



Sida-ILO Partnership Programme, 2022 – 25

QUICK FACTS

Countries: Global

Evaluation date: November 2023-May 2024

Evaluation type: Project

Evaluation timing: Mid-term

Administrative Office: GEDI, GREEN JOBS, SME, DEVINVEST

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Key Words: just transitions to environmental sustainability, gender equality, market-systems development, humanitarian, peace and development



BACKGROUND & CONTEXT

Summary of the project purpose, logic and structure

Anchored in the Sida-ILO Partnership for 2022–25, the programme was developed with the aim of contributing both to Sweden’s global development cooperation in sustainable economic development as well as to the ILO’s 2019 Centenary Declaration for the Future of Work and the 2021 Global Call to Action for a human-centred recovery from the COVID-19 crisis that is inclusive, sustainable and resilient.

To achieve this objective, the programme’s approach attempts an innovative design, presenting four key strategic cross-cutting areas of ILO’s work, precisely reflecting the normative nature of the Global Call to Action as main streams of work. The four cross-cutting areas and their intended outcomes are the following ones:

- Gender Equality and Non-discrimination (GEDI)
- Just Transition and Environmental Sustainability (JTES)
- Conflict perspective and Humanitarian, Peace and Development Nexus (HDPN)
- Market Systems Development Approach (MSD)

Work in all four cross-cutting areas is expected to produce global normative policy developments and global products serving many of the ILO’s policy outcomes and country priorities. Common to all four components of work is that they also consider the realities of workers both from the formal and informal sectors and tailor approaches as required through country-level applications. Furthermore, for the period 2022-2023, joint work from the various components was also planned in Colombia, Moldova, and Ghana.

For the biennium 2022-23, US\$ 6,681,056 were made available for the global programme

Purpose, scope and clients of the evaluation

The primary objectives of this mid-term evaluation are to provide an account of early results related to programme design and implementation, to contribute to real-time learning, and to enhance the evaluability of the programme. The evaluation provides analysis of the programme and examines the relevance, coherence, effectiveness, efficiency, and sustainability of the current phase



Methodology of evaluation

The evaluation assessed the programme covering the period 1 January 2022 to 31 January 2024. Data gathering was performed between 1 December 2023 and 16 January 2024. The geographical coverage is aligned with the scope of the programme and involved data collection in Colombia, Ghana and Moldova. The evaluation integrates gender equality, inclusion of people with disabilities, ILS and social dialogue, and Covid-19 as crosscutting concerns throughout its methodology and deliverables. The logical framework and indicators of the programme components were used as a basis for addressing key questions. A mixed-method approach was used to collect data to allow for triangulation and validation of data and enhance the credibility of findings, conclusions, and recommendations. Data collection relied on desk review of secondary sources, interviews and focus groups (25 male and 37 female), and observation to gather evidence of achievements. Data analysis was qualitative and quantitative. The evaluation faced and mitigated several constraints, i.e. limited time to conduct the evaluation and consult informants, limited number and types of evaluation informants, limited availability of data.

MAIN FINDINGS & CONCLUSIONS

Relevance

The evaluation found the programme relevant to global normative processes, the specific needs of vulnerable groups, and national development priorities. The programme contributes to the implementation of global normative processes and to the development of global products. By producing publications with global reach, developing action-oriented knowledge products, supporting contributions to global events and collaboration with international partners, the programme is influencing global discourse and practice in areas such as gender equality, decent work, environmental sustainability, violence and harassment at work, peace responsiveness. The programme's focus on addressing the specific needs of vulnerable groups—including women, youth, migrant workers, refugees, and internally displaced persons—underscores its relevance to development challenges. The programme's approach to consult or account for these groups at national level in the design and implementation of initiatives demonstrates a commitment to



inclusivity and responsiveness to the needs of end-beneficiaries. The programme's efforts to align with national development plans and engage tripartite constituents at country level (governments, employers' organizations, and workers' organizations) in both design and implementation phases highlight its relevance to country-specific contexts and priorities. This alignment ensures that the programme's interventions are well-integrated into national strategies and supported by key stakeholders, enhancing the potential for sustainable impact. The programme's ability to adjust interventions according to evolving national agendas and contexts indicates a dynamic and responsive approach to development work.

Coherence

The programme is aligned with the ILO's strategic objectives and well-designed to contribute to the ILO's strategic plan. The programme has significantly contributed to operationalising the establishment of the ILO's priority action programmes on just transitions toward environmentally sustainable economies and societies (JTES); and decent work in crisis and post-crisis situations (HDPN). The programme was also key in capacitating the MSD unit and enabling to scale its reach. The programme is well-designed to contribute to the SDGs, particularly SDG 1 (No Poverty), SDG 5 (Gender Equality), SDG 8 (Decent Work and Economic Growth), SDG 13 (Climate Action), and SDG 16 (Peace, Justice and Strong Institutions). The programme successfully integrates cross-cutting themes such as gender equality, environmental sustainability, and support for vulnerable groups into its interventions. This comprehensive approach enhances the coherence of the programme by ensuring that various components can work synergistically to address multiple dimensions of development challenges. The programme's initiatives are consistent with and promote several international norms and standards, such as the ILO Violence and Harassment Convention (C190). The programme's efforts to align with national development plans and engage tripartite constituents (governments, employers, and workers) in both design and implementation phases demonstrate its responsiveness to country-specific contexts and priorities. This alignment ensures that the programme's interventions are well-integrated into national agendas. The programme has made progress in fostering cross-collaboration and synergies between its



components, contributing to a more coherent implementation of its objectives. While there have been challenges in identifying joint interventions and ensuring consistent collaboration, efforts to strengthen partnerships and develop joint activities indicate a commitment to enhancing programme coherence. Despite these strengths, the programme could further enhance its coherence by strengthening the relationships between the components' Theories of Change (TOCs) and the overall programme TOC, addressing gaps in terms of systemic coverage, and ensuring that interventions consistently promote international norms and standards. Additionally, creating more robust mechanisms for collaboration and synergy at both global and country levels could further improve programme coherence.

Efficiency

While the programme has demonstrated efficient use of resources and an ability to leverage additional funding, there are opportunities for improving its efficiency further. The programme components have demonstrated efficient use of resources (funds, human resources, and time), despite facing limitations in the funding cascaded to certain interventions and challenges related to the startup time for implementation. Innovative approaches and strategic use of tools have showcased cost-effectiveness in programme management. For instance, GEDI's adaptation of previously developed policy tools and the MSD component's proactive approach in initiating market system analyses (MSAs) reflect a commitment to maximizing the impact of available resources. The long startup time for initiating implementation and the difficulty in identifying project niches at the country level that complement existing projects have posed challenges to efficiency. These issues suggest a need for improved strategic planning, faster mobilization of resources, and more effective coordination at the outset of the programme. The programme's flat management structure and periodic meetings among component leads have facilitated technical coherence and integration of activities. However, there is room for enhancing programmatic coordination, as ad hoc meetings and the absence of a global programme manager have limited strategic engagement and monitoring. Establishing regular meetings and including a wider range of technical specialists and the Bureaus could strengthen programme management and



promote more effective collaboration across components. Accordingly, the programme would benefit from installing a Technical Advisory Group as initially planned. The programme has been successful in acting as a catalyst, supporting the ILO's influence in targeted countries, and leveraging additional resources. Strategic use of programme funds has attracted complementary funding and in-kind contributions, enhancing the programme's outcomes. These achievements underscore the programme's ability to mobilize resources and form productive partnerships, contributing to broader development objectives.

Effectiveness

The evaluation of the programme indicates a generally positive trajectory towards achieving its planned outputs and outcomes, despite encountering some delays and measurement challenges. The programme's interventions have shown progress in the majority of intended outcomes and outputs, with over half of the components' indicators reflecting progress and a notable portion of output indicators achieved. However, shortcomings in the design of the programme's logical framework and issues in implementing and responding to the Comprehensive Monitoring and Evaluation System (CMES) and Real-Time Evaluation (RTE) findings have affected the clarity and reporting of progress. Many interventions have exceeded initial timelines, pushing some activities into 2024 due to various factors including extended design and implementation phases, and external challenges such as political changes and competing priorities in certain countries. Nonetheless, the programme has made significant contributions across its Theory of Change, including institutional strengthening, normative development, technical backstopping, capacity building, policy influence, knowledge generation, and enhancing social dialogue and partnerships. Activities that influenced policy agendas and integrated into development projects were highlighted as particularly effective, demonstrating the programme's ability to respond to national policy and legislative agendas through approaches that involve social dialogue, capacity building, and leveraging national tools. The programme has benefitted various groups, especially women and workers in fragile contexts, through its focus on policy influence, capacity building, and institutional strengthening. However, the evaluation also identifies areas for

improvement, including enhancing joint activities between components, increasing the visibility and use of programme outputs, and addressing the challenges posed by national contexts and operational constraints.

Sustainability

The sustainability of the programme's outcomes is significantly enhanced through strategic coordination with tripartite constituents and beneficiaries, aligning interventions with national development plans and leveraging partnerships across the UN-system and beyond. By engaging with governments, employers' associations, trade unions, and other development partners, the programme ensures that its initiatives are integral to national frameworks, thereby enhancing their longevity and impact. For example, in Moldova and Colombia, interventions are closely coordinated with national authorities and integrated into national development plans, promoting sustainable outcomes in gender equality, decent work, environmental sustainability, and social dialogue.

RECOMMENDATIONS, LESSONS LEARNED AND GOOD PRACTICES

Recommendations

- **Recommendation 1:** Programme components should strengthen the management of the programme and implement the approach formulated in the concept note.
- **Recommendation 2:** Programme components should better leverage results-based management and monitoring and evaluation.
- **Recommendation 3:** GEDI should consider continuing to promote and disseminate the global reports and practical tools produced during the first phase of the programme.
- **Recommendation 4:** JTES should accelerate the execution of the programme.
- **Recommendation 5:** HDPN should continue promoting the nexus within the ILO and externally.



- **Recommendation 6:** MSD should continue building internal capacities on market systems as well as strengthening the capacities of local actors in countries of intervention.

Main lessons learned and good practices

Good practices and lessons learned

The evaluation identified several good practices and lessons learned from the countries of joint interventions and global activities. Good practices include for example anchoring interventions in national policy agendas, ensuring a participatory process and local ownership through adequate training of target beneficiaries, catalysing programme interventions through internal collaborations and external partnerships. Lessons learned relate to adapting to political changes, leveraging constituents' reach at sub-national level, reconciling innovation and adaptive management with results-based planning and orientation.