational trainings have just been completed during 2023 and teachers generally are optimistic about the enhanced chances of the students on the labour market, but this cannot yet be established. With respect to Outcome 3, the indicator is "Industries perceive that skills needed in key areas are being delivered by skills digitization", and the same applies to this Outcome as to Outcome 2. In sum, therefore, the outcomes have been partially achieved.

Impeding factors: Challenges

The ILO/Korea projects encountered a number of overall challenges as well as challenges specific for each of the three projects that affected the performance and effectiveness.

Overall Challenges:

- 1) When the projects were launched in June 2021, the COVID-19 pandemic was still hampering activities. For example, in Lao there was a COVID *lockdown* and no activities were allowed at all! Discussions with stakeholders re-started in early 2022, and activities could be organized from May 2022 onwards.
- 2) This resulted in the projects having *to re-design* the implementation schedules and time frames originally agreed with the donor. Below are several challenges specific for each project, which also contributed to the need for such a re-design.
- 3) The political situation in Myanmar led the UN to disallow any activities in this country, including the work on Corridor-1 of MRS.
- 4) The ILO-DWT specialists backstop large numbers of projects in Asia and the Pacific, and as a result they are not always immediately available. This applies in part also to in-country staff involved in managing several projects.
- 5) The challenging management structure of the programme and projects. This can be attributed to:
 - ❖ The Programme's management structure involves a large number of actors: ROAP; the Programme Team in BKK; DWT specialists; Korean loaned officers; Country teams; etc.
 - ❖ In particular, the DWT experts backstop a large number of projects, while for the ILO/Korea projects the DWT experts are not expected to only backstop the projects, but to **drive progress forward** as the technical experts; in most ILO projects this is a full-time job.
 - ❖ The fact that there was no regular (half-yearly) Project Steering Committee (PSC) or Executive Committee Meeting (ECM) in which decisions can be discussed and made jointly (it seems there was only one ECM in 2021 but the minutes could not be traced). I would be more efficient to call it PSC and organize it in Bangkok by ROAP jointly with the Programme Team (than to organize in in/from Geneva).
 - ❖ Stakeholders in the projects were at times not at all aware of the other two projects, and a PSC would be important to engage all stakeholders, and to enhance the possible integration of the projects (as has for example been done in Lao PDR by the OSH and the Social Protection projects).
- 6) The loan arrangement with COMWEL to recruit a loaned officer was substantially delayed.

Challenges specific for each project:

Challenges for the OSH project:

- The OSH Standards in Lao PDR have not been officially approved yet.
- Serious budget constraints at the Government of Lao PDR (GoL) because of the economic crisis in this country and the aftermath of the COVID-19 pandemic.
- Lack of knowledge and capacity on OSH among government staff (as one key Lao stakeholder said: "It was new for Lao"), and limited numbers of staff in government organisations dedicated to OSH.
- The staff turnover at the Government side was at times relatively high, while also many *different* persons from tripartite partners attended the successive workshops organised by the project.
- The LNCCI indicated that their member companies are generally afraid of reporting (and of possible penalizations).

- Lao PDR is not so much on the radar of donors in the area of OSH as a result of a net focus on supply chains (e.g., VZF-OSH in Lao is closed, partly because funds are earmarked through VZF's steering committee).
- The project implementation was at times delayed due to slow disbursement from ILO for the activities involving the Provincial level, and sometimes the budget did not allow to hire experienced international consultants.
- There is no data centre in Lao to report occupational accidents/diseases.

Challenges for the Social Protection project:

- The GoL took a substantial amount of time to decide how to proceed in the project and with which activities.
- The Revisions of the Social Security Law and of the Health Insurance Law were delayed because data collection and the checking of the data are time-consuming tasks.
- Staff turnover at tripartite partners, and the limited number of staff with a reliance on one or two persons only. In addition, project work comes on top of their regular duties (e.g., in MoLSW and in NSSF).
- The majority of the labour force and population is relatively poor and is working in the informal economy in rural and remote areas, which makes it quite difficult to increase coverage.
- The LNCCI underlined that 99% of firms are MSMEs, and that the understanding of the laws is not widespread among them.
- Language can also be a challenge as translation of all documents is essential (Lao/English).

Challenges for the Skills project:

- MRS requires a long-term effort:
 - It started with the ASEAN-Meeting in 2012 where the sectors and countries were identified, and the first phase actually started subsequently in 2014.
 - The ASEAN Member States (AMS) need to agree in the ASEAN-SLOM, and, at sector level, the sending and receiving countries need to build trust and agree to harmonize the skill standards, especially if there are many gaps like in Corridor-1.
 - In Corridor-2 it went quicker with Philippines and Thailand (as mentioned in the above), but the intended third participant, Viet Nam, withdrew after having participated in the Experts meeting in November 2022 because it did not have the standards yet (they are working on it now and they may join again next year).
- The participation of Lao PDR in Corridor-1 is on hold due to the restructuring within Lao PDR's MOLSW (the constraint is essentially the lack of endorsed national skill standards for comparability with Thailand).
- Staff turnover at government level, for example those who decided at the 2014 RSTWG are now no longer involved.
- MRS is difficult to conduct virtually, and parts of it can only be done in person leading at times to delays.
- Legislation on MRS in Lao PDR is incomplete: needed are a skill development law, a Quality Assurance system, certification and the endorsement of standards (which is currently a slow process).
- Communication between the participating countries can be a challenge as well, in particular because it concerns many technical terms and concepts.
- The readiness of countries to digitalize their learning and RPL system differs substantially.
- There was less political commitment on digital learning in Lao PDR than in Cambodia, and also in Lao PDR the English limitations are higher among participants.

- Technical challenges were affecting Blended RPL, such as Internet connection problems, and the fact that in some areas 70% of students have no smartphone.
- The knowledge of teachers of digitalisation varied substantially among regions and countries.

These challenges have been **addressed** by the projects in various ways. Some challenges were a fact and had to be accepted, like the situation in Myanmar. The COVID-19 pandemic was addressed by changing to virtual modes of delivery. The withdrawal of Lao PDR from MRS is going to be addressed by targeted support later this year, and the same may perhaps be possible for Viet Nam (time and funding permitting). The low capacities of staff were addressed by providing capacity building where possible, while the staff turnover was dealt with as much as possible by direct and frequent communication with the new as well as with the more permanent staff members. Overall, it was found that the project staff addressed the challenges listed satisfactorily.

Enabling or Success factors

Next to the challenges there were also several pertinent enabling or success factors, in particular:

- 1) The continuity of the ILO/Korea Partnership was an important enabling factor, and it was explicitly appreciated by all stakeholders.
- 2) The strong commitment and support of the main government partners in the different programme countries.
- 3) The realisation among stakeholders of the importance of the topics at hand in times of crises (COVID-19; economic crisis).
- 4) The high commitment and technical competence of ILO staff involved in Bangkok as well as of the staff in the ILO Country Offices.
- 5) The important contributions made by the Seconded and loaned staff from Korea and by the Korea partner institutes especially because Korea has substantial comparative advantages in the three technical areas of the programme.
- 6) The Tripartite Partners in Lao PDR were very cooperative and worked in partnership.

Follow-up on the Recommendations of selected previous evaluations

Another measure of effectiveness is the follow-up by the Programme on the Recommendations made by the two MTE's mentioned above, as well as by the Independent Final Evaluation in July 2020 of the previous phase of the Partnership, entitled "2018-2020 ILO/Korea Partnership Programme funded projects in ASEAN, Thailand, Cambodia, Lao PDR, Myanmar and Vietnam", with a budget of US\$ 3,000,000. The nine Recommendations of this Final Evaluation were mainly addressed and followed-up, however the *fourth* one, i.e., "Strengthen relationship with ASEAN Secretariat to better link with regional priorities" could not be assessed because the ASEAN Secretariat, perhaps tellingly, did not respond to repeated requests for an interview. The full details of the 9 Recommendations and ILO's Management Response are included in Annex 9-A.

The MTE of the Skills project made 6 Recommendations which were or are being addressed through the MRS Operating Manual, the TVET Forum with KOREATECH, the SLOM meeting, and the 7th RSTWG (for details see Annex 9-B). The *fourth* Recommendation is not followed-up; it concerns the segregation between the work with technical staff in ministries (horizontal coordination) and with the political/management level (vertical coordination). The MTE (2023: 11) found that "There are requests from both managerial and technical government officials to be

involved or updated more in particular stages where one of them were less engaged.” This seems logical, although usually agreement should be reached at the technical level, after which the political level will take it over and decides on the priorities.

The MTE of the Social Protection project made 5 Recommendations which mostly were or are being addressed as is explained in Annex 9-B (under the column ‘Follow-up by the project’), with the exception of the *first* one which recommends to “Put more focus on gender issues” which has not really been done (cf. Section 3.8).

3.4 Effectiveness of Management Arrangements

Management Arrangements

The *management arrangements* and the lines of accountability have been somewhat complex in this project. The Programme Management is comprised of a CTA based at the ILO Regional Office for Asia and the Pacific (ROAP) in Bangkok, under the guidance of the ILO Deputy Regional Director of ROAP who is the ILO Project Responsible. As determined through the ILO-Korea MoU the CTA is seconded from MOEL/ROK and has the following tasks as quoted from the ToR (Annex 1): “.. *coordinates and monitors the Programme implementation and reporting requirements, provides administrative and programme support, and liaises with the donor and the ILO relevant departments on related matters.*” The *technical* leads are then allotted to selected lead specialists from the ILO DWT Team in Bangkok for each of the projects and/or outcomes; for example, for the Skills project there are *two different DWT-experts*, one for MRS (Outcome 1) and one for digitalisation (Outcome 2). However, these DWT specialists backstop dozens or more projects in Asia and the Pacific, and as a result they are not always immediately available to drive the day-to-day implementation.

This task is then partly taken over by *another layer of technical management*, i.e., the in-country teams based in Vientiane for Osh and Social Protection, and in Bangkok for Skills. However, the in-country staff are also involved in managing several projects simultaneously and are thus often only part-time involved in the ILO-Korea programme. For example, the position of Project Manager Social Protection is cost-shared with several projects; first UNJP, then SOLAR (EU) and in future also with UN-DESA (New York). The NPC for the OSH project in Vientiane is also part of the Social protection team in this city. The Senior Programme Officer of the Skills project is cost-shared with ILO-Japan and is part of ILO’s *Regional Skills Programme* with projects funded by several donors. In contrast, for the digital learning activities in Cambodia there is no in-country team assigned. The Korean loaned officers in OSH and Social Protection are involved in the technical areas of their own expertise. Lastly, the driving of the implementation of the *regional components* of the three projects generally seems to be the responsibility of the DWT experts.

To provide a specific recommendation how to simplify the above complicated management structure is not easy as it concerns de facto three different projects and at the same time the in-country teams are indispensable for their local knowledge and expertise. Therefore, it is recommended for a possible next phase of the programme to conduct a half-yearly Project Steering Committee (PSC) meeting which has the ability to enhance the coordination between all these actors, and it will provide a platform where experts and managers can jointly discuss and decide about the priority issues at hand for the coming half year.

In terms of financial and administrative embedding of the projects, it was found that they were solidly embedded in the admin/finance systems of ROAP and of the ILO Country Offices. From ILO HQ in Geneva targeted support was provided when required.

The degree to which the tripartite constituents and counterparts are satisfied

The tripartite constituents and the project counterparts were quite satisfied with the services and outputs delivered by each of the ILO/Korea projects as could be assessed through the interviews conducted for this evaluation.

In the case of **OSH**, the MoLSW and its OSH Center were satisfied as the project provided the right activity at the right time, and it has been generating good results for the government, business units and workers. The LNCCI is especially satisfied with the National OSH Programme which has quite good vision and mission statements. The SOP for business reopening and recovery was useful according to several stakeholders and it initiated the engagement, also from MSMEs. Various stakeholders were satisfied that work on the recording system of occupational diseases and accidents has actually started. The LFTU was satisfied that they were involved in the review of the National OSH programme in Lao PDR..

With respect to **Social Protection**, the MoLSW was satisfied and assessed the implementation by ILO as quite good. They expressed their urgent need for more support like that, including as a priority capacity building. The LSSO was also satisfied with the projects, in particular with the ILO specialists, the experts from Korea, with the Capacity Building of national and local staff, and with the support to prepare the Social Security Law. The LNCCI was also satisfied about the project and about the way it has been implemented, while the LFTU was satisfied that they were involved in the EII/EI workshops in Korea and Lao. In future it would be good if the project activities could enhance the involvement of the private sector (and of workers' organisations).

With respect to **Skills**, the MoLVT in Cambodia is satisfied since they have now the MRS Roadmap with 7 Steps which is a good model that can be replicated. The MoL in Thailand is also satisfied because they have learned a lot from the ILO project on how to make MRS possible, and they acquired a great deal of new knowledge and good experience.

The tracking of the relevant gender concerns

The ILO/Korea projects have collected some data that help track the relevant gender concerns, for example efforts were made to have equal numbers of women and men in activities such as trainings, workshops, seminars, study tours, etc., and information has also been collected and analysed to help assess the different effects of an intervention on both men and women, in particular through the systematic post-activity *evaluations* for all trainings and workshops. Lastly, in how far the project tried to integrate the criteria of the UN-SWAP on Gender Equality and Empowerment of Women (GEEW) will be analysed later in Section 3.8 below.

3.5 Efficiency of Resource Use

The Allocation of Resources

According to the two MTE's completed earlier this year, the programme's resources (funds, human resources, time, expertise, etc.) have been strategically allocated to achieve expected results. The **MTE on Skills** found that the project "...has used the existing resources quite efficiently. There were some financial savings, largely related to more online deliveries due to pandemic situation that can be allocated if the project is granted a no-cost extension. It has utilized efficiently and effectively ILO's internal resources, such as RMCS (Regional Model Competencies Standards), digital trainings provided by the ITC Turin. Stakeholders admitted that the ILO is resourceful with international references. The project has also synergized strategically with the existing relevant ASEAN institutions—such as SLOM, ATC and RSTWG—and takes advantage from their resources, too." (March 2023: 28).

The **MTE on Social Protection** found that the allocation of resources has been "... broadly appropriate for achieving project outcomes. There does not appear to be any need to reallocate resources. As noted elsewhere, insofar as possible, it would enhance VFM to increase the number of participants attending international events." (Jan. 2023: 16; VFM is Value For Money). For the **OSH project** there was no MTE conducted as the budget remained under US\$ 500,000. The majority of the budget was allocated to OSH activities in Lao PDR involving not only Outcome 1, but also Outcome 2 (Outputs 2.1 and 2.2), while only Output 2.3 was regional (ASEAN OSHNET, Training in Korea, etc.). The relatively small budget was substantial for introducing the country to OSH related activities and regulations, and stakeholders underlined that it makes good sense to have a country and a regional component for OSH.

Coherence vs. Duplication

The Evaluation Questions on Coherence (EQ6) and on Duplication of efforts (EQ17) are two sides of the same coin. The explicit policies of the UN (viz. 'One UN') and of ILO are to cooperate as much as possible with other projects in similar areas in order to enhance coordination, coherence and efficiency (including sharing resources). One prime example is the cooperation in Lao PDR between various projects on Social Protection and OSH where the project manager has been the same person; as a result coordination was enhanced and duplication avoided, and at the same time enhancing coherence. On Skills no other projects were identified that might represent a duplication of efforts, while also the regional activities were generally quite unique.

Efficiency of Expenditures

The spending of the funding has been *very slow* in the first year since the programme started in June 2021; we have already seen the reasons for this in the above under Challenges (see Section 3.3). Although after this slow start the expenditures have increased rapidly especially since mid 2022, the implementation rates (expenditures plus encumbrances) are still quite modest with an overall **62.9%** as of 21 July 2023 at which time there were over five months left in the project until December 2023. The differences are quite substantial among the three projects with OSH not reaching 54% while Social Protection achieved over 66% (see Table 3).

Table 3: The Allocation of financial resources and the Expenditures (actuals plus encumbrances) as per 21 July 2023.

Projects	Total budget	Expenditures in \$	Expenditures in %	Balance	Balance in %
OSH	311,639	168,080	53.9%	143,559	46.1%
Social Protection	921,149	609,742	66.2%	311,407	33.8%
Skills	921,149	576,314	62.6%	344,835	37.4%
TOTAL	2,153,937	1,354,136	62.9%	799,801	37.1%

As a result of the modest implementation rates shown in Table 3 above, the **Balance** in each project is quite substantial illustrated by an overall balance of 37% of the total budget. However, in a large majority of (ILO) projects, spending always *accelerates* towards the end. In this case also a series of major milestones is planned for the coming months as we have seen in the above (e.g. Training Workshops in Korea, the 7th RSTWG, Study Tours, a TVET forum, a Mission to Cambodia, and Fellowships). In addition, a **no-cost extension** of 4 or 5 months (January to May 2024) could allow spending to increase to well over 90%. Even earlier this year the MTE on Skills recommended such a no-cost extension (as we saw in the above). **Concerns** have been raised over the fact that every phase of ILO-Korea required a no-cost extension and that it could negatively affect the external partners' trust in ILO's project management. This needs to be considered very seriously, but many ILO projects, especially since the start of the COVID-19 pandemic, are witnessing the need for no-cost extensions for which the donors usually demand extensive rationalisations, a revised M&E Framework and a revised budget before approval, and such a considerable effort by ILO project managements comes a long way to balance the trust issue. In addition, for the present case, there seems to be no other way out as the Korean budget year runs until December and the project had not yet submitted a request for a no-cost extension (as per September 2023).

Expenditures differed also substantially among Outcomes as is indicated in Table 4 below. While in **all three projects** the expenditures on **Outcome 1** amount to between 70 and 74%, **Outcome 2** in the Skills project reaches just 51%. In contrast, the expenditures in the mainly **Regional Outcomes** in the three projects (Outcome 3 in Skills, and Outcomes 2 in both Social protection and OSH) lack substantially behind with only just 4% in Skills, 12% in OSH and 30% in Social Protection.

It is important to note, hereby, that the budget for the Outcome 1 activities in all three projects is substantially larger than for the other Outcomes (cf. Table 4). The table further indicates that the *largest* category in all three projects is for **Project Management**, and overall, US\$ 776,169, or 36.0 % of the total budget has been spent on this; this is followed very closely by the Outcome 1 activities with 29.8% (US\$ 640,770). Lastly, **Programme Support Costs (PSC)** are the *Organisational Costs* for the ILO, which were approved explicitly on beforehand with the donor, and, therefore, is a fixed amount (fixed at 13% of the total budget). As such, the **Balance** on this budget category will certainly be spent in the coming months, and this applies also to the large majority of the project management balance.

For all projects the stakeholders generally indicated that the **funds** were sufficient, also related to how much you can deliver considering the challenges discussed earlier. In the Skills project there were even considerable **savings** generated because Myanmar and Lao PDR were in the end not included in the implementation of the MRS Roadmap. In various cases other organisations also provided their own resources, for example by the Korea partner institutions,

while the LNCCI used its own resources and worked with volunteers (for SOP on OSH). Flexibility was important for the OSH project, as after the start the Government of Lao PDR requested for various additional activities, such as funding for World Safety Day which was funded from the ILO/Korea budget.

Table 4: The Expenditures (actuals plus encumbrances) and balance by Outcome and Expenditure Categories as per 21 July 2023.

Projects	Outcome 1	Outcome 2	Outcome 3	Project Management	PSC & Contingency	Overall
SKILLS						
Expenditures	70.3%	51.3%	3.9%	86.1%	36.7%	62.6%
Balance	29.7%	48.7%	96.1%	13.9%	63.3%	37.4%
Total budget in US\$	260,068	76,000	104,080	351,719	129,282	921,149
% of Budget	28.2%	8.3%	11.3%	38.2%	14.0%	100.0%
Social Protection						
Expenditures	71.7%	30.1%		88.6%	45.3%	66.2%
Balance	28.3%	69.9%		11.4%	54.7%	33.8%
Total budget in US\$	287,350	176,726		331,534	125,539	921,149
% of Budget	31.2%	19.2%		36.0%	13.6%	100.0%
OSH						
Expenditures	73.5%	12.2%		79.7%	35.3%	53.9%
Balance	26.5%	87.8%		20.3%	64.7%	46.1%
Total budget in US\$	93,352	81,389		92,916	43,982	311,639
% of Budget	30.0%	26.1%		29.8%	14.1%	100.0%

There were a few areas where the ILO/Korea projects could have been **more efficient**. Firstly, one area that was less cost-efficient was the Training workshop in Korea by COMWEL, KEIS, ITC and ILO ROAP; it had a budget of about US\$ 54,000 , in addition to the contributions from COMWEL and KEIS which spent USD 20,656 and 29,484 respectively, for just 16 participants from 7 countries. The project is currently developing a revised model for the training workshop later this year to make it more cost-efficient (perhaps increasing the number of participants and/or reducing the involvement of ITC Turin). Secondly, there were some reports of slow and bureaucratic fund disbursements to stakeholders from ILO for their participation in project activities, e.g., in the areas of travel from the provinces which the participants had to advance themselves; such delays are in particular problematic because of the very high inflation rates in Lao PDR.

Communication between stakeholders and the ILO Country Teams has generally been assessed as quite good by the interviewed tripartite constituents and other partners. Some examples of communication materials include a 10-minute documentary on Social Protection in Lao PDR by the communication consultant, and several Videos and TV Advertisements (of 1 to 2 minutes), as well as ten briefs based on the studies conducted within the projects (e.g., on the agricultural sector).

Reporting has been complete following the donor requirements, and the Technical Progress Reports were always shared timely with PARTNERSHIPS (former PARDEV). These reports serve

as inputs for the annual reports which the HQ is compiling for their Flagship and other programmes. The LABADMIN-OSH Department in Geneva would even appreciate in future amore direct linkage with the programme.

3.6 Impact

In terms of Impact, the ILO/Korea programme has made several important steps towards changes in policies and legislations/regulations, and also towards specific impact on different key stakeholders. Examples of the areas in which the three projects delivered Impact are as follows.

Impact related to OSH:

- An enhanced legal framework in Lao PDR through the 2nd National OSH Profile, the 3rd National OSH Programme (2022-26) and the System for Reporting, Recording & Notification of occupational diseases and accidents. The OSH Center of the Lao MoLSW emphasised this explicitly.
- The training on SOP for Business Reopening and Recovery in the New Normal had an impact on the companies and workers involved.
- Employers' organisations, in particular the LNCCI, will disseminate the acquired knowledge to their members and to workers as well.
- Employers' and workers' organisations alike (LNCCI and LFTU) indicated that many people have been paying more attention to OSH systems following the project's activities.
- The Knowledge and Lessons Learned from the seminars attended were used by the LFTU to train OSH workers.

Impact related to Social Protection:

- It is difficult to see a clear tangible impact (such as an increase in coverage of social protection measures), which is related to the incipient stage of Lao's development in this area; stakeholders all agreed that a lot of future support is going to be needed to reach a stage whereby coverage can be enhanced.
- A positive impact is that politics has changed in Lao PDR in that it has become more constructive towards Social Protection, and this became manifest when the government initiated the reform of the Social Security Law (which had been postponed for several years).
- The innovative sensitization work with Members of the National Assembly has a substantial potential impact on ongoing and future Law Revisions because the training and field visits provide insights into the reality on the ground to inform this revision process.
- The pilot of the mobile registration desk to reach agricultural workers is promising; although currently still small at 3 villages, it can be scaled-up in the next phase.
- Looking beyond the current phase of the ILO/Korea partnership, one area of considerable impact was emphasized by one stakeholder: After having been in the ILO/Korea programme from 2005 until 2020, Cambodia is now considered as a Good Practice on Social Protection.

Impact related to Skills:

- Currently, there are no actual beneficiaries yet (i.e., migrant workers using MRS), because the MRS System should be put in place before that and the involved countries should agree on the procedures to follow.
- The IOM-ILO mission to Phnom Penh on "Consultation on collaboration on skills training for Cambodian construction migrant workers during the pre-departure phase" on 7-8 August 2023 was an important example of buy-in from Thai employers and ECOT.

- In Cambodia the MoLVT indicated that there was a positive change in the mindset of technical staff. Now support is needed from the political leaders to complete Steps 6 and 7 in the next three years.
- On digital learning, the students have acquired enhanced and more up-to-date skills, and will be more likely to find better jobs. It also had a big impact on the teaching methods in the TVET schools.
- At the regional level the MRS is well-known in ASEAN SLOM, increasingly becoming a central issue in the ASEAN TVET Council. This impact could be further enhanced during the 16th Meeting of the Working Group of the Senior Labour Officials Meeting (SLOM) on Progressive Labour Practices to Enhance the Competitiveness of ASEAN (16th SLOM-WG Meeting) in September/October 2023 (TBC) in Brunei Darussalam.

3.7 Sustainability

Ownership

An important element of Sustainability is National/Local **Ownership**, and the ILO/Korea projects have fostered it in a number different ways.

- In the area of **OSH** in Lao PDR the Ownership of the tripartite constituents has been assessed as good by several stakeholders, and a concrete sign is that government, employers' and workers' organisations have their own workplan now.
- In addition, the OSH Center proposed various activities on OSH on their own initiative, showing their sense of ownership, and showing that this is indeed the right agency to cooperate with in this area.
- The Training of Trainers (ToT) workshop on OSH should also enhance sustainability through the newly trained trainers spreading the new knowledge.
- Lastly, the Working Group of the ASEAN OSHNET has its own workplan.

- With respect to **Social Protection**, the Government of Lao PDR (including the LSSO/MoLSW) is taking increasingly ownership, making requests and contacting the ILO frequently including requests for support for a review on the Social Security Law, and they were, for example, very interested in the Indonesia mission. This shows that this is indeed the right agency to cooperate with in this area. However, they are hindered by bureaucracy and are a bit overwhelmed with the volume of work.
- Social Protection Committees are established in Lao PDR.
- Through LSSO useful partnerships were built with employers' and workers' organisations.
- In addition, the National Assembly has developed its Recommendation-12 which guarantees that they will continue their work on Social Protection.
- Awareness is substantially increased in different ways as we have seen in the above.

- With respect to **Skills**, a lot of ownership has been fostered at the technical level (i.e. MoLVT in Cambodia and MoL in Thailand). It is now the responsibility of the political level in both countries because in the end (i.e. Step 7) the MoU between the countries needs to be endorsed and signed.

- The work between the different countries on Corridors 1, 2 and 3 resulted in enhanced learning and mutual understanding.
- At the 7th RSTWG entitled “The Way Forward for the Mutual Recognition of Skills Initiative” which will be held later this month (late September 2023) the ASEAN Member States (AMS) will need to identify jointly a clear direction for the future of the MRS initiative after the present stage of MRS pilot implementation. This includes decisions on the identification of the link with the employment of migrant workers in the receiving country (Step 7).

Sustained results after the programme ends

The other main element of Sustainability is in how far the results will continue through the action of Government and other stakeholders after the three projects have ended. Despite the fact that all stakeholders indicated that continued support will be quite essential for the sustainability of the results, the evaluation identified specific signs of sustainability for all three projects.

OSH project:

- It will take a long-term effort to build all the OSH systems required, and this process has just started in Lao PDR in 2022 (“It is new for Lao” as several stakeholders underlined). Therefore, long-term support is needed in this country. By the way, this does not apply *only* to Lao PDR; for example, the OSH system in Korea was also not build overnight but took a long-term effort.
- The *Capacity Building* activities are certainly expected to be sustainable involving OSH government staff and labour inspectors throughout the country as well as staff of the social partners. This included the training in Korea and fellowships, the reporting/notification system on occupational diseases and accidents, the SOP for business reopening, the work for the implementation of the two recently ratified ILO Conventions on OSH, and various workshops and seminars.
- Support from the government budget has been *proposed* by the OSH Center/MoLSW although it is relatively limited.
- The Reporting/Notification System on occupational diseases and accidents itself is actually in development. Each tripartite constituent had its own reporting systems, and now they will be using the common reporting system cf. the ILO guidelines.
- Strengthened social and tripartite dialogue in the area of OSH.
- Increased awareness and better understanding of OSH by the public through the dissemination of the OSH Decree, the National OSH Programme and Profile, Conventions and regulations.

Social Protection project

- The *Capacity Building* activities are also in this project certainly expected to be sustainable involving government staff (staff from LSSO including from the provinces, and from NSSF), Members of Parliament and social partners, through (research) workshops and seminars, training in Korea on EI/EII, tripartite regional meetings, etc.
- Project findings are adopted in the workplan of the Government of Lao PDR.
- The actuarial valuation of the NSSF including the establishment of a national Actuarial Working Committee is likely to be sustainable.
- Improvement of capacity of the LNCCI staff, and the potential to disseminate new knowledge to their members.
- Enhanced awareness and understanding of social protection (including the benefits of social security and NSSF) through the Lao Employment Expo 2022 and the production of brochures, posters and briefs.

Skills project

- The *Capacity Building* activities are also in this project certainly expected to be sustainable involving government staff participating in MRS workshops and meetings, teachers of TVET institutions participating in training and coaching in digital learning, as well as (regional) knowledge sharing activities.
- MRS is part of the ASEAN-SLOM Agenda, and at the next SLOM-WG meeting (planned for September/October 2023) the AMS are expected to adopt the MRS Roadmap.
- Some countries are already using the MRS Roadmap without ILO involvement, e.g., Cambodia and Viet Nam work on MRS in welding.
- In Cambodia, the MoLVT has developed a series of MRS indicators for the next five years plan (2023-2028) and requested a budget allocation (which will depend on the priorities to be identified within the Ministry).
- Through the RSTWGs, governments are talking to each other on MRS.
- The connection between RSTWG and the ASEAN TVET Council (ATC) ensures an institutionalized setting.

3.8 ILO Cross-cutting Themes

Gender equality and non-discrimination

Gender equality and non-discrimination have been addressed in a somewhat generic way both in the design and in the implementation of the ILO/Korea projects. There were no specific activities focussed on gender and non-discrimination and there was no dedicated budget allocated for that.

While the ***Independent Final Evaluation*** of the *previous* phase of the ILO/Korea partnership (2018-2020) recommended to “Emphasize gender mainstreaming when designing the next programme” especially in the OSH and Skills projects (ILO, July 2020: 26), the PRODOC’s of the present three projects do not include a gender equality strategy as such, and in fact made very little references to gender. The ***MTE on Skills*** surprisingly does not investigate Gender Equality at all, while the ***MTE on Social Protection*** (2023: 19) found that: “In terms of gender, the PRODOC makes very limited reference to gender and does not include any activities which address specific gender issues. It is clear that the project is, in practice, relevant to gender-related issues. For example, some of the groups considered as part of coverage extension (e.g domestic workers) are largely female.” This MTE dedicated its first recommendation to gender although it is in itself also quite generic: “Put more focus on gender issues.” (cf. Annex 9).

The present evaluation found *specific signs* that ***gender equality*** was in fact considered. The three projects did, for example, actively try to involve equal numbers of men and women in workshops, trainings, study tours, etc., and in research studies gender is explored as a cross-cutting issue (e.g., in the informality research in Lao PDR on social protection). In Lao PDR there are relatively many women among the government staff at the management level (MoLSW, LSSO), and e.g., the heads of key departments are women (e.g., in LSSO and the Head of the OSH Center), and therefore it was easier in this country to arrive at equal numbers of women and men among participants than in Cambodia. In the employers’ organisation in Lao PDR, the LNCCI, several Vice-Presidents are women, and it has a Women’s Unit, while in the trade unions the overwhelming majority of staff is male. In the OSH project there was specific attention for the recent ILO Convention 190 on Violence and Harassment in the workplace which has a large

health component. It was further found that the LSSO pays attention to Social Protection Regulations specific for women (e.g., for pregnancy). Among the participants in the Seoul training in 2022, seven out of the 16 participants were women (44%), while the COMWEL instructors were in majority male. At the TVET institutions, the students involved in Digital Learning were in majority female (about 60 - 70%). In the Skills project, the occupations selected for the MRS Roadmap are mostly male dominated (bricklaying, plastering, welding), while one TVET School suggested to select sectors with mainly women workers, such as food processing in Battambang.

The practical actions that could be done to improve gender equality and non-discrimination are to design specific actions targeted at women and to allocate a dedicated budget. It would be best to integrate these actions and budgets into one gender strategy developed at the outset as an integral part of the PRODOC of follow-up interventions.

Unanticipated effects of the three interventions on gender equality were not encountered during the evaluation, except perhaps in the case of the selection of occupations for the MRS Roadmap which turned out to be traditionally male dominated. Taking this fact into consideration, it is likely that the skills project might benefit men more than women and in consequence, perpetuate the gender segregation in the labour markets. However if a future phase of the project could consider strategic needs of women, and further promote access of women to skills development in these sectors where they are currently under-represented, these could potentially reduce gender imbalance and gender inequalities in these sectors. For example, bricklaying/plastering in Cambodia and Thailand was selected for Corridor 1 MRS. Traditionally the construction industry and bricklaying/plastering work in Cambodia have long been dominated by men. Just recently the construction industry has been attracting more female workers. About 20–40 percent of workers in the construction field are women; most have limited education and are nearly illiterate, and they have few job opportunities. Most women are working as plaster mixers, i.e., unskilled helpers for construction workers. As bricklaying/plastering work is dominated by male and generally better paid and has a higher status, it is important that women are given more opportunity to access to skill development and get certified to strengthen their ability to negotiate higher wages and access better jobs. The project could potentially help contribute to enhance gender equality by making sure that women access to skills development and skilled opportunities, supported by ILO.

The criteria of the **UN System-wide Action Plan (UN-SWAP)** on Gender Equality and the Empowerment of Women (GEEW)⁸ of the UN Evaluation Group (UNEG 2018) are intended for *Evaluations* (and not for *projects*). Applying these criteria⁹ creatively *to the present three projects* would lead to the following conclusions: GEEW is not integrated in the scope of analysis of the three PRODOC's, and the methodology, tools, and data analysis techniques selected are not particularly gender responsive. In sum, the *projects* therefore integrated only very partially the criteria of the UN-SWAP on GEEW.

Other Cross-cutting Themes

Considerations for **people with disability** and other special needs were generally not explicitly included in the three projects, except in a few cases:

- Capacity building for government officials and members of the Disability Assessment Committee on EII.

⁸ Sometimes also referred to as GEWE: Gender Equality and Women's Empowerment.

⁹ These criteria are as follows: (i) GEWE is integrated in the evaluation scope of analysis and evaluation criteria and questions are designed in a way that ensures GEWE related data will be collected. (ii) A gender-responsive methodology, methods and tools, and data analysis techniques are selected. (iii) The evaluation findings, conclusions and recommendations reflect a gender analysis.

- KOREATECH (Skills) is quite advanced in technology for EI including for people with disabilities.

With respect to the normative context and the impact of **International Labour Standards (ILS)**, attention was already paid in the above to the two new ILO Fundamental Conventions on OSH C155 and C187, and to ILO Convention 190 on Violence & Harassment at the workplace. With respect to Social Protection in Lao, the Convention 102 on Social Security, although not (yet) ratified by Lao PDR, was used as a key *benchmark* and is a part of the legal amendment (a small legal activity on this has just started in the project).

Mostly the three projects did ensure **Tripartite Inputs** in the design by conducting consultations with tripartite stakeholders, while **Social Dialogue** was used in most activities, workshops and seminars where tripartite stakeholders were invited to participate, contribute and comment. However, the participation of employers' and workers' organisations was stimulated much more actively in the Social Protection and OSH projects, than in the Skills project.

Lastly, the impact of the interventions on the **Environment** were generally not considered.

3.9 SWOT Analysis

The evaluation has conducted a SWOT analysis (Strengths-Weaknesses-Opportunities-Threats) of each of the three ILO/Korea projects. On the next pages are **three Tables (Tables 5 - 7)**, one for each of the three projects, which have identified in the rows both internal and external factors which have positively ("Helpful") and negatively ("Harmful") contributed to or constrained the achievement of the projects' outcomes and objectives (in the columns).

Table 5: SWOT Analysis of the OSH Project.

	Helpful to achieving the objective	Harmful to achieving the objective
Internal (attributes of the organization)	Strengths: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1) The continuity of the ILO/Korea Partnership. 2) The strong commitment and support of the main government partners. 3) The realisation among stakeholders of the importance of the topics at hand in times of crises. 4) The high commitment and technical competence of ILO staff involved in Bangkok as well as of the staff in the ILO Country Offices. 5) The important contributions made by the Seconded staff from Korea and by the Korea partner institutes. 6) The Tripartite Partners in Lao PDR were very cooperative and worked in partnership. 	Weaknesses: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1) The ILO-DWT specialists backstop large numbers of projects and are thus not always immediately available. This applies in part also to in-country staff. 2) The challenging management structure of the programme and projects and no PSC. 3) The OSH Standards in Lao PDR have not been officially approved yet. 4) Lack of knowledge and capacity on OSH among government staff and limited staff in GO's. 5) High staff turnover at the Government side. 6) LNCCI's member companies are afraid of reporting. 7) The project implementation was at times delayed due to slow disbursement from ILO. 8) There is no data centre in Lao to report occupational accidents/diseases.
External (attributes of the environment)	Opportunities: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1) The presence of the OSH Decree (2019) and the 3rd National OSH Programme provide the opportunity to support the implementation of the project. 2) The fact that the GoL ratified the two OSH Conventions (155 & 187) in July 2022: Support is required for follow-up and implementation. 3) The OSH Law will be developed in the coming years led by MoLSW with social partners; support is needed for the OSH Center and the OSH Committees at central & provincial levels. OSH is in 5-year plan. 4) UN organisations (ILO, WHO, FAO, etc.) will work together on OSH under the UNSDCF. 5) OSH is not well-known by the public, so awareness campaigns can have a substantial impact. 6) The utilization and transfer of digital technology (e.g., a national Information Management System). 	Threats: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1) Lao PDR's current economic crisis (including debt issues), and the serious budget constraints at GoL. 2) If there is no next phase of the ILO/Korea programme, then there will be a serious vacuum. 3) Continued political leadership and commitment of the government is required. 4) The political situation in Myanmar. 5) No National OSH Policy, and no OSH Law (yet). 6) Shortage of resources (national budget) in the country. 7) Shortage of skilled personnel in OSH, and lack of quality control and of coordination. 8) Lao PDR is not so much on the radar of donors on OSH as a result of a focus on supply chains.

Table 6: SWOT Analysis of the Social Protection Project.

	Helpful to achieving the objective	Harmful to achieving the objective
Internal (attributes of the organization)	Strengths: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1) The continuity of the ILO/Korea Partnership. 2) The strong commitment and support of the main government partners. 3) The realisation among stakeholders of the importance of the topics at hand in times of crises. 4) The high commitment and technical competence of ILO staff involved in Bangkok as well as of the staff in the ILO Country Offices. 5) The important contributions made by the Seconded staff from Korea and by the Korea partner institutes. 6) The Tripartite Partners in Lao PDR were very cooperative and worked in partnership. 	Weaknesses: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1) The ILO-DWT specialists backstop large numbers of projects and are thus not always immediately available. This applies in part also to in-country staff. 2) The challenging management structure of the programme and projects and no PSC. 3) The loan arrangement with COMWEL to recruit a loaned officer was substantially delayed. 4) The GoL took a substantial amount of time to decide how to proceed in the project (with which activities). 5) The Revisions of the Social Security Law and of the Health Insurance Law were delayed because data collection and data checking are time-consuming. 6) Staff turnover at tripartite partners and low number of staff; project work comes on top of regular duties. 7) Language can also be a challenge as translation of all documents is essential (Lao/English).
External (attributes of the environment)	Opportunities: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1) The GoL recognizes the role of social protection and is committed to aiming for universal coverage. 2) The amendment of the Social Security Law in Lao is expected to be finalised in 2024, and the LSSO requested ILO for further technical support on a review of the Social Security Law, especially comparing it with international standards. 3) LSSO is interested in Best Practices (e.g. of Thailand & Philippines) to continue to improve the benefit scheme. 4) Work more with National Assembly to increase their capacity (to approach the level of the LSSO), and also on financing of non-contributory schemes (as soon as economic crisis is decreasing). 5) Follow-up of the research on informality just completed. 6) Cooperate with new Partnerships at the Regional Level: Interest of Japan & China to cooperate. 7) Growing recognition in AMS of the need to invest more in the Social Protection Floor (SPF). 	Threats: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1) Lao PDR's current economic crisis (including debt issues). 2) If there is no next phase of the ILO/Korea programme, then there will be a serious vacuum. 3) Continued political leadership and commitment of the government is required. 4) It is difficult to expand Social Protection, esp. financing of non-contributory schemes, during an economic crisis. 5) The political situation in Myanmar. 6) The majority of the labour force and population is relatively poor and working in informal economy in difficult to reach rural and remote areas. 7) In Lao 99% of firms are MSMEs and understanding of the laws is not widespread among them.

Table 7: SWOT Analysis of the Skills Project.

		Helpful to achieving the objective	Harmful to achieving the objective
Internal (attributes of the organization)	Strengths:	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1) The continuity of the ILO/Korea Partnership. 2) The strong commitment and support of the main government partners. 3) The realisation among stakeholders of the importance of the topics at hand in times of crises. 4) The high commitment and technical competence of ILO staff involved in Bangkok as well as of the staff in the ILO Country Offices. 5) The important contributions made by the Seconded staff from Korea and by the Korea partner institutes. 	Weaknesses: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1) The ILO-DWT specialists backstop large numbers of projects and are thus not always immediately available. This applies in part also to in-country staff. 2) The challenging management structure of the programme and projects and no PSC. 3) In Corridor-2 Philippines and Thailand cooperated, while the intended third participant, Viet Nam, withdrew because it did not have the standards. 4) The participation of Lao PDR in Corridor-1 is on hold due to the restructuring within Lao PDR's MOLSW. 5) Legislation on MRS in Lao PDR is incomplete. 6) Communication between the participating countries can be a challenge (technical terms). 7) The readiness of countries to digitalize their learning and RPL system differs substantially. 8) There was less political commitment on digital learning in Lao PDR than in Cambodia, and in Lao PDR participants have more limitations in English.
	Opportunities:	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1) The MRS System for Corridors 1 and 2 is for a large part in place up to Step 5 out of 7 Steps: the opportunity is to complete these last few steps and connect to employment and stimulate replication. 2) Due to restructuring within the Lao MOLSW the MRS is currently on hold; the project will support them later this year to try to move forward (if funds are still available in the project). 3) Viet Nam withdrew from Corridor 2 as it did not have the standards, but they are working on it and may join again next year. 4) Great opportunity if work would again be possible in Myanmar. 5) To continue the AGP linked to the AQR (ASEAN Qualifications Reference Framework). 6) With respect to Blended RPL, use the new Guideline, and replicate for other subjects in the TVET schools, and enhance the use of iPads for students. 	Threats: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1) MRS requires a long-term effort: The AMS need to agree in the ASEAN-SLOM, and at sector level the sending and receiving countries need to build trust and agree to harmonize the skill standards. 2) If there is no next phase of the ILO/Korea programme, then there will be a serious vacuum. 3) Continued political leadership and commitment of the government is required. 4) Political changes or changes of high-level staff in Ministries, and staff turnover at government level. 5) For Corridor-1 to move from Step 5 to Step 7 solid commitment is required from political leaders, and sustained support from the receiving country for a speedy progress. 6) Technical challenges were affecting Blended RPL, such as Internet connection problems, and the fact that many students do not have a smartphone. 7) The knowledge of teachers of digitalisation varied substantially among regions and countries. 8) Lao PDR's current economic crisis (including debt issues). 9) The political situation in Myanmar.
External (attributes of the environment)			

Overseeing these three SWOT analyses in Tables 5 to 7, it can be concluded that for each of the three projects there are serious internal *Weaknesses* and external *Threats*. At the same time, the internal *Strengths* are also quite powerful, and the external *Opportunities* identified for all three projects are very substantial and realistic. This results in the recommendation to continue the very relevant work in the three projects, and this is laid down in a specific Recommendation in Section 4.2 below. Further conclusions will be drawn in the next section where the SWOT analysis will be combined with the Comparative analysis.

3.10 Comparative Analysis of the three projects

In this section a Comparative Analysis will be undertaken in order to compare the performance of the three projects as was proposed in the ToR (cf. Annex 1). The proposal was to score the projects on each evaluation question, and this has been conducted. However, a **word of caution** is warranted here. Not only are the given scores quite subjective, such a comparative analysis is

furthermore complicated by the fact that it includes 24 Evaluation Questions which are not equally divided over 8 Evaluation Criteria (for example, 5 questions for Relevance, while Impact, Sustainability and Cross-cutting issues have just two questions each). Moreover, the three projects (Skills, Social protection and OSH) are differently distributed over the project countries, and since many more stakeholders will be interviewed in Lao PDR (for all three projects) than in Cambodia (only Skills) and in Thailand (only Skills), or, for that matter, in Indonesia (Skills), the Philippines (Skills) and Viet Nam (Skills), the comparability becomes somewhat questionable.¹⁰

With the above cautionary considerations in mind Table 8 below provides the average scores for each of the eight Evaluation Criteria. Figure 1 below provides a graphical representation of the average scores. Annex 8 provides the individual scores (from a maximum of 5 to a minimum of 0) allotted to each of the 24 Evaluation Questions.

Table 8: Comparative Analysis of the three ILO/Korea Projects: Average scores on the eight Evaluation Criteria (for the individual scores on the 24 Evaluation Questions see Annex 8).

Evaluation Criteria	Skills	Social Protection	OSH
	Score (0-5)	Score (0-5)	Score (0-5)
Relevance	4,3	4,0	4,0
Coherence	3,7	3,7	3,7
Effectiveness	3,5	3,5	3,5
Effectiveness of Management Arrangements	3,0	3,3	3,0
Efficiency of Resource Use	3,0	3,0	2,5
Impact	3,0	3,0	3,0
Sustainability	3,0	3,0	3,0
ILO Cross-cutting themes	2,0	2,5	2,5
TOTAL	25,5	26,0	25,2

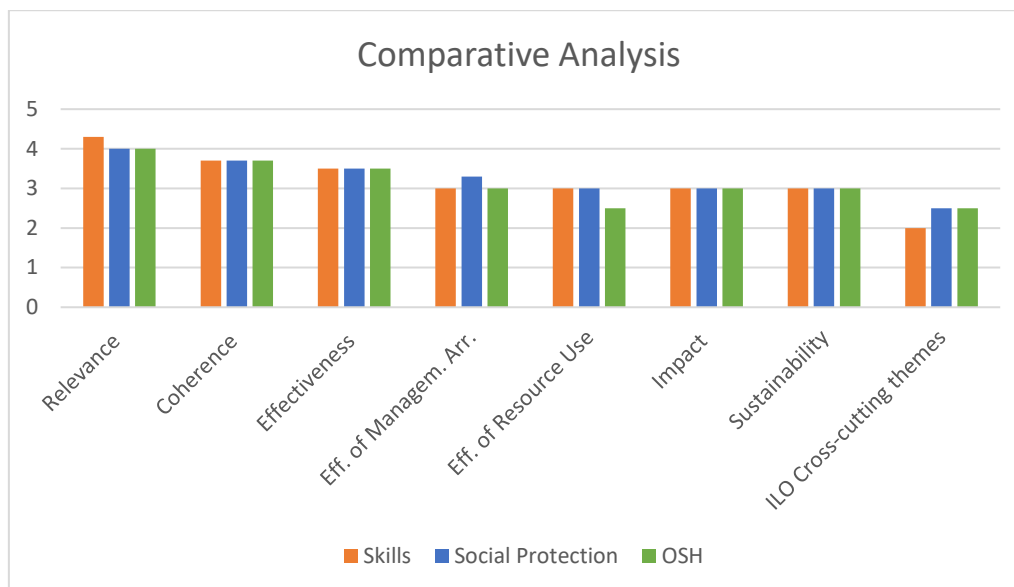
This analysis shows that the scoring of three projects provides quite similar results with a marginally higher average score (26.0) for the Social Protection project. When considering the individual scores on the evaluation questions the same can be said (with a score of 67, against 66 for Skills and 65 for OSH; cf. Annex 8). This is in part also logical as the three projects are implemented under one and the same programme sharing a lot of crucial common aspects, and these include:

- 1) The impact of the COVID-19 pandemic during and after the development of the PRODOCS.
- 2) The economic crisis in Lao PDR and the political situation in Myanmar.
- 3) Similar capacity problems in the Government organisations.
- 4) The challenging management structure of the programme and projects and no PSC.
- 5) The dependence on *political* leadership and commitment of the government for moving forward in legislation and regulations (at least partly during times of crisis).

¹⁰ In initial online meetings it had further been suggested to use *weighted* scores for the Evaluation Questions, but considering the above cautionary considerations, as well as the fact that each and every Evaluation Question has its own specific importance, this does not seem appropriate and would not contribute anything to a better understanding as compared to a straightforward scoring.

Figure 1 highlights some differences among the evaluation criteria. For example, it shows that Cross-cutting issues and Efficiency of resource use score lowest. This is followed by Impact and Sustainability, while Relevance and Coherence have the highest scores.

Figure 1: Comparative Analysis of the three ILO/Korea Projects: Average scores on the eight Evaluation Criteria.



Based on the analysis in the above Sections (3.1 through 3.8) of the eight evaluation criteria, and also based on the SWOT analysis (Section 3.9) and the Comparative analysis in the present section, the following **conclusions** have been drawn.

Although the ILO/Korea Partnership has been focusing on **OSH** and **Social Protection** during several of its 3-year programmes, this does not apply to **Lao PDR**; in this country the activities on these two technical areas were relatively new according to the national stakeholders. Therefore, and because the Opportunities in both areas in that country are particularly promising (cf. SWOT), because the Republic of Korea focuses on the low-income countries, as well as because of their very high relevance for the country and for the beneficiaries, it is recommended to continue both these technical areas in Lao PDR.

It is further recommended to closely monitor the situation in **Myanmar** and to make provisions to be able to implement dedicated activities for these two technical areas in this country once the UN decides to allow activities again. This is based on the similar considerations as for Lao PDR explained in the above.

It is further recommended to phase out gradually the work on **MRS**, which has been funded since the ASEAN meeting in 2014, by agreeing to fund one last phase of 3 years, in particular to take advantage of the Opportunity (cf. SWOT) to complete the last part of the MRS Roadmap from Step 5 to Step 7 for both Corridors 1 and 2. This continuation of funding should be *conditional* on the inclusion in the new PRODOC of a solid and comprehensive Exit/Sustainability Plan along these lines, which should include the first impact on employment (i.e. migrant workers who benefited from MRS and got a job), as well as models for replication of the MRS Roadmap.

The Skills Outcome 2 on **Digital Learning** has been lagging behind in the implementation rate by spending only just about half of its budget (until 21 July 2023), and the activities have been somewhat fragmented distributed mainly over a series of TVET institutions; therefore, the exact potential could not be fully established. It is thus recommended to develop a more integrated plan for this technical area as part of a PRODOC and to include a solid Exit Plan which can then be assessed by Korea. It needs to be considered also that digitalisation is one of ILO priorities under the Future of Work initiative.

Lastly, the **Regional Components** of each of the three projects are potentially important for embedding activities and outcomes into the ASEAN Institutions and Workplans, as well as for sharing Good Practices and for enhancing cooperation among countries in general. This will benefit the other components like MRS, OSH, Social protection, possible integration of the projects, knowledge sharing, learning, etc.

4 Conclusions and Recommendations

4.1 Conclusions

The conclusions of the present Final Independent Clustered Evaluation are analysed in the present section according to the eight evaluation criteria used throughout this report. It will also summarise the SWOT and Comparative analyses. With respect to the first evaluation criteria, **Relevance and Strategic Fit**, the Evaluation found that the three ILO/Korea projects were highly relevant and have responded to the needs and priorities of the tripartite stakeholders and beneficiaries. The stakeholders interviewed all underlined explicitly the relevance of the projects in question. The more specific issues on relevance for each of the three projects are discussed in the report. The projects are also clearly aligned to the priorities of the Republic of Korea to support the lower income countries (CLM), and at the regional level the priority is on ASEAN. The projects also align closely with the ILO strategic policy and country outcomes as well as with the UN SDG's and UNDAF.

In terms of **Strategic Fit**, it was found that the projects were at least to a substantial degree unique. There were various other projects dealing with broadly similar technical areas (such as UNJP, SOLAR/EU, EU/SP&PFM, SHP ILO-Luxembourg, ILO/Japan and ILO-China) but in each of those projects the focus was just a bit different. The national stakeholders interviewed all underlined that the areas selected (within the topics of OSH, social protection and SKILLS), are very crucial areas for their respective countries and *that more support is needed for these areas*. The *priority areas* for *policies* within the three projects on which interventions should be zeroed in are according to the respective national stakeholders as follows: the development of the OSH Law and the further development and implementation of the Social Security Law both in Lao PDR, and the focus of ASEAN Member States (AMS) on stimulating policies on labour mobilisation.

Concerning the second evaluation criteria, **Coherence**, the evaluation found that the ILO/Korea projects did each individually contribute in various ways to leveraging synergies and partnerships to enhance the projects' effectiveness and impact and to maximize its contribution to realize decent work goals and examples are given in the Section 3.2. In addition, there was close cooperation on many activities with several **Korea partner institutes** as well as with the loaned officers from these institutes to the ILO DWT in Bangkok.

The **Design** of the three projects was considered appropriate as underlined by the stakeholders during the interviews undertaken for this evaluation, and also the two MTE's on Skills and Social Protection undertaken in early 2023 found that the design remained generally valid. Concerning the OSH project, the present evaluation found that the simple design with two Outcomes and six outputs was appropriate considering the small size of the budget compared to the two projects. For all three projects some consultations were conducted at the design stage especially with the national governments involved but less so with the social partners. Generally, the cooperation among social partners was quite good.

The investigations into the **Effectiveness** of the ILO/Korea projects shows that they have been making *important progress in specific areas* towards their planned results, although it should at the same time be underlined that the implementation has generally been slow with lots of activities concentrated in the present, final programme year. In Section 3.3 an overview is given of some

of the main achievements for each project. A more comprehensive overview of the activities undertaken by each project and by *geographical coverage* (individual ASEAN Member States, ASEAN as a whole and Regional) is provided in Annex 7. A review of the indicators at the Outcome level in the Logical Framework of the PRODOC of each of the three projects resulted in the assessment that the outcomes have been partially achieved.

The slow progress especially in the first year of the project was due to a series of **Challenges** encountered some of which applied to all three projects while others were specific for each of the three projects. The overall challenges are as follows (while the specific challenges are included in Section 3.3):

- 1) When the projects were launched in June 2021, the COVID-19 pandemic was still hampering activities. For example, in Lao there was a COVID *lockdown* and no activities were allowed at all. Discussions with stakeholders re-started in early 2022, and activities could be organized from May 2022 onwards.
- 2) This resulted in the projects having to *re-design* the implementation schedules and time frames originally agreed with the donor. Below are several challenges specific for each project, which also contributed to the need for such a re-design.
- 3) The political situation in Myanmar led the UN to disallow any activities in this country.
- 4) The ILO-DWT specialists backstop large numbers of projects in Asia and the Pacific, and as a result they are not always immediately available. This applies in part also to in-country staff involved in managing several projects.
- 5) The challenging management structure of the programme and projects, among others, due to the Programme's complex management structure involving a large number of actors: ROAP; the Programme Team in BKK; DWT specialists; Korean secondments; Country teams; etc, and the fact that there was no regular (half-yearly) PSC. Stakeholders in the projects were at times not at all aware of the other two projects.
- 6) The loan arrangement with COMWEL to recruit a loaned officer was delayed.

The overall and the specific challenges have been **addressed** by the projects in various ways. Some challenges were a fact and had to be accepted, like the situation in Myanmar. The COVID-19 pandemic was addressed by changing to virtual modes of delivery. The withdrawal of Lao PDR from MRS is going to be addressed by targeted support later this year, and the same may perhaps be possible for Viet Nam (time and funding permitting). The low capacities of staff in particular in Lao PDR were address by providing capacity building where possible, while the staff turnover was dealt with as much as possible by direct and frequent communication with the new as well as with the more permanent staff members. Overall, it was found that the project staff addressed the challenges satisfactorily.

Next to the challenges there were also several pertinent **enabling or success factors**: 1) The continuity of the ILO/Korea Partnership was an important enabling factor, and it was explicitly appreciated by all stakeholders. 2) The strong commitment and support of the main government partners in the different programme countries. 3) The realisation among stakeholders of the importance of the topics at hand in times of crises (COVID-19; economic crisis). 4) The high commitment and technical competence of ILO staff involved in Bangkok as well as of the staff in the ILO Country Offices. 5) The important contributions made by the Seconded and loaned staff from Korea and by the Korea partner institutes. 6) The Tripartite Partners in Lao PDR were very cooperative and worked in partnership.

The **Recommendations** made by the two **MTE's**, as well as by the **Independent Final Evaluation** in July 2020 of the previous phase of the Partnership, were generally followed-up by the Programme except in particular two of them: to strengthen the relationship with the ASEAN Secretariat, and to put more focus on gender issues (cf. Annex 9).

The **Management Arrangements** and the lines of accountability have been somewhat complex in this project (cf. Challenge 5 in the above). While the management was undertaken by the CTA, seconded from the MOEL/ROK, and the ILO Deputy Regional Director of ROAP, the *technical* leads were left to the lead specialists from the ILO DWT Team in Bangkok who backstop dozens or more projects in Asia and the Pacific, as well as to the in-country teams (mostly part-time) based in Vientiane for Osh and Social Protection, and in Bangkok for Skills. In contrast, for the digital learning activities in Cambodia there was no in-country team assigned. The Korean loaned officers in OSH and Social Protection are involved in the technical areas of their own expertise. Lastly, the driving of the implementation of the *regional components* of the three projects at the technical level generally seems to be the responsibility of the DWT experts. To enhance coordination and to integrate projects the evaluation strongly recommends for a possible next phase of the programme to conduct a half-yearly Project Steering Committee (PSC) meeting in Bangkok which will provide a platform where experts and managers can jointly discuss and decide about the priority issues at hand for the coming half year. In terms of financial and administrative embedding of the projects, it was found that they were solidly embedded in the admin/finance systems of ROAP and of the ILO Country Offices. From ILO HQ in Geneva targeted support was provided when required. The tripartite constituents and the project counterparts were quite **satisfied** with the services and outputs delivered by each of the ILO/Korea projects as could be assessed through the interviews conducted for this evaluation (various examples for each project are provided in Section 3.4).

The ILO/Korea projects have collected some data that help track the relevant **gender concerns**, and efforts were made to have equal numbers of women and men in all activities. Information has also been collected and analysed to help assess the different effects of an intervention on both men and women, for example through the systematic post-activity evaluations for all trainings and workshops (see further below under Cross-Cutting themes).

In terms of the **Efficiency of Resource Use**, the two MTE's found that the programme's resources have been strategically *allocated* to achieve expected results and were generally utilized efficiently including savings due to more online work. The MTE on Social protection emphasised that Value For Money (VFM) could be enhanced if the number of participants attending international events could be increased. In the case of the OSH project the present evaluation found that the majority of the budget was allocated to OSH activities in Lao PDR, while only one Output was regional (ASEAN OSHNET, Training in Korea, etc.). The relatively small budget was substantial for introducing Lao PDR to OSH related activities, and stakeholders underlined that it makes good sense to have a country and a regional component for OSH. No duplication of efforts was identified, although coherence with other projects was at times high which is also the explicit policy of both the UN ('One UN') and the ILO; one example is the cooperation in Lao PDR between various projects on Social Protection and OSH where the project manager has been the same person enhancing coordination and avoiding duplication.

The actual **spending** of the funding has been *very slow* in the first year since the programme started in June 2021 but picked up rapidly after that especially since mid 2022. Nevertheless, the implementation rates (expenditures plus encumbrances) are still quite modest with an overall

62.9% as of 21 July 2023. The differences are quite substantial among the three projects with OSH not reaching 54% while Social Protection achieved over 66% (see Table 3). An overall balance of 37% of the total budget with over five months left in the project is not unusual though in (ILO) projects, as spending always *accelerates* towards the end. In this case also a series of major milestones is planned for the coming months. In addition, a **no-cost extension** of 4 or 5 months (January to May 2024) could allow spending to increase to well over 90%. Concerns have been raised over the fact that every phase of ILO-Korea required a no-cost extension and that it could negatively affect the external partners' trust in ILO's project management. This needs to be considered very seriously, but many other ILO projects are witnessing the need for no-cost extensions for which the donors usually demand extensive rationalisations, a revised M&E Framework and a revised budget before approval, and such a considerable effort by ILO project managements comes a long way to balance the trust issue. In addition, for the present case, there seems to be no other way out as the Korean budget year runs until December and the project had not yet submitted a request for a no-cost extension (as per September 2023)..

Expenditures differed also substantially among Outcomes as is indicated in Table 4 with especially a low implementation rates for the regional components. In terms of expenditures, the largest category in all three projects is for Project Management (36.0%) of the total budget closely followed by the Outcome 1 activities in each project (29.8%). Lastly, Programme Support Costs (PSC) are the Organisational Costs for the ILO, which were approved explicitly with the donor (fixed at 13% of the total budget). As such, the Balance on this budget category will certainly be spent in the coming months, and this applies also to most of the project management balance.

For all projects the stakeholders generally indicated that the *funds* were sufficient, and in various cases other organisations also provided their own resources (Korea partner institutions and the LNCCI). There were a few areas where the ILO/Korea projects could have been more efficient, such as the social protection training workshop in Korea, and some reports of slow and bureaucratic fund disbursements by ILO to stakeholders. *Communication* between stakeholders and the ILO Country Teams has generally been assessed as quite good by the interviewed stakeholders, while *Reporting* has been complete following the requirements by the donor and by ILO Geneva.

In terms of **Impact**, the ILO/Korea programme has made several important steps towards changes in policies and legislations/regulations, and also towards specific impact on different key stakeholders. While in the *skills* project there are currently no actual beneficiaries yet (i.e., migrant workers using MRS), because the MRS System should be put in place before that and the involved countries should agree on the procedures to follow. Nevertheless, a few important inroads towards impact have been made: a positive change in the mindset of technical staff of the MoLVT in Cambodia; buy-in from Thai employers and ECOT into the MRS Roadmap; students have acquired enhanced and more up-to-date skills, and will be more likely to find better jobs; and at the regional level the MRS is well-known in ASEAN SLOM, increasingly becoming a central issue in the ASEAN TVET Council.

In *social protection* it is difficult to see a clear tangible impact (i.e., an increase in coverage of social protection), which is related to the incipient stage of Lao's development in this area. However, a positive impact is that politics in Lao has become more constructive towards Social Protection and the government initiated the reform of the Social Security Law. In addition, the innovative sensitization work with Members of the National Assembly has a substantial potential impact on ongoing and future Law Revisions. In the *OSH* project the legal framework was

enhanced in Lao PDR (OSH Profile and OSH Programme); the LNCCI will disseminate the acquired knowledge to their members and their workers and the LFTU is training OSH workers; and awareness has been increased among all stakeholders.

An important element of **Sustainability** is National/Local **Ownership**, and the ILO/Korea projects have fostered it in a number of different ways resulting in substantial ownership in *Skills* at the technical level of the MoLVT in Cambodia and the MoL in Thailand, while also learning and mutual understanding has been enhanced between countries in Corridors 1-3, and the series of RSTWG (the 7th will be held in late September 2023) brings the ASEAN Member States (AMS) closer together in the area of MRS. Ownership was also substantial in *Social Protection* at the LSSO/MoLSW and the National Assembly, while also Social Protection Committees have been established in Lao PDR and through LSSO useful partnerships were built with employers' and workers' organisations. Lastly, ownership was substantial at the *OSH Center* of the MoLSW in Lao PDR, while also several other tripartite constituents have their own workplan now, and this applies also to the Working Group of the ASEAN OSHNET.

Despite the fact that all stakeholders indicated that *continued support* will be quite essential for the sustainability of the results **after the projects have ended**, the evaluation identified specific signs of sustainability, such as the series of capacity building activities in all three projects which are certainly expected to be sustainable and have the real potential to disseminate new knowledge. In addition, MRS is part of the ASEAN-SLOM Agenda, while some countries are already using the MRS Roadmap without ILO involvement (Cambodia and Viet Nam on welding). In Cambodia, the MoLVT has developed a series of MRS indicators for the next five years plan and requested a budget allocation for that. The connection between the RSTWG and the ATC ensures an institutionalized setting. In social protection, the establishment of a national Actuarial Working Committee linked to the NSSF is likely to be sustainable, and this applies also to the awareness raising (e.g., through the Lao Employment Expo). With respect to OSH in Lao PDR, support from the government budget has been *proposed* by the OSH Center, and a sustainable Reporting/Notification System on occupational diseases and accidents is in development. In addition, social and tripartite dialogue was strengthened in the area of OSH, and awareness and understanding of OSH increased among the public through the dissemination of the OSH Decree, the National OSH Programme and Profile, Conventions and regulations.

The last evaluation criteria concern the **ILO Cross-cutting Themes**, of which **gender equality and non-discrimination** have been addressed in a somewhat generic way both in the design and in the implementation of the ILO/Korea projects. There were no specific activities focussed on gender and non-discrimination and there was no dedicated budget allocated for that. While most of the previous evaluations recommended to put more emphasis on gender, neither the PRODOC's nor the implementation followed-up on that. The present evaluation found some specific signs that gender equality was in fact considered, but on the whole GEEW is not integrated in the scope of analysis of the three PRODOC's, and the methodology, tools, and data analysis techniques selected are not particularly gender responsive.

Considerations for **people with disability** as well as interventions on the **Environment** were generally not explicitly included in the three projects. With respect to **International Labour Standards (ILS)**, attention was paid in the projects to the two new ILO Fundamental Conventions on OSH C155 and C187, and to ILO C.190 on Violence & Harassment and the C.102 on Social Security. Mostly the three projects did ensure **Tripartite Inputs** in the design by conducting consultations with tripartite stakeholders, while **Social Dialogue** was used in most workshops

and seminars where tripartite stakeholders were invited to participate, contribute and comment, although less actively in the Skills project.

The evaluation has conducted a *SWOT Analysis* of each of the three ILO/Korea projects (see Tables 5 to 7). Overseeing these tables, it can be concluded that for each of the three projects there are serious internal *Weaknesses* and external *Threats*. At the same time, the internal *Strengths* are also quite powerful, and the external *Opportunities* identified for all three projects are very substantial and realistic. This results in the recommendation to continue the very relevant work in the projects, and this is laid down in a specific Recommendation in Section 4.2 below.

The evaluation has also conducted a *Comparative Analysis* of the three projects following the proposal in the ToR to score the projects on each of the 24 evaluation questions. However, a *word of caution* needs to be given on the subjectivity of the scoring, on the representativity (number of questions per evaluation criteria differ), and on the diverging numbers of interviews conducted in the different countries. With that in mind, the comparative analysis (Table 8, Figure 1 and Annex 8) shows that the scoring of three projects provides quite similar results with a marginally higher average score (26.0) for the Social Protection project. This is in part also logical as the three projects are implemented under one and the same programme sharing a lot of crucial common aspects (which are given in Section 3.10). Figure 1 highlights some differences for example, that Cross-cutting issues and Efficiency of resource use score lowest, while Relevance and Coherence have the highest scores.

Based on the SWOT and the Comparative analysis, the following **conclusions** have been drawn. Although the ILO/Korea Partnership has been focusing on *OSH* and *Social Protection* during several of its 3-year programmes, this does not apply to *Lao PDR*; in this country the activities on these two technical areas was relatively new according to the national stakeholders. Therefore, and because the Opportunities in both areas in that country are particularly promising (cf. SWOT), because the Republic of Korea focuses on the low-income countries, as well as because of their very high relevance for the country and for the beneficiaries, it is recommended to continue both these technical areas in *Lao PDR*. It is further recommended to make provisions to be able to implement activities in *Myanmar* in this country once the UN decides to allow activities again.

It is further recommended to phase out gradually the work on *MRS*, which has been funded since the ASEAN meeting in 2014, by agreeing to fund one last phase of another 3 years, in particular to take advantage of the Opportunity (cf. SWOT) to complete the last part of the *MRS Roadmap* from Step 5 to Step 7 for both Corridors 1 and 2. This continuation of funding should be *conditional* on the inclusion in the new PRODOC of a solid and comprehensive Exit/Sustainability Plan along these lines, which should include models for replication. The Skills Outcome 2 on *Digital Learning* has been lagging behind in the implementation rate by spending only just about half of its budget (until July 2023), and the activities have been somewhat fragmented distributed mainly over a series of TVET institutions; therefore, the exact potential could not be fully established. It is thus recommended to develop a more integrated plan for this technical area as part of a PRODOC and to include a solid Exit Plan.

Lastly, the *Regional Components* of each of the three projects are potentially important for embedding activities and outcomes into the ASEAN Institutions and Workplans, as well as for sharing Good Practices and for enhancing cooperation among countries in general. This will benefit the other components like *MRS*, *OSH*, *Social protection*, possible integration of the projects, knowledge sharing, learning, etc.

4.2 Recommendations

On the basis of the findings of the present final independent clustered evaluation of the ILO/Korea programme **Nine Overall Recommendations** have been formulated as well as several specific recommendations for each of the three projects.

Overall Recommendations

1. **Make sure to request for a no-cost extension for January-May 2024 by submitting a substantiated request with a revised M&E Framework and an updated budget to MOEL/ROK through PARTNERSHIPS, Geneva, because the Korea budget year runs until December and a request for a no-cost extension has not yet been submitted.**

Responsible Unit	Priority	Time Implication	Resource Implication
Programme Team, ILO-ROAP, DWT experts, In-country teams, PARTNERSHIPS, MOEL/ROK	Very High	Coming 2 months	None

2. **Continue the ILO-Korea Partnership Programme where appropriate with funding for another programme phase.** All stakeholders interviewed as well as the ILO do appreciate very much the long-term continuity of the partnership, and to continue that into the future would enhance the sustainability of the work conducted so far. It is further recommended to start consultations with the involved Tripartite Constituents in an early stage (well *before* the PRODOC is developed).

Responsible Unit	Priority	Time Implication	Resource Implication
MOEL/ROK, PARTNERSHIPS, ILO-ROAP, Tripartite Constituents	High	Coming 6 months	Part of a possible new phase of ILO/Korea partnership

3. **Continue the work in Lao PDR and Cambodia** based on the SWOT analysis in Section 3.9 combined with the Comparative analysis in Section 3.10. In addition, until and including the present phase of the Partnership the priority of MOEL/ROK was with the lower-income countries, and it is more than likely that this will continue, which also supports the inclusion of in particular Lao PDR and Cambodia in a possible next phase. Monitor the situation in **Myanmar** and make provisions to have dedicated activities there once the UN decides to allow activities again in the country. Include **other ASEAN Member States and other Asia and the Pacific countries** where appropriate.

Responsible Unit	Priority	Time Implication	Resource Implication
ILO-ROAP, DWT experts, MOEL/ROK, Programme Team, In-country teams, Tripartite Constituents, AMS	Medium	Coming 6 months	Part of a possible new phase of ILO/Korea partnership

4. With respect to the three technical topics, it is recommended to:

- a) **Continue both OSH and Social Protection in Lao PDR** (based on the SWOT analysis in Section 3.9 and the Comparative analysis in Section 3.10). In addition, these two areas are related to two outputs of outcomes of the ILO DWCP of Lao PDR 2022-26.
- b) **Phase-out gradually the work on MRS by agreeing to fund one last phase of 3 years**, in particular to take advantage of the Opportunity (cf. the SWOT analysis) to complete the last part of the MRS Roadmap from Step 5 to Step 7 for both Corridors 1 and 2. This will be **conditional upon** the inclusion in the new PRODOC of a solid and comprehensive Exit/Sustainability Plan, as well as models for replication of MRS.
- c) **Develop for the Skills Outcome 2 on Digitalisation of skills and TVET a more integrated plan** as part of a PRODOC and include a solid Exit Plan.
- d) **Continue the Regional Components of each of the three projects** as they are potentially important for embedding activities and outcomes into the **ASEAN** Institutions and Workplans, as well as for sharing knowledge and Good Practices and for enhancing cooperation among countries.
- e) **Investigate the possibility of integrated OSH/Social Protection/Skills interventions** to maximize the impact of the programme (as e.g., has been done in the current phase between the OSH and Social protection projects in Lao PDR).

Responsible Unit	Priority	Time Implication	Resource Implication
ILO-ROAP, DWT experts, MOEL/ROK, Programme Team, In-country teams, Tripartite Constituents	Medium	Coming 6 months	Part of a possible new phase of ILO/Korea partnership

- 5. Make sure to install a Programme/Project Steering Committee (PSC) and to conduct a meeting every half year** in a possible next phase of the Partnership. This was found to be *essential* because of the specific complex structure of the programme management with different layers of management and different layers of (regional and/or in-country) technical leads who are not dedicated leads but at best part-time. Such a regular PSC would also enhance communication and can oversee and drive progress. In addition, related donors (Japan, China, EU, SDC, etc.) could be invited whenever appropriate to enhance coordination and coherence. Lastly, it is recommended to organise the first PSC meeting within three months from the start of the project.

Responsible Unit	Priority	Time Implication	Resource Implication
ILO-ROAP, DWT experts, MOEL/ROK, Programme Team, In-country teams, Tripartite Constituents	Medium	Start of the new programme	Part of a possible new phase of ILO/Korea partnership

- 6. Involve the workers' and employers' organisations more systematically in the consultations for a new phase of the programme** and provide capacity building with a dedicated budget to key staff of these organisations including a minimum number of female staff members.

Responsible Unit	Priority	Time Implication	Resource Implication
ILO-ROAP, DWT experts, MOEL/ROK, Programme Team, In-country teams, Tripartite Constituents, ACE, ATUC	High	Coming 6 months	Part of a possible new phase of ILO/Korea partnership

7. **Develop a Gender Equality Strategy in a next phase from the design stage**, and make sure to identify specific outcomes/outputs on gender, and in particular make sure that the project design will address pertinent strategic needs of women. In addition, make sure to allocate dedicated resources to such a Strategy.

Responsible Unit	Priority	Time Implication	Resource Implication
ILO-ROAP, DWT experts, Programme Team, In-country teams, Tripartite Constituents, MOEL/ROK,	Medium	Coming 6 months	Part of a possible new phase of ILO/Korea partnership

8. **Conduct a sustainability workshop ('Closing Event') in early 2024** in order to consolidate the Outcomes and Results by discussing long-term strategies with key high-level stakeholders (including ASEC), and to investigate ways to keep the momentum going that was created by the projects.

Responsible Unit	Priority	Time Implication	Resource Implication
Programme Team, ILO-ROAP, DWT experts, In-country teams, Tripartite Constituents, MOEL/ROK, ASEC	High	Coming 6 months	Allocate from savings (Balance)

9. **Strengthen relationship with the ASEAN Secretariat (ASEC)** in order to enhance the linkages with regional priorities.

Responsible Unit	Priority	Time Implication	Resource Implication
Programme Team, ILO-ROAP, DWT experts, ASEC	Medium	Coming 6 months	Allocate from savings (Balance) and Part of a possible new phase of ILO/Korea partnership

Recommendations specific for each of the three projects:

OSH:

- ✓ Adhere closely to the five priority areas in the National OSH Programme of Lao PDR. The OSH Center underlined two specific priorities:
 - to develop the database system for the OSH programme, and
 - to improve and strengthen the OSH committees at provincial level.
- ✓ Some stakeholders suggested to explore other priorities in Lao, such as Employment Policy, since it is primarily an agrarian economy with a small industry.

Social Protection:

- ✓ Provide Capacity Building for the LSSO staff, especially on actuarial issues, occupational diseases, disability, database development (IT) and the extension of coverage.
- ✓ Provide capacity building for the LNCCI staff and those in the 18 provinces, as well as awareness raising activities.

Skills:

- ✓ Develop an implementation manual for the MRS Roadmap to guide replication for other occupations and by other ASEAN countries.
- ✓ Support Lao PDR to enhance work on standards.
- ✓ Include representatives of Employers in the MRS processes as they know which skills are needed.
- ✓ Continue work in Corridor 2 but re-consider the occupations identified i.e. warehousing & forklift operations, because COVID changed the employment situation (cf. MoL/Thailand).
- ✓ Consider the new topic of Green skills.

5 Lessons Learned and Good Practices

This chapter identifies two lessons learned (LL) and two good practices (GP) from the experience gained by the evaluation in the present report.

Lessons Learned

One of the purposes of evaluations in the ILO is to improve project or programme performance and promote organizational learning. Evaluations are expected to generate lessons that can be applied elsewhere to improve programme or project performance, outcome, or impact. The present evaluation has identified two Lessons Learned (LL) and these are briefly introduced below while the full descriptions in the ILO/EVAL Templates are included in Annex 10.

LL1 – In a complicated management environment with different levels of management and different levels of technical leads coordination involves bringing all stakeholders together at regular intervals in order to drive progress and to enhance cooperation, coherence and communication.

LL2 – Inclusion from private sectors in the MRS processes is crucial in harnessing timely and relevant outcomes.

Good Practices

ILO evaluation sees lessons learned and emerging good practices as part of a continuum, beginning with the objective of assessing what has been learned, and then identifying successful practices from those lessons which are worthy of replication. The present evaluation has identified two Good Practices (GP) and these are briefly introduced below while the full ILO/EVAL Templates are included in Annex 10.

GP1 – Adding a Regional component to Outcomes/Outputs specific for one or two countries has the clear potential to enhance knowledge sharing, learning and mutual understanding between countries and to involve different ASEAN Institutions.

GP2 - Adaptability and flexibility of ILO-ROAP, the Programme Team, the DWT experts, the in-country teams, as well as of the Donor is critical for progress in project implementation especially in times of crisis.

Templates in Annex 10

The ILO/EVAL Templates with the full description of these Lessons Learned (LL) and Good Practices (GP) are provided in Annex 10.

ANNEXES

Annex 1: Terms of Reference (TOR)

Terms of Reference

Independent Final Cluster Evaluation

The 2021– 2023 ILO/Korea Partnership Programme funded projects in
ASEAN, Cambodia and Lao PDR

Project Titles	1) Improved Mechanisms for Skills Recognition and TVET Digitisation in ASEAN (RAS/21/50/KOR) 2) Establishing and Implementing Occupational Safety and Health (RAS/21/51/KOR) 3) Supporting the Implementation of Sustainable Social Protection Floors for the Workers and their Families in ASEAN - Phase III (RAS/21/52/KOR)
ILO Project Code	RAS/21/50/KOR RAS/21/51/KOR RAS/21/52/KOR
Country	ASEAN, Cambodia and Lao PDR
Administrative Unit in charge of the project	ROAP and DWT-Bangkok
Technical Backstopping Unit	SKILLS, SOCPRO and OSH
Type of Evaluation	Independent cluster
Timing of Evaluation	Final
Project Period	June 2021 - December 2023 (31 months)
Total Project Budget	US\$ 2,153,937.09
Funding Agency	The Ministry of Employment and Labor of the Republic of Korea (MOEL/ROK)
Evaluation Manager	Rattaporn Pongpattana, M&E Officer, ROAP

Contents

Introduction..... Error! Bookmark not defined.

I. Background of the programme and projects to be evaluated. Error! Bookmark not defined.

ILO/Korea Partnership Programme in Asia and the Pacific for 2021-2023. **Error! Bookmark not defined.**

Skills development/TVET **Error! Bookmark not defined.**

Social protection..... **Error! Bookmark not defined.**

Occupational Safety and Health..... **Error! Bookmark not defined.**

Programme Management **Error! Bookmark not defined.**

Direct stakeholders..... **Error! Bookmark not defined.**

II. Purpose and Objectives of the Evaluation Error! Bookmark not defined.

III. Evaluation Scope	Error! Bookmark not defined.
IV. Evaluation Criteria and Questions	Error! Bookmark not defined.
V. Methodology	Error! Bookmark not defined.
VI. Main Deliverables.....	Error! Bookmark not defined.
VII. Management Arrangements and Workplan.....	Error! Bookmark not defined.
VIII. Required Qualifications and Duration	Error! Bookmark not defined.
IX. Legal and Ethical Matters.....	65
Annex 1: All relevant ILO policies and guidelines	Error! Bookmark not defined.
Annex 2: National consultant TOR (for Cambodia and Lao PDR)	Error! Bookmark not defined.

Introduction

This Terms of Reference for a final cluster independent evaluation of the 2021-2023 ILO/Korea Partnership Programme encompasses the three Asia-Pacific Regional projects of the ILO/Korea Partnership Programme as follows:

1. Improved Mechanisms for Skills Recognition and TVET Digitisation in ASEAN (RAS/21/50/KOR)
2. Supporting the Implementation of Sustainable Social Protection Floors for the Workers and their Families in ASEAN - Phase III (RAS/21/52/KOR)
3. Establishing and Enhancing an Implementing Overall Occupational Safety and Health (RAS/21/51/KOR)

The final independent Cluster evaluation of the project is to be undertaken in line with the funding agreement between the Ministry of Employment and Labor of the Republic of Korea (MoEL/ROK) and ILO and complies with the *ILO policy guidelines for results-based evaluation: Principles, rationale, planning and managing for evaluations, 4th ed.*¹¹ The final independent evaluation will be managed by the M&E Officer based in the ILO Regional Office-Bangkok and will be conducted by a team of independent evaluators (an international and 2 national evaluators based in Lao PDR and Cambodia) to be recruited by the evaluation manager. Key stakeholders, including tripartite constituents, donor, key partners and the technical specialists in the ILO regional office, will be consulted throughout the evaluation process. The evaluation process and report will follow ILO guidelines and the ILO Evaluation Office will approve the final evaluation report. The evaluation will comply with the United National Evaluation Group (UNEG)'s Evaluation Norms and Standards.¹²

The three projects to be evaluated are under the 2021-2023 ILO/Korea Partnership Programme which is funded by the Ministry of Employment and Labor of the Republic of Korea (MoEL/ROK). This final cluster independent evaluation will allow for a holistic and integrated approach in assessing the efficiency and effectiveness of progress being made in terms of the overall programme's and projects' objectives. The evaluation will

¹¹ https://www.ilo.org/eval/Evaluationpolicy/WCMS_571339/lang--en/index.htm

¹² <http://www.uneval.org/document/guidance-documents>

assess implementation performance and enhance learning within the ILO and among key stakeholders. The evaluation will apply mixed methods – both qualitative and quantitative and it will conduct SWOT and comparative analysis to assess the performance of the projects being evaluated. The evaluation team will conduct a thorough review of relevant documents and propose possible methods to gather evidence of implementation, progress, and challenges during the site visits. The evaluation will thus address OECD/DAC evaluation criteria and other relevant cross-cutting issues.

Gender equality and non-discrimination, promotion of international labour standards, tripartite processes and constituent capacity development and environmental issues will also be considered throughout this evaluation.

This evaluation is planned between June and August 2023 with the field work in Cambodia and Lao PDR taking place in July 2023. The final report is scheduled for completion by mid of September 2023. The M&E Officer, in consultation with the ILO/Korea Programme Manager and the ILO technical backstopping specialists for the programme, will provide all necessary documents and information required by the evaluation team and will facilitate and support the evaluation team on the logistics needed in the evaluation process.

I. Background of the programme and projects to be evaluated

ILO/Korea Partnership Programme

1. The Republic of Korea has a longstanding partnership with the ILO in the field of development cooperation since 2003 when the Ministry of Employment and Labor of the Republic of Korea (MoEL/ROK) signed a memorandum of understanding with the ILO to formalize their partnership for development. In 2004, the Government of Korea provided funding to institutionalize the ILO/Korea Partnership Programme, which focuses on realizing the objectives set out in the Asian Decent Work Decade. Through the ILO/ Korea Partnership Programme, the Republic of Korea supports the ILO's mandate to promote decent work goals. The year 2023 marks the 20th year of collaboration between the ILO and Republic of Korea.
2. By focusing resources and expertise on those countries most in need, the ILO/Korea Partnership Programme in the Asia-Pacific region aims to maximize its contribution to the realization of the Decent Work in Asia-Pacific.
3. The ILO/Korea Partnership Programme is managed by the CTA of the ILO/Korea partnership programme, under the guidance of the ILO Regional Office for Asia and the Pacific. It works in close collaboration with ILO specialists in ILO DWT BKK.
4. The ILO/Korea's areas of work are closely tied with the Korean Partner Institutions to extend knowledge and technical expertise, providing training programmes and institutional network in the project implementation. The current Korean partner institutions of the ILO/Korea Partnership Programme included Korea University of Technology and Education (KOREATECH), Korea

Employment Information service (KEIS), Korea workers' Compensation and Welfare Service (COMWEL), Human Resource Development Service of Korea (HRD Korea) and Korea Occupational Safety and Health Agency (KOSHA).

5. The ILO/Korea Partnership Programme conducts the ILO/Korea Executive Committee Meeting with high level officials from Korea's Ministry of Employment and Labor and the Korean partner institutions to discuss effectiveness, experiences and lessons learned, review the status of their ongoing activities and harmonization of project interventions.
6. To support the decision making and design of the next programme framework, the final cluster evaluation for the ILO Korea Partnership programme 2021-2023 will be conducted, between June and August 2023. Findings and recommendations from this evaluation will be integrated into the design of possible 2024-2026 programme.

ILO/Korea Partnership Programme in Asia and the Pacific for 2021-2023.

4. The ILO Korea Partnership programme in Asia and the Pacific for 2021-2023 commenced on 1 June 2021, according to the MOU for the ILO/Korea Partnership Programme 2021–23 between the ILO and the Republic of Korea through the MOEL, which was signed on 6 May 2021. With the total budget of US\$ 2,153,937.09, the MOEL/ROK and the ILO agreed that the budget allocation was made to the following 3 priority areas/projects:

Priority Areas	Projects	Implementation area	Budget (USD)
Skills	Improved mechanisms for skills recognition and TVET digitisation in ASEAN (RAS/21/50/KOR)	Cambodia, Myanmar, Lao PDR, And ASEAN	921,149.04
Social protection	Supporting the Implementation of Sustainable Social Protection Floors for the Workers and their Families in ASEAN - Phase III (RAS/21/52/KOR)	Lao PDR and Asia and Pacific Region	921,149.04
Occupational Safety and Health	Establishing and implementing Occupational Safety and Health (RAS/21/51/KOR)	Lao PDR and ASEAN	311,639.01

Skills development/TVET

5. The ILO Korea partnership programme has supported SKILLS in the ASEAN countries since 2010, when the ILO established strong working relationships with constituents and focal points of skills development/TVET in each ASEAN country as well as the ASEAN Secretariat.
6. With funding from the ILO Korea partnership programme, the ILO has made a significant contribution to the Mutual Recognition of Skills (MRS) initiatives which have been recognized as one of the three key regional initiatives for promoting skills recognition in ASEAN.

7. The *Improved mechanisms for skills recognition and TVET digitisation in ASEAN (2021 -2023)*¹³ aims to enhance mechanisms for national and regional skills recognition and TVET digitisation as well as enhanced knowledge sharing and partnership building in ASEAN. The project also aims to enhance the skills and lifelong learning of women, men, youth, vulnerable workers and migrant workers, in order to facilitate their access to ASEAN labour markets.
8. The mid-term internal evaluation of the project focusing on the technical aspect was conducted in 2022.

Social protection

9. The ILO/Korea partnership programme has supported SOCIAL PROTECTION in ASEAN countries since 2008. Since 2015, The ILO/Korea partnership programme has supported the project, Supporting the Implementation of Sustainable Social Protection Floors for the Workers and their Families in ASEAN. This ILO-led initiative aims to strengthen and gradually build comprehensive, sustainable social protection systems for all by increasing the system's coverage, effectiveness and efficiency.
10. The project that is implemented in the current programme cycle (2021 -2023) is Supporting the Implementation of Sustainable Social Protection Floors for the Workers and their Families in ASEAN - Phase III¹⁴. This project brings experiences and lessons from its previous phases, which focus on barriers to access to social security among workers and extending social security coverage to more workers, especially the self-employed and workers in rural areas, in Lao PDR. The project focuses on reducing administrative barriers to access. In addition, it also develops activities to increase countries' understanding and awareness about the importance of social protection to create conditions in the target country and the region to gradually build comprehensive sustainable social protection systems for all by increasing the system coverage and increasing its effectiveness and efficiency. The expected objective is that, "more women and men in Lao PDR, as well as other countries in the region, are covered by a more effective, efficient, sustainable and gender-sensitive social protection system".
11. The mid-term internal evaluation of the project was conducted in 2022. It focused on the technical aspect and would be a good source of secondary data for final evaluation.

Occupational Safety and Health

12. The ILO Korea partnership programme has supported OSH in the ASEAN countries since 2010. Major contribution of the ILO Korea partnership programme in the areas of OSH in Lao PDR include:

¹³ https://www.ilo.org/wcmsp5/groups/public/---asia/---ro-bangkok/documents/publication/wcms_811839.pdf

¹⁴ https://www.ilo.org/wcmsp5/groups/public/---asia/---ro-bangkok/documents/publication/wcms_811837.pdf
https://www.ilo.org/wcmsp5/groups/public/---dgreports/---exrel/documents/publication/wcms_360429.pdf

- 2010 Development of the 2nd National OSH Programme in Lao PDR (2011 – 2015)
- 2021-2 Development of the 2nd National OSH Profile

13. The *Establishing and implementing Occupational Safety and Health project* (2021 -2023) aims to enhance an overall occupational safety and health framework in Lao People's Democratic Republic. The project builds upon the experience of the ILO/Korea OSH project “Establishing and enhancing an overall Occupational Safety and Health framework in Myanmar and Lao People's Democratic Republic” and other OSH related projects and is aligned with the ILO's Flagship programme: SAFETY+HEALTH FOR ALL. The project design and implementation explore potential areas of collaboration with existing projects on OSH and social protection, other UN agencies and the country's national plan. In addition, the project strengthens cooperation with the Korean partner institution, Korea Occupational Safety and Health Agency (KOSHA), which is making its own budget contribution to the initiative.

Programme Management

14. The Programme management comprised of a CTA based at the ILO Regional Office for Asia and the Pacific (ROAP) in Bangkok, under the guidance of the Deputy Regional Director. The CTA of the ILO/Korea Partnership Programme coordinates and monitors the Programme implementation and reporting requirements, provides administrative and programme support, and liaises with the donor and the ILO relevant departments on related matters. A Programme Officer and an Administrative Secretary support the work of the CTA.
15. For implementation of the Programme's priority areas/projects, the ILO designates a lead specialist per priority area of the Programme to ensure that activities planned and outputs delivered under different projects are inter-related and well-coordinated with other initiatives at the country and regional levels, and support the achievements of regional outcomes and Decent Work Country Programmes (DWCPs). The lead specialists coordinate and mobilize support of other specialists in related disciplines (OSH, social protection, skills) for smooth delivery. Partner Institutions are advised on their counterparts for specific Programme areas and fully participate in planning and design of project activities. The lead specialists also coordinate with Decent Work Technical Support teams (DWTs), country offices and headquarters technical units for effective delivery of the Programmes.

Direct stakeholders

16. Direct stakeholders of the projects include:

Country	stakeholder	Skills	OSH	Social protection
Lao PDR	Social Security Organisation (LSSO)		X	X
	Ministry of Labour and Social Welfare (MOLSW)	X	X	X
	Ministry of Health			X
	Ministry of Finance			X

Country	stakeholder	Skills	OSH	Social protection
	Ministry of Information and Culture			X
	Ministry of Agriculture and Forestry			X
	Ministry of Home Affairs			X
	Commercial Bank			X
	Lao Federation of Trade Unions (LFTU)		X	X
	Lao National Chamber of Commerce Industry (LNCCI)		X	X
	Ministry of Education and Sports		X	
	Development Centre of Vientiane Capital		X	
Cambodia	Ministry of Labour and Vocational Training (MOLVT)	X		
ASEAN	ASEAN Secretariat	X	X	
	ASEAN TVET Council (ASEC)	X		
Korea partners	Human Resources Development Service of Korea (HRD Korea),	X		
	Korea University of Technology and Education (KOREATECH)	X		
	Korea Occupational Safety and Health Agency (KOSHA)		X	
	Korea Employment Information service (KEIS)			X
	Korea workers' Compensation and Welfare Service (COMWEL)			X

II. Purpose and Objectives of the Evaluation

17. The main purpose of the independent final evaluation is for accountability and learning for programme improvement. The evaluation will review the effectiveness, efficiency and impact orientations and sustainability of the overall ILO/Korea programme interventions. The evaluation will also examine the relevance of and future demands for the project interventions, as well as assess factors that have contributed to, or that are likely to contribute or impeded achievement. The aims of the programme evaluation is to draw out and document key lessons learnt as well as to provide a set of recommendations to inform future directions of the ILO/Korea programme and to inform better allocation of resources for the portfolio of the ILO/Korea partnership programme.
18. Specific objectives of the independent final cluster evaluation are to:
 - (i) Assess if there are changes in the needs and priorities of the national stakeholders and beneficiaries in the areas of OSH, skills and social protection and (new/existing) areas or components that should be strategically zeroed-in by the ILO Korea Partnership programme to optimize performance excellence.
 - (ii) Assess effectiveness and efficiency of the three ILO/Korea-funded Asia-Pacific Regional projects, including the progress in achieving results vis-à-vis their original plans, the challenges affecting the achievement of the results, factors that hindered or facilitated achievement so far, and effectiveness of management arrangements;

- (iii) Identify both internal and external factors that (positively and negatively; currently and potentially) contribute to or constrain the achievement of the projects' outcomes and objectives, and assess performance of the three projects, and the technical backstopping support, using a Strengths-Weaknesses-Opportunities-Threats (SWOT) analysis
- (iv) Identify factors that influenced (positively or negatively) the sustainability of the outputs delivered by the three ILO/Korea-funded Asia-Pacific Regional projects;
- (v) Identify lessons learned that need to be considered in the design and implementation of similar projects and the ILO Korea partnership programme.
- (vi) Identify good practices at the Programme and project levels that should be replicated; and
- (vii) To conduct comparative analysis on how well has each project comparatively performed.
- (viii) To assess the extent to which gender equality and non-discrimination were addressed and mainstreamed in the design and in the implementation of the ILO/Korea projects

III. Evaluation Scope

- 19. The evaluation will cover the three priority areas administered by ROAP and implementation of all three-funded Asia-Pacific Regional projects. The evaluation will cover all the geographic coverage of the three projects, including Cambodia, Lao PDR and ASEAN.
- 20. The final evaluation findings, conclusions and recommendations will be primarily addressed to the primary clients of this evaluation as follows: the ILO/Korea Partnership Programme team, ROAP, DWT-Bangkok, and MoEL/ROK. Secondary clients are tripartite constituents, the project counterparts, and partner institutions in Korea.

IV. Evaluation Criteria and Questions

- 21. The evaluation should address the following ILO evaluation criteria: relevance and strategic fit of the intervention; coherence; efficiency of resource use; and effectiveness of management arrangements and impact and Sustainability; as defined in the ILO policy guidelines for results-based evaluation: Principles, rationale, planning and managing for evaluations, 4th ed., (Nov 2020)
- 22. The core ILO cross-cutting priorities, such as gender equality and non-discrimination, promotion of international labour standards, tripartite processes, and constituent capacity development should be considered in this evaluation. In particular, gender dimension will be considered as a cross-cutting concern throughout the methodology, deliverables and final report of the evaluation. To the extent possible, data collection and analysis should be disaggregated by sex as described in the ILO Evaluation Policy Guidelines and relevant Guidance Notes (Annex 1).

23. It is expected that the evaluation address all of the questions detailed below to the extent possible. The evaluator may adapt the evaluation criteria and questions, but any fundamental changes should be agreed upon between the ILO team and the evaluator. The evaluation instruments (to be summarized in the inception report) should identify the general areas of focus listed here as well as other priority aspects to be addressed in the evaluation.

24. Suggested evaluation criteria and evaluation questions are summarized below:

Relevance

- To what extent and how well have the ILO/Korea projects responded to the needs and priorities of the national stakeholders and social partners, and beneficiaries?
- How unique were the ILO/Korea projects supported by the ILO Korea partnership programme to partner government priorities, as well as the need of social partners and beneficiaries (as compared with other ILO projects)?
- Are the areas of focus of the ILO/Korea projects the most demanding areas?
- Are there any other areas (within OSH, social protection and SKILLS) that are more in-demand, and therefore should have received more attention/support/funding (as they are important but are under-resourced) as viewed by national stakeholders?
- What are the priority areas of interventions /components (within OSH, social protection and SKILLS) for the TVET policy, OSH policy and social protection policy that should be zeroed in and why?

Coherence and strategic fit of the intervention

- To what extent has the ILO/Korea projects leveraged synergies and partnerships (among the ILO/Korea Programme-supported projects, Korea partner institutions, and other ILO programs/projects, constituents, other donors, Government, social partners, national institutions, and other UN/development agencies) to enhance the projects' effectiveness and impact and maximize its contribution to realize decent work goals?
- To what extent and how well do the ILO/Korea projects complement and fit with the policies, programmes and/or priorities of the constituents?

Effectiveness

- To what extent have the ILO/Korea projects been making sufficient progress towards their planned results?
- What are the contributing and impeding factors (*both internal and external factors*,) that affect (or may affect) the performance and effectiveness of the ILO/Korea projects?
- How well have (or how could) these issues been addressed?

Effectiveness of management arrangement

- What are the management issues (both internal and external management) that affected the performance of the ILO/Korea projects?
- Identify the Strengths-Weaknesses-Opportunities-Threats of each of the projects and the ILO/Korea partnership programme (Based on SWOT analysis that analyses all criteria and factors that are identified under this evaluation (both external and internal))

- To what extent are the tripartite constituents and the project counterparts satisfied with the services and deliverables and outputs delivered by each of the ILO/Korea projects and why?
- Has the ILO/Korea projects collected information/data that help track/capture the relevant gender concerns? Is information being collected and analysed to help assess the different effects of an intervention on both men and women?

Efficiency of resource use

- Have resources (funds, human resources, time, expertise, etc.) been allocated strategically to achieve expected results within the ILO/Korea projects? Could they have been allocated more effectively and if so, how?
- Are there any duplications of efforts with other projects run by ILO and other partners?
- Have the resources been used efficiently? Are there any ways to make the ILO/Korea projects more efficient and effective?

Impact

- To what extent and how well have the ILO/Korea projects resulted in changes in policies and legislations/ regulations as well as improved service provisions in the target countries?
- How well have the ILO Korea projects delivered impact or had high impact oriented intervention?

Sustainability

- How effective have the ILO/Korea projects been in establishing and fostering national/local ownership?
- How likely will the results be sustained beyond the current ILO/Korea projects through the action of Government and other stakeholders? Are there any factors that constrained their ability to do so?

Gender equality and non-discrimination

- To what extent have gender equality and non-discrimination been addressed in the design and in the implementation of the ILO/Korea projects? What are practical actions that could be done to improve gender equality and non-discrimination?

V. Methodology

26. The evaluation will comply with evaluation norms, standards and follow ethical safeguards, as specified in the ILO's evaluation procedures. The ILO adheres to the United Nations system of evaluation norms and standards as well as to the OECD/DAC Evaluation Quality Standards.¹⁵
27. A mix-method (both qualitative and quantitative evaluation approaches) should be used for this evaluation. Secondary data such as the ILO DC dashboard and mid term internal evaluation reports of the SKILL and social protection projects can serve good data sources. Quantitative online surveys may be conducted. Qualitative information will be obtained from key informant interviews and focus group discussions as appropriate. Attempts should be made to collect data from different sources by different methods for each evaluation question and findings be triangulated to draw valid and reliable

¹⁵ <https://www.oecd.org/dac/evaluation/revised-evaluation-criteria-dec-2019.pdf>

conclusions. Data shall be disaggregated by sex where possible and appropriate. The evaluation fieldwork will be participatory in nature. The participatory nature of the evaluation will contribute to the sense of ownership among stakeholders.

28. **A SWOT analysis should be executed to assess performance of the three projects, whereas comparative analysis be conducted to compare the performance of the three projects. The comparative analysis should be articulated clearly in the evaluation report using a matrix or other effective data visualization technique.**
29. A detailed gender-responsive methodology, tools and data analysis will be elaborated by the independent evaluator on the basis of this ToR. The detailed methodology should include key and sub-question(s), detailed methods, data collection instruments and data analysis plans and data presentation techniques to be presented as a key element in the inception report.
30. The gender dimension should be considered as a cross-cutting concern throughout the methodology, deliverables and final report of the evaluation. In terms of this evaluation, this implies involving both men and women in the consultation, evaluation analysis and evaluation team. Moreover the evaluators should review data and information that is disaggregated by sex and gender and assess the relevance and effectiveness of gender-related strategies and outcomes to improve the lives of women and men. All this information should be accurately included in the inception report and evaluation report.

VI. Main Deliverables

31. The evaluators will provide the following deliverables and tasks:

Deliverable 1: Inception report. The inception report will include among other elements the evaluation questions and data collection methodologies and techniques, including SWOT and comparative analysis, and the evaluation tools (interview, guides, self-administered questionnaires, etc.). The instrument needs to make provision for the triangulation of data where possible. The evaluators will prepare an inception report as per the ILO Checklist 4.8: Writing the inception report (Annex 1).

Deliverable 2: Stakeholder workshop. The evaluators will conduct an online internal debriefing and an online stakeholder workshop with all project stakeholders, to validate information and data collected through various methods and to share the preliminary findings. Evaluation findings should be based on facts, evidence and data. This precludes relying exclusively upon anecdotes, hearsay and unverified opinions. Findings should be specific, concise and supported by triangulation of quantitative and qualitative information derived from various sources to ensure reliability, validity and generalizability.

Deliverable 3: First draft evaluation report. Evaluation report should include action-oriented, practical and specific recommendations assigning or designating audiences/implementers/users. The draft evaluation report should be prepared as per the ILO Checklist 4.2: Preparing the Evaluation Report which will be provided to the evaluators. It should address all evaluation question and explicit crossover analysis of satisfaction of the projects using appropriate data

presentation techniques. The first draft evaluation report will be improved by incorporating evaluation manager's comments and inputs.

Deliverable 4: Final evaluation report with evaluation summary. The evaluators will incorporate comments received from ILO and other key stakeholders into the final report. The report should not exceed 60 pages in length. The report should be finalized as per the ILO Checklist 4.2: Preparing the Evaluation Report which will be provided to the evaluators. The quality of the report and evaluation summary will be assessed against the ILO Checklists 4.9 (Annex 1).

32. The reports and all other outputs of the evaluation must be produced in English. All draft and final reports including other supporting documents, analytical reports, and raw data should be provided in electronic version compatible with WORD for windows. Ownership of the data from the evaluation rests jointly between ILO and ILO consultants. The copy rights of the evaluation report rest exclusively with the ILO. Key stakeholders can make appropriate use of the evaluation report in line with the original purpose and with appropriate acknowledgement.

VII. Management Arrangements and Workplan

33. The evaluation manager who has no prior involvement in the project will manage this independent evaluation with oversight provided by the ILO Evaluation Office. An international consultant will be commissioned to conduct this evaluation. The evaluation will be funded from the ILO/Korea Partnership Programme budget. A list of tasks of the evaluation manager is following:
 - Draft and finalize the evaluation TOR upon receiving inputs from key stakeholders;
 - Reviewing CV and proposals of the proposed evaluators;
 - Providing project background documents to the evaluators;
 - Coordinate with the project team on the field visit agenda of the evaluators;
 - Briefing the evaluation consultant on ILO evaluation procedures;
 - Circulating the report to all concerned for their comments;
 - Reviewing and providing comments of the draft evaluation report; and
 - Consolidate comments and send them back to the evaluators.
34. The ILO/Korea programme management team and relevant ILO officials will handle administrative contractual arrangements with the evaluator and provide any logistical and other assistance as required. The ILO/Korea programme management team and relevant ILO officials will be responsible for the following tasks:
 - Provide project background materials to the evaluators;
 - Prepare a list of recommended interviewees;
 - Schedule meetings for field visits and coordinating in-country logistical arrangements;

- Be interviewed and provided inputs as requested by the evaluator during the evaluation process;
 - Review and provide comments on the draft evaluation reports;
 - Organize and participate in the stakeholder workshops; and
 - Provide logistical and administrative support to the evaluator, including travel arrangements (e.g. plane and hotel reservations, purchasing plane tickets, providing per diem) and all materials needed to provide all deliverables.
35. The evaluation team reports to the evaluation manager. The international consultant will be assisted by translator/national consultant in Lao PDR and Cambodia, selected through a competitive process from qualified consultants. The international consultant will lead the evaluation and will be responsible for delivering the above evaluation deliverables using a combination of methods as mentioned above.
36. The international consultant will have final responsibility for above described deliverables. He/she will be assisted by the national consultants (nationals of Lao PDR and Cambodia). ToR of national consultant can be seen in Annex 2.
37. Indicative time frame and responsibilities

	Task	Responsible person	Indicative Time frame
1	Preparation, sharing and finalization of the TOR	Evaluation Manager	5 – 17 May 2023
2	Approval of the TOR	Evaluation Manager/	17 May 2023
3	TOR Advertisement	Regional Evaluation Officer (REO)	17 May – 31 May
4	Issuance of contracts	ILO/Korea Programme Management Team	7 Jul 2023
5	Brief evaluators on ILO evaluation policy and the project	Evaluation Manager	7 Jul 2023
6	Draft mission itinerary for the evaluator and the list of key stakeholders to be interviewed	ILO/Korea Programme CTA	4 Jul 2023
7	Document review and development of the inception report submitted to Evaluation Manager	Evaluator	7 -20 July 2023
8	Inception report approved	Evaluation Manager	23 July 2023
9	Interview and data collection	Evaluators	24 July - 15 August
10	Stakeholder validation workshop	Evaluators+stakeholders	W3 of August 2023
11	Draft report submitted to Evaluation Manager	Evaluators	15 -31 August 2023
12	Sharing the draft report with all concerned stakeholders for comments	Evaluation Manager	1-10 Sept 2023
13	Consolidated comments on the draft report and send to the evaluator	Evaluation Manager	10 Sept 2023
14	Finalization of the report and submission to Evaluation Manager	Evaluators	11-20 Sept 2023
15	Review and approval of the final report	Evaluation Manager, REO, and Evaluation Office	30 Sept 2023

VIII. Required Qualifications and Duration

39. An international consultant /Team leader.

Desired skills and competencies:

- No previous involvement in the delivery of the 2021-2023 ILO/Korea programme funded activities;
- University Degree with minimum 10 years of strong and substantial experience in project /programme evaluations;
- An evaluation expert in development field with demonstrated technical expertise in evaluation methodologies including using Strengths-Weaknesses-Opportunities-Threats (SWOT) analysis and previous proven skills and experience in undertaking evaluations of similar projects/programmes;
- Extensive experience in conducting programme-level, thematic evaluation, and corporate evaluations, and evaluation related to organizational and institutional capacity building;
- Experience in conducting evaluations on at least two of the following subject matters : (1) skills recognition arrangement and TVET policy, (2) social protection system strengthening, and/or (3) OSH policy.
- Extensive knowledge of, and experience in applying, qualitative and quantitative research methodologies;
- Excellent analytical skills and communication skills;
- Demonstrated excellent report writing skills in English;
- Knowledge of ILO's roles and mandate and its tripartite structure as well as UN evaluation norms and its programming is desirable;
- Experience in at least two programme areas in which the ILO/Korea programme is currently supporting will be an advantage; and
- Working experience in Southeast Asia will be an advantage.

40. Below are indicative inputs and tasks to be completed. Numbers of days foreseen for experts in one task can be reallocated to another task where justified and in consultation with the evaluation manager.

Tasks	International Evaluator /Team Leader
Desk review of programs' related documents; Skype briefing with CTA, ILO specialists and other stakeholders ; Prepare inception report	11
Conduct field visits to Vientiane, Phnom Penh, and Bangkok; and conduct (face to face, online) interviews with identified programs' staff, stakeholders, and beneficiaries; conduct one national stakeholder workshop	15

Tasks	International Evaluator /Team Leader
Analysis of data based on desk review, field visit, interviews/questionnaires with stakeholders; write a draft report	8
Finalize the report including explanations on why comments were not included.	2
Total	36

IX. Terms of payment

25% (plus DSA+Airfare)	Upon ILO's approval of inception report
50%	Upon ILO's approval of the submitted draft IFE report AND completion of stakeholder validation workshop
25%	Upon ILO Evaluation Office (HQ) approval of the submitted final report and evaluation summary , and other specified deliverables

X. Legal and Ethical Matters

42. The evaluation will comply with UN Norms and Standards. The ToR is accompanied by the code of conduct for carrying out the evaluations. UNEG ethical guidelines will be followed. It is important that the evaluator has no links to project management or any other conflict of interest that would interfere with the independence of evaluation.

Annex 1: All relevant ILO policies and guidelines

- [1. Guidance Note 1.3: Procedure and Tools for Evaluability](#)
- [2. Checklist 4.8 Writing the inception report](#)
- [3. Checklist 4.2 Preparing the evaluation report](#)
- [4. Checklist 4.9 Rating the quality of evaluation report](#)
- [5. Protocol on collecting evaluative evidence on the ILO's Covid-19 response measures through project and programme evaluations](#)
- [6. Guidance note 4.5 Stakeholders participation in the ILO evaluation](#)
- [7. Guidance note 3.1. Integrating gender equality in M&E](#)
- [8. Guidance Note 3.2: Adapting evaluation methods to the ILO's normative and tripartite mandate](#)
- [9. Code of conduct form \(To be signed by the evaluator\)](#)
- [10. UNEG integrating Human Rights and Gender Equality in evaluations](#)
- [11. United Nations Evaluation Group. 2008. *Ethical Guidelines for Evaluation in the UN System*](#)
- [12. United Nations Evaluation Group. 2014. *Integrating Human Rights and Gender Equality in Evaluations*](#)
- [13. United Nations Evaluation Group. 2016. *Norms and Standards for Evaluation*](#)
- [14. United Nations Evaluation Group. 2018. *UN-SWAP Evaluation Performance Indicator - Technical Note and Scorecard*](#)

15. [ILO policy guidelines for results-based evaluation: Principles, rationale, planning and managing for evaluations, 4th ed., \(Nov 2020\)](#)

Annex 2: Direct stakeholders

The Direct stakeholders of the three projects include:

Country	Stakeholder	Skills	Social protection	OSH
Lao PDR	Lao Social Security Organisation (LSSO)		X	
	Ministry of Labour and Social Welfare (MOLSW)	X	X	X
	Ministry of Health		X	
	Ministry of Finance		X	
	Ministry of Information and Culture		X	
	Ministry of Agriculture and Forestry		X	
	Ministry of Home Affairs		X	
	Commercial Bank		X	
	Lao Federation of Trade Unions (LFTU)		X	X
	Lao National Chamber of Commerce Industry (LNCCI)		X	X
	Ministry of Education and Sports			X
	Development Centre of Vientiane Capital			X
Cambodia	Ministry of Labour and Vocational Training (MOLVT)	X		
ASEAN	ASEAN Secretariat	X		X
	ASEAN TVET Council (ASEC)	X		
Korea partners	Human Resources Development Service of Korea (HRD Korea),	X		
	Korea University of Technology and Education (KOREATECH)	X		
	Korea Occupational Safety and Health Agency (KOSHA)			X
	Korea Employment Information service (KEIS)		X	
	Korea workers' Compensation and Welfare Service (COMWEL)		X	

Annex 3: M&E Frameworks for the three Projects

Summaries of the M&E Framework's/Log Frames of the three projects are included here for reference. The complete Log Frames are to be found in the respective PRODOCS.

Annex 3A: Skills project:

Outcomes and Outputs	Activities
Outcome 1: Enhanced mutual recognition of skills system in ASEAN piloted and agreed for future scaling up	
1.1 MRS pilot implementation in the CLM countries completed as per roadmap On schedule Cambodia	Activity 1.1.1 Review and benchmarking of assessment, certification and accreditation systems in CLM countries
1.2 Improved implementation mechanism for MRS and other ASEAN skills recognition initiatives agreed within regional meeting to share lessons learned and key challenges from the MRS pilot implementation	Activity 1.2.1 Regional Skills Technical Working Group and Sectoral Skills Technical Working Group meetings are organized
1.3 Development of a common framework for a regional mechanism(s) of skills recognition through partnership between the MRS and other related skills recognition initiatives in ASEAN	Activity 1.2.2 (better: 1.3.1) Initiate and form a collaborative framework(s) by which the procedures, template, instruments and tools are consolidated resulting in a common tool and guidance note for the MRS processes in ASEAN
Outcome 2: Improved and enhanced digital learning and skills recognition infrastructure in CLM to ensure employability for people affected by the economic impacts of COVID-19, including women, youth, migrant workers, and disadvantaged workers	
2.1 Digitalization of skills assessment and certifications adequately mainstreamed in national plan for greater outreach for vulnerable populations	Activity 2.1.1 Rapid policy and system review of TVET and skill system to identify barriers and potential for digitalisation of skills assessments to meet future skills needs and promote Life Long Learning for migrant workers and other vulnerable populations
	Activity 2.1.2 Technical assistance provided to mainstream digitalisation of skills assessments into national plans for greater outreach to migrant workers and vulnerable populations
	Activity 2.1.3 Pilot implementation of skill assessments and basic digital training course to women, migrant workers, youth and the disadvantaged
2.2 Blended vocational training, certification tools and packages are designed and piloted in priority occupations	Activity 2.2.1 Guideline developed to support stakeholders to transform existing vocational training packages into blended vocational training packages
	Activity 2.2.2 Development of selected modular blended vocational training packages for the selected occupations
2.3 Online skills assessment and certification tools and packages are designed and piloted in priority occupations	Activity 2.3.1 Guideline developed to support stakeholders to transform existing Recognition of Prior Learning assessment packages into blended Recognition of Prior Learning assessment packages.
	Activity 2.3.2 Development of selected modular blended Recognition of Prior Learning assessment packages for the selected occupations

Outcome 3: Strengthened mechanisms and forward looking frameworks to enhance partnerships, regional dialogue and knowledge sharing on skills recognition, skills digitization and other future of work related aspects in place for the ASEAN	
3.1 Report/toolkit on the digitization of TVET and skills system for ASEAN countries development/ produced.	<p>Activity 3.1.1 Documentation and sharing of regional research, tools comparative compilations and policy notes to raise awareness and understand among the key stakeholders within the region</p> <p>Activity 3.1.2 Regional meetings and TVET forum discussion on skills digitization conducted to compile trends and best practices in the region</p>
3.2 New partnerships, action plans, and MOUS established with key partners such as HRD Korea, KOREATECH, NILE, ASEAN TVET Council, ASEAN-Korea TVET, BNSP, IMT-GT.	Activity 3.2.1 Interactive discussions on the current status of skills system in ASEAN and in forming collaboration framework among AMS and partners in quality assurance of competency certification systems, such as the formation of a regional recognition mechanism(s) for certified skilled workers+

Annex 3B: Social Protection project:

Outcomes and Outputs	Activities
Outcome 1: Comprehensive and sustainable social protection for all with increased coverage in Lao PDR	
1.1 Strategies to increase coverage among workers in registered enterprises and self-employed workers are developed	<p>Activity 1.1.1. Analysis of the coverage gaps and access barriers among workers in registered enterprises and self-employed workers</p> <p>Activity 1.1.2. Analysis of possible amendments to the Social Security Law with a view to increase coverage</p> <p>Activity 1.1.3. Capacity building including exchange of information and experiences from other countries on increasing coverage among hard-to-reach populations and informal workers and increasing compliance</p>
1.2 Understanding of the financial ecosystem for social security contribution and benefit payments enhanced	<p>Activity 1.2.1. Analysis of existing and potential payment mechanisms and their extension to all groups of workers in urban and remote areas</p> <p>Activity 1.2.2. Capacity building including exchange of experiences and good practices from other countries</p>
1.3 Awareness of the benefits of social security and NSSF enhanced	<p>Activity 1.3.1. Capacity building and advocacy training for worker and employer representatives on social protection</p> <p>Activity 1.3.2. Dedicated information and communication campaigns to promote NSSF enrolment among workers and enterprises</p>
Outcome 2: Better understanding and increased awareness on the importance of social protection	
2.1 Comprehensive knowledge of social protection is built based on producing effective technical materials and developing partnerships and shared through the activities of a Centre of Excellence for international dialogue in Employment Insurance in Asia and Pacific	<p>Activity 2.1.1 Organise a regional seminar to share knowledge and best practice on social protection</p> <p>Activity 2.1.2 Develop regional knowledge products in the area of SP under the umbrella of the Centre of Excellency</p> <p>Activity 2.1.3 Facilitate consultations and discussions on expansion and reform of employment protection in the region</p>
2.2 Capacity of members of government institutions and social partners is increased through training programmes supported by the Project	Activity 2.2.1 Organise a training seminar on the social protection in collaboration with partner institutions in Korea and ITCILO
2.3 Technical assistance is provided to countries in ASEAN on an individual basis	Activity 2.3.1 Provide individual countries with technical assistance based on the countries' demands and situations

Annex 3C: OSH project:

Outcomes and Outputs	Activities
Outcome 1: : National OSH system is strengthened in Lao PDR through development of promotional framework	
1.1 Legal framework on OSH is developed	<p>Activity 1.1.1 Provide technical assistance in drafting OSH regulations</p> <p>Activity 1.1.2 Provide technical support to organizing tripartite consultations with social partners and other agencies</p>
1.2 Recording and notification system of occupational accidents and diseases is established	<p>Activity 1.2.1 Conduct mapping and gap analysis for current recording and notification system</p> <p>Activity 1.2.2 Establish coordination mechanism among agencies and organizations which are engaged in the collection of occupational accident and disease data including those in social security system in Lao PDR</p> <p>Activity 1.2.3 Develop a road map for an improved recording and notification system</p>
1.3 National OHS programme is developed	<p>Activity 1.3.1 Support the MoLSW and National OSH Committee to identify and set priorities for the national OSH programme, based on the national OSH profile</p> <p>Activity 1.3.2 Support the MoLSW and National OSH Committee to draft the national OSH programme of Lao PDR</p> <p>Activity 1.3.3 Assist the MoLSW and National OSH Committee to organize the tripartite verification workshop</p> <p>Activity 1.3.4: Support the MoLSW and National OSH Committee to launch and publish the national OSH programme</p>
Outcome 2: Awareness, knowledge and skills on OSH at the national and enterprise levels are strengthened	
2.1 Capacity of national OSH committee members and stakeholders in Lao PDR is strengthened	Activity 2.1.1 Organise capacity building training workshops for OSH inspectors, national OSH committee members and other stakeholders on Safety and Health
2.2 Capacity on OSH in pilot enterprises is enhanced	Activity 2.2.1: Organise training on OSH risk assessment in the selected enterprises
2.3 Good practices on OSH are widely shared and disseminated in the ASEAN countries	<p>Activity 2.3.1: Training programmes, workshops or fellowships on OSH for ASEAN tripartite constituents are supported by the project through the cooperation with KOSHA.</p> <p>Activity 2.3.2: Technical consultative panels or advisors from KOSHA for the development of OSH programme are provided</p>

Annex 4: Data Collection Worksheet

Below is the Data Collection Worksheet specifying the Evaluation Criteria and Questions, as well as the sources of data, stakeholder interviews and specific methods used in the present final independent evaluation (Source: Inception Report, 25 August 2022).

Evaluation Criteria and Questions	Sources of Data	Stakeholder Interviews	Specific Methods
A. Relevance and Strategic Fit			
1) To what extent and how well have the ILO/Korea projects responded to the needs and priorities of the national stakeholders and social partners, and beneficiaries?	PRODOCs, MTEs, Policies of Governments and of Social Partners	Tripartite Constituents, ROAP/DWT, Project Team, ILO CO's, ILO HQ, Donor, Implementing partners	Documents review & Stakeholder Interviews
2) How unique were the ILO/Korea projects supported by the ILO Korea partnership programme to partner government priorities, as well as the need of social partners and beneficiaries (as compared with other ILO projects)?	PRODOCs, MTEs, Policies of Governments and of Social Partners, ILO-DWCPs, CPO & P&B, UNSDCFs, SDGs	Tripartite Constituents, ROAP/DWT, Project Team, ILO CO's, ILO HQ, Donor, Implementing partners	Documents review & Stakeholder Interviews
3) Are the areas of focus of the ILO/Korea projects the most demanding areas?	PRODOCs, MTEs, ILO-DWCPs, UNSDCFs	Tripartite Constituents, ROAP/DWT, Project Team, ILO CO's, ILO HQ, Donor, Implementing partners	Documents review & Stakeholder Interviews
4) Are there any other areas (within OSH, social protection and SKILLS) that are more in-demand, and therefore should have received more attention/support/funding (as they are important but are under-resourced) as viewed by national stakeholders?	PRODOCs, MTEs, Policies of Governments and of Social Partners, ILO/Korea Arrangement, Evaluations of previous phases of the Programme, ILO-DWCPs, UNSDCFs	Tripartite Constituents, ROAP/DWT, Project Team, ILO CO's, ILO HQ, Donor, Implementing partners	Documents review & Stakeholder Interviews
5) What are the priority areas of interventions /components (within OSH, social protection and SKILLS) for the TVET policy, OSH policy and social protection policy that should be zeroed in and why?	PRODOCs, MTEs, Policies of Governments and of Social Partners, ILO-DWCPs, UNSDCFs	Tripartite Constituents, ROAP/DWT, Project Team, ILO CO's, ILO HQ, Donor	Documents review & Stakeholder Interviews
B. Coherence (including Validity of Design)			
6) To what extent has the ILO/Korea projects leveraged synergies and partnerships (among the ILO/Korea Programme-supported projects, Korea partner institutions, and other ILO programs/projects, constituents, other donors, Government, social partners, national institutions, and other UN/development agencies) to enhance the projects' effectiveness and impact and maximize its contribution to realize decent work goals?	PRODOCs, TPRs, MTEs, ILO-DWCPs, UNSDCFs, ILO/Korea Arrangement, Evaluations of previous phases of the Programme	ROAP/DWT, Project Team, ILO CO's, ILO HQ, Donor, Tripartite Constituents	Documents review & Stakeholder Interviews
7) To what extent and how well do the ILO/Korea projects complement and fit with the policies, programmes and/or priorities of the constituents? <i>(overlaps with Question No. 1)</i>	See EQ. 1	See EQ. 1	See EQ. 1
8) With the benefit of hindsight, was the project design appropriate? What	PRODOCs and M&E Frameworks,	ROAP/DWT, Project Team, ILO CO's, ILO	Documents review &

would you change? (<i>additional question</i>)		HQ, Donor, Tripartite Constituents, Implementing partners	Stakeholder Interviews
C. Effectiveness			
9) To what extent have the ILO/Korea projects been making sufficient progress towards their planned results?	TPRs, MTEs, Project products, Minutes of ECM and other key meetings	ROAP/DWT, Project Team, ILO CO's, ILO HQ, Donor, Tripartite Constituents, Implementing partners	Documents review, Stakeholder Interviews & Field visit
10) What are the contributing and impeding factors (both internal and external factors,) that affect (or may affect) the performance and effectiveness of the ILO/Korea projects?	TPRs, MTEs, Project products, Minutes of ECM and other key meetings	ROAP/DWT, Project Team, ILO CO's, ILO HQ, Donor, Tripartite Constituents, Implementing partners	Documents review, Stakeholder Interviews & Field visit
11) How well have (or how could) these issues been addressed?	TPRs, MTEs, Project products, Minutes of ECM and other key meetings	ROAP/DWT, Project Team, ILO CO's, ILO HQ, Donor, Tripartite Constituents, Implementing partners	Documents review, Stakeholder Interviews & Field visit
D. Effectiveness of Management Arrangements			
12) What are the management issues (both internal and external management) that affected the performance of the ILO/Korea projects?	TPRs, MTEs, Project products, Minutes of ECM and other key meetings	ROAP/DWT, Project Team, ILO CO's, ILO HQ, Donor, Tripartite Constituents, Implementing partners	Documents review, Stakeholder Interviews & Field visit
13) Identify the <u>Strengths-Weaknesses-Opportunities-Threats</u> of each of the projects and the ILO/Korea partnership programme (Based on SWOT analysis that analyses all criteria and factors that are identified under this evaluation (both external and internal))	TPRs, MTEs, Project products, Minutes of ECM and other key meetings, UNSDCF's	ROAP/DWT, Project Team, ILO CO's, ILO HQ, Donor, Tripartite Constituents, Implementing partners	Documents review, Stakeholder Interviews & Field visit
14) To what extent are the tripartite constituents and the project counterparts satisfied with the services and deliverables and outputs delivered by each of the ILO/Korea projects and why?	TPRs, MTEs, Project products, Minutes of ECM and other key meetings	ROAP/DWT, Project Team, ILO CO's, ILO HQ, Donor, Tripartite Constituents, Implementing partners	Documents review, Stakeholder Interviews & Field visit
15) Have the ILO/Korea projects collected information/data that help track/capture the relevant gender concerns? Is information being collected and analysed to help assess the different effects of an intervention on both men and women? In how far did the project integrate the criteria of the UN-SWAP on Gender Equality and Empowerment of Women (GEEW)? (cf. UNEG 2018).	TPRs, MTEs, Project products, Minutes of ECM and other key meetings	ROAP/DWT, Project Team, ILO CO's, ILO HQ, Donor, Tripartite Constituents, Implementing partners	Documents review, Stakeholder Interviews & Field visit
E. Efficiency of Resource Use			
16) Have resources (funds, human resources, time, expertise, etc.) been allocated strategically to achieve expected results within the ILO/Korea projects? Could they have been allocated more effectively and if so, how?	Financial Reports, TPRs, MTEs, Project products, Minutes of ECM and other key meetings	ROAP/DWT, Project Team, ILO CO's, ILO HQ, Donor, Tripartite Constituents	Review of Financial Reports & Stakeholder Interviews
17) Are there any duplications of efforts with other projects run by ILO and other partners?	TPRs, MTEs	ROAP/DWT, Project Team, ILO CO's, ILO HQ	Review of Financial Reports & Stakeholder Interviews

18) Have the resources been used efficiently? Are there any ways to make the ILO/Korea projects more efficient and effective?	Financial Reports, TPRs, MTEs, Project products, Minutes of ECM and other key meetings	ROAP/DWT, Project Team, ILO CO's, ILO HQ, Donor, Tripartite Constituents	Review of Financial Reports & Stakeholder Interviews
F. Impact			
19) To what extent and how well have the ILO/Korea projects resulted in changes in policies and legislations/regulations as well as improved service provisions in the target countries?	TPRs, MTEs, Project products, Minutes of ECM and other key meetings	ROAP/DWT, Project Team, ILO CO's, ILO HQ, Donor, Tripartite Constituents, Implementing partners	Documents review, Stakeholder Interviews & Field visit
20) How well have the ILO Korea projects delivered impact or had high impact oriented intervention?	TPRs, MTEs, Project products, Minutes of ECM and other key meetings	ROAP/DWT, Project Team, ILO CO's, ILO HQ, Donor, Tripartite Constituents, Implementing partners	Documents review, Stakeholder Interviews & Field visit
G. Sustainability			
21) How effective have the ILO/Korea projects been in establishing and fostering national/local ownership?	TPRs, MTEs, Project products, Minutes of ECM and other key meetings	ROAP/DWT, Project Team, ILO CO's, ILO HQ, Donor, Tripartite Constituents, Implementing partners	Documents review, Stakeholder Interviews & Field visit
22) How likely will the results be sustained beyond the current ILO/Korea projects through the action of Government and other stakeholders? Are there any factors that constrained their ability to do so?	TPRs, MTEs, Project products, Minutes of ECM and other key meetings	ROAP/DWT, Project Team, ILO CO's, ILO HQ, Donor, Tripartite Constituents, Implementing partners	Documents Review & Stakeholder Interviews
H. ILO Cross-cutting themes, in particular Gender Equality and Non-Discrimination			
23) To what extent have gender equality and non-discrimination been addressed in the design and in the implementation of the ILO/Korea projects? What are practical actions that could be done to improve gender equality and non-discrimination? In how far did the project integrate the criteria of the UN-SWAP on GEEW? (cf. UNEG 2018).	TPRs, MTEs, Project products, Minutes of ECM and other key meetings	ROAP/DWT, Project Team, ILO CO's, ILO HQ, Donor, Tripartite Constituents, Implementing partners	Documents review, Stakeholder Interviews & Field visit
24) To what extent have other cross-cutting themes been addressed in the design and in the implementation of the ILO/Korea projects, including ILS, tripartism and social dialogue, and a just transition to environmental sustainability? (<i>additional question</i>)	TPRs, MTEs, Project products, Minutes of ECM and other key meetings	ROAP/DWT, Project Team, ILO CO's, ILO HQ, Donor, Tripartite Constituents, Implementing partners	Documents review, Stakeholder Interviews & Field visit

Annex 5: Data Collection Schedule

The Table below includes the List of Stakeholders Interviewed as well as the Data Collection Schedule:

Date/Time	Participants	Meeting Venue/ Contact	Remarks
Virtual Data Collection			
Tuesday, 18 July 2023 – Virtual data collection – Amsterdam			
08.00 – 08.50	Ms Marielle Phe Goursat Chief Technical Adviser – Social Protection, ILO	Location: Bangkok, Thailand Email: goursat@ilo.org Amsterdam time: 08.00 – 08.50 Bangkok time: 13.00 – 13.50	Social protection confirmed
09.00 – 09.50	<i>Project team “Enhancing and Implementing Occupational Safety and Health Standards in Lao PDR”</i> Ms Yuka Ujita Senior Specialist on OSH	Location: Bangkok, Thailand Email: ujita@ilo.org Amsterdam time: 09.00 – 09.50 Bangkok time: 14.00 – 14.50	OSH confirmed
10.00 – 10.50	Mr Jo Hyungkyu Director Korea Workers Compensation & Welfare Service (COMWEL)	Location: Seoul, Korea Email: sthkjhk@kcomwel.or.kr Amsterdam time: 10.00 – 10.50 Seoul time: 17.00 -17.50	Social protection confirmed
Wednesday, 19 July 2023 – Virtual data collection - Amsterdam			
09.00 – 09.50	Dr (Ms.) Manivone Thikeo External consultant	Location: Vientiane, Lao PDR Email: mthikeo@yahoo.com Tel: +856 20 5953 6080 Amsterdam time: 09.00 – 09.50 Vientiane time: 14.00 -14.50	OSH confirmed
10.00 – 10.50	<i>Project team “Supporting the implementation of sustainable social protection floors for the workers and their families in ASEAN Phase III”</i> Mr Markus Ruck Specialist on Social Protection	Location: Bangkok, Thailand Email: ruck@ilo.org Amsterdam time: 10.00 – 10.50 Bangkok time: 15.00 – 15.50	Social protection confirmed
15.00 – 15.50	Ms. Justine Tillier Programme and Operations Officer, LABADMIN/OSH, ILO	Location: Geneva, Switzerland Email: tillier@ilo.org Amsterdam time: 15.00 – 15.50 Geneva time: 15.00 – 15.50	OSH confirmed
Thursday, 20 July 2023 – Virtual data collection - Amsterdam			

Date/Time	Participants	Meeting Venue/ Contact	Remarks
09.00 – 09.50	Mr Jajoon Coue Specialist on International Labour Standards and Labour Law, ILO	Location: Bangkok, Thailand Email: coue@ilo.org Amsterdam time: 09.00 – 09.50 Bangkok time: 14.00 – 14.50	OSH confirmed
Field Data Collection			
Monday, 24 July 2023 – Vientiane, Lao PDR (day 1)			
10.00 – 11.00	<i>Project team “Enhancing and Implementing Occupational Safety and Health Standards in Lao PDR”</i> Ms Nouthong Alounthong National Project Coordinator	ILO Vientiane office Email: alounthong@ilo.org	OSH confirmed
14.00 – 15.30	<i>Project team “Supporting the implementation of sustainable social protection floors for the workers and their families in ASEAN Phase III”</i> Ms Loveleen De Program Manager Mr Xiong Thongleck National Project Coordinator Mr Mongkon Duangkhiew ILO External consultant – communication	ILO Vientiane office Email: del@ilo.org Email: thongleck@ilo.org Email: duangkhiew@iloquest.org	Social protection confirmed
Tuesday, 25 July 2023 – Vientiane, Lao PDR (day 2)			
10.00 – 10.50	<i>Ministry of Labour and Social Welfare (MOLSW), Lao PDR</i> Mr Oudone Maniboun Deputy Director General, Labour Management Department Ms Buavanh Panyavong Head of OSH Centre, Labour Management Department	MoLSW Email: oudonelabin1712@gmail.com Tel: +856 20 5591 5444 Email: buavanhpanyavong@gmail.com Tel: +856 20 5683 9768	OSH confirmed
15.00 – 16.00	<i>Ministry of Labour and Social Welfare (MOLSW), Lao PDR</i> Mr Vilayphong Sisomvang	Virtual - Zoom Email: vilayphongs@gmail.com Tel: +856 20 2222 5185	Social protection confirmed

Date/Time	Participants	Meeting Venue/ Contact	Remarks
	Director General, Department of Planning and Cooperation		
18.00 – 19.00	<i>Lao National Chamber of Commerce and Industry (LNCCI)</i> Ms Daovading Phirasayphithak Deputy Secretary General	Virtual Email: daovading79@gmail.com Tel: +856 20 5533 0110	Social protection confirmed
Wednesday, 26 July 2023 – Vientiane, Lao PDR (day 3)			
08.30 – 09.30	<i>Ministry of Labour and Social Welfare (MOLSW), Lao PDR</i> Madam Bouahome Phommachanh Deputy Director, Lao Social Security Organization (LSSO)	LSSO office Email: cbouahome@yahoo.com Tel: +856 20 9996 4331	Social protection confirmed
Thursday, 27 July 2023 – Vientiane, Lao PDR (day 4)			
Full day	Attend and observe the workshop on “Validation of Research findings on Understanding Informality and Expanding Social Security Coverage”	Hotel Crowne Plaza Vientiane	Social protection confirmed
Friday, 28 July 2023 – Vientiane, Lao PDR (day 5)			
15.00 – 16.00	<i>Lao National Chamber of Commerce and Industry (LNCCI)</i> Mr Viboon Sithimolada Executive Board	LNCCI office Email: viboon.sithimolada@gmail.com Tel: +856 20 5997 8953	OSH confirmed
Saturday, 29 July 2023 – Depart to Phnom Penh			
11.30	Depart Vientiane to Phnom Penh		
Monday, 31 July 2023 - Phnom Penh, Cambodia			
13.00 – 14.00	<i>Ecole d'Hotellerie et de Tourisme Paul Debrule (EHT)</i> Mr Enrique Blanco Projects and Communications Manager Mr François Schnoebelen School Director	Virtual Email: com@ecolepauldubrule.org Email: director@ecolepauldubrule.org	Skills confirmed
15.00 – 16.00	Mr Nuno Meira Simoes de Cunha	Virtual Location: Geneva, Switzerland	Social protection

Date/Time	Participants	Meeting Venue/ Contact	Remarks
	Senior Specialist on Labour Market Institutions, INWORK, ILO (Former responsible specialist for the social protection project)	Email: cunhan@ilo.org Phnom Penh time: 15.00 – 16.00 Geneva time: 10.00 – 11.00	confirmed
Tuesday, 1 August 2023 - Phnom Penh, Cambodia (day 1)			
09.00 – 10.30	<i>Ministry of Labour and Vocational Training (DGTVE), Cambodia</i> Mr Sak Teang Director, Department of Standard and Curriculum Mr Khim Yorm Deputy Director, Department of Standard and Curriculum Mr Khoeun Chhoum Deputy Director, Department of Standard and Curriculum Mr Bun Heang Chief of Competency Assessment Office, Department of Standard and Curriculum	BanteaySrey Meeting Room - Research, Development and Innovation Center (Phnom Penh TVET Park) Tel: 092 79 65 79 Email: thorng_samon@yahoo.com Email: sak_teang@yahoo.com Email: khimveayo@yahoo.com Email: khoeun_info@yahoo.com Email: bunheang7@gmail.com	Skills confirmed
13.30 – 14.30	<i>Pour Sourir D'enfants (PSE)</i> Mr Andrew Pennington Dean of Hospitality and Tourism Ms Sinaeng Seab Program Monitoring and Evaluation Officer	Email: andrew.pennington@pse.ngo Email: sineang.seab@pse.ngo	Skills confirmed
Wednesday, 2 August 2023 - Phnom Penh, Cambodia (day 2)			
08.00 – 09.00	<i>National Vocational Institute of Battambang (NVIB)</i> Mr Ngounhort Heng Director	Virtual Somith will create the MS Teams link. Email: hengngounhort@yahoo.com	Skills confirmed
11.00 – 12.00	<i>Lao Federation of Trade Unions (LFTU)</i> Mr Khamchan Sivanthong	Virtual Tel: +856 20 2208 8805	Social protection, OSH confirmed

Date/Time	Participants	Meeting Venue/ Contact	Remarks
	Deputy Director General, Labour Protection Department Mr Soubin Thenebouapha Technical Officer	Email: soubinthanbouapha@gmail.com Tel: +856 20 5570 8036	
15.45	Depart Phnom Penh to Bangkok		
Thursday, 3 August 2023 – Bangkok, Thailand (day 1)			
10.00 – 10.50	ILO/Korea partnership Programme Mr Son Sunggil Chief Technical Advisor ILO/Korea Partnership Programme	ILO Office, 11th Floor, Room 1108B Email: son@ilo.org	ILO/Korea partnership Programme confirmed
11.30 – 12.20	<i>Project team “Improved mechanisms for skills recognition and TVET digitisation in ASEAN”</i> Ms Akiko Sakamoto Specialist on Skills and Employability	Virtual Theo can do this virtual session from the ILO Office, 10th Floor, Meeting room Email: sakamoto@ilo.org	Skills confirmed
13.30 – 14.20	<i>Project team “Supporting the implementation of sustainable social protection floors for the workers and their families in ASEAN Phase III”</i> Ms Kyounghee Chong Social Security officer (Expert from COMWEL)	ILO Office, 7th Floor, Room 0719 Email: chong@ilo.org	Social protection confirmed
14.30 – 15.20	<i>Project team “Improved mechanisms for skills recognition and TVET digitisation in ASEAN”</i> Ms Sutida Srinopnikom Programme Officer	ILO Office, 10th Floor, Room 1003 Email: sutida@ilo.org	Skills confirmed
Friday, 4 August 2023 – Bangkok, Thailand (day 2)			
09.30 – 10.30	<i>Project team “Improved mechanisms for skills recognition and TVET digitisation in ASEAN”</i> Ms Marie-Helene Thomas Senior Programme Officer Ms Suttida Chaikitsakol Programme Officer	ILO Office, 10th Floor, Meeting room Email: thomasma@ilo.org Email: chaikitsakol@ilo.org	Skills confirmed

Date/Time	Participants	Meeting Venue/ Contact	Remarks
14.00 - 16.00	<p><i>Ministry of Labour, Thailand</i> <i>Department of Skill Development</i></p> <p>Mr Chatsada Chanaurai Director Standard and Testing Development Office</p> <p>Mr Santi Puchana Director of skill Standard Promotion and Competition</p> <p>Ms Nuchjarin Sairadtong Skills Development Technical Officer</p> <p>Ms Konjanat Jaiya Skills Development Technical Officer</p>	<p>Department of Skill Development 10th Floor, Department of Skill Development Building, Ministry of Labour Mitmaitri Road., Din Daeng, Bangkok</p> <p>Meeting venue: Pakorn Angsusingha Meeting Room</p> <p>Focal person: Khun Nolapun Chatpatanagul Number: +66-649120720</p> <p>Email: icd@dsd.go.th</p>	Skills confirmed
Monday, 7 August 2023 – Bangkok, Thailand (day 3)			
09.00 – 09.50	<p><i>Project team “Enhancing and Implementing Occupational Safety and Health Standards in Lao PDR”</i></p> <p>Mr Joonbeom Kim Expert on Occupational Safety and Health (Expert from KOSHA)</p>	<p>ILO Office, 7th Floor, Room 0709</p> <p>Email: kimjoon@ilo.org</p>	OSH confirmed
10.00 – 11.00	<p>Ms Panudda Boonpala Deputy Regional Director, ILO ROAP</p>	<p>ILO Office, 11th Floor, Room 1102A</p> <p>Email: boonpala@ilo.org</p>	ILO Management confirmed
11.10 – 12.00	<p>ILO/Korea partnership Programme</p> <p>Ms Aatcharaporn Chaowahem Programme Officer ILO/Korea Partnership Programme</p>	<p>ILO Office, 10th Floor, Room 1021</p> <p>Email: aatcharaporn@ilo.org</p>	ILO/Korea partnership Programme confirmed
Tuesday, 8 August 2023 – Bangkok, Thailand (day 4)			
08.45 – 09.45	<p><i>Ministry of Labour and Social Welfare (MOLSW), Lao PDR</i> <i>Skill Development Institute (SDI)</i></p> <p>Mr Bounma Sithisom Director</p>	<p>Virtual</p> <p>Click here to join the meeting Meeting ID: 371 375 271 966 Passcode: i8Xmrd</p> <p>Bangkok time: 08.45 – 09.45 Vientiane time: 08.45 – 09.45</p> <p>Email: sitthisom.bounma1122@gmail.com</p>	Skills confirmed

Date/Time	Participants	Meeting Venue/ Contact	Remarks
	<p>Mr Sourisack Souphanthong Director, Skills Standards Development Division</p> <p>Mr Inthavone Singdala Deputy Director, Skills Standards Development Division</p>	<p>Email: sourisack@hotmail.com</p> <p>Email: in.gh2011@yahoo.com</p>	
11.15 – 12.15	<p><i>Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Thailand</i> <i>Thailand International Cooperation Agency (TICA)</i></p> <p>Ms Arunee Hiam Deputy Director-General</p> <p>Ms Pantipa Chaiyasorn Assistant</p> <p><i>Ministry of Labour, Thailand</i> <i>Department of Skill Development</i></p> <p>Ms Wanwisa Sukontavaree Foreign Relations Officer</p>	<p>Thailand International Cooperation Agency (TICA) The Government Complex (B Building), 8th Floor, South Zone (S2), Chaengwattana Rd., Laksi, Bangkok 10210 Meeting venue: Meeting Room 2</p> <p>Focal Point: Khun Fon Tel: +66-98-956-9424</p> <p>Email: pantipa.mfa@gmail.com</p> <p>Email: wanwisa.psed8@gmail.com</p>	Skills confirmed
14.00- 16.00	<p><i>Ministry of Labour, Thailand</i> <i>Department of Skill Development</i></p> <p>Ms Pacharasuda Podhiarn Skills Development Technical Officer</p> <p>Mr Prasarn Kiddee Skills Development Technical Officer</p> <p>Mr Noppanat Kongjitngam Skills Development Technical Officer</p> <p><i>Ministry of Labour, Thailand</i> <i>International Institute for Skill Development</i></p> <p>Mr Dusit Kotcharin Skill Development Technical Officer</p> <p>Mr Somruam Mongkolkaew Skill Development Technical Officer</p> <p>Ms Nolapan Chatpatanagul</p>	<p>Department of Skill Development 10th Floor, Department of Skill Development Building, Ministry of Labour Mitmaitri Road., Din Daeng, Bangkok</p> <p>Meeting venue: Amporn Junnanonta Meeting Room</p> <p>Focal point: Khun Nolapun Chatpatanagul Number: +66-649120720</p> <p>Email: icd@dsd.go.th</p>	Skills confirmed

Date/Time	Participants	Meeting Venue/ Contact	Remarks
	Skill Development Technical Officer <i>Thai Logistics and Production Society</i> Mr Suwat Nualkhaow Industry Partner		
Wednesday, 9 August 2023 –			
	Depart Bangkok to Amsterdam		
Virtual Data Collection			
Monday, 14 August 2023 - Bangkok			
15.00 – 15.50	Ms Imelda Taganas External Consultant Mr Conrad Barres External Consultant	Location: Manila, Philippines Email: imeebtaganas@gmail.com Bangkok time: 15.00 – 15.50 Manila time: 16.00 – 16.50	Skills confirmed
Tuesday, 15 August 2023 - Bangkok			
13.00 – 13.50	<i>National Professional Certification Board (BNSP - Badan Nasional Sertifikasi Profesi (BNSP)</i> Mr Kunjung Masehat Chair Ms Tetty D.S. Ariyanto Legal & Planning Division	Location: Jakarta, Indonesia Bangkok time: 13.00 – 13.50 Jakarta time: 13.00 -13.50 Email: tetty.ariyanto@bnsf.go.id	Skills confirmed
14.00 – 14.50	<i>Technical Education and Skills Development Authority (TESDA), Philippines</i> Mr El Cid Castillo Executive Director Qualifications and Standards Office Ms Maria Susan P. Dela Rama Executive Director, Certification Office <i>Supply Chain Management Associations of Philippines</i> Mr Pierre Curay Chair	Location: Manila, Philippines Bangkok time: 14.00 – 14.50 Manila time: 15.00 -15.50 Email: echcastillo@tesda.gov.ph Email: mspdelarama@tesda.gov.ph Email: pierre.curay@gmail.com	Skills confirmed

Annex 6: Evaluation Work Plan

Updated Evaluation Workplan: Timeframe, Tasks and Responsibilities are as follows:

Task	Responsible person	Indicative Time frame
Preparation, sharing and finalization of the TOR	Evaluation Manager	5 – 17 May 2023
Approval of the TOR	Evaluation Manager/	17 May 2023
TOR Advertisement	Regional Evaluation Officer (REO)	17 May-31 May
Issuance of contracts	ILO/Korea Programme Management Team	7 Jul 2023
Brief evaluators on ILO evaluation policy and the project	Evaluation Manager	7 Jul 2023
Draft mission itinerary for the evaluator and the list of key stakeholders to be interviewed	ILO/Korea Programme CTA	4 Jul 2023
Document review and development of the inception report submitted to Eval. Manager	Evaluator	7 -20 July 2023
Inception report approved	Evaluation Manager	23 July 2023
Interview and data collection	Evaluators	24 July - 15 August
Stakeholder validation workshop	Evaluators & stakeholders	12 September 2023
Draft report submitted to Evaluation Manager	Evaluators	19 September 2023
Sharing the draft report with all concerned stakeholders for comments	Evaluation Manager	28 September 2023
Consolidated comments on the draft report and send to the evaluator	Evaluation Manager	End Sept 2023
Finalization of the report and submission to Evaluation Manager	Evaluators	End Sept 2023
Review and approval of the final report	Evaluation Manager, REO, and Evaluation Office	End Sept 2023

The breakdown of the number of working days for the International Evaluator (IE) and for the National Evaluators (NE) by tasks and phases

Tasks and Phases	IE-Days	NE-Lao PDR	NE-Cambodia
Documents review	3	2	2
Interview with CTA+PO, EM, ILO specialist	3	1	1
Draft inception report +tools	5	2	2
TOTAL inception report	11	5	5
Lao	5	5	
Cambodia	2		2
Thailand	4		
ASEAN, Indonesia, Philippine, Viet Nam	3		
Stakeholder workshop	1	1	1
TOTAL data collection	15	6	3
Analysis and reporting	8	3	2
Address comment and finalize report	2		
TOTAL reporting	10	3	2
TOTAL # of workdays	36	14	10

Annex 7: Geographical scope of the activities

The Geographical scope of the activities undertaken in the three projects over countries and regions.

(Source: Compiled by the evaluator based on the Outcome Statements in the latest Technical Progress Reports).

Three Projects and their Outcomes	Out-puts	Activities (Source: Summarised from the Outcome Statements in the latest Technical Progress Reports)	Lao PDR	Cambodia	Thailand	Viet Nam	Philippine	Indonesia	Myanmar	Malaysia	Singapore	Brunei D.	ASEAN	Regional
1) SKILLS														
Outcome 1		MRS pilots in ASEAN												
	1.1	Corridor 1 - MRS Pilot on bricklaying/plastering (Final output is a Technical Assessment Report), and building electrical wiring/BEW (final output?).	¹⁾	X	X				²⁾					
		Corridor 2 - MRS logistics for warehousing & forklift operations			X	³⁾	X							
		Corridor 3 – Sub-regional skills recognition arrangements on ASEAN Guiding Principles (AGP) in ASEAN meeting											X	
	1.2	6 th RSTWG (online) on 8-9 March 2022 co-hosted by ASEAN TVET Council												X
		7 th RSTWG Sept. 2023												X
	1.3	Exploratory work to develop a common framework for a regional mechanism of skills recognition and form a working group for that.												X
		Furthering the collaboration with IMT-GT's common welders' scheme and exploring the use of international reference framework (e.g. ISO).			X			X		X				
		Surveying the structure of using a regional reference framework such as the World Skills Occupational Standards (WSOS).												X
Outcome 2		Enhance digital learning and skills recognition infrastructure in CLM to ensure employability for people affected by the economic impacts of COVID-19												
	2.1	Blended RPL: Develop coaching programme on how to blend RPL packages (jointly with other ILO projects in Cambodia)	⁴⁾	X					²⁾					
	2.2	Pilot to blend training and RPL packages (in construction in NE-Cambodia)		X										

Three Projects and their Outcomes	Out-puts	Activities (Source: Summarised from the Outcome Statements in the latest Technical Progress Reports)	Lao PDR	Cambodia	Thailand	Viet Nam	Philippine	Indonesia	Myanmar	Malaysia	Singapore	Brunei D.	ASEAN	Regional
	2.3	Developing blended vocational training packages for the construction and hospitality sectors		X										
		Working on the global digital transformation tools and coaching programme in partnership with ITC-ILO on 'how to blend your RPL programmes'												X
		A TVET institution was commissioned to design, deliver and assess blended learning RPL packages.		X										
		Developing selected blended RPL assessment packages for Cambodia		X										
Outcome 3		Enhance partnerships, regional dialogue and knowledge sharing on MRS, skills digitization and others in ASEAN												
	3.1	Knowledge sharing webinar in Jan. 2022 on upskilling and reskilling needs for workers impacted by COVID-19 and automation held in Thailand.											X	
	3.2	Knowledge sharing sessions on AGP.											X	
		Translated English Quality Manual of the IMT-GT's initiative on developing a common welders' certification scheme in CIMT in July/August 2021.		X	X			X		X				
		Work with ASEC and BNSP on AGP3 in relation to the MRS work.						X						
2) SocPro														
Outcome 1		Develop strategies to increase coverage among workers in registered enterprises and SE workers												
	1.1	The quantitative research on informality was completed in October 2022 and was followed by a qualitative analysis and tailoring of policy recommendations.	X											
		An actuarial valuation of the NSSF to provide reform options and inputs to the amendment of the Social Security Law including the establishment of a national Actuarial Working Committee (cost-shared with two other projects: EU & SHP)	X											
		Three capacity building events were organised. ⁶⁾	X											
	1.2	Meeting on feasibility assessment of existing and planned payment mechanisms and preparations with LSSO for a pilot project to test a payment method.	X											
	1.3	Enhance awareness of the benefits of SS and NSSF, e.g. the Lao Employment Expo 2022, and the production of brochures, posters and briefs.	X											
Outcome 2		Increase awareness in Asia/Pacific												

Three Projects and their Outcomes	Out-puts	Activities (Source: Summarised from the Outcome Statements in the latest Technical Progress Reports)	Lao PDR	Cambodia	Thailand	Viet Nam	Philippine	Indonesia	Myanmar	Malaysia	Singapore	Brunei D.	ASEAN	Regional
	2.1	Tripartite Regional Meeting in collaboration with ILO Japan was held in BKK in November 2022 on promoting formalization. The Centre of Excellence aims to serve as a knowledge hub. This work was initiated through a joint effort by the ILO's development cooperation projects in Japan, Korea, and China.												X
	2.2	Increase capacity of staff of government institutions and social partners through a training workshop in Korea on EI/EII involving ILO, COMWEL, KEIS and ITC.											X	
	2.3	TA is provided to countries in ASEAN on an individual basis: <i>Not yet started</i> because no requests were received on this topic.												...
3) OSH														
Outcome 1		National OSH System strengthened in Lao PDR												
	1.1	Legal framework on OSH is developed; In light of the Ratifications of C155 and C187, comparative analysis on legal and policy framework is on-going.	X											
	1.2	Technical materials: Recording and notification system of occupational accidents and diseases is established.	X											
	1.3	The 3 rd National OSH programme (2022-26) was developed and adopted by the Minister of MoLSW in Dec. 2022	X											
Outcome 2		Strengthen awareness at national & enterprise levels												
	2.1	Capacity Building of National OSH Committee members: planned for 2023.	X											
	2.2	Capacity Building in pilot enterprises: Completed SOP for Business Reopening and Recovery in the New Normal; Safe Day event was held on 25 May 2022.	X											
	2.3	Lao PDR regularly participated in the ASEAN OSHNET events and shared good practices in 2022, including on work injury compensation on accident prevention.	5)										X	

Footnotes in Table:

¹⁾ On hold due to restructuring within Lao PDR's MOLSW (the constraint is the lack of endorsed national skill standards for comparability with Thailand).

²⁾ On hold due to the ongoing political situation in Myanmar.

³⁾ Due to lack of promulgated national competency standards, Viet Nam will not continue with MRS at this time.

⁴⁾ Digital learning is on hold in Lao PDR since there was not sufficient political commitment on digital learning in in this country (as compared to Cambodia), and also in Lao PDR the English limitations are higher among participants.

⁵⁾ Within ASEAN, but central are the discussions in ASEAN OSHNET on Lao PDR's good practices.

⁶⁾ Capacity building for over 100 MPs from the Social and Cultural Affairs Committee and co-funded by UNICEF; for government officials and members of the Disability Assessment Committee on EII; and for LSSO staff from the 18 provinces organised by ILO and TAKSA Training Centre with key involvement of COMWEL Korea.

Annex 8: Comparative Analysis

The Comparative Analysis comprises the scoring on the 24 Evaluation Questions and the averages for the eight Evaluation Criteria as in the Table below. Some Evaluation Questions do not allow any scoring as it concerns a listing of items (these have been marked with --).

Evaluation Criteria and Questions	Skills	Social Protection	OSH
	Score (0-5)	Score (0-5)	Score (0-5)
A. Relevance and Strategic Fit	4,3	4,0	4,0
1) To what extent and how well have the ILO/Korea projects responded to the needs and priorities of the national stakeholders and social partners, and beneficiaries?	5	5	5
2) How unique were the ILO/Korea projects supported by the ILO Korea partnership programme to partner government priorities, as well as the need of social partners and beneficiaries (as compared with other ILO projects)?	4	3	3
3) Are the areas of focus of the ILO/Korea projects the most demanding areas?	4	4	4
4) Are there any other areas (within OSH, social protection and SKILLS) that are more in-demand, and therefore should have received more attention/support/funding (as they are important but are under-resourced) as viewed by national stakeholders?	4	4	4
5) What are the priority areas of interventions /components (within OSH, social protection and SKILLS) for the TVET policy, OSH policy and social protection policy that should be zeroed in and why?	--	--	--
B. Coherence (including Validity of Design)	3,7	3,7	3,7
6) To what extent has the ILO/Korea projects leveraged synergies and partnerships (among the ILO/Korea Programme-supported projects, Korea partner institutions, and other ILO programs/projects, constituents, other donors, Government, social partners, national institutions, and other UN/development agencies) to enhance the projects' effectiveness and impact and maximize its contribution to realize decent work goals?	3	4	4
7) To what extent and how well do the ILO/Korea projects complement and fit with the policies, programmes and/or priorities of the constituents?	4	3	3
8) With the benefit of hindsight, was the project design appropriate? What would you change?	4	4	4
C. Effectiveness	3,5	3,5	3,5
9) To what extent have the ILO/Korea projects been making sufficient progress towards their planned results?	4	4	4
10) What are the contributing and impeding factors (both internal and external factors,) that affect (or may affect) the performance and effectiveness of the ILO/Korea projects?	--	--	--
11) How well have (or how could) these issues been addressed?	3	3	3

D. Effectiveness of Management Arrangements	3,0	3,3	3,0
12) What are the management issues (both internal and external management) that affected the performance of the ILO/Korea projects?	3	3	3
13) Identify the <u>Strengths-Weaknesses-Opportunities-Threats</u> of each of the projects and the ILO/Korea partnership programme (Based on SWOT analysis that analyses all criteria and factors that are identified under this evaluation (both external and internal))	--	--	--
14) To what extent are the tripartite constituents and the project counterparts satisfied with the services and deliverables and outputs delivered by each of the ILO/Korea projects and why?	5	5	5
15) Have the ILO/Korea projects collected information/data that help track/capture the relevant gender concerns? Is information being collected and analysed to help assess the different effects of an intervention on both men and women?	1	2	1
E. Efficiency of Resource Use	3,0	3,0	2,5
16) Have resources (funds, human resources, time, expertise, etc.) been allocated strategically to achieve expected results within the ILO/Korea projects? Could they have been allocated more effectively and if so, how?	3	3	3
17) Are there any duplications of efforts with other projects run by ILO and other partners?	--	--	--
18) Have the resources been used efficiently? Are there any ways to make the ILO/Korea projects more efficient and effective?	3	3	2
F. Impact	3,0	3,0	3,0
19) To what extent and how well have the ILO/Korea projects resulted in changes in policies and legislations/ regulations as well as improved service provisions in the target countries?	3	3	3
20) How well have the ILO Korea projects delivered impact or had high impact oriented intervention?	3	3	3
G. Sustainability	3,0	3,0	3,0
21) How effective have the ILO/Korea projects been in establishing and fostering national/local ownership?	4	4	4
22) How likely will the results be sustained beyond the current ILO/Korea projects through the action of Government and other stakeholders? Are there any factors that constrained their ability to do so?	2	2	2
H. ILO Cross-cutting themes, in particular Gender Equality and Non-Discrimination	2,0	2,5	2,5
23) To what extent have gender equality and non-discrimination been addressed in the design and in the implementation of the ILO/Korea projects? What are practical actions that could be done to improve gender equality and non-discrimination?	2	2	2
24) To what extent have other cross-cutting themes been addressed in the design and in the implementation of the ILO/Korea projects, including ILS, tripartism and social dialogue, and a just transition to environmental sustainability?	2	3	3
TOTAL	66	67	65

Annex 9: Recommendations of previous Evaluations and Follow-up by ILO

This annex consists of **two Tables**:

Table A: The Recommendations made by the Independent Final Evaluation of the 2018-2020 phase of the ILO-Korea Partnership Programme (July 2020) including ILO's Management Response.

Table B: The Recommendations made the two MTE's: one on the Skills project in March 2023, and one on the Social protection project in January 2023. The Table also includes the way the projects have responded to the respective recommendations.

Table A: Recommendations of the Independent Final Evaluation of the 2018-2020 phase of the ILO/Korea Partnership programme (July 2020).

Recommendation description	Management response	Action plan	Progress
Consider extending the project for at least 6 months – alternatively shift balance of activities not implemented to new projects under the next programme cycle	Completed	The duration of 2018~2020 ILO/Korea Partnership Programme will be extended.	Achieved
Define more precise indicators of achievement for all three projects	Completed	The indicators of achievement will be set more precisely in the new three projects under the 2021~2023 ILO/Korea Partnership Programme.	Achieved
Boost the support to beneficiaries in Lao PDR to address their demand for urgent external assistance	Completed	1. Lao PDR will be newly included as a target country in the new projects of 2021~2023 which did not have Lao PDR as Target country in 2018~2020 programme cycle / 2. The amount of support, such as budget for activities and personnel costs, etc., for Lao PDR in the new cycle projects will be increased.	Achieved
Strengthen relationship with ASEAN Secretariat to better link with regional priorities and needs and collaborate with the new ASEAN-Korea TVET project to strengthen TVET regional mechanism	Completed	1. The cooperation with the ASEAN Secretariat through the projects which have common areas of interests and activities with the Secretariat will be strengthened. / 2. The communicate with the new ASEAN-Korea TVET project to find ways to cooperate will be open.	Partially achieved

Strengthen ownership of projects among beneficiaries	Completed	The participation of the governments of beneficiary countries will be strengthened from the planning stage to the implementation of 2021~2023 ILO/Korea Partnership Programme to strengthen their ownership.	Achieved
Prepare exit strategies of all three projects in preparation of a possible new cycle	Completed	Exit strategies for the three projects under 2021~2023 ILO/Korea Partnership Programme will be considered.	Partially achieved
Define options for future projects under a new 3-year cycle	Completed	Recommended options will be considered in establishing the plans for 2021~2023 ILO/Korea Partnership Programme.	Partially achieved
Enhance expertise of Korea in further projects	Completed	The experiences of Korea especially in the areas of social protection and OSH will be more actively and effectively shared.	Achieved
Gender mainstreaming should be given adequate attention when designing the next programme	Completed	Gender mainstreaming will be given adequate attention when designing the 2021~2023 projects	Achieved

Table B: Recommendations by two MTE's on Skills (March 2023) and Social protection (January 2023).

SKILLS: Recommendations of the MTE (March 2023)	Follow-up by the Project
1) To complete and document the full MRS piloting process.	We are working on an MRS Operating Manual, which will document everything.
2) To connect components 1 and 2 more closely.	Corridor 1 and 2 are being brought together in the MRS Operating Manual which will review the best practices and lessons learned from both.
3) To provide bilingual translation.	This has been taken into consideration for the future.
4) To facilitate simultaneously vertical and horizontal coordination.	
5) To establish more technical partnerships with Korean TVET organisations.	We are having a TVET Forum end of the year where KOREATECH is our partner and will be inviting Korean TVET organisations to participate and share knowledge.
6) To prepare full implementation of MRS.	We are in discussion on how to make MRS a SLOM project (implementation by member states themselves) and we are also having the 7 th RSTWG meeting end of September, whose topic is specifically on the progress/finalisation of the MRS pilot implementation and the way forward.

Social Protection: Recommendations of the MTE (Jan. 2023)	Follow-up by the Project
1) Put more focus on gender issues	Activity 1.1.1. – research on informality explores gender as a cross-cutting issue.
2) Review outputs which have not been fully implemented	<p>At the time of the MTE, Outputs 1.1 and 1.3 were on schedule. Output 1.2 was behind schedule as the LSSO was conducting their internal studies and preparatory work, before requesting the project for support on training and rollout. This is now ongoing, with a training and practical application planned in October 2023.</p> <p>Activity 2.1.2- Develop regional knowledge products in the area of SP under the umbrella of the Centre of Excellency. It is not the meaning of establishing a physical centre. This initiative aims to support and strengthen existing ILO Social protection platforms by providing information on current EI system policy changes, such as job retention programs, specifically in Asia.</p> <p>Activity 2.3.1- Provide individual countries with technical assistance based on the countries' demands and situations. Thailand's SSO has requested an extension of coverage to the informal workers , along with an operational case similar to Korea's. This is now ongoing with their annual reports analysis.</p>
3) Expand participation in international capacity building	<p>A study visit to Indonesia for Lao PDR officials was organised in August 2023, as part of Outputs 1.2 and 1.3. It had two main objectives, to expand international cooperation in social security and to participate and learn from advancements in the other country.</p> <p>02.02.01 Organise a training seminar on the social protection in collaboration with partner institutions in Korea and ITCILO</p> <p>This year, we have changed the format to focus on field visits and industrial area visit to gain practical knowledge while maintaining a reduced budget compared to last year's event. Additionally, the ongoing agenda includes platform work, which has significant impact on workers in ASEAN. In this regard, Korea has amended its laws to mandate social protection for platform workers. The training will share Korea's case and provide opportunities for study visit for learning operation case. It is scheduled for November.</p>
4) Evaluate capacity building and identify impact (with a view to the final evaluation).	Post-activity evaluations were conducted for all Lao PDR trainings and workshops.
5) Plan for sustainability.	<p>Recommendations for continued ILO support to the Government of Lao PDR, where required, have been made as inputs to the final evaluation. Activity 1.1.2 focuses on adoption of an amended Social Security Law, which can contribute to sustainability of project's interventions and ILO's recommendations.</p> <p>For the regional component, effective coverage in Asia remains low for EII(34 %) and EI(14%),as recognized by tripartite members due to the COVID 19. Especially, changes of work, climate change and demographic change need to contribute sustainability of projects interventions and require an integrated approach to expand social protection.</p>

Annex 10: Lessons Learned (LL) and Good Practices (GP)

ILO Lesson Learned Template

Project Title: The 2021– 2023 ILO/Korea Partnership Programme funded projects in ASEAN, Cambodia and Lao PDR

Project TC/SYMBOL: RAS/21/50/KOR, RAS/21/51/KOR, RAS/21/52/KOR

Name of Evaluator: Theo van der Loop, Chanhay Samavong and Somith Sok

Date: 1 November 2023

LL Element	Text
Brief description of lesson learned (link to specific action or task)	<i>In a complicated management environment with different levels of management and different levels of technical leads coordination involves bringing all stakeholders together at regular intervals in order to drive progress and to enhance cooperation, coherence and communication.</i>
Context and any related preconditions	<i>The Programme's complicated management structure involves a large number of actors: ROAP; the Programme Team in BKK including the CTA seconded from the MOEL of Korea; DWT specialists; Korean secondments; Country teams; etc. The fact that there was no regular (half-yearly) Project Steering Committee (PSC) in which decisions can be discussed and made at the appropriate levels, and which has the ability to enhance the coordination between all these actors, and will provide a platform where experts and managers can jointly discuss and decide about the priority issues at hand for the coming half year.</i>
Targeted users / Beneficiaries	<i>ROAP; the Programme Team in BKK including the CTA seconded from the MOEL of Korea; DWT specialists; Korean loaned officers; Country teams; Donor (can be represented by the seconded CTA).</i>
Challenges /negative lessons - Causal factors	<i>The challenging management structure of the programme and projects, and stakeholders in the projects were at times not at all aware of the other two projects, and a PSC would be important to engage all stakeholders.</i>
Success / Positive Issues - Causal factors	<i>A regular PSC would enhance communication and can oversee and drive progress. In addition, related donors (Japan, China, EU, SDC, etc.) could be invited to enhance coordination and coherence.</i>
ILO Administrative Issues (staff, resources, design, implementation)	<i>ILO DWT staff are managing dozens of projects in Asia and the Pacific, while in-country staff were mostly part-time.</i>

LL2: Inclusion from private sectors in the MRS processes is crucial in harnessing timely and relevant outcomes.

ILO Lesson Learned Template

Project Title: The 2021– 2023 ILO/Korea Partnership Programme funded projects in ASEAN, Cambodia and Lao PDR

Project TC/SYMBOL: RAS/21/50/KOR, RAS/21/51/KOR, RAS/21/52/KOR

Name of Evaluator: Theo van der Loop, Chanhay Samavong and Somith Sok

Date: 1 November 2023

LL Element	Text
Brief description of lesson learned (link to specific action or task)	<i>Inclusion from private sectors in the Mutual Recognition of Skills (MRS) processes is crucial in harnessing timely and relevant outcomes.</i>
Context and any related preconditions	<i>The assessment of skills standard for MRS by cooperating countries needs to incorporate the private sector in the MRS processes because representatives of employers and of workers know best which skills are really needed on the ground.</i>
Targeted users / Beneficiaries	<i>DWT experts, Project Team, Ministries of Labour and employers' and workers' organisations.</i>
Challenges /negative lessons - Causal factors	<i>Standards for MRS lack the inputs from those most involved.</i>
Success / Positive Issues - Causal factors	<i>The standards for MRS are more realistic and more relevant.</i>
ILO Administrative Issues (staff, resources, design, implementation)	<i>Engage closely with the relevant social partners.</i>

GP1: Adding a Regional component to Outcomes/Outputs specific for one or two countries has the clear potential to enhance knowledge sharing, learning and mutual understanding between countries and to involve different ASEAN Institutions.

ILO Emerging Good Practice Template

Project Title: The 2021– 2023 ILO/Korea Partnership Programme funded projects in ASEAN, Cambodia and Lao PDR

Project TC/SYMBOL: RAS/21/50/KOR, RAS/21/51/KOR, RAS/21/52/KOR

Name of Evaluator: Theo van der Loop, Chanhsy Samavong and Somith Sok

Date: 1 November 2023

GP Element	Text
Brief summary of the good practice (link to project goal or specific deliverable, background, purpose, etc.)	<i>Adding a Regional component to Outcomes/Outputs specific for one or two countries has the clear potential to enhance knowledge sharing, learning and mutual understanding between countries and to involve different ASEAN Institutions.</i>
Relevant conditions and Context: limitations or advice in terms of applicability and replicability	<i>Regional outputs in addition to country-based activities have been strongly appreciated by the tripartite constituents involved in the ILO/Korea programme. The wish to learn from other countries and from Good practices was expressed on many occasions during the evaluation interviews.</i>
Establish a clear cause-effect relationship	<i>The Regional Components of each of the three ILO/Korea projects are potentially important for embedding activities and outcomes into the ASEAN Institutions and Workplans (including the ASEAN Secretariat/ASEC, SLOM Working Groups, ASEAN TVET Council, as well as workplans related to the ASEAN Guiding Principles). They are also important for sharing Good Practices and for enhancing cooperation among countries in general. This will benefit the other components like MRS, OSH, Social protection, possible integration of the projects, knowledge sharing, learning, etc.</i>
Indicate measurable impact and targeted beneficiaries	<i>Enhanced learning, and the Tripartite Constituents of the involved countries.</i>
Potential for replication and by whom	<i>Replication can be done in many multi-country projects implemented by the ILO and other organisations.</i>
Upward links to higher ILO Goals (DWCPs, Country Program Outcomes or ILO's Strategic Program Framework)	<i>Regional policies of ROAP and RPU. Cooperation by ILO with the ASEAN Member states (AMS) and the ASEAN social partners (ACE and ATUC).</i>
Other documents or relevant comments	<i>n.a.</i>

GP2: Adaptability and flexibility of ILO-ROAP, the Programme Team, the DWT experts, the in-country teams, as well as of the Donor is critical for progress in project implementation especially in times of crisis.

ILO Emerging Good Practice Template

Project Title: The 2021– 2023 ILO/Korea Partnership Programme funded projects in ASEAN, Cambodia and Lao PDR

Project TC/SYMBOL: RAS/21/50/KOR, RAS/21/51/KOR, RAS/21/52/KOR

Name of Evaluator: Theo van der Loop, Chanhay Samavong and Somith Sok

Date: 1 November 2023

GP Element	Text
Brief summary of the good practice (link to project goal or specific deliverable, background, purpose, etc.)	<i>Adaptability and flexibility of ILO-ROAP, the Programme Team, the DWT experts, the in-country teams, as well as of the Donor is critical for progress in project implementation especially in times of crisis.</i>
Relevant conditions and Context: limitations or advice in terms of applicability and replicability	<i>The COVID-19 pandemic which started in March 2020 triggered different reactions from governments and resulted in varying regulations related to the vaccinations, homework, travel restrictions, etc. under these circumstances the ILO/Korea programme 2021-2023 was being developed resulting in uncertainties about how long this pandemic would continue, and what exactly would be possible in terms of activities. As a result, once the restrictions were lifted well into the first year of the project, the implementation schedules and time frames originally agreed with the donor had to be re-designed demanding flexibility from all stakeholders involved.</i>
Establish a clear cause-effect relationship	<i>The project had to adapt and innovate with implementation modalities and with online exchange and learning events.</i>
Indicate measurable impact and targeted beneficiaries	<i>ILO-ROAP, the Programme Team, the DWT experts, the in-country teams, as well as of the Donor, but also adaptability and flexibility was demanded of the tripartite constituents and other stakeholders and partners.</i>
Potential for replication and by whom	<i>To be replicated in most projects implemented by the ILO.</i>
Upward links to higher ILO Goals (DWCPs, Country Program Outcomes or ILO's Strategic Program Framework)	<i>Linked to ILO Strategic Policy Outcomes related to Skills, Social Protection and OSH.</i>
Other documents or relevant comments	<i>n.a.</i>

Annex 11: Documents Consulted

Project Documents:

- Terms of Reference (ToR) for the Final Independent Clustered Evaluation of “The 2021–2023 ILO/Korea Partnership Programme funded projects in ASEAN, Cambodia and Lao PDR.” 5 July 2023 (see Annex 1).
- Arrangement between MOEL/ROK and ILO of May 2021,
- The three project documents (PRODOCs) including the LogFrames,
- The Mid-Term Internal Evaluation (MTE) reports of the skills and social protection projects,
- The evaluation reports of previous phases of the ILO/Korea Partnership programme:
 - ILO (July 2020): Independent Final Evaluation of “2018-2020 ILO/Korea Partnership Programme funded projects in ASEAN, Thailand, Cambodia, Lao PDR, Myanmar and Vietnam”
 - ILO (August 2018): Independent Final Evaluation of the ILO/Korea Partnership Programme 2015 – 2017 funded projects in Cambodia, Lao PDR, Myanmar and Vietnam.
- Annual Technical Progress reports (TPR).
- Financial reports
- Other documents/materials/publications that were produced through the project or by relevant stakeholders.
- Project Website: <https://www.ilo.org/asia/projects/korea/lang--en/index.htm>

Other Documents:

- ILO (2022): Independent High-Level Evaluation of ILO’s COVID-19 response 2020-22. EVAL office Geneva, August 2022:
https://www.ilo.org/eval/Evaluationreports/Strategyandpolicyevaluations/WCMS_854253/lang--en/index.htm
- ILO EVAL: Evaluation Policy Guidelines, including ILO policy guidelines for results-based evaluation: Principles, rationale, planning and managing for evaluations 3rd edition 2017.
- ILO (2020) Policy Guidelines for Results-Based Evaluation (4th edition). ILO-EVAL, Geneva: November 2020. See:
https://www.ilo.org/eval/Evaluationpolicy/WCMS_571339/lang--en/index.htm
- EVAL (2020): Implications of COVID-19 on evaluations in the ILO: An internal guide on adapting to the situation. Geneva: http://www.ilo.ch/wcmsp5/groups/public/---ed_mas/---eval/documents/publication/wcms_741206.pdf, and:
www.ilo.ch/eval/WCMS_744068/lang--en/index.htm
- ILO EVAL (2021): ILO’s response to the impact of COVID-19 on the world of work: Evaluative lessons on how to build a better future of work after the pandemic (August 2021): <http://www.unevaluation.org/document/download/2787>
- United Nations Evaluation Guidelines (UNEG) Norms and Standards ILO policy guidelines (4th edition, 2020): https://www.ilo.org/eval/WCMS_817079/lang--en/index.htm
- United Nations Evaluation Group (2018): UN-SWAP Evaluation Performance Indicator - Technical Note and Scorecard

- OECD/DAC Network on Development Evaluation (2019): Better Criteria for Better Evaluation; Revised Evaluation Criteria Definitions and Principles for Use. December 2019.