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Partnerships for Youth Employment in the CIS II

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LIST OF ACRONYMS

CIS	Commonwealth of Independent States
CO	Country Office
CTA	Chief Technical Advisor
DAC	Development Assistance Committee
DWCP	Decent Work Country Program
DWT	Decent Work Team
EAEU	Eurasian Economic Union
EEC	Eurasia Economic Commission
EBRD	European Bank for Reconstruction and Development
EU	European Union
G20	Group of Twenty
GIZ	Deutsche Gesellschaft für Internationale Zusammenarbeit
HRD	Human Resource Development
HQ	Headquarters
ILO	International Labour Organization
ITC ILO	International Training Center of the ILO
IPA CIS	Interparliamentary Assembly of Member Nations of the Commonwealth of Independent States
HR&GE	Human Rights and Gender Equality
LM	Labour Market
LMIS	Labour Market Information System
MTE	Mid-Term Evaluation
M&E	Monitoring & Evaluation
NPC	National Project Coordinator
NQF	National Qualifications Framework
OECD	Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development
PAC	Project Advisory Committee
PPP	Public Private Partnership
RBSA	Regular Budget Supplementary Account
RBCT	Regular Budget Technical Cooperation
RF	Russian Federation
RIAC	Russian International Affairs Council
SDGs	Sustainable Development Goals
SKILLS	ILO Skills and Employability Branch
SMART	Specific, Measurable, Achievable, Relevant, Time-bound
TOC	Theory of Change
ToR	Terms of Reference
TVET	Technical and Vocational Education and Training
UN	United Nations
UNDAF	United Nations Development Frameworks
UNDP	United Nations Development Program
UNESCO	United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization
UNSDCF	United Nations Sustainable Development Cooperation Framework
WHO	World Health Organization

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The project “Partnerships for Youth Employment in the CIS II,” Phase 2 (the Project), is a 60-month, US\$6 million second phase initiative, funded by the LUKOIL company and implemented by the ILO Decent Work Technical Support Team and Country Office for Eastern Europe and Central Asia. The Project aims to improve the effectiveness of policies and programmes promoting decent jobs for young people in the CIS countries through interventions at the regional, national and sub-national levels, as follows:

The regional (CIS) component constitutes the project’s backbone to address youth employment issues common to the CIS countries and enhance the existing mechanisms for regional cooperation on youth employment.

The national component targets Azerbaijan, Kazakhstan, the Russian Federation and Uzbekistan to strengthen the implementation of country-specific youth employment policies and programmes.

The sub-national component focusses on youth employment actions in three regions of the Russian Federation (Republic of Komi, Astrakhan Region and Kaliningrad Region) to foster a framework for cooperation and partnership among local institutions, the social partners and other stakeholders at the sub-national level.

Phase 2 continues to target the three countries that benefitted from technical support during Phase 1, Russian Federation, Azerbaijan and Kazakhstan and expanded to include Uzbekistan and three regions in the Russian Federation.

Present Situation of the Project

The project builds on the successful outcome and lessons learned of a previous collaboration between the ILO and the Russian oil company LUKOIL during the 2013-2017. The main objective of this project is to improve the effectiveness of policies and programmes to support the creation of decent jobs for young people within the overall comprehensive employment policy framework in the CIS countries. The overall strategy of the project relies on three sets of interventions: at sub-regional level involving nine CIS countries (objective 1, also potentially involving the BRICS countries and the relevant UN agencies) supporting research and voluntary policy reviews for evidence based youth employment policies; secondly focusing on country-level interventions in Azerbaijan, Kazakhstan, the Russian Federation and Uzbekistan (objective 2) and thirdly addressing the sub-national level needs in the three regions of the Russian Federation (Republic of Komi, Astrakhan Region and Kaliningrad Region) (objective 3). The project implementation strategy relies on strengthening the capacity of policy-makers and practitioners to design, implement, evaluate and update evidence-based and gender sensitive policies, programmes and approaches for youth employment, and on delivering and disseminating results through existing partnerships and strategic alliances.

The project is working under the supervision of the ILO Decent Work Team and Country Office for Eastern Europe and Central Asia based in Moscow (DWT-Moscow). The Senior Employment Specialist of the DWT-Moscow is appointed as focal point for the project. The project is staffed with an international Chief Technical Advisor (CTA) who is responsible for the overall implementation of the project, one Technical Officer who supports all the project activities, one Research Officer and two assistants based in Moscow.

Purpose, scope and clients of the evaluation

The purpose of the midterm evaluation is learning and project improvement. In accordance with the PRODOC, the evaluation will help to determine the relevance and achievement of objectives, development efficiency, effectiveness, impact and sustainability. It will concentrate on the intermediate results of the project to assess its overall performance.¹

The evaluation covers the duration of the Project since its start on 1st January 2018 until 18th June 2021 and its full geographical coverage at both Sub-Regional (DWT/CO for Eastern Europe and Central Asia (Moscow office) and Country level. All countries were assessed as part of the desk review, with three countries – Azerbaijan, Uzbekistan and Russian Federation - selected for in-depth analysis and virtual meetings with the Social Partners, stakeholders and beneficiaries due to highest volume of the activities held in these countries. The evaluation was conducted in the time period from 19 April to 20 June 2021, with the draft of the final evaluation report submitted to the ILO on 5 July 2021.

The Mid-Term Evaluation will serve the following clients' groups: ILO management, technical specialists at the HQ and in the field, Project staff, tripartite constituents in the target countries, the Donor, direct beneficiaries, including policy makers and practitioners, ultimate beneficiaries, including young men and women.

Methodology of evaluation

The evaluation applied a mixed-method approach, with the main focus being on the qualitative techniques, including quantitative data obtained through the review of the project documents and reports, monitoring matrices and survey feedback results of the participants of the workshops. The primary data was collected directly from the stakeholders through individual and group interviews conducted via virtual mode. Project reports and documents, including evaluation reports, from the first phase of the project as well as key policy papers and country strategic plans and research reports were analysed as secondary data sources. The evaluation applied the OECD/DAC evaluation criteria of relevance, effectiveness, efficiency, sustainability and impact potential.

¹ TOR

Main Findings and conclusions

The COVID-19 crisis burst out after ²⁷ months of the Project's implementation. The Project has well adapted to the crisis and provided timely support to the policy makers by a) Conducting rapid assessment of the labour market in Armenia, Kyrgyzstan, Uzbekistan and Kazakhstan; b) Raising capacity of the policy makers and social partners on addressing the employment crisis and the COVID-19 challenges through series of the sub-regional webinars which allowed countries to gain timely advice and support from the ILO's experts and share concerns with their country peers; c) Institutional assessment and capacity building recommendations of the Uzbekistan Public Work Program for enhancing an effective employment response to the Covid 19 job-crisis; d) Support and monitoring ROSTRUD response to the COVID19 job crisis in Russian Federation.

Relevance and strategic fit: strategic relevance of the project has been rated as high by all key stakeholders and constituents from all countries who confirmed great extent of the facilitated social dialogue across strategic directions of the project. The project is well-aligned with countries' national and regional priorities, strategies and plans, the ILO and other international development assistance programmes as well as the SDG target 4, 5, 8, 17. The Project's focus is relevant to the UN global initiative "Decent work for youth" by addressing challenges for young men and women in transition from school to work and gender disparities in the CIS region. The Project's showed high responsiveness to the COVID-19 implications at the labour market and formulation of the relevant response measures in Uzbekistan, Kyrgyzstan, Kazakhstan and Armenia based on Rapid Assessments of the situation at the labour market.

Validity of Design: Project design, results framework and indicators are valid and responsive to the emerging concerns. However, some modifications for the indicators/targets would be beneficial to better capture project progress, especially at the outcome level, gender equality and non-discrimination. Given gained knowledge and expertise of the Project on youth employment and gender equality in the CIS it would be beneficial to introduce forth component specifically targeted gender-related focused at the results level. Introducing baseline data would be crucial to track the Project's progress.

Effectiveness: At present, the project shows quite good progress in mainstreaming youth employment into national development and employment strategies thanks to effective project management arrangements, ILO technical capacities and unique expertise to support tripartite and PES networks. The timely advice on tackling the COVID-19 pandemic implication on the labour markets and virtual capacity building activities has allowed the constituents in the Project's countries to undertake prompt measures and keep strategic focus on promoting youth employment beyond the health crisis.

The project shows meaningful results in advancing gender equality and human rights by assisting the participant countries in formulating informed policies aligned with the national development goals, SDGs, human centered and youth targeted approach, such as Future of Work and Decent Works for Youth. At the same time, the project has undertaken consistent and intensive efforts to strengthen PES nation and region wide to deliver client-oriented

services for young men and women in line with international labour standards. The Project takes the unique position in contributing to the achievement of the SGD #8, 5 and 17.

Efficiency of resource use: project human (staff and expert) resources have been allocated and used strategically to achieve the expected results. The project shows some slight delay on piloting of ALMPs but the remaining time is sufficient for the implementation and validation of results. Cooperation with Rostrud leveraged project's resources and resulted in the rich content of the capacity building programme run at the federal level and sustained at the global level through the publication of the manual for PES in Russian and English languages.

Impact orientation: the Project has achieved significant impact in Armenia, Azerbaijan and Uzbekistan by assisting tripartite constituents to develop National Employment Policies with specific targets aimed at long-term effects (impact) on the target groups and institutions in terms of youth employment outcomes, and more equitable gender relations. If PES services are capacitated to serve young men and women, including persons with disabilities, and if ALMPs targeted for youth are adequately funded, then significant impact in youth employment is much expected.

Project's sustainability: The project has been successful in securing national ownership of the project results. Participatory and needs-based approach adopted by the project allows the results of the project to be sustained after its end. To enhance the sustainability of the project and strengthen the uptake of the project outcomes by the national stakeholders, sufficient time should be allowed to complete all planned activities, to reflect upon its results and secure proper handover of key achievements of the project. The Project should intensify efforts in supporting countries in achieving their national SDGs aligned with global SDG #5 Gender Equality and #8 Decent work and Economic growth especially by contributing to reduced share of NEET.

Main recommendations and follow-up

1. To ensure that the mid-term evaluation results are shared and discussed with the stakeholders;
2. To conduct thorough internal review and assessment of the workplans and budgets to develop future implementation strategy of the Project including formulation of gender-focused results;
3. To enhance project visibility and external public communication to promote project results and donor's visibility at national and global levels;
4. To develop a Gender Mainstreaming Strategy for the Project;
5. To improve project design, data collection, reporting and monitoring performance;

6. To continue active promotion and dissemination of the knowledge products and tools developed by the project;
7. To reduce inequalities by supporting CIS countries in building capacity to collect statistics on youth employment and unemployment including share of NEET;
8. To organize final sub-regional high visibility event with participation of the stakeholders from all countries.

1. INTRODUCTION

Current evaluation exercise is an independent Mid-Term Evaluation (MTE) of the project “Partnerships for Youth Employment in the CIS II”. The goal of this Mid-term Evaluation is to review the project performance and enhance learning within the ILO and among stakeholders. The exercise is conducted in line with the ILO Evaluation Policy Guidelines ILO Policy Guidelines for results-based evaluation² and the UN Norms and Standards for Evaluation³ which require to undertake an independent review of the project in approximately one year and a half since the start of its implementation, to analyse whether the project is on-track, what problems or challenges the project is encountering, and what corrective actions are required. The main objectives of the evaluation are to:

- a) Assess the relevance of the project implementation strategy;
- b) Assess the achievement of both quantitative and qualitative results and immediate objectives (effectiveness);
- c) Determine the efficiency of the project;
- d) Assess the sustainability of results and likelihood of long-term effects on the beneficiary institutions, national systems, policies;
- e) Identify the supporting factors and/or barriers, constraints;
- f) Identify lessons learned, especially regarding models of interventions that can be replicated in the region and globally;
- g) Provide technical recommendations regarding the most appropriate next steps in the project main subject areas and/or countries.

The mid-term evaluation assesses the project performance to date (in terms of relevance, effectiveness and efficiency), and determines the likelihood of the project achieving its intended outcomes, including their impact and sustainability. In addition, the evaluation integrates gender equality, disability inclusion and other non-discrimination issues as a cross-cutting concern throughout its methodology, analysis and deliverables⁴.

² https://www.ilo.org/wcmsp5/groups/public/---ed_mas/---eval/documents/publication/wcms_571339.pdf

³ Norms and Standards for Evaluation (2016). URL: <http://www.uneval.org/document/detail/1914>

⁴ Gender concerns were addressed in accordance with the ILO Guidance note 4, “Integrating gender in monitoring and evaluation of projects”.

The evaluation covers the duration of the Project since its start on 1st January 2018 until 18th June 2021 and its full geographical coverage at both Sub-Regional (DWT/CO for Eastern Europe and Central Asia (Moscow office) and Country level. The evaluation targeted all outcomes of the project, with particular attention to coherence and synergies across its components. All countries were assessed as part of the desk review, with three countries - Russian Federation, Azerbaijan and Uzbekistan - selected for in-depth analysis and virtual meetings with the Social Partners, stakeholders and beneficiaries due to highest volume of the activities held in these countries. The evaluation was conducted in the time period from 30 April to 18 June 2021, with the draft of the final evaluation report submitted to the ILO on 5 July 2021.

The findings of the evaluations and its recommendations will be used by the Project team to align the implementation of the remaining period of the project's duration and to enhance the impact and sustainability of its results.

2. CONTEXT AND BACKGROUND

The project "Partnerships for Youth Employment in the CIS II," Phase 2 (the Project), is a 60-month, USD \$6 million second phase initiative, funded by the LUKOIL company and implemented by the ILO Decent Work Technical Support Team and Country Office for Eastern Europe and Central Asia. This project aims to improve the effectiveness of policies

and programmes promoting decent jobs for young people⁵ in the CIS countries through interventions at the regional, national and sub-national levels, as follows:

The regional (CIS) component constitutes the project's backbone; it will develop further joint approaches to address youth employment issues common to the CIS countries and enhance the existing mechanisms for regional cooperation on youth employment.

The national component targets Azerbaijan, Kazakhstan,⁶ the Russian Federation and Uzbekistan to strengthen the implementation of country-specific youth employment policies and programmes.

The sub-national component focuses on youth employment actions in three regions of the Russian Federation (Republic of Komi, Astrakhan Region and Kaliningrad Region) to foster a framework for cooperation and partnership among local institutions, the social partners and other stakeholders at the sub-national level.

The project builds on the successful outcome and lessons learned of a previous collaboration between the ILO Moscow office and the Russian oil company LUKOIL during the 2013-2017 period.⁷

2.1. Brief outline of project context in participating countries

Seven countries within the Commonwealth Independent States (CIS) that have benefitted from technical support during the Phase 2 of the Project are: target countries, Azerbaijan, Kazakhstan, Russian Federation and Uzbekistan; and other members of the CIS, namely Armenia, Kyrgyzstan and Tajikistan. According to UN DESA classification, all seven CIS countries fall into category "Economies in transition", Russia, Kazakhstan and Azerbaijan are

5 For the purposes of this project, "youth employment policies and programmes" include all measures taken by the public and private sectors to support young people aged 15-29 both from demand side (such as supporting hiring of young people through wage subsidies, sensitizing employers about youth unemployment) and supply side perspective (developing the skills of young people, ensuring their preparedness for labour market).

6 At the time of the mid-term evaluation the implementation of the activities planned by the project has not been yet started in the Republic of Kazakhstan, yet the constituents from the Republic of Kazakhstan benefitted from the activities implemented at the sub-regional level.

7 <http://www.ilo.org/global/topics/youth-employment/projects/cis-partnership/lang--en/index.htm>

upper-middle economies countries by per capita GNI in 2019; Armenia and Uzbekistan are the lower-middle economy countries, while Tajikistan is a low-income country⁸.

Within the block of CIS countries, Armenia, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan and Russia, are the members of Eurasian Economic Union (EAEU) while Azerbaijan, Tajikistan and Uzbekistan have not joined this integration⁹. All CIS countries enjoy visa free regime but participation in EAEU provides the opportunity for member countries for free flow of goods and services, capital and labour force. Also, citizens of member countries do not need work permit to work in the territory of Eurasian Economic Union (EAEU).

In the recent years, the CIS region has been experiencing high levels of youth unemployment. Economic recovery from the world crisis in 2008 (Great Recession) has been slow in the region and the uncertain outlook of the global economy raises concerns about the ability of the region to address the crisis consequences and create sufficient quality employment opportunities for young people entering in the labour market.¹⁰ At 17%¹¹, the youth unemployment rate in the CIS region is above the global youth unemployment rate of 13%. In 2016, the youth unemployment rate in the Eastern Europe region and Central and Western Asia regions stood at 16.6% and 17.7% respectively, both above the global youth unemployment rate of 13.1%¹²

The global labour force participation rate for young people aged 15 to 24 declined significantly between 1993 and 2018, falling by 15 percentage points to reach 42 per cent at the end of that period. This trend can be ascribed mainly to the rising rate of educational enrolment among young people. Globally, the gross enrolment ratio in secondary education rose from 55 per cent in 1993 to 77 per cent in 2017; in tertiary education, it increased from 14 per cent to 38 per cent over the same period (UIS, 2018). In 2018, the youth labour force participation rate was highest, at 57 per cent, in low-income countries; the lowest value (36 per cent) was observed in lower-middle-income countries. In upper-middle-income countries, the youth

8 Source: World Economic Situation and Prospects 2018 (WESP), DPAD, UN DESA. Country Classification <https://www.un.org/development/desa/publications/wesp-2018.html>; Source: World Economic Situation and Prospects 2020 (WESP), DPAD, UN DESA. World Economic Situation and Prospects 2020 (un.org)

9 Current country members of EAEU are Russia, Kyrgyzstan, Belarus, Kazakhstan, Armenia. Source: EAEU official Web-site <http://www.eaeunion.org>

10 This section relies on ILO World Employment and Social Outlook – Trends 2017, http://www.ilo.org/global/research/global-reports/weso/2017/WCMS_540899/lang--en/index.htm and ILO World Employment and Social Outlook 2016: Trends for Youth, unless otherwise indicated.

11 Calculated as the average of youth unemployment rates of Armenia, Belarus, Georgia, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Tajikistan, Russian Federation and Ukraine in 2015, ILOSTAT, http://www.ilo.org/ilostat/faces/ilostat-home/home?_adf.ctrl-state=dbpkjrlf4_33&_afLoop=340171536200282#

12 ProDoc

participation rate has declined by more than 20 percentage points since 1993, reaching 44 per cent in 2018, a level similar to that recorded in high-income countries (45 per cent). However, the gross enrolment ratio in tertiary education in upper-middle-income countries (52 per cent in 2017) is still significantly lower than in high-income countries (77 per cent) (ibid.). In addition, the fact that in lower-middle-income countries this ratio stood at just 24 per cent in 2017 (ibid.) suggests that educational enrolment has only a limited influence on variations in youth labour force participation rates across country income groups.¹³

The COVID-19 crisis of 2020 has severely affected labour markets around the world, hurting young people more than other age groups. Globally, youth employment fell by 8.7 per cent in 2020 compared with 3.7 per cent for adults. Based on available country-level data, the fall in employment has been much more pronounced in middle-income countries.¹⁴ In Central Asia, nearly one in five young people still has NEET status.

Table 1 Youth unemployment rate (15-24), %, selected CIS countries

COUNTRY	2009			2015			LATEST AVAILABLE DATA BY COUNTRY		
	Total	Male	Female	Total	Male	Female	Total	Male	Female
Azerbaijan	13.9	12.9	14.9	13.4	11.4	15.8	12.4 (2019)	10.9 (2019)	14.2 (2019)
Kazakhstan	6.7	5.5	8.2	4.5	3.9	5.1	3.8 (2017)	3.6 (2017)	4 (2017)
Russian Federation	18.6	18.3	19	16	15.3	16.9	15.2 (2019)	14.8 (2019)	15.6 (2019)
Uzbekistan ¹⁵	20.6	19.7	22.2	20.3	19.3	22.0	No data	No data	No data

Source: ProDoc, ILOSTAT (accessed 27 February 2017). The table was continued by the evaluator based on the recent ILOSTAT data (accessed 12 June 2021)

¹³ World Employment and Social Outlooks, 2019, ILO. https://www.ilo.org/wcmsp5/groups/public/---dgreports/---dcomm/---publ/documents/publication/wcms_670542.pdf

¹⁴ An update on the youth labour market impact of the COVID-19 crisis, ILO Statistical Brief, June 2021

¹⁵ Data for Uzbekistan is from the World Bank, <http://databank.worldbank.org/data/reports.aspx?source=jobs#> (accessed 15/03/2017). According to the International Labour Organization, unemployment levels have remained stable in the last two decades, at about 11 to 11.5 per cent, with youth unemployment being almost twice as high (21.1 per cent in 2012).

Another important aspect to be taken into consideration is the high proportion of young people who are outside of any employment, education or training (NEETs) (see Table 3). In this respect, the gender differences are also noticeable, with young women typically more often affected.

Table 2. Share of youth not in employment, education or training (NEET) by sex, selected CIS countries%

Country	Sex	2009	2015	Latest available data by country
Azerbaijan	Total	6.916		
	Male	6.1		
	Female	6.7	n/a	n/a
Kazakhstan	Total	9.5	8.5	9.5 17(2016)
Uzbekistan	No data available			
Russian Federation	Total	14.1	12	12.4 (2016)
	Male	10.5	9.7	10.3 (2016)
	Female	17.8	14.5	14.6 (2016)

Source: ILOSTAT (accessed 27 February 2017). The table was continued by the evaluator based on the recent ILOSTAT data (accessed 12 June 2021)

Russian Federation

Russia is a member of the Group of Twenty (G20) and an active ILO's international development partner. It comes into top 10 countries in the world by population (about 144 million). Market reforms in the 1990s privatized much of the Russian industry and agriculture.

16 EUROSTAT. Database European Policy Neighborhood Countries. URL: <http://ec.europa.eu/eurostat/web/european-neighborhood-policy/enp-east/data/database>

17 Sex disaggregated data is not available

Russia's vast geography is an important determinant of its economy. Russia contains over 30 percent of the world's natural resources making it's the leading exporter of gas and oil. After years of reforms and economic recessions the country managed to demonstrate economic growth. In 2018 average 5 percent unemployment rate was registered¹⁸. However, it varies in different regions (the highest rate is in the North Caucasus region, the lowest is in the Far East region).

Youth unemployment was not acute problem in the USSR when after graduating from the college or university, young men and women were provided with a job and the special protection years to keep the job withing the forthcoming three years. According to ROSSTAT in 2019 the unemployment rate among youth 20-24 years old was 15.1% (3.3 times higher than the general unemployment rate) and among youth 15-19 y.o. – 22.1% (4.7 times higher than the general unemployment rate).

Pension reform which started in Russia in 2018 with increase of the pension age, has also adopted the law which prohibits firing people of the pre-pension age which before the reform was the legitimate pension age. In this situation pre-pension age workers who would have retired earlier will be staying in the labour market while new fresh graduates will be entering labour market. In some regions, the pre-pension age workers can't be dismissed from work however when they reach pension age their jobs are being annulated and are not available for young workers. ¹⁹

Some experts are also concerned with the new type of jobs for youngsters in the so-called “sharing economy” when employers and workers are connected via electronic platforms without entering labour relations but rather providing mutual services to each other.

The traditional spheres of economy such as mining try to implement “zero people” approach when human operations are being substituted by machines and technics. The plants where before more than 3000 people were employed now are being handled by 30 people.

Azerbaijan

18 PRESERVING STABILITY; DOUBLING GROWTH; HALVING POVERTY - HOW? Russia 40 Economic Report, World Bank, 2018. URL: <http://pubdocs.worldbank.org/en/673631543924406524/RER-40-English.pdf>

19 Russia should prevent youth unemployment. Alexander Zapesotsky. Rector of SpbGU, RAS member-correspondent). Russian Newspaper, 04.02.2021 URL: <https://rg.ru/2021/02/04/rossii-neobhodimo-preodolet-molodezhnuii-bezroboticu.html>

Azerbaijan is bordered by the Caspian Sea in east, by Iran in south, by Armenia in west, and Georgia and Russia in the north. Economic growth has been supported by stable oil production and a modest acceleration in domestic demand, real GDP expanded by 1.4 percent in 2018. While oil production plateaued, the hydrocarbons sector overall posted growth of 1.1 percent, thanks to higher exports of natural gas. The non-energy economy expanded by 1.8 percent, reflecting greater dynamism in most economic sectors. 20

In 2018 youth took 70% from the total labour force population while only 27% of young people were participating in the labour market. 21 According to the latest available data in 2019 total unemployment rate in Azerbaijan was 4.8% (4% for men and 5.8% for women) while youth unemployment was 12,4% (10,9 % for men and 14.2% for women).

Uzbekistan

Uzbekistan has been included as a target country during the second phase, considering the progress achieved on fighting child labour, which was the main cooperation area, and as part of an expanded cooperation agenda including employment policies. Uzbekistan is a landlocked country in Central Asia, with a total area of 447 400 km². It is bordered in the west by Kazakhstan, in the northeast by the Aral Sea, in the north by Kazakhstan, in the east by Kyrgyzstan and Tajikistan, and in the south by Afghanistan and Turkmenistan.²² In Uzbekistan, GDP growth slowed sharply from 5.8 percent in 2019 to 1.6 percent in 2020 due to COVID-19–related lockdowns and trade disruptions. However, positive growth was supported by a robust agriculture output and substantial anti-crisis measures that boosted health spending and supported households and firms.

The unemployment rate rose sharply from 9 percent in 2019 to 11.1 percent in September 2020. The poverty rate rose to 9 percent as the pandemic led to job losses, income reductions, and declining remittances. A large expansion of social assistance provided some relief to affected households.²³

20 World Bank, overview on Azerbaijan, accessed on 17 June 2021 URL: Azerbaijan Overview (worldbank.org)

21 UN News web-portal. Azerbaijan – youth employment is our priority. 12 June 2018, accessed on 17 June 2021 URL: <https://news.un.org/ru/interview/2018/06/1332292>

22 FAO, Country Profile, Uzbekistan. URL: CA0372EN.pdf (fao.org)

23 World Bank, overview on Uzbekistan, accessed on 17 June 2021 URL: Uzbekistan Overview (worldbank.org)

In present-day Uzbekistan, children and young people below 30 years of age constitute 60 per cent of the population. In 15-20 years, they will become the largest labour force Uzbekistan has ever had. Among 19-30-year-old respondents, the rate of those not transferring to further education, training, or the labour market after secondary education (NEET) is an alarming 54.6 per cent. For young women, the NEET-rate is consistently higher than for young men, reaching 74.0 per cent as compared to 24.8 per cent. The factors impeding the ambition of young women to generate own income are household and family-care responsibilities, and lower mobility in regards to being able to relocate towards economic opportunities. As compared to their contemporaries residing in urban centres, youths in rural areas enjoy fewer opportunities for continuing their education or securing employment, and therefore show an interest in pursuing entrepreneurship.²⁴

Kazakhstan

Kazakhstan is a republic in Central Asia, south of Russia, that extends east from the Caspian Sea to the Altai Mountains and China in west. The cooperation with the ILO was upheld in previous years and reactivated during the year 2020 because of the progress on following ILO Conventions on fundamental principles and rights at works, especially Freedom of Association. The multi-ethnic country has a population of 17,7 million people (in 2016), making it one of the most sparsely populated countries in the world.²⁵ Since independence in 1991, Kazakhstan has experienced remarkable economic performance. Rapid growth, fuelled by structural reforms, abundant hydrocarbon resources, strong domestic demand, and foreign direct investment (FDI), has helped reduce poverty and transform the country into an upper middle-income economy. But given the fact that half of the country's population lives in rural and economically isolated areas with poor access to public services and vulnerability to poverty, the COVID-19 pandemic is likely to exacerbate Kazakhstan's economic and social vulnerabilities.²⁶

Unemployment rate in 2019 (the latest available data in ILOSTAT) was 4.8% (sex disaggregated data is not available) and youth unemployment rate in 2017 was quite low – 3.8% (3.6% for men and 4% for women).²⁷ In 2016 NEET share is the lowest among the CIS countries – 9.5% (sex disaggregated data is not available).

24 Youth of Uzbekistan- Challenges and Prospects.pdf (unicef.org)

25 Kazakhstan - Country Profile - Qazaqstan (nationsonline.org)

26 World Bank, overview on Kazakhstan, accessed on 17 June 2021 URL: Kazakhstan Overview (worldbank.org)

27 Country profiles - ILOSTAT

Armenia

Armenia is a lower middle-income country with population of 3 million and an estimated GDP per capita of 3,898 USD. Remittances from migrant workers who work in the Russian Federation traditionally contribute significantly to the Armenian economy, but they were decreased in 2015 as the Russian economy entered a recession severely reducing domestic demand for labour. The ILO cooperation agenda was enhanced early 2018 as a response to the country request for assistance on developing a new national employment strategy. Economic development of Armenia has recently shifted from agriculture and industry to services. This was reflected in changing proportions of employment. The unemployment rate in 2018 was 15,5 per cent²⁸. In 2019 (the recent data available in ILOSTAT) the unemployment rate was 18.3% (17.5 for men and 19,3% for women). Youth unemployment in 2019 was 32.6% (31.2 for men and 34.3 for women).²⁹

Informal employment remains very high. The largest number of people informally employed is in construction, trade and services sectors – 55% and 29% respectively³⁰. The EU-Armenia Comprehensive and Enhanced Partnership Agreement (CEPA) signed in November 2017 aimed to provide better investment climate.

In spite of gender equality guaranteed at the legislative level and high level of education among women, youth unemployment is the major problem faced by women.³¹ Given the fact that one third of the households in Armenia are run by women, the country faces risks of poverty among women. The wage gap is also very large in Armenia accounted for by differences in the employment rates of women and men.³²

The COVID-19 crisis was also aggravated by the military conflict between Armenia and Azerbaijan in the Nagorny Karabakh region which took place in summer 2020.

28 For more details see Trading Economics. URL: <https://tradingeconomics.com/armenia/unemployment-rate?embed>

29 ILOSTAT (accessed 12.06 2021)

30 For more details see - ARMENIA COUNTRY STRATEGY PAPER 2017-20 2018 UPDATES. URL: https://www.etf.europa.eu/sites/default/files/m/83EAA920435EEEFEC125821F005351CE_CSP%202017-2020%20Armenia_Updates%202018.pdf

31 Peer-Review of the Youth Employment in the Republic of Armenia, Michael Pushkin, Julia Surina, ILO, 2017

32 Gender and youth employment in CIS countries, December 2020, ILO

Tajikistan

Tajikistan is a low-income, mountainous country with an economy dominated by minerals extraction, metals processing, agriculture, and reliance on remittances from citizens working abroad (mainly in the Russian Federation and Kazakhstan). The population is up to 9 million. The 1992-1997 civil war that followed the USSR collapse severely damaged economic infrastructure and caused a sharp decline in industrial and agricultural production. Today, Tajikistan has one of the lowest per capita GDPs among the former Soviet republics. Industry consists mainly of small obsolete factories in food processing and light industry, substantial hydropower facilities, and a large aluminium plant - currently operating well below its capacity. More than one million Tajik citizens work abroad - roughly 90% in Russia - supporting families back home through remittances that in 2014 were equivalent to nearly 50% of GDP³³. The ILO cooperation agenda was enhanced with the preparation of a new phase of the DWCP, including support of a new national employment strategy.

In 2016 youth unemployment (15-29 y.o.) was 10,6% which is twice higher than unemployment among persons of 30-75 y.o. and 1,5 higher than average unemployment rate in the country. Aggregated indicator of the underutilized labour force among youth was 20,5% which means that every 5th young person could not utilize its potential in the labour market. NEET youth was 30% from the total youth population. The labour potential of young male population is utilized at 94,2% while labour potential of the young female population is utilized at 46,9%³⁴

2.2. Project overall context

In the recent years, the CIS region has been experiencing high levels of youth unemployment. Economic recovery from the crisis has been slow in the region and the uncertain outlook in the global economy raises concerns about the ability of the region to address the crisis

33 For more details, see World Bank in Tajikistan. URL: <https://www.worldbank.org/en/country/tajikistan/overview>

34 Report of the Agency of Statistics at the President of the Republic of Tajikistan "Situation in the labour market in the Republic of Tajikistan", Dushanbe 2017 URL: [Положение на рынке труда в Республике Таджикистан \(ww.tj\)](http://www.tj)

consequences and create sufficient quality employment opportunities for young people entering the labour market.³⁵ At 17%³⁶, the youth unemployment rate in the CIS region is above the global youth unemployment rate of 13%. In 2016, the youth unemployment rate in the Eastern Europe region and Central and Western Asia regions stood at 16.6% and 17.7% respectively, both above the global youth unemployment rate of 13.1%. Gender differences in the youth unemployment are also pronounced in the regions, where young women tend to experience more unemployment compared to young men (partly linked to the perceptions of traditional roles of women and men, which often have been encapsulated in the legislative frameworks).

The overall trend diverges between the two regions. Whereas in Eastern Europe, the youth unemployment rate (for both sexes) has been declining in the recent years, in Central and Western Asia youth unemployment has been increasing. The level of youth unemployment has been higher in certain countries of the region, particularly in Azerbaijan and Russian Federation, and relatively modest in others like Kazakhstan. Gender disparities are pronounced in the countries, with young women having consistently higher unemployment rates compared to young men. In the Russian Federation, there are also high regional differences in the youth unemployment rate. Moreover, the quality of jobs accessed by young people remains a cause for concern. A great number of young people are working, but do not earn enough to lift themselves out of poverty. In 2016, 4.2% of working youth in Eastern Europe and 8.9% in Central and Western Asia were in extreme and moderate poverty (defined as less USD 3.10/per day). Young workers are more than other groups, engaged in low-quality, precarious and hazardous forms of work.

The youth employment challenge in the region is also characterised by the fact that young people are usually over-represented in the informal economy, with around half of total youth employment being in the informal economy.³⁷ A higher proportion of informal young workers is found especially in the rural areas and the construction sector.³⁸ This means that many young workers do not enjoy basic rights at work, do not have an employment contract and are not covered by the social protection systems. This limited access to social security of

35 This section relies on ILO World Employment and Social Outlook – Trends 2017, http://www.ilo.org/global/research/global-reports/weso/2017/WCMS_540899/lang--en/index.htm and ILO (2016) World Employment and Social Outlook 2016: Trends for Youth, unless otherwise indicated.

36 Calculated as the average of youth unemployment rates of Armenia, Belarus, Georgia, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Tajikistan, Russian Federation and Ukraine in 2015, ILOSTAT, http://www.ilo.org/ilostat/faces/ilostat-home/home?_adf.ctrl-state=dbpkjrlf4_33&_afLoop=340171536200282#

37 ILO (2015) Labour market transitions of young women and men in Eastern Europe and Central Asia. http://www.ilo.org/wcmsp5/groups/public/---ed_emp/documents/publication/wcms_357353.pdf

38 For example, in a new target country for the project Uzbekistan, in 2014, only 38% of employed population made contributions to the Pension Fund which may reveal substantial informal employment. Although, according to the Ministry of Labour, informal employment comprises 30% of all work, in agriculture and industry the level is estimated much higher at 82% and 63%; in the service sector the figure is 38%. Informal labour arrangements in Uzbekistan mainly take the form of self-employment or workers employed in short-term, casual and seasonal jobs without formal contracts. Rural workers and individuals with low levels of educational attainment are more likely to be in informal employment, <https://data.gov.uz/uploads/datasets/10-56/10-56-55.pdf>

young people is a serious concern (as it has implications for the whole of working life and future retirement). Lack of comprehensive social security coverage for youth is mainly due to the levels of informal employment. For instance, the practice of (total or partial) unreported remuneration without mandatory social security contribution is quite widespread in the region. The economic crisis and slow subsequent recovery also meant that young people are under increasing pressure to accept precarious jobs, with low wages, whilst lacking experience and capacity to negotiate the working conditions with the employers, nor fully understanding the possible value of joining the trade unions, in this respect.

Skills mismatches are also a serious concern in several countries of the region. The correlation between educational attainment and unemployment, in the sense that the higher the level of educational attainment, the lower the rate of youth unemployment, is generally the trend. Nevertheless, the issue of the young “educated” unemployed is increasing in a sense that the educational attainment levels in the region are quite high but there are not enough quality jobs for young university graduates. On the other, there is high and unsatisfied demand for labour at the medium and low skill levels.

Youth in the labour markets are also affected by the changing nature of the world of work, including the prevalence of temporary or short-term contracts, informal jobs without any contract, under own-account arrangements or unpaid family jobs, and the rise in part-time employment, especially among women.³⁹ The jobs that young people do are also significantly affected by the need for the continuous adaptation and reorganisation to respond to the rapid technological change, the processes and changes in the global value and supply chains as well as jobs becoming more demanding for social, cognitive, team building and time management skills. Policy and legislative frameworks in the region have not yet fully and explicitly caught up with these developments, with a further need to support the development of the understanding on the part of employers of how the respect for labour rights can have a positive impact on productivity and competitiveness.

Beneficiaries of the Project

The ultimate beneficiaries of the project are young women and men between the ages of 15 and 29⁴⁰ who can benefit from integrated, more effective and gender-sensitive youth employment and related policies and programmes. In the CIS countries, young people constitute a heterogeneous group whose needs vary by gender, ethnicity/migration background, education level, family income, geographic location (rural/urban) and the

³⁹ ILO (2017). The World Employment and Social Outlook 2017 (WESO).

⁴⁰ Typically, ILO defines young people as aged 15-24. In the national legislation of most CIS countries, young people are defined as aged 15-29.

economic development of the areas in which they live. Some groups of young people face particular challenges in finding and securing decent jobs (such as those with fewer qualifications or in economically under-developed areas). Statistics and research also show the particular challenges in the labour markets faced by young women as compared to young men. In the youth sector there are a set of gender differences in transition from education to employment, gender inequalities in access to the labour market and young families and care responsibilities. Hence, gender equality of opportunity and treatment, in law and practice, constitute an important aspect in the project activities, involving both ultimate and direct beneficiaries. Policy analysts, international institutions, researchers and the general public also benefit from access to publicly available information about youth employment and youth related challenges and adopted approaches.

The direct beneficiaries of the project are the Ministries of Labour and Employment, employers and workers organizations, the public employment services and other stakeholders from the national and sub-regional institutions involved in the formulation, implementation and oversight of policies and programmes for youth employment. This includes the ministries in charge of employment, the public employment services, the social partners (staff of employers' and workers' organizations) and the institutes of statistics, but also other relevant different government departments (e.g., economy, health, welfare, industry, education and training, employment, youth affairs, trade, finance). The capacity of the staff of these organizations is being strengthened in the areas relating to the planning, design, implementation, monitoring and evaluation of policies, programs and services for youth employment and related areas. The involvement of both decision makers and staff of national institutions is being done on the basis of gender-balanced criteria in order to promote equality of opportunity in the institutions governing the labour market. The project also seeks to encourage collaboration between actors from the public and private sector, including national and multinational companies (also the SMEs and micro businesses), youth organizations, educational institutions, career services, entrepreneurship promotion organizations to promote youth employment. It is a crucial point for the project to promote strategic partnerships for employment involving all the institutions, organizations and stakeholders that have a say in the life of a young person.

In particular, the project works with the ministries responsible for employment, which take the primary responsibility and lead function in the formulation, implementation, evaluation and updating of youth employment policies. These institutions directly support the implementation of the project at national level and provide overall coordination between various government departments responsible for formulating and implementing policies related to or impacting youth employment, including the ministries in charge of Education, Youth Affairs, Planning, Economy and other relevant ministries (e.g., digital economy, environment, agriculture, finance). This approach promotes comprehensive employment policies that have a measurable impact on the quality and quantity of decent jobs available to young people.

The Public Employment Services of the countries involved in the project are benefitting from the activities implemented at sub-regional level (objective 1). Under the second objective, the main employment policy stakeholders in the four target countries are the key actors involved in the development and implementation of the project activities.

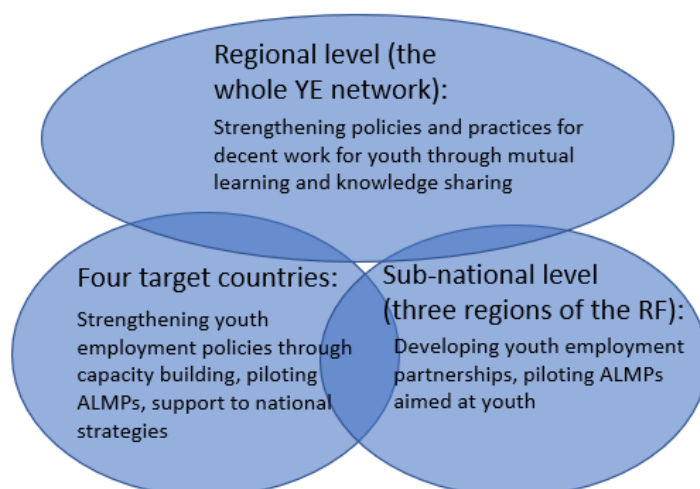
The institutions responsible for the development of statistics in the four target countries are being involved in the implementation of the aspects of the project activities that relate to further development and use of youth labour market indicators, including compilation and dissemination of labour statistics and labour market information for providers and users of youth labour market data.

The employers' and workers' organizations pro-actively participate in the project activities in the formulation, monitoring, evaluation and updating of policies, programmes and services to improve youth employment promotion in their respective constituencies. In particular, employers' organizations are involved in providing services for potential young entrepreneurs and to companies that can create jobs and/or improve the quality of existing jobs for young women and men, including the priorities of the UN Global Initiative such as green jobs, jobs in the digital economy, employment in rural economies and in hazardous occupations. The workers' organizations are involved in the promotion of rights at work for young people and in providing services for young workers to actively implement their rights. The social partners, together with the government, identify opportunities for public-private partnerships on youth employment.

Project strategy

The main goal of this project is to improve the effectiveness of policies and programmes to support the creation of decent jobs for young people within the overall comprehensive employment policy framework in the CIS countries. The overall strategy of the project relies on three sets of interventions: at sub-regional level involving nine CIS countries (objective 1), also potentially involving the BRICS countries and the relevant UN agencies) supporting research and voluntary policy reviews for evidence based youth employment policies; secondly focusing on country-level interventions in Azerbaijan, Kazakhstan, the Russian Federation and Uzbekistan (objective 2) and thirdly addressing the sub-national level needs in the three regions of the Russian Federation (Republic of Komi, Astrakhan Region and Kaliningrad Region) (objective 3) (see Figure 1).

Figure 1: The overall project strategy



The project implementation strategy relies on strengthening the capacity of policy-makers and practitioners to design, implement, evaluate and update evidence-based and gender sensitive policies, programmes and approaches for youth employment, and on delivering and disseminating results through existing partnerships and strategic alliances. The capacity building will ensure that the work done during the project life becomes sustainable and is replicated in the long run. The involvement of public institutions, the social partners and other actors will help create synergies and replicate effective delivery models across the national contexts.

The sub-regional component supports further implementation of joint approaches to address youth employment and youth related challenges common to the CIS countries and the existing mechanisms for sub-regional cooperation on youth employment. Through the interventions envisaged under objective 2, the project supports the implementation of youth-specific strategies and programmes in the target countries, as well as the implementation of new pilot initiatives that respond to the context-specific priorities. In the Russian Federation, the pilot initiatives include a sub-national component to build youth employment partnerships involving local institutions, the social partners and other actors at the level of the districts or other relevant local territories (objective 3).

The work carried out at national and sub-national levels in the four target countries under the second immediate objective builds on and complements the activities implemented at the sub-regional level. The project activities under the first objective will strengthen the capacity of the members of the network to analyse the youth labour market, to design policies and programs for youth and facilitate mutual learning and peer-to-peer cooperation, while the activities in the second objective and third objective will assist in implementation of these policies and strategies, including through institutional reforms and implementation of effective and gender-sensitive initiatives for youth employment. The lessons learned from the

evaluation of these initiatives will help identify “what works” and what can be replicated or scaled-up.

The project’s aim to improve the effectiveness of policies and programmes for youth employment is built upon the requirements and guidance contained in key International Labour Standards of the ILO aimed at ensuring the quality and standards of employment, the ILO Convention 122 on Employment Policy Promotion⁴¹ and Employment Policy Recommendations 122⁴² and 169⁴³, which call the Member States to promote full, productive and freely chosen employment, ensure the equal opportunities in employment and promote transitions to legal economies. Other instruments to be used in this respect are Convention 88 on Employment Services, ILO recommendation for employment services the HRD Convention and recommendation, the ILO Convention on social dialogue and tripartism, the ILO Recommendation 204 on Transition from the Informal to the Formal Economy, the non-discrimination Conventions, , and the 20th International Labour Conference of Statistician on issues concerning to diverse form of employments and classification of the employment status of the labour force. The project activities thus directly support furthering international labour standards relating to the protection of young people, to the equality of opportunity and treatment, instruments on employment policy and promotion, vocational guidance and training, employment security and termination, wages, working time, occupational health and safety, social security, migrant workers and transition to formal economy.⁴⁴

Youth transition to formality is one of the project overarching themes, including addressing it at the regional level through network meetings, voluntary peer reviews and knowledge development products to ensure the development of more effective youth employment policies supporting in a more targeted way the transitions to the formal economy. At the national level, this is to be addressed through targeted capacity building activities and support to the development of more effective ALMPs targeting the formalisation of employment.

The project aims to promote gender equality both as a horizontal principle across the project activities (to respect the principle of equal opportunities for representation of men and women) as well as ensuring that gender gaps and issues in youth employment in the CIS are addressed through specific actions sponsored by the project. A gender mainstreaming strategy for youth employment policies is being developed as part of the project to ensure its full contribution to the promotion of gender equality.

41http://www.ilo.org/dyn/normlex/en/f?p=NORMLEXPUB:12100:0::NO:12100:P12100_INSTRUMENT_ID:312267:NO

42http://www.ilo.org/dyn/normlex/en/f?p=NORMLEXPUB:12100:0::NO:12100:P12100_INSTRUMENT_ID:312460:NO

43http://www.ilo.org/dyn/normlex/en/f?p=NORMLEXPUB:12100:0::NO:12100:P12100_INSTRUMENT_ID:312507:NO

44<http://www.ilo.org/dyn/normlex/en/f?p=NORMLEXPUB:12030:0::NO::>

The project was designed on the basis of assumptions relating to its sustainability, implementation, and management. Relevant risks were identified and mitigation measures have been performed.

Project management arrangements

The project is working under the supervision of the ILO Decent Work Team and Country Office for Eastern Europe and Central Asia based in Moscow (DWT-Moscow). The Senior Employment Specialist of the DWT-Moscow is appointed as focal point for the project. The project is staffed with an international Chief Technical Advisor (CTA) who is responsible for the overall implementation of the project, one Technical Officer who supports all the project activities, one Research Officer and two assistants based in Moscow.

A senior specialist based in the ILO's Programme on Youth Employment in Geneva provides technical backstopping to the project, and recently following the reorganization of the EMPLAB Branch, technical backstopping is provided by the Employment Strategies for Inclusive Transformation Unit.

A Project Partnership Committee (PPC) has been established in Moscow to inform regularly the donor on the implementation process of the project and on the needs and priorities of the beneficiaries. The members of the PPC include the ILO and donor representatives.

2.3. Project objectives and milestones

The project has three immediate objectives:

Immediate objective 1: More effective and inclusive policies and strategies for Decent Work of young men and women in the countries of sub-regional youth employment network

Immediate objective 2: Improved implementation of policies and programmes promoting Decent Work for young men and women in the target countries

Immediate objective 3: Youth employment partnerships created and strengthened to improve the design, monitoring and evaluation of youth employment policy interventions in three regions of the Russian Federation.

Major events and milestones of the project

The project has made progress under each of its main objectives in 2018-2020. Below are the highlights of the project's activities and achievements up to date:

- development and dissemination of knowledge products – research, studies, and other publications, including a technical manual and reviews of youth employment policies, measures, and other interventions (a list of knowledge products available);
- mainstreaming youth employment programs into national development strategies and national employment policies, and targeting public services delivering targeted programs and services for youth.
- capacity building of constituents through organization of workshops and webinars on a variety of youth employment policy issues under the subregional, national, and sub-national components, including Employment Academies in the Russian Federation;
- advocacy and partnership building among constituents in the subregion and beyond on youth employment through the promotion of cross-country peer networks and inter-agency cooperation and collaboration between the private and public sectors at regional, national, and sub-national levels. This includes further development of the sub-regional cooperation network on youth employment through organization of a sub-regional meeting and webinars.

The project is a continuation of the previous project “Partnerships for youth employment in the Commonwealth of Independent States” (YEP CIS)⁴⁵. It builds upon the findings and recommendations of the final independent evaluation of the first phase in 2017.

45 <http://www.ilo.org/global/topics/youth-employment/projects/cis-partnership/lang--en/index.htm>

3. EVALUATION BACKGROUND

The findings of the Mid-Term Evaluation and its recommendations are intended to be used by the Project team to align the implementation of the remaining period of the project duration and to enhance the impact and sustainability of its results.

3.1. Evaluation purpose, objectives, scope and clients

The purpose of the midterm evaluation is learning and project improvement. In accordance with the PRODOC, the evaluation will help to determine the relevance and achievement of objectives, development efficiency, effectiveness, impact and sustainability. It will concentrate on the intermediate results of the project to assess its overall performance. The exercise is conducted in line with the ILO Policy Guidelines for results-based evaluation ⁴⁶ and the UN Norms and Standards for Evaluation⁴⁷ which require to undertake an independent review of the project in approximately one year and a half since the start of its implementation, to analyze whether the project is on-track, what problems or challenges the project is encountering, and what corrective actions are required.

The main objectives of the evaluation are to:

- a. Assess the relevance of the project implementation strategy;
- b. Assess the achievement of both quantitative and qualitative results and immediate objectives (effectiveness);
- c. Determine the efficiency of the project;
- d. Assess the sustainability of results and likelihood of long-term effects on the beneficiary institutions, national systems, policies;
- e. Identify the supporting factors and/or barriers, constraints;
- f. Identify lessons learned, especially regarding models of interventions that can be replicated in the region and globally;
- g. Provide technical recommendations regarding the most appropriate next steps in the project main subject areas and/or countries.

⁴⁶ https://www.ilo.org/wcmsp5/groups/public/---ed_mas/---eval/documents/publication/wcms_571339.pdf

⁴⁷ Norms and Standards for Evaluation (2016). URL: <http://www.uneval.org/document/detail/1914>

The evaluation will serve the following users/clients' groups:

- a. ILO management, technical specialists at the HQ and in the field
- b. Project staff
- c. Tripartite constituents in the target countries
- d. The Donor
- e. Direct beneficiaries, including policy-makers and practitioners
- f. Ultimate beneficiaries, including young people

It is expected that the evaluation findings will inform the work of the project in the time remaining. It should be used by the Project team and line managers responsible for the implementation of the project at the HQ, regional and country level.

The mid-term evaluation assesses the project performance to date (in terms of relevance, effectiveness and efficiency), and determines the likelihood of the project achieving its intended outcomes and impacts, including their impact and sustainability. In addition, the evaluation integrates gender equality, disability inclusion and other non-discrimination issues as a cross-cutting concern throughout its methodology, analysis and deliverables⁴⁸.

The evaluation covers the duration of the Project since its start on 1st January 2018 until 18th June 2021 and its full geographical coverage at both Sub-Regional (DWT/CO for Eastern Europe and Central Asia (Moscow office) and Country level. The evaluation targeted all outcomes of the project, with particular attention to coherence and synergies across its components. All countries were assessed as part of the desk review, with three countries – Azerbaijan, Uzbekistan and Russian Federation - selected for in-depth analysis and virtual meetings with the Social Partners, stakeholders and beneficiaries due to highest volume of the activities held in these countries.

The evaluation was conducted in the time period from 19 April to 20 June 2021, with the draft of the final evaluation report submitted to the ILO on 5 July 2021.

The evaluation integrated gender equality, disability inclusion and other non-discrimination issues as a cross-cutting concern throughout its methodology, analysis and deliverables. Finally, the evaluation paid special attention to how the Project is relevant to the ILO's Programme and policy frameworks at the national, regional and global levels, relevant Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), UNDAFs/UNSDCFs and national sustainable development strategies and other relevant national development frameworks, including relevant sectoral policies and programmes.

⁴⁸ Gender concerns were addressed in accordance with the ILO Guidance note 4, "Integrating gender in monitoring and evaluation of projects".

The evaluation included three phases- (a) inception phase, which includes desk review and preparation of the inception report (19 - 30 April 2021), (b) data collection phase, which included virtual interviews with ILO constituents, donors and key project partners and beneficiaries (30 April – 18 June 2021); and (c) report writing phase, which includes drafting the report based on the inputs from discussions and the interviews with key stakeholders and analysis of desk review and preparing final report (20 June – 5 July 2021).

3.2. Evaluation principles and standards

The ILO adheres to the UN System Evaluation Norms and Standards and applies the OECD/DAC Evaluation Quality Standards and Criteria. Therefore, in conducting the independent mid-term evaluation, the evaluation consultant complied with the evaluation rules and standards of the United Nations System, as well as the Evaluation Quality Standards and Criteria of OECD/DAC and the United Nations Evaluation Group standards. These international benchmarks require that gender and human rights be taken into consideration in evaluations. Thus, gender and human rights considerations were taken into consideration during the Mid-Term evaluation. Finally, ethical safeguards concerning the independence of the evaluation were ensured at all stages of the evaluation process.

3.3. Evaluation methodology

The purpose and scope of this evaluation exercise require a methodology that provides accountability in assessing how the project is progressing in achieving its results as well as highlighting lessons learned to improve performance and assessing the relevance of the sustainability strategy, its progress and potential in achievement. Thus, a mixed methods approach was proposed for the mid-term evaluation, with main focus being on qualitative techniques, but also including quantitative data collection.

To strengthen the credibility and usefulness of evaluation results, the evaluator used both primary and secondary data sources. The primary data was collected directly from stakeholders about their first-hand experience with the intervention through Key informants' interviews (via Skype and in person where possible), group discussions and observation of the key events via distant mode. The latter allowed the evaluation consultant to originate the information for the first time. Secondary data sources consisted of documentary evidence that has direct relevance for the evaluation, such as nationally and internationally published reports, project documents, monitoring reports, previous reviews, country strategic plans, and

research reports⁴⁹. Using both primary and secondary data sources allowed to enhance validity of the results of evaluation.

Evaluation methodology included the following data collection methods:

Document review: Review and analysis of project document, the logical framework, DWCPs, country progress reports and consolidated reports, activity reports, surveys, studies and other knowledge products produced by the project, monitoring and evaluation reports from the previous stage of the project as well as other relevant documents. *Overall, the mid-term evaluation consulted about 200 documents, out of them more than 100 – documents and papers produced by the Project.*

Key informant interviews: individual semi-structured interviews and group discussions were conducted with all ILO project staff directly involved in project management and implementation, interviews with key project stakeholders and beneficiaries in the project countries. In particular, the following interviews were conducted:

- Interviews with project technical and managing staff (at both national, sub-national, sub-regional and global level at ILO's headquarters in Geneva);
- Teleconference interviews with project stakeholder in the countries.

Each interview lasted not less than 30 mins and was conducted in line with UNEG Norms and Standards on competencies and ethics in evaluation⁵⁰. See Annex B for the detailed statistics and list of persons interviewed. Overall, 32 interviews were conducted (30 individual and 2 group discussions) with the participation of 35 persons (18 men and 17 women) based in 9 countries – Russia, Azerbaijan, Uzbekistan, Armenia, Tajikistan, UK, Denmark, Sweden and Geneva. In Russia, Azerbaijan and Uzbekistan the evaluation consultant held interviews with the representatives of each ILO's tripartite constituent – government, trade unions and employers' organizations.

49 Secondary data will be collected through a desk review of project documents and other relevant materials. Secondary data is the already existing data, collected by different institutions and organisations earlier and will allow the evaluator to get more complex view on the situation on the ground, the project context, the progress and environment of its implementation.

50 UNEG Norms and standards for evaluation, 2016 URL: <http://www.uneval.org/document/detail/1914>

Data validation/Evaluation Briefings with project teams: at the end of the field research, the evaluator conducted a data validation briefing with ILO's project team. During the briefing, the findings of the data collection were presented, evaluation findings were jointly discussed and validated, and a set of emerging recommendations and lessons learnt identified. Such briefing allowed enhancing validity of results and ensure ownership of the recommendations developed during evaluation

Evaluability of human rights and gender equality. The Mid-term evaluation exercise adopted a Human Rights and Gender Sensitive Approach. To ensure this, UNEG Guidance on Integrating Human Rights and Gender Equality in Evaluation⁵¹ was followed in conducting the exercise and reporting. Preliminary analysis of the evaluability of human rights and gender equality has been conducted at the inception phase. On the basis of the evaluability exercise, UNEG recommendations were suggested to be included in the evaluation process, they are available as Annex B to this report and were used for orientation in data collection and report writing stages.

At the final stage, all data collected by the Evaluator was verified and analysed to inform the preparation of the final evaluation report. Data analysis has been conducted using triangulation method, to validate main findings of desk research and primary data collection, to eliminate inconsistencies in the findings and ensure quality control.

⁵¹ United Nations Evaluation Group, Integrating Human Rights and Gender Equality in Evaluation, (UNEG, 2014)

3.3. Evaluation criteria and questions

The evaluation followed the UN Evaluation Standards and Norms, the Glossary of key terms in evaluation and Results Based Management ⁵². The evaluation applied the OECD/DAC evaluation criteria of relevance, effectiveness, efficiency, sustainability and impact potential. Below are the main evaluation questions per each of the criteria:

✓ Relevance

1. Has the project been relevant to the target countries' needs in the area of youth employment? Did it correspond to the broader national development objectives as they evolved from 2018 to the present?
2. How well does the project fit into the ILO programming and implementation frameworks?
3. How well has the project adapted to the implications of COVID-19 crisis and relevant response measures?

✓ Effectiveness

4. What progress has the project made towards the achievement of its outcomes (immediate objectives)? Has the project been effective in fostering adequate policy responses to youth employment challenges in the changing environment affected by the emerging health and socio-political issues in the target countries/region?
5. Have there been any contributing factors or obstacles?
6. If and how well has the project adapted its approach and implementation to COVID-19 crisis (e.g., repurposed activities, added outputs etc.)
7. How have the relevant international norms and labour standards concerning, for instance, employment, discrimination and informality, been taken into account during the implementation?
8. If and how have the social dialogue and tripartite approach contributed to project implementation?

✓ Efficiency of resources use

9. Have the project resources (knowledge, expertise, networks, time, staff and funds) been used in an efficient manner?

⁵² OECD DAC evaluation criteria which were used are: the relevance, the coherence and validity of the programme design, effectiveness and efficiency of the programme, the impact of the results and the potential for sustainability.

- ✓ Sustainability and likelihood of the project to have a longer-term impact
10. What is the likelihood that the results of the project will be durable and utilized after the end of the project?
 11. Is it likely that the project will have long-term effects (impact) on the target groups and institutions in terms of youth employment outcomes, and more equitable gender relations?
 12. To what extent tripartite constituents feel ownership of the results the project has achieved so far and the responsibility to follow them up?

- ✓ Recommendations⁵³
13. What are the recommendations for the next steps in the area of youth employment?

In the inception phase of the evaluation, these questions were reviewed, discussed and adapted. A detailed list of the evaluation questions is presented in Annex D.

3.4. Limitations of the evaluation

Five major limitations and challenges were observed during the evaluation process:

1. Limitation to travel due to the COVID-19 world pandemic situation and memory bias on the part of the stakeholders engaged in this evaluation. This means that the evaluator was not able to meet with all project beneficiaries in the countries visited to conduct the interviews.
2. Since the evaluation covered the whole period of the implementation of the Phase II from its start in 2018 – some stakeholders were not involved in the Project from its start and could not recall some Project’s activities / events in detail due to the quite long time passed.
3. ILO implements several projects in the CIS region and project’s stakeholders can’t often differentiate the Project one from the other as they recall the activity or certain event or take this as ILO’s activity, thus additional measures of validations are needed to assign the reported results to the current evaluated project.

⁵³ Recommendations should be clear, concise, actionable and specify who is called to act upon.

4. The data collection process during the evaluation conducted in a distant mode was challenged by the fact that unlike real time missions when the countries should make time to meet the evaluator within the allocated time frame, the possibility to hold interviews online resulted in several postponements which increased the data collection phase.
5. Due to the COVID-19 restrictions on the part of the ILO for personal meetings, usual in-person consultations with the CTA and Project's team were not conducted which slowed down paper work during the validation phase of evaluation findings.

4. KEY FINDINGS OF EVALUATION

This Section is organized according to the evaluation criteria presented in the TORs and analyses of the factual evidence available. A brief summary on key findings for each evaluation criteria is presented at the end of each subsection.

4.1. Relevance and strategic fit

Relevance and strategic fit — the extent to which the objectives are in keeping with local, national and sub-regional priorities and needs, Constituents’ priorities and needs, and the Donor’s priorities for the project countries.

4.1.1. Relevance of the Project to the target countries needs in the area of youth employment and its correspondence with broader national development objectives as they evolved from 2018 to present

With the overall focus of the project being on “improving the effectiveness of policies and programmes promoting decent jobs for young people in the CIS countries through interventions at the regional, national and sub-national levels” in the project countries, each with different levels of economic and social development as well as different needs for strengthening their policies and programmes in youth employment, the project has been consistent in developing and implementing the interventions that address specific needs of key project beneficiaries in a comprehensive and systemic way.

Based on the results of the previous phase, thorough stakeholder analysis and consultations with key stakeholders in all countries were conducted during the inception phase. As a result, objectives and interventions were formulated to address the priorities of the beneficiaries on three sets of interventions: at regional level involving nine CIS countries (objective 1), secondly focusing on country-level interventions in Azerbaijan, Kazakhstan, the Russian Federation and Uzbekistan (objective 2) and thirdly addressing the sub-national level needs in the three regions of the Russian Federation (Republic of Komi, Astrakhan Region and Kaliningrad Region) (objective 3).

The Project secured strong alignment with national priorities, strategies and plans at three levels. First, the project responds to the strategic needs and priorities as articulated in the national development strategies, visions and action plans (frameworks, programmes) for mid-term and long-term socio-economic development. Secondly, the project is well-aligned with

national Strategies for Development and National Employment Strategies. Thirdly, the project is consistent with sectoral and regional priorities, strategies and plans. Specific reference details of the project alignment for each country are provided below:

Table 3. National strategies, policies and plans to which the project is aligned (compilation of the evaluator, based on the document review and key informants' interviews)

COUNTRY	RELEVANT NATIONAL STRATEGIES, POLICIES AND PLANS
<p>RUSSIAN FEDERATION</p>	<p>The strategic priorities for the Russian Federation's economic development are identified in the “National Development Goals till 2030”⁵⁴ which focuses on creating conditions for decent and effective labour and successful entrepreneurship.</p> <p>The project supports the implementation of <i>the State Programme on Employment of Population of Russian Federation for 2013-2024</i> contributing to the goal 1. Reducing labour market mismatches by strengthening PES, training personnel and supporting implementation of the ALMPs in the regions.⁵⁵</p> <p>Federal Project “Support of Employment and Improvement of Labour Market Efficiency to ensure growth of Labour productivity” aims at achieving the following tasks: Update and standardization of public employment centres; enhancing interaction among employers, employment services, educational institutions, and other labour market participants; Creation of a new type of public employment centre; Development and testing of approaches in pilot employment centers and their replication⁵⁶</p> <p>Federal Project “Young Professionals 2018-2024”⁵⁷ aims at creating a competitive system of professional education which provides training of highly qualified specialists and workers in line with the modern standards, including creation of the infrastructure for the development of professional skills, conducting WorldSkills Russia competition and creation of the Centers of the Advanced Training (Centers of Excellence) based on the advanced technologies.</p>
<p>AZERBAIJAN</p>	<p>The Decree of the President of the Republic Azerbaijan on National priorities of the social and economic development “Azerbaijan 2030” considers</p>

54 RUS: Vladimir Putin signed the Decree “About national development goals till 2030” URL: Указ о национальных целях развития России до 2030 года • Президент России (kremlin.ru)

55 State Programme of Russian Federation “Employment of the Population” Source: Государственная программа Российской Федерации «Содействие занятости населения» (mintrud.gov.ru)

56 Power Point Presentation provided by CTA: Federal Project “Employment Support”, Results achieved, year 2019, 21.11.2019. Presidential Academy of National Economy and Public Administration

57 Federal Project “Young Professionals 2018-2024”. URL: <http://dpo53.ru/sites/default/files/public/news2017/skvorcova.pdf>

	<p>sustainable and inclusive economic growth as the main priority. Competitive economy requires high level of remuneration based on productivity.</p> <p>Strategy for development of Azerbaijan youth in 2015-2025 identifies numerous target groups of youth covered by the document where youth employment is the corner stone of the human development.</p> <p>The 2016-2020 Employment Strategy of Azerbaijan distinguishes young people as one of the key target groups of the strategy. Amongst the key employment policy priorities, the strategy envisages actions and initiatives to increase the coverage and efficiency of active labour market programmes and strengthen the integration of target groups into labour market for ensuring inclusive employment.</p> <p>Action Plan for the prevention of informal employment in the Republic of Azerbaijan, approved by Order nr. 3287, dated 9 October 2017, involves taking action in 36 policy areas in order to facilitate the formalization of the informal economy.</p>
UZBEKISTAN	<p>Strategic Plan of Action on five strategic development priorities of the Republic Uzbekistan in 2017-2021⁵⁸ prioritizes sustainable employment and increase of income of the population as well as increasing role of women in social and political life of the country.</p> <p>National Employment Strategy of the Republic Uzbekistan until 2030 prioritizes strengthening capacity of the PES, introducing additional instruments for stimulating demand for labour resources and digitalization of the PES services.</p>
KAZAKHSTAN	<p>National Strategy Kazakhstan 2050 prioritizes economy development, support of entrepreneurship, social protection and skills among seven key strategic directions.</p> <p>Strategic Development Plan till 2025 focuses on achieving strong diverse economy resulted in the increased welfare of people compared to the level of OECD countries. State Programme “Digital Kazakhstan” prioritizes increased productivity in key sectors of the economy, digitalization of state services, creation of new jobs as a result of digital economy</p>
ARMENIA	<p>Armenia Development Strategy for 2014-2025⁵⁹ recognizes “Growth of Employment” as the first priority. Employment increase will be the measurable outcome of implementation of the sustainable economic growth policy. Policies</p>

58 The Decree of the President of the Republic Uzbekistan “On Strategy of actions on further development of the Republic Uzbekistan”. Official web-site of the state institution “National legal information center “Adolat” at the Ministry of Justice of the Republic Uzbekistan, accessed 17 June 2021. URL: <https://lex.uz/docs/3107042>

59 Armenia Development Strategy for 2014-2025.
https://eeas.europa.eu/sites/eeas/files/armenia_development_strategy_for_2014-2025.pdf

	<p>ensuring sustainable economic growth, which creates new quality jobs, have systemic nature, i.e., they will flow from the priority of the primary objective by promoting its achievement or at least not hampering it”</p> <p>Strategy on transforming Armenia till 2050 recognizes underutilization of women’s potential in Armed forces, economy and state governance.⁶⁰</p>
TAJIKISTAN	<p>National Development Strategy of the Republic Tajikistan for the period up to 2030⁶¹ identifies “the need for productive employment of youth and women including support of youth in farming and entrepreneurship.</p> <p>State Programme of Employment of Population for 2020- 2022 Tajikistan ⁶²aims at creating new jobs, collaboration in the labour market, professional development of labour resources, social support of the returning labour migrants, employment of youth and women, development of individual entrepreneurship.</p> <p>The Project also contributed to the development of new Labour Market Development Strategy in the Republic of Tajikistan.</p>

4.1.2. Relevance to the DWCPs of the project countries and the ILO programmes and budget outcomes

Overall, the project fits well with general ILO programmes implemented in the countries, its objectives and outputs are aligned with the Decent Work Country Programs (DWCP) of participating countries in the areas of employment creation, skills development and promoting social dialogue (where the DWCP is in place). The project objectives are strongly aligned with the Decent Work Country Programme (DWCP) in Azerbaijan for 2016-2020, as well as with the Programme of Cooperation between the Russian Federation and the ILO for 2017-2020 and the extended DWCP for Uzbekistan for 2017-2020.

Program of Cooperation between the Russian Federation and the ILO (2017-2020)⁶³ was the key cooperation agreement between the Russian Federation and the ILO. The

60 Official web-site of the Prime Minister of the Republic of Armenia. Press-release on presenting the development and implementation of the Strategy of transformation of Armenia as a nationwide movement based on our national values and goals: prime-minister. URL: <https://www.primeminister.am/ru/press-release/item/2020/09/21/Nikol-Pashinyan-meeting-Sept-21/>

61 National Development Strategy of the Republic of Tajikistan For The Period Up To 2030. URL: http://nafaka.tj/images/zakoni/new/strategiya_2030_en.pdf

62 The Decree of the Government of Tajikistan from 30 December 2019 № 644 «About State Programme of Employment in the Republic Tajikistan for 2020-2022”. Source: Continent-online.com

63 Program of Cooperation between the Russian Federation and the ILO (2017-2020). URL: https://www.ilo.org/moscow/news/WCMS_535498/lang--en/index.htm

Program addressed the issue of territorial mismatches between the demand for and supply of labour at the regional labour markets in Russia. Also, the Programme focused on strengthening social dialogue, particularly at the sectoral, regional, and municipal levels, expansion of employment opportunities for young women and men in selected regions. Building on the National Development Goals, UN 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, the ILO Centenary Declaration among others, the ***new* Programme of Cooperation for 2021-2024** emphasizes the importance of a human-centered approach to the Future of Work. It makes a stronger emphasis on the improvement of labour legislation in response to changing conditions in the modern economy, lifelong learning and skills development, non-discriminatory and inclusive employment policies, universal social protection throughout life cycle and workforce agility to changing labour market demands and conditions, including technological transformations.

The first priority of **Azerbaijan's DWCP 2016-2020** is to promote decent employment opportunities and quality jobs for inclusive growth, with one of DWCP outcomes (1.2) being active labour market programmes targeting young men and women being in put in place and implemented.⁶⁴ The ILO project activities will thus provide support to the DWCP implementation in analysing the situation of youth on the labour market and developing active labour market policies facilitating youth employment. The Minister of Labour in Azerbaijan articulated interest to ILO in the extension of the cooperation, particularly in the rural areas.

In Uzbekistan, the **DWCP 2017-2020** establishes fostering decent work opportunities as one of the three top policy priorities.⁶⁵ The DWCP monitoring and implementation plan foresees a number of actions to support the achievement of key Outcome 2.1: Active policies pursued to promote full, productive and freely chosen employment, including youth employment, including the review of existing employment policy framework involving technical meetings and study visits. Project activities feed into the achievement of this policy priority by providing a framework and technical inputs for developing and implementing effective policies ensuring decent work for young people. ILO assistance in the project focuses on the elaboration and implementation of national youth employment initiatives.⁶⁶

For more details, please see summary table below:

64 The relevant country programme outcome (CPO) in ILO's programming system is AZE106 "National Employment Strategy developed with the ILO technical support" (target).

65 The relevant CPO is UZB126 "Employment-centred policies improved based on tripartite consultations and LM information" (target). The 2014-2016 Memorandum of Understanding has been extended to the 2017-2020 period.

66 TOR

Table 4 Areas of the project relevance to the ILO Programmes in the project countries (compilation of the evaluator based on the document review and key informants' interviews)

COUNTRY	AREAS OF RELEVANCE TO THE ILO PROGRAMMES/DWCPS
ARMENIA	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Improved capacity of the government to implement, monitor and evaluate policies and programmes to increase employability of women and men in the labour market. Based on the results of implementation of the Decent Work Agenda 2014-2017, promoting sustainable employment and strengthening social dialogue were proposed by the constituents as key targets for the new DWCP 2019-2023⁶⁷
TAJIKISTAN	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Decent employment opportunities for youth increased through Skills Development and better provision of employment services. In particular, DWCP 2015-2017⁶⁸ prioritizes “decent employment opportunities for youth through skills development”. In addition, it also aims to improve “the link of education and training to decent work, and matching the provision of skills to the needs of the labour market, focusing on demand-driven training, which is relevant and of good quality”. New DWCP 2020-2024 is built upon the results of the previous DWCP 2015-2017 and aims at strengthening the capacity of the Agency for Labour and Employment of Population. Acknowledging the important role the Agency for Labour and Employment of Population (ALEP) plays in supporting inclusive labour market and stimulating for creation of decent jobs, especially for vulnerable groups, including unemployed youth, returning migrants, rural and informal workers, new DWCP Program sets as a priority to level up the ALEP capacity through training activities and knowledge sharing on good practices on ALMPs, labour market information systems, timely, up-to-date and gender-disaggregated labour market statistics, including the development of SDGs Decent Work Indicators From the Crisis towards Decent and Safe Jobs project (Phase II, 2014-2018) has been also implemented in Tajikistan

67 Workshop on DWCP Development in Armenia. URL: https://www.ilo.org/moscow/news/WCMS_565886/lang-en/index.htm

68 Decent Work Country Programme of the Republic of Tajikistan 2015-2017. URL: https://www.ilo.org/wcmsp5/groups/public/---europe/---ro-geneva/---sro-moscow/documents/publication/wcms_432702.pdf

The ILO programme and budget 2016-2017 and 2018-19⁶⁹ establish Outcome 1: “More and better jobs for inclusive growth and improved youth employment prospects” as one of ILO’s ten policy outcomes of critical importance in the world of work. By delivering technical support and capacity-building in the implementation and improvement to the youth employment policies, the project will directly contribute to the achievement of this Outcome in the CIS region.⁷⁰

The project also contributes more indirectly to the Outcome 5 “Decent work in the rural economy” by exploring youth employment issues and developing relevant interventions in the rural areas in some target countries and also to the Outcome 6 “Formalization of the informal economy” by examining and developing approaches to tackle a high incidence of informal youth employment in the CIS region.

The ILO Programme of Work for 2020–21 promotes the human-centred approach to the future of work set out in the Centenary Declaration, which brings together the economic, social and environmental dimensions of policies for the world of work. With enhanced focus, clear prioritization and greater coherence of action, the programme will enable accelerated progress towards achieving the four strategic objectives of the Decent Work Agenda (employment; social protection; social dialogue and tripartism; and standards and fundamental principles and rights at work) and advancing the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development (2030 Agenda).⁷¹

The eight proposed policy outcomes derive directly from the Centenary Declaration and focus on the essential elements of a human-centred approach to the future of work, namely: (1) strong tripartite constituents and influential and inclusive social dialogue; (2) international labour standards and authoritative and effective supervision; (3) economic, social and environmental transitions for full, productive and freely chosen employment and decent work for all; (4) sustainable enterprises as generators of employment and promoters of innovation and decent work; (5) skills and lifelong learning to facilitate access to and transitions in the labour market; (6) gender equality and equal opportunities and treatment for all in the world of work; (7) adequate and effective protection at work for all; and (8) comprehensive and sustainable social protection for all. Gender equality and non-discrimination, international labour standards, social dialogue and a just transition towards environmental sustainability, which were established as crosscutting policy drivers in the ILO’s Strategic Plan for 2018–21, are now fully embedded in the policy outcomes of the Programme of Work for 2020–21. They

69 <http://www.ilo.org/public/english/bureau/program/download/pdf/16-17/pb-2016-17-en.pdf> The project will also contribute to the achievement of CPO SMO130 (sub-regional level) and GLO104 (Global Product) – all linked to the ILO Policy Outcome 1.

70 To be measured through Indicator 1.2: “Number of member States that have taken targeted action on decent jobs for young women and men through the development and implementation of multi-pronged policies and programmes”

71 The ILO Programme and Budget for biennium 2020-2021

are reflected in the outcome strategies and outputs to be delivered in the biennium, with accompanying indicators to track progress more effectively.

In the biennium 2020-2021 the project reported to the Outcome 3, Output 3.1 and 2.5

Output 3.1. Increased capacity of member States to formulate and implement a new generation of gender-responsive national employment policies, including for youth Indicator 3.1.1. Number of member States with new generation of national employment policies addressing country-specific future of work challenges

Indicator 3.1.2. Number of member States with a national strategy for youth employment, as a distinct strategy or as part of a national employment strategy (based on SDG indicator 8.b.1)

Output 3.5. Increased capacity of member States to formulate and implement labour market programmes and employment services for transitions to decent work over the life course, with particular focus on young and older workers Indicator 3.5.1. Number of member States with strengthened employment services and labour market programmes addressing transitions to decent work, including for young and older persons.

At country level, the project contributed to the following CPOs, and to results considered as successful targets to be included in the biannual ILO report for the P&B 2020-2021:

- ***UZB126: Increased capacity of constituents to develop a gender-responsive national employment policies and labour market services, particularly for youth***

UZB 126 is currently linked to Output 3.1.1 as a Target. Youth employment has been mainstreamed in the new employment strategy, in the final stage of approval. In the set of measures for youth employment promotion is included ALMPs, Vocational training and career guidance and the youth are identified as priority vulnerable group. Furthermore, the President of the Republic of Uzbekistan declared 2021 as the year of "Supporting youth and strengthening the health of the population". The Project is currently providing technical assistance for implementing nation-wide a flagship presidential initiative for establishing employment and career guide centers for youth.

- ***TJK128 Increased capacities of constituents to develop and implement an integrated policy response on employment and social protection***

TJK 128 is linked to 3.1.1 as a target. The project has delivered the following activities contributing to this outcome: Assessment of the current labour market situation, including rapid assessment of challenges caused by Covid-19; Final assessment of the "State Strategy for Labour Market Development of the RT until 2020" (SSLMD-2020); Policy advice and technical support to constituents to develop a new NES with integrated social protection framework, addressing the Covid-19 response measures and post-crisis labour market and social protection system management, guided by ILO Centenary Declaration and relevant ILS and aimed at establishment of a new intergovernmental coordination mechanism for the new NES

- ***RUS155 Strengthened capacity of constituents to formulate and implement innovative labour market services and address skills mismatch***

RUS 155 is linked to 3.5.1 and considered as a “pipeline”. Nevertheless, it is possible to upgrade the status from “pipeline” to “target”, taking into account the successful reform of the Federal Employment Services (ROSTRUD) actively assisted by the ILO. Currently the Project is supporting innovative approaches for ALMPs and an ambitious federal training program reaching 4.000 staff for ensuring quality employment services delivery, the federal training is based in the ILO PES Manual.

Other sub-regional initiatives: “South-South technical cooperation and knowledge-sharing on an integrated approach towards formalization (Tajikistan, Kyrgyzstan, Azerbaijan, Uzbekistan). The project contributed also to the subregional research and conference “South-South technical cooperation and knowledge-sharing on an integrated approach towards formalization”, October 2020. The report submitted to the conference recommended road maps for Azerbaijan (AZ), Kyrgyz Republic (KY), Tajikistan (TS) and Uzbekistan (UZ) to make progress towards an integrated strategic approach to facilitate the transition to formality. The final section provided an evaluation of the progress and next steps for further cooperation.⁷²

Other initiatives undertaken by the ILO HQ in Geneva: a research aimed to document success story achieved by Azerbaijan in the report “Scaling Up a Self-Employment Initiative in Azerbaijan From Pilot Project to National Programme” (Khan and Nikolaii Rogovsky, RESEARCH Knowledge Management Unit, ILO Geneva, May 2019); the COVID 19 ILO Labour Market Rapid Assessment country reports (Kyrgyzstan, Kazakhstan and Armenia); RBSA funding for Tajikistan and Armenia for enhanced coordination of employment and social protection policies through Integrated policy response on employment and social protection in the context of COVID-19 crisis mitigation and recovery, supported by social dialogue in Tajikistan.

4.1.3. Complementarity and fit with current ongoing UN programmes and projects in the countries

⁷² South-South and triangular cooperation (PARDEV) (ilo.org)

Aside from the links to the ILO Policy Outcomes referred to above, the Project is well aligned with the National Development Frameworks, Sustainable Development Programmes and UN Cooperation programmes in the project countries. In particular, the Project supported reporting to the UN joint programme coordinated by RC. The specific examples are provided below:

United Nations-Azerbaijan Partnership Framework (UNAPF) 2016-2020⁷³ identified promoting sustainable and inclusive economic development underpinned by increased diversification and decent work as the first Strategic Priority Area 1. Accompanying this priority is the Outcome 1.1 where the aim to generate decent work also for youth. Youth has also been recognized as one of cross-cutting issues of the UNAPF. New cooperation Framework for 2021-2025 identifies four priority areas for partnership: inclusive growth that reduces vulnerability and builds resilience; stronger institutions for better public and social services delivery; protecting the environment and addressing climate change; and achieving a gender-equitable society that empowers women and girls.

Partnership Framework for Development with Kazakhstan 2016-2020⁷⁴ envisaged that reducing disparities and improved human development as one of key strategic pillars. Within this pillar, Outcome 1.2 is foreseen focused on the diversification of the economy which provides decent work opportunities for the underemployed, youth and socially vulnerable women and men.

The Uzbekistan-UN Development Assistance Framework 2016-2020⁷⁵ foresees the inclusive economic development, with a focus on employment and social protection and creation of sustainable decent work amongst its key development priorities. Within this priority, special attention is given to policies are needed to promote employment for the social inclusion of vulnerable groups, for example, young people. The United Nations Development Assistance Framework for the Republic of Uzbekistan, 2021-2025⁷⁶ reiterates the importance to enhance the culture of adherence to international human rights and labour rights standards and to ensure full implementation of recent legislation supporting gender equality and women's empowerment. The Project supports the country in achieving Outcome 3. By 2025, youth, women and vulnerable groups benefit from improved access to livelihoods,

73 United Nations-Azerbaijan Partnership Framework (UNAPF) 2016-2020 URL: https://unece.org/fileadmin/DAM/operact/Technical_Cooperation/Delivering_as_One/UNDAF_country_files/UNDAF_files_2015-2020/AZERBAIJAN_UNAPF_2016-2020_signed.pdf

74 PARTNERSHIP FRAMEWORK FOR DEVELOPMENT, KAZAKHSTAN, 2016-2020 URL: <https://kazakhstan.un.org/sites/default/files/2019-12/Partnership%20Framework.pdf>

75 The United Nations Development Assistance Framework for the Republic of Uzbekistan, 2016-2020 URL: https://www.uz.undp.org/content/uzbekistan/en/home/library/un_in_Uzbekistan/the-united-nations-development-assistance-framework-for-the-repu.html

76 UNDAF for Uzbekistan 2021-2025 URL: [UNSDCF-UZB-final-\(website\).pdf](https://www.un.org/development/dsf/undaf/undaf-uzb-2021-2025-final-website.pdf)

decent work and expanded opportunities generated by inclusive and equitable economic growth (national SDGs: 1, 2, 4, 5, 8, 10, and 11).

On a practical level, in the CIS region, complementarity is found with the development assistance projects implemented by the UNDP in Tajikistan and Uzbekistan. In particular, in the framework of the project “Assistance in the expansion of socio-economic opportunities for women and youth of the Zeravshan valley of Tajikistan” funded by the Russian Federation, UNDP Tajikistan provides technical assistance to the vocational technical schools which increases the enrolment of girls in TVET training, to promote social and economic opportunities for women and youth. In the Republic of Uzbekistan, the Project “Promoted Youth Employment in Uzbekistan” was launched in May 2019 at the support of Russian government.⁷⁷ The project is a joint initiative of the Ministry of Employment and Labour Relations (MELR) of the Republic of Uzbekistan and UNDP. It is aimed at promoting youth employment in Uzbekistan, particularly among college and university graduates, young women, returning migrants, and other vulnerable groups, by helping the Government implement a number of active labour market initiatives stipulated in the government’s medium-term Employment Promotion Programme and policies.

The project also continued, based on the experiences in the first phase, to make the best use of links with the other ILO projects in the CIS region (such as “From the Crisis towards Decent and Safe Jobs” Project, “Strengthening social dialogue and industrial relations through the capacity building of employers and workers” Project, “Applying the G20 Training Strategy” Project etc.) to utilize the synergies and deliver joint activities where relevant.

4.1.4. Relevance to the SDG targets and indicators

The project is consistent with a number of policy responses at the global and regional level to tackle youth unemployment. At the strategic level, the project activities addressing youth unemployment feed directly into the UN’s Sustainable Development Goals 2030 agenda⁷⁸ and in particular to supporting full and productive employment and decent work for all (SDG 8), but also, albeit more indirectly, to reducing poverty (SDG 1), improving gender equality

⁷⁷ UNDP in Uzbekistan official web-site, web-page of the Project “Promoting youth employment in Uzbekistan”, accessed on 17 June 2021 URL: <https://www.uz.undp.org/content/uzbekistan/en/home/projects/promoting-youth-employment-in-uzbekistan.html>

⁷⁸ Adopted in September 2015, see <http://www.un.org/sustainabledevelopment/development-agenda/>

(SDG 5), reducing inequality (SDG 10) and partnerships for the goals (SDG 17). The Agenda's outcome document includes the following youth employment related targets:

- 8.5: "By 2030, achieve full and productive employment and decent work for all women and men, including for young people and persons with disabilities, and equal pay for work of equal value" (to be measured through inter alia youth unemployment rate); and
- 8.6: "By 2020, substantially reduce the proportion of youth not in employment, education or training" (to be measured through the proportion of youth (aged 15-24 years) not in education, employment or training).

To translate this strategic commitment into action, the UN adopted in 2016 the Global Initiative on Decent Jobs for Youth for the promotion of youth employment worldwide.⁷⁹ The UN Global Initiative is aimed to stimulate partnerships with governments, the UN system, businesses, academic institutions, youth organizations and other groups to scale-up action to create new opportunities and avenues for quality employment of young people. These are to occur across several areas, including "green jobs" for youth, quality apprenticeships, digital skills and the building of "tech-hubs", support to young people in the rural economy, facilitation of transitions from the informal to the formal economy, support to youth in hazardous occupations and the promotion of youth entrepreneurship. ILO is the lead agency for the Global Initiative, working together with another 21 UN Agencies. The project makes a contribution to the implementation of the UN Global Initiative by reviewing and adjusting the implementation of its key priority themes in the youth employment policies in the CIS region, particularly contributing to the following development priorities:

- Transitions to the formal economy
- Youth in the rural economy
- Youth entrepreneurship and self-employment
- Quality apprenticeships

4.1.5. Relevance to the needs of the ultimate beneficiaries (women, youth, and vulnerable categories)

The evaluator did not conduct any interviews or focus groups with the ultimate beneficiaries of the project⁸⁰ (young men and women who benefitted from the Project's activities). Thus,

⁷⁹ <http://www.ilo.org/global/topics/youth-employment/databases-platforms/global-initiative-decent-jobs/lang-en/index.htm>

⁸⁰ The ultimate beneficiaries of the project are: the youth aged 15-24 eligible for entering professional educational institutions and covered by vocational guidance systems and the adults employed or unemployed who are willing to undertake skill training, retraining and assessment for acquiring a formal qualification.

all findings under this section are based on the evidence generated through the desk review and from the opinions shared by the key informants.

Collected evidence confirms that the project objectives, outputs and interventions are highly relevant to the needs of the ultimate beneficiaries of the project countries as well as to the specific social groups identified as vulnerable in terms of access to the labour market. The list of these vulnerable groups is presented below.

Table 5 The list of the vulnerable groups relevant to the project as identified on the basis of the key informants' interviews

GROUP	COUNTRIES
Young people (15-24), esp. vulnerable youth⁸¹, youth not in employment, education or training (NEET)	All countries
Young men and women residing in remote and rural areas	Armenia, Tajikistan, Azerbaijan, Uzbekistan, RF region (Astrakhan region and Komi Republic)
Working poor, informal workers and low-income households, esp. self-employed youth and female-headed households	Armenia, Tajikistan, Azerbaijan, Uzbekistan, RF region (Astrakhan region and Komi Republic)
Women	Uzbekistan, Tajikistan, Azerbaijan, Armenia
Refugees and displaced people, returning migrants, internal migrants	Armenia, Tajikistan, Uzbekistan
Persons with disabilities	All countries
Young women with small children	All countries

Importance to address the needs of the youth (youth in NEET in particular) and women to the project is also confirmed by using SDG4 and SDG8 targets as international policy and operational benchmarks in youth employment and decent work.

⁸¹ Vulnerable youth was identified as orphans, graduated from an orphan' home, young people from families with many children, youth in difficult life situation including children of migrant's workers.

4.1.6. Strategic mainstreaming of gender, human rights and disability inclusion

Decent Work and non-discrimination are the key aspects of the human rights-based approach, which is one of the common programming principles of the UN system. As a global intervention implemented by the ILO, the project must mainstream principles of non-discrimination and gender equality and pay particular attention to groups subject to discrimination and exclusion.

To enhance gender responsiveness of the project in the second phase, gender equality was identified as an essential strategy element of all aspects of the project. According to the project document, the project was designed to promote gender equality both as a horizontal principle across the project activities (to respect the principle of equal opportunities for representation of men and women) as well as ensuring that gender gaps and issues in youth employment in the CIS are addressed through specific actions sponsored by the project. Specific elements which were incorporated into the project to achieve gender mainstreaming are presented in the table below.

Table 6 Key elements of the project incorporated to achieve gender mainstreaming (developed by the evaluator on the basis of the document review & interviews with the ILO Project Team)

ELEMENT	MECHANISM
Project structure and management	<p>Project’s structure: The Project’s results matrix includes gender-sensitive goal, e.g., Objective 1. More effective and inclusive policies and strategies for Decent Work of young men and women in the countries of regional youth employment network, and gender-sensitive indicators, e.g., Number of tools reflecting the gender dimension and number of tools supporting the employment of vulnerable groups of young people</p> <hr/> <p>Gender equality in beneficiaries’ participation in project capacity building initiatives. The following corresponding indicators were incorporated:</p> <p>Number of network meetings and number of meeting participants (by key stakeholder group and sex; Number of young men and women who participated in the pilot supported by the project (also by relevant vulnerable group characteristics)</p>

	<p>Data management: data entered and maintained in the project M&E information system will be sex disaggregated. The following corresponding indicators were incorporated:</p> <p>Characteristics of initiatives reviewed, adjusted or revised by type, location, number of beneficiaries (share of participants by gender, age, level of education and other relevant vulnerable group characteristics)</p> <p>Number of staff trained (by gender, stakeholder type, institution, and position)</p> <p>Number of young people (disaggregated by sex) who obtained a positive result (employment, further education/training) as a result of the measures developed with the ILO support</p>
Specific project interventions on Output/ Activity level	<p>Including gender-responsive components in project activities: Specific activity was introduced under Objective 1 “Continue to keep the political momentum for evidence-based and cost-effective youth employment interventions as well as the integration of the gender dimension into the youth policy cycle and tackling the widespread informality of youth employment.</p>

According to the project document, the project was marked by the ILO Gender equality marker as one which does not include gender equality as an outcome, but some outputs and/or activities specifically address gender issues. Though none of the project’s outputs specifically address gender issues, gender sensitive targets were formulated at the policy/capacity change level. Please see their description in the table below.

Table 7 Outputs of the project which specifically address gender issues (identified on the basis by the document review and interviews with the ILO Project Team)

OUTPUTS	INDICATOR
<i>Output 1.1 Framework for the regional cooperation network further developed</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Number of network meetings and number of meeting participants (by key stakeholder group and sex)
<i>Output 1.4. Research on key youth employment issues and challenges undertaken</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Number of tools reflecting the gender dimension and number of tools supporting the employment of vulnerable groups of young people
<i>Output 2.1 Support to the implementation of the programme of cooperation and the national plan for</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Characteristics of initiatives reviewed, adjusted or revised by type, location, number of beneficiaries (share of participants by gender, age, level of

<p><i>the promotion of decent work for youth in the Russian Federation</i></p>	<p>education and other relevant vulnerable group characteristics).</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Number of staff trained (by gender, stakeholder type, institution, and position) • Number of young people (disaggregated by sex) who obtained a positive result (employment, further education/training) as a result of the measures developed with the ILO support
<p><i>Output 2.2 Support to the implementation of action plan for youth employment in Kazakhstan</i></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Characteristics of initiatives reviewed, adjusted or revised by type, location, number of beneficiaries (share of participants by gender, age, level of education and other relevant vulnerable group characteristics) • Number of staff trained (by gender, stakeholder type, institution, and position) • Number of young people (disaggregated by sex) who obtained a positive result (employment, further education/training) as a result of the measures developed with the ILO support
<p><i>Output 2.3 Support to the implementation of the national employment strategy in Azerbaijan</i></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Number of staff trained (by gender, stakeholder type, institution, and position) • Number of young people (disaggregated by sex) who obtained a positive result (employment, further education/training) as a result of the measures developed with the ILO support
<p><i>Output 2.4 Support to the implementation of the national initiatives and policies targeting youth in Uzbekistan</i></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Number of staff trained (by gender, stakeholder type, institution, and position) ▪ Number of young people (disaggregated by sex) who obtained a positive result (employment, further education/training) as a result of the measures developed with the ILO support
<p><i>Output 3.1 Youth Employment Partnerships involving public and private sector established in three further regions of the Russian Federation (Republic of Komi, Astrakhan Region and Kaliningrad Region)</i></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Number of pilot ALMPs implemented in the regions (share of participants by gender, age, level of education and other relevant vulnerable group characteristics), enrolment, attendance and dropout rate by individual characteristics, and as relevant, number of jobs created, quality of jobs provided, number of companies involved, etc.)

More details on current progress of the project in incorporating gender issues into implementation are provided in the section 4.2.7 of this report.

In terms of human rights and disability inclusion, the project is coherent with the *global UN's development, humanitarian, and human rights agendas* and contributes to the relevant UNDAF/UNSDCF support for sustainable growth and economic development through achievement of the outcomes on increased access of youth to labour market and decent employment opportunities. The project addresses human rights and disability inclusion issues at the activity level, via capacity building and awareness raising of the main beneficiaries about best practices on ensuring human rights and disability inclusion into youth employment policies, programmes and tools, without any explicit reference at outputs or outcome level. Please see Gender and Human Rights Evaluability Assessment in the Annex G.

4.1.7. Adaptation of the Project to the implication of the COVID-19 crisis and relevant response measures

The COVID-19 crisis burst out after 27 months of the Project's implementation and many Project's stakeholders divide the Project's implementation in two phases – before and after the crisis. However, all interviewed stakeholders agree that the Project has well adapted to the crisis and provided timely support to the policy makers by:

- a) Conducting rapid assessment of the labour market in Armenia⁸², Kyrgyzstan,⁸³ Uzbekistan⁸⁴ and Kazakhstan;
- b) Raising capacity of the policy makers and social partners on addressing the employment crisis and the COVID-19 challenges through series of the sub-regional webinars which allowed countries to gain timely advise and support from the ILO's experts and share concerns with their country peers.
- c) Institutional assessment and capacity building recommendations of the Uzbekistan Public Work Program for enhancing an effective employment response to the Covid 19 job-crisis (July-December 2020)
- d) Support and monitoring ROSTRUD response to the COVID19 job crisis in Russian Federation

82 Armenia: https://www.ilo.org/moscow/information-resources/publications/WCMS_762029/lang--en/index.htm

83 Kyrgyzstan: https://www.ilo.org/moscow/information-resources/publications/WCMS_761673/lang--en/index.htm

84 Uzbekistan: https://www.ilo.org/moscow/information-resources/publications/WCMS_759842/lang--en/index.htm

In particular two major initiatives supporting the CIS sub-regional cooperation network on youth employment were developed and regularly delivered from early May to December 2020: the ILO Moscow series of conferences “From the immediate crisis response to COVID pandemic towards economic recovery, with decent work in focus” and the PES online training for high officials and practitioners in the CIS “The PES role in overcoming the COVID-19 crisis, and the Future of Work”. These sub-regional meetings were the main platform for promoting cooperation among the CIS on youth employment policies, to facilitate mutual learning through voluntary thematic reviews and to identify good practices aligned with international labour standards.

To sum up, the Project has contributed to the UN framework for the immediate socio-economic response to COVID-19 through ⁸⁵ supporting one of the five streams of the package: stream work 3. *protecting jobs, supporting small and medium-sized enterprises, and informal sector workers through economic response and recovery programmes*, extending support to the most vulnerable countries in CIS (Tajikistan, Uzbekistan and Kyrgyzstan).

KEY FINDINGS ON RELEVANCE:

Strategic relevance of the project has been rated as high by all key stakeholders and constituents from all countries who confirmed great extent of the facilitated social dialogue across strategic directions of the project. The project is well-aligned with countries’ national and regional priorities, strategies and plans, the ILO and other international development assistance programmes as well as the SDG target 4, 5, 8, 17. The Project’s focus is relevant to the UN global initiative “Decent work for youth” by addressing challenges for young men and women in transition from school to work and gender disparities in the CIS region. The Project’s showed high responsiveness to the COVID-19 implications at the labour market and formulation of the relevant response measures in Uzbekistan, Kyrgyzstan, Kazakhstan and Armenia based on Rapid Assessments of the situation at the labour market

85 A UN Framework for the immediate socio-economic response to COVID-19, April 2020 URL: [un_framework_report_on_covid-19.pdf](#)

4.2. Validity of design

Validity of design- the extent to which the project design, logic, strategy and elements are/remain valid vis-à-vis problems and needs.

4.2.1. Appropriateness and validity of the project design, results framework, given the expectations of the ILO and the Donor

The second phase of the project aims to continue improving the effectiveness of policies and programmes promoting decent jobs for young people⁸⁶ in the CIS countries through interventions at the regional, national and sub-national levels, as follows:

- The regional (CIS) component constitutes the project's backbone; it will develop further joint approaches to address youth employment issues common to the CIS countries and enhance the existing mechanisms for regional cooperation on youth employment.
- The national component will target Azerbaijan, Kazakhstan, the Russian Federation and Uzbekistan to strengthen the implementation of country-specific youth employment policies and programmes.
- The sub-national component will focus on youth employment actions in three regions of the Russian Federation (Republic of Komi, Astrakhan Region and Kaliningrad Region) to foster a framework for cooperation and partnership among local institutions, the social partners and other stakeholders at the sub-national level.

The project builds on the successful outcome of a previous collaboration between the ILO and the Russian oil company LUKOIL during the 2013-2017 period.⁸⁷ Taking advantage of the global nature of the intervention, the project also seeks to strengthen regional and global

86 For the purposes of this project, "youth employment policies and programmes" include all measures taken by the public and private sectors to support young people aged 15-29 both from demand side (such as supporting hiring of young people through wage subsidies, sensitising employers about youth unemployment) and supply side perspective (developing the skills of young people, ensuring their preparedness for labour market).

87 Official web-page of the Project "Partnership for youth employment in the Commonwealth of Independent States (YEP CIS)". URL: <https://www.ilo.org/global/topics/youth-employment/projects/cis-partnership/lang--en/index.htm>

cooperation in promoting youth employment, peer-to-peer learning, knowledge-sharing and tools transfer, to further encourage interventions by both the ILO and the international community on implementing effective youth employment initiatives.

The second phase of the project was developed based on the results and lessons learned from the first phase as well as taking into account the recommendations provided by the independent mid-term and final evaluation of the first phase of the project. As a result, the project design and results framework were significantly improved due to the introduction of the gender-sensitive indicators and gender-focused activities.

The regional CIS component is much valued by the stakeholders and the Project has been successful in establishing horizontal links and partnerships between the countries on tripartite basis. It was confirmed through key informant interviews that project objectives, outputs, activities and expected results have been formulated in a participatory manner, reflecting specific development needs of the governments, PES institutions, employers' and workers' organizations in each of the countries in a balanced way.

At the same time, a systemic and coherent approach was also secured in the project design and the framework, with all outputs closely linked to each other and contributing to the overall objective in a complementary and comprehensive manner, being strategically aligned with the broader developmental objectives and the expectations of the ILO and the Donor – the LUKOIL company which advised on the countries participants based on presence of the company in these countries.

Though gender-related goals were not specifically formulated, the Project has implemented gender-focused activities at the regional CIS level such as the report “Gender and youth employment in CIS countries”⁸⁸. Report was submitted for discussion during the sub-regional annual meeting of the Commonwealth of Independent States (CIS) network for youth employment promotion policies, held in July 2019, Kazan, Russian Federation and updated early in 2020. Thus, given gained expertise of the Project in gender and youth employment (this is second report produced by the Project)⁸⁹, the Project’s design could benefit from the specific fourth block on gender equality.

⁸⁸ Gender and youth employment in CIS countries, ILO, December 2020 URL: [Digital manufacturing revolutions as political projects and hypes: \(ilo.org\)](https://www.ilo.org/public/eng/mediacentre/pressreleases/20201201.htm)

⁸⁹ First report Gender and Youth Employment in CIS was published in 2017 [wcms_629704.pdf \(ilo.org\)](#)

4.2.2. Validity of the indicators described in the project document appropriate and their usefulness in assessing the project progress? If necessary, how can they be modified to be more useful?

The results of the mid-term evaluation confirm that the Project has developed quality and quantitative indicators to measure the success of the Project at the immediate objectives and outputs level. However, tracking the progress of the Project is quite challenging as in spite of the second phase of the Project, the base line data is missing. The majority of the indicators are not specific and formulated as “Number of ...” which hinders capturing the progress of the Project.

Finally, to better capture the project progress at the outcome level, and bring additional evidence of the project impact on capacity and policy development, complementary indicators⁹⁰ can be identified and discussed and agreed upon by the ILO Project Team to monitor and document the progress and ensure sure that the project properly documents its effectiveness in achieving the desired outcomes.

It is particularly advised to formulate specific indicators to capture progress on advancing employment prospects for youth groups at disadvantaged position at the labour market as:

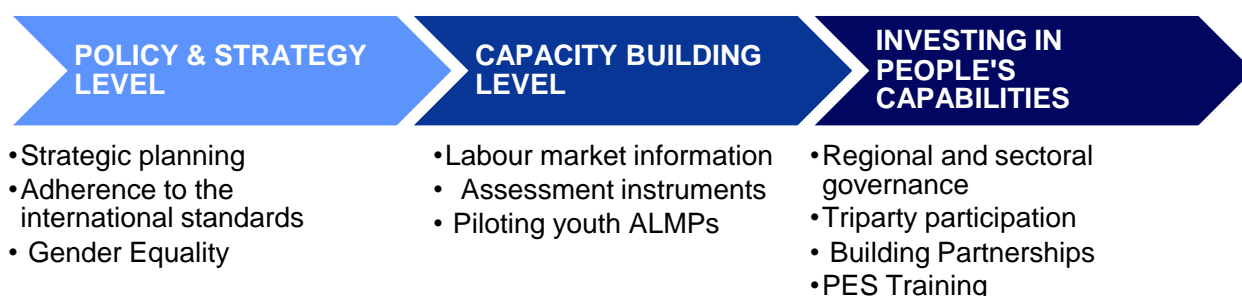
- a) Increase in number and quality of policies and ALMPs targeted at young men and women with disabilities;
- b) Increase in number and quality of policies and ALMPs targeted at young women, particularly with women with children under three years old;
- c) Increase in number and quality of policies and ALMPs targeted at NEET youth;

90 Some proposals for additional supporting indicators are: 1) Number of strategies, policies and framework which were fed by the proposals developed by the project; 2) Number of strategies, policies and frameworks adopted/changed as a result of discussions and proposals made by the project; 3) number of gender-sensitive and inclusive ALMPs developed and adopted by the policy makers at the regional and national level as the result of the capacity building activities of the project; 4) % of trained PES employees at the regional and national level disaggregated by sex ; increase of female PES employees in Azerbaijan and Uzbekistan; 5) number of stakeholders targeted by the Project disaggregated by sex, countries and institutions with at least 50% of female representation; 6) Number of visits of the websites supported by the project; 7) Number of persons reached by the awareness raising and PR actions of the project (via mass media and social media sources); 8) number of states which considered ratification / adoption of new ILS as the result of the awareness-raising efforts of the Project; 9) number of experts undertaken research on youth employment disaggregated by level (international and national), countries and sex, with at least 50% of participation of women; 10) number of countries in the CIS region which improved capacity and efficiency on collecting youth employment statistics disaggregated by sex and submitted data to ILOSTAT, particularly in share of NEET.

4.2.3. Logic and coherence of the project design (objectives, outcomes, outputs and activities) and its underlining theory of change

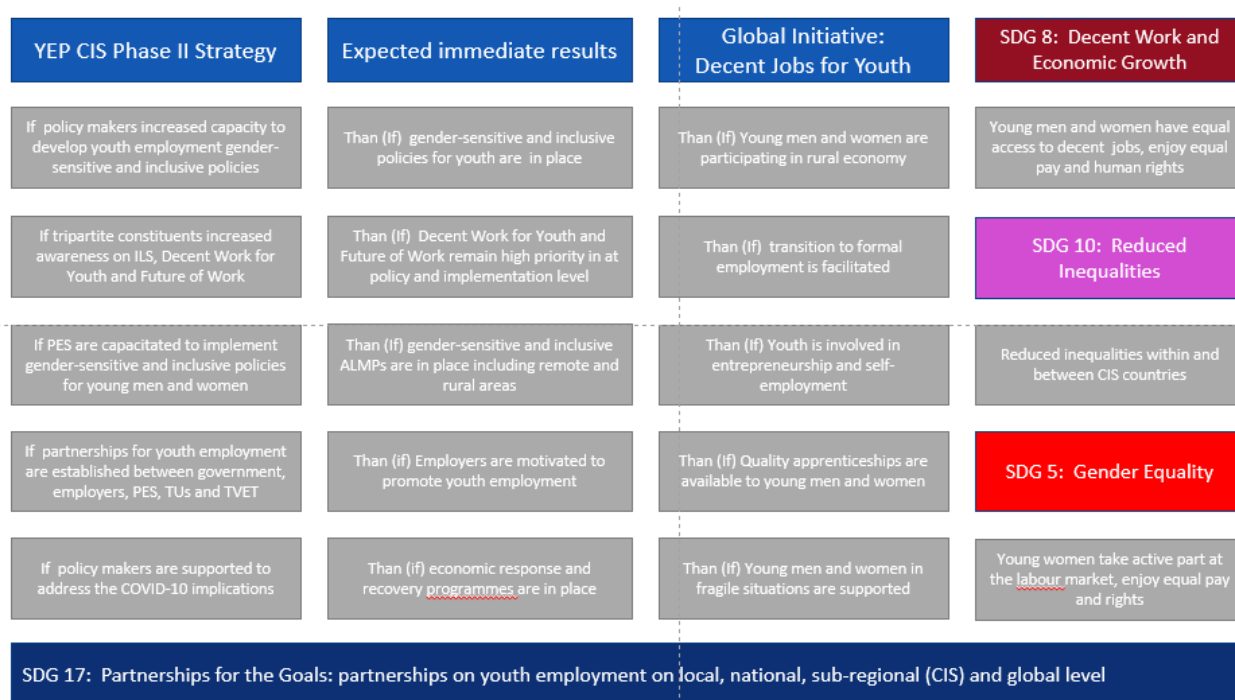
This mid-term evaluation confirms that the overall project intervention logic is well-thought and valid. Overall, the anticipated changes at the output and immediate objective (outcome) level are properly identified, with the connection to the project interventions justified. Thus, current needs of the youth employment at the institutional and policy level are addressed in a systematic and coherent way. The project supports enhancements at the strategic planning and policy level, which forms the basis for the changes in the regulatory frameworks, enhancement of capacities through design and pilot testing of innovative tools and instruments as well as promoting changes at the institutional level of regional and sectoral governance as well as multi-stakeholder engagement for youth employment. The outline of the intervention logic at the national level is presented below.

Figure 2 Project intervention logic at national level (compiled by the evaluator on the basis of the project documents review and interviews with the ILO Project Team)



At the sub-regional level, the underlying project intervention logic is also well-justified and built on a well-thought theory of change which proved its validity, relevance and coherence during this mid-term evaluation. Three main blocks are tackled, enhanced capacity in policy alignment and institutional performance through joint participation of CIS countries at the capacity building activities; enhanced access to the best international practices and better understanding of international labour standards; and facilitating global knowledge sharing and mutual learning through partnerships. Schematic presentation of the Theory of Change for the project is presented below (Figure 3).

Figure 3 Project Theory of Change (developed by the evaluator on the basis of the project document review and interviews with the ILO Project Team)



4.2.4. To what extent did the project mainstream gender equality and non-discrimination and inclusion of people with disabilities into its activities, outputs and outcomes?

As it was noted in the section 4.1.7 of this report, even though the Project has introduced gender-sensitive indicators, the vertical logic design (activities which lead to the outputs and outputs which lead to the immediate objectives) does not include gender equality at the Immediate Objectives level and their targets. The vertical logic of the project suggests three immediate objectives focused on strengthening youth employment policies, strategies and programmes, but gender goals are not reflected in any of them. It is compensated by the gender-focused activities undertaken by the Project at the practical level however it is hard to evaluate the progress at the development level hence the targets are not articulated in the project’s results framework.

If gender equality is sought at the development objective level, the gender mainstreaming strategy should have been better integrated in the Project design (particularly in the Project’s Logframe) and include tangible results at the national / regional / sectoral level, for other outputs and going beyond gender disaggregated data of the number of trained participants.

Also, vulnerable groups have been articulated in the project document as target groups. However, their needs were not fully integrated into the Project’s Logframe and not explicitly

addressed by the project interventions (at activity, output and outcome level). Yet the results of the mid-term evaluation confirm that the Project has addressed the needs of persons with disabilities at the implementation level through the promotion of development inclusive employment policies for persons with disabilities, informing on international best practices and relevant ILS.

At the same time, some countries of the project could provide examples of how these issues have been addressed in their countries at policy, strategy and legislative level. In the Russian Federation, for example, one of the key tasks of the **State Programme on Creating Accessible Environment for 2015-2020** is to ensure equal access of the persons with disabilities to professional development and employment⁹¹. Also, **Federal Project Promotion of women's employment - creation of conditions for pre-school education for children under three years of age**⁹² and **National strategy for action in the interest women to 2017 – 2022** envisions adoption of additional measures aimed at increasing employment women, as well as to creating conditions for their career and professional growth.

KEY FINDINGS ON VALIDITY OF DESIGN:

Project design, results framework and indicators are valid and responsive to the emerging concerns. However, some modifications for the indicators/targets would be beneficial to better capture project progress, especially at the outcome level, gender equality and non-discrimination. Given gained knowledge and expertise of the Project on youth employment and gender equality in the CIS it would be beneficial to introduce forth component specifically targeted gender-related focused at the results level.

4.3. Effectiveness

Effectiveness — the extent to which the project can be said to have contributed to the development objectives and more concretely whether the stated outputs have been produced satisfactorily; in addition to building synergies with national initiatives and with other donor-supported projects.

⁹¹ Decree of the government of Russian Federation from 1 December 2015, No 1297 on establishing state programme of the Russian Federation “Accessible Environment” URL: <http://static.government.ru/media/files/6kKpQJTEgR1Bmijjyqi6GWqpAoc6OmnC.pdf>

4.3.1. What progress has the project made towards the achievement of its outcomes (immediate objectives)? Has the project been effective in fostering adequate policy responses to youth employment challenges in the changing environment affected by the emerging health and socio-political issues in the target countries/region? Have there been any contributing factors or obstacles?

As of June 20, 2021, the project is making sufficient progress towards its planned results. The assessment of the actual progress versus the work plan reveals that approximately 70% of the targets at output levels for the current period are met⁹³.

To put in place more effective and inclusive policies and strategies for Decent Work of young men and women in the countries of regional youth employment network (Immediate Objective One), Sub-regional report on Gender and Youth Employment in CIS and three rapid assessment reports of the employment impact and policy responses of the Covid-19 pandemic on Armenia, Kyrgyzstan and Kazakhstan, Research on transition from informal to formal economy in Azerbaijan and National Report on Gender and Youth Employment in Armenia were produced, widely shared with key national stakeholders and discussed during sub-regional conferences and national workshops. In response to the Minister of Labour, Migration and Employment of the Republic of Tajikistan, the project supported two research aiming to mainstream youth employment into national policies: Assessment Report State Strategy for Labour Market Development of the Republic of Tajikistan until 2020; Towards a Tajikistan National Employment Strategy for a sustainable economic and social development, both submitted to tripartite discussions in September 2020. All knowledge products (including videos of the sub-regional workshops) are available on Project's web pages. At country level, the project supported tripartite discussion in Tajikistan, Kyrgyzstan and Uzbekistan: Tripartite discussion on the "Assessment Report State Strategy for Labour Market Development of the Republic of Tajikistan until 2020 Towards" and the videoconference on the "Tajikistan National Employment Strategy for a sustainable economic and social development"; Kyrgyzstan: Tripartite videoconference on the "Rapid diagnostics for assessing impact of COVID19 pandemic on the economy and labour market"; Uzbekistan: Tripartite discussion of the "Background report for preparation of the National Employment Strategy and the way

⁹³ The details on the progress per outputs are summarized in the Attachment J.

forward” and “New employment strategy: the way forward to sustainable social and economic development”. As a result, more than 521 policy-makers, constituents, experts and other stakeholders (107 men and 138 women)⁹⁴ enhanced their knowledge on gender aspects of youth employment and implication of the COVID-19 on youth labour markets and its application into national strategic planning.

To improve implementation of policies and programmes promoting Decent Work for young men and women in the target countries (Immediate Objective 2), the Project supported the implementation of the programme of cooperation and the national plan for the promotion of decent work for youth in the Russian Federation, the implementation of the national employment strategy in Azerbaijan and implementation of the national initiatives and policies targeting youth in Uzbekistan.

- **In the Russian Federation:** ROSTRUD has led a major institutional client-oriented reform by introducing technology and digitalizing services, strategic result-based management, core institutional performance indicators and administrative rationalization. The federal reform initially selected 16 pilot Russian regions. In partnership with ROSTRUD, the project has organized two Employment Academies in 2019 **capacitating 112 PES employees (55% men and 45% women) from 19 regions of the RF, including two target regions of Phase II (Astrakhan region and Komi Republic)** and developed **the Manual the PES and the Future of Work**, providing guidance for a comprehensive staff capacity building plan, responding to the institutional needs identified in the Russian interregional meetings held in year 2019.
- **In Azerbaijan:** the ILO supported the Government of Azerbaijan to design and put in place its National Employment Strategy (2018-2030), the National Tripartite Commission on Economic and Social Affairs, a new Law on Unemployment Insurance and ALMPs for youth. The Project provided extensive support on conducting a diagnostic assessments and tripartite discussions on the informal economy and continues implementing a PES staff development Plan and challenges faced on the implementation of national scale programs targeting self-entrepreneurship and youth employment. The Project organized three large-scale PES trainings in 2018 and 2019 **capacitating 306 employees (70% men and 30% women) from 9 out of 10 administrative regions of Azerbaijan Republic**. As the results of these efforts and the commitment of Government to modernize PES, the staff of the PES institution was increased and the capacity was increased to deliver nation-wide.
- **In Uzbekistan,** the analysis of the impact of the employment policies in the youth labour market was complemented by the institutional strengthening of the employment

⁹⁴ Sex disaggregated data is available for some activities, thus total number of men and women doesn't coincide with the overall number of participants. The data on participants is represented by the following Project's events – Subregional COVID-19 webinars (2020), Subregional PES training webinars (2020), Sub-regional meeting in Kazan (2019), Kick-off Conference in Turin (2018)

agencies and their capacity to deliver quality services to youth. The MELR requested to conduct and to update the institutional assessments of the Public Employment Service and the Uzbekistan Public Work Program. Both institutional assessments provided practical recommendations on how the employment agencies could deliver more effective responses to the COVID 19 economic crisis, both in the short-term (during the crisis) and on the transition to sustainable economic and job recover; how to enhance the coordination between employment and social protection policies to improve the coverage and outreach of women and youth, and what managerial skills, institutional arrangements and procedures might be required for a more effective crisis response. The Project organized three large-scale PES trainings in 2018 and 2019 **capacitating 141 employees (at least 17% women) from 14 administrative units - 12 regions, 1 autonomous republic, and 1 independent city in the Republic of Uzbekistan.** Also, the Project assisted in introduction of the law amendments for the "social contract", which has been implemented by the Uzbek MofL - PES as a pilot program in 28 districts since May 2021 aimed to design an integrated package of social protection and active labour market measures, tailored for specific groups of disadvantage groups of job-seekers and workers with an emphasis on women and persons with disabilities in Uzbekistan and improve coordination in the management and use of existing databases: MoF Unified Social Registry, SES "Single Window" abkm.mehnat.uz; PWP jamoat.mehnat.uz; COVID 19 "Temir Daftar" ("Iron logbook") to enhance impact assessment and forecasting of government programmes in Uzbekistan. The recommendations for a more integrated approach to the working poor come from the PWP assessment as part C19 response.

To create and strengthen youth employment partnerships to improve the design, monitoring and evaluation of youth employment policy interventions in three regions of the Russian Federation, the project conducted a participatory strategic assessment of the target regions, identifying challenges and regional capacity to address youth employment issues at regional level. Building on the previous assessment of the regional capacities to deliver decent work for youth, identifying shortcomings and opportunities in the youth labour market, and assess the regional PES performance on delivering services and programs for young people, the project assisted regions in prioritizing and planning the implementation of the pilot programs:

- **Astrakhan region** has chosen the programme on rural development and business opportunities for youth in rural area. In February 2020 26 PES employees (100% female) were trained on the introduction training of the ILO "Start and improve your business". 57% of the participants were represented by remote districts of Astrakhan region — Akhtubinsky, Volodarsky, Enotaevsky, Znamensk town, Ikryaninsky, Kamyzyaksky, Krasnoyarsky, Limansky, Narimanovsky, Kharabalinsky, Chernoyarsky. Due to the COVID-19 pandemic, the training for trainers for these participants was conducted in June, 2021 with participation of 20 female and 1 male PES employees. The importance of this

result was highlighted by the regional Astrakhan PES as PES in remote districts will be staffed with qualified ILO's trainers "Start and Improve your Business".

- **Komi region** opted for "Wage subsidy programme of youth NEET", aiming to implementing an innovative on-the-job training program by placing young rural NEET (not in employment, education or training) in enterprises providing services in the Komi forestry industry. However, all these pilot programmes were put on hold due to the COVID-19 crisis. Launch of wage subsidy programme of youth NEET was initiated in June, 2021 at the approval of the Ministry of labour, employment and social protection of the Komi Republic.
- **Kaliningrad region:** the Project has supported the region in drafting youth employment strategy in cooperation with international expert. Furthermore, Kaliningrad participated in all inter-regional meeting, including the peer to-peer review organized in Komi Republic. The implementation of the ALMPs pilot was delayed, because of lack internal clarity on priorities. Regional stakeholders were very strong on working with people with disability, and suggested to continuous working on this, but the diagnostic report indicate that the main issue was brain-drain of youth graduated, mismatches because young people were not really clear of opportunities offered by well advanced enterprises in Kaliningrad. The region has decided to consider a pilot career guidance center and currently is working on the Project in this direction.

Other sub-regional initiatives implemented by the ILO such as "South-South technical cooperation and knowledge-sharing on an integrated approach towards formalization (Tajikistan, Kyrgyzstan, Azerbaijan, Uzbekistan) contributed to the development of the road maps for Azerbaijan (AZ), Kyrgyz Republic (KY), Tajikistan (TS) and Uzbekistan (UZ) to make progress towards an integrated strategic approach to facilitate the transition to formality.

The Phase II of the Project has coincided with the year of the ILO centenary celebration in 2019 which was well highlighted by the Project. The ILO Centenary Declaration and the Global report on the Future of Work was presented at the sub-regional meeting in Kazan, Russia. The Project raised awareness of the social partners about the Future of work concept – a new human centered agenda, which was confirmed by the key informant interviews.

The Mid-Term Evaluation did not identify any negative results of implementation; the results of the key informants' interviews confirm that project results are perceived positively by the stakeholders in all countries. Detailed analysis of the current progress on output levels is presented in the Table 16 available as Annex K of the report.

4.3.2. If and how well has the Project adapted its approach and implementation to COVID-19 crisis (e.g., repurposed activities, added outputs, etc.?)

The COVID-19 pandemic burst out in the beginning of 2020 when the implications on the labour market required rapid policy response and active measures to address the implication

of the crisis. The ILO has been in close contact with the governments to provide consultations and policy advice how to tackle emerging challenges. Financial and fiscal policies for reactivating the economy, support to enterprises for jobs retention and social packages fighting poverty received great priority. Targeted response to vulnerable groups such as women and youth were very often not considered in the first policy packages. The project developed a good compromise between supporting national policies, conducting impact analysis on the labour market and employment, and simultaneously raising awareness on how the crisis was affecting youth and advocating for more targeted policy responses.

Apart from the individual consultations with the policy makers, early in May 2020 the Project organized series of the virtual conferences at the sub-regional level to capacitate social partners in addressing challenges at the labour markets, discuss best international practices and possibility of their application at the local context.

The ILO Moscow conferences “From the immediate crisis response to COVID pandemic towards economic recovery, with decent work in focus » and the Online training for PES Officials in the CIS “PES Role in Overcoming the COVID-19 Crisis, and the Future of Work” enhanced capacity of the social partners in the CIS region to understand better underlying roots of unemployment, new concept of “future work” and enhanced PES role in providing client-oriented, gender-sensitive and youth-focused services. (Source: interviews). As a follow up to the web-conferences, the Governments in consultation with the social partners were able to select topics for more targeted ILO support according to their own needs. Policy briefs, research papers and methodological tools elaborated by the project and the ILO COVID-19 anti-crisis response were broadly presented and circulated, including those directly related to youth employment: Preventing exclusion from the labour market: tackling the COVID-19 youth employment crisis; The role of public employment programmes and employment guarantee schemes in COVID-19 policy responses, and Distance and Online Learning during the time of COVID-19.

It was also reported by the project’s stakeholders that the series of the webinars allowed to maximize reach and coverage of the Project to the knowledge, enhance cooperation between the social partners from the region and better manage knowledge resources hence they were well documented through video-recording and available for further usage to the wide range of development actors.

4.3.3. How have the relevant international norms and labour standards concerning, for instance, employment, discrimination and informality, been taken into account during the implementation?

The Project has promoted key International Labour Standards of the ILO aimed at ensuring the quality and standards of employment, the ILO Convention 122 on Employment Policy

Promotion⁹⁵ and Employment Policy Recommendations 12296 and 16997, which call the Member States to promote full, productive and freely chosen employment, ensure the equal opportunities in employment and promote transitions to legal economies. Other instruments used in this respect were the Convention 88 on Employment Services and ILO Recommendation 204 on Transition from the Informal to the Formal Economy which provides guidance to the Member States as to how to develop and implement coherent and integrated strategies to facilitate the transition to the formal economy.

The Project sought expertise of the International Labour Standards and Labour Law Specialist who participated in the capacity building events and revised key publications to ensure that relevant international standards are reflected. On 6 April 2018, the round table devoted to the issue of strengthening the Public Employment Service in Uzbekistan was conducted in Tashkent with the participation of the representatives of the Ministry of Employment and Labour Relations, regional employment centers, workers' and employers' organizations. The agenda included presentation on the ILO international labour standards concerning employment with particular focus on the Employment Policy Convention, 1964 (No. 122), Employment Service Convention, 1948 (No. 88) and Private Employment Agencies Convention, 1997 (No. 181). The objective of the round table was to identify priorities for the Public Employment Service. The constituents have formulated several priority areas to be addressed at the future training events. In particular, they requested more information on the implementation of the International Labour Standards, including 11 standards that the government considers for ratification.

The particular work of the Project was to strengthen role of PES in accordance with the international standards. The ILO's Employment Service Convention of 1948 (No. 88) and the Employment Service Recommendation of 1948 (No. 33) include important information on the role of PES. They see PES as 'a key institution implementing employment and labour market policies.' Firstly, the future world of work provides PES with an opportunity to move into a central, coordinating role in the labour market. The ILO Social Protection Floors Recommendation, 2012 (No. 202)¹⁴ calls for better integration between employment and social policies. The Project has shaped new visioning in PES through the capacity building

95 C122 - Employment Policy Convention, 1964 (No. 122) URL:
http://www.ilo.org/dyn/normlex/en/f?p=NORMLEXPUB:12100:0::NO:12100:P12100_INSTRUMENT_ID:312267:NO

96 R122 - Employment Policy Recommendation, 1964 (No. 122)
http://www.ilo.org/dyn/normlex/en/f?p=NORMLEXPUB:12100:0::NO:12100:P12100_INSTRUMENT_ID:312460:NO

97 R169 - Employment Policy (Supplementary Provisions) Recommendation, 1984 (No. 169)
http://www.ilo.org/dyn/normlex/en/f?p=NORMLEXPUB:12100:0::NO:12100:P12100_INSTRUMENT_ID:312507:NO

events and PES manual to further promote and sustain the achieved results in promoting the ILO Centenary Declaration for the Future of Work (2019).

In terms of promoting gender equality at work the Project promoted core ILO's conventions on Equal Remuneration Convention, 1951 (No. 100) on Discrimination (Employment and Occupation) Convention, 1958 (No. 111) on Employment Policy Convention, 1964 (No. 122) on Workers with Family Responsibilities Convention, 1983 (No. 156) on Maternity Protection Convention, 2000 (No. 183) on Violence and Harassment Convention, 2019 (No. 190) through the preparing and disseminating results of the regional research "Gender and youth employment in CIS countries". The report sets the ground for CIS member countries for building new perspectives for the youth labour market analysis, developing new capacities to analyse the disparities faced by young men and women on vocational education, professions and the gender inequalities when they are trying to apply for jobs after a period of inactivity.

4.3.4. If and how have the social dialogue and tripartite approach contributed to Project implementation?

The Project has undertaken multi-faucet approach to sustain social dialogue and tripartite discussions at the policy, institutional and general public level by a) involving social partners in policy discussions; b) inviting social partners in participating in the capacity building events beyond their direct agenda to strengthen their role in the social dialogue and particular in youth employment; c) by supporting members of worker's and employer's organization in participating at the international events to uphold the human rights and gender and tripartite dialogue.

The specific output focused on strengthening social dialogue "Youth Employment Policies and programmes are reinforced in the agendas of the trade unions and employers' organizations" allowed to intensify work in this direction through various type of activities.

At regional level, the videoconferences "Role of social dialogue in supporting employment and advancing towards economic recovery" (July 13), and the videoconference "Strategic Partnerships: Creating the Conditions for Sustainable Employment PES Role in Overcoming the COVID-19 Crisis, and the Future of Work" (November 20) gathered representative of governments, employers and trade unions to exchange practical experiences on how social dialogue was facilitating targeted response to vulnerable groups, including youth. Examples ranged from new federal laws and regulations for teleworking, or agreeing regional and district employment support priorities (Russian Federation), to enhancing active labour market programs, such as public work and youth entrepreneurship (Uzbekistan) or scaling up new modalities of job retention and wage subsidies programs (Azerbaijan). Although the PES Online Training prioritized public officials and practitioners with responsibility on managing employment services and programs, all the 6 webinars delivered between July and

December 2020, included representative of employers and workers organizations, recognizing their importance as implementing partners and facilitating the social dialogue with public officials.

The subregional meeting in Kazan in 2019 included a focus on social dialogue. One of its sessions were spent for tripartite discussion, supported by Specialists in Employers' organizations and Workers' organizations

At country level, the project supported tripartite discussion in Tajikistan, Kyrgyzstan and Uzbekistan:

- **Tajikistan:** Tripartite discussion on the “Assessment Report State Strategy for Labour Market Development of the Republic of Tajikistan until 2020 Towards”, 29 September 2020; and the videoconference on the “Tajikistan National Employment Strategy for a sustainable economic and social development”, 13 October 2020;
- **Kyrgyzstan:** Tripartite videoconference on the “Rapid diagnostics for assessing impact of COVID19 pandemic on the economy and labour market”, 25 October 2020;
- **Uzbekistan:** Tripartite discussion of the “Background report for preparation of the National Employment Strategy and the way forward”, 3 April 2020; and the videoconference on the “New employment strategy: the way forward to sustainable social and economic development”, 15 May 2020.

The interviews with the social partners in Tajikistan and Uzbekistan confirm the involvement of the partners in the tripartite discussions of the national policies and strategic documents. The representatives of the social partners in the target countries – Azerbaijan, Russian Federation and Uzbekistan express great satisfaction over participation in the trainings held in ILO ITC in Turin – ITC addressing NEET, ITC Employment Academy, ITC designing employment policies, ITC Youth Employment Academy. In total, ILO ITC capacitated 7 representatives of the social partners (sex disaggregated data is not available), out of them 3 representatives of the trade unions and 4 representatives of employers' organizations.

4.3.5. How effectively did the project monitor performance and results? Had M&E plan been implemented in a consistent manner? If not, what are the reasons?

The ILO has robust and in-depth reporting system to inform about the progress of the projects on annually basis across planned outputs, outcomes, targets and indicators. By the time of the mid-term evaluation the Project has provided three annual progress reports for the analysis – Progress Report 2018, Progress Report 2019, Progress Report 2020. The progress reports were of high quality and prepared in accordance with the ILO's procedures and reporting guidelines. They have captured major milestones of the developments, the

progress on the delivered activities, activities and indicators which has greatly facilitated the evaluation progress.

According to the ProDoc, the project was going to develop monitoring and evaluation plan has at the start of the project, based on the overall project work plan. It was to include expected project outcomes, performance indicators, baseline information, data sources and data collection methods, data analysis (method, frequency and responsibility). At the period of the mid-term evaluation, the M&E framework has not been developed including the baseline data thus the Progress of the Project could not be evaluated in comparison with previous Project Phase I. The specific M&E instruments such as Performance Measurement Framework has not been developed which has complicated to estimate number of project's participants. Though the Project's team has collected the data at the process of the Mid-Term Evaluation the total number of the participants could be only estimated as the Project doesn't have the data base of the project's participants allowing to estimate the actual number of the participants and frequency of their involvement across all project's activities.

The ProDoc mentioned that 4 recommendations of the mid-term would be addressed (see the status on the implementation in the table below), yet the management response to the recommendations of the final evaluation of the Phase I was not prepared.

Table 8 MTE observance of the ILO management response to the Recommendations of the Mid-Term Evaluation of Phase I

RECOMMENDATION OF THE MID-TERM EVALUATION OF PHASE I	PLANNED FOLLOW-UP BY ILO	MTE OBSERVANCE OF THE ILO MANAGEMENT RESPONSE
To sustain the inter-regional working group on Youth Employment and explore new formats of coordination on youth employment with other international organizations	The working group will be sustained New formats of coordination will include the involvement of specific UN agencies in the regional level activities (Objective 1)	The Inter-regional working group on Youth Employment was sustained and greatly expanded. Representatives of other UN agencies and/or international financial institutions participated in the following events: AZE PES training IV (on ALMPs) (2018); UZE presentation on COVID-19 rapid assessment (2020); KGZ conference on rapid diagnostics (2020).
To support national partners in evaluating the results of implementation of active labour market programmes and assist in their implementation	Further support to building evaluation capacity at the national level (Objective 2) will be delivered by the project activities, including emphasis on following	The Project organized Tripartite discussions of ALMPs in Uzbekistan and Tajikistan. (UZ, TJ)To check with Ramiro:

	up the evaluation recommendations	Khanty-Mansy okrug, Perm Kray, Kalmykia
To develop guidelines on Youth Employment Policies Review through gender lenses and a gender mainstreaming strategy for the project, introducing gender-sensitive indicators to the log frame	Report on gender aspects of youth employment in the CIS was produced during the Phase I. Gender sensitive indicators in the log frame have been developed as appropriate.	The MTE confirms that reports on gender aspects of youth employment in the CIS was produced during the Phase I and Phase II, yet Gender Mainstreaming strategy of the Project was not developed and the guidelines on Youth Employment Policies Review were not updated to include gender perspective.
To develop clear approaches on integrating specific vulnerable groups of young people into the national action plans and policies and setting specific indicators on vulnerable groups into project design	Currently existing approaches on integrating specific vulnerable groups of young people into the national action plans and policies will be further reviewed and developed in the project activities Setting specific indicators on vulnerable groups are reflected in the project design through inclusion of specific relevant indicators in the logical framework	The MTE confirms that the Phase II has taken due efforts in integrating specific vulnerable groups of young people into the national action plans and policies. Setting specific indicators on vulnerable groups are reflected in the project design through inclusion of specific relevant indicators in the logical framework – was not observed by MTE

Table 9 MTE observance of the ILO management response to the Recommendations of the Final Evaluation of Phase I

RECOMMENDATION OF THE FINAL EVALUATION OF PHASE I	PLANNED FOLLOW-UP BY ILO	MTE OBSERVANCE OF THE ILO MANAGEMENT RESPONSE
<p>Promote the project as a model of Corporate Social Responsibility in the Russian Federation and globally</p> <p>The ILO should work with LUKOIL and RSPP to develop a strategy to communicate the success of this project to other potential donors and to the wider community. This is in keeping with the agreement between the ILO’s Director General, Mr. Guy Ryder, and LUKOIL’s CEO, Mr. Vagit Alekperov, that the “unique</p>	<p>The project became the first PPP in the sub-region which was considered successful by the ILO DG and the company which resulted in the agreement on the phase II of the project. The ILO promotes the project as a model of CSR, through the presentation and exposition at the 10th ERM conducted in October 2017; attracting the company to participate in the ITC targeted courses; through the ACTEMP team. A number of raising visibility products were produced</p>	<p>The Project has taken due efforts in addressing this recommendation, e.g., Enhancing visibility of Lukoil through the ILO action – 100 meters below the sea level and highlighting LUKOIL’s support at 74th session of the UN General Assembly.</p>

<p>cooperation between the ILO and LUKOIL should be promoted globally” (as recorded in the minutes of the Project Partnership Committee meeting of December 2016)</p>	<p>during the project's implementation, including regularly updated web-page, news items, press releases, publications, videos, stationary with the project logo and key messages. The company regularly takes part in the project activities. These activities will be further promoted. The project experience will be highlighted at various regional and global events and conferences, i.e., in conjunction with the ILO centenary celebrations in 2019.</p>	
<p>Identify how best to monitor the changes made as a result of the peer reviews in youth employment policies</p> <p>Working through the Regional Cooperation Network, consider how best to measure the impact of peer reviews. A number of options are outlined in the Toolkit (Section 4.2).</p>	<p>The recommendation has been partially addressed through monitoring the changes by collecting and analyzing good practices from the countries (summarized in the global product - Toolkit for conducting peer reviews), by drafting analytical synthesis reports based on the findings of the peer review rounds, regular missions to the countries and meetings with the constituents in order to develop follow up actions based on the provided policy recommendations and monitor the progress. The phase II of the project will pay more attention to monitoring the changes in the countries related to the implementation of the project and thematic policy reviews that are planned between the countries. Special questionnaires could be used for this reason and regular discussions with the constituents.</p>	<p>Annual conferences for mutual learning and peer-to-peer reviews were complemented by monthly webinar bringing together the main tripartite partners in the CIS for discussing up-to-date employment police issues, with focus on youth, and further developing a PES sub-regional network for knowledge sharing</p>
<p>Consider further research into how new and emerging forms of work are affecting young people in the labour market and what policy responses might be needed in CIS countries</p> <p>Given the pace of change in this field and the fact that the</p>	<p>The Istanbul Initiative promotes policy framework to maximize the benefits and minimize the risks relating to the future of work in the region. It calls on the ILO to provide tripartite constituents in member States with the advice and support they need to design these policies. The project phase</p>	<p>The Project has supported study on gender and youth employment in the CIS by Niall O'Higgins. It looks at school-to-work transitions of youth in the CIS region from a perspective of gender equality. Source: https://www.ilo.org/moscow/information-resources/publications/WCMS_764206/lang--en/index.htm. The</p>

<p>second phase of the project runs for five years, this forward-looking research could be used not only to ensure appropriate protections are in place for young people employed in this way, but also to maximize any benefits or opportunities they might present. This is in line with the ILO's "Istanbul Initiative" announced in October 2017</p>	<p>It foresees annual thematic policy reviews based on the topics prioritized in the Global UN Initiative on Decent Jobs for Youth. The list of possible topics to be discussed and accompanied by the solid research products has been already developed and will be discussed with the constituents during the kick-off event to be conducted in February 2018. Possible topics include the Future of Work for young people, green jobs for youth, gender issues in the context of YE promotion, skills for youth, informal economy among young people, entrepreneurship and rural development with focus on youth. All these topics will touch upon new and emerging forms of work that are affecting young people in the labour market.</p>	<p>PES Manual also considered the future of work (or changing world of work) and provides innovative recommendations.</p>
<p>Continue to build the capacity of stakeholders (especially in pilot locations) to monitor and evaluate the youth programmes they pilot</p>	<p>During the project phase I particular attention of the project while piloting labour market programmes was devoted to the monitoring and assessment of results. This was done with the technical support of the ILO international experts and in cooperation with the stakeholders (during special missions to pilot locations. Monitoring and assessment reports were produced). The project produced a tool on Monitoring and evaluation of YE programmes in Russian language and disseminated the publication among the stakeholders. During the phase II the project will pay further attention to building capacities of the stakeholders (particularly in the pilot locations) on monitoring and evaluation. Technical sessions in cooperation with the HQ on this issue could be organized during the subregional meetings.</p>	<p>Monitoring labour market outcomes with youth employment was across-cutting issues included in all country activities. In Russian Federation the project carried out initial assessment of the youth labor market and employments centers institutional capacity to deliver employments services to youth in 3 regions; specific analysis about the youth labour market, programs and services were included into country employment papers prepared for Armenia, Uzbekistan and Tajikistan. Wider dissemination of the ILCS guidance and definitions for analyzing the employment status according to the latest international standards and research</p>

<p>As recommended in the Mid-Term Evaluation, enhance the gender sensitivity of future project implementation including through specialist expertise (e.g., in review of research and tools produced), capacity building for stakeholders in programme design and management, and in project performance monitoring</p>	<p>As it has been reported earlier after the mid-term evaluation, the project phase I enhanced the gender sensitivity of the project implementation. Particular attention was paid to gender issue by developing an in-depth research on gender aspects of youth employment in the countries of the sub-region. The publication is available to the stakeholders. During the project phase II this issue will be further promoted. One of thematic policy reviews will be devoted to this issue. This will include capacity building for the stakeholders. Project performance monitoring data will be disaggregated by gender when relevant and appropriate.</p>	<p>The MTE observed good efforts of the Project in gender mainstreaming, in terms of data management – more efforts should be applied in collecting sex /age disaggregated data in a consistent manner</p>
<p>Encourage/support countries to give more attention to the needs of people disadvantaged in the labour market (e.g., people with disabilities, low levels of education, or facing discrimination) in the design and delivery of youth employment programmes, including by sharing international good practice and specialist expertise</p>	<p>During the project phase I the countries were supported in design and delivery of youth targeted labour market programmes. In selected regions of Russia piloted programmes were aimed at helping disadvantaged youth (e.g., long term unemployed, people without education, people with disabilities etc.). The programmes included wage subsidies to employers in case of hiring such groups of youth and entrepreneurship programme. Project II has three new regions of Russia as target locations. In these areas design and delivery of youth LM programmes is planned and special attention will be paid to disadvantaged groups.</p>	<p>The MTE observed that ALMPs piloted in Russia opted for addressing needs of vulnerable groups of youth – e.g., NEET youth in Komi Republic, rural youth in Astrakhan region. The PES training in AZE (Dec 2018) was focused on disadvantaged groups, as well. One of the sessions of Employment Academy I in Moscow was about disadvantaged groups, as well. Women are also a disadvantaged group, so all activities relevant to gender are relevant, as well.</p>
<p>Monitor and document Azerbaijan’s experience in “mainstreaming” and scaling up entrepreneurship training as a means of sharing good practice and lessons learned</p>	<p>On 13-16 February 2018 a subregional meeting of the member of the youth employment network is planned within the Project. Participants will include tripartite constituents from 10 countries of the subregion and representatives of</p>	<p>The MTE observed that the Project has not organized special session devoted to sharing good practices and lessons learnt in Azerbaijan at the subregional meeting in February, 2018. The project highlighted Azerbaijan</p>

<p>to other countries (in the region and elsewhere)</p>	<p>the Ministries of Labour of BRICS countries. The main objectives of the meeting will be to summarize, present and discuss the project phase I outputs and introduce to the stakeholders the phase II. During summarizing the achievements special session will be devoted to sharing good practices and lessons learnt in Azerbaijan. It was also discussed to produce develop a good practice story devoted to Azerbaijan for further sharing. Format of the good practice story should be further discussed.</p>	<p>experience at the following publications:</p> <p>Case studies The WHO European Health Equity Status Report Initiative, WHO, 2019</p> <p>Scaling Up a Self-Employment Initiative in Azerbaijan from Pilot Project to National Programme, ILO, 2019</p>
<p>Ensure project monitoring in Stage 2 gives more attention to measuring outcomes/effectiveness of outputs and activities by revising the current performance indicators and reporting accordingly.</p> <p>These should include a mix of qualitative and quantitative measures. (The current quantitative measures provide an inadequate indication of the value the project is adding.)</p>	<p>New set of performance indicators with a baseline data, end target and milestones has already been developed for the project phase II. The indicators include mix of qualitative and quantitative measures to facilitate better reporting and provide adequate indication of the value the project is adding.</p>	<p>The MTE of the Phase II didn't observe the baseline data thus evaluation of the progress against targets set remains difficult. The reporting system of the Project captures results at the outputs level.</p>
<p>Reinforce the application of International Labour Standards in all Stage 2 outputs and activities</p> <p>Opportunities for promoting and reinforcing these standards should be systematically reviewed at all stages of implementation, especially activity design/commissioning. A checklist could be prepared that helps project staff and others responsible for delivery to identify these opportunities (e.g., in publications, toolkits, meetings and events) and provides guidance on how to</p>	<p>During the phase I, all project activities, including sub-regional and national events, included a special component on raising awareness on the ILS, especially those on employment policy, public and private employment services, social dialogue, gender equality and other relevant norms (e.g., C122 and its R, C88, C181, and fundamental conventions). During the phase II this strategy will be continued and production of relevant publications (e.g., Guide on ILS for youth employment) could be considered. Promotion of application of ILS will remain a cross-cutting issue during the</p>	<p>The Project showed high performance in mainstreaming ILS, yet the checklist to help project staff and others responsible for delivery to identify these opportunities (e.g., in publications, toolkits, meetings and events) and provide guidance on how to use them to promote the standards remains good recommendation</p>

use them to promote the standards.	implementation of thematic policy reviews	
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4.3.6. What has been project’s contribution to SDGs and related targets as prioritized by the national development strategies?

Key Project documents and progress reports explicitly identify the links between the project interventions and relevant SDGs. In particular, at the policy development level, the project is providing support to the alignment of the national strategies and policies to the 2030 Development Agenda.

The project is consistent with a number of policy responses at the global and regional level to tackle youth unemployment. At the strategic level, the project activities addressing youth unemployment will feed directly into the UN’s Sustainable Development Goals 2030 agenda⁹⁸ and in particular to supporting full and productive employment and decent work for all (SDG 8), but also, albeit more indirectly, to reducing poverty (SDG 1), improving gender equality (SDG 5), and reducing inequality (SDG 10). The agenda outcome document includes the following youth employment related targets:

- 8.5: “By 2030, achieve full and productive employment and decent work for all women and men, including for young people and persons with disabilities, and equal pay for work of equal value” (to be measured through inter alia youth unemployment rate); and
- 8.6: “By 2020, substantially reduce the proportion of youth not in employment, education or training” (to be measured through the proportion of youth (aged 15-24 years) not in education, employment or training).⁹⁹

The expert methodological support in conducting evidence-based assessments, developing national M&E Frameworks, systems and indicators not only monitors the implementation of national strategies and plans, but also aligns them with countries’ national efforts in reporting on SDGs. At the policy implementation level, the project supports the efforts on reforming PES systems, formulating gender-sensitive and youth inclusive policies which directly


⁹⁸ Adopted in September 2015, see <http://www.un.org/sustainabledevelopment/development-agenda/>

⁹⁹ ProDoc

contribute to the achievement of SDGs 1, 5, 8 and 10. Finally, with the piloting and promotion of effective public, public-private and civil society partnerships in promoting youth employment, regional and global knowledge sharing and peer-to-peer learning among the participant countries, the project can serve as an emerging good practice on promoting international cooperation and partnerships for youth employment at a global level (SDG 17).

The activities and outputs listed below provide some illustrative examples of how the project contributes to the achievement of SDG #1 No Poverty, SDG #4 Quality Education, SDG #5 Gender Equality, #8 Decent work and Economic Growth, SDG #10 Reduced Inequalities and SDG #17

Table 10 Examples of project activities which contribute to specific SDGs (compiled by the evaluator on the basis of document review and key informants' interviews)

SDG GOAL	PROJECT'S ACTIVITY
 <p>SDG #1 No Poverty</p> <p>Target 1.3 Implement nationally appropriate social protection systems and measures for all, including floors, and by 2030 achieve substantial coverage of the poor and the vulnerable. ILO custodian relevant indicator: 1.3.1 <i>Proportion of population covered by social protection floors/systems, by sex, distinguishing children, unemployed persons, older persons, persons with disabilities, pregnant women, newborns, work-injury victims and the poor and the vulnerable (Tier I)</i></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Russia: Conference in Omsk for discussing minimum wages, 2018 • Azerbaijan: New law on Unemployment Insurance, 2018 • Uzbekistan: Functional Assessment of Public Works Fund
 <p>SDG #5 Gender Equality</p> <p>Target 5.5. Ensure women's full and effective participation and equal opportunities for leadership at all levels of decision-making in political, economic and public life. ILO custodian relevant indicator: 5.5.2 <i>Proportion of women in managerial positions (Tier I)</i></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Sub-region: Report Gender and youth markets in the CIS, Sub-regional meeting in Kazan (2019) • Armenia: Policy review on Gender and Employment



SDG #8 Decent work and Economic Growth

Target 8.2 Achieve higher levels of economic productivity through diversification, technological upgrading and innovation, including through a focus on high-value added and labor-intensive sectors. **ILO custodian relevant indicator:** 8.2.1 Annual growth rate of real GDP per employed person (Tier I)

Target 8.3 Promote development-oriented policies that support productive activities, decent job creation, entrepreneurship, creativity and innovation, and encourage the formalization and growth of micro-, small- and medium sized enterprises, including through access to financial services. **ILO custodian relevant indicator:** 8.3.1 Proportion of informal employment in non-agriculture employment, by sex (Tier II)

Target. 8.5 By 2030, achieve full and productive employment and decent work for all women and men, including for young people and persons with disabilities, and equal pay for work of equal value **ILO custodian relevant indicator:**

8.5.1 Average hourly earnings of female and male employees, by occupation, age and persons with disabilities (Tier II);
8.5.2 Unemployment rate, by sex, age and persons with disabilities (Tier I)

Target. 8.6 By 2020, substantially reduce the proportion of youth not in employment, education or training **ILO custodian relevant indicator:**

8.6.1 Proportion of youth (aged 15-24 years) not in education, employment or training (Tier I)

Target 8.7 Take immediate and effective measures to eradicate forced labour, end modern slavery and human trafficking and secure the prohibition and elimination of the worst forms of child labour, including recruitment and use of child soldiers, and by 2025 end child labour in all its forms. **ILO custodian relevant indicator:**

8.7.1 Proportion and number of children aged 5-17 years engaged in child labour, by sex and age (Tier I, ILO with UNICEF)

Target 8.8 Protect labour rights and promote safe and secure working environments for all workers, including migrant workers, in particular women migrants, and those in precarious employment. **ILO custodian relevant indicator:**

8.8.1 Frequency rates of fatal and non-fatal occupational injuries, by sex and migrant status (Tier I)

8.8.2 Increase in national compliance of labour rights (freedom of association and collective bargaining) based on International Labour Organization (ILO) textual sources and national legislation, by sex and migrant status (Tier I)

Target. 8.b By 2020, develop and operationalize a global strategy for youth employment and implement the Global Jobs Pact of the International Labour Organization **ILO custodian relevant indicator:**

- Sub-region: PES online training
- Global: PES Manual
- Azerbaijan, Uzbekistan: PES trainings
- Russia: Employment Academies
- Kyrgyzstan, Kazakhstan, Armenia: Rapid Assessment reports of the Employment Impacts of the COVID-19 pandemic
- Tajikistan: Tripartite discussion on the “Assessment Report State Strategy for Labour Market Development of the Republic of Tajikistan until 2020 Towards”, September 29; and the videoconference on the “Tajikistan National Employment Strategy for a sustainable economic and social development”, October 13
- Uzbekistan: Tripartite discussion of the “Background report for preparation of the National Employment Strategy and the way forward”, April 3; and the videoconference on the “New employment strategy: the way forward to sustainable social and economic development”, May 15

8.b.1 Total government spending in social protection and employment programmes as a proportion of the national budgets and GDP (Tier III)



SDG #10 Reduced Inequalities within and among the countries

Target. 10.4 Adopt policies, especially fiscal, wage and social protection policies, and progressively achieve greater equality.

ILO custodian relevant indicator:

10.4.1 Labour share of GDP, comprising wages and social protection transfers (Tier I)

Target.10.7 Facilitate orderly, safe, regular and responsible migration and mobility of people, including through the implementation of planned and well managed migration policies.

ILO custodian relevant indicator:

10.7.1 Recruitment cost borne by employee as a proportion of yearly income earned in country of destination (Tier III, ILO with the WB)

- Azerbaijan: Best practices on developing inclusive labour policies for people with disabilities presented at the **PES training** in Baku, 2018



SDG #17 Partnerships for the Goals

- Sub-region: videoconference “Strategic Partnerships: Creating the Conditions for Sustainable Employment PES Role in Overcoming the COVID-19 Crisis, and the Future of Work” (November 20)
- Sub-region: The project contributed also to the subregional research and conference “South-South technical cooperation and knowledge-sharing on an integrated approach towards formalization”, October 2020. The report submitted to the conference recommended road maps for Azerbaijan (AZ), Kyrgyz Republic (KY), Tajikistan (TS) and Uzbekistan (UZ) to make progress towards an integrated strategic approach to facilitate the transition to formality.
- Russia: Joint partnership of the ILO and Rostrum on the conducting

Given high achievements of the Project in highlighting SDGs and contributing to their achievement, it could be recommended the development of case studies or communication products (for instance short videos or animations) labelled explicitly as “project support to SDGs” for visibility purposes. Specific efforts on reducing NEET and contributing to gender equality could be highlighted.

4.3.7. How effective is the project communication strategy? How effective is the knowledge management strategy?

The communication strategy of the Project is exercised at the global, sub-regional, national and sub-national level. The first sub-regional kick-off conference of the project “Partnerships for youth employment in the CIS- phase II” held in the ITC ILO, Turin, in February 2018 discussed the main expected outcomes and possible activities for the implementation at the sub-regional, national and sub-national levels. The conference gathered tripartite members of the regional youth employment network established during the first phase, as well as the ILO Moscow, ILO Rome, ILO HQ (VC) officials and international experts. The following countries were present at the conference: Azerbaijan, Armenia, Belarus, Georgia, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Russian Federation, Tajikistan, Turkmenistan, and Uzbekistan as well as observers from selected BRICS countries, Brazil and China.

The Russian Federation high-level kick-off conference for the YEP CIS Project Phase II and side events held in Astrakhan (May 2018) involved the project target regions laying solid ground for further project implementation in the Russian Federation. Mr. Guy Ryder, Director-General of the International Labour Organization (ILO), attended the event and Anatoly Moskalenko, Vice-President of the PAO LUKOIL. Social partners were represented by David Yakobashvili, member of the Governing Board of the Russian Union of Industrialists and Entrepreneurs (RUIE) and Mikhail Shmakov, Chairman of the Federation of Independent Trade Unions of Russia (FITUR). Regional authorities included Ms. Inna Avdeeva, Head of Labour Inspection of Astrakhan Region and Oleg Petelin Deputy Chairman of the Astrakhan Region Government.

The second sub-regional meeting (July, 2019) was held in Kazan city, Russia. The second sub-regional meeting became the main platform for promoting cooperation among the CIS on youth employment policies, to facilitate mutual learning through voluntary thematic policy reviews and identify good practices aligned with international labour standards. The annual meeting advanced regional tripartite discussions on the gender-related aspects of youth employment, introduced the ILO Global report “A quantum Leap for Gender Equality” and enhanced the ILO constituents’ capacity to design and implement gender/youth employment policies according to main ILS on gender equality and non-discrimination. The ILO Centenary Declaration and the Global Report on the Future of Work Agenda were presented to launch preparatory activities for the next CIS regional meeting, year 2020, focused on the future of work for youth. The sub-regional meeting gathered tripartite representatives from Eastern Europe and Central Asia (EECA) countries, China, ILO Moscow, ILO HQ and international experts. The following EECA countries were represented: Armenia, Azerbaijan, Belarus, Georgia, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, the Russian Federation, Tajikistan and Uzbekistan. Participants from the Russian Federation included YEP Partners regions: Astrakhan Region, Kaliningrad Region, Republic of Komi, Perm Territory and Khanty-Mansi Autonomous Region. A representative from the Republic of Bashkortostan participated as observer.

The achievements of the project were highlighted at the high-level event held on September 23 in New York on the margins of the 74th session of the UN General Assembly. The high-level event was co-organized by the Ministry of Labour and Social Protection of the Russian Federation, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Russian Federation, and the International Labour Organization. The LUKOIL representative took part in this event:

“The unique tripartite nature of the ILO’s work allows it to effectively respond to current challenges to labour and economy,” said Vassily Nebenzya, Permanent Representative of Russia to the United Nations. “Russia shares the ILO’s strategic objectives of protecting the rights of workers. We are active in our cooperation with the ILO to implement individual projects. I would specifically mention the joint ILO-LUKOIL project in the area of youth employment”, Mr. Nebenzya said. 100

The project’s webpage is the key instrument used for knowledge sharing. The website is multilingual, currently, its content is available in English and Russian. The Project has

100 ILO’s web-site URL: UN General Assembly: Our efforts must ensure young people have decent job opportunities and the skills to take them (ilo.org)

undertaken numerous efforts to highlight the importance of youth employment at the various events, the examples of which are presented below:



The International Forum “Future of Work: Decent Work for All” took place on February 4-5 at the Toratau Congress Hall in Ufa, Republic of Bashkortostan



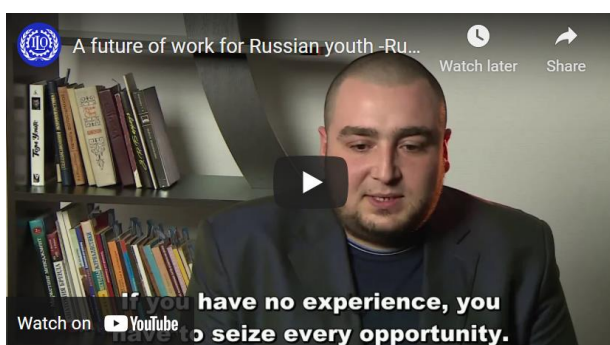
The Moscow State University hosted the 26th International Scientific Conference of Undergraduate and Postgraduate Students and Young Scientists entitled “Lomonosov 2019”. On 15 April, the session “The future of the world of work and social and labour relations: opportunities and limitations” was held in partnership with the ILO.



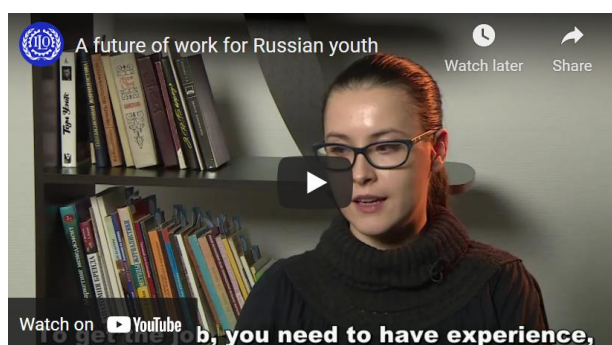
On 26 August 2019 Kazan hosted a round table “Youth employment and the future of work” co-organized by ILO Moscow and the Ministry of labour and Social Protection of the RF on the margins of 45th WorldSkills competition.



Employment specialists from the International Labour Organization visit a mine in the Russian Federation to mark the Centenary of the organization and to promote decent work



Ruslan Mikhno, 25, is one of these highly qualified jobless. After graduating as a geodesist, Mikhno moved to the city of Nizhnevartovsk.



Marina Romanova, 25, another university graduate, lives in the neighboring city of Surgut. She found it impossible to find a job in journalism or public relations.



A tripartite conference “100th Anniversary of ILO and the Future of Work”, organized by the Azerbaijan Trade Unions Confederation and the International Labour Organization (ILO), took place in Baku on May 06, 2019.



A training workshop for the Public Employment Services (PES) was held on 16-19 April in Baku. Focused on youth employment, lifelong-learning and youth labor transitions, bringing into action the policy recommendations for investing in people's capabilities outlined in the report of the Global Commission for the Future of Work.

To sum up, knowledge sharing, exchange of experiences and peer-to-peer learning is one of the cornerstones of the current phase of the project. Learning from the lessons of the first phase, the project has significantly upgraded its knowledge management strategy and overall approach to connecting knowledge production and sharing. At present, analytical support is provided in a comprehensive manner, based on a unified methodology for research and analysis conducted at the national levels. The results produced at the national level are shared and discussed at the sub-regional levels and then further channelled for wider dissemination at the global level.

4.3.8. Special considerations on project effectiveness in addressing cross cutting issues (Gender, Human rights, Tripartite issues and Environmental Sustainability)

This section serves to reiterate the findings on cross cutting issues revealed during the M&E exercise, to generate knowledge and develop recommendations for the remainder of the Project' implementation period, to strengthen gender equality and uphold human rights, to uphold tripartite principles and international labour standards.

The 1999 ILO Policy on Gender Equality and Mainstreaming states that as an organization dedicated to fundamental human rights and social justice, ILO must take a leading role in international efforts to promote and realize gender equality. The policy specifically refers to evaluation as part of the institutional mechanisms that will help in mainstreaming gender.

In light of ILO's mandate, managers of ILO technical cooperation projects as well as programming and technical staff should be aware of the requirement to mainstream gender in all activities. A gender-responsive monitoring and evaluation system is just as important as a gender-responsive project design. Indeed, if a project design is gender-blind, this can be corrected when setting up the monitoring and evaluation plan by formulating indicators that are more gender-inclusive. Monitoring and evaluation thereafter keeps track of the project's performance related to gender equality.

Gender Issues and Human Rights

Human Rights and Gender Equality are extremely important in the UN Work. As a UN Organization, the ILO should integrate gender issues and human rights at all levels of project management, including implementation. Gender Constraints prevail in the CIS countries and in many countries the Human Rights agenda is not treated with due regard by duty bearers thus it is more important to emphasize the importance of upholding human rights. The Project is in a unique position to do this hence it works directly with duty bearers, namely governments. The following findings were observed during the desk review phase and consultations with key informants:

1. Gender Equality and Human Rights dimension were streamlined across the Project's activities though they were not included in the Project Intervention Logic and design.
2. No specific objectives and performance indicators were formulated to achieve significant success in upholding HR&GE in the participant countries.
3. The Specific Outputs on gender were not formulated even though the Project was marked as Gender Marker 2 "Does not include gender equality as an outcome, but some outputs and/or activities specifically address gender issues".
4. Though vulnerable groups were outlined, their interests and needs were not embedded in the Project Design, the Project showed consistent efforts in addressing their needs through across project's activities and events.
5. The Performance Evaluation Framework allows for the collection of data in a sex disaggregated manner however the Progress Reports do not reflect the data in a sex-disaggregated manner. It was observed through the interviews with ILO Project's staff that promoting gender-balanced participation of the participants is quite a challenge.
6. The Project's stakeholders in Russia do not consider gender issues of high importance as they mark achievements of Russia vs countries of the CIS Region, primarily with the South Caucasus and Central Asia. However, in Komi region only young men were recruited as the participants of the pilot region justified by the fact that young women are not interested in working in forest industry which could indicate on prevailing gender stereotypes of women at work and occupation.

7. Overall, the Project showed good achievements of advancing GE and HR at the policy level, yet more efforts should be applied to monitor implementation of the gender-sensitive policies and upholding human rights at the implementing level.

Tripartite issues

The ILO is based on the principle of Tripartism - dialogue and cooperation between governments, employers, and workers - in the formulation of standards and policies dealing with labour matters¹⁰¹. International labour standards are created and supervised through a tripartite mechanism, ensuring broad support from all ILO constituents. Tripartism with regard to ILO standards is also important at the national level. Through regular tripartite consultations, governments can ensure that ILO standards are formulated, applied and supervised with the participation of employers and workers. Thus, it is important that in all ILO projects needs and interests of key constituents (governments, employers and workers) are well reflected. The Project supported the countries in the implementation of the C144 - Tripartite Consultation (International Labour Standards) Convention, 1976 (No. 144) and the following findings were observed during the desk review phase and consultations with the key informants:

1. Key tripartite constituents were consulted during the Inception Phase of the Project.
2. The Project consistently ensured participation of all constituents in key Project events and the specific output in the Project's design allows to maintain this focus in an intensified manner.
3. Project's constituents expressed the satisfaction over cooperation with the ILO.
4. Main departments of ILO responsible for cooperation with workers (ACTRAV) and employers (ACTEMP) were involved in the Project implementation and provided their expertise during tripartite discussion of the national policies in Tajikistan, Kirgizstan and Uzbekistan.

¹⁰¹ The Convention on Tripartite Consultation, 1976 (No. 144) promotes application of the tripartite social dialogue in the development and implementation of international labour standards

which is the essential founding principle of the ILO.

5. The Project placed a specific and clear focus on strengthening capacity of the workers' and employers' organizations through supporting their participation at more than 10 capacity building events (conferences, workshop and trainings) held in Russia, Azerbaijan, Armenia, Tajikistan, Uzbekistan and in the ITC ILO, Turin (Italy).

Environmental Sustainability

The ILO Programme and Budget Proposals for 2018-2019¹⁰² acknowledge environmental sustainability as one of four key cross-cutting policy drivers. While the international labour standards, social dialogue, gender equality and non-discrimination are fundamental to the ILO's constitutional objectives, environmental sustainability has been introduced as a fourth cross-cutting policy driver in 2016 to address the negative impact of the climate change and promote structural transformation towards sustainable enterprise development, in the context of decent work and as a contribution to the implementation of the 2030 Agenda¹⁰³.

The project refers to the Programme and Budget planning framework of the ILO for 2018-19 and indicates that the Project aims to contribute to the "Outcome 1: More and better jobs for inclusive growth and improved youth employment prospects." While the international labour standards, tripartite issues and gender have been acknowledged and addressed by the project, environmental sustainability was not considered as a cross-cutting policy driver in the Project Intervention Logic yet the topic of the "green jobs" was addressed at the Projects' implementation level. "Green transition and youth employment" was identified at the sub-regional conference held in 2018 in ITC ILO Turin and was of much interest to the Project's stakeholders in the participant countries. The Project contributed to the UN Global Initiative such as green jobs, jobs in the digital economy, employment in rural economies through assisting in the development of ALMPs (Azerbaijan) in rural area, promoting digital PES services and reducing impact on the environment by conducting key activities online, such as virtual conferences and PES online trainings.

KEY FINDING ON EFFECTIVENESS:

At present, the project shows quite good progress in mainstreaming youth employment into national development and employment strategies thanks to effective project management arrangements, ILO technical capacities and unique expertise to support

¹⁰² The Director General's Programme and Budget proposals for 2018-19. ILO. 2017.

¹⁰³ In particular, the ILO aims to focus on scaling up policy research and strengthening partnerships with the UN agencies and other institutions to improve policy coherence on climate change mitigation and adaptation and access to financing, including through the Green Climate Fund.

tripartite and PES networks. The timely advice on tackling the COVID-19 pandemic implication on the labour markets and virtual capacity building activities has allowed the constituents in the Project's countries to undertake prompt measures and keep strategic focus on promoting youth employment beyond the health crisis. The project shows meaningful results in advancing gender equality and human rights by assisting the participant countries in formulating informed policies aligned with the national development goals, SDGs, human centered and youth targeted approach, such as Future of Work and Decent Works for Youth. At the same time, the project has undertaken consistent and intensive efforts to strengthen PES nation and region wide to deliver client-oriented services for young men and women in line with international labour standards. The Project takes the unique position in contributing to the achievement of the SGD #8, 5 and 17

4.4. Efficiency of resource use

Efficiency- the productivity of the project implementation process taken as a measure of the extent to which the outputs achieved are derived from an efficient use of financial, material and human resources, effectiveness of management arrangements.

4.4.1. How well have resources and inputs (funds, expertise, time, etc.) been allocated and used strategically to achieve the expected results?

The results of the mid-term evaluation show that up to date, human resources (project staff and external collaborators) have been allocated and used efficiently and strategically to achieve the expected results. The Project is well on track and though the pilot initiatives in the regions of Russia have been delayed due to the COVID-19 restrictions, the remaining time allows for the implementation and validation of the results.

The project is under the supervision of the ILO Decent Work Team and Country Office for Eastern Europe and Central Asia. In Moscow, the project is staffed with an international Chief Technical Advisor (CTA), male who is responsible for the overall implementation of the project; two Technical Officers (1 Youth Employment, female; 1 Research, female) who supports the CTA in the activities as regards the implementation of the project strategy; two administrative assistants (females) who are in charge of the organizational and logistical support.

Other human resources

The *ILO Moscow Senior Employment Specialist* supports the planning, organization, monitoring and technical backstopping of the activities and inputs of the Project providing technical inputs and overall coordination to the Project and support arrangements for the provision of required consultancies, training and other technical and advisory services. In addition, the project is benefitting from the support of the *ILO National Coordinators based in Uzbekistan, Azerbaijan and Armenia*.

The Geneva-based staff at the *Employment Policy Department* (Cepol, YEP, SKILLS, Global Initiative) ensures the necessary technical support.

The ILO's Bureaux for Employers' and Workers' Activities (ACTRAV and ACTEMP, respectively) are involved in the implementation of the project through their Senior Specialists based in Moscow. The ACTRAV and ACTEMP specialists provide advice on the development of activities under these outputs, their focus, the relevant counterparts that should engage in the process, as well as on the strategy and means to help employers' and workers' organizations develop services targeting youth. The Project used expertise of relevant Specialists based in the *ILO Decent Work Support Team and Country Office for Eastern Europe and Central Asia* in Moscow namely Specialist on international labour standards and Specialist on Social Protection.

Research assessments and technical and training interventions were supported by more than 57 international and national experts (35 men and 22 women) from over 19 countries (Russia, Uzbekistan, Kazakhstan, Tajikistan, Belgium, Austria, Estonia, Slovenia, Germany, Armenia, Denmark, Kyrgyzstan, Lithuania, Norway, Serbia, Spain, UK, US, Sweden, Australia, Azerbaijan) with the accumulative experience with more than 600 years.

The ILO International Training Center in Turin was involved in the capacity building and knowledge-sharing initiatives by educating 28 stakeholders (18 men and 10 women) in 8 training courses offered by the Center.

4.4.2. To what extent project resources been leveraged with other related interventions to maximize impact, if any?

The Project has leveraged the resources with the federal project on reforming PES in the Russian Federation to provide ILO international expertise and benefit from the administrative and financial support of the Russian government to capacitate more than 112 PES representatives (61 men and 51 women) from 19 regions of the Russian Federation at the

Employment Academies. International expertise, internal discussions and raised questions of PES employees were used to develop first manual for PES – “Public Employment Services and the Future of work”. The manual has been already published in English and Russian what greatly widens its audience and the potential impact of the PES services in the world. It will be also published in Turkish at the request of the ILO mission in Turkey which proves its demand and practical usage. On 28 May, the ILO Decent Work Technical Support Team and Country Office for Eastern Europe and Central Asia in partnership with the Federal Service for Labour and Employment (ROSTRUD) organized a virtual presentation of its flagship publication “Public Employment Services and the Future of Work”, with the participation of 150 heads and managers of the regional employment centres from all over Russia. Mr Denis Vasiliev, Deputy Head, Federal Service for Labour and Employment (ROSTRUD), highlighted the commitment of the Russian Federation to bring employment services up to a new level and pointed out that employment centres are being modernised as part of the national project "Demography". According to him, this year a large-scale retraining programme for employees, whose qualifications should correspond to the new tasks of the service, is to be launched. By the end of the year, over 4,000 people will have undergone retraining.¹⁰⁴ In June 2021 the project launched training of 4000 PES staff in RF in cooperation with Rostrud where the developed PES manual will be used for education purposes.

The Project obtained the approval for the ILO RBSA funding to support the initiatives in Azerbaijan, Armenia and Tajikistan:

- Integrated policy response on employment and social protection in the context of COVID-19 crisis mitigation and recovery, supported by social dialogue in Armenia - 249,080 US
- Integrated policy response on employment and social protection in the context of COVID-19 crisis mitigation and recovery, supported by social dialogue in Tajikistan - 350, 900 US
- Labour administration and informality in Azerbaijan (2019) – 7,500 US;

And RBTC funding to support the initiatives in Tajikistan, Kyrgyzstan, Azerbaijan, Uzbekistan:

SSTC knowledge sharing on an integrated approach towards formalization (Tajikistan, Kyrgyzstan, Azerbaijan, Uzbekistan – 100,000 US.

The total amount of the attracted funding is 707 480 USD.

¹⁰⁴ ILO's official web-site: https://www.ilo.org/moscow/news/WCMS_800066/lang--en/index.htm

4.4.3. What are the good practices of efficient use of resources which could be shared?

Several good practices of efficient use of resources have been identified so far. First, organizing expert work as a team of an international expert who leads on the methodology, data analysis and development of recommendations with the national experts who support on data collection on the country levels. Such an approach was undertaken for the analytical work for the CIS region on the Immediate Objective One and resulted in high quality analytical reports which were used at the national and sub-regional level by multiple stakeholders. The results of key informants' interviews confirm high value of these knowledge products and their applicability in the work.

A second example of the efficient use of resources is running high quality virtual conferences for the CIS region with the participation of international speakers and provision of the simultaneous translation using advanced ZOOM account. Such practice allows saving costs for travelling, reducing negative impact on the environment and providing platform for exchange of the best practices and international experience at low cost. Also, it gives additional opportunity to reiterate importance of the ILS and share important publications produced by the Project. It was confirmed by the project's participants through the interviews, though they prefer live events as they can't substitute human communication and interaction, such consecutive conferences allow move forward at the high speed to pursuing project's goals.

KEY FINDING ON EFFICIENCY:

project human (staff and expert) resources have been allocated and used strategically to achieve the expected results. The project shows some slight delay on piloting of ALMPs but the remaining time is sufficient for the implementation and validation of results. Cooperation with Rostrud leveraged project's resources and resulted in the rich content of the capacity building programme run at the federal level and sustained at the global level through the publication of the manual for PES in Russian and English languages

4.5. Project sustainability

Sustainability- the extent to which adequate capacity building of project stakeholders has taken place to ensure that mechanisms are in place to sustain activities and whether the existing results are likely to be maintained beyond project.

4.5.1. What is the likelihood that the results of the project will be durable and utilized after the end of the Project?

It was confirmed during the interviews with the constituents in the target countries that the project has generated quite sustainable results at the policy and institutional level. **Armenia, Uzbekistan, Azerbaijan and Tajikistan** have developed new youth targeted National Employment Strategies. **Azerbaijan, Uzbekistan and the Russian Federation** strengthened capacity of their PES services. In accordance with the Project’s logic, and evidence collected through the Final Evaluation of the Phase I, in case of Azerbaijan, ALMPs if piloted and supported by government’s commitment, have a great chance to be scaled up at the national level. At the time of the MTE ALMPs pilots were just about to launch and not yet completed for proper evaluation.

Sustainability at the Policy level. The stakeholders informed the MTE that policy formulation was supported with the in-depth research undertaken by the Project in close consultation with tripartite constituents. Many interlocutors represented by the Government reported that they had participated in the ITC courses that strengthened their capacity in policy development and increased the scientific potential of the countries in policy formulation.

The majority of the stakeholders represented by national government confirmed that adopted strategies will be used to develop national programmes on employment which would be further implemented by the governments. In the RF target regions, it was reported that state governors support the Project and it is very much likely that successfully implemented pilots would be further scaled up in the regions.

Table 11 Examples of evidence gained during MTE on sustainability of results at the policy level

RESEARCH PRODUCED BY THE YEP	HOW IT WAS USED BY COUNTRIES (POLICY AND / OR INSTITUTIONAL LEVEL)	IMPACT ORIENTATION
<p>ARMENIA:</p> <p>Armenian Gender National Report</p> <p>A rapid assessment of the employment impact and policy responses of the</p>	<p>National Employment Strategy in Armenia</p>	<p>Improving situation of young Armenian women in the labour market</p>

Covid-19 pandemic on Armenia, November 2020		
<p>UZBEKISTAN:</p> <p>Towards Employment Friendly Macroeconomic policies in Uzbekistan</p> <p>“Background report for the preparation of the National Employment Strategy of the Republic of Uzbekistan”; “Towards Full and Productive Employment in Uzbekistan: Achievements and Challenges”, May 2020</p> <p>Functional Analysis of PES</p>	<p>National Employment Strategy in Uzbekistan¹⁰⁵</p> <p>Development of ALMPs for youth</p> <p>Improving PES services at the regional and national level</p>	<p>Improving access of women to the labour market and transition to the formal economy, additional jobs for persons with disabilities</p>
<p>RUSSIAN FEDERATION:</p> <p>Assessment of regional capacity for decent work for youth, RF</p>	<p>Development of ALMPs for youth</p>	<p>Improved employability of youth</p>
<p>AZERBAIJAN:</p> <p>Study Diagnostic Report on Informality</p> <p>The project has worked on the regulatory framework of apprenticeships in Azerbaijan since Jan 2021, though the research is in the study of the finalization, it was used by the government to reflect on the current policies.</p>	<p>National Employment Strategy in Azerbaijan 2019-2030</p> <p>Development of Self-Employment Programme</p> <p>Development of Wage-Subsidies Programme</p>	<p>Tackling Informality for youth</p> <p>Improved employability of youth</p>
<p>TAJIKISTAN:</p> <p>The project supported two research aiming to mainstream youth employment into national policies: Assessment Report State Strategy for Labour Market Development of the Republic of Tajikistan until 2020; Towards a Tajikistan National Employment Strategy for a sustainable economic and social development,</p>	<p>National Employment Strategy in Tajikistan</p>	<p>Improved employability of youth</p>

¹⁰⁵ The Employment Promotion Strategy of the Republic of Uzbekistan for 2030, submitted to the Cabinet in June 2021 at the time of the Mid-Term Evaluation

both submitted to tripartite discussions in September 2020.		
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Sustainability at the Institutional level. It was confirmed by the governments that the Project has targeted core areas in youth employment starting from the in-depth research and functional analysis of the state institutions¹⁰⁶, identifying weaknesses and developing tailored trainings, resulted in strong political will to transform labour markets for progress in terms of decent work and employability of youth, women and vulnerable groups. PES are the main institutions in the target countries which are in charge for the provision of the services for job seekers and employers. Intense trainings conducted for PES in Uzbekistan and Azerbaijan resulted in the increased number of employees in PES, developed TOR for each PES officer, increased number of certified trainers of Start and Improve Your Business (Azerbaijan). Yet according to the stakeholders in these countries, there is a need to continue trainings for PES to modernize services nation-wide. In the Russian Federation there is also a demand to train more than 4000 PES employees to facilitate the PES reform. Given the fact that the Project has developed PES manual, the Project has high potential to assist Russian government in scaling new strategies and approaches at the federal level. Though virtual PES trainings conducted at the sub-regional level allow maximum reach, tailored training for each individual countries are recommended to address the specific needs and employment challenges.

Similar to the previous phase, more time needs to be planned and allocated to observe and evaluate the results of these activities. Peer to peer critical review and reflection are critical to make the results durable and sustainable. Thus, the project team has to make sure that all capacity building activities are completed at least three months prior to the end of the project. This will allow the last months of project implementation to be devoted to consolidation of main achievements, good practices and lessons learnt, developing recommendations and sharing/channelling them regionally and globally via high level visibility events.

4.5.2. Is it likely that the Project will have long-term effects (impact) on the target groups and institutions in terms of youth employment outcomes, and more equitable gender relations?

All project activities in the Russian Federation, Uzbekistan, Azerbaijan, Armenia, Kyrgyzstan and Kazakhstan, Tajikistan demonstrate well-thought and good alignment to the national and regional policies. National ownership is the principal for the ILO approach which are well-

¹⁰⁶ Public Work Fund in Uzbekistan, PES in targeted countries

embedded in the national institutions through special decrees, Ministerial order and/or special decisions of Ministries of Labour. The sustainability of project initiatives is built on the alignment to the National Strategies of Human Development of participant countries, synergy with the interventions of different donors in the participant countries (UNDP in Azerbaijan and Uzbekistan, Rostrud in RF) and the development of new partnerships to boost existing relations. It was also noted and confirmed by the evaluation that the governments at national, regional and municipal levels more readily assume ownership when initiatives are built on their visions, strategies, and frameworks.

According to the Paris Declaration on Aid Effectiveness¹⁰⁷, building more effective and inclusive partnerships between the development partners, government institutions of all levels, as well as civil society and communities, will have greater impact on achieving sustainable development results. Proceeding from the assumption that securing national ownership is the best strategy to guarantee that a development project succeeds and expands in the long run, it is highly recommended to stay active in implementing the exit strategy and continue active search for new possibilities of securing the handover of project results and practices to the national stakeholders as well as developmental partners working on youth employment and PES reform.

The developed NES supported by the Project have specific targets aimed at long-term effects (impact) on the target groups and institutions in terms of youth employment outcomes, and more equitable gender relations. In particular:

- **New NES for Armenia (2019-2023)**, sets annual decrease of Ratio of average monthly earnings of male employees and average monthly earnings of female employees by 0,01%, annual decrease Ratio of overall average monthly earnings and average monthly earnings of the persons with disabilities by 0,005%, increased Number of young people of 16-21 years of age involved in programmes who are neither studying nor working (NEET).
- **New NES for Azerbaijan (2019-2030)** sets target that by 2030, reduce unemployment rate to 4%, including reduction of unemployment among women and youth to the minimum level; By 2030, reduce proportion of youth (15-24) not in Education, Employment, or Training (NEET) to 15%; By 2030, achieve full and productive employment and decent work for all women and men, including for young people and persons with disabilities.
- **New NES for Uzbekistan (2021-2030)** sets ambitious target on doubling the employment rate of non-competitive individuals in the labour market until 2030 compared to 2019: employment of at least 8,000 people with disabilities per year by

¹⁰⁷ The Paris Declaration on Aid Effectiveness and the Accra Agenda for Action. URL: <http://www.oecd.org/development/effectiveness/34428351.pdf>

2030; employment and job placement of at least 300,000 young people entering the labour market each year; employment of at least 100,000 women annually (with the rate of 7-8% of unemployed women).

Thus, we may conclude that the Project has achieved the Immediate Objective 1 in Armenia, Azerbaijan and Uzbekistan: More effective and inclusive policies and strategies for Decent Work of young men and women in the countries of regional youth employment network.

If PES services are capacitated to serve young men and women, including persons with disabilities, and if ALMPs targeted for youth are adequately funded, then achieving significant impact in youth employment is much expected.

4.5.3. To what extent tripartite constituents feel ownership of the results the Project has achieved so far and responsibility to follow them up?

The interviews with the tripartite constituents confirmed great level of ownership for the achieved results. Trade unions and employers' organizations in the target countries demonstrate great awareness of the main concepts of decent work and youth employment. Social partners confirmed that they have participated in the formulation of policies, capacity building events and tripartite discussions. They follow youth focused agenda. Employer's organization in Azerbaijan run their own youth programme targeted at employers to sensitise them on youth employment and promoting wage subsidies programme.

Government stakeholders are confident that the project is bringing the results essential for medium-term development and laying the foundations of upgraded skills at development youth employment systems at the regional and national levels.

4.5.4. What are the key project achievements thus far that could be sustained? What are the lessons learnt, good practices/experiences what are worth highlighting?

The mid-term evaluation revealed the following key project achievements formulated by the stakeholders that could be sustained in future:

At the policy level:

- Formulation of the gender-sensitive and youth inclusive policies based on in-depth research and tripartite discussions;

- Conducting functional analysis of state institutions (Public Works Funds and PES) to develop tailor made capacity building strategies and strategic directions for improvement of services for young men and women;
- Undertaking peer reviews and sustaining evaluation practices of peer countries in development and implementation of youth employment policies;
- Adjusting employment policies with national SDGs to contribute to the development goals at national and global level;
- Sustain youth employment partnership across nation-wide and sub-region wide to promote youth employment agenda, gender equality and Future of work;

At the institutional level:

- To continue efforts in training PES employees on ILO's flagship training Start and Improve your Business;
- To strengthen cooperation with employment organizations to develop and implement youth employment programmes in partnership with their members;
- To continue cooperation with ROSTRUD in training of the PES employees;
- To continue cooperation with academia institutions to support young scientists on research aimed at promoting youth employment agenda.

Lessons learnt:

1. Public Works Fund in Uzbekistan proved to be effective measure to offer employment during the COVID-19 crisis which could be considered by other development actors;
2. As the COVID-19 pandemic showed, digital public employment services allow rolling out needs-based social support at the emerging crisis situations;
3. Change of attitude happens and development results occur if employment challenges are dully addressed. The Project has strengthened efforts on tackling informality issues in the region which resulted in high political will in Azerbaijan to tackle informality and set the benchmark for other countries in transition to formal and dignified employment for young men and women.

Good Practices:

1. Leveraging resources with Rostrud resulted in rich quality trainings undertaken at the federal level and development of the manual to be used at the global level;
2. Conducting gender-focused research undertaken in 2017 and 2019 to measure the progress of the countries in terms of advancing gender equality.

4.5.5. What can be done to enhance the sustainability of the project and strengthen the uptake of the project outcomes by the national stakeholders?

To strengthen the uptake of the project outcomes by the national stakeholders and to enhance the overall sustainability of the project, several actions can be undertaken.

First, the Project Team (the ILO project Management Team and Project National Coordinators) should review current work plans and budgets to critically assess the remaining timeframes and identify the new timelines which would be the most conducive for achieving the planned results not only for outputs, but also at the immediate objective levels. The desired outcomes would be that developed youth focused policies are adopted, transformed into action plans and fully implemented including gender-sensitive and inclusive implementing practices. In particular, sufficient time should be allocated for critical evaluation and peer review of the project results achieved on the national levels. All key informants showed high interest in sharing, learning and discussing the results on the pilot activities at the sub-regional level. When revising the work plans, additional activities aimed at discussing the results of the project and developing recommendations should be envisioned and planned. It was particularly stressed by the stakeholders that Project's plans should be shared well in advance so they could plan participation in Project's activities.

Secondly, given high priority of the target countries in the continuation of the training of the PES employees, more sustainable and long-term strategy should be developed based on national capacity and budget resources to ensure PES training on regular basis. The Project could facilitate in the development of such strategies in coordination with state structures and national academia institutions to develop competency-based training of key PES staff – administrative personnel, front-desk personnel (consultants), key thematic specialists.

Additional project activities could be considered and discussed among the Project Team which could reinforce the achievement of the immediate objectives and better link to the development goal of the project. As a minimum, one national activity in the Russian Federation should be planned, to bring together all participants from the regions to discuss the results of the project, how they are used at the regional level to implement PES reforms and what recommendations can be made to the regions (based on the project results). At the sub-regional level, a final high-level event should also be organized, to discuss the results of project implementation, share good practices and lessons learnt and develop

recommendations, which could be used by other countries, development agencies and donors.

Third, as the results of the mid-term evaluation showed, the Project should reiterate and sustain results contributed to gender equality in the CIS region. The research undertaken in 2017 and 2019 could form a baseline for assessing the target countries in terms of achieving gender equality at the labour market. National stakeholders could be invited to prepare national gender reports following good practice of Armenia, set gender-focused development goals aligned with SDGs 8 and 5. The Project should motivate the countries for competition in advancing gender equality and the progress could be measured based on the next research undertaken by the Project. The adjustment of the methodology might be needed.

The mid-term evaluation revealed that the Project's stakeholders in the countries are much concerned about high share of NEET in the target countries. Given the fact that the Project has achieved the significant results in supporting countries in achieving their national SDGs, it is recommended to intensify efforts in reducing share of NEET. The mid-term evaluation revealed that CIS countries have different capacity in collecting labour market statistics – some countries do not collect data on NEET while others do but not on regular basis. It would be beneficial of the Project would strengthen capacity of the countries in terms of collecting data on NEET and using it in developing relevant policies and programmes for young men and women.

Finally, current efforts on dissemination of the knowledge products developed by the project should be continued, to engage with the stakeholders on the sub-regional level who have not yet been involved. If needed, additional resources for a short-term expert to support the organization of seminars for policy practitioners working on the CIS regional level or contributing to the planned events organized by the intergovernmental regional structures (EEC, thematic Commissions of the CIS IPA, CIS Executive Committee, Eurasian Bank for Development) can be allocated. To benefit from the synergise with other youth projects cooperation with UNICEF and UNDP is recommended to avoid duplication of activities, leverage the resources and maximize the achieved results.

KEY FINDINGS ON SUSTAINABILITY:

The project has been effective in securing national ownership of the project results. Participatory and needs-based approach adopted by the project allows the results of the project to be sustained after its end. To enhance the sustainability of the project and strengthen the uptake of the project outcomes by the national stakeholders, sufficient time should be allowed to complete all planned activities, to reflect upon its results and secure proper handover of key achievements of the project. The Project should intensify efforts in supporting countries in achieving their national SDGs aligned

with global SDG #5 Gender Equality and #8 Decent work and Economic growth especially by contributing to reduced share of NEET.

5. CONCLUSIONS AND LESSONS LEARNT

5.1. Conclusions

Strategic relevance of the project has been rated high by all key stakeholders and constituents from all countries during the interviews. The project is well-aligned with countries' national and regional priorities, strategies and plans, the ILO and other international development assistance programmes as well as the SDG target 1, 4, 5, 8, 10, 17.

Project design, results framework and indicators are valid and responsive to the emerging concerns. However, some modifications for the indicators/targets would be helpful to better capture project progress, esp. on outcome levels, gender equality and non-discrimination. Given gained knowledge and expertise of the Project on youth employment and gender equality in the CIS it would be beneficial to introduce forth component specifically targeted gender-related focused at the results level. Introducing baseline data would be crucial to track the Project's progress.

At present, the project shows quite good progress thanks to effective project management arrangements, ILO technical capacities and high relevance/fit to specific national contexts and environments. The timely advice on tackling the COVID-19 pandemic implication on the labour markets and virtual capacity building activities has allowed the constituents in the Project's countries to undertake prompt measures and keep strategic focus on promoting youth employment beyond the health crisis. The project shows meaningful results in advancing gender equality and human rights by assisting the participant countries in formulating informed policies aligned with the national development goals, SDGs, human centered and youth targeted approach, such as Future of Work and Decent Jobs for Youth. At the same time, the project has undertaken consistent and intensive efforts to strengthen PES nation and region wide to deliver client-oriented services for young men and women in line with international labour standards. The Project takes the unique position in contributing to the achievement of the SGD #8, 5 and 17

Project human (staff and expert) resources have been allocated and used strategically to achieve the expected results. The project shows some slight delay on piloting of ALMPs but the remaining time is sufficient for the implementation and validation of results. Cooperation with Rostrud leveraged project's resources and resulted in the rich content of the capacity building programme run at the federal level and sustained at the global level through the publication of the manual for PES in Russian and English languages.

Government institutions fully support the initiatives undertaken by the project. All ILO Constituents been involved in the implementation of the project. The project shows high potential of achieving significant long-term results on economic and social levels if all planned outputs are achieved, their results analysed and exit strategies are duly implemented.

The project has been effective in securing national ownership of the project results. Participatory and needs-based approach adopted by the project allows the results of the project to be sustained after its end. To enhance the sustainability of the project and strengthen the uptake of the project outcomes by the national stakeholders, sufficient time should be allowed to complete all planned activities, to reflect upon its results and secure proper handover of key achievements of the project. Also, as a part of the exit strategy, the project should seek more active engagement and synergies with the ongoing initiatives and projects implemented by the UN Agencies in the countries, including Russia-funded projects.

5.2. Lessons Learnt

Three main lessons learnt were identified by the Mid-Term Evaluation, all of them are described in more details below.

Lessons learnt and good practices:

Lessons learned:

1. Public Works Fund in Uzbekistan proved to be effective measure to offer employment during the COVID-19 crisis which could be considered by other development actors;
2. As the COVID-19 pandemic showed, digital public employment services allow rolling out needs-based social support at the emerging crisis situations;
3. Change of attitude happens and development results occur if employment challenges are fully addressed. The Project has strengthened efforts on tackling informality issues in the region which resulted in high political will in Azerbaijan to tackle informality and set the National reforms to increase decent employment among young men and women should include investments into increasing PES capacity, including for training PES staff, to provide quality services.

5.3. Good Practices

Good Practices:

1. Leveraging resources with Rostrud resulted in rich quality trainings undertaken at the federal level and development of the manual to be used at the global level;

2. Conducting gender-focused research undertaken in 2017 and 2019 to measure the progress of the countries in terms of advancing gender equality.

6. RECOMMENDATIONS

When analysing data collected during the desk review and field visits and formulating recommendations, the evaluator applied a utilization-focused approach.¹⁰⁸ This is aimed at developing recommendations which will be realistic, feasible and support the ILO project team to make informed decisions about re-aligning the project implementation to improve its impact, increase sustainability of the results as well as produce evidence on emerging good practices and lessons learnt for future interventions.

Table 12 Recommendations based on MTE results and findings.

RECOMMENDATIONS / PRIORITY/ ADDRESSED TO		TIMEFRAME AND RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS
HIGH PRIORITY FOR ILO PROJECT MANAGEMENT TEAM:		
1	To ensure that the MTE results are shared and discussed with the stakeholders. The ILO Project Team, with support from the ILO National Coordinators should ensure that the results of the mid-term evaluation are shared and discussed with the national stakeholders and partners in all countries.	Within two months. No extra resources needed
2	To conduct thorough internal review and assessment of the workplans and budgets to develop future implementation strategy of the Project including formulation of gender-focused results (at least at the outputs level). The ILO Project Team, with support from the ILO National Coordinators should carefully review current status of implementation of the activities which are delayed, paying attention to the implementation of the	Three months. No additional resources needed

¹⁰⁸ Utilization-Focused Evaluation. URL: <https://www.betterevaluation.org/it/node/779>

	<p>pilots in the regions of the Russian Federation to enhance impact, consolidate best practices and lessons learnt and increased visibility of the project results</p>	
3	<p>To enhance project visibility and external public communication to promote project results and donor's visibility at national and global levels. The ILO Project Team, with support from the ILO National Coordinators should revise and update Communication Plan, on both sub-regional and national levels. In addition to using traditional mass media sources, project website, promotional tools developed with the support of the project, the ILO social media accounts (Facebook, Twitter, YouTube, etc.) should be used to promote the results of the project and to raise awareness on the ongoing reforms. Additional indicator can be introduced to capture the progress on communication activities (for ex., the number of visits, views; the number of communication products developed and shared- targets to be set by the Project team).</p>	<p>Three months, Additional resources needed (ideally, budget reallocation or staff and implementing partner costs)</p>
4	<p>To develop a Gender Mainstreaming Strategy for the Project. The ILO Project Team should develop gender mainstreaming strategy, taking into account The ILO Strategic Plan for 2018-21 and ILO Action Plan for Gender Equality 2018-21. The participatory methodology could be sourced from the Manual for Gender Audit Facilitators (2nd Edition, 2012 Geneva, ILO) to drive the participatory process involving project's stakeholders. The expertise of ILO Gender, Equality and Diversity branch (GED) would be beneficial and introduce at least one gender-relevant topic in each Project's events and/or activity. Capacity building activities for Project staff and its constituents on integrating a gender-sensitive approach in policy development, programming and implementation including Gender Sensitive Budgeting are highly recommended.</p>	<p>Within three months. No additional resources needed (with support from ILO Gender Bureau)</p>
5	<p>To improve project design, data collection, reporting and monitoring performance. The ILO Project Team should update project M&E tools and progress reporting templates. In particular, consider the following measures: a) developing specific indicators on vulnerable groups of youth into the Project Design in coordination with social partners; b) developing additional complementary indicators to capture progress on immediate objectives</p>	<p>Within three months. No additional resources needed</p>

	<p>levels; c) introduce gender disaggregated data to project progress reports; d) adding sections on project progress on gender mainstreaming, inclusion and support to achieving the SDGs in project progress reports; e) develop monitoring performance plans to collect the data to capture 1) actual number of project's beneficiaries disaggregated by sex, representation of tripartite institution, country and 2) frequency of the participation of each person in various project's activities.</p>	
6	<p>To continue active promotion and dissemination of the knowledge products and tools developed by the project. The ILO Project Team should include representatives of the sub-regional intergovernmental organizations working on the Eurasian Economic Union and CIS levels (such as Inter-Parliamentary Assembly CIS, CIS Executive Committee, Eurasian Economic Commission) as well as expert organizations like Russian International Affairs Council (RIAC), Russian Academy of Science (RAS) and state universities (MSU, HSE, etc.) in the list of the project stakeholders directly benefitting from the Project knowledge products and capacity development activities.</p>	<p>Within the remaining period of time. Additional resources might be needed for short term expert support</p>
7	<p>To reduce inequalities by supporting CIS countries in building capacity to collect statistics on youth employment and unemployment including share of NEET. The ILO Project Team, with support of ILOSTAT should organize capacity development activities aimed at enhancing knowledge and skills of the national statistical bodies on collection and applying ILO's methodologies on collecting Youth unemployment rate (15-24) and NEET. This recommendation is particular important for Uzbekistan and Azerbaijan.</p>	<p>Within the remaining period of time Additional resources might be needed</p>
8	<p>To organize final sub-regional high visibility event with participation of the stakeholders from all countries. The ILO Project Team, with support from the ILO National Coordinators should organize final level event to discuss the results of project implementation, present good practices and lessons learnt on a global level and develop recommendations to inform future initiatives.</p>	<p>In the last three months of project implementation.</p>

RECOMMENDATIONS	TIMEFRAME AND RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS
MEDIUM PRIORITY FOR ILO PROJECT MANAGEMENT TEAM AND NATIONAL PROJECT COORDINATORS	
<p>1 To continue actively explore emerging opportunities for partnerships and synergies with similar initiatives and other donor funded projects. <u>The ILO Project Management Team and ILO National Coordinators should continue actively exploring existing and emerging possibilities for cooperation on all levels</u>, including synergies with other donors' initiatives and cooperation with the UN Agencies and UNCTs, including other Russia-funded development initiatives in the CIS region (UNDP implemented projects), to enhance sustainability of results</p>	<p>Within the remaining timeframe. No extra resources needed</p>
<p>2 To continue the good practice of collecting the data on participation of key constituents by category (government, workers, employers). The ILO Project Management Team and ILO National Coordinators should continue good practice of continuous data collection on participation in capacity development activities by category and ensure equal representation and participation, to ensure equal engagement of the constituents in the project activities</p>	<p>Within the remaining timeframe. No extra resources needed</p>



International Labour Organization

iTrack Evaluation

ANNEXES

ANNEXES

ANNEX A List of Documents Analyzed

LIST OF THE DOCUMENTS ANALYZED

Comprehensive information

1. Prodoc and concept note
2. Webpage on YEP-CIS project: <https://www.ilo.org/global/topics/youth-employment/projects/cis-partnership/lang--en/index.htm>
3. Project briefs: https://www.ilo.org/moscow/projects/WCMS_247774/lang--en/index.htm
4. Technical Progress Reports (2018, 2019, 2020)

Information on specific activities

5. Sub-regional kick-off conference for Phase II (Feb 2018), agenda
6. News item: https://www.ilo.org/moscow/news/WCMS_623750/lang--en/index.htm
7. Subregional conference (July 2019), agenda
8. News item: https://www.ilo.org/moscow/news/WCMS_714418/lang--en/index.htm
9. Subregional conferences on the COVID-19 pandemic and decent work, agenda
10. Part 1 (20 May 2020): https://www.ilo.org/moscow/events/WCMS_744766/lang--en/index.htm
11. News item: https://www.ilo.org/moscow/news/WCMS_745920/lang--en/index.htm
12. Part 2 (1 June 2020): https://www.ilo.org/moscow/events/WCMS_745811/lang--en/index.htm
13. News item: https://www.ilo.org/moscow/news/WCMS_748041/lang--en/index.htm
14. Part 3 (18 June 2020): https://www.ilo.org/moscow/events/WCMS_747281/lang--en/index.htm
15. News item: https://www.ilo.org/moscow/news/WCMS_750004/lang--en/index.htm
16. Part 4 (30 June 2020): https://www.ilo.org/moscow/events/WCMS_748697/lang--en/index.htm
17. News item: https://www.ilo.org/moscow/news/WCMS_751406/lang--en/index.htm
18. Part 5 (13 July 2020): https://www.ilo.org/moscow/events/WCMS_749824/lang--en/index.htm
19. News item: https://www.ilo.org/moscow/news/WCMS_751450/lang--en/index.htm
20. Sub-regional training on PES
21. Public Employment Services and the Future of Work (Manual. Please refer to the section “Publications” below)
22. Introductory module (23 July 2020): https://www.ilo.org/moscow/events/WCMS_751100/lang--en/index.htm

23. News item: https://www.ilo.org/moscow/news/WCMS_756110/lang--en/index.htm
24. Part 1 (18 Sept 2020): https://www.ilo.org/moscow/events/WCMS_754479/lang--en/index.htm
25. News item: https://www.ilo.org/moscow/news/WCMS_758958/lang--en/index.htm
26. Part 2 (7 Oct 2020): https://www.ilo.org/moscow/events/WCMS_756451/lang--en/index.htm
27. News item: https://www.ilo.org/moscow/news/WCMS_759475/lang--en/index.htm
28. Part 3 (30 Oct 2020): https://www.ilo.org/moscow/events/WCMS_758453/lang--en/index.htm
29. Part 4 (18 Nov 2020): https://www.ilo.org/moscow/events/WCMS_760725/lang--en/index.htm
30. Part 5 (2 Dec 2020): https://www.ilo.org/moscow/events/WCMS_762021/lang--en/index.htm

National Activities

Russian Federation

31. Kick-off conference (May 2018)
32. News item: https://www.ilo.org/moscow/news/WCMS_630798/lang--en/index.htm
33. Agenda
34. Coordination meeting (Aug 2018)
35. News item: https://www.ilo.org/moscow/news/WCMS_645505/lang--en/index.htm
36. Agenda
37. Employment Academy I (Mar 2019)
38. News item: https://www.ilo.org/moscow/news/WCMS_703408/lang--en/index.htm
39. Agenda and other documents
40. Employment Academy II (Nov 2019)
41. News item: https://www.ilo.org/moscow/news/WCMS_733012/lang--en/index.htm
42. Agenda and other documents

Uzbekistan

43. Roundtable on PES (Apr 2018)
44. News item: https://www.ilo.org/moscow/news/WCMS_627827/lang--en/index.htm
45. Agenda
46. PES functional overview and training for managers (3-7 Sep 2018)
47. Agendas
48. Assessment report (Rus and Eng)
49. PES training (core services and management, Nov 2018)
50. Agenda
51. DWCP roadmap discussion (Feb 2019)
52. Agenda
53. Training on macroeconomic approaches (Apr 2019)
54. Agenda
55. PES training (April 2019)
56. Agenda
57. PES training (11-13 Sep 2019)
58. Agenda
59. Development of NES (Apr and May 2020)

60. News items:
61. https://www.ilo.org/moscow/news/WCMS_742065/lang--en/index.htm
62. https://www.ilo.org/moscow/news/WCMS_745656/lang--en/index.htm
63. Background report for NES preparation
64. Assessment of Public Works Fund (May 2020)
65. News item: https://www.ilo.org/moscow/news/WCMS_747271/lang--en/index.htm
66. Assessment report (Strengthening the Public Employment Service of the Republic of Uzbekistan: assessment and recommendations)
67. Guided self-assessment report on Public Works Programme
68. Launch of rapid assessments of the employment impact and policy responses of the COVID-19 pandemic (Sept 2020)
69. News item: https://www.ilo.org/moscow/news/WCMS_756488/lang--en/index.htm
70. Report (Please refer to the section “Publications” below)
71. Meeting on the technical note for the creation of pilot career guidance centres (Mar 2021)

Azerbaijan

72. Expert’s mission for the Action Plan on formalization (May 2018)
73. Mission agenda and action plan prepared based on the mission
74. PES training (July 2018)
75. News item: https://www.ilo.org/moscow/news/WCMS_635387/lang--en/index.htm
76. Agenda
77. Study visit to Oslo (Sept 2018)
78. PES training (4-7 Dec 2018)
79. News item: https://www.ilo.org/moscow/news/WCMS_676295/lang--en/index.htm
80. PES training (Apr 2019)
81. News items:
82. https://www.ilo.org/moscow/news/WCMS_697136/lang--en/index.htm
83. Agenda
84. Self-employment programme:
85. News item: https://www.ilo.org/moscow/news/WCMS_633848/lang--en/index.htm

Kazakhstan

72. Initial consultations (Sept 2018)
73. News item: https://www.ilo.org/moscow/news/WCMS_650579/lang--en/index.htm
74. Conference on rapid assessment of the employment impacts of the COVID-19 pandemic (March 2021), agenda
75. Assessment report (Please refer to the “Publication” section)

Armenia

76. Workshop for development of new NES (Oct 2018), agenda
77. News item: https://www.ilo.org/moscow/news/WCMS_649865/lang--en/index.htm
78. Mission for interviews (Dec 2018)
79. News item: https://www.ilo.org/moscow/news/WCMS_667335/lang--en/index.htm
80. Tripartite workshop on Armenian labour market (Jul 2019), agenda

Georgia

81. Fact-finding mission by expert for the development of the employment strategy (Sept 2018)
82. Mission agenda and report

Kyrgyzstan

83. Conference on rapid assessment on impact of COVID-19 pandemic (Sept 2020), agenda

Tajikistan

84. Roundtable on the results of assessment of labour market strategy (Sept 2020), agenda
85. Assessment report
86. Conference to present policy paper towards NES (Oct 2020), agenda
87. Policy paper

Sub-national Activities (in Russian Federation)

Multiple regions:

88. Regional meeting (Oct 2019), agenda
89. News item: https://www.ilo.org/moscow/news/WCMS_726979/lang--en/index.htm

Komi

90. Initial preparatory meetings (Oct 2018)
91. News item: https://www.ilo.org/moscow/news/WCMS_647459/lang--en/index.htm
92. Roundtable on national trends in the youth labour market (April 2019), agenda
93. Report on youth labour market in Komi
94. PES training (Oct 2019), agenda

Astrakhan

95. 1st round table with expert's visit (Oct 2018), agenda
96. Report on youth labour market in Astrakhan
97. Kick-off conference for youth entrepreneurship for rural development (Feb 2020), agenda
98. News item: https://www.ilo.org/moscow/news/WCMS_742070/lang--en/index.htm

Kaliningrad

95. 1st round table (Oct 2018), agenda
96. News item: https://www.ilo.org/moscow/news/WCMS_651074/lang--en/index.htm
97. Expert's visit (Apr 2019), agenda
98. Report on youth labour market in Kaliningrad

Khanty-Mansy

99. PES training (Nov 2018), agenda

Other Project Activities

100. Training at Turin Centre (Sent participants)
101. https://www.ilo.org/moscow/news/WCMS_647419/lang--en/index.htm
102. https://www.ilo.org/moscow/news/WCMS_711829/lang--en/index.htm
103. Int'l forum in Ufa (Feb 2019)
https://www.ilo.org/moscow/news/WCMS_669358/lang--en/index.htm
104. Session on future of work at MSU (Apr 2019)
https://www.ilo.org/moscow/news/WCMS_728318/lang--en/index.htm
105. Round table on youth employment as a side event of WorldSkills 2019 (Aug 2019)
https://www.ilo.org/moscow/news/WCMS_716913/lang--en/index.htm
106. Celebration at a mining site (Oct 2019)
https://www.ilo.org/moscow/news/WCMS_724935/lang--en/index.htm
107. "A Future of Work for Russian Youth" (Dec 2019)
https://www.ilo.org/moscow/news/WCMS_655550/lang--en/index.htm

YE-related contribution to other events

108. https://www.ilo.org/moscow/news/WCMS_633517/lang--en/index.htm
109. https://www.ilo.org/moscow/news/WCMS_649428/lang--en/index.htm
110. https://www.ilo.org/moscow/news/WCMS_668582/lang--en/index.htm
111. https://www.ilo.org/moscow/news/WCMS_679817/lang--en/index.htm
112. https://www.ilo.org/moscow/news/WCMS_677990/lang--en/index.htm
113. https://www.ilo.org/moscow/news/WCMS_724918/lang--en/index.htm
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117. Armenia: https://www.ilo.org/moscow/information-resources/publications/WCMS_762029/lang--en/index.htm
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ANNEX B List of Persons Interviewed

SUMMARY STATISTICS

Figure 4 Key informant interviews conducted (by country and gender, in persons)

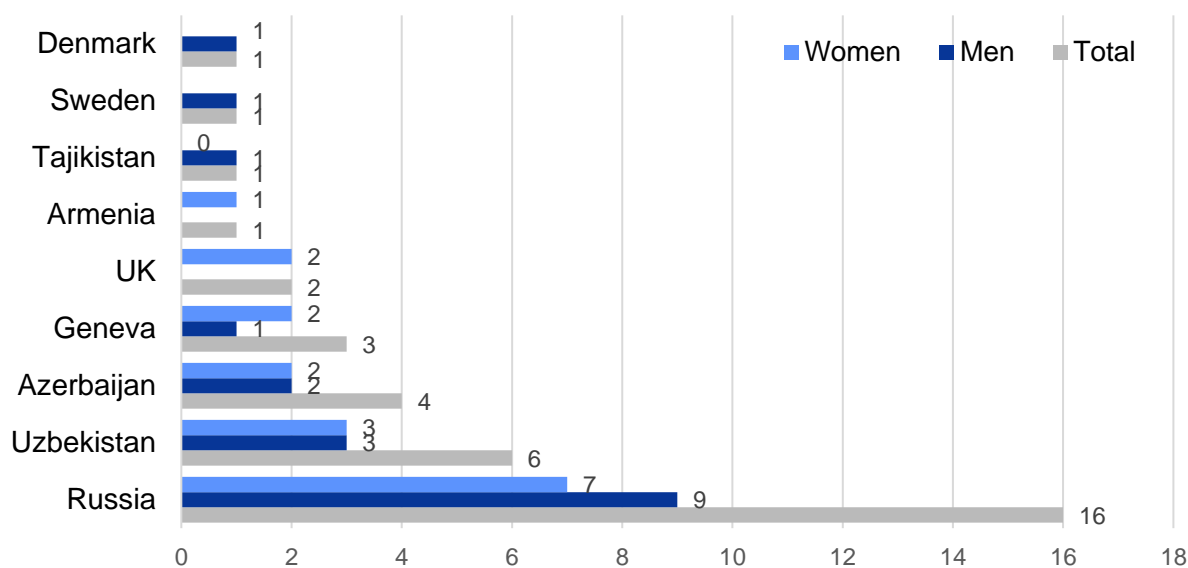
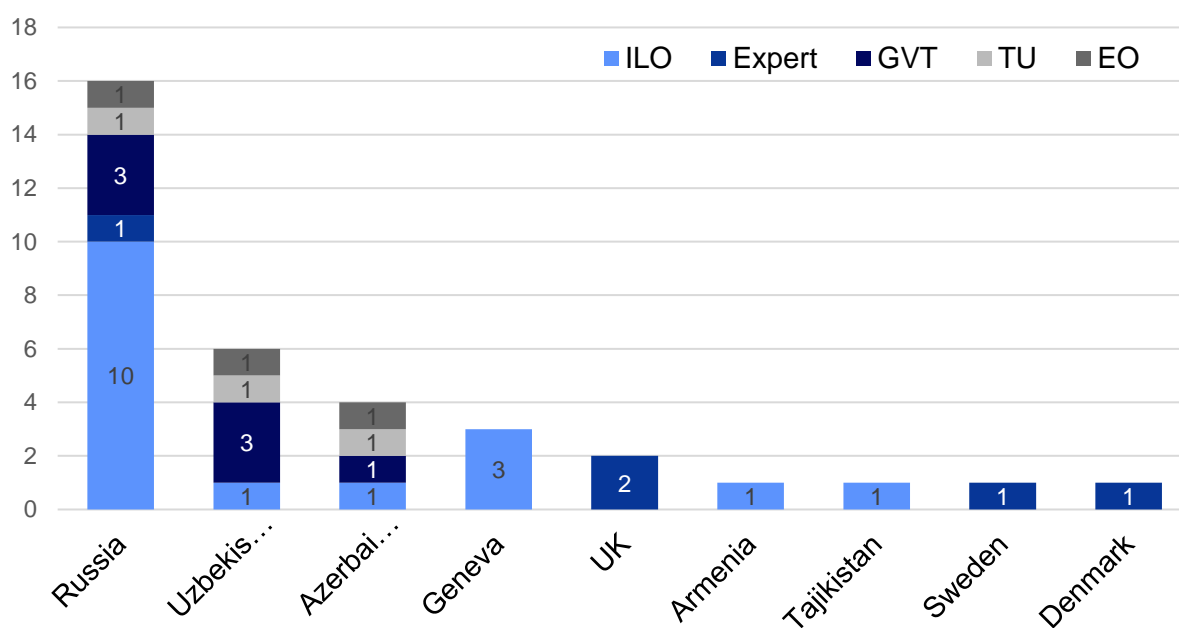


Figure 5 Key informant interviews conducted (by country and organization, in persons)



THE LIST OF THE KEY INFORMANTS INTERVIEWED DURING THE MID-TERM EVALUATION:

Project “Partnerships for Youth Employment in the CIS”, phase II

Independent midterm evaluation

List of interviews with ILO Moscow officials, external experts and constituents

TIME	DATE
FRIDAY, 30 APRIL	
	Mr. Ramiro Pizarro , Project Manager Ms. Kanae Tada , Project Technical Officer Mr. Vladimir Curovic , Senior Specialist in Employers’ Activities
TUESDAY, 04 MAY	
	Mr. Yashar Hamzayev , National Coordinator for Azerbaijan Ms. Olga Koulaeva , ILO Moscow Director Mr. Mikhail Pouchkin , ILO Moscow Deputy Director
WEDNESDAY, 05 MAY	
	Mr. Gocha Aleksandria , Senior Specialist in Workers’ Activities
11:30 – 12:30	Ms. Jasmina Papa , Social Protection Specialist
15:30 – 16:30	Ms. Nune Hovhannisyan , National Coordinator for Armenia
17:00 – 18:00	Ms. Irina Melekh , Programme Officer
THURSDAY, 06 MAY	
11:45 – 12:45	Ms. Anastasia Dubova , Project Technical Officer (started in February 2021)
13:15 – 14:15	Mr. Azizkhon Khankhodjaev , National Coordinator for Uzbekistan
FRIDAY, 07 MAY	
11:00 – 12:00	Mr. Sobir Aminov , National Coordinator for Tajikistan
12:30 – 13:30	Mr. Lejo Sibbel , Senior International Labour Standards and Labour Law Specialist
14:00 – 15:00	Mr. Claes-Göran Lock , External expert, Sweden
16:00 – 17:00	Ms. Julia Surina , former (2014 – Dec 2020) Project Technical Officer
17:30 – 18:30	Mr. Jens Sibbersen , External expert, Denmark
WEDNESDAY, 12 MAY	
14:00 – 15:00	Ms. Helen Metcalfe , External expert, UK Ms. Ruth Santos , External expert, UK
THURSDAY, 13 MAY	
11:00 – 12:00	Mr. Yury Gertsyiy , External expert, Russia

THURSDAY, 20 MAY

- 13:00 – 13:30** **Ms. Rena Abdullayeva**, Deputy Head, Employment Policy and Demography Development Department, Ministry of Labor and Social Protection of Population of the Republic of Azerbaijan
- 14:00 – 14:30** **Mr. Ramiz Azizov**, Head of Public Employment Service of Astrakhan Region
- 15:00 – 15:30** **Mr. Ilyas Aliyev**, First Deputy Chairman of the Trade Unions Confederation of Azerbaijan
- 16:00 – 16:30** **Ms. Kristina Mammadova**, Acting General-Secretary from the **National Confederation of Entrepreneurs (Employers) Organizations of the Republic of Azerbaijan (ASK)**

TUESDAY, 25 MAY

- 11:00 – 11:30** **Mr. Alexander Khokhlov**, Deputy Minister, Ministry of Labour, Employment and Social Protection of the Republic of Komi

FRIDAY, 28 MAY

- 14:45 – 15:30** **Federation of Trade Unions of Uzbekistan**,
Mr. Ruslan Rakhmanov, lead specialist on protection of social and economic interests of workers
- 15:30 – 16:00** **Ministry of Employment and Labour Relations of the Republic of Uzbekistan**
Ms. E. Gorbunova, Ms. A. Nuriddinova, Mr. I. Ismailov

TUESDAY, 01 JUNE

- 17:30 – 18:00** **Mr. Igor Zemlianskiy**, Head of International Cooperation Division, Department of Legal and International Affairs, Ministry of Labour and Social Protection of the Russian Federation

THURSDAY, 03 JUNE

- 14:00 – 14:30** **Chamber of Commerce and Industry of the Republic of Uzbekistan**
Participants: **Ms. E. Margishvili**, executive director

FRIDAY, 04 JUNE

- 11:00 – 11:30** **Mr. Egor Pinykh**, Adviser to Social Labour and Social Partnership Department, Federation of Independent Trade Unions of Russia

TUESDAY, 08 JUNE

- 16:30** **Ms. Marina Moskvina**, Managing Director of the Department of labor market and social partnership, Russian Union of Industrialists and Entrepreneurs

THURSDAY, 17 JUNE

- 10:00 – 10:30** **Mr. Niall O'Higgins**, Senior Employment Research Specialist, ILO HQ
Teams Geneva

FRIDAY, 18 JUNE

- Ms. Susana Puerto** - Senior Youth Employment Specialist, Employment, Labour Markets and Youth Branch (EMPLAB) of ILO Geneva.

ANNEX C Terms of Reference



International
Labour
Organization

Draft Terms of Reference

Independent Midterm Evaluation of the project

Project Title:	Partnerships for Youth Employment in the CIS II
Project code	RER/17/01/LUK
Countries:	Azerbaijan, Kazakhstan, the Russian Federation, Uzbekistan and other countries in the Commonwealth of Independent States (CIS) region (Armenia, Kyrgyzstan, Tajikistan, Turkmenistan) and Georgia
ILO Responsible Office:	DWT/CO for Eastern Europe and Central Asia
ILO Technical Backstopping Unit:	Programme on Youth Employment, Employment Policy Department
P&B Outcomes:	Outcome 1, Indicator 1.2 (youth employment)
SDG(s) under evaluation	SDG 8 – UN Global Initiative on Decent Jobs for Youth
Duration:	1 January 2018 – 27 February 2023 (tbc)
Donor:	PJSC LUKOIL
Budget:	USD 6,353,000

National Counterparts:

Ministries in charge of labour and employment, relevant national and regional authorities, employers' organizations and trade unions in the project countries

I. BACKGROUND

This is an independent midterm evaluation of Partnerships for Youth Employment in the CIS project, phase II, to be conducted in accordance with the provisions of the Project Document (PRODOC) and ILO evaluation policy that requires projects with budgets over USD 5mIn to undergo independent evaluations twice in their lifecycle – at the midterm and final stage.

The project is the result of a public-private partnership between the ILO and the Open Joint Stock Company LUKOIL.

This project aims to improve the effectiveness of policies and programmes promoting decent jobs for young people¹⁰⁹ in the CIS countries through interventions at the regional, national and sub-national levels, as follows:

The regional (CIS) component constitutes the project's backbone; it will develop further joint approaches to address youth employment issues common to the CIS countries and enhance the existing mechanisms for regional cooperation on youth employment.

The national component will target Azerbaijan, Kazakhstan, the Russian Federation and Uzbekistan to strengthen the implementation of country-specific youth employment policies and programmes.

The sub-national component will focus on youth employment actions in three regions of the Russian Federation (Republic of Komi, Astrakhan Region and Kaliningrad Region) to foster a framework for cooperation and partnership among local institutions, the social partners and other stakeholders at the sub-national level.

The project builds on the successful outcome and lessons learned of a previous collaboration between the ILO and the Russian oil company LUKOIL during the 2013-2017 period.¹¹⁰

Project Background

In the recent years, the CIS region has been experiencing high levels of youth unemployment. Economic recovery from the crisis has been slow in the region and the uncertain outlook in the global economy raises concerns about the ability of the region to address the crisis consequences and create sufficient quality employment opportunities for young people entering in the labour market.¹¹¹ At 17%¹¹², the youth unemployment rate in the CIS region is above the global youth unemployment rate of 13%. In 2016, the youth unemployment rate

¹⁰⁹ For the purposes of this project, "youth employment policies and programmes" include all measures taken by the public and private sectors to support young people aged 15-29 both from demand side (such as supporting hiring of young people through wage subsidies, sensitising employers about youth unemployment) and supply side perspective (developing the skills of young people, ensuring their preparedness for labour market).

¹¹⁰ <http://www.ilo.org/global/topics/youth-employment/projects/cis-partnership/lang--en/index.htm>

¹¹¹ This section relies on ILO World Employment and Social Outlook – Trends 2017, http://www.ilo.org/global/research/global-reports/weso/2017/WCMS_540899/lang--en/index.htm and ILO (2016) World Employment and Social Outlook 2016: Trends for Youth, unless otherwise indicated.

¹¹² Calculated as the average of youth unemployment rates of Armenia, Belarus, Georgia, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Tajikistan, Russian Federation and Ukraine in 2015, ILOSTAT, http://www.ilo.org/ilostat/faces/ilostat-home/home?_adf.ctrl-state=dbpkjrlf4_33&_afLoop=340171536200282#

in the Eastern Europe region and Central and Western Asia regions stood at 16.6% and 17.7% respectively, both above the global youth unemployment rate of 13.1%. Gender differences in the youth unemployment are also pronounced in the regions, where young women tend to experience more unemployment compared to young men (partly linked to the perceptions of traditional roles of women and men, which often have been encapsulated in the legislative frameworks).

The overall trend diverges between the two regions. Whereas in the Eastern Europe, the youth unemployment rate (for both sexes) has been declining in the recent years, in Central and Western Asia youth unemployment has been increasing.

The level of youth unemployment has been higher in certain countries of the region, particularly in Azerbaijan and Russian Federation, and relatively modest in others like Kazakhstan. Gender disparities are pronounced in the countries, with young women having consistently higher unemployment rates compared to young men. In the Russian Federation, there are also high regional differences in the youth unemployment rate.

Moreover, the quality of jobs accessed by young people remains a cause for concern. A great number of young people are working, but do not earn enough to lift themselves out of poverty. In 2016, 4.2% of working youth in Eastern Europe and 8.9% in Central and Western Asia were in extreme and moderate poverty (defined as less USD 3.10/per day). Young workers are more than other groups, engaged in low-quality, precarious and hazardous forms of work.

The youth employment challenge in the region is also characterised by the fact that young people are usually over-represented in the informal economy, with around half of total youth employment being in the informal economy.¹¹³ A higher proportion of informal young workers is found especially in the rural areas and the construction sector.¹¹⁴ This means that many such young workers do not enjoy basic rights at work, do not have an employment contract and are not covered in the social protection systems. This limited access to social security of young people is a serious concern (as it has implications for the whole of working life and future retirement). Lack of comprehensive social security coverage for youth is mainly due to the levels of informal employment. For instance, the practice of (total or partial) unreported remuneration without mandatory social security contribution is quite widespread in the region.

113 ILO (2015) Labour market transitions of young women and men in Eastern Europe and Central Asia. http://www.ilo.org/wcmsp5/groups/public/---ed_emp/documents/publication/wcms_357353.pdf

114 For example, in a new target country for the project Uzbekistan, in 2014, only 38% of employed population made contributions to the Pension Fund which may reveal substantial informal employment. Although, according to the Ministry of Labour, informal employment comprises 30% of all work, in agriculture and industry the level is estimated much higher at 82% and 63%; in the service sector the figure is 38%. Informal labour arrangements in Uzbekistan mainly take the form of self-employment or workers employed in short-term, casual and seasonal jobs without formal contracts. Rural workers and individuals with low levels of educational attainment are more likely to be in informal employment, <https://data.gov.uz/uploads/datasets/10-56/10-56-55.pdf>

The economic crisis and slow subsequent recovery also meant that young people are under increasing pressure to accept precarious jobs, with low wages, whilst lacking experience and capacity to negotiate the working conditions with the employers, nor fully understanding the possible value of joining the trade unions, in this respect.

Skills mismatches are also a serious concern in several countries of the region. The correlation between educational attainment and unemployment, in the sense that the higher the level of educational attainment, the lower the rate of youth unemployment, is generally the trend. Nevertheless, the issue of the young “educated” unemployed is increasing in a sense that the educational attainment levels in the region are quite high but there are not enough quality jobs for young university graduates. On the other, there is high and unsatisfied demand for labour at the medium and low skill levels.

Youth in the labour markets are also affected by the changing nature of the world of work, including the prevalence of temporary or short-term contracts, informal jobs without any contract, under own-account arrangements or unpaid family jobs, and the rise in part-time employment, especially among women.¹¹⁵ The jobs that young people do are also significantly affected by the need for the continuous adaptation and reorganisation to respond to the rapid technological change, the processes and changes in the global value and supply chains as well as jobs becoming more demanding for social, cognitive, team building and time management skills. Policy and legislative frameworks in the region have not yet fully and explicitly caught up with these developments, with a further need to support the development of the understanding on the part of employers of how the respect for labour rights can have a positive impact on productivity and competitiveness.

The ultimate beneficiaries of the project are young women and men between the ages of 15 and 29¹¹⁶ who can benefit from integrated, more effective and gender-sensitive youth employment and related policies and programmes. In the CIS countries, young people constitute a heterogeneous group whose needs vary by gender, ethnicity/migration background, education level, family income, geographic location (rural/urban) and the economic development of the areas in which they live. Some groups of young people face particular challenges in finding and securing decent jobs (such as those with fewer qualifications or in economically under-developed areas). Statistics and research also show the particular challenges in the labour markets faced by young women compared to young men. In the youth sector there are a set of gender differences in transition from education to employment, gender inequalities in access to the labour market and young families and care responsibilities. Hence, gender equality of opportunity and treatment, in law and practice, constitute an important aspect in the project activities, involving both ultimate and direct beneficiaries. Policy analysts, international institutions, researchers and the general public

¹¹⁵ ILO (2017). The World Employment and Social Outlook 2017 (WESO).

¹¹⁶ Typically, ILO defines young people as aged 15-24. In the national legislation of most CIS countries, young people are defined as aged 15-29.

also benefit from access to publicly available information about youth employment and youth related challenges and adopted approaches.

The direct beneficiaries of the project are the decision-makers and staff from the national and sub-regional institutions involved in the formulation, implementation and oversight of policies and programmes for youth employment. This includes the ministries in charge of employment, but also other relevant different government departments (e.g., economy, health, welfare, industry, education and training, employment, youth affairs, trade, finance), the public employment services, the social partners (staff of employers' and workers' organizations) and the institutes of statistics. The capacity of the staff of these organizations is being strengthened in the areas relating to the planning, design, implementation, monitoring and evaluation of policies for youth employment and related areas. The involvement of both decision makers and staff of national institutions is being done on the basis of gender-balanced criteria in order to promote equality of opportunity in the institutions governing the labour market. The project also seeks to encourage collaboration between actors from the public and private sector, including national and multinational companies (also the SMEs and micro businesses), youth organizations, educational institutions, career services, entrepreneurship promotion organizations to promote youth employment. It is a crucial point for the project to get involved all the organizations that have a say in the life of a young person.

In particular, the project works with the ministries responsible for employment, which take the primary responsibility and lead function in the formulation, implementation, evaluation and updating of youth employment policies. These institutions directly support the implementation of the project at national level and provide overall coordination between various government departments responsible for formulating and implementing policies related to or impacting youth employment, including the ministries in charge of Education, Youth Affairs, Planning, Economy and other relevant ministries (e.g., digital economy, environment, agriculture, finance). This approach promotes comprehensive employment policies that have a measurable impact on the quality and quantity of decent jobs available to young people.

The Public Employment Services of the countries involved in the project are benefitting from the activities implemented at sub-regional level (objective 1). Under the second objective, the main employment policy stakeholders in the four target countries are the key actors involved in the development and implementation of the project activities.

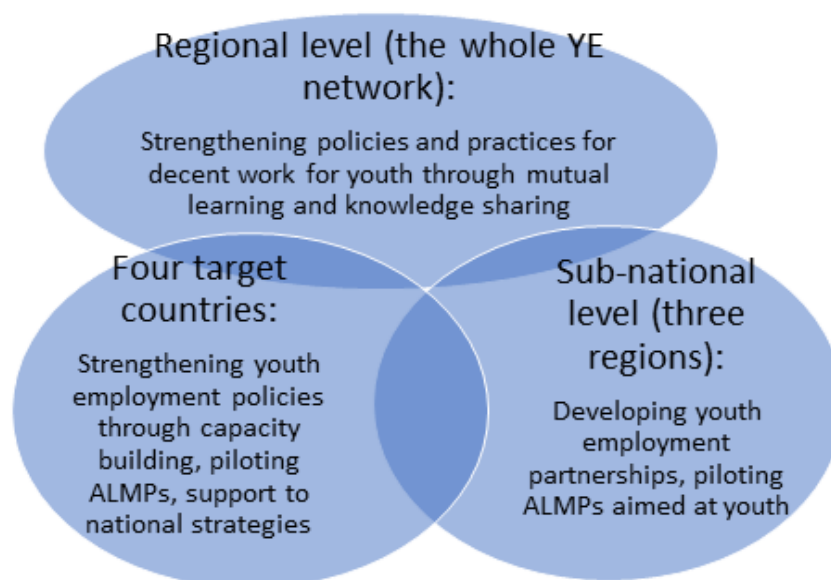
The institutions responsible for the development of statistics in the four target countries are being involved in the implementation of the aspects of the project activities that relate to further development and use of youth labour market indicators, including compilation and dissemination of labour statistics and labour market information for providers and users of youth labour market data.

The employers' and workers' organizations pro-actively participate in the project activities in the formulation, monitoring, evaluation and updating of policies, programmes and services to improve youth employment promotion in their respective constituencies. In particular,

employers' organizations are involved in providing services for potential young entrepreneurs and to companies that can create jobs and/or improve the quality of existing jobs for young women and men, including the priorities of the UN Global Initiative such as green jobs, jobs in the digital economy, employment in rural economies and in hazardous occupations. The workers' organizations are involved in the promotion of rights at work for young people and in providing services for young workers to actively implement their rights. The social partners, together with the government, identify opportunities for public-private partnerships on youth employment.

The main objective of this project is to improve the effectiveness of policies and programmes to support the creation of decent jobs for young people within the overall comprehensive employment policy framework in the CIS countries. The overall strategy of the project relies on three sets of interventions: at sub-regional level involving nine CIS countries (objective 1, also potentially involving the BRICS countries and the relevant UN agencies), secondly focusing on country-level interventions in Azerbaijan, Kazakhstan, the Russian Federation and Uzbekistan (objective 2) and thirdly addressing the sub-national level needs in the three regions of the Russian Federation (Republic of Komi, Astrakhan Region and Kaliningrad Region) (objective 3) (see Figure 1).

Figure 1: The overall project strategy



The project implementation strategy relies on strengthening the capacity of policy-makers and practitioners to design, implement, evaluate and update evidence-based and gender sensitive policies, programmes and approaches for youth employment, and on delivering and disseminating results through existing partnerships and strategic alliances. The capacity building will ensure that the work done during the project life becomes sustainable and is replicated in the long run. The involvement of public institutions, the social partners and other

actors will help create synergies and replicate effective delivery models across the national contexts.

The sub-regional component supports further implementation of joint approaches to address youth employment and youth related challenges common to the CIS countries and the existing mechanisms for sub-regional cooperation on youth employment. Through the interventions envisaged under objective 2, the project supports the implementation of youth-specific strategies and programmes in the target countries, as well as the implementation of new pilot initiatives that respond to the context-specific priorities. In the Russian Federation, the pilot initiatives include a sub-national component to build youth employment partnerships involving local institutions, the social partners and other actors at the level of the districts or other relevant local territories (objective 3).

The work carried out at national and sub-national levels in the four target countries under the second immediate objective builds on and complements the activities implemented at the sub-regional level. The project activities under the first objective will strengthen the policy/strategy development capacity of the members of the network, while the activities in the second objective and third objective will assist in implementation of these policies and strategies, including through institutional reforms and implementation of effective and gender-sensitive initiatives for youth employment. The lessons learned from the evaluation of these initiatives will help identify “what works” and what can be replicated or scaled-up.

The project’s aim to improve the effectiveness of policies and programmes for youth employment is built upon the requirements and guidance contained in key International Labour Standards of the ILO aimed at ensuring the quality and standards of employment, the ILO Convention 122 on Employment Policy Promotion ¹¹⁷ and Employment Policy Recommendations 122 ¹¹⁸ and 169 ¹¹⁹, which call the Member States to promote full, productive and freely chosen employment, ensure the equal opportunities in employment and promote transitions to legal economies. Other instruments to be used in this respect are Convention 88 on Employment Services and ILO Recommendation 204 on Transition from the Informal to the Formal Economy which provides guidance to the Member States as to

117
http://www.ilo.org/dyn/normlex/en/f?p=NORMLEXPUB:12100:0::NO:12100:P12100_INSTRUMENT_ID:312267:NO

118
http://www.ilo.org/dyn/normlex/en/f?p=NORMLEXPUB:12100:0::NO:12100:P12100_INSTRUMENT_ID:312460:NO

119
http://www.ilo.org/dyn/normlex/en/f?p=NORMLEXPUB:12100:0::NO:12100:P12100_INSTRUMENT_ID:312507:NO

how to develop and implement coherent and integrated strategies to facilitate the transition to the formal economy. The project activities thus directly support furthering international labour standards relating to the protection of young people, to the equality of opportunity and treatment, instruments on employment policy and promotion, vocational guidance and training, employment security and termination, wages, working time, occupational health and safety, social security, migrant workers and transition to formal economy.¹²⁰

Youth transition to formality is one of the project's overarching themes, including addressing it at the regional level through network meetings, voluntary peer reviews and knowledge development products to ensure the development of more effective youth employment policies supporting in a more targeted way the transitions to the formal economy. At the national level, this is to be addressed through targeted capacity building activities and support to the development of more effective ALMPs targeting the formalisation of employment.

The project aims to promote gender equality both as a horizontal principle across the project activities (to respect the principle of equal opportunities for representation of men and women) as well as ensuring that gender gaps and issues in youth employment in the CIS are addressed through specific actions sponsored by the project. A gender mainstreaming strategy for youth employment policies is being developed as part of the project to ensure its full contribution to the promotion of gender equality.

The project was designed on the basis of assumptions relating to its sustainability, implementation, and management. Relevant risks were identified and mitigation measures have been performed. (A detailed list of assumptions and risk analysis is available.)

Development Objective and Theory of Change (ToC)

The development objective of the project is to contribute to the creation of decent work for youth in CIS countries.

Towards this end, project activities will reinforce youth employment policies and approaches on the ground which will help the ultimate beneficiaries (young women and men) to have more opportunities to move away from unemployment, underemployment, informal employment, low-quality and temporary jobs. The improved policy mix aimed at young people would ultimately benefit young men and women in terms of both quantity and quality of the jobs they have access to. This will be reached through the further development of the already existing framework for regional cooperation and knowledge sharing on youth employment across the nine countries of the CIS (immediate objective 1), and through further improvement of the effectiveness of policies and programmes for youth employment in Azerbaijan, Kazakhstan, the Russian Federation and Uzbekistan (immediate objective 2) and at the level of three regions within the Russian Federation (immediate objective 3). The target countries and regions have been chosen reflecting the results of the first phase of the project and the

¹²⁰ <http://www.ilo.org/dyn/normlex/en/f?p=NORMLEXPUB:12030:0::NO::>

discussions with the project donor. The sub-regional, national and sub-national approaches in the project design reinforce each other insofar as the sub-regional level activities are being informed by the experiences from the national and sub-national level activities, whereas the national and sub-national level activities will be developed reflecting the learning from the sub-regional level activities.

Link to ILO Programme and Budget (P&B), DWCPs and CPOs

The project takes a multi-pronged approach to tackle specific youth employment and youth related issues in the respective countries. The proposed work is in line with the ILO's regional priorities and the orientations of the ILO new Strategic Policy Framework 2018-2021.

ILO Programme and Budget

The ILO programme and budget 2016-2017 and 2018-2021 establish Outcome 1: "More and better jobs for inclusive growth and improved youth employment prospects" as one of ILO's ten policy outcomes of critical importance in the world of work. By delivering technical support and capacity-building in the implementation and improvement to the youth employment policies, the project will directly contribute to the achievement of this Outcome in the CIS region.¹²² The project will also contribute more indirectly to the Outcome 5 "Decent work in the rural economy" by exploring youth employment issues and developing relevant interventions in the rural areas in some target countries and also to the Outcome 6 "Formalization of the informal economy" by examining and developing approaches to tackle a high incidence of informal youth employment in the CIS region. As outlined throughout this

¹²¹ <http://www.ilo.org/public/english/bureau/program/download/pdf/16-17/pb-2016-17-en.pdf> The project will also contribute to the achievement of CPO SMO130 (sub-regional level) and GLO104 (Global Product) – all linked to the ILO Policy Outcome 1.

¹²² To be measured through Indicator 1.2: "Number of member States that have taken targeted action on decent jobs for young women and men through the development and implementation of multi-pronged policies and programmes"

document, the three cross-cutting policy drivers (gender/non-discrimination, labour standards and social dialogue) are an integral part of the strategy adopted for implementation of the project.

Decent Work Country Programmes (DWCPs)¹²³

The project objectives are strongly aligned with the Decent Work Country Programme (DWCP) in Azerbaijan for 2016-2020, as well as with the Programme of Cooperation between the Russian Federation and the ILO for 2017-2020 and the extended DWCP for Uzbekistan for 2017-2020.

The first priority of Azerbaijan's DWCP 2016-2020 is to promote decent employment opportunities and quality jobs for inclusive growth, with one of DWCP outcomes (1.2) being active labour market programmes targeting young men and women being in place and implemented.¹²⁴ The ILO project activities will thus provide support to the DWCP implementation in analysing the situation of youth on the labour market and developing active labour market policies facilitating youth employment. The Minister of Labour in Azerbaijan articulated interest to ILO in the extension of the cooperation, particularly in the rural areas.

In the ILO – Russia Programme of Cooperation 2017-2020 increasing employment opportunities and labour productivity is the first priority, calling inter alia for the promotion of employment of young people and their adaptation to the labour market, for the reform of vocational training systems in line with the labour market needs and ensuring the adequate supply of skills to the labour market.¹²⁵ ILO activities in the project support the implementation of these priorities for further action (including support to the activities planned in the Implementation Plan for the Programme of Cooperation).

In Uzbekistan, the DWCP 2017-2020 establishes fostering decent work opportunities as one of the three top policy priorities.¹²⁶ The DWCP monitoring and implementation plan foresees a number of actions to support the achievement of key Outcome 2.1: Active policies pursued to promote full, productive and freely chosen employment, including youth employment, including the review of existing employment policy framework involving technical meetings and study visits. Project activities feed into the achievement of this policy priority by providing

¹²³ There is no DWCP for Kazakhstan. The relevant CPO is KAZ156 "Strengthened capacity of the government to implement employment policies for inclusive growth".

¹²⁴ The relevant country programme outcome (CPO) in ILO's programming system is AZE106 "National Employment Strategy developed with the ILO technical support" (target).

¹²⁵ The relevant CPO is RUS155 "Increased decent work opportunities for young women and men" (target).

¹²⁶ The relevant CPO is UZB126 "Employment-centred policies improved based on tripartite consultations and LM information" (target). The 2014-2016 Memorandum of Understanding has been extended to the 2017-2020 period.

a framework and technical inputs for developing and implementing effective policies ensuring decent work for young people. ILO assistance in the project focuses on the elaboration and implementation of national youth employment initiatives.

[Link to the National Development Frameworks¹²⁷](#)

The project is in line with the development goals of the target countries.

- United Nations-Azerbaijan Partnership Framework (UNAPF) 2016-2020¹²⁸ identified promoting sustainable and inclusive economic development underpinned by increased diversification and decent work as the first Strategic Priority Area 1. Accompanying this priority is the Outcome 1.1 where the aim to generate decent work for also for youth. Youth has also been recognized as one of cross-cutting issues of the UNAPF.
- Partnership Framework for Development with Kazakhstan 2016-2020¹²⁹ envisaged that reducing disparities and improved human development as one of key strategic pillars. Within this pillar, Outcome 1.2 is foreseen focussed on the diversification of the economy which provides decent work opportunities for the underemployed, youth and socially vulnerable women and men.

¹²⁷ There is no UNADF for Russia.

¹²⁸https://unece.org/fileadmin/DAM/operact/Technical_Cooperation/Delivering_as_One/UNDAF_country_files/UNDAF_files_2015-2020/AZERBAIJAN_UNAPF__2016-2020__signed.pdf

¹²⁹ <https://kazakhstan.un.org/sites/default/files/2019-12/Partnership%20Framework.pdf>

- The Uzbekistan-UN Development Assistance Framework 2016-2020¹³⁰ foresees the inclusive economic development, with a focus on employment and social protection and creation of sustainable decent work amongst its key development priorities. Within this priority, special attention is given to policies are needed to promote employment for the social inclusion of vulnerable groups, for example, young people.

Link to SDGs and global initiatives

The project is consistent with a number of policy responses at the global and regional level to tackle youth unemployment. At the strategic level, the project activities addressing youth unemployment will feed directly into the UN's Sustainable Development Goals 2030 agenda¹³¹ and in particular to supporting full and productive employment and decent work for all (SDG 8), but also, albeit more indirectly, to reducing poverty (SDG 1), improving gender equality (SDG 5), and reducing inequality (SDG 10). The Agenda outcome document includes the following youth employment related targets:

- 8.5: “By 2030, achieve full and productive employment and decent work for all women and men, including for young people and persons with disabilities, and equal pay for work of equal value” (to be measured through inter alia youth unemployment rate); and
- 8.6: “By 2020, substantially reduce the proportion of youth not in employment, education or training” (to be measured through the proportion of youth (aged 15-24 years) not in education, employment or training).

To translate this strategic commitment into action, the UN adopted in 2016 the Global Initiative on Decent Jobs for Youth for the promotion of youth employment worldwide.¹³² The UN

¹³⁰ https://www.uz.undp.org/content/uzbekistan/en/home/library/un_in_Uzbekistan/the-united-nations-development-assistance-framework-for-the-repu.html

¹³¹ Adopted in September 2015, see <http://www.un.org/sustainabledevelopment/development-agenda/>

¹³² <http://www.ilo.org/global/topics/youth-employment/databases-platforms/global-initiative-decent-jobs/lang--en/index.htm>

Global Initiative is aimed to stimulate partnerships with governments, the UN system, businesses, academic institutions, youth organizations and other groups to scale-up action to create new opportunities and avenues for quality employment of young people. These are to occur across several areas, including “green jobs” for youth, quality apprenticeships, digital skills and the building of “tech-hubs”, support to young people in the rural economy, facilitation of transitions from the informal to the formal economy, support to youth in hazardous occupations and the promotion of youth entrepreneurship. ILO is the lead agency for the Global Initiative, working together with another 21 UN Agencies. The project will make a contribution to the implementation of the UN Global Initiative by reviewing and adjusting the implementation of its key priority themes in the youth employment policies in the CIS region and involving appropriate UN agencies as relevant.

The Global UN Initiative complements other actions taken recently at the global level. In November 2015, the G20 Leaders agreed to the goal of reducing the share of young people who are most at risk of being permanently left behind in the labour market by 15 per cent by 2025 in G20 countries. The first BRICS Labour and Employment Ministers meeting in January 2016 also concluded with the resolution that called for concerted action on promoting quality and inclusive employment, supporting the formalisation of labour markets and fostering the labour market information exchanges, including on trends of youth employment.¹³³

The project takes in due account in its design and implementation the ILO’s cross-cutting issues, such as norms and social dialogue, gender equality, disability inclusion and other non-discrimination concerns. The project implementation strategy is based on the principles of tripartism and social dialogue, whereby the social partners (workers’ and employers’ organizations) are fully engaged and involved into the project capacity building, knowledge sharing and policy making activities. The social partners are both offering their advice on project implementation approach and benefitting from the new skills, methods and tools that the project is making available at all the levels of the intervention.

¹³³ BRICS LABOUR AND EMPLOYMENT MINISTERS DECLARATION QUALITY JOBS AND INCLUSIVE EMPLOYMENT POLICIES, UFA, Russia, 2016.

Immediate objectives of the project

The project has three immediate objectives:

Immediate objective 1: More effective and inclusive policies and strategies for Decent Work of young men and women in the countries of sub-regional youth employment network

Immediate objective 2: Improved implementation of policies and programmes promoting Decent Work for young men and women in the target countries

Immediate objective 3: Youth employment partnerships created and strengthened to improve the design, monitoring and evaluation of youth employment policy interventions in three regions of the Russian Federation

Project management arrangements

The project is working under the supervision of the ILO Decent Work Team and Country Office for Eastern Europe and Central Asia based in Moscow (DWT-Moscow). The Senior Employment Specialist of the DWT-Moscow is appointed as focal point for the project. The project is staffed with an international Chief Technical Advisor (CTA) who is responsible for the overall implementation of the project, one Technical Officer who supports all the project activities, one Research Officer and two assistants based in Moscow.

A technical cooperation specialist based in the ILO's Programme on Youth Employment in Geneva provides technical backstopping to the project.

A Project Partnership Committee (PPC) has been established in Moscow to inform regularly the donor on the implementation process of the project and on the needs and priorities of the beneficiaries. The members of the PPC include the ILO and donor representatives.

Major events and milestones of the project

The project has made progress under each of its main objectives in 2018-2020. Below are the highlights of the project's activities and achievements up to date:

- development and dissemination of knowledge products – research, studies, and other publications, including a technical manual and reviews of youth employment policies, measures, and other interventions (a list of knowledge products available);

- capacity building of constituents through organization of workshops and webinars on a variety of youth employment policy issues under the subregional, national, and sub-national components, including Employment Academies in the Russian Federation;
- advocacy and partnership building among constituents in the subregion and beyond on youth employment through the promotion of cross-country peer networks and inter-agency cooperation and collaboration between the private and public sectors at regional, national, and sub-national levels. This includes further development of the sub-regional cooperation network on youth employment through organization of a sub-regional meeting and webinars.

Exit strategy and sustainability of the project

The project adopts a strategy of gradual devolution of responsibility to national partners; decisions and management will be devolved to participants over the course of the project. It is expected that key partners – individuals and institutions – will keep on endorsing their assigned roles and responsibilities after the project termination and continue to implement effective youth employment policies after the end of the project.

The sustainability and replicability of the project have been fostered through 1) promoting ownership of the project by ILO constituents and other partners, 2) providing capacity building to national institutions and partners, 3) using international labour standards to guide the project implementation and actively promoting their application, and 4) linking the project to other initiatives implemented by the ILO and other development partners.

The project is a continuation of the previous project “Partnerships for youth employment in the Commonwealth of Independent States” (YEP CIS)¹³⁴. It builds upon the findings and recommendations of the final independent evaluation of the first phase in 2017.

¹³⁴ <http://www.ilo.org/global/topics/youth-employment/projects/cis-partnership/lang--en/index.htm>

II. PURPOSE, OBJECTIVES AND CLIENTS OF THE EVALUATION

ILO considers evaluation as an integral part of the implementation of technical cooperation activities. Relevant provisions are made in all projects in accordance with ILO evaluation policy and established procedures. According to the Project Document (PRODOC), the project is subject to two independent evaluations (mid-term and final) to assess its design, implementation, and results.

The midterm evaluation will investigate the appropriateness of project design, progress in implementation and suggest adjustments to be made in order to better achieve the project's objectives. It will allow to fine-tune the implementation approach for the remaining duration of the project.

Purpose

The purpose of the midterm evaluation is learning and project improvement.

In accordance with the PRODOC, the evaluation will help to determine the relevance and achievement of objectives, development efficiency, effectiveness, impact and sustainability. It will concentrate on the intermediate results of the project to assess its overall performance.

Objectives

The main objectives of the evaluation are to:

- a. Assess the relevance of the project implementation strategy;
- b. Assess the achievement of both quantitative and qualitative results and immediate objectives (effectiveness);

- c. Determine the efficiency of the project;
- d. Assess the sustainability of results and likelihood of long-term effects on the beneficiary institutions, national systems, policies;
- e. Identify the supporting factors and/or barriers, constraints;
- f. Identify lessons learned, especially regarding models of interventions that can be replicated in the region and globally;
- g. Provide technical recommendations regarding the most appropriate next steps in the project main subject areas and/or countries.

Users of evaluation

The evaluation will serve the following users/clients' groups:

- a. ILO management, technical specialists at the HQ and in the field
- b. Project staff
- c. Tripartite constituents in the target countries
- d. The Donor
- e. Direct beneficiaries, including policy-makers and practitioners
- f. Ultimate beneficiaries, including young people

It is expected that the evaluation findings will inform the work of the project in the time remaining. It should be used by the Project team and line managers responsible for the implementation of the project at the HQ, regional and country level.

The evaluation will seek inputs from the stakeholders at all stages of implementation, including field research and reporting.

III. EVALUATION SCOPE

The evaluation will focus on the project as a whole covering the period from January 1, 2018 through the timing of evaluation in the second quarter of 2021. Field research will focus on select target countries, including Uzbekistan, Azerbaijan, and the Russian Federation, it might also include other CIS member countries receiving support from the project such as Armenia and Tajikistan. The evaluation will assess the national and sub-national components. The results of the project's work in other countries will be assessed based on the documentation available. Assessment of the sub-regional component (sub-regional cooperation network on youth employment) will be also done based on documentation review.

The evaluation will integrate ILO cross-cutting issues, including norms and social dialogue, gender equality, disability inclusion, other non-discrimination concerns, medium and long-term effects of capacity development initiatives throughout its methodology and all deliverables.

The evaluation will give specific attention to how the project is relevant to the ILO's programme and policy frameworks (national and global levels), UNDAFs/UNSDCFs, DWCPs and national development strategies, relevant policies and frameworks.

The evaluation will focus on project sustainability and exit strategy.

IV. EVALUATION CRITERIA AND QUESTIONS BASED ON OECD/DAC EVALUATION CRITERIA

The evaluation will apply the OECD/DAC evaluation criteria of relevance, effectiveness, efficiency, sustainability and impact potential. Below are the main evaluation questions per each of the criteria:

Relevance

1. Has the project been relevant to the target countries' needs in the area of youth employment? Did it correspond to the broader national development objectives as they evolved from 2018 to the present?
2. How well does the project fit into the ILO programming and implementation frameworks?
3. How well has the project adapted to the implications of COVID-19 crisis and relevant response measures?

Effectiveness

1. What progress has the project made towards the achievement of its outcomes (immediate objectives)? Has the project been effective in fostering adequate policy responses to youth employment challenges in the changing environment affected by the emerging health and socio-political issues in the target countries/region?
2. Have there been any contributing factors or obstacles?
3. If and how well has the project adapted its approach and implementation to COVID-19 crisis (e.g., repurposed activities, added outputs etc.)
4. How have the relevant international norms and labour standards concerning, for instance, employment, discrimination and informality, been taken into account during the implementation?
5. If and how have the social dialogue and tripartite approach contributed to project implementation?

Efficiency of resources use

1. Have the project resources (knowledge, expertise, networks, time, staff and funds) been used in an efficient manner?

Sustainability and likelihood of the project to have a longer-term impact

1. What is the likelihood that the results of the project will be durable and utilized after the end of the project?
2. Is it likely that the project will have long-term effects (impact) on the target groups and institutions in terms of youth employment outcomes, and more equitable gender relations?
3. To what extent tripartite constituents feel ownership of the results the project has achieved so far and the responsibility to follow them up?

Recommendations¹³⁵

1. What are the recommendations for the next steps in the area of youth employment?

The evaluator may adapt the evaluation criteria and questions, but any fundamental changes should be agreed with the evaluation manager and reflected in the inception report.

¹³⁵ Recommendations should be clear, concise, actionable and specify who is called to act upon.

V. CROSS-CUTTING ISSUES/ISSUES OF SPECIAL INTEREST TO THE ILO

Project responsiveness to gender equality, non-discrimination and disability inclusion issues

1. Within the context of ILO goal of gender equality, disability inclusion and other non-discrimination issues, to what extent did the project design take into account specific gender equality and non-discrimination concerns relevant to the project context?
2. How have gender issues been taken into account during the implementation?
3. To what extent did the project results contribute towards gender equality and non-discrimination, as well as inclusion of people with disability?

Project responsiveness to SDGs

1. To what extent the project results contribute to the identified SDGs and related targets?
2. Are the project results likely to have a sustainable positive contribution to SDGs and related targets?

VI. EVALUATION METHODOLOGY

The evaluation will be conducted in a participatory manner by engaging various groups of stakeholders at different levels of power relations and ensuring that they have a say about the implementation of the project, can share their views and contribute to the evaluation process itself, as well as the dissemination process.

The evaluation will use a mix of qualitative and quantitative methods (i.e., desk review, interviews, surveys etc.) to gather and analyse data which will be disaggregated by sex to the extent possible. It should be able to capture intervention's contributions to the achievement of expected and unexpected outcomes, paying attention to which groups benefit from and which groups contribute to the project and providing an assessment of how the project is functioning in regards to gender equality and non-discrimination (e.g., if and in which way do the project outputs contribute to gender equality and non-discrimination). It will also strive to make sure that both women and men provide information, participate in interviews and express their views freely.

During the analysis stage, feedback from the stakeholder groups would be compared to determine areas of agreement as well as areas of divergence. The Evaluator will draw conclusions based on triangulation of evidence from different methods and data sources. A set of analytic methods to be applied will be further elaborated in the Inception report.

The evaluation will examine the project Theory of Change with particular attention to the logical connect between the levels of results, the validity of the assumptions, risk and mitigation strategies in light of the results achieved, and alignment of the results with ILO's strategic objectives and outcomes, as well as with the relevant SDGs and related targets.

To the extent possible, the data collection, analysis and presentation should be responsive to issues related to ILO's normative work, social dialogue, non-discrimination, including disability issues.

The methodology should state the limitations of the chosen evaluation methods, including those related to representation of specific groups of stakeholders.

The following is the proposed evaluation methodology.

Documents review

Desk review of appropriate materials, including the project document, Logical Framework, progress reports, mission reports, activity reports, surveys, studies and other outputs of the project, DWCPs/Country Cooperation Programmes, progress reports of other ILO projects implemented in the countries and relevant materials from secondary sources (e.g., national research and publications).

Inception report

At the end of the desk review the evaluation consultant will prepare an inception report indicating the methodological approach to be followed (list of evaluation questions) that will be discussed with the ILO prior to the field research (to be conducted on distance).

Planning meeting

A planning meeting will be conducted (on distance) with the participation of the ILO representatives prior to field research. The objective of the meeting is to reach a common understanding regarding the status of the project, priority assessment questions, data sources, data collection instruments, status of logistical arrangements.

Interviews

Individual and/or group interviews (on distance, desk-based or in person, if the situation allows¹³⁶) will be conducted with the following stakeholders:

- a. Project staff
- b. ILO management, technical specialists, National Coordinators, CTAs of other ongoing TC projects in the subregion
- c. Project partners from tripartite constituents' organizations in the target countries
- d. Project partners and direct beneficiaries, i.e., those who received training from the project or participated in project events and activities
- e. UNDP or other UN partners and agencies working in the field
- f. The Donor
- g. Any other relevant stakeholder as indicated by ILO staff during the planning meeting

¹³⁶ Travel would be possible if restrictions are lifted by national authorities and if it is allowed by the ILO.

Interviews will be scheduled in advance by the ILO project staff in accordance with these terms of reference.

Observation

If scheduling permits, the evaluator will attend and assess an online event or a training activity of the project.

Post-trip debriefing

The evaluator will present preliminary findings, conclusions and recommendations to the ILO and will prepare the draft report. The draft report will subsequently be shared with the ILO and constituents for comment.

The detailed approach and methodology, i.e., the workplan, should be part of the inception report.

The evaluator may adapt the methodology, but any fundamental changes should be agreed with the evaluation manager and reflected in the inception report.

VI. EVALUATION OUTPUTS/DELIVERABLES

The expected deliverables are:

- Inception report (electronic version) in English, to be provided not later than 9 days after the signing of the contract

- Draft evaluation report (electronic version) in English that should comply with ILO Evaluation Office requirements¹³⁷ and include:
 - Executive Summary with key findings, conclusions and recommendations¹³⁸
 - project background
 - evaluation criteria and questions
 - evaluation methodology
 - findings
 - conclusions and recommendations (identifying which stakeholders are responsible)
 - lessons learnt & good practices
 - annexes including the TORs, inception report, a list of those consulted

Draft evaluation report should be provided within two weeks after completion of research and interviews.

- Final evaluation report (electronic version) in English incorporating feedback from stakeholders on the draft. To be provided within a week time upon receipt of comments on the draft.
- Translation of the evaluation report or most essential parts of it into Russian (to be provided by the project)

The total length of the report should be preferably up to 35 pages, excluding annexes.

Quality of the report will be assessed against ILO Evaluation Office checklists 5 & 6.

VII. MANAGEMENT ARRANGEMENTS

¹³⁷ See EVAL Checklists 5 & 6 on preparing evaluation reports for detailed guidance
http://www.ilo.org/wcmsp5/groups/public/---ed_mas/---eval/documents/publication/wcms_165967.pdf

¹³⁸ The executive summary should address the project purpose, project logic, project management structure, present situation/status of project, evaluation purpose, evaluation scope, evaluation clients/users, evaluation methodology, main findings, conclusions, recommendations, important lessons learned, and good practices.

Evaluation team

The evaluation will be conducted by an International Evaluation Consultant. He/she will be assisted by country-based interpreters if necessary. The evaluation consultant will report to the Evaluation Manager assigned by the ILO.

The consultant profile

- University degree in economics or social sciences
- Knowledge of the social and economic development context of the region
- Technical expertise or previous experience in the area of youth employment policies and programmes
- Knowledge of evaluation methods and norms
- Experience in the evaluation of development projects, in the ILO and/or the UN system in particular
- Previous work experience in the target region and countries an advantage
- Fluency in English
- Knowledge of Russian an advantage

Roles and Responsibilities

The Evaluation Consultant

is responsible for conducting the evaluation according to the terms of reference (TOR). He/she will:

- Review the TOR and provide input, propose any refinements to assessment questions, as necessary
- Review project background materials (e.g., project document, progress reports)
- Prepare the inception report
- Conduct preparatory consultations with the ILO prior to the assessment mission
- Develop and implement the assessment methodology (i.e., conduct interviews, review documents) to answer the assessment questions
- Prepare an initial draft of the evaluation report and submit it to the ILO evaluation manager
- Conduct briefing to the ILO on findings, conclusions and recommendations
- Prepare a final evaluation report based on comments obtained on the initial draft report and submit it to the ILO evaluation manager

The Evaluation Manager

assigned by the ILO is responsible for:

- Drafting the TOR and circulating the draft to the stakeholders
- Finalizing the TOR with input from colleagues
- Preparing a short list of candidates to be circulated to the relevant stakeholders
- Preparing a consultant selection memo for submission to the management, RO Evaluation Focal Point for approval and HQ Evaluation Office for final clearance
- Hiring the consultant
- Providing the consultant with the general background materials in coordination with the project team
- Participating in preparatory meeting prior to the assessment mission
- Assisting in the implementation of the assessment methodology, as appropriate (i.e., participate in meetings, review documents)
- Reviewing the initial draft report, circulating it for comments and providing consolidated feedback to the evaluation consultant
- Reviewing the final draft report
- Submitting the final draft report to RO/Europe and EVAL for approval
- Disseminating the final report or a summary to all the stakeholders
- Coordinating follow-up as necessary

The Project Manager (CTA) and project staff

are responsible for:

- Reviewing the draft TOR and providing input, as necessary
- Providing project background materials, including surveys, studies, analytical papers, reports, tools, publications produced
- Participating in preparatory meeting prior to the assessment mission
- Facilitating all the necessary logistical arrangements (i.e. visa, tickets, travel and lodging)
- Preparing the programme and schedule of all meetings/interviews
- Ensuring the engagement of stakeholders into the evaluation process
- Reviewing and providing comments on the draft report
- Participating in debriefing on findings, conclusions, and recommendations
- After final EVAL's approval, submitting the final report to the Donor
- Ensuring inputs on management response to evaluation recommendations and proper follow-up on evaluation recommendations
- Ensuring translation of the most essential parts of the report into the national languages, if necessary

The evaluation will be carried out with the logistical and administrative support of the ILO project staff.

Evaluation Timeframe

29,5 work days (non-consecutive) during the period of two months approximately, with the submission of the draft report within two weeks from the end of the field research mission.

Below are the key stages and tentative schedule (to be adjusted):

<i>PHASE</i>	<i>DURATION/DAYS</i>	<i>PROVISIONAL TIMING 2021</i>
I Desk review & inception report	7	TBD
II Preliminary briefing	0,5	April
III Field research (on distance, unless specified differently)	9	April
IV Preparation of draft report	8	April - May
V Briefing on findings and recommendations (on distance)	1	May
VI Consultation on draft report	(2 weeks)	May – beginning of June
VII Finalisation of report	4	Within seven days after receipt of comments on the draft
Total	29,5 Days of work	

VIII. LEGAL AND ETHICAL MATTERS

The evaluation will be carried out in adherence with the ILO Evaluation Policy, ILO Policy Guidelines for Results-Based Evaluation; UN Evaluation Group Norms and Standards, Ethical Guidelines, Code of Conduct; and the OECD/DAC Evaluation Criteria.

The evaluator will abide by EVAL's Code of Conduct for carrying out the evaluations.

In accordance with ILO Guidance note 4: "Considering gender in the monitoring and evaluation of projects"¹³⁹ the gender dimension should be considered as a cross-cutting concern throughout the methodology, deliverables and final report of the evaluation. In terms of this evaluation, this implies involving both men and women in the consultation, evaluation analysis and, if feasible, the evaluation team. Moreover the evaluator should review data and information that is disaggregated by sex and assess the relevance and effectiveness of gender-related strategies and outcomes to improve lives of women and men. All this information should be accurately included in the inception report and final evaluation report.

Ethical safeguards should be maintained during the evaluation process and women and men will be interviewed in ways that avoid gender biases or reinforcement of gender discrimination and unequal power relations.

The consultant should not have any links to project management or any other conflict of interest that would interfere with the independence of the evaluation.

IX. REFERENCES TO ESSENTIAL DOCUMENTS/WEBLINKS

All relevant ILO evaluation guidelines and standard templates

ILO Policy Guidelines for results-based evaluation, 2020
https://www.ilo.org/wcmsp5/groups/public/---ed_mas/---eval/documents/publication/wcms_571339.pdf

Code of conduct form (To be signed by the evaluators)
https://www.ilo.org/wcmsp5/groups/public/---ed_mas/---eval/documents/publication/wcms_649148.pdf

¹³⁹ http://www.ilo.org/eval/Evaluationguidance/WCMS_165986/lang--en/index.htm

Checklist No. 4.8 Writing the inception report https://www.ilo.org/wcmsp5/groups/public/---ed_mas/---eval/documents/publication/wcms_746817.pdf

Checklist 4.2 Preparing the evaluation report https://www.ilo.org/wcmsp5/groups/public/---ed_mas/---eval/documents/publication/wcms_746808.pdf

Checklist 4.4 Writing the evaluation report summary https://www.ilo.org/wcmsp5/groups/public/---ed_mas/---eval/documents/publication/wcms_746811.pdf

Checklist 6 rating the quality of evaluation report http://www.ilo.org/eval/Evaluationguidance/WCMS_165968/lang--en/index.htm

Template for lessons learnt and Emerging Good Practices https://www.ilo.org/wcmsp5/groups/public/---ed_mas/---eval/documents/publication/wcms_746820.pdf https://www.ilo.org/wcmsp5/groups/public/---ed_mas/---eval/documents/publication/wcms_746821.pdf

Guidance note 4.5 Stakeholder Engagement https://www.ilo.org/wcmsp5/groups/public/---ed_mas/---eval/documents/publication/wcms_746724.pdf

Guidance note 3.1 Integrating gender equality in M&E of projects http://www.ilo.org/eval/Evaluationguidance/WCMS_165986/lang--en/index.htm

Template for evaluation title page http://www.ilo.org/eval/Evaluationguidance/WCMS_166357/lang--en/index.htm

Template for evaluation summary <http://www.ilo.org/legacy/english/edmas/eval/template-summary-en.doc>

Implications of COVID-19 on evaluations in the ILO: Practical tips on adapting to the situation https://www.ilo.org/wcmsp5/groups/public/---ed_mas/---eval/documents/publication/wcms_744068.pdf

EVAl's Protocol on collecting evaluative evidence on the ILO's COVID-19 response measures https://www.ilo.org/wcmsp5/groups/public/---ed_mas/---eval/documents/publication/wcms_757541.pdf

Guidance note 3.2 Adapting evaluation methods to ILO's normative and tripartite mandate https://www.ilo.org/wcmsp5/groups/public/---ed_mas/---eval/documents/publication/wcms_746717.pdf

i-eval Connect: Knowledge sharing platform -- Evaluation Office (EVAI) <https://intranet.ilo.org/collaborate/evalksp/Pages/default.aspx>

ILO Library guides on gender <https://libguides.ilo.org/gender-equality-en>

SDG related reference materials at: <http://www.ilo.ch/eval/eval-and-sdgs/lang--en/index.htm>

ANNEX D List of Evaluating Questions

THE LIST OF EVALUATION QUESTIONS

CRITERION	QUESTIONS
Relevance and strategic fit- the extent to which the objectives are in keeping with local, national and sub-regional priorities and needs, Constituents' priorities and needs, and the Donor's	<ul style="list-style-type: none">▪ Has the project been relevant to the target countries' needs in the area of youth employment? Did it correspond to the broader national development objectives as they evolved from 2018 to the present?▪ How well does the project fit into the ILO programming and implementation frameworks?

<p>priorities for the project countries</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ How well has the project adapted to the implications of COVID-19 crisis and relevant response measures? ▪ To what extent does the project relevant/responds to the needs of the ultimate beneficiaries (women, youth, and vulnerable categories)? ▪ To what extent does the project strategically mainstream gender, human rights and disability inclusion?
<p>Validity of design- the extent to which the project design, logic, strategy and elements are/remain valid vis-à-vis problems and needs</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ To what extent are the indicators described in the project document appropriate and useful in assessing the project progress? If necessary, how can they be modified to be more useful? ▪ To what extent are the project design (objectives, outcomes, outputs and activities) and its underlining theory of knowledge change logical and coherent? ▪ To what extent did the project mainstream gender equality and non-discrimination and inclusion of people with disabilities into its activities, outputs and outcomes?
<p>Effectiveness- the extent to which the project can be said to have contributed to the development objectives and more concretely whether the stated outputs have been produced satisfactorily; in addition to building synergies with national initiatives and with other donor-supported projects</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ What progress has the project made towards the achievement of its outcomes (immediate objectives)? Has the project been effective in fostering adequate policy responses to youth employment challenges in the changing environment affected by the emerging health and socio-political issues in the target countries/region? ▪ Have there been any contributing factors or obstacles? ▪ If and how well has the project adapted its approach and implementation to COVID-19 crisis (e.g., repurposed activities, added outputs etc.) ▪ How have the relevant international norms and labour standards concerning, for instance, employment, discrimination and informality, been taken into account during the implementation? ▪ If and how have the social dialogue and tripartite approach contributed to project implementation? ▪ How have gender and disability issues been taken into account during the implementation? ▪ How have the relevant international labour standards been taken into account during the implementation? ▪ What has been the project's contribution to SDGs and related targets as prioritized by the national sustainable development strategies? ▪ How effectively did the project monitor performance and results? Had M&E plan been implemented in a consistent manner? If not, what are the reasons? ▪ How effective is the project communication strategy? How effective is the knowledge management strategy?

<p>Efficiency- the productivity of the project implementation process taken as a measure of the extent to which the outputs achieved are derived from an efficient use of financial, material and human resources</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Have the project resources (knowledge, expertise, networks, time, staff and funds) been used in an efficient manner? ▪ To what extent project resources been leveraged with other related interventions to maximize impact, if any? ▪ What are the good practices of efficient use of resources which could be shared?
<p>Impact- positive or negative changes & effects caused by the Project at the sub-regional and national levels</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Do the government institutions fully support the initiatives taken by the project? ▪ To what extent have ILO Constituents been involved in the implementation of the project and what the effects of this engagement? ▪ What is the most significant change/effect the project brought so far at social and economic levels? Are there any negative effects the project producing?
<p>Sustainability and likelihood of the project to have a longer-term impact - the extent to which adequate capacity building of project stakeholders has taken place to ensure that mechanisms are in place to sustain activities and whether the existing results are likely to be maintained beyond project</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ What is the likelihood that the results of the project will be durable and utilized after the end of the project? ▪ Is it likely that the project will have long-term effects (impact) on the target groups and institutions in terms of youth employment outcomes, and more equitable gender relations? ▪ To what extent tripartite constituents feel ownership of the results the project has achieved so far and the responsibility to follow them up?

ANNEX E Analysis of Project’s relevance to the UN strategic programmes

PROJECT RELEVANCE TO THE UN STRATEGIC PROGRAMMES IN THE COUNTRIES COMPLEMENT TO THE PROJECT (COMPILATION OF THE EVALUATORS BASED ON THE DOCUMENT REVIEW AND KEY INFORMANTS’ INTERVIEWS)

Table 5. Current UN Strategic Programmes in the countries complement to the project (compilation based on the document review and key informants' interviews)

COUNTRY	FIT WITH THE CURRENT UNDAFs & STRATEGIC COOPERATION PROGRAMMES
<p>RUSSIAN FEDERATION</p>	<p>Program of Cooperation between the Russian Federation and the ILO (2017-2020)¹⁴⁰ is the key cooperation agreement between the Russian Federation and the ILO. The Program addresses the issue of territorial mismatches between the demand for and supply of labour at the regional labour markets in Russia. Also, the Programme focuses on strengthening social dialogue, particularly at the sectoral, regional, and municipal levels, expansion of employment opportunities for young women and men in selected regions.</p> <p>Building on the National Development Goals, UN 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, the ILO Centenary Declaration among others, the new PoC for 2021-2024 emphasizes the importance of a human-centered approach to the Future of Work. It makes a stronger emphasis on the improvement of labour legislation in response to changing conditions in the modern economy, lifelong learning and skills development, non-discriminatory and inclusive employment policies, universal social protection throughout life cycle and workforce agility to changing labour market demands and conditions, including technological transformations.</p>
<p>AZERBAIJAN</p>	<p>United Nations Azerbaijan Partnership Framework for 2016-2020¹⁴¹ set the target that a) By 2020, the Azerbaijan economy is more diversified and generates enhanced sustainable growth and decent work, particularly for youth, women, people with disabilities, and other vulnerable groups; and b) by 2020, Azerbaijan has enhanced institutional capacities for transparent, evidence-based and gender-responsive policy formulation and implementation</p> <p>New cooperation Framework for 2021-2025 identifies four priority areas for partnership: inclusive growth that reduces vulnerability and builds resilience; stronger institutions for better public and social services delivery; protecting the environment and addressing climate change; and achieving a gender-equitable society that empowers women and girls.</p>
<p>UZBEKISTAN</p>	<p>The United Nations Development Assistance Framework for the Republic of Uzbekistan, 2016-2020¹⁴² prioritized eight outcomes among which Inclusive economic development, with a focus on employment and social protection.</p> <p>The Project contributes to the implementation of the United Nations Sustainable Development Cooperation Framework (UNSDCF)¹⁴³ by addressing Output 3.1. By 2025, the capacities of national institutions and social partners are strengthened to design and implement effective and innovative Active Labour Market Policies, decent work and skills development programmes</p>

140 Program of Cooperation between the Russian Federation and the ILO (2017-2020). URL: https://www.ilo.org/moscow/news/WCMS_535498/lang--en/index.htm

141 UNPF for Azerbaijan 2016-2020 URL: [DPDCPAZE3_UNAPF \(2016-2020\)_FINAL \(for signing\)_ENG.pdf](#)

142 UNDAF for Uzbekistan 2016-2020 URL: [UNDAF_cover_last_print](#)

143 <https://uzbekistan.un.org/index.php/en/94416-united-nations-sustainable-development-cooperation-framework-2021-2025-uzbekistan>

for NEET Youth, Women, and PWD and policies for inclusive and resilient economic growth and reduced regional inequalities, in particular through sub-outputs and activities: 3.1.2 A comprehensive gender and youth responsive employment policy developed and implemented, including policy measures aimed at transition to formalization; Mainstreamed youth employment policy in the new employment strategy. Focus on education, employability and entry into the labour market; 3.1.3 Employment opportunities for youth and women enhanced through ALMP: apprenticeship, internship and on the job-training; wages subsidies and first job experience, public works; Support to the pilot Information Centres for Employment and Career Guidance. A Handbook presenting international models, functions, core services, workspace organization and interagency coordination, delivered. 3.1.4 Public employment services, including regional employment centers capacitated to deliver quality services and inclusive labour market programs; Conducted the institutional assessments of the PES and the Public Work Program. Training rolled out according to the institutional needs identified on both reports.

KAZAKHSTAN

Partnership Framework for Development for 2016-2020 is based on Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) and the longer-term 'Kazakhstan 2050' strategy, with the Government and society leading the way towards a more inclusive, resilient and equitable future. PFD is a collective and integrated response to ambitious national priorities set out in the long-term strategic planning document 'Kazakhstan 2050: New Political Course of the Established State'. These priorities focus on the country joining the top 30 developed countries by 2050, and achieving an outstanding quality of life: both comfortable and safe. They encompass seven priority areas: (1) human development; (2) energy; (3) 'green' growth; (4) urban/regional development and decentralization; (5) knowledge economy; (6) global and regional integration; and (7) institutions. **New cooperation agreement 2021-2025¹⁴⁴ was not signed by the ILO.**

ARMENIA

United Nations Development Assistance Framework for Armenia for the period 2016-2020¹⁴⁵ aims at improving Armenia's competitiveness is improved and enhanced access of people, especially vulnerable groups to sustainable economic opportunities (Outcome One). Specific actions "will be taken to increase the quality of employment services and to expand vocational education and training, while keeping up with the pace of technological innovation to build skills in Armenia in support of innovation and competitive industries... New schemes are needed to measure and analyse skill gap and assist job-seekers to find decent employment"

144 UNITED NATIONS SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT COOPERATION FRAMEWORK FOR KAZAKHSTAN 2021-2021 UNSDCF_Kazakhstan_2021-2025_ENG.pdf

145 Armenia-United Nations Development Assistance Framework 2016-2020. URL: http://www.un.am/up/library/UNDAF_Armenia%202016-2020_eng.pdf

	<p>2021-2025 UN Sustainable Development Cooperation Framework (Cooperation Framework) 146envvisions that people, communities, and regions benefit from equitable economic opportunities, decent work, and sustainable livelihoods, enabled through competitiveness and inclusive green growth (Outcome 4). The UN’s strategic interventions will be geared towards developing new capacities, especially for green jobs and resilient livelihoods (promoting continuous/life-long learning, re/up-skilling – including in culture and creative industries, entrepreneurship, digitalisation); and creating jobs and opportunities for these skills to be employed (strengthening food systems, supporting green agribusiness, market integration, trade facilitation and connectivity, value chains, MSMEs development and technological innovation for the fourth industrial revolution).</p>
KYRGYZSTAN	<p>United Nations Development Assistance Framework for the Kyrgyz Republic for the period 2018-2022147 is complementary to the current project by promoting “development-oriented policies that support productive activities, decent job creation, entrepreneurship, creativity and innovation, with the purpose to achieve full and productive employment and decent work for all women and men, including for young people and persons with disabilities”. In addition, UNDAF envisions that programme cooperation with the UN system agencies and “provide access to good practice global policies and models, expertise and support for the implementation of international norms and standards, and will promote new skills”</p>
TAJIKISTAN	<p>United Nations Development Assistance Framework for Tajikistan for the period 2016-2021148 envisions the ILO contribution into Outcome 2: People in Tajikistan benefit from equitable and sustainable economic growth through decent and productive employment; stable energy supply; improved access to specialised knowledge and innovation and more favourable business environment, especially for entrepreneurs and farmers</p>

ANNEX F Analysis of National Achievements and Challenges of the SDGs

NATIONAL ACHIEVEMENT AND CHALLENGES ON THE ACHIEVEMENT OF THE SDGS AS OUTLINED IN THE VOLUNTARY NATIONAL REVIEWS AND THEIR RELEVANCE TO THE PROJECT (COMPILATION OF THE EVALUATOR BASED ON THE DOCUMENT REVIEW)

146 Armenia-United Nations Development Assistance Framework 2021-2025. URL: <http://armenia.un.org/content/dam/unct/armenia/docs/Library/UNDAF%2018052017%20eng%20fin.pdf> (un.org)

147 The United Nations Development Assistance Framework (UNDAF) for the Kyrgyz Republic 2018-2022. URL: <http://kg.one.un.org/content/dam/unct/kyrgyzstan/docs/Library/UNDAF%2018052017%20eng%20fin.pdf>

148 UNDAF for Tajikistan 2016-2021U URL: Microsoft Word - UNDAF 2016-2020 eng final

Table 13 National achievement and challenges on the achievement of the SDGs as outlined in the Voluntary National Reviews and their relevance to the project (compilation of the evaluator based on the document review)

SDG	NATIONAL ACHIEVEMENTS AND CHALLENGES
<div data-bbox="376 456 533 607" data-label="Image"> </div> <p data-bbox="264 629 536 869">1.1. By 2030, eradicate extreme poverty for all people everywhere, currently measured as people living on less than USD 1.25 a day.</p> <p data-bbox="264 891 536 1155">1.2. By 2030, reduce at least by half the proportion of men, women and children of all ages living in poverty in all its dimensions according to national definitions</p>	<p data-bbox="564 461 1453 745">RUSSIA: Russia has basically achieved the goal of eradication of extreme poverty. The current nation-wide policy of combating poverty provides for the reduction of the national poverty level at least by half by 2024 (in 2018, the proportion of the poor population with below-the-poverty-line income¹ was 12.6%). This is to be achieved through the implementation of the so-called National Projects, namely “Demography”, “Workforce Productivity and Employment Support” and others and development and introduction of new support mechanisms (such as social contract and volunteer services)</p> <p data-bbox="564 786 1453 976">AZERBAIJAN: The ‘international poverty line’ is currently USD 1.90 a day. The proportion of the population living below the international poverty line in the Republic of Azerbaijan has been 0% since 2015. The proportion of the country’s population living below the national poverty line decreased from 4.9% in 2015 to 4.8% in 2019 (4.7% for men, and 5% for women), with 4.5% in urban areas and 5.2% in rural areas.</p> <p data-bbox="564 1016 1453 1144">UZBEKISTAN: The country reported the share of the poor decreased from 12.8% in 2015 to 11.4% in 2018 (poverty threshold of \$ 3.2 per day) however the main challenge remains – high regional differences in poverty levels.</p> <p data-bbox="564 1184 1453 1375">ARMENIA: Armenia almost ended extreme poverty and \$1.25-per-day poverty (reduced to 0.1 percent). Though Armenia almost ended extreme poverty and \$1.25-per-day poverty, almost 30 percent of the population is still under the national poverty line. Children are more affected by poverty than the total population, with high regional disparities (51 percent of children are poor in Shirak region).</p>
<div data-bbox="381 1426 536 1576" data-label="Image"> </div> <p data-bbox="240 1599 536 1771">4.3. By 2030, ensure equal access for all women and men to affordable and quality technical, vocational and tertiary education</p> <p data-bbox="240 1794 536 2031">4.4. Increase the number of youth and adults who have relevant skills, including technical and vocational skills, for employment, decent jobs and entrepreneurship 4.5. Eli</p>	<p data-bbox="564 1431 1453 1805">RUSSIAN FEDERATION: The Constitution of the Russian Federation states that everyone shall have the right to education and that basic general education shall be mandatory. In 2018, the gross enrolment ratio in primary, basic and general secondary education in Russia was 99.9. Free access to and integrated development of education are the key priorities of the relevant “Education” National Project and some other strategic and policy documents (such as the State Programme “Education Development” aimed at ensuring access to preschool education and increased involvement in extended education programmes). In 2020–2024, more than 667 bln rubles are planned to be allocated to finance the implementation of “Education” National Project.</p> <p data-bbox="564 1879 1453 2031">UZBEKISTAN: The country reported high growth in pre-school education coverage from 27.7% in 2017 to 52% in 2019 and 100% coverage in secondary education. The challenges prevail in high differences in the functional competencies of students in urban and rural educational institutions, lack of adequate education quality assessment</p>

minate gender disparities in education and ensure equal access to all levels of education

system, shortage of highly qualified teachers and high staff turnover, low enrollment in higher education and great gender disparities in higher and technical education.

KAZAKHSTAN: Kazakhstan has achieved 100% coverage of the population with secondary education; 95.2% of children aged 3-6 years attend preschool educational institutions, young people have access to free technical and vocational education, while 54.3% of the population has a higher education. Kazakhstan seeks to create an education system that also offers further training and retraining (if needed) throughout the lifetime of its citizens. The country has also created the necessary conditions for inclusive education.

ARMENIA: A key challenge is the high drop-out rates from high schools. Boys (especially rural and poor) have low motivation to continue education because they try to find a job and earn money for their families at an early age and often the education they will get will be of little or no help in finding a job in the market. There are some current challenges in retaining national human capital. Armenia currently loses a high proportion of its qualified youth, as unemployment pushes young people to travel abroad to study or work and many do not return.

TAJIKISTAN: Currently, the skills of not less than 35-40% of specialists in average are below the labor market requirements. Based on this, the Government plans in the coming 5 years to engage in retraining programs not less than 115 thousand people a year.



5.5 Ensure women's full and effective participation and equal opportunities for leadership at all levels of decision-making in political, economic & public life

5.c Adopt and strengthen sound policies and enforceable legislation for the promotion of gender equality and the empowerment of all women and girls at all levels

RUSSIAN FEDERATION: Equal rights and freedoms for men and women are guaranteed by the Constitution of the Russian Federation. In 2019, the level of participation of women in labor force was 55.4% (for men— 70.6%), employment rate— 52.9% (for men— 67.3%), unemployment rate— 4.4% (for men— 4.8%). According to the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) assessment, Russia is a country with a very high human development level, with the Human Development Index for women being equal to or more than the Human Development Index for men (0.823 against 0.808 in 2017). To ensure gender equality, Russia has been implementing National Action Strategy for Women 2017–2022 aimed, among other things, at reduction of disparities in men's and women's wages (in 2019, the ratio between women's and men's wages was 72.1%), reduction of violence against women, and increased number of women in managerial positions in small- and medium-sized businesses. "Demography" National Project and, in particular, "Promotion of Women's Employment— Creation of Conditions for Preschool Education for Children Aged under Three" Federal Project is also aimed at the achievement of SDG 5.

AZERBAIJAN: ¹⁴⁹During 2000-2015, the level of female unemployment reduced more than by twice, decreasing from 12.7% to 5.9%. In 2015 year, the Gender Parity Index on education enrollment rate made 0.99, at higher education - 0.99 and secondary education - 1.07. During 2000-

149 National Voluntary Review of the Republic Azerbaijan on the first steps on the implementation of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, Baku, 2017 URL: 16005Azerbaijan.pdf (yandex.ru)

2015, the number of women in the Parliament increased from 10.7% to 16.8%.

UZBEKISTAN: the country reported on high share of female employees in the healthcare sector – 76,6%, yet not equal but decent share of women in parliament – 33% and 45% of women in the total workforce. Gender inequalities prevail in the labour market - the registered female unemployment is more than that of male and makes up 12.7% Still low proportion of women in leadership position and gender disparities in higher and technical education.

ARMENIA: Men and women have equal access to education, with women being slightly more enrolled at most levels of education with exception for STEM education tracks. However, women have more difficulties in finding well-paid jobs, especially in the non-agricultural sector. There is higher unemployment among women, compared to men. Thus, 46 per cent of women were unemployed in Armenia in 2016, compared to 29.8 percent unemployed men aged 15-24. Young women (15-24 years of age) are relatively more likely to be unemployed than men.

TAJKISTAN: Lately, a considerable increase of gender-based inequality is the case regarding access to primary vocational education. The share of girls among the students from primary vocational schools is going down from 34,4% in 2000 to 19,2% in 2015. Given positive trends in the sphere of secondary and higher vocational institutions, the gender misbalance regarding specialization in these institutions, is significant. With regard to pedagogical specialties, the girls in higher educational institutions make up to 75,3%, while in economics the share of girls does not reach 28%.



8.3 Promote development oriented policies that support productive activities, decent job creation

8.5 By 2030, achieve full and productive employment and decent work for all

8.6 By 2020, substantially reduce the proportion of youth not in employment, education or training

RUSSIAN FEDERATION: Russia demonstrated accelerated GDP growth rate (from 0.2% in 2016 to 2.3% in 2018) and growth of household income (the increase in real average monthly wages was 0.8% in 2016 and 2.9% in 2019). SDG 8 targets are also addressed by other National Projects, such as “Workforce Productivity and Employment Support”, and “Small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs) and Support for Individual Entrepreneurial Initiative”. National Projects’ goals (cover the period till year of 2024) include acceleration of annual labor productivity growth of medium-sized and large enterprises in essential non-oil economic sectors by at least 5%, growth of SME sector employment by 25 mln by 2024 (15 mln in March 2020), and the rise of SMEs share in national GDP by at least 32.5% (20.2% in 2018).

AZERBAIJAN: the country reported the following on the goal 8 measured By 2020, develop and operationalize a global strategy for youth employment and implement the Global Jobs Pact of the International Labour Organization. In 2020, the “2020-2025 Action Plan for the Implementation of the Employment Strategy” was approved by the Decree No. 1816 of the President of the Republic of Azerbaijan dated 13 February, 2020. It comprises the following activities: - expanding the network of vocational rehabilitation centres for people with disabilities in the regions to strengthen the social rehabilitation of people with disabilities, especially youth; - supporting the establishment of career centres and career counseling services in higher, specialized secondary and vocational education institutions to organize the occupational

orientation of young people; - increasing the effectiveness of vocational training courses to attract people with special needs and difficulties in finding employment, especially young people, and people with disabilities, to the labour market; - expanding the application of competence-oriented modular training using advanced educational methods in this field; - taking measures to attract a segment of the inactive working-age population to the labour market, on the basis of statistical data regarding the number of this group (especially youth and women)¹⁵⁰

KAZAKHSTAN: Today, the country aims to achieve a new level of development with inclusive economic growth. Kazakhstan has embarked on increasing the productivity and complexity of the economy, developing human capital, and strengthening the role of the private sector. One of the key areas of the national policy in supporting economic growth is the development of small and medium-sized enterprises, which contributes to the creation of decent jobs. The country plans to achieve qualitative and sustainable economic growth, leading to an increase in the well-being of its people. In Kazakhstan, there are opportunities for productive employment, personal development and improving quality of life.

UZBEKISTAN: The country achieved 1.3 increase in overall GDP per capita in 2015-2018 and 67,4% share of employment to labour force ratio. Uzbekistan reported that three quarters of jobs are created due to the accelerated development of small business, private and individual entrepreneurship. Yet the country experiences slowdown in real GDP growth per employed person and high proportion of informally employed people in agricultural sectors. The COVID-19 pandemic resulted in declined employment, especially among self-employed people and labor migrants.

ARMENIA: The 2013-2018 Employment Strategy highlighted the importance of addressing employment problems of the youth (up to 30 years old) and women, who are more likely to be unemployed in Armenia. Unemployment rates of return migrants, meaning those returning to Armenia after having lived abroad, also tend to be higher. These unemployment rates can be linked to high rates of labor out-migration in Armenia, particularly of youth. Refugees, stateless persons and other displaced population face even more difficulties with employment and decent work.



10.4. Adopt policies, especially fiscal, wage and social

RUSSIAN FEDERATION: The Gini index 2 for Russia in 2018 was 0.413 (0.421 in 2010; 0.412 in 2015), with the household income distribution by 20-percent groups (quintiles) remaining practically unchanged. SDG 10 targets are also addressed in “Demography” National Project (financial assistance to families upon the birth of children), “Digital Economy” National Project (bridging of the digital gap), Strategy of Spatial Development of the Russian Federation 2025 (narrowing the divide in socioeconomic development of different regions

¹⁵⁰ Azerbaijan Third National Voluntary Review, 2021 URL: 279452021_VNR_Report_Azerbaijan.pdf (un.org)

protection policies, and progressively achieve greater equality.

10.7. Facilitate orderly, safe, regular and responsible migration and mobility of people, including through the implementation of planned and well-managed migration policies.

in order to reduce interregional differentiation of the HDI by 3% by 2025), the Accessible Environment State Programme that aims to increase the share of key social, transport, engineering infrastructure facilities accessible for persons with disabilities and other disabilities groups to 70.7% by 2025

AZERBAIJAN: 10.4.1 Labour share of GDP, comprising wages and social protection transfers. Compared to 2015, the labour share of GDP increased by 0.3 percentage points from 20.5 percent to 21.0 percent in 2019. Over the past 5 years, the nominal income of the population increased by 36%, from 41.7 billion AZN to 56.8 billion AZN.

UZBEKISTAN: The country achieved 27,1 % growth of per capita income by 27.1% (8664.8 thousand sums) in 2018. However, income differentiation between urban and rural areas (the level of poverty in villages is 2.7 times higher than in cities)

KAZAKHSTAN: Kazakhstan pursues a policy of fair and equitable development, reducing inequality and eliminating the causes of all forms of discrimination. Kazakhstan has already successfully reduced the proportion of the population living below the subsistence level. To reduce inequality, Kazakhstan aims to raise the income levels of the bottom 40% of the population, from 22.8% to 27% of the total income of the population, by 2025



17.9 Enhance international support for implementing effective and targeted capacity-building in developing countries
17.16 Enhance global partnership for sustainable development, complemented by multi-stakeholder partnerships that mobilize and share knowledge, expertise, technology and financial resources, to support the achievement of SDGs
17.17 Encourage and promote effective public, public-private and civil society partnerships
17.18 Enhance capacity-building support to developing countries, to increase high-quality, timely and reliable data

17.6. Enhance North-South, South-South and triangular regional and international cooperation on and access to science, technology and innovation and enhance

RUSSIAN FEDERATION: Russia annually allocates considerable funds for international development assistance. From 2014 to date, they amounted to more than USD 5.5 bln. In 2018, the federal expenditures classified by OECD as the Official Development Assistance (ODA) amounted to about USD 1 bln

AZERBAIJAN: The Azerbaijan Digital Hub project is being implemented with a view to developing telecommunication infrastructure in Azerbaijan in line with world standards, eliminating dependence on the Internet from other countries, building a Digital Silk Way on the historic Silk Road between Europe and Asia, making the country a major Internet provider in the region, an Internet sharing hub and exporter of digital services. The project envisages the construction of fiber-optic cable lines along the bottom of the Caspian Sea on the routes Azerbaijan-Kazakhstan and Azerbaijan-Turkmenistan. For this purpose, agreements have been signed with the Republic of Turkmenistan and the Republic of Kazakhstan respectively.

UZBEKISTAN: The country acquired Membership in the Eurasian Economic Union, achieved WTO Accession, undertaken measures to adopt the agreement on enhanced partnership and cooperation between the European Union and the Republic of Uzbekistan and Measures to adopt the CIS agreement on free trade in services.

KAZAKHSTAN: Kazakhstan continues to pursue a multi-vector policy and is a country free from conflict. Although the country is still developing, it continues to provide humanitarian assistance to other states with around \$ 540 million in assistance provided to developing countries over the past 20 years. Kazakhstan's WTO membership removes discriminatory attitude towards Kazakhstani goods in foreign markets thereby providing opportunities to increase exports. In turn, this creates an inflow of foreign investment in the country's economy due to factors such as the overall improvement of the country's image,

<p>knowledge-sharing on mutually agreed terms, including through improved coordination among existing mechanisms, in particular at the United Nations level, and through a global technology facilitation mechanism</p>	<p>openness of the economy, improvement of legislation, increased transparency of investment procedures, easier access of foreign financial institutions to the domestic market and stock market development.¹⁵¹</p> <p>TAJIKISTAN: For the support of holistic and balanced approaches for achieving SDGs 1,2,3,5,9 and 17, there is a need in reliable, accountable platforms with participation of many parties concerned and partnership relations. That is why the actions of the Government will be aimed at strengthening the mechanisms of management and coordination with participation of many stakeholders, which should include intersectoral dialogue and institutional development support to stimulate parties concerned to jointly work over the development of common decisions for reaching common goals.¹⁵²</p>
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ANNEX G Evaluability of Human Rights and Gender Equality

EVALUABILITY OF HUMAN RIGHTS AND GENDER EQUALITY

Mid-term evaluation exercise adopted Human Rights and Gender Sensitive Approach. To ensure this, UNEG Guidance on Integrating Human Rights and Gender Equality in Evaluation¹⁵³ was followed in conducting the exercise and reporting. Summary of the evaluability assessment is presented below.

EVALUABILITY	CHARACTERISTICS OF THE INTERVENTION	EVALUATORS' COMMENTS
HIGH	The intervention theory has clearly considered HR & GE issues (e.g., the	Gender Equality, in particular constraints for women, youth and persons with

¹⁵¹ 23946KAZAKHSTAN_DNO__eng_4.Juli19.pdf (un.org)

¹⁵² Improving Living Standards Through Mainstreaming Of Sustainable Development Goals Into The National Development Policy In Tajikistan. URL: <https://sustainabledevelopment.un.org/content/documents/16021Tajikistan.pdf>

¹⁵³ United Nations Evaluation Group, Integrating Human Rights and Gender Equality in Evaluation, (UNEG, 2014)

<p>intervention identified, from the beginning, problems and challenges that affect particular groups, inequalities and discrimination patterns in the area where it occurs, contextual or systematic violations of rights, etc.)</p>	<p>disabilities in employment were raised in the Project Document in the Section “Problem Analysis”. Vulnerable groups were outlined and brief HR analysis was conducted</p>
<p>HR & GE are clearly reflected in the intervention design (logframe, indicators, activities, M&E systems, reporting mechanisms)</p>	<p>Project’s strategy adopts the three cross-cutting policy drivers (gender/non-discrimination, labour standards and social dialogue) are an integral part of the strategy adopted for implementation of the project. Also, in particular to supporting full and productive employment and decent work for all (SDG 8), but also, albeit more indirectly, to reducing poverty (SDG 1), improving gender equality (SDG 5), and reducing inequality (SDG 10). The Development objective of the Project is formulated in a gender-sensitive language: Immediate objective 1: More effective and inclusive policies and strategies for Decent Work of young men and women in the countries of regional youth employment network.</p> <p>The expected results include “Continue to keep the political momentum for evidence-based and cost-effective youth employment interventions as well as the integration of the gender dimension into the youth policy cycle and tackling the widespread informality of youth employment” (Source: Pro Doc, p.16)</p> <p>At the long-term results level, the project set 1 gender-sensitive indicator for one of the three objectives, namely “Number of young men and women who participated in the pilot supported by the project (also by relevant vulnerable group characteristics)” (Immediate objective 2: Improved implementation of policies and programmes promoting Decent Work for young men and women in the target countries). Other immediate objectives such as Immediate Objective 1: More effective and inclusive policies and strategies for Decent Work of young men and women in the countries of regional</p>

youth employment network and Immediate objective 3: Youth employment partnerships created and strengthened to improve the design, monitoring and evaluation of youth employment policy interventions in three regions of the Russian Federation do not suggest gender-oriented indicators to track the Project's success in advancing gender equality.

At the outputs level, out of 9 outputs, 7 suggest gender-sensitive indicators – 78%.

At the activities level, the Project's design has not suggested any gender-focused activities.

(Source: ProDoc). However progress reports capture information on gender-related issues including the implementation of the gender-focused activities, eg. Gender aspects of youth employment as the topic of the annual thematic policy reviews, undertaking research on gender and youth employment in Armenia, availing from the expertise of ILO Gender Focal Point, National Report on Gender and Youth Employment in Armenia, updating ILO DWCT-Moscow report on “Gender and youth employment in CIS, trends and global challenges”, 2017, addressing young workers' rights at the Conference “Industrial Revolution-4.0” in Bashkortostan, addressing labour market inclusion of disadvantaged groups – persons with disabilities, employment of women with children, young graduates without job experience, discussing employment challenges of disadvantaged groups in Russian regions (Source: Progress Report, 2018)

M&E Plan was not developed thus it could not assess how HR&GE were specifically outlined in it.

	<p>Performance Evaluation Framework allows collecting data in sex disaggregated manner</p> <p>Progress report templates do not foresee regular reporting on HR&GE.</p>
The intervention design benefited from a strong and inclusive stakeholder analysis	Yes, Stakeholder Analysis was conducted including motivation, constraints of each group and application for design
The intervention design benefited from specific human rights and gender analyses	Yes
Records of implementation and activity reports contain information on how HR & GE issues were addressed	Yes
Stakeholders (both women and men) have participated in the various activities of the intervention in an active, meaningful and free manner	Yes (Source: Agenda's of the Project's events)
Monitoring systems have captured HR & GE information (e.g., the situation of different groups of people, specific indicators, etc.)	No
Data has been collected in a disaggregated manner (e.g., by sex, ethnicity, age, etc.) reflecting the diversity of stakeholders	Data in progress reports 2018 is not sex disaggregated
Progress and results report for the intervention include HR & GE information	No
Context (political, institutional, cultural, etc.) where the intervention is inserted is conducive to the advancement of HR & GE	To some extent. Gender Equality and Human Rights agenda is not treated with due regard by duty bearers.

UNEG recommendations to address evaluability challenges:

- Make sure that the evaluation ToR takes full advantage of the information already produced by the intervention, and of the participation and accountability mechanisms established.
- Consult stakeholders on whether there are still areas where the HR & GE dimensions in the intervention need improvement.
- Address any possible weaknesses and recommend steps to improve the intervention, if necessary. Consult stakeholders on their ideas about how to improve.
- If necessary, include methods and tools in the evaluation that can capture new data or strengthen the existing ones on HR & GE (e.g. information on additional groups of people, changes in the context, etc.).
- Use the context (political, institutional, cultural) of the intervention in favour of the evaluation: when it is conducive, build on this support to ensure a highly participatory evaluation.

MEDIUM	The intervention theory has considered HR & GE issues to a certain extent, with weaknesses in some areas of the intervention	yes
	HR & GE have been reflected in the intervention design to some extent (e.g. intended or mentioned, but not clearly articulated on how to address them in practice; limited to only a few disaggregated indicators such as number of men and women; addressing numbers without addressing actual changes in rights and equality situation; clear in the narrative but not in the logframe, etc.)	yes
	The intervention design benefited from a stakeholder analysis, but important groups have been left out	yes
	The intervention design benefited from limited human rights and gender analyses, or from only one of them	yes
	Records of implementation and activity reports include limited data on how HR & GE have been addressed	yes

Stakeholders have participated in the intervention to a certain extent (e.g. being informed or consulted, but not taking part in decisions; only some groups have been consulted; etc.)	yes
Monitoring systems have captured some information on HR & GE	No
Some limited disaggregated data have been collected	Yes
Progress and results reports for the intervention include some information on HR & GE	Yes
Context (political, institutional, cultural, etc.) where the intervention is inserted is conducive, to a certain extent, to the advancement of HR & GE	yes

UN recommendations to address evaluability challenges:

Understand the reasons for the limitations: are they political, practical, budgetary, time related, due to limited know-how, etc.? Consult stakeholders and documentation that may offer insights on this.

Highlight the evaluability limitation in the evaluation ToR. Include, in the evaluation design, tools and methods that make use of the existing data, but that may also help generate new information on HR & GE. Include tools and methods that strengthen stakeholder participation.

Pay special attention to the stakeholder analysis in the evaluation process, and who should be involved. Make sure to consider groups that have been left out, and how to include them at this stage.

Include in the evaluation process an exercise to strengthen the existing HR & GE analyses.

During the evaluation process, seek partners and documents that may have useful information on HR & GE that has not been captured by the intervention (e.g., national evaluation/statistics offices, other development agencies, civil society and community organizations, media, academia, etc.)

LOW	The intervention theory failed to consider HR & GE dimensions in its design, implementation and monitoring	No
	Stakeholder, HR & GE analyses were not conducted adequately or not existent at all	No

Data on HR & GE and/or disaggregated data are not available	Yes
Stakeholder participation in the design, implementation and monitoring processes of the intervention has been minimal or has left out important groups (women, men, indigenous people, people with disabilities and HIV/AIDS, children, etc.)	No
Progress and results reports for the intervention do not address HR & GE issues	No
Context (political, institutional, cultural, etc.) where the intervention is inserted is not conducive to the advancement of HR & GE	Yes

UNEG recommendations to address evaluability challenges:

- Understand the reasons for the failure: are they political, practical, budgetary, time-related, due to limited know-how, etc. Consult stakeholders and documentation that may offer insights on this.
- Highlight the evaluability limitation in the evaluation ToR. Include, in the evaluation design, tools and methods that may help generate information on HR & GE, even if limited. Include tools and methods to enhance stakeholder participation.
- Pay special attention to the stakeholder analysis in the evaluation process, and who should be involved. Because the HR & GE dimensions have not been considered in the intervention, several important stakeholders will most probably have been left out.
- Include preparation of HR & GE analyses in the evaluation process.
- During the evaluation process, seek partners and documents that may have useful information on HR & GE that has not been captured by the intervention (e.g., national evaluation/statistics offices, other development agencies, civil society and community organizations, media, academia, etc.).
- In spite of the context, try to identify advocates and supporters of HR & GE and involve them from the evaluation design stage.
- During the data analysis process, pay special attention to the question whether the intervention had a negative effect on particular stakeholders. Consider and consult stakeholders on how this situation could be improved.

Highlight the challenges of addressing HR & GE in the evaluation report, including evaluability challenges. Since HR & GE are a mandate of the UN, which should be considered in every intervention design, provide assertive recommendations for immediate action.

Conclusions: Based on the conducted analysis the evaluability of HR&GE dimensions in YE Project is rated as “medium”.

1. Gender Equality and Human Rights dimension was included in the Project Intervention Logic and Design.
2. Specific objectives were formulated to achieve significant success in upholding HR&GE in the countries beneficiaries; most of indicators were not gender-sensitive
3. Vulnerable groups were outlined and their interests and needs were well embedded in the Project Design.
4. There is no Performance Evaluation Framework which allows collecting data in sex disaggregating manner, progress (basically results report)
5. Progress reports failed to provide any progress on HR&GE.

The following UNEG recommendations are suggested to be included in M&E Evaluation Process:

- Learning about nature of current limitations: are they political, practical, budgetary, time related, etc?
 - Making use of the existing data and generate new information on HR & GE.
 - Considering groups that have been left out (women organizations and activists, organizations serving men and women with disability and HIV, youth and human rights organization), and how to include them at this stage.
 - Include in the evaluation process an exercise to strengthen the existing HR & GE analyses. Raise this during the focus group
 - Seeking partners and documents that may have useful information on HR & GE that has not been captured by the intervention (e.g. national evaluation/statistics offices, other development agencies, civil society and community organizations, media, academia, etc.)
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ANNEX K Current Progress on delivered Project's outputs

CURRENT PROGRESS ON OUTPUTS

Table 14 Detailed analysis of the current progress on outputs per targets

OBJECTIVE / OUTPUT	INDICATORS	ACTIVITIES ACCORDING TO PRODOC	DELIVERY STATUS ACCORDING TO MTE
<p>IMMEDIATE OBJECTIVE 1:</p> <p>More effective and inclusive policies and strategies for Decent Work of young men and women in the countries of regional youth employment network</p>	<p>Number of national policies, programmes and initiatives that implement recommendations stemming from peer reviews and/or knowledge and policy learning developed through the activities of the network</p> <p>Number of recommendations from the network activities which promote social dialogue on youth employment</p> <p>Services and programmes for young people become more targeted.</p> <p>New programmes targeting youth introduced</p>		
<p>Framework for the regional cooperation network further developed</p>	<p>Long-term agenda for regional cooperation on youth employment approved by the network and national authorities</p> <p>Members of the network engaged in ensuring the sustainability of the framework for regional cooperation on youth employment</p> <p>Number of network meetings and number of meeting participants (by key stakeholder group and sex)</p> <p>Communication products developed (press</p>	<p>1.1.1. Confirm the institutions that will be involved in the Regional Cooperation network;</p> <p>1.1.2. Organize regular meetings of the members of the network to define network priorities, exchange knowledge and experience, mutual learning exercises, etc.</p> <p>1.1.3. Share materials developed throughout the project such as training material, peer reviews, analyses, etc. during the regional cooperation meetings</p>	<p>On track. Accomplishment rate is 80%.</p> <p>Key results: 90 participants (54 men, 36 women) took part in the sub-regional conferences held in Turin (2018) and Kazan (2019).</p> <p>251 participants (sex disaggregated data is not available) took part in the sub-regional COVID-19 virtual conference and</p> <p>155 participants (53 men and 102 women) took</p>

	releases, notes, news items; available online)	and through the web-page of the ILO Moscow; 1.1.4. Organize final high profile event to support the development of a long-term framework for regional cooperation on youth employment 1.1.5. Implement awareness raising and communication activities	part in online PES trainings Final high profile event has not been conducted yet. <i>Important note: number of participants is the summative number of the participants of the events and doesn't reflect actual number of persons participated in the activities as the Project doesn't have M&E system to collect the data on unique participants (persons)</i>
Output 1.2 Voluntary peer reviews on policies, institutions and programmes on youth employment conducted and findings used for policy development	Number of peer reviews completed and conclusions adopted by the members of the regional network Number of programmes, policies and initiatives reviewed and modified by the main actors and institutions at national level reflecting the recommendations of the peer reviews in the countries of the network	1.2.1. Develop and implement capacity building programmes for peer reviews – including on youth labour market analysis, policy development and programme implementation – in conjunction with network meetings (activity 1.1.2); 1.2.2. Provide technical support to the countries of the network as they review and update their methods for collecting and analysing labour market data; 1.2.3. Organize peer reviews of specific themes in the youth employment policies, institutional frameworks and programmes among countries of the network; 1.2.4. Discuss the findings of the peer reviews in conjunction with meetings envisaged under activity 1.1.2 and during the event in activity 1.1.4; 1.2.5. Based on peer reviews, develop recommendations to improve the	On track. Accomplishment rate is 80%. Key results: 7 peer reviews prepared National Report on Gender and Youth Employment in Armenia. Source: Progress Report 2018 Assessment of National Employment Policy Source: Progress Report 2018 The project supported three voluntary policy reviews (Kyrgyzstan, Kazakhstan and Armenia) agreed with the ILO Moscow Office and CIS member countries to foster sub-regional cooperation within the context of the COVID 19 employment and labour market crisis, with special focus on youth and women. Road maps for Azerbaijan (AZ), Kyrgyz Republic (KY), Tajikistan (TS) and Uzbekistan (UZ) to make progress towards an integrated strategic approach to

		<p>effectiveness of policies for youth employment;</p> <p>1.2.6. Use recommendations for youth employment policy formulation and programme development;</p> <p>1.2.7. Publish the results of the peer reviews and share them on the web-page</p> <p>1.2.8. Conduct a desk review on successful practices relating to youth employment promotion in BRICS;</p> <p>1.2.9. Discuss effective practices during the meetings of the network and other meetings supported by the project</p>	<p>facilitate the transition to formality.</p>
<p>Output 1.3</p> <p>Youth employment policies and programmes reinforced in the agendas of trade unions and employers' organisations</p>	<p>Number of workers' and employers' organisations capacity building programmes or services created or reinforced to help young people</p> <p>Number of workers' and employers' organisations take action to improve the representation of young people in their organizations and to increase the voice of young people in social dialogue</p> <p>Number of cases where workers and employers' organisations work in cooperation with the governments to review and improve youth employment policies, programmes and initiatives</p>	<p>1.3.1. Identify the key priority topics on youth employment issues of workers' and employers' organizations of the countries involved in the network;</p> <p>1.3.2. Based on the results of previous activity, design training material and modules for a capacity building programme on how to include youth employment issues in the agendas of workers' and employers' organizations;</p> <p>1.3.3. Deliver a joint capacity building programme for workers' and employers' organizations using the modules developed;</p> <p>1.3.4. Finalize the training materials and modules based on the feedback received from the participants and make them available on the web-page;</p> <p>1.3.5. Provide technical support to social partner</p>	<p>On track.</p> <p>Accomplishment rate is 80%. Key results: The Project has conducted more than 15 capacity building events for trade unions and social partners from Russia, Azerbaijan, Tajikistan, Kazakhstan, Armenia and Uzbekistan with the participation of 216 representatives of TUs (124) and Eos (92).</p> <p><i>Important note: number of participants is the summative number of the participants of the events and doesn't reflect actual number of persons participated in the activities as the Project doesn't have M&E system to collect the data on unique participants (persons)</i></p>

		organizations on the promotion of bi- and tri-partite social dialogue on policies and strategies for decent work for youth.	
<p>Output 1.4</p> <p>Research on key youth employment issues and challenges undertaken</p>	<p>Number of national and comparative studies on youth employment themes developed and disseminated</p> <p>Information on policies affecting youth employment in CIS countries available from the YouthPol database and on the web-page of the ILO Moscow website</p> <p>Reviews of government and business effective practice outside the region on youth employment available on the web-page of the ILO Moscow website and discussed during the meetings of the network</p> <p>Number of tools translated or developed, adapted to the CIS context, available in Russian, published, and disseminated by members of the network and beyond</p> <p>Number of tools reflecting the gender dimension and number of tools supporting the employment of vulnerable groups of young people</p>	<p>Activity 1.4.1 Conduct comparative studies on the themes prioritized by the Regional network;</p> <p>Activity 1.4.2 Recruit national consultants and collect information on policies for youth employment;</p> <p>Activity 1.4.3 Include the data in the ILO's global policy database;</p> <p>Activity 1.4.4. Share results of comparative analysis through ILO publication and posting on the web-page of ILO Moscow;</p> <p>Activity 1.4.5 Organize a session, during one meeting of the Network, to present the existing tools supporting the promotion of youth employment and agree on those that are most relevant for the region and need translation and adaptation;</p> <p>Activity 1.4.6 Translate and adapt the tools' material to the context of CIS countries;</p> <p>Activity 1.4.7 Finalize the material according to the feedback received from countries of the Network that will have made an in-depth review of the material;</p> <p>Activity 1.4.8 Design the lay-out of the CIS version of the materials, studies, training modules used for capacity building activities and other documents produced by the network, publish and disseminate.</p>	<p>On track. Accomplishment rate is 100%. Key results:</p> <p>Sub-regional report on Gender and Youth Employment in CIS.</p> <p>Research on transition from informal to formal economy in Azerbaijan.</p> <p>Assessment Report State Strategy for Labour Market Development of the Republic of Tajikistan until 2020; Towards a Tajikistan National Employment Strategy for a sustainable economic and social development</p> <p>Finally, the project contributed to the ILO publication "Youth and COVID-19: Impacts on jobs education, rights and mental well-being", prepared by the YOUTH team in the ILO Employment, Labour Markets and Youth Branch, and published in August 2020.</p>

<p>IMMEDIATE OBJECTIVE 2:</p> <p>Improved implementation of policies and programmes promoting Decent Work for young men and women in the target countries</p>	<p>Number of reviewed, adjusted or revised national youth employment programmes, policies and initiatives</p> <p>Number of young men and women who participated in the pilot supported by the project (also by relevant vulnerable group characteristics)</p> <p>Services and programmes for young people become more targeted.</p> <p>New programmes targeting youth introduced</p>		
<p>Output 2.1</p> <p>Support to the implementation of the programme of cooperation and the national plan for the promotion of decent work for youth in the Russian Federation</p>	<p>Number of national policies, programmes and initiatives on youth employment reviewed, adjusted or revised to take into account ILO methodology and international best practice</p> <p>Characteristics of initiatives reviewed, adjusted or revised by type, location, number of beneficiaries (share of participants by gender, age, level of education and other relevant vulnerable group characteristics).</p> <p>Number of staff trained (by gender, stakeholder type, institution, and position)</p> <p>Number of young people (disaggregated by sex) who obtained a positive result (employment, further education/training) as a result of the measures developed with the ILO support</p>	<p>2.1.1. Carry out a needs analysis to assess capacity and training needs of staff of labour market institutions and social partners on key strategic youth employment policy priorities;</p> <p>2.1.2. Based on the results of the needs analysis, conduct a capacity building programme on the design, implementation, monitoring and evaluation of policies and operational strategies for youth employment;</p> <p>2.1.3. Provide technical support for the review, on a tripartite and consultative manner, of the implementation of key national policies promoting youth employment;</p> <p>2.1.4. Organize a national tripartite learning/training events to review the implementation of the key national policies</p>	<p>On track. Accomplishment rate is 100%. Key results:</p> <p>ROSTRUD has led a major institutional client-oriented reform by introducing technology and digitalising services, strategic result-based management, core institutional performance indicators and administrative rationalization. The Project supported by the PES reform by conducting needs assessment and building capacity of 112 PES employees (61 men, 51 women)</p> <p>In partnership with ROSTRUD, the project developed the Manual the PES and the Future of Work, providing guidance for a comprehensive staff capacity building plan, responding to the institutional needs identified in the</p>

		<p>promoting youth employment;</p> <p>2.1.5.Design and implement training programmes for PES to support the review of implementation of its selected initiatives;</p> <p>2.1.6.Conduct awareness raising activities mobilizing support towards the implementation of the national initiatives for youth employment.</p>	<p>Russian interregional meetings held in year 2019.</p>
<p>Output 2.2</p> <p>Support to the implementation of action plan for youth employment in Kazakhstan</p>	<p>Number of national policies, programmes and initiatives on youth employment reviewed, adjusted or revised to take into account ILO methodology and international best practice</p> <p>Characteristics of initiatives reviewed, adjusted or revised by type, location, number of beneficiaries (share of participants by gender, age, level of education and other relevant vulnerable group characteristics)</p> <p>Number of staff trained (by gender, stakeholder type, institution, and position)</p> <p>Number of young people (disaggregated by sex) who obtained a positive result (employment, further education/training) as a result of the measures developed with the ILO support</p>	<p>2.2.1. Carry out a needs analysis to assess capacity and training needs of staff of labour market institutions and social partners on key strategic youth employment policy priorities;</p> <p>2.2.2. Based on the results of the needs analysis, conduct a capacity building programme on the design, implementation, monitoring and evaluation of policies and operational strategies for youth employment;</p> <p>2.2.3. Organize a study visit to countries with internationally recognized effective practice on initiatives promoting youth employment;</p> <p>2.2.4. Provide technical support for the review, on a tripartite and consultative manner, of the implementation of key national policies promoting youth employment;</p> <p>2.2.5. Organize national tripartite learning/training events to review the implementation of the key national policies</p>	<p>Put on hold. Accomplishment rate is 10%. Key results:</p> <p>In response to the COVID 19 pandemic, the Ministry of Labor and Social Protection of the Republic of Kazakhstan (MLSPZ RK) requested the ILO Moscow Office' technical assistance for conducting a rapid assessment of the impact of the pandemic on the labour market and employment. The study conducted in 2020 produced the report «A Rapid Diagnostics for Assessing the Country-Level Impact of Covid-19 virus on the Economy and Labour Market of Kazakhstan» contributed to the CIS sub-regional network, supporting member countries to mainstream youth employment into national policies, and fostering voluntary peer-to-peer reviews on employment policies, institutions, services and active labour market programs.</p>

		<p>promoting youth employment;</p> <p>2.2.6. Design and implement training programmes for PES to support the review of implementation of its selected initiatives.</p>	
<p>Output 2.3</p> <p>Support to the implementation of the national employment strategy in Azerbaijan</p>	<p>Number of national policies, programmes and initiatives on youth employment reviewed, adjusted or revised to take into account ILO methodology and international best practice</p> <p>Characteristics of initiatives reviewed, adjusted or revised by type, location, number of beneficiaries (share of participants by gender, age, level of education and other relevant vulnerable group characteristics.), enrolment, attendance and dropout rate by individual characteristics, and as relevant, number of jobs created, quality of jobs provided, number of companies involved, etc.</p> <p>Number of staff trained (by gender, stakeholder type, institution, and position)</p> <p>Number of young people (disaggregated by sex) who obtained a positive result (employment, further education/training) as a result of the measures developed with the ILO support</p>	<p>2.3.1. Conduct a training programme to strengthen the capacity of public employment service (PES) to implement and evaluate labour market programmes targeting young people;</p> <p>2.3.2. Organize a study visit to countries with internationally recognized effective practice on initiatives promoting youth employment;</p> <p>2.3.3. Train and mentor PES in piloting entrepreneurship training programme for young jobseekers registered at PES in rural area;</p> <p>2.3.4. Train and mentor PES in piloting apprenticeship programme for young graduates;</p> <p>2.3.5. Assist PES in evaluation of the results of the piloted ALMPs;</p> <p>2.3.6. Make recommendations on including ALMPs in the scope of regular activities of PES and the national initiatives for youth employment.</p>	<p>On track. Accomplishment rate is 90%. Key results:</p> <p>Technical assistance in the development of National Employment Strategy (2018-2030);</p> <p>Assistance in establishing National Tripartite Commission on Economic and Social Affairs;</p> <p>Assistance in the development of new Law on Unemployment Insurance and ALMPs for youth</p> <p>306* PES employees trained (215 men, 91 women)</p> <p>Study visit to Norway by 4 government officials (all men),</p> <p><i>*Important note: number of participants is the summative number of the participants of the events and doesn't reflect actual number of persons participated in the activities as the Project doesn't have M&E system to collect the data on unique participants (persons)</i></p>
<p>Output 2.4</p> <p>Support to the implementation of the national initiatives and policies targeting youth in Uzbekistan</p>	<p>Number of national policies, programmes and initiatives on youth employment reviewed, adjusted or revised to take into account ILO methodology and</p>	<p>2.4.1. Conduct a training programme to strengthen the capacity of public employment services (PES) to implement and evaluate labour market</p>	<p>On track. Accomplishment rate is 90%. Key results:</p> <p>Developed new national employment strategy</p>

	<p>international best practice</p> <p>Characteristics of initiatives reviewed, adjusted or revised by type, location, number of beneficiaries (share of participants by gender, age, level of education and other relevant vulnerable group characteristics).</p> <p>Number of staff trained (by gender, stakeholder type, institution, and position)</p> <p>Number of young people (disaggregated by sex) who obtained a positive result (employment, further education/training) as a result of the measures developed with the ILO support</p>	<p>programmes targeting young people;</p> <p>2.4.2.Organize a study visit to countries with internationally recognized effective practice as regards initiatives promoting youth employment;</p> <p>2.4.3.Support PES in piloting ALMPs</p> <p>2.4.4.Assist PES in evaluation of the results of the piloted ALMPs;</p> <p>2.4.5.Make recommendations on including ALMPs in the scope of regular activities of PES.</p>	<p>with focus on gender and youth</p> <p>Prepared study report “Towards Full and Productive Employment in Uzbekistan: Achievements and Challenges”, 2020</p> <p>Conducted Functional analysis of PES services</p> <p>151* PES employees trained (122 men; 26 women)</p> <p><i>*Important note: number of participants is the summative number of the participants of the events and doesn't reflect actual number of persons participated in the activities as the Project doesn't have M&E system to collect the data on unique participants (persons)</i></p>
<p>IMMEDIATE OBJECTIVE 3</p> <p>Youth employment partnerships created and strengthened to improve the design, monitoring and evaluation of youth employment policy interventions in three regions of the Russian Federation</p>	<p>Number and improved efficiency of private-public partnerships on youth employment developed at the sub-national level</p>		
<p>Output 3.1</p> <p>Youth Employment Partnerships involving public and private sector established in three further regions of the Russian Federation (Republic of Komi, Astrakhan Region and Kaliningrad Region)</p>	<p>The three Youth Employment Partnerships are endorsed at tripartite level</p> <p>The Youth Employment Partnerships include all major stakeholders involved in youth employment at the level of the district or the local territory and meet regularly</p> <p>Number and characteristics of the</p>	<p>3.1.1.In each selected region, identify key actors that will be part of the Youth Employment Partnerships;</p> <p>3.1.2.Conduct a participatory strategic assessment of the target regions, identifying challenges and regional capacity to address youth employment issues at regional level;</p> <p>3.1.3.Conduct training workshops for members</p>	<p>Delayed. Accomplishment rate is 60%. Key results:</p> <p>Kalinigrad, Komi and Astrakhan regions developed youth employment strategies</p> <p>Regional PES performance assessed</p> <p>Two ALMPs for youth designed with focus on rural youth (Astrakhan)</p>

	<p>projects or programmes fostered by the Youth Employment Partnerships</p> <p>Number of pilot ALMPs implemented in the regions (share of participants by gender, age, level of education and other relevant vulnerable group characteristics), enrolment, attendance and dropout rate by individual characteristics, and as relevant, number of jobs created, quality of jobs provided, number of companies involved, etc.)</p> <p>Performance of the pilot ALMPs (% of increase in youth participation in services offered, of increase in job placement, in satisfaction of staff, etc.)</p>	<p>of the Partnerships to prioritize and address youth employment challenges;</p> <p>3.1.4. Provide technical assistance to establish the Youth Employment Partnerships as an effective coordination mechanism (roles and responsibilities, working procedures, etc.) and present best practice from the first phase regions;</p> <p>3.1.5. Develop and implement a training package on the design, monitoring and evaluation of employment programmes and initiatives for the members of the Partnerships;</p> <p>3.1.6. Provide technical assistance to select and implement a set of pilot youth employment interventions and support their implementation.</p>	<p>and NEET youth (Komi)</p>
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ANNEX L Lessons learnt

Lesson Learnt 1

Project Title: Partnerships for Youth Employment in the CIS II

Project TC/SYMBOL: RER/17/01/LUK

Name of Evaluator: Svetlana Bronyuk

Date: 03.09.2021

The following lesson learned has been identified during the course of the evaluation. Further text explaining the lesson may be included in the full evaluation report.

LL Element	Text
Brief description of lesson learned (link to specific action or task)	Public Works Fund in Uzbekistan proved to be effective measure to offer employment during the COVID-19 crisis which could be considered by other development actors
Context and any related preconditions	Public works and community services, referred to as the Public Works Programme (PWP) are the largest labour market programmes in Uzbekistan. The PWP is managed and coordinated by the Ministry of Employment and Labour Relations (MELR) and in May 2020 it provided temporary work to approximately 270,000 people across Uzbekistan. For 2020 the government has allocated 450 billion soums (USD 44 million) to the Public Works Fund (PWF) which funds all the national government contributions to the PWP. (This includes an additional allocation of 200 billion to respond to COVID-19). The program has the following objectives: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • To provide unemployed people with a short-term income support before they can find full-time employment. • To employ people with no previous work experience and skills. • To supply the additional labor force to different public and private initiatives experiencing work-force shortage, which have economic and social importance.
Targeted users / Beneficiaries	Governments / unemployed men and women, people with no previous work experience and skills

<p>Challenges /negative lessons - Causal factors</p>	<p>The PWP has become a key part of the government response to the effects of the COVID-19 pandemic. It aims to respond to an anticipated rise in unemployment as well as the possible return of Uzbek migrant workers, who will add to the number of people seeking employment in the country. In response to the government has made some key adjustments:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Funding to the PWF has been increased by an additional 200 billion soums • The number of pre-determined work activities has been increased to 18, including some COVID 19 related activities such as monitoring quarantines, guarding checkpoints and supporting elderly and others more vulnerable to COVID-19. • Private sector companies and NGO can now receive 100 per cent of the salary costs, as opposed to 50 percent. <p>The government would however like to make further adjustments and improvements to the programme, not only to make it a more effective response to the effects the COVID-19 pandemic, but also to increase the overall effectiveness and efficiency of the programme. They requested the support of the ILO to assist this with</p>
<p>Success / Positive Issues - Causal factors</p>	<p>Given the constraints imposed by the COVID-19 pandemic, the ILO together with the MELR conducted a guided self-assessment of the PWP which resulted in the recommendations to improve the programme across the following areas:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Eligibility and targeting: Improving and accelerating the recruitment of PWP participants (ISPA Focus Area A) 2. Benefits, time and duration of benefits: payment of wages (ISPA Focus Area B) 3. Institutions, coordination and funding: strengthening partnerships with local public partners and the private sector (ISPA Focus Area D) 4. Monitoring public works and data management (ISPA Focus Area E) <p>The mid-term evaluation revealed that self-assessment conducted by the Uzbek government enhanced better understanding of the way-forward to improve the PWF programme and generated learning that Public Works Fund proved to be effective measure to offer employment during the COVID-19 crisis which could be considered by other development actors.</p>
<p>ILO Administrative Issues (staff, resources, design, implementation)</p>	<p>The report on self-assessment of the PWF was prepared by Maikel Lieuw-Kie-Song and Ramiro Pizarro from the ILO, but is primarily based on the findings from the four Self-Assessment Working Groups. Also ILO Staff in Uzbekistan, in particular Azizkhon Khankhodjaev, ILO National Coordinator assisted in organizing the workshops on the self-assessment exercise of the Uzbekistan Public Work Program</p>

ILO Lesson Learnt 2

Project Title: Partnerships for Youth Employment in the CIS II

Project TC/SYMBOL: RER/17/01/LUK

Name of Evaluator: Svetlana Bronyuk

Date: 03.09.2021

The following lesson learned has been identified during the course of the evaluation. Further text explaining the lesson may be included in the full evaluation report.

LL Element	Text
Brief description of lesson learned (link to specific action or task)	As the COVID-19 pandemic showed, digital public employment services allow rolling out needs-based social support at the emerging crisis situations
Context and any related preconditions	The COVID-19 pandemic burst out in the beginning of 2020 required prompt response from the states to address acute unemployment crisis. Those CIS states who had digital public employment services (Russian Federation) were able to provide direct unemployment benefits to citizens via digital PES services
Targeted users / Beneficiaries	Governments / unemployed men and women
Challenges /negative lessons - Causal factors	The COVID-19 crisis required citizens to be on self-isolation in order to prevent spreading of the virus. Many citizens lost the jobs and had difficulties to access PES services.
Success / Positive Issues - Causal factors	Russian Government introduced new format of digital registration as unemployed person through special job search web-site “Rabota v Rossii” and state web-site on state services. No additional papers were required – solely application and the CV. As a result, out of 9,1 mln citizens who applied to PES, 7,2 mln persons applied via digital way.
ILO Administrative Issues (staff, resources, design, implementation)	The ILO staff, team of the project “Partnerships for Youth Employment in the CIS (Phase II)” – demonstrated best practice to other CIS states through web-conferences. The mid-term evaluation revealed that this experience and best international practices on digital PES services urged the states to modernize their PES services and introduce new digital formats of interaction with population.

Lesson Learnt 3

Project Title: Partnerships for Youth Employment in the CIS II

Project TC/SYMBOL: RER/17/01/LUK

Name of Evaluator: Svetlana Bronyuk

Date: 03.09.2021

The following lesson learned has been identified during the course of the evaluation. Further text explaining the lesson may be included in the full evaluation report.

LL Element	Text
Brief description of lesson learned (link to specific action or task)	Change of attitude happens and development results occur if employment challenges are dully addressed. The Project has strengthened efforts on tackling informality issues in the region which resulted in high political will in Azerbaijan to tackle informality and set the benchmark for other countries in transition to formal and dignified employment for young men and women
Context and any related preconditions	The previous mid-term evaluation of the project “Partnerships for Youth Employment in the CIS (Phase I)” held in 2018 showed that governments were not ready to address the informality issues in the CIS region.
Targeted users / Beneficiaries	Governments
Challenges /negative lessons - Causal factors	It was observed through the interviews that government stakeholders were hesitant to address informality issues in the region as having a job (source of income) was more important than urging young men and women to come out of a shadow
Success / Positive Issues - Causal factors	During the second Phase, the Project provided extensive support on conducting a diagnostic assessments and tripartite discussions on the informal economy in Azerbaijan and challenges faced on the implementation of national scale programs targeting self-entrepreneurship and youth employment.

<p>ILO Administrative Issues (staff, resources, design, implementation)</p>	<p>The ILO staff, team of the project “Partnerships for Youth Employment in the CIS (Phase II)” The Project also supported sub-regional initiative implemented by the ILO such as “South-South technical cooperation and knowledge-sharing on an integrated approach towards formalization in (Tajikistan, Kyrgyzstan, Azerbaijan, Uzbekistan) contributed to the development of the road maps for Azerbaijan (AZ), Kyrgyz Republic (KY), Tajikistan (TS) and Uzbekistan (UZ) to make progress towards an integrated strategic approach to facilitate the transition to formality.</p>
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ANNEX M Emerging Good Practices

Emerging Good Practice 1

Project Title: Partnerships for Youth Employment in the CIS II

Project TC/SYMBOL: RER/17/01/LUK

Name of Evaluator: Svetlana Bronyuk

Date: 03.09.2021

The following emerging good practice has been identified during the course of the evaluation. Further text can be found in the full evaluation report.

GP Element	Text
Brief summary of the good practice (link to project goal or specific deliverable, background, purpose, etc.)	Leveraging resources with Rostrud resulted in rich quality trainings undertaken at the federal level and development of the manual to be used at the global level. This best practice was implemented to support the achievement of Project's <i>Output 2.1 "Support to the implementation of the programme of cooperation and the national plan for the promotion of decent work for youth in the Russian Federation"</i>
Relevant conditions and Context: limitations or advice in terms of applicability and replicability	ROSTRUD has led a major institutional client-oriented reform by introducing technology and digitalising services, strategic result-based management, core institutional performance indicators and administrative rationalization. The Project supported by the PES reform by conducting needs assessment and building capacity of 112 PES employees (61 men, 51 women)
Establish a clear cause-effect relationship	In partnership with ROSTRUD, the project developed the Manual the PES and the Future of Work, providing guidance for a comprehensive staff capacity building plan, responding to the institutional needs identified in the Russian interregional meetings held in year 2019.
Indicate measurable impact and targeted beneficiaries	On 28 May, the ILO Decent Work Technical Support Team and Country Office for Eastern Europe and Central Asia in partnership with the Federal Service for Labour and Employment (ROSTRUD) organized a virtual presentation of its flagship publication "Public Employment Services and the Future of Work", with the participation of 150 heads and managers of the regional employment centres from all over Russia.

<p>Potential for replication and by whom</p>	<p>Mr Denis Vasiliev, Deputy Head, Federal Service for Labour and Employment (ROSTRUD), highlighted the commitment of the Russian Federation to bring employment services up to a new level and pointed out that employment centres are being modernised as part of the national project "Demography". According to him, this year a large-scale retraining programme for employees, whose qualifications should correspond to the new tasks of the service, is to be launched. By the end of the year, over 4,000 people will have undergone retraining.¹⁵⁴ In June 2021 the project launched training of 4000 PES staff in RF in cooperation with Rostrud where the developed PES manual will be used for education purposes</p>
<p>Upward links to higher ILO Goals (DWCPs, Country Programme Outcomes or ILO's Strategic Programme Framework)</p>	<p>This good practice supports the implementation of the Future of work. The Future of Work Initiative stands as the centrepiece of the centenary activities. It will enable the ILO to sustain its capacity to pursue its social justice mandate in conditions of transformational change in the world of work.</p>
<p>Other documents or relevant comments</p>	<p>Public Employment Services and the Future of Work publications: Eng - https://www.ilo.org/moscow/information-resources/publications/WCMS_779107/lang--en/index.htm Rus - https://www.ilo.org/moscow/information-resources/publications/WCMS_779108/lang--ru/index.htm</p>

¹⁵⁴ ILO's official web-site: https://www.ilo.org/moscow/news/WCMS_800066/lang--en/index.htm

Emerging Good Practice 2

Project Title: Partnerships for Youth Employment in the CIS II
Project TC/SYMBOL: RER/17/01/LUK

Name of Evaluator: Svetlana Bronyuk
Date: 03.09.2021

The following emerging good practice has been identified during the course of the evaluation. Further text can be found in the full evaluation report.

GP Element	Text
<p>Brief summary of the good practice (link to project goal or specific deliverable, background, purpose, etc.)</p>	<p>Conducting gender-focused research undertaken in 2017 and 2019 to measure the progress of the countries in terms of advancing gender equality. This emerging good practice was to support achievement of the Output 1.4 “Research on key youth employment issues and challenges undertaken”</p>
<p>Relevant conditions and Context: limitations or advice in terms of applicability and replicability</p>	<p>The “Gender and youth employment in CIS countries” report was commissioned in the context of the ILO project “Partnerships for Youth Employment in the CIS” implemented by the ILO Decent Work Technical Support Team and Country Office for Eastern Europe and Central Asia with financial support of the Russian private company LUKOIL. Report was submitted for discussion during the sub-regional annual meeting of the Commonwealth of Independent States (CIS) network for youth employment promotion policies, held in July 2019, Kazan, Russian Federation and updated early in 2020.</p>
<p>Establish a clear cause-effect relationship</p>	<p>The study covers selected CIS countries; namely, Republic of Azerbaijan, Republic of Armenia, Republic of Kazakhstan, Kyrgyz Republic, Tajikistan, Uzbekistan. It provides a deeper dive into NEET and the school-to-work transition in the Russian Federation and Armenia. The report reviews significant gender gaps in the labour market and youth labour market in the region, and assesses country differences in terms of extent and nature of the gaps. Factors underlying such gaps include issues with the application of legislation, the perseverance of traditional attitudes to women’s role in society, as well as, related to this, the strong predominance of women in unpaid care work in the family, and the obstacles this may place in the way of the effective participation of young women in the labour market – an issue emphasised by the ILO’s recent global research on gender disparities in the labour market (ILO, 2019). The report provides evidence that young people face a daunting task in seeking to enter the world of work today, and existing gender gaps among young people in labour market outcomes tend to become larger with age</p>

<p>Indicate measurable impact and targeted beneficiaries</p>	<p>Formulation of the gender-sensitive and youth inclusive policies based on in-depth research and tripartite discussions. Armenian Gender National Report was stemmed from this research. Also, the produced research served as the basis to inform the developed of gender-sensitive National Employment Strategies in Uzbekistan, Azerbaijan and Armenia.</p>
<p>Potential for replication and by whom</p>	<p>The results of the mid-term evaluation showed that the Project should reiterate and sustain results contributed to gender equality in the CIS region. The research undertaken in 2017 and 2019 could form a baseline for assessing the target countries in terms of achieving gender equality at the labour market. National stakeholders could be invited to prepare national gender reports following good practice of Armenia, set gender-focused development goals aligned with SDGs 8 and 5. The Project should motivate the countries for competition in advancing gender equality and the progress could be measured based on the next research undertaken by the Project. The adjustment of the methodology might be needed</p>
<p>Upward links to higher ILO Goals (DWCPs, Country Programme Outcomes or ILO's Strategic Programme Framework)</p>	<p>This good practice supports the implementation of the Future of work. The Future of Work Initiative stands as the centrepiece of the centenary activities. It will enable the ILO to sustain its capacity to pursue its social justice mandate in conditions of transformational change in the world of work.</p>
<p>Other documents or relevant comments</p>	<p>The report "Gender and youth employment in CIS countries": https://www.ilo.org/moscow/information-resources/publications/WCMS_764206/lang--en/index.htm</p>