



International Labour Organization

Final Internal Evaluation of the Project
Return Migrants and Home Country Socio-Economic Development
MOL/12/01/CZE

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List of Abbreviations

DWCP	Decent Work Country Programme
DWT/CO	Decent Work Technical Support Team and Country Office
EU	European Union
HQ	Headquarters
ILO	International Labour Organization
IOM	International Organization for Migration
MLSPF	Ministry of Labour, Social Protection and Family
NC	National Coordinator
NPC	National Project Coordinator
OECD/DAC	Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development/Development Assistance Committee
UNDP	United Nations Development Programme

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Executive Summary

Background

The project 'Return migrants and home country socio economic development' is a continuation of the ILO's previous work on labour migration issues in Moldova and is complementary to other initiatives, including Effective Governance of Labour Migration and its Skill Dimensions project in Moldova and Ukraine in 2011 – 2013.

The Government of the Czech Republic is the donor of the project and has provided a financial contribution of USD 79,407 for its implementation.

The project was originally conceived for 12 months, but then extended by three months to bring the overall duration to 15 months, from January 15, 2013 to March 31, 2014.

The immediate objective of the project is as follows:

Strengthened capacity of Moldovan constituents to design evidence-based policies, which foster return migration and successful labour market reintegration at home.

This is a research project conceived in response to the national development challenges with the following rationale in mind. In order to be in a position to understand better the return migration-development nexus in countries, such as Moldova, and design evidence-based policies, which foster return migration and successful labour market reintegration at home, it is necessary to carry out research to provide empirical evidence and analysis on return migration trends, to determine what factors affect return and re-migration decisions and what type of social and economic characteristics return migrants possess. Further, this analytical work contributes to support the design of measures and incentives encouraging sustainable and successful labour market reintegration for return migrants in Moldova and other countries facing similar demographic challenges, thus fostering the efficient use of human, financial and social capital acquired abroad for homeland development.

Purpose, scope and clients of evaluation

The purpose of this internal project evaluation is to assess progress made in achieving the project results and make recommendations on how to improve sustainability of achieved results.

The evaluation was undertaken in accordance with the provisions of PARDEV Project Approval Sheet (Clause 9) dated January 28, 2013 based on a relevant request of the donor. Although according to the ILO rules no internal evaluation is required for projects with budgets less than \$500,000, this provision reflects the importance that the partners - ILO and the donor - place on transparency, accountability and learning, that would help design future interventions, elaborate new priorities and gain necessary expertise.

The evaluation covers the project as a whole, from its start until the time when the evaluation mission was conducted to Chisinau on March 17-19, 2014.

The evaluation serves the following - external and internal - clients' groups:

- The ILO DWT/CO Budapest
- The ILO Headquarters management and backstopping units
- The tripartite constituents
- The Donor

The evaluation was conducted by Irina Sinelina, Evaluation Officer, DWT/CO Moscow, having no prior involvement into the project management and implementation.

Methodology

The project was evaluated in terms of relevance, efficiency, effectiveness and sustainability. OECD/DAC Criteria for Evaluating Development Assistance were used to interpret the answers to the evaluation questions.

The methodology included:

- a) Desk review of project reports, studies and documentation
- b) Interviews with the ILO DWT/CO–Budapest staff, including Senior Employment Specialist, managers of the project, ILO National Coordinator in Moldova
- c) Interviews with the national constituents, technical experts and other stakeholders
- d) Observation of the final event of the project on March 19, 2014 in Chisinau, Moldova.

A field visit to Chisinau was conducted on March 17-19, 2014.

Main Findings

The summary of the main findings and recommendations is presented below.

Relevance

- The focus of the project was chosen correctly. The project fits into the constituents' and national policy agenda in the field of labour migration. It is aligned with the DWCP/Moldova, Outcome 2.2.
- The project is timely and topical for the country.
- The project's approach to use a combination of upstream policy-related studies has proven to be relevant.
- The approach to involve all categories of the project stakeholders in project implementation with an emphasis on tripartite cooperation has been chosen correctly.

Design

- The logical framework represents a quite basic matrix only generally reflecting key areas of the project intervention. The design lacks risks analysis, assumptions were not formulated.
- Human resources were not envisioned in the project budget and the original timeframe proved to be too short for completion of all project activities.

Effectiveness

- The project has generally achieved its objective. Understanding/commitment of the Government and social partners on return labour migration has increased due to the project.
- The achievements of the project at the national level are seen as a major contribution to the process of addressing the issue of return migration. The resulting knowledge and skills are already used for the development of policy and implementation measures.
- The social partners are working together in addressing labour migration issues, but not yet on a full scale. They were involved into the project implementation, but their involvement was not equal, so more attention to strengthening the capacity of the employers' organization in particular would be needed.

Efficiency

- The project was managed efficiently by the DWT/CO-Budapest team.
- It was successful in attracting additional resources for its implementation at no cost to the project at the country level, including contribution of venue for project meetings by the government free of charge, contribution of time and expertise by dedicated ILO staff.
- Some delays in the implementation of project activities have been observed due to the need for broad consultations with multiple stakeholders on research methodology and survey tools that took longer than expected. The project management requested a no-cost extension for three months that was successfully approved by the donor.

Sustainability

- Sustainability of the project contributions at capacity level has good prospects. The skills and knowledge are likely to be used without further presence of the ILO project(s) in the country.
- At the policy level, much will depend on the availability of public funds for the implementation of relevant plans and actions, including the National Plan of Action on Supporting the Reintegration of Returnees for 2014-2016 and the Proposal of Public Policy on Incentives for the Return of Migrants to the Republic of Moldova currently under finalization.

Main recommendations

1. Envision a possibility to support the national partners in evaluating the results of the implementation of the National Plan of Action on Supporting the Reintegration of Returnees for 2014-2016, for example one year after its start at the end of 2015.
2. Consider a possibility to repeat the study on return migration in two to three years from now to track possible changes in return migrants profile in order to support evidence-based policy responses with regards to their integration into the labour market.
3. Sustain the multi-agency working group on labour migration.

4. Explore new formats or approaches to coordination on migration and development issues with other international organizations, e.g., IOM, UNDP (depending on the topic), to come jointly vis-à-vis the government. In certain cases more narrow discussions on labour migration might be useful.
5. Enhance participation of employers in future capacity building activities and dialogue on labour migration. A tailor made training for employers might be appropriate.
6. Examine the possibility to replicate return migration research methodology developed under the project in other countries with similar context. In this regards, it would be beneficial to have parts of the report translated into Russian for sharing with colleagues from the CIS region for possible replication.
7. Make sure that the project studies are made available online after they are finalized, at least on the following websites: MLSPF; ILO/HQ; ILO/Budapest, and are searchable online through popular search engines with relevant tags inserted into the text.
8. Some thematic areas for further cooperation of relevance to the project topic suggested by the partners in the country include:
 - jobs creation, with a particular consideration of quality of jobs created (are they attractive to the candidates from among return migrants)
 - monitoring of the situation on the labour market and opportunities for reintegration of return migrants
 - quality of labour market governance (transparency, accountability)
 - validation of qualifications and skills of return migrants
 - matching of employers and job seekers from among return migrants
 - reintegration of young graduates who are studying abroad

Lessons learned

1. Under proper conditions, projects of a small size can produce results comparable to the results of large projects, so that one may conclude that there is no direct correlation between the size of a project and its effectiveness. The key determining factors or conditions would be the level of preparedness of the constituents to the kind of support offered by the project, the degree of complementarity with their own initiatives and timing/harmonization with their plans.
2. For a project of one-year duration, a quick start is of outmost importance. Because the project had several logically interlinked research components that were building up one upon the other, any delay with each of the initial components would inevitably cause a delay with the consecutive steps.

1. Introduction

This report is about the final internal evaluation of Return Migrants and Home Country Socio Economic Development project in Moldova (2013-2014). The evaluation has been undertaken in March 2014 at the request of ILO DWT/CO-Budapest in accordance with the requirements stipulated in the Terms of Reference developed for the present evaluation (see Annex 1). The internal evaluation report was prepared by Irina Sinelina, Evaluation Officer, DWT/CO-Moscow, with no prior involvement into the implementation of the project and no relation to the project management.

1.1 Brief description of the project

ILO acts as the executing agency of the project. The Government of the Czech Republic represented by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs is the donor of the project and has provided financial contribution of USD 79,407 for its implementation.

The duration of the project is 15 months: from January 2013 to March 2014. The project is decentralized to DWT/CO-Budapest. It did not employ any staff. It was technically backstopped and managed by DWT/CO-Budapest with the help of ILO field staff based in Moldova, including ILO National Coordinator and National Project Coordinator of another ILO project.¹

The project has one immediate objective:

Strengthened capacity of Moldovan constituents to design evidence-based policies, which foster return migration and successful labour market reintegration at home

This is essentially a research project, with research products and relevant communication services being the main project outputs, as follows:

- Output 1: Return migration survey
- Output 2: Analysis on return migration trends including policy recommendations
- Output 3: Publication of the analysis
- Output 4: Review of best practices on measures and incentives for labour market re-integration of returnees (in other countries)
- Output 5: Launching survey results and analysis (dissemination)

Other relevant ILO interventions in the country include Effective Governance of Labour Migration and its Skills Dimensions project in Moldova and Ukraine (2011- 2013) that aimed at strengthening national capacity to regulate labour migration with a particular focus on enhancing human resources capital and preventing skills waste.

¹ Effective Governance of Labour Migration and its Skills Dimensions Project

The project is aligned with DWCP/Moldova 2012-2015 Priority 2. “Promoting Decent Work and Employment Opportunities” and contributes to the achievement of DWCP Outcome 2.2. “Institutions more effectively manage labour migration and prevent labour exploitation of migrant workers due to increased capacity and improved policy and regulatory framework.”

1.2 Brief description of the project context

Overall the phenomenon of migration for labour is wide-spread in modern Moldova and has important implications for all the spheres of socio-economic development. The country faces difficulties with a lack of updated and accurate data on the labour migration phenomenon and its dimensions. By various estimates the number of Moldovan migrants working abroad ranges from 300,000 to 700,000 which represents a considerable share of the total population of 3.5 millions.

A brief description of the project context as outlined in the ILO background note and proposal for funding is presented below:

There has been an intense policy debate on the perceived positive link between return migration and the socio-economic progress of sending countries; yet, the reality is much more complex and there is very little empirical analysis to illustrate this important relationship and what factor play a role in facilitating or impeding it. This is of particular policy importance to countries, such as Moldova, facing very high levels of migration outflow of their labour force and its impact on demographic and economic development. Return migrants could play an important role in contributing to homeland development, even if their return is temporary or virtual. They can act as catalytic elements, given that they often bring back fresh human, financial and social capital. The type and duration of migration is mainly associated with the different transaction costs and opportunities available in destination countries, but it also reflects a lack of similar possibilities in sending countries. For example, migration to the EU member states shows a more permanent feature, compared to other regions, where it is mostly temporary and/or with clearly predefined skill levels.

Various return programs and incentives have been put in place to attract back migrants in Moldova. For instance, in order to capitalise on return migrants’ skills, the promotion of brain gain programmes for inducing especially skilled nationals abroad to return to home countries has been achieved in various recently industrialised countries such as Singapore, Korea, Taiwan, and Israel. However, they seem to be preceded by vibrant economic growth, being a response to, rather than a driver of, economic development. Further, “stay-at-home policies” of sending countries often turn out to be counter-productive and tend to have negative impact on fostering return and promoting investment at home. Motivation for return, level of preparedness, patterns of resource mobilisation through cross-border networks, pace of labour market reintegration, pre- and post-return conditions are key interrelated factors linking return migration with local development.

In this context, in order to be in a position to understand better the return migration-development nexus in countries, such as Moldova, and design evidence-based policies, which foster return migration and successful labour market reintegration at home, it is necessary to carry out research to provide empirical evidence and analysis on return migration trends, what factors affect return and re-migration decisions and what type of social and economic characteristics return migrants possess. Further, this analytical work will contribute to support the design of measures and incentives encouraging sustainable and successful labour market reintegration for return migrants in Moldova and other countries facing similar demographic challenges, thus fostering the efficient use of human, financial and social capital acquired abroad for homeland development.

2. Evaluation background and methodology

Purpose, scope and clients of evaluation

The purpose of this internal evaluation is to assess progress made in achieving the project results and make recommendations on how to improve sustainability of achieved results.

Although according to the ILO rules no internal evaluation is required for projects with budgets less than \$500,000, a special provision for evaluation was made in the Project Approval Sheet (Clause 9) dated January 28, 2013 based on a relevant request of the donor. This provision reflects the importance that the partners - ILO and the donor - place on transparency, accountability and learning that would help design future interventions, elaborate new priorities and gain necessary expertise.

The evaluation covers the project as a whole, from its start in January 2013 until the time when the evaluation mission to Chisinau/Moldova was conducted on March 17-19, 2014.

The evaluation serves the following - external and internal - clients' groups:

- The ILO DWT-CO Budapest
- The ILO Headquarters management and backstopping units
- The tripartite constituents in Moldova
- The Donor

Criteria

The project was evaluated in terms of relevance, efficiency, effectiveness and sustainability, in accordance with the evaluation questions defined in the TOR for the final internal evaluation (attached). OECD/DAC Criteria for Evaluating Development Assistance were used to interpret the answers to the evaluation questions. Additional considerations of gender and knowledge sharing were also incorporated into the assessment of the project.

The methods used include:

- a) Desk review of project reports, studies and documentation
- b) Interviews with the ILO DWT/CO-Budapest staff, including Senior Employment Specialist, managers of the project, ILO National Coordinator in Moldova

- c) Interviews with the national constituents and other stakeholders
- d) Observation of the final event of the project on March 19, 2014 in Chisinau

A field visit to Chisinau was conducted on March 17-19, 2014. Following the completion of research and field visit, the draft evaluation report was prepared by the end of March 2014 and submitted to DWT/CO-Budapest for circulation and comments.

Participatory approach

An important dimension of the evaluation approach is transparency and active participation of the project stakeholders in the evaluation exercise. All parties involved were made aware of the objectives of the evaluation and invited to actively participate in evaluation exercise.

Target groups for evaluation

The following target groups have been identified for the country mission:

- ILO technical backstopping and project management team
- Ministry of Labour, Social Protection and Family and other Government stakeholders
- Social partners' organizations
- Partners from international organizations
- Researchers and consultants who have worked on the project

Limitations of evaluation

The project document was not fully elaborated, so some elements of the underlying theory of change were assumed implicitly. Other than this, no major risks or limitations for the evaluation process have been identified. The only limitation was the shortage of time and lack of opportunities of meeting the stakeholders from the employers' organization.

3. Main findings

3.1 Relevance

All the respondents noted that the project is relevant, timely and responds to the topical problems and needs. The concept of the project was elaborated jointly with the constituents to address the existing capacity gaps. The country has a large number of labour migrants, so the government and other stakeholders wanted to better understand their profile, in which sectors they work(ed), what are their wages, their needs and expectations in the context of return to the home country. Most importantly, the government needed the knowledge and information that would help design approaches to attract return migrants into the domestic labour market on a long-term, sustainable basis. In an effort to anticipate possible changes in labour migration patterns, the government also needs to be properly prepared for a possible increase in the number of migrants returning home to ensure their smooth reintegration and avoid loss of skills and income.

In this context, national authorities and the MLSPF, in particular, have been tasked with the elaboration of a national action plan and programme that would facilitate the above processes, make sure that Moldovan citizens who plan to return to the home country can effectively apply their skills, use their savings upon return.

While there is data provided by the National Statistics Bureau on a regular basis, this data is not enough and it is mainly based on labour migrants relatives' survey, but not labour migrants them-selves.

In this regards, the ILO research project is unique in offering a way to reach out directly to return migrants in order to establish their social and economic profile and learn about their specific needs and perspectives, i.e. on personal finance management, child care, education, health care, public services at the local level and other issues. This was in fact the first research project targeted specifically at return migrants.

Conclusion: the relevance of the project is high both to the needs of the country and to the priorities of the national partners.

Some observations on project design aspects

Logical framework

The description of the logic of the project consists of the definition of the immediate objective and the outputs corresponding to it. It represents a quite basic matrix only generally reflecting the key deliverables and does not have any indicators.

- It is advisable for the design of future interventions, even in case it is a research project, to pay due attention to the formulation of expected results with relevant indicators and targets. In case of a 'capacity' type of outcome, such indicators would refer to the anticipated changes in knowledge, skills and attitudes to be addressed with the help of the project.

Management approach

The project was designed with no staff provisions to support the implementation. Although from a cost-efficiency point of view the decision to have no staff costs in the project budget appears to be justified, it is likely to generate an additional workload on the existing staff in the country office, in addition to their regular job responsibilities.

- It is advisable to envision at least some administrative assistance costs in project budgets, for example on a part-time basis.

Participatory approach to project design

The project concept was designed in consultations with the national partners. All key stakeholders interviewed expressed their readiness to participate in future project design prior to the beginning of the project activities. Such consultations strengthen the relevance and increase the ownership and commitment over outcomes.

- It is recommended to sustain the practice of involving the constituents in project concept design for future interventions.

3.2 Project effectiveness

The stakeholders were unanimous in saying that the project strengthened their knowledge on return migration. All the outputs were delivered as planned. The project studies provided credible and valid data on return migrants profile and characteristics. The project filled a gap in the existing knowledge base with a very limited number of studies available. The data obtained conforms with the information available from other sources, including the findings of other research projects, which confirms that the data is reliable, the methodology is correct and the findings can be used in decision-making. Based on the above, the MLSPF has engaged into the process of drafting a Programme aimed at facilitating the reintegration of return migrants. Benefitting from the insights on return migrants' needs and challenges, it is striving to design a targeted package of services so that it meets the real needs, demands and helps them settle down in the home country. The Bureau for Diaspora Relations is planning to use research findings in drafting a concept note on empowering labour migrants and other public policy documents.

The project has also produced research on practical experiences of other countries in tackling similar challenges, which is extremely valuable as it sets the right context for various policy options under consideration. It was particularly noted that the selection of the countries for the analysis of international practices on returning migration policies was right: it included the countries with similar or comparable economic and social conditions (e.g., Albania, Romania). The scope of analysis was also calibrated well, with due consideration of strengths and weaknesses of various measures and options taken.

National partners were regularly consulted and involved into the design of the survey questionnaire and other tools. The validation workshop in Chisinau in February 2014 offered them a chance to make suggestions and give recommendations for the finalization of the study. There was a broad range of experts and stakeholders involved into consultations from various parties concerned, including the social partners and international organizations, such as IOM. According to the respondents, they were able to influence the process and their views have been taken into consideration. The level of involvement of social partners was good, but not the same. Employers' involvement was apparently less vocal and visible as compared to other partners.

The findings, conclusions and recommendations of the research products delivered by the project have already proved to be useful for the work of the national authorities tasked with facilitating reintegration of labour migrants. A proposal for public policy on Incentives for the Return of Migrants to the Republic of Moldova and a National Plan of Action on Supporting the Reintegration of Returnees for 2014-2016 have been drafted by the MLSPF with a broad range of options, including information and awareness, counselling network at regional/local level, assistance with job search and finance management, so that migrants' savings could be used for development. These are intended to be country-wide interventions that will be implemented in various regions through the network of 43 territorial Public Employment Services. The public policy proposal was presented at the high-level final

project event in Chisinau on March 19, 2014 (50 participants, with women and men equally represented) chaired by Vice-Minister of MLSPF of Moldova who noted that a lot of recommendations from the study have been reflected in both, the government plan of action and proposal for public policy.

- The level of involvement of social partners was good, but not the same. It is advisable to enhance participation of employers in the ongoing and future capacity building activities.

Conclusion: Overall the project has achieved its immediate objective. It was an up-stream policy oriented initiative that produced research which was useful and used by the policy-makers and other stakeholders. The effectiveness of the project in strengthening the capacities of Moldovan constituents to design evidence-based policies on labour migration is high. According to one of the respondents from the government, under proper conditions, projects of a small size can produce results comparable to the results of large projects, so that one may conclude that there is no direct correlation between the size of a project and its effectiveness.

3.3 Efficiency

Time-wise and budget-wise this is a small-scale project that produced tangible and useful results, including the elaboration of an innovative research methodology, preparation of solid analytical outputs and communication of research findings to the key stakeholders and policy-makers at the national level.

The management of the project was done by the DWT/CO-Budapest specialists and management team at no cost to the project. It was proactive and result-oriented. Moreover, the project implementation was supported by the ILO existing staff in the field, including ILO NC in Moldova and NPC of the EU funded project on labour migration that was implemented at the same time (2013).

Moreover, the government provided in-kind support to the project by offering the venue for the project meetings and validation workshop free of charge.

Collecting original data on return migration through a specially designed survey (quantitative research) however has taken longer than foreseen. Additional time was needed to complete all the planned research stages, including qualitative research, analysis of findings.

- For a project of one-year duration, a quick start is of utmost importance. Because the project had several logically interlinked research components that were building up one upon the other, any delay with each of the initial components would inevitably cause a delay with the consecutive steps.

Conclusion: The overall efficiency of this intervention is high.

3.4 Sustainability

Sustainability and exit strategy

It is very likely that the capacities strengthened with the support of the project will be sustained. A sustainability strategy was not precisely defined at the stage of the project design, although actions towards the sustainability of the project results have been mainstreamed into the overall project approach: through engaging stakeholders into the design of research methodology and tools (survey questionnaire), validation of research and discussion of the studies, communication of findings to the decision-makers within national partners' organizations, and a final conference in Chisinau where the government Proposal of Public Policy on Incentives for the Return of Migrants to the Republic of Moldova was presented for discussion to a broad range of stakeholders from the tripartite constituents organizations, international organizations, NGOs, academic community.

Institutional sustainability

The project main focus has been at empowering the national partners with the relevant knowledge and tools. A multi-agency working group was established to advise the project implementation, discuss the methodology and findings. This can be seen as an institutional platform for further work. This group could be sustained, possibly, with the ILO's help as facilitator of meetings in the future.

The level of involvement of social partners was good, but not the same. It is advisable to enhance the participation of employers in future dialogue and capacity building activities.

Technical sustainability (expertise)

Local providers and experts were extensively involved into the research and the technical/professional skills are likely to be sustained by the expert community, provided that the local research company (Center for Sociological Investigations and Marketing/CBS-AXA) remains in business. These experts and expertise represent a strong asset and can be used in future research projects by the government and the ILO.

Sustainability of policy proposals

Looking one step forward, financial sustainability of the public policy proposals using project research findings is one of the most challenging aspects, taking into account the economic situation of the country. A commitment to allocate financial resources for the implementation of efforts in the field of return migration would clearly enhance the sustainability of the project results.

Conclusion: In the overall, sustainability of the project contributions at capacity level has good prospects. The skills and knowledge are likely to be used without further presence of the ILO project(s) in the country. At the policy level, much will depend on the availability of public funds for the implementation of relevant plans and actions.

3.5 Special considerations

Gender issues

The project implementation envisaged a specific focus on gender issues and therefore adequate provisions for gender-disaggregated data collection were made. Gender statistics have been well recorded during the preparation of studies/research. All project quantitative data are gender-disaggregated and adequate attention has been paid to making sure that gender specific findings can be obtained.

Gender specific patterns of migration for labour were documented and described, including the destination countries, public services needs (e.g., child care), duration of stay in receiving country etc. It is possible to sort data by gender, sectors, age to design evidence-based policies for different target groups.

Knowledge sharing

The review of the project records and interviews with the stakeholders confirm that knowledge sharing has been addressed at all the stages of the implementation. The knowledge products of the project include:

- Specifically designed research tools, quantitative and qualitative, including return labour migrants' survey questionnaire and focus group guide
- Analytical reports (draft and final)
- Statistical database with survey results
- A set of relevant recommendations resulting from the analysis

These knowledge products have been shared with the project stakeholders and are planned to be made available to the partners and the public after the completion of the project. Moreover, they were produced in two languages: Romanian and English, which makes them accessible and convenient to use for broader audiences in Moldova and abroad. Of particular notice, TV and press were invited at the final project event and a broad coverage in the national mass-media was provided.

The MLSPF of Moldova is engaged into cooperation with eight CIS countries on remittances, labour statistics and labour migration , so information sharing is taking place in the framework of relevant regional inter-ministerial structures.

- It is recommended to make sure that the project studies are made available online after they are finalized, at least on the following websites: MLSPF; ILO/HQ; ILO/Budapest. It could be also placed on UNDP, IOM and UN Women websites;
- It is also recommended to make sure that the studies are easily searchable online through popular search engines by relevant key words and with relevant tags inserted into the text.

4. Conclusions and recommendations

The project represented an upstream policy-related intervention. It was a strategic investment to support the constituents and strengthen their capacities in policy making on one of the topical labour market issues in Moldova – return migration and reintegration of labour migrants.

The data collected, the findings and recommendations of research produced by the project have been already used by the partners in drafting public policy and will serve as a reference point for future policy analysis.

Below is a recapitulation of the main findings of the analysis by each of the evaluation criteria.

Relevance

- The focus of the project was chosen correctly. The project fits into the constituents' and national policy agenda in the field of labour migration. It is aligned with the DWCP/Moldova, Outcome 2.2.
- The project is timely and topical for the country.
- The project's approach to use a combination of upstream policy-related studies has proven to be relevant.
- The approach to involve all categories of the project stakeholders in project implementation with an emphasis on tripartite cooperation has been chosen correctly.

Design

- The logical framework represents a quite basic matrix only generally reflecting key areas of the project intervention. The design lacks risks analysis, assumptions were not formulated.
- Human resources were not envisioned in the project budget and the original timeframe proved to be too short for completion of all project activities.

Effectiveness

- The project has generally achieved its objective. Understanding/commitment of the Government and social partners on return labour migration has increased due to the project.
- The achievements of the project at the national level are seen as a major contribution to the process of addressing the issue of return migration. The resulting knowledge and skills are already used for the development of policy and implementation measures.
- The social partners are working together in addressing the labour migration issues, but not yet on a full scale. The level of involvement of social partners into the project was good, but not the same, so more attention to strengthening the capacity of the employers' organization would be needed.

Efficiency

- The project was managed efficiently by the DWT/CO-Budapest team.

- It was successful in attracting additional resources for its implementation at no cost to the project at the country level, including contribution of venue for project meetings by the government free of charge, contribution of time and expertise by dedicated ILO staff.
- Some delays in the implementation of project activities have been observed due to the need for broad consultations with multiple stakeholders on research methodology and survey tools that took longer than expected. The project management requested a no-cost extension for three months that was successfully approved by the donor.

Sustainability

- Sustainability of the project contributions at capacity level has good prospects. The skills and knowledge are likely to be used without further presence of the ILO project(s) in the country.
- At the policy level, much will depend on the availability of public funds for the implementation of relevant plans and actions, including the National Plan of Action on Supporting the Reintegration of Returnees for 2014-2016 and the Proposal of Public Policy on Incentives for the Return of Migrants to the Republic of Moldova currently under finalization.

Cross-cutting gender and knowledge-sharing aspects were given due consideration during the implementation.

Of particular notice, MLSPF representatives asked to put on record their gratitude to the ILO and the Donor for the technical assistance offered with the help of this relatively small but nevertheless useful project.

Recommendations

1. Envision a possibility to support the national partners in evaluating the results of the implementation of the National Plan of Action on Supporting the Reintegration of Returnees for 2014-2016, for example one year after its start at the end of 2015, to see whether it is achieving the expected results, what is working well and what is not working well, what are the issues encountered and if there are any changes in the needs of return migrants and any adjustments in the strategy to be made.²
2. Consider a possibility to repeat the same study in two to three years to track possible changes in return migrants profile and needs in order to support evidence-based policy

² It is envisaged that a centralized database of return migrants who will have received services from the state programme will be created and maintained, so that it would be possible to know how many have received assistance. It would be also possible to use the records for analysis and decision-making.

responses with regards to their integration into the domestic labour market. The findings of the 2013 study will serve as a baseline.

3. Sustain the multi-agency working group on labour migration.
4. Explore new formats or approaches to coordination on migration and development issues with other international organizations, e.g., IOM, UNDP (depending on the topic), to come jointly vis-à-vis the government. In certain cases more narrow discussions on labour migration might be useful.
5. It is advisable to enhance participation of employers in future capacity building activities and dialogue on labour migration. A tailor made training for employers might be envisaged.
6. The methodology and the findings of the studies might be of help to colleagues from the Ministries of Labour of other countries with similar challenges and migration patterns. In this regards, it would be beneficial to have parts of the report translated into Russian for sharing with colleagues from the region for possible replication.
7. It is recommended to develop a follow-up plan for further continuation of dialogue at country level and make sure that the project studies are made available online after they are finalized, at least on the following websites: MLSPF; ILO/HQ; ILO/Budapest. They could be also placed on UNDP, IOM and UN Women websites.
It is also recommended to make sure that the studies are searchable online through popular search engines with relevant tags inserted into the text.
8. Decent Work is on the government agenda and more cooperation, more common activities with the ILO's involvement would be needed. Some subject areas of relevance to the project topic were suggested by the respondents, including:
 - jobs creation, with a particular consideration of quality of jobs created (are they attractive to the candidates from among return migrants)
 - monitoring of the situation on the labour market and opportunities for reintegration of return migrants
 - quality of labour market governance (transparency, accountability and other)
 - validation of qualifications and skills of return migrants
 - matching of employers and job seekers from among return migrants
 - reintegration of young graduates who are studying abroad

Recommendations concerning project design

9. It is advisable for the design of future interventions, even in case it is a research project, to pay due attention to the formulation of expected results with relevant indicators and targets. In case of a 'capacity' type of outcome, such indicators would

refer to the anticipated changes in knowledge, skills and attitudes to be addressed with the help of the project.

10. It is advisable to envision at least some administrative assistance costs in project budgets, for example on a part-time basis.
11. It is recommended to sustain the practice of involving the constituents in project concept design for future interventions.

Lessons learned

1. Under proper conditions, projects of a small size can produce results comparable to the results of large projects, so that one may conclude that there is no direct correlation between the size of a project and its effectiveness. The key determining factors or conditions would be the level of preparedness of the constituents to the kind of support offered by the project, the degree of complementarity with the constituents' own initiatives and timing/correlation with their plans. All these conditions can only be met when there are close ties with the constituents, understanding of current developments and ability to anticipate.
2. For a project of one-year duration, a quick start is of outmost importance. Because the project had several logically interlinked research components that were building up one upon the other, any delay with each of the initial components would inevitably cause a delay with the consecutive steps.

Annex 1. Terms of Reference



Terms of Reference for Internal Evaluation of the project:
“Return migrants and home country socio economic development”
(MOL/12/01/CZE)

Donor:

Government of the Czech Republic

Implementing Agency:

International Labour Organization (ILO)

Type of Evaluation:

Internal Evaluation

Date & Duration:

March, 2014 (2 days desk work, 3 days drafting the report)

March, 2014 (3 day mission to Moldova, - interviews and participation at final event)

Geographical coverage:

Moldova

Duration of the project *15 months: 15th January, 2013 to 31st March, 2014*

Total amount of the project:

CZK1,500,000 (US\$79,407 at January 2013 UN exchange rate).

1. Background and Justification

In order to be in a position to understand better the return migration-development nexus in countries, such as Moldova, and design evidence-based policies, which foster return migration and successful labour market reintegration at home, it is necessary to carry out research to provide empirical evidence and analysis on return migration trends, what factors affect return and re-migration decisions and what type of social and economic characteristics return migrants possess. Further, this analytical work contributes to support the design of measures and incentives encouraging sustainable and successful labour market reintegration for return migrants in Moldova and other countries facing similar demographic challenges, thus fostering the efficient use of human, financial and social capital acquired abroad for homeland development.

Immediate Objective: Strengthened capacity of Moldovan constituents to design evidence-based policies, which foster return migration and successful labour market reintegration at home.

Output 1: Return migration Survey

Output 2: Analysis on return migration trends including policy recommendations

Output 3: Publication of the analysis

Output 4: Review of best practices on measures and incentives for labour
market re-integration of returnees

Output 5: Launching survey results and analysis

2. Scope, Purpose and Clients of the Evaluation

The purpose of this internal project evaluation is to evaluate progress made and make recommendations on how to improve sustainability of achieved results. The project evaluator should review and assess the progress and achievements of the project from January 15, 2013 to date. The objectives and outputs as mentioned in the Project Document will be the starting point of the evaluation. The project should be evaluated in terms of efficiency, effectiveness, relevance and finally sustainability of the project, as they are briefly described below:

Generally, the evaluation will:

-Firstly, review the achievements of the Project by assessing to what extent the stated objectives and major outputs have been achieved;

-Secondly, review the efficiency and effectiveness of the project implementation;

-Thirdly, review to what extent the program is still relevant and is continuing to meet the needs of its original target groups;

Finally, draw conclusions in terms of the progress made and make recommendations for future actions beyond the end of the project (i.e. what is the scope and potential for activities being sustained without technical assistance by the ILO).

The evaluation will serve the following - external and internal - clients' groups:

- The ILO DWT-CO Budapest
- The ILO Headquarters management and backstopping units
- The tripartite constituents
- The Donor

3. Project Assessment

This project evaluation should address the progress of the project to date – in this, it should deal with the following main 'effect and impact concerns': validity of project design, delivery of project strategy, and project performance. The latter should include relevance, effectiveness, efficiency, sustainability, causality and unanticipated effects, alternative strategies and gender concerns. Finally, the project assessment should also deal with the lessons learned during the project. OECD/DAC Criteria for Evaluating Development Assistance will be used to interpret the answers to the evaluation questions.

Specific questions to be addressed include:

A. Are we doing the right thing?

Rationale/Relevance

- ✓ *Do the problems/needs that gave rise to the project still exist, have they changed or are there new needs that should be addressed?*
- ✓ *Was the project an appropriate response to the problems/needs that existed when it started?*

B. Are we doing things in the right way?

Effectiveness of achieving expected results

- ✓ *Has the overall execution of the project focused on the achievement of the objectives?*
- ✓ *Is the delivery strategy effective?*
- ✓ *Have the main partners interacted and coordinated as planned?*
- ✓ *Have the various partners contributed to project implementation as planned?*
- ✓ *Has the project management sufficiently combined project activities with the strengths of its project partners?*

- ✓ *Has the project made sufficient progress in meeting its objectives?*

Efficiency: in the use of inputs and satisfaction of intended beneficiaries

- ✓ *Have resources (funds, human resources, time, expertise etc) been used efficiently?*
- ✓ *Have activities been delivered in a timely manner?*
- ✓ *Have activities been cost effective?*
- ✓ *Has data been collected to measure the outputs of the project?*
- ✓ *Is it necessary to collect additional data?*
- ✓ *Has the project made sufficient progress in conducting activities and producing outputs?*
- ✓ *Did the target groups participate in the formulation and implementation of the project?*
- ✓ *Have the project benefits accrued to the target groups?*

C. Are there better ways achieving results?

- ✓ *Do conditions exist to ensure that the project's results will have lasting effects?*
- ✓ *What are the major lessons learnt through the project implementation and what are the implications for future project design?*

Special considerations:

Gender Concerns:

- ✓ *Have women and men in the target groups benefited equally from the project activities?*
- ✓ *To what extent did the project mainstream gender in its approach and activities?*
- ✓ *To what extent did the project use gender/women specific tools and products?*

Knowledge Sharing:

- ✓ *Has sufficient attention been given to documenting the project experiences and achievements?*
- ✓ *In what ways has the knowledge pertaining to these project experiences and achievements been documented?*
- ✓ *Has the project sufficiently shared its accrued knowledge on the experiences and achievements among the project's country teams?*
- ✓ *Have the project experiences and achievements been shared with stakeholders within and outside the ILO (with similar ILO projects in-country and in the region, other donors' projects, government agencies etc.)?*

Sustainability:

- ✓ *What is the likelihood of sustainability of outcomes?*
- ✓ *What project components or results appear likely to be sustained after the project and how?*

4. Methodology

- a) Desk review: review of project reports;
- b) Interviews with the managers of the project, the national project coordinator, as well as the national project assistants;
- c) Interviews with national government representatives as well as employers' representatives and trade union representatives.
- d) Field visit.

5. Findings, Conclusions and Recommendations

The consultant should include, but not be limited to, the questions raised in Section 3 in his/her evaluating work and the resulting findings, conclusions and recommendations. The project team will arrange the necessary field visit and share all the necessary project info with the Evaluator.

6. Timetable and Itinerary

Desk Review: 3 days

Interviews with Budapest and project managers 1 day through Skype.

Field visit: interview with national project staff and stakeholders 1 day, participation at ½ day tripartite roundtable assessing progress of the project.

Report writing: 5 days for the first draft + 2 days for addressing comments.

DTW/CO Budapest will cover all related costs.

A detailed itinerary will be provided to the evaluator prior to arriving to Kiev.

7. Sources of information

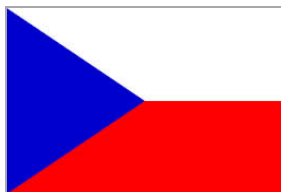
The evaluator will have access to all relevant material on the project from ILO DWT/CO Budapest and the national project office in Kiev. To the extent possible, key documentation will be sent to the evaluator in advance. The documentation will include the project document, work plans, progress reports and other relevant documents.

8. Final report

The evaluator will present an initial report on the 26th March 2014. This will allow the project staff to discuss findings and provide additional information, if need be during the week, COB 28th March, 2014. Subsequently, a final evaluation report will be submitted on the 31th March, 2014.



Government of the Republic of
Moldova



Annex 2. List of interviews

MOL/12/01/CZE

„Return Migrants and Home Country Socio-Economic Development”

ILO internal evaluation mission

to Chisinau, Moldova on March 17 – 19, 2014

Mrs. Irina Sinelina

Tentative AGENDA (as of 11.03.2014)

Monday, 17 March 2014	
14.00 – 15.00	Ministry of Labour, Social Protection and Family (MLSPF) Mrs. Valentina Ungureanu, Head of Migration Policies Department <i>Address: MLSPF, 1, V. Alecsandri str.</i>
16.00 – 17.00	Bureau for Relations with Diaspora Mrs. Natalia Vozian, National Consultant on Economical Programmes <i>Address: 1, Pia</i> the Moldovan Republic <i>1 Națională, 4</i>
Tuesday, 18 March 2014	
10.00 – 11.00	IOM Mission to Moldova Mr. Ion Bulgac, Mr. Simion Terzioglo <i>Address: 31, Ciuflea str., nr. 36/1, Chisinau</i>
11.30 – 12.30	CBS-AXA Mr. Vasile Cantarji, Coordinator <i>Address: CBS-AXA office, 31 August 1989 str., no. 98, office 202, Chisinau</i>

14.00 – 15.00	<p>Meeting on the Proposal for Public Policy with MLSPF, IOM and ILO</p> <p>Mrs. Valentina Ungureanu, MLSPF, Mr. Ion Bulgac, IOM, Mrs. Natalia Popova, Mr. Francesco Panzica, Mrs. Anna Farkas</p> <p><i>Address: MLSPF, 1, V. Alecsandri str.</i></p>
16.00 – 17.00	<p>ILO Project team</p> <p>Mrs. Natalia Popova, Mrs. Anita Anna Farkas, Mrs. Oxana Lipcanu and Mr. Francesco Panzica</p> <p><i>Address: TBD</i></p>
Wednesday, 19 March 2014	
09.00 – 14.00	<p>Conference „Return Migrants and Home Country Socio-Economic Development”, Codru Hotel, "Mozart" hall</p>