



Independent Clustered Evaluation of Vision Zero Fund projects in the global coffee supply chain Training and Technological Investment (PROFIT) – Final independent evaluation

Executive summary

ILO DC/SYMBOL: HTI/20/01/NOR

Type of Evaluation: Project

Evaluation timing: Final

Evaluation nature: Independent

Project country: Haiti

P&B Outcome: Outcome 4: Sustainable enterprises as generators of employment and promoters of innovation and decent work

SDGs: 8, 9, 12, 13

Date when the evaluation was completed by the evaluator: 23 April 2024

Date when evaluation was approved by EVAL: 17 May 2024

ILO Administrative Office: DWT/CO – San Jose

ILO Technical Office(s): SKILLS

Project duration: December 2020 – March 2024

Donor and budget: Norway, USD 4,297,393

Name of consultant(s): Patrick Alteus (evaluation leader) - CATEDEL

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Evaluation Office oversight: Patricia Vidal

Evaluation budget: USD 33,530

Key Words: Grand-Anse Haïti (Small Island States of the Caribbean), Humid mountain agriculture and quality approach (SDG 1 and 2); Green and resilient jobs (SDG 4 and 8); Integration into preferential markets (SDG 10 and 16); Gender integration and participation (SDG 5); Climate of metastasized insecurity (SDG 16); Combating extreme poverty and exclusion (SDG 1); Agricultural logistics (SDG 3); Equity – Diversity and Inclusion and Sharing of services (SDG 17); Ecosystem resilience and Climate change (SDG 11, 12, 13, 14 and 15); Transfer of expertise and Strengthening organizational capacities (SDG 17)



BACKGROUND & CONTEXT

Summary of the project purpose, logic and structure

The PROFIT Project (HTI/20/01/NOR), funded by the Norwegian Ministry of Foreign Affairs for a total amount of USD 4,297.393, is being implemented following a set of recommendations from evaluations of other sustainable development initiatives carried out in Haiti – in accordance with its mandate; in consultation with the most representative public authorities and civil society organizations concerned by the areas and/or sectors of intervention of the said project and therefore, in consistency with: The “country program for the promotion of decent work” of the ILO for the period in Haiti. This project is in principle aligned with "Product 4.2.: Strengthening the capacities of businesses and their support systems to improve productivity and sustainability" of the said program and focused on SDG 8 and nested in other strategic orientation frameworks developed by the United Nations System and national sectoral public policies of Haiti. Its implementation is ensured by the National Projects Office of the International Labor Organization (ILO) of Haiti in support of sectoral ministries and in consultation with stakeholders. It began in December 2020 and its closing date was theoretically scheduled for November 30, 2023. With the arrival of the EMERGENCY PROFIT Project component, the closing date has just been modified to March 15, 2024, on the one hand, and then, brought up to January 31, 2024, due to lack of funds.

The overall objective of the project is to contribute to improving the living conditions of small farmers in the promising agricultural sectors of the Grand-Anse department. The main expected results are:

- (i) The capacity of farmers to develop (refined) products in greater quantity and better quality, corresponding to growing market demand, is improved (adapted technical and managerial training, better structured producers), with particular attention to the specificities and gender needs.
- (ii) The technological capacity of agriculture and applied research along value chains for selected products is improved (traceability, fermentation, post-harvest equipment);
- (iii) The income and financial capacity of beneficiary farmers are improved, green and decent jobs are created in support of the two targeted agricultural and agri-food value chains;
- (iv) Support for the establishment of a credit/savings system;
- (v) The living conditions of the populations of the PROFIT project area victims of the earthquake in Haiti on August 14 and of hurricane Grace



	<p>are improved.</p> <p>This final evaluation reviewed the achievements at the level of each of these results using a holistic approach to analyzing the operating environment of the project to highlight the successes, constraints, good practices, lessons learned and recommendations that can guide the possible similar interventions and organizational practices. It has been commissioned by the ILO Evaluation Unit in San Jose (Costa Rica) and the findings are intended to be used by the project stakeholders (Norway government, ILO Office for Central America, Dominican Republic, Haiti and Panama, Project office in Haiti, Office of Evaluation (EVAL) -ILO Geneva, Municipalities of the Grand-Anse department; KNFP, GEONOVA, KALEOS, GAPL, etc...)</p>
<p>Purpose, scope and clients of the evaluation</p>	<p>The final and independent evaluation combined two (2) approaches. One focused on the logic of the intervention, the other rather global, focused on interactions. The evaluation followed the evaluation norms and standards of the United Nations Evaluation Group (UNEG). Thus, it applied the criteria and approaches to international development assistance as defined in the OECD Quality Standards for Development Evaluation. The evaluation combined quantitative study methods and qualitative approaches to better appreciate the subjective dimensions and lead to a more objective analysis of the project's achievements.</p> <p>The evaluation was carried out using a mixed sequential exploratory design. Thus, the two components (qualitative and quantitative) were explored, deciphered, processed, and analyzed simultaneously. This choice was justified due to the orientation of the conceptual and operational framework of PROFIT which combines both qualitative and quantitative data. The reporting format is more of the “ QUAL+Quan ” type (Leech, 2012) . That is to say, the qualitative component is – in substance – more important than the quantitative part, which is relatively less elaborate. Given the scale of the project and the quantity of achievements, the qualitative approach makes it possible to dig deeper and identify the real impacts of the project on the communities and target groups. The quantitative analysis approach, for its part, allowed us to confirm the trends, find patterns and test causal relationships.</p> <p>To reach the conclusions and related recommendations, the review of project documentation, the evaluation designed and used semi-structured interview guides, observation sheets and individual questionnaires. In order to guarantee a suitable level of representativeness, a systematic random sampling method was applied. The assessment had set a sampling rate greater than or equal to 30%. The deductive and inductive analysis carried out around the discriminating parameters made it possible to</p>

formulate elements of conclusions, suggestions, and consequent recommendations.

Field data collection began in mid-January and ended on March 10, 2024; in an extremely difficult context marked in particular by:

- 1) The major impacts of the socio-political crisis.
- 2) The rivalry between armed gangs in the neighborhoods, which now infests the entire country;
- 3) Critical communication problems and the recurring fuel shortage crisis.
- 4) The disengagement of the majority of NGOs and other types of operators which generally operate in supporting isolated and remote rural communities in the country.

The data collected was validated at different geographic, organizational, and institutional levels, through an iterative process, focused on a representative and inclusive participation approach. All stakeholders have been contacted and engaged to this process by providing useful data and information needed to understand the implementation and its impacts.

MAIN FINDINGS & CONCLUSIONS

MAIN CONCLUSIONS:

i. The implementation of the project was planned for a period of 36 months ranging from December 2020 to November 30, 2023. During this short period, the project faced various external obstacles and blockages which hampered its smooth running such as the events of unrest and uncertainties which followed the assassination of President Jovenel Moïse on July 7, 2021, the passage of the earthquake in the Great South on August 14, 2021, followed by the passage of the tropical storm, August 15, 2021. Among the obstacles, we can mention the blockages of roads and the oil terminal by armed groups from September to December 2022, socio-political events, constantly unpredictable and uncontrollable which have negative repercussions in the country and the project intervention area, cases of generalized insecurity characterized by kidnappings, sequestration for ransom and summary assassinations along the axis leading to the Great South which paralyze interdepartmental movements.

ii. The project, with the new values it promotes, in favor of the empowerment of people with reduced mobility - women and girls, only galvanizes - catalyzes substantial, palpable progress. In addition, this inspiring, encouraging and promising dynamic is strongly supported by a rising generation of conscious men, educated, for the most part, within the framework of the project on the cause.

iii. The project made considerable efforts to respond to the recommendations of the mid-term evaluation, address management of



responses to key recommendations, seek synergies and accelerate implementation. Certain ongoing activities (such as the traceability platform, solidarity mutual networks, strengthening of FOSAG, integration of breadfruit flour into food and products, etc.) have been strengthened to respond best suited to the needs expressed. Other activities were carried out specifically during this post-evaluation period. These results are highlighted in the selected list above.

iv. The project provides a response to this situation by targeting the rehabilitation of certain municipal markets and road sections of the Jérémie-Les Irois road in partnership with the Departmental Directorate of Public Works and Communications through the EMERGENCY PROFIT component. So, it is this trend that PROFIT theory aims to reverse. If for all the constraints raised previously the level of effects and expected impact is not yet perceptible, for certain components of results, the evaluation estimates that the majority of interventions carried out and/or in progress fall into this dynamic category.

v. To strengthen its actions, improve the implementation environment and contribute to improving the resilience of beneficiary communities which evolve in a complex physical, hydrometeorological, socio-economic and socio-political context, the project team, with the help of the office of Geneva and San José has mobilized additional resources to implement initiatives addressing specific issues relating to the framework defined at the level of the theory of change. This working relationship developed at different levels of the organization is a positive element which makes it possible to strengthen the capacity to provide solutions at the local level for the well-being of the final beneficiaries. In a logic of performance, ownership and sustainability, the project has also developed solid partnerships at the local level which have contributed to the positive results obtained so far.

KEY ACHIEVEMENTS AND FIRST RESULTS:

During its implementation period, the project carried out a set of activities which contribute to strengthening the two value chains targeted at the local level and community resilience. Thanks to its effective approach, despite the difficult context in which it evolved, the project was able to achieve the majority of its initial targets and even some unexpected results. Among the main achievements cited by most people interviewed and observed, we can cite:

- Mutual solidarity networks made up of 1,157 members (including 535 men and 622 women) have been set up, facilitating the emphasis on rapid credit and at an affordable rate for project beneficiaries,

- ▶ A modern and functional cocoa fermentation center with an annual capacity of 150 tons is built in the commune of Anse d' Hainault in partnership with KALEOS and PLACAGA,
- ▶ A well-equipped breadfruit-to-flour processing unit is set up in Dame-Marie,
- ▶ In partnership with the agronomic research unit of Quisqueya University, three research studies were carried out: (i) pre-diagnosis of market opportunities for breadfruit and its derivatives (ii) maximum substitution of breadfruit flour breadfruit in traditional breadmaking and analysis of the nutritional value of breadfruit flour (iii) formulation of instant juice powder based on breadfruit,
- ▶ A disaster insurance mechanism has been put in place for the benefit of 1,000 producers in conjunction with AIC and KALEOS;
- ▶ A network of agricultural service providers is set up, supported, and trained to provide close technical assistance service to local producers...

In addition, thanks to the EMERGENCY, SDG and “joint program (ILO-UNCTAD)” components:

- ▶ 1,154 direct beneficiaries are trained in the “Family Emergency Plan” in the communities where the project operates,
- ▶ A technical study is carried out for the rehabilitation or construction of 6 modern municipal markets in the project intervention municipalities.
- ▶ 57 junior civil engineers and construction technicians are trained, however, 37 received the assessment test and certified after evaluation in seismic and anticyclonic construction practices in partnership with the town halls of the municipalities of intervention and the National Institute of Professional Training.
- ▶ Six (6) critical sections of road totaling 11.5 kilometers are rehabilitated along departmental road 75 km to facilitate transportation for the sale of fresh agricultural products and the movement of people.
- ▶ The 480 ml fence of the Lesson farm training center in Dame-Marie is rebuilt in support of the Departmental Agricultural Directorate of Grand-Anse. This center is dedicated to the training of farmers and the development of technical packages at the request of farmers and entrepreneurs in the department. Note that an extension of 100 ml of fencing is in the process of being possible. For a total of 580/1230 ml of reconstructed fence.

SATISFACTIONS EXPRESSED BY STAKEHOLDERS:

Data on the perception of the various stakeholders of the project has evolved since the mid-term evaluation finalized at the beginning of 2023. Given its relevance and the results obtained, the project received very high levels of satisfaction according to the new data collected. Compared to the mid-term review, a greater number of stakeholders rate the overall execution of the project as “very satisfactory”. The percentages are then distributed as follows:

- 40% of implementing partners (compared to 18% at mid-term) think that this is a very interesting project, while for 50% it is a good project,
- 59% of the decentralized public bodies involved believe that it is a good project (compared to 51% for mid-term) and for 35% it is a fairly good project (42% at mid-term) and, around 6% believe that the results are mixed or have nothing to report.
- 38% of local authorities (Mayors and CASECs) believe that it is a very interesting project (35% at mid-term), and for 45% it is a good project (compared to 47% at mid-term) and, for 12% is a pretty good project (13% at midterm) ...

In relation to the satisfaction expressed to the direct beneficiaries (organizational and individual), the final evaluation noted a clear improvement in the level compared to that of the mid-term which was, for its part, already good. The trend of opinions can be summarized as follows :

- 65% of respondents say they are very satisfied with the gender and sex-specific approach adopted by the project compared to 53% mid-term and 32% say they are satisfied compared to 35% mid-term,
- 45% of respondents are very satisfied (compared to 22% at mid-term) and 55% satisfied (compared to 70% at mid-term) with the establishment of solidarity mutual networks,
- 40% of respondents are very satisfied (compared to 20% at mid-term) and 55% are satisfied compared to (73% at mid-term) in relation to the component “transfer of expertise and capacity building in agricultural value chains ”.

Another aspect that is worth mentioning is the level of satisfaction of stakeholders on prioritized thematic such as: environmental protection, job creation, gender empowerment, market strengthening. Most of beneficiaries express total satisfaction of the project gender-response effort, environmental benefits of strengthening the local agroforestry ecosystem, and job creation and income generation through market

strengthening. Thus, we concluded, through our analysis, that the effort made by the project to better involve local actors in the implementation through the mobilization of additional resources which make it possible to intervene on other axes and allied concerns was the main source of increase in the level of satisfaction expressed by stakeholders.

CHALLENGES, LIMITATIONS AND MITIGATION STRATEGIES

The evaluation has encountered several difficulties during the field data collection period. To cope with them, we have used specific mitigation approaches. The main obstacles faced and mitigation strategies used are:

No.	Main difficulties encountered	Coping strategies
A-1.-	<p>Deterioration of insecurity conditions:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> During the evaluation period, the security situation worsened. Political unrest surrounding February - the expected end of agreement among political parties and organizations - along with the return of the ex-senator from Grand-Anse and the start of his REVOLUTION movement, led to widespread road blockages across the country, especially in the Grand 'Anse communes where the project intervenes, <p>Added to this:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> The period was further characterized by rampant banditry and recurrent criminal actions. The Mariani area, situated on the axis leading to the departments of Nippes, Sud and Grand 'Anse, emerged as a hot spot of violence, with numerous cases of assassinations and frequent kidnappings, significant hindering mobility. Frequent cases of summary executions and kidnappings in the great South and mainly in the project intervention area, further complicating the security landscape. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Systematic withdrawal from areas when the situation degenerates. Using the Snowball Methodology Conducting certain individual surveys by telephone, WhatsApp, and/or Zoom; Flexibility in field travel schedules. Process of daily updating of major vital issues, risks and threats;

A-2.-	<p>Aggravating circumstances linked to the context of political instability (very low continuity in the governance system):</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Unavailability of key people migrating to North America or other destinations • Expiration of the mandate of local elected officials, initially involved in the project, replaced by civil servants appointed by the central government who sometimes do not understand the problem and the associated issues; • Repeated changes of certain officials involved at different levels involved in the project; a major issue for carrying out certain semi-structured interviews. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Capitalizing on cordial relationships developed by the Principal Technical Advisor of the Project at the ILO (Fabrice Leclercq) to access stakeholders considered important; • Use of the snowball methodology to reach certain displaced people;
A.3	<p>The reaction times of public officials and town hall focal points were long, compared to the established schedule.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Regular follow-ups and courteous reminders • Changes in methods (telephone, WhatsApp, sending questionnaires for completion at the appropriate time, hyper-flexible schedule of the interviewer: the respondent has precedence in appointment times, etc.)
A.4	<p>The consultative process is conducted during the crisis period.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Difficulties in setting up meetings, particularly with public institutional actors and development organizations (national and international) • Difficulties in getting in touch with local actors due to lack of connection of communication networks at the local level due to the impossibility of reaching the antenna sites and supplying them with fuel 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Prioritize exchanges with direct beneficiaries and communities, which are more accessible during these periods.
AT 5	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Unavailability of certain key players due to departures 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Archive and historical investigations

	abroad due to humanitarian programs	
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GENDER PROFIT STRATEGIES

During its implementation, the project integrated specific considerations to promote the participation of women in activities and decision-making spheres. Women played an important role in one of the most impactful activities of the project: the establishment and management of mutual solidarity groups (54% women compared to 46% men). Sustained attention was paid to integrating gender aspects into all new activities. With its objective of 50% women beneficiaries, PROFIT is aligned with the ILO 2022-2025 action plan and the corresponding elements of UN-SWAP 2.0. It can be classified GEM 2 according to the UN gender equality markers (Gender Equality Marker – GEM). It has a very good performance in terms of EDI (Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion) in the sector.

GOOD PRACTICES, LESSONS LEARNED AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Good practices

GOOD PRACTICES (BI-):

BP-1. | Introduction of digitalization in the management of the cocoa and breadfruit sectors in Grand-Anse: The establishment of a digital platform to record farm data supports rural transformation and opens the way to better structuring of the sectors cocoa and breadfruit.

BP-2. | Strengthening local capacity in disaster prevention: Carrying out training sessions on seismic and anticyclonic construction for local technicians and disaster prevention and management for beneficiaries is an activity that will provide immediate and long-term results.

BP-3. | Establishment of productive partnerships by the project: The success of the project with its value chain approach is mainly due to the partnerships established and maintained with institutions with good roots at the local level; because the latter represent the basis of the selected sectors and emerged strengthened from the implementation, which paves the way for the sustainability of the actions carried out by the project.

Lessons learned

LESSONS LEARNED (LI-):

L.1. | The integrated implementation approach as a factor of overall satisfaction: The improvement in the overall satisfaction of the project

	<p>during the final evaluation compared to the mid-term review is above all the result of the integration of more actors and better dissemination of results through the implementation of additional components.</p> <p>L.2. Proactivity in the communication chain, an essential element for success: In a situation of repeated crises like that in Haiti where stakeholders still do not have full control of their programming, proactive communication strategies help to better manage unforeseen events.</p>
Recommendations	<p>RECOMMENDATIONS (RI-):</p> <p>R.1.- Carry out an exchange workshop (three days) for the establishment of a regional collaborative platform, involving in particular the local decentralized entities of the MARNDR, the Chamber of Commerce and Industry, implementing partners, NGOs of development and local financial institutions, mutual societies (MUSO) and the most representative organizations of farmers or agricultural professionals, to support the exit strategy: The project manages to bring together and organize the actors, previously scattered, in agroecological value chains with a socio-economic vocation; however, it does not exist yet a multi-stakeholder space where the potential challenges and opportunities can be exploited, to better promote and sustain the achievements and legacies of the project, on a regional scale.</p> <p>R.2. Carry out six open days (3 in Grand-Anse and 3 in the south) in order to promote (exhibit) the achievements of PROFIT to the general public, by giving the different categories of beneficiaries (individual and organizational) the opportunity to present their achievements (agricultural and consumer products on site, technologies introduced, photos, documents, videos, etc.), with the involvement of the various vectors of the regional and even national press : The project generated a set of results tangible, substantial, promising, and innovative in several areas, it will be an opportunity to popularize good practices, lessons learned, emerging issues; and, to offer associations of producers, traders, FOSACs, etc. to exhibit and sell their products (food, processed products or technologies, services, etc.); and to communicate their contact details to interested parties (business card).</p> <p>R.3.- Produce an article to promote the international prize won by KALEOS, with the support in part of PROFIT, with a view to further encouraging other companies in the private sector to invest in the initiatives approached under the angle of the circular economy, framed by a quality approach, as a source of diversification, empowerment and creation of renewable wealth – in a</p>



prism of socio-ecosystem resilience: The partnership with KALEOS is a very good example of the importance of private investment in the agri-food sector in the context of Haitian extensive agriculture, but other innovative investments of this type can be locally experienced at the level of production, conservation, processing and expanded marketing; while guaranteeing sustainable additional income for producers and sustainable development processes.

R.4.- Promote the scenario of resource mobilization for another phase of the project, with a view to strengthening actions in the breadfruit sector, while guaranteeing substantial investment for the deepening of research and development of new opportunities, seen from the perspective of a structuralist, integrative, pragmatic and decolonized epistemic approach: The findings from these studies pave the way for further research and creation of new economic opportunities through the development of strategic agroeconomic value chains.