Independent Final Evaluation of the project "Towards a Holistic Approach to Labour Migration Governance and Labour Mobility in North Africa" (THAMM)

QUICK FACTS

Countries: Egypt, Morocco, Tunisia

Evaluation date: 22 February 2024

Evaluation type: Project

Evaluation timing: Final

Administrative Office: ILO Algiers

Technical Office: Multi-Partners, ILO MIGRANT and IOM's Regional Office for the Middle East and North Africa

Evaluation manager: Dessero, Pacome

Evaluation consultant(s): Rimantas Dumcius, Loes van der Graaf, Anna Kiss-Pal, Laura Dauksaite
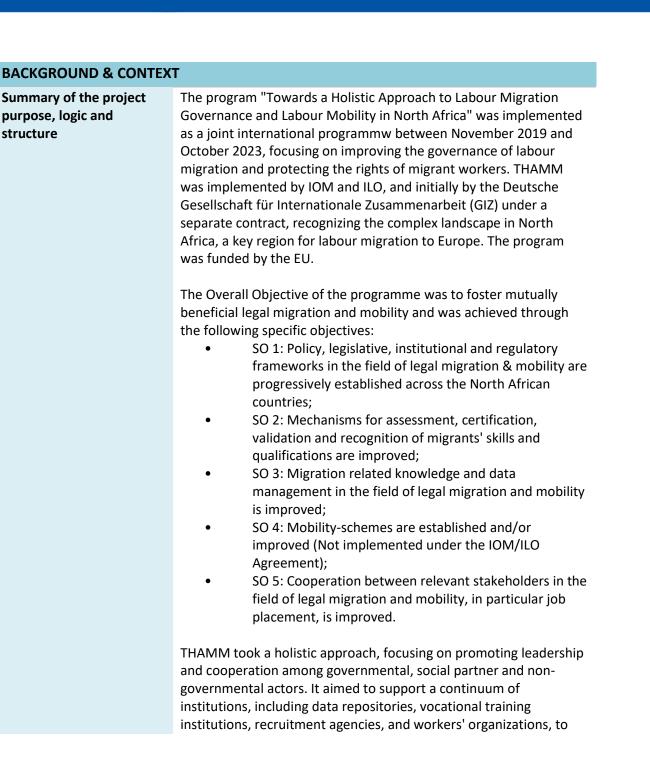
DC Symbol: RAF/17/06/EUR

Donor(s) & budget: The European Union Emergency Trust Fund for Stability and Addressing the Root Causes of Irregular Migration and Displaced Persons in Africa (EUTF) ILO and IOM EUR 7,000,000

Key Words: international migration, skills development, governance, labour migration, freedom of movement *Use themes as provided in i-eval Discovery*

BACKGROUND & CONTEXT

Summary of the project purpose, logic and structure	The program "Towards a Holistic Approach to Labour Migration Governance and Labour Mobility in North Africa" was implemented as a joint international programmw between November 2019 and October 2023, focusing on improving the governance of labour migration and protecting the rights of migrant workers. THAMM was implemented by IOM and ILO, and initially by the Deutsche Gesellschaft für Internationale Zusammenarbeit (GIZ) under a separate contract, recognizing the complex landscape in North Africa, a key region for labour migration to Europe. The program was funded by the EU. The Overall Objective of the programme was to foster mutually beneficial legal migration and mobility and was achieved through the following specific objectives: • SO 1: Policy, legislative, institutional and regulatory frameworks in the field of legal migration & mobility are progressively established across the North African countries; • SO 2: Mechanisms for assessment, certification, validation and recognition of migrants' skills and qualifications are improved; • SO 3: Migration related knowledge and data management in the field of legal migration and mobility is improved; • SO 4: Mobility-schemes are established and/or improved (Not implemented under the IOM/ILO Agreement); • SO 5: Cooperation between relevant stakeholders in the field of legal migration and mobility, in particular job placement, is improved. THAMM took a holistic approach, focusing on promoting leadership and cooperation among governmental, social partner and non-governmental actors. It aimed to support a continuum of institutions, including data repositories, vocational training institutions, recruitment agencies, and workers' organizations, to

	create a unified framework for governance. The program countries were Egypt, Morocco, and Tunisia.
Present situation of the project	According to normal programming, the implementation of THAMM would have ended in October 2022, but after an agreement on a no-cost extension of the program, it was completed in October 2023.
Purpose, scope and clients of the evaluation	The final evaluation of the THAMM Programme covered all activities between November 2019 and October 2023, including all activities in implementing countries as well at the regional level. The main users of the evaluation are: - implementing agencies of the contract (ILO and IOM) - implementing agencies of THAMM (GIZ, ENABEL, OFII) - stakeholders at district level (governmental and non-governmental actors, social partners) - donor (DG NEAR)
Methodology of evaluation	The evaluation applied the core OECD/DAC evaluation criteria and complied with the ILO Guidelines for Results-Based Evaluation (2020) as well as the UNEG Ethical Guidelines and Norms and Standards in the UN System. In addition, PPMI followed a strict data protection policy during the evaluation, in line with the European Union's General Data Protection Regulation. The evaluation relied on four forms of data collection: desk research, interviews, a survey, and a debriefing workshop. In all data collection tools and approaches, the evaluation team sought to ensure that female respondents were consulted. A total of 35 interviews and a survey were conducted, with 98 responses (60 from Tunisia, 22 from Egypt and 16 from Morocco). A debriefing workshop was held to consolidate the findings. Limitations were the low response rate to the survey, which limited the generalizability of the findings; the complexity of the monitoring system, which made it difficult to interpret progress across countries; and delays in the completion of activities, which hampered access to the most recent LogFrame and posed additional challenges to the evaluation. However, these were mitigated by careful triangulation of findings and follow-up interviews.

This evaluation has been conducted according to ILO's evaluation policies and procedures. It has not been professionally edited, but has undergone quality control by the ILO Evaluation Office.

3

MAIN FINDINGS & CONCLUSIONS	The design of the THAMM program was highly **relevant** and responsive to the specific needs of stakeholders in Egypt, Morocco and Tunisia. Input was actively sought through national programming workshops, which encouraged open discussion of government needs and priorities. The program adapted to the unique challenges of each country and tailored its activities to meet the needs expressed. Stakeholder engagement, particularly through coordination and steering committees, reflected a commitment to adapt to contextual needs and promoted a sense of ownership among stakeholders.

The programme was **coherent** with other development initiatives and the objectives of international organizations. It was consistent with the mandates of the ILO and IOM, reflecting in particular the ILO's commitment to fair recruitment and the improvement of labour policy standards, while also contributing to the IOM's objective of promoting international cooperation on migration challenges. THAMM worked with existing regional projects, avoiding duplication and fostering partnerships with initiatives such as YMED, FAIR, AMEM and others. It also sought synergies beyond IOM and ILO, working with organizations such as the German Development Cooperation (GIZ), the Belgian Development Agency (ENABEL), and the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR), demonstrating a broad, interconnected approach to labor migration challenges.

The programme was **effective** and achieved most of its planned outputs, despite the challenges posed by COVID-19 and institutional instability. It made significant progress in mainstreaming labor migration in policy making (IO1), fair and ethical recruitment (IO2 and IO3), and support for migrant worker services (IO4). It also made impressive progress in data analysis and collection (IO6) and in identifying occupational sectors for migrant workers (IO7). Progress was more moderate in improving skills development (IO5) and regional cooperation (IO8). The program's success depended on government commitment and staff expertise, and was hampered by political and institutional factors, staff overload, and the complex multi-stakeholder nature. Increased EU attention improved the

interregional policy context, which supported implementation towards the end.

The program budget was sufficient but strained, some felt a larger budget would have improved implementation, especially due to the high human resources cost. A lack of a separate coordinating budget led to inefficiencies. Staff shortages arose towards the end due to increased activities and government interaction. Limited staff turnover was beneficial, despite role transition challenges. The expertise of THAMM staff was appreciated, though there were suggestions for more external expert involvement. The program was **cost-effective**, leveraging additional funding and sharing resources. However, frequent reporting and the necessity of inter-agency coordination placed a significant burden on staff.

The program has begun to reshape labour migration policies in Morocco, Tunisia and Egypt. Policymakers are integrating labour migration into national employment strategies, as seen in Tunisia's SNEI and Morocco's SNMPI. The program has also improved skills development for migrants and statistical data on labour migration, with Morocco leading the way. Cooperation among stakeholders has improved. Government commitment is evident, but challenges such as the disruption of the coordination committee in Egypt and limited stakeholder ownership in Tunisia require EU support.

Sustainability depends on the commitment of national stakeholders to integrate migrant workers using the program's tools. Stakeholders plan to continue using these resources, but need additional support, particularly in improving the employability of North African migrant workers. The program's strategies, charters, and digital services are valuable, but implementation requires sustained commitment.

RECOMMENDATIONS, LESSONS LEARNED AND GOOD PRACTICES

recommendation	Recommendation 1: Continue to engage constituent actors in labour governance questions.
	- Maintain or expand engagement of stakeholders (workers' organizations, employers' organizations, and recruitment

This evaluation has been conducted according to ILO's evaluation policies and procedures. It has not been professionally edited, but has undergone quality control by the ILO Evaluation Office.

5

	agencies) in labour governance. Increase tripartite engagement during the design as well as the implementation.
	- Plan follow-up activities to sustain improvements in labour migration governance.
	- Utilize digital platforms for communication with all stakeholders.
	Recommendation 2: Develop further actions based on the produced material by the THAMM programme.
	- Capitalize on studies and tools produced by the THAMM programme for further action.
	- Monitor and update implemented tools based on effectiveness.
	- Strengthen regional collaboration to share good practices between countries.
	Recommendation 3: Innovative Coordination with Governmental Stakeholders:
	- Find innovative ways to coordinate among multiple implementing partners to ease challenges.
	- Optimize government capacity by organizing joint meetings and minimizing overlaps.
	- Strengthen the role of EUDs for national and regional coordination.
	- Introduce alternative training methods to accommodate staff schedules.
	Recommendation 4: Increase Resources for Efficient Programme Management:
	- Increase staff to support coordination, reporting, and monitoring.
	- Allocate additional resources for programme management to avoid overburdening staff.
	- Enhance monitoring and reporting processes, especially for regional programmes.
Main lessons learned and good practices	Lessons learned 1:
	- The program highlighted the embedded challenge of coordinating multiple implementing partners and

This evaluation has been conducted according to ILO's evaluation policies and procedures. It has not been professionally edited, but has undergone quality control by the ILO Evaluation Office.

6

	emphasized the critical role of interagency cooperation in program design. However, resource limitations for inter-agency collaboration resulted in resource-intensive efforts. Intra-agency coordination faced challenges due to insufficient budgetary and human resources, highlighting the importance of dedicated resources in future initiatives. Good practices 1: - Effective cooperation on labour migration was achieved by involving stakeholders from the outset. National programming workshops and the establishment of policy and technical coordination committees addressed administrative fragmentation, which improved information sharing and awareness raising. Good practices 3: - Structured coordination among participants, especially in regions with multiple collaborators, was implemented to avoid duplication of efforts and promote synergies. Early agreement on responsibilities and synergy matrices promoted shared accountability and impact.

This evaluation has been conducted according to ILO's evaluation policies and procedures. It has not been professionally edited, but has undergone quality control by the ILO Evaluation Office.

7