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MID TERM REVIEW REPORT (MTR)

SRI LANKA NATIONAL LABOUR MIGRATION POLICY PROJECT – PHASE IV

PROMOTING DECENT WORK THROUGH GOOD GOVERNANCE,
PROTECTION AND EMPOWERMENT OF MIGRANT WORKERS:
CONTRIBUTING TOWARDS IMPLEMENTATION OF THE SRI LANKA
NATIONAL LABOUR MIGRATION POLICY (NLMP) – PHASE IV

August 2023

1. KEY FACTS

Title of project being evaluated	PROMOTING DECENT WORK THROUGH GOOD GOVERNANCE, PROTECTION AND EMPOWERMENT OF MIGRANT WORKERS: CONTRIBUTING TOWARDS IMPLEMENTATION OF THE SRI LANKA NATIONAL LABOUR MIGRATION POLICY – PHASE IV
Project DC symbol	LKA/02/03/CHE
Programme Date	18-JAN-2021 - 30-AUG-2024
Type of evaluation	Mid -Term Review (MTR)
Evaluation Nature	Internal
Donor	Swiss Agency for Department and Cooperation (SDC)
Administrative Unit in the ILO responsible for administrating the project	ILO Country Office for Sri Lanka and the Maldives (CO-Colombo)
Technical Unit(s) in the ILO responsible for backstopping the project	ILO Decent Work Technical Support Team for South Asia, New Delhi (DWT South Asia)
P&B outcome (s) under evaluation	P&B Outcome 7 DWCP Outcome 3.2 and LKA 154
SDG(s) under evaluation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • SDG Target 5 on gender equality and women and girls' empowerment by mainstreaming gender as a cross cutting theme across interventions • SDG Target 8 on growth and decent work, specifically Target 8.8. on protecting labour rights and promoting safe and secure working environments for all workers including migrant workers, in particular women migrants, and those in precarious employment • SDG Target 10 on reducing inequalities, specifically Target 10.7 on facilitating orderly, safe and regular migration of people, through the implementation of planned and well-managed migration policies. • SDG Target 17 on global partnerships on sustainable development which includes improving data.
External Implementing Partners	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ministry of Labour & Foreign Employment, • Sri Lanka Bureau of Foreign Employment (SLBFE), • Tertiary & Vocational Education Commission (TVEC)
Name of Consultant	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Deepthi Lamahewa
Project Budget	USD 1,043,932

2. List of Acronyms and abbreviations

ACTRAV	Bureau of Workers' Activities
ALFEA	Association of License Foreign Employment Agencies
DWCP	Decent Work Country Programme
DWT	Decent Work Team
EXCOL	External Collaborator
GOALS	Governance of Labour Migration in South & South East Asia
HQ	Headquarters
CO-Colombo	ILO Country Office for Sri Lanka and the Maldives
EVAL	ILO Evaluation Department
ROAP	ILO Regional Office for Asia and Pacific
IA	Implementation Agreement
ILO	International Labour Organization
ILS	International Labour Standards
IOM	International Organization for Migration
LFEA	License Foreign Employment Agencies
ML&FE	Ministry of Labour & Foreign Employment
NPC	National Project Coordinator
OECD / DAC	Organization for Economic Co-operation and Development Assistance Committee
PARDEV	Partnering for Development
P&B	Programme and Budget
REO	Regional Evaluation Official
SA	South Asia
SDC	Swiss Agency for Development and Cooperation
SLBFE	Sri Lanka Bureau of Foreign Employment
SDGs	Sustainable Development Goals
TOR	Terms of Reference
UNSDCF	United Nation Sustainable Development Cooperation Framework
UN	United Nations
UNEG	United Nations Evaluation Group

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1. EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Labour migration from Sri Lanka has grown in importance in recent decades and has significantly contributed to the socioeconomic development of the country. In the context of a globalized economy, Sri Lankan workers continue to search for decent work and better livelihoods abroad, leading to yearly increases in labour migration and remittance flows. Labour migration has decreased unemployment rates and provided a source of household income for many.

Labour migration in Sri Lanka at a glance;

- In 2022, Sri Lanka saw 311,269 people leaving the country, the highest in history. Previously, the country's annual peak was 300,413 in 2014. It was more than double of the migrated population of 121,795 in the previous year 2021. (Central Bank Data 2022)
- Private remittances sent to Sri Lanka in 2022 amounted to USD 3,789.4 million, in comparison to USD 5,491.0 million in 2021 recording a monthly average of USD 315.8 million per month. An improvement in inflow of workers' remittances was witnessed in the recent months in line with the higher departures for foreign employments. (Sources: UNDESA, SLBFE statistics, World Bank).
- Men/women ratio of foreign employment: 66 per cent male and 34 per cent female.
- Over 90 per cent of Sri Lankan employees working abroad were employed in the Arab States.

Key national legislation and policies related to labour migration of Sri Lanka;

- In September 2023, the State Ministry of Foreign Employment Promotions received the Cabinet approval for the National Labour Migration Policy,
- National Labour Migration Policy for Sri Lanka, 2008,
- Sub-Policy and National Action Plan on Return and Reintegration of Migrant Workers Sri Lanka, 2015,
- Sri Lanka Bureau of Foreign Employment Act, 1985.

Other key documents reviewed;

- SLBFE - Corporate Strategic Plan - 2022-2026,
- The NVQ Circular 02/2021 of the Tertiary and Vocational Education Commission (TVEC) - TVEC e-RPL and Skills Passport Circulars

Safe Labour Migration Programme (SLMP) in Sri Lanka; Supported by the SDC - Government of Switzerland is aims at ensuring an effective implementation of the Sri Lanka National Labour Migration Policy while promoting decent work through good governance, protection and empowerment of migrant workers.

The SLMP Project is focused to improve the policy, legislative and regulatory frameworks and processes that govern labour migration in Sri Lanka to reflect and respond to current contextual situations and needs that further safeguard the rights of women and men migrant workers to protect the rights of and empower women migrant workers and their families is an urgent requirement of the country.

Safe migration policies are crucial for Sri Lanka for several reasons, considering the significant number of Sri Lankan nationals seeking employment opportunities abroad. Ensuring safe migration involves creating an environment where potential migrants are informed, protected, and supported throughout the migration process.

SLMP Project focused on following components;

- SLMP Project is engaged to support safe migration policies for Sri Lanka to protect its citizens, enhance their economic opportunities, and establish a positive image on the international stage. These policies contribute to sustainable development and support the well-being of both migrants and their families.
- Enhanced participation in decision-making by migrant workers, their families, trade unions civil society organizations other related stakeholders.
- Protecting Migrant Rights: Safe migration policies ensure that the rights and well-being of Sri Lankan migrant workers are protected at every stage of their migration journey. This includes protection from exploitation, human trafficking, and abusive labor practices.
- Implementing safe migration policies; helps in preventing human trafficking and exploitation, which unfortunately can be a significant concern for migrants from Sri Lanka. Proper regulations and monitoring deter human trafficking networks and provide support to victims, through the involvement of all levels of stakeholders,
- Enhancing Skill Development and Education: Policies that promote safe migration often include provisions for skill development and education to enhance the employability and competitiveness of migrants. This, in turn, can lead to better employment opportunities abroad and improved remittances. In this regard Project is closely working with the Tertiary and Vocational Education Commission (TVEC) and introduced several new initiatives.
- Improving Financial Security and Remittances: Safe migration policies can facilitate the secure transfer of remittances back to Sri Lanka, contributing to the country's economy and the financial security of families left behind. This influx of funds can aid in poverty reduction and economic development.
- Strengthening Diplomatic Relations: Implementing policies that prioritize safe migration can help build better diplomatic relations with host countries where Sri Lankan migrants are employed. A positive image regarding the treatment and conditions of Sri Lankan migrants can foster stronger international relationships.
- Reducing Vulnerability to Exploitation: Migrants are often vulnerable due to their lack of knowledge about migration processes and their rights. Safe migration policies aim to educate potential migrants, making them less susceptible to fraudulent practices and exploitation by unscrupulous agents.
- Promoting Legal Migration Channels: Safe migration policies encourage migrants to use legal and official channels for migration, reducing the reliance on informal and illegal routes. Legal channels ensure awareness creation, knowledge gathering and dissemination, proper documentation, protection, and assistance throughout the migration process.
- Addressing Social and Psychological Well-being: Safe migration policies include provisions for mental health support and counseling for migrants, addressing the social and psychological challenges they might face while living and working abroad.
- Establish support mechanism for migrant workers to prepare Family Development Plans (FDP) through relevant government agencies and civil society organizations.
- Skills Recognition: the SLMP project has identified skills recognition and certification as key elements of migration-focused skills development. Therefore, the project is working with the Tertiary and Vocational Education Commission (TVEC) to digitalize

the Recognition of Prior Learning (RPL) process to increase the efficiency and effectiveness of skills recognition.

- The ILO/SDC priority sectors in the scope of the project, which are hospitality, construction, and care works will be supported by the e-RPL system for better access to skills recognition. The ILO international experiences were also considered to develop the comprehensive system. The e-RPL system has linked with the National Skills Passport, a product that is in place to provide skills certifications.
- Recognising Prior Learning- e-RPL; The NVQ Circular 02/2021 of the Tertiary and Vocational Education Commission (TVEC) outlines the process of awarding NVQs in the e-RPL system through Recognition of Prior Learning (RPL) with a special focus to migrant workers.
- Regional linkages: Supporting the South Asian Qualification Reference Framework and Colombo Process consultations ensured. The project supported the regional office to share country experiences among SA countries in many forms. Other than the regional engagements, the project coordinated with ILO headquarters to link Sri Lankan counterparts in global forums related to migration activities.

2. BACKGROUND

The Sri Lanka Labour Migration Policy Project (SLMP), implemented by the ILO with the support of Swiss Development Cooperation (SDC) since December 2010 has made a significant contribution to enhancing the rights of migrant workers and promoting the protection and welfare of workers and their families through improved governance of labour migration. Thus, the Project over the course of three previous phases of SDC funding, has updated policies and improved implementation, reviewed regulatory mechanisms, and developed tools, frameworks and systems to improve capacities of the government and service providers through three pillars: governance; protection and empowerment of migrant workers and their families; and enhancing the migration development nexus.

The purpose of this mid-term internal assessment (MTR) is to review the project progress, achievements, and challenges, inform the ILO, project stakeholders, and the donor of key lessons learned, and propose recommendations for any improvement or adjustment needed for the remaining project implementation period.

Specifically, the mid-term review will focus on the following aspects:

- 1) Assessment of the validity of the project design and activities, implementation strategy and approaches, capacities of implementing partners, challenges and how these challenges are addressed; and to what extent these contribute to the achievement of the project objectives.
- 2) Drawing key findings and lessons learned and proposing improvement and adjustment needed to ensure that the project remains relevant to the needs of the target groups and contributes to knowledge development.
- 3) Assessment of the impact of COVID-19 and the economic crisis on the project implementation and how well has the project responded to mitigate the impact.

Project History;

Phase - 1	The initial phase of the ILO Safe Labour Migration Project supported by SDC, have assisted the Government of Sri Lanka and other stakeholders to identify areas to formulate the Sri Lanka's National Labour Migration Policy; provide exposure to international best practices in labour migration governance and management and identified key stakeholders and agreeing for areas of capacity development for key stakeholders.
Phase - 11	During the second phase of the programme, the ILO provided technical support to the Government resulting in the adoption of a policy on Return and Reintegration of Sri Lankan migrants in December 2015. Throughout the Project, ILO engaged with the Sri Lanka Bureau of Foreign Employment (SLBFE) and stakeholders to develop a code of ethical conduct for recruitment agents and sensitize a majority of the licensed foreign recruitment agents and developed safe migration information dissemination tools and disseminated same to more than 1000 local level government officers through capacity building programmes, among other key achievements.
Phase - 111	In its third phase, the ILO SLMP Project contributed to promote safe and regular migration through improved policies and legal frameworks related to labour migration and better service provision to migrant workers and their families. The experiences of the planned interventions have feed and substantiate national, regional and global policy dialogue on Migration and Development.
Phase - 1V	In line with the wider objectives of the Safe Labour Migration Programme, the Goal of this Project is "Labour migration in Sri Lanka is well-governed, orderly and regular for all women and men, ensuring decent, safe and productive employment". The programme aims at ensuring an effective implementation of the Sri Lanka National Labour Migration Policy - Phase IV, while promoting decent work through good governance, protection and empowerment of migrant workers.

The current phase is the final stage of the SLMP project process. The three previous phases of the ILO Safe Labour Migration Project also supported by the Swiss Agency for Development & Cooperation (SDC), have assisted the Government of Sri Lanka and other stakeholders to formulate and implement Sri Lanka's National Labour Migration Policy. In this exit phase (Phase-IV) of the Project, interventions will now shift from policy making to enhanced policy implementation through the assumption of transferring the ownership and implementation of the Safe Labour Migration Programme to the Government of Sri Lanka and other stakeholders.

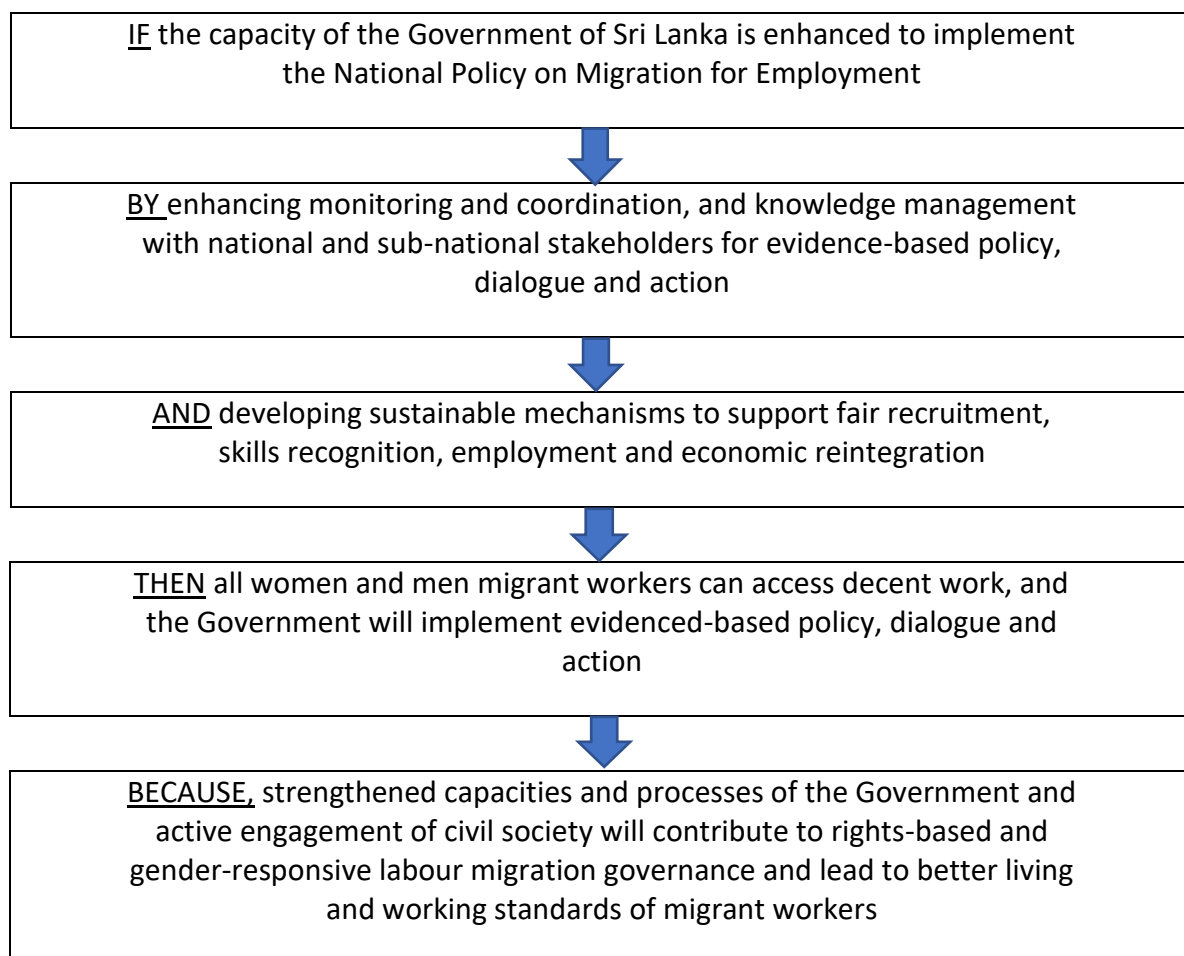
Target beneficiaries of the SLMP project is, returnee and aspiring migrant workers, and their families.

3. The Project

Promoting decent work through good governance, protection and empowerment of migrant workers: Contributing towards effective implementation of the Sri Lanka National Labour Migration Policy is the International Labour Organisation (ILO) component of the Safe Labour Migration Programme (SLMP) in Sri Lanka, supported by the Swiss Agency for Development and Cooperation (SDC) Global Programme for Migration and Development since 2010. In this phase of the Project, interventions will now shift from policymaking to enhanced policy implementation through the assumption of transferring the ownership of the Safe Labour Migration Programme to the Government of Sri Lanka and other stakeholders. Currently Project is in its final phase (Phase IV). In line with the wider objectives of the Safe Labour Migration Programme, the Goal of this Project is “Labour migration in Sri Lanka is well-governed, orderly and regular for all women and men, ensuring decent, safe and productive employment” which means; this Goal can be achieved through the effective implementation of the Government of Sri Lanka’s National Policy on Migration for Employment and the related Sub-Policy and National Action Plan on Return and Reintegration. The Project has been structured around three outcomes:

1. Enhancing the benefits of the labour migration governance framework (the National Policy on Migration for Employment and the Sub-Policy and National Action Plan on Return and Reintegration) through improved monitoring and review of its implementation;
2. Fostering fair and ethical recruitment, skills recognition and certification, and strengthen service delivery by state officials, through strategic initiatives which will be driven by the stakeholders themselves; and,
3. Where policymakers, public officials and other stakeholders are provided with an evidence base for their informed participation in policy, dialogue and action on labour migration.

The Theory of Change of the SLMP project is expressed as follows:



4. PROJECT OUTCOMES AND OUTPUTS

EXPECTED OUTCOME	EXPECTED OUTPUTS
<p>Outcome 01: Enhancing the benefits of the labour migration governance framework (the National Policy on Migration for Employment and the Sub-Policy and National Action Plan on Return and Reintegration) through improved monitoring and review of its implementation Outward labour migration policies and plans are better implemented and monitored by the GoSL</p>	<p><u>Output 1.1:</u> Strengthened human resource and technological capacity to implement, coordinate & monitor outward labour migration related policies & plans</p> <p><u>Output 1.2:</u> Increased engagement in national, regional and global policy dialogues by under-represented district and national-level stakeholders (especially trade unions)</p> <p><u>Output 1.3:</u> GoSL is capable of meeting regional and global commitments on safe labour migration; and identify regional and global best practices for adoption in Sri Lanka, including in labour mobility agreements</p>

<p>Outcome 2: Fostering fair and ethical recruitment, skills recognition and certification, and sustainable reintegration through institutional enhancement and a 'Whole-of-Government' approach.</p>	<p><u>Output 2.1:</u> Licensed Foreign Employment Agents (LFEAs) incorporated fair and ethical recruitment practices in their self-regulation; while the Sri Lanka Bureau of Foreign Employment (SLBFE) strengthened monitoring and compliance of LFEAs with fair and ethical recruitment practices</p> <p><u>Output 2.2:</u> Better access to skills recognition and certification through e-RPL for departing and returning migrant workers, particularly women, improved their decent employment opportunities</p> <p><u>Output 2.3:</u> Initiate 'Whole-Of-Government-Approach' for strengthened implementation of the Sub Policy on Return and Reintegration (Areas 2 and 5)</p>
<p>Outcome 3: Improved evidence-base on labour migration to inform knowledge, dialogue, policy and action</p>	<p><u>Output 3.1.</u> 'Knowledge Hub' with required human resource skills and systems for generating evidence for policymaking, contributing to national, regional and global dialogues is established</p> <p><u>Output 3.2.</u> Data management system analysing data on labour migration for the 'Knowledge Hub' is operationalized</p> <p><u>Output 3.3.</u> GoSL has improved capacity to generate knowledge share events</p>

The three Project Outcomes are detailed below. In line with this, MTR Report will be assessed what the project status as at August 2023 and achievements of these outcomes;

1. Outward labour migration policies and plans are effectively monitored for implementation by the GoSL.
2. Fair and ethical recruitment, skills recognition and certification, and sustainable reintegration is fostered through institutional enhancement and the 'Whole-Of-Government-Approach'
3. Policy makers, individuals and institutions at the national and regional level used evidence base to inform policy dialogues, policy drafting and knowledge exchange

In this (IV) phase of the Safe Migration Project; the overall approach is changed from, Policy making to Policy Implementation;

5. EXPECTED PROJECT RESULTS

- Institutional capacity to coordinate and monitor implementation of outward Labour Migration policies and plans strengthened,
- Stakeholder participation in national, regional and global policy dialogues facilitated,

- GoSL capability of meeting regional and global commitments and adoption of best practices increased,
- Licenced Foreign Employment Agencies (LFEAs) commitment to incorporate fair and ethical recruitment practices enhanced,
- Departing and returning migrants, particularly women accessibility for skills recognition and certification through the e-RPL system established,
- "Whole-of-Government" approach for strengthening implementation of the sub policy on return and reintegration initiated,
- 'Knowledge Hub' with required human resource skills and systems for generating evidence for policymaking, contributing to national, regional and global dialogues established,
- Data management system to analyse data on LM for the 'Knowledge Hub' operationalized,
- GoSL capacity to generate knowledge products and host knowledge share events improved,

6. PROJECT STRATEGIES

The main strategies for implementation in this phase are:

- I. To capacitate duty-bearers where necessary for improved governance of labour migration;
- II. To focus on process sustainability and institutionalisation of roles and functions in monitoring and review of implementation by duty-bearers;
- III. To promote the 'Whole-Of-Government-Approach' through dialogue and coordinated interventions;
- IV. To mainstream rights-based approaches and gender responsiveness in the governance of labour migration; and
- V. To boost civil society participation in the process and mechanisms of governance, including through recognition and voice for migrant workers and joint actions with trade unions.

How Strategies Applied:

Strategic interventions in this phase are to selectively and sustainably introduce mechanisms, where missing, to expedite monitoring and review of the implementation of the Government of Sri Lanka's own national policies and plans and to support its meaningful participation in regional and global processes which it has voluntarily joined; and to deepen the role and inclusion of non-state stakeholders, especially migrant workers societies; the private sector (recruitment agencies) and employers'; and trade unions and civil society organizations, in the governance of labour migration.

The implementation of the Safe Labour Migration Programme in this phase be led and executed by the national stakeholders, especially from the Government of Sri Lanka, instead of external parties including the ILO, which shall provide its technical support assistance in the full assumption of ownership by local actors.

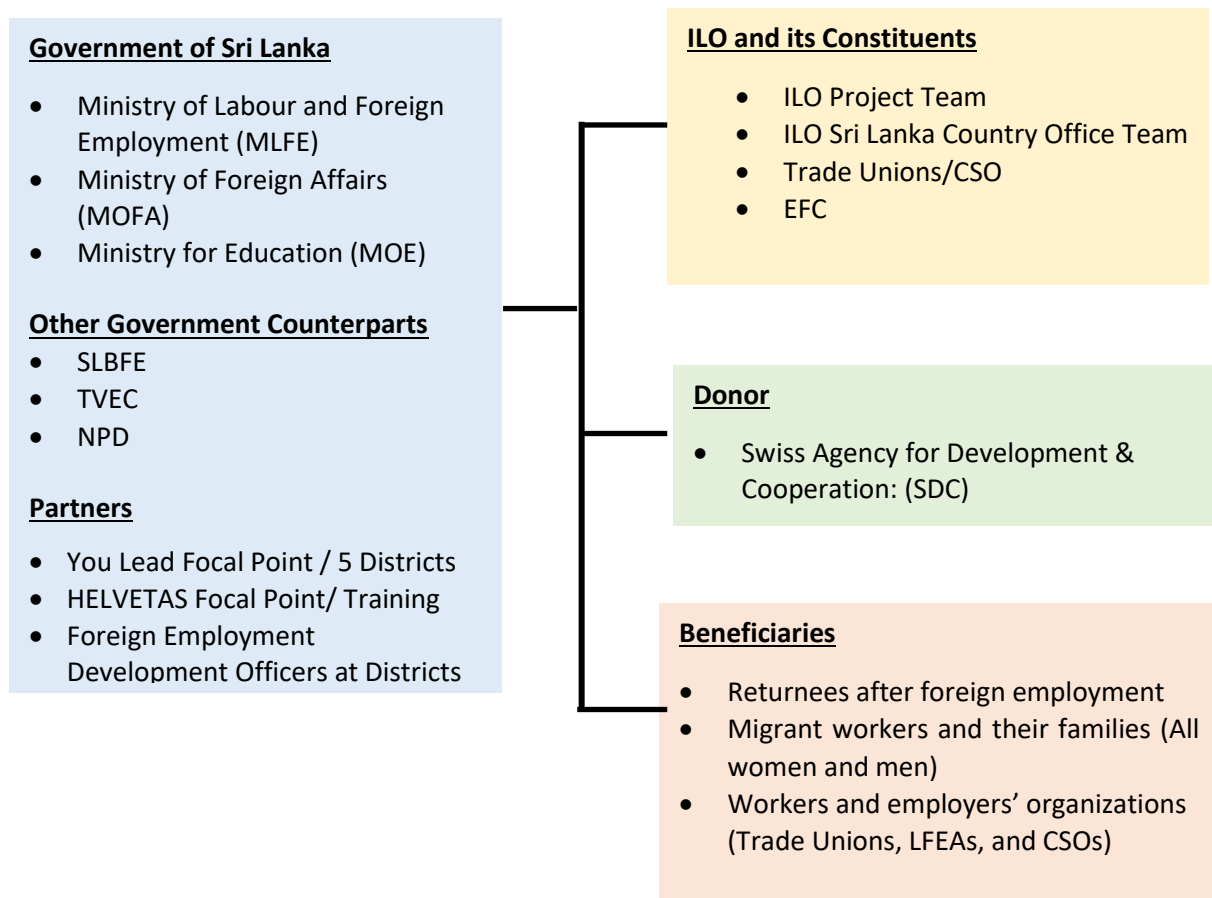
This national ownership, as well as the sustainability, of the Safe Labour Migration Programme will be reinforced from the inception of Phase IV of the Project, by ensuring that all interventions are not dependent on external resources from development cooperation but rather that these resources provide a bridge to continue and complete the journey to self-resourcing of the national machinery for implementation of the National Policy on Migration for Employment and the Sub-Policy and National Action Plan on Return and Reintegration. Thus, none of the proposed activities require the recruitment of new staff or provision of new infrastructure but rather identify opportunities for the redeployment of existing cadres using existing state facilities at the national and sub-national levels.

Mapping and Identification of stakeholders for the Mid-Term Review

During the mid-term assessment Phase, the MTR Consultant has conducted discussions with the Project Team including the National Project Coordinator and the Finance Assistant of the SLMP Project.

The MTR consultant analysed the roles and responsibilities of the stakeholders identified by Project, and mapped the stakeholders in the below chart.

Fig. 1
STAKEHOLDER MAP



7. KEY PARTNERS OF THE SLMP PROJECT AND THEIR ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

Key Partner	Roles and Responsibilities
<p>01. Ministry of Labour & Foreign Employment;</p>	<p>Ministry of Labour & Foreign Employment is the responsible ministry to implement and monitor the NATIONAL LABOUR MIGRATION POLICY FOR SRI LANKA PROJECT. ILO technical assistance provided to the Ministry to develop the policy.</p> <p>The National Labour Migration Policy has following goals:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> i. To develop a long-term vision for the role of labour migration in the economy; ii. To enhance the benefits of labour migration on the economy, society, and the migrant workers and their families and minimize its negative impacts; iii. To work towards the fulfilment and protection of all human and labour rights of migrant workers <p>The sub-policy document complements the National Labour Migration Policy and focuses on 5 strategies. It also contains a detailed Action Plan under each strategy.</p> <p>The sub-policy contains specific strategic intervention in support of social reintegration, economic reintegration, physical and psychological well-being of returnees and their family members, mobilization and empowerment of migrant returnees, and the effective management of the return and reintegration process. Its implementation will be monitored and reviewed periodically and subsequent implementation is to be formulated through national consultations.</p> <p>Local level labour migration operations are handled by Divisional Secretariat level FEDO's. Several TOT's have organised to capacity improvement of Foreign Employment Development Officers (FEDO's)</p>
<p>02. Sri Lanka Bureau of Foreign Employment (SLBFE);</p>	<p>The Sri Lanka Bureau of Foreign Employment (SLBFE) is the regulatory authority for the foreign employment sector in Sri Lanka. It has been established under the provisions of the Parliamentary Act No. 21 of 1985. This act was subsequently amended by the Act No.4 of 1994 and 56 of 2009. The SLBFE presently functions under the purview of the State Ministry of Foreign Employment Promotion & Market Diversification and also under the guidance of the Ministry of Labour. It is governed by a Board of Directors headed by a Chairman.</p> <p>SLBFE has developed the Corporate Strategic Plan 2022-2026; mostly covered core areas of the ILO Safe Migration Project where the plan has included;</p>

Key Partner	Roles and Responsibilities
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Governance of Labour Migration to Promote Decent and Productive Employment, • Secure Rights and Protection of Migrant Workers and Ensure the Wellbeing of their Families, • Promotion of Employment Opportunities for Skilled and Semi-skilled Migrant Workers in Local and Global Economies, • Rights Framework introduced to Promote Skilled and Semi-skilled Job Opportunities, • Enhance Benefits of Migration and its Nexus with National Development, • International Focus on Decent Work and Migration, • Included strategies to cover Sustainable Development Goals, • Promotion of Skilled and Semi-skilled Foreign Employment Opportunities, Enhancement of Protection and Welfare of Migrant Employees and their Family Members, • Support Development of Migrant Employees and Families, through Proper Development Plans. <p>Project related technical assistance provided to SLBFE by ILO;</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Safe Labour Migration Information Guide 2015 – ILO provided technical assistance to develop this information guide. • Supported to develop an Agent tracking system; • Real-time complaint tracking system; and the • Recognition for Prior Learning portal, which drew everyone’s attention. <p>The SLBFE and the Foreign Employment Ministry are tasked with sending 300,000 skilled workers in 2022, and that this target reflects the Government’s expectations, what the stakeholders have to work towards, and what collaborations will be needed. This task was achieved in 2014. However, after 2014, there was a decline. In 2021, only 121,000 Sri Lankans were sent for overseas employment, and in 2020, only 53,000 were sent due to the pandemic. Sending 300,000 migrant workers is a challenging task, collective endeavours involving both the public and private sectors would make it possible. However this target is achieved in 2021 and 2022 again.</p> <p>The SLBFE assists migrant workers, in skills development, a training system has been started to recognise prior learnings, and they have launched a programme to educate on how to gather evidence while they are working abroad. When prospective workers receive training, they are educated on how to gather evidence to obtain the next level of certification. Recently, they developed another programme to help domestic workers upgrade their qualifications</p>

Key Partner	Roles and Responsibilities
	to the national vocational qualification (NVQ) Level 4 from NVQ Level 3.
03. Tertiary & Vocational Education Commission (TVEC)	<p>SLMP Project related responsibilities of TVEC;</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The SLMP Project working closely with the TVEC and facilitated to prepare the e-RPL system. That helped to recognise experience gained by migrant workers in their work in foreign countries. In turn they can obtain Skill Passports. All licenced agencies are provided with necessary awareness on both e-RPL and Skill Passport system. • Technical and Vocational Education and Training (TVET) Information Systems Development; • TVET system operates with several essential stakeholders such as learners, government and private TVET providers, employers, policymaking, quality assurance organizations, etc. • Improvement of the IT system; ICT plays a pivotal role in harnessing the above stakeholders by sharing information, supporting operational activities, managing data for decision support systems, etc. • As economies and labour market conditions change, TVET digital information systems are in the process to be transformed to cater better services for its stakeholders. • As strategies, there could be digital innovation, adaptation, and acceleration according to the changing needs of the labour markets, users, available technologies, and trends. • The main objective of TVET Information Systems is to design, develop and maintain various computerized information systems to facilitate TVET activities, including the following; e-RPL (electronic Recognizing Prior Learning) Skills Passport etc.
04. Swiss Agency for Development Cooperation (SDC);	<p>The Safe Labour Migration Project, supported by the Swiss Agency for Development Cooperation (SDC), aims to enhance monitoring, reviewing, and implementation of policies and strategic plans relating to labour migration.</p> <p>The Global Compact for Safe, Orderly, and Regular Migration (GCM) framework highlights the importance of capacitating state institutions, the private sector, international organisations, and other related institutions to meet international commitments. The Safe Labour Migration Project in Sri Lanka also attempts to enhance migration practices in line with the GCM.</p> <p>SDC believes that, after supporting fourteen years for Sri Lanka's Safe Migration program, now it's the responsibility of the government to continue the process by themselves. Capacities of</p>

Key Partner	Roles and Responsibilities
	<p>the government has improved and self-financing can be easily generated through the process.</p> <p>SDC is highly satisfied with the role that the ILO plays in the SLMP project. The financial control and achieving all three Outcomes of the project is achieved to the level of donor expectation.</p>
<p>05. Association of Licenced Foreign Employment Agencies (ALFEA)</p>	<p>ALFEA is an association that represents over 900 licensed foreign employment agencies in Sri Lanka. It is a non-governmental organization comprised of private recruitment agencies involved in sending Sri Lankan workers abroad for employment opportunities.</p> <p>ALFEA aims to promote and protect the interests of its member agencies and support ethical recruitment practices within the foreign employment industry.</p> <p>The association often works closely with the government and SLBFE to ensure compliance with regulations and standards in the recruitment and placement of Sri Lankan migrant workers. The relationship between SLBFE and ALFEA can be characterized as one of cooperation and regulation within the framework of safe migration. While SLBFE is a government agency responsible for setting policies and regulations and monitoring the industry, ALFEA represents the interests of private recruitment agencies that facilitate the overseas employment of Sri Lankan workers. These two entities work together to ensure that the recruitment and deployment of migrant workers adhere to legal and ethical standards.</p> <p>The SLBFE collaborates with ALFEA on matters related to the regulation of recruitment agencies, the dissemination of information to potential migrant workers, and addressing issues or challenges in the foreign employment sector. However, the specific nature of their interactions and collaborations may vary over time and depend on the prevailing policies and priorities of the Sri Lankan government.</p> <p>ALFEA administering the 1989 Hotline provides all information related to labour migration.</p> <p>ALFEA is responsible to maintain the code of conduct of licenced foreign employment agencies.</p>
<p>06. International Organization</p>	<p>IOM is not involved in the final phase of the project. Their involvement was in 2016 to 2018. It was the Third Phase of the Project. Major involvement of IOM was to increase quality in</p>

Key Partner	Roles and Responsibilities
for Migration (IOM);	<p>recruitment of migrant workers. IOM worked with Foreign Employment Agents and Sub Agents. IOM provided capacity building training to 316 Agents. Two major training curricula's developed on;</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> a) Quality Labour Migration and b) Capacity improvement of Recruitment Agencies on Business Management. <p>IOM Sri Lanka provides secretariat and technical support to the five thematic area working groups (TAWG) of the Colombo Process--a twelve-country regional consultative process for labour sending countries in Asia.</p> <p>IOM is also the co-convener of the Governance of Labour Migration in South and Southeast Asia (GOALS) programme, a three-year joint programme implemented in conjunction with the International Labour Organisation and UN Women. The GOALS programme responds to the current context, achievements, gaps and challenges relating to safe, orderly and regular labour migration from the countries of the Colombo Process.</p>
07. Trade Unions & CSO's	<p>The Project aims to encourage and strengthen Trade Union and Civil Society action to promote and protect workers' rights through policy advocacy, service provision and outreach to workers. The ILO principles and guidelines for fair recruitment encourage trade unions and Civil Society organizations to take following actions:</p> <p>Voice of Migrants is a Civil Society and Trade Union representative of the SLMP Project. VoM is play a key role in working with the Migrant workers in the country. There are five (5) trade unions, 565 migrant societies a coalition of 26 CSO's working through Voice of Migrants (VoC). There are over 900 members in those 565 Migrant Societies. VOM is working in following districts; Killinochchi, Batticaloa, Ampara, Nuwaraeliya, Kurunegala, Galle, Matara, Hambantota, Anuradhapura and Kandy. They will expand their coverage by starting offices in Colombo, Gampaha and Puttalam.</p> <p>The expected responsibility of Trade Unions (TU) and Civil Society Organizations (CSO) are given below;</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provide more and better services to their members who might have encountered challenges during their recruitment processes. • Better promote fair recruitment nationally as well as across international borders.

Key Partner	Roles and Responsibilities
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Influence and strengthen regulatory, monitoring and enforcement mechanisms to address abusive and fraudulent recruitment practices. • Support the application and implementation of international labour standards and human rights instruments by actively participating in formulating legislation and policies at all levels (e.g. sectorial, industry, national, regional, international). • Trade Unions are, one major constituent of ILO Tri Partite approach. Voice of Migrants (VoM) plays a trade union role and as a civil society role in the safe migration project. • Also, VOM is working on preparing a comprehensive database on returnee migrant workers. • VOM is keen on developing a comprehensive Family Development Plan for migrant worker families. According to the VOM, the migrant worker priorities are different of what are given at the moment; such as duty free Electric Cars. VOM is helping migrant worker societies to develop their priority list, including, construction of houses, meet education needs of the children, fulfilling utility requirements, to start a business to meet a sustainable family income etc. Also VOM thinks, that every migrant worker should have a proper Family Development Plan/ Business Plan before they migrate. <p>The Centre for Working Women in collaboration with ILO is undertaking a programme to assist migrant workers who have lost their jobs and returned to the country due to the Covid-19 pandemic.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • CWW assumed that there were more than 75,000 Sri Lankan migrant workers who have returned to the country during the COVID period. Among them, many individuals were looking for new livelihood opportunities. • CWW have identified this as one of the main socio-economic problems created by the pandemic around the world. This situation affects not only the individuals who lost their ex-pat jobs but also their dependents in various ways. <p>With this background, CWW had introduced following programs;</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Support NVQ Level IV qualifications • Support Entrepreneurship trainings • Skill labour passport system • Awareness on safe migration practices
08. HELVETAS;	ILO through its Safe Labour Migration Project (Phase IV) supported by the Government of Switzerland, is collaborating with HELVETAS

Key Partner	Roles and Responsibilities
	<p>to capacitate state officials, trade unionists, and civil society partners engaged in migrant rights protection.</p> <p>HELVETAS, a Swiss non-profit, non-governmental organization; having been active in Sri Lanka on labour migration for more than a decade maintains a strong network of state institutions, donor agencies, trade unions as well as civil society organizations.</p> <p>Main responsibility of HELVETAS was to develop the ToT manuals for two sets of key implementing partners/groups. The first is for Trade Unions and Civil Society Organizations and the second ToT is for Development Officers (FEDO's) of the Ministry.</p> <p>HELVETAS developed a Resource Manual and Hand Book for the TOT. The initial intervention was in the Phase 3 of the project. They conducted the training for 392 trainees in 10 districts. Then the Ministry rolled out this program in other districts as well. In the Phase IV, with the guidance of ILO, they updated the Training Manual and the Resource Book. With the assistance of ILO, the Ministry has appointed a Technical Committee to review the manuals and updated the manuals as per their recommendations.</p> <p>The Safe Labour Migration Project also expects to improve the engagement in national, regional and global policy dialogues by under-represented districts and national-level stakeholders, especially trade unions and civil society organizations.</p> <p>Thus, the trade union members and civil society partners have been capacitated on key commitments by GoSL, in national policies and plans namely, the National Policy on Migration for Employment, sub policy and national action plan on Return and Reintegration as well as on regional dialogues such as The Colombo Process and Abu Dhabi Dialogue as well as international commitments including the Global Compact on Migration and international labour standards.</p> <p>A series of training sessions have been conducted in this regard and the contents of the training has drawn on guidance produced by the ILO's Bureau for Workers Activities (ACTRAV) for trade unions to promote migrant workers' rights and international labour standards of direct relevance.</p> <p>Hence, this partnership aims to update and localise trainer manuals and tools for the use of ToT unit of the Ministry, trade unions and CSOs, as well as to conduct training sessions to capacitate all master trainers in those institutions.</p>

Key Partner	Roles and Responsibilities
	Through this partnership, the ILO in Sri Lanka expects to expand its tripartite-plus network on labour migration.
09. Employer's Federation of Ceylon (EFC)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Skills Passport is an initiative of the Tertiary and Vocational Educational Commission (TVEC) of the Ministry of Skills Development, Employment and Labour Relations, together with The Employers' Federation of Ceylon (EFC) and the SLMP Project of the International Labour Organization (ILO). • A returnee migrant worker can now assert his or her expertise and experience to gain visibility of potential employers in Sri Lanka by presenting a proof that is embedded with skills and qualifications of a worker, acquired informally, along with references. The passport allows both the employer and skilled workers of Sri Lanka to identify their experience under the national skills assessment systems, explore job opportunities with an adequate wage, decent work conditions and further training for re-skilling and up-skilling.
10. Ministry of Foreign Affairs (MOFA)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Migrant workers in foreign countries in-service are need the support from Foreign Missions abroad. Foreign Missions need to create mechanisms to protect migrant workers from exploitation and abuse, and will ensure that Sri Lankan Diplomatic Missions in host countries have adequate systems and services to assist all migrant workers in each country and work towards their protection and welfare in a proactive manner.

8. THE MID TERM REVIEW (MTR)

The mid-term internal review (MTR) has been conducted in line with both the ILO and Donor evaluation policies and guidelines with the objective of learning and accountability.

The findings of the mid-term review will help identify issues, bottlenecks, and require interventions to address them to ensure the overall achievement of Project Outputs and expected outcomes.

The scope of the assessment covered all interventions of the Project implemented from 18-JAN-2021 to 30-AUG-2023 around the country covering all twenty five districts. The assessment examined the following:

The SLMP Project is based on three Goals. In line with this, this Mid-Term Review Report (MTR) is prepared to assess the midterm project status and achievements of these goals;

- Assessing the benefits of the labour migration governance framework (the National Policy on Migration for Employment and the Sub-Policy and National Action Plan on

Return and Reintegration) through improved monitoring and review of its implementation;

- Assessing fair and ethical recruitment, skills recognition and certification, and strengthen service delivery by state officials, through strategic initiatives which will be driven by the stakeholders themselves; and
- The MTR will provide; policymakers, public officials and other stakeholders an evidence base information for their informed participation in policy, dialogue and action on labour migration.

Purpose and the Scope of the Mid Term Review;

The mid-term internal review (MTR) is conducted in line with both the ILO and Donor evaluation policies and guidelines with the objective of learning and accountability.

The findings of the mid-term evaluation will help identify issues, bottlenecks, and require interventions to address them to ensure the overall achievement of Project Outputs and expected outcomes.

It is expected that learning from the MTR will feed into a wider organizational learning mechanism through 'Management Responses' to the evaluator's comments. The evaluation will apply the evaluation criteria established by the Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD) / Development Assistance Committee (DAC) Quality Standards for Development Evaluation, and the United Nations Evaluation Group (UNEG) Code of Conduct for Evaluation in the UN System.

This assessment has followed guidelines on results-based evaluation of the ILO Evaluation Department (EVAL) contained in the "ILO Policy Guidelines for Evaluation (4th edition)" and, more specifically, the checklist "Preparation of the Evaluation Report". The Evaluation Policy of SDC (revised in 2018) is also one of the guiding documents.

Main end users and use of the mid-term assessment

Key users of the MTR are ILO's constituents, and national and international partners, such as: Government of Sri Lanka including Ministry of Labour & Foreign Employment, Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Ministry of Education, Sri Lanka Bureau of Foreign Employment, Tertiary & Vocational Education Commission. Trade Unions, ILO Country Office in Colombo - ILO HQ, MIGRANT, PARDEV - Donors – Swiss Agency for Development & Cooperation (SDC) - ILO Regional Office for Asia and Pacific (ROAP) - ILO Decent Work Team in New Delhi, India - License Foreign Employment Agencies - Civil Society Organizations - The project team and other relevant ILO policy departments, branches, and programmes

Scope of the Mid Term Review

In ILO, mid-term reviews (MTR) and final evaluations are an integral part of the implementation of technical cooperation activities. Accordingly; this mid-term review has been commissioned.

A Results Based Monitoring, Review, and Reporting process is carried out throughout the project life cycle as per ILO standard procedures for technical cooperation Projects.

Stakeholder participation, simplicity, credibility, and timeliness are core principles of the project mechanism.

A mid-term internal review is being conducted in line with both the ILO and Donor evaluation policies and guidelines with the objectives of learning and accountability. The findings of the mid-term review will help identify issues, bottlenecks, and required interventions to address them to ensure the overall achievement of Project Outputs and expected outcomes. It is expected that learning from these reviews will feed into a wider organizational learning mechanism through 'Management Responses' to the evaluator's comments.

The MTR has been applied the evaluation criteria established by the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD) / Development Assistance Committee (DAC) Quality Standards for Development Evaluation, and the United Nations Evaluation Group (UNEG) Code of Conduct for Evaluation in the UN System. This MTR followed guidelines on results-based evaluation of the ILO Evaluation Department (EVAL) contained in the "ILO Policy Guidelines for Evaluation (4th edition)" and, more specifically, the checklist "Preparation of the Evaluation Report". The Evaluation Policy of SDC (revised in 2018) is also one of the guiding documents. The purpose of this mid-term internal review is to review the project progress, achievements, and challenges, inform the ILO, project stakeholders, and the donor of key lessons learned, and propose recommendations for any improvement or adjustment needed for the remaining project implementation period.

Specifically, the mid-term review will focus on the following aspects;

- Assessment of the validity of the project design and activities, implementation strategy and approaches, capacities of implementing partners, challenges and how these challenges are addressed; and to what extent these contribute to the achievement of the project objectives.
- Drawing key findings and lessons learned and proposing improvement and adjustment needed to ensure that the project remains relevant to the needs of the target groups and contributes to knowledge development.
- Assessment of the impact of COVID-19 and the economic crisis on the project implementation and how well has the project responded to mitigate the impact
- MTR criteria: The MTR is based on the following evaluation criteria: Relevance, effectiveness, efficiency, coherence, and sustainability as defined in the ILO Policy Guidelines for results-based evaluation, 2020 in line with OECD/DAC guidelines:

a. MTR Approach - Methodology and Tools for the assessment;

A mixed methods approach will be used in this MTR to enable triangulation of data from different sources. The methods are briefly described below;

Desk Research

Desk research on secondary sources and data started during the inception phase. Information from the desk review has been used for a preliminary analysis of 'effectiveness' but also provided valuable information to understand the key evaluation questions.

Key documents consulted during the Inception Phase included following documents;

- Project proposal (PRODOC) and related annexures
- NLMP Policy 2008

- SLBFE Corporate Plan
- National Action Plan
- TVEC Agreement
- Progress reports
- SLMP Mid-term TOR
- Other relevant Reports

Desk research continued after the submission of the Inception Report. As the MTR progresses, the Consultant has also reviewed additional documents.

Key Informant Interviews (KII)

Interviews have been conducted with the identified key informants either on a one-to-one basis or in small groups (e.g. when several officials from one organization are involved), or online depending on the availability of the informant. For this purpose, interview guides have been developed

Focus Group Discussions (FGD)

Since the interviews mainly focused to KII's, there was only one Focus Group Discussion conducted at the Labour Ministry level. FGD has been conducted using a structured guide. Selection of beneficiaries for discussion will ensure gender-balance and that they would provide information to assess the project benefits.

Data Management and Triangulation

The outcome of the evaluation will depend on the reliability and validity of data/information collected. Reliability will be ensured by using well-designed Interview Guides to capture the required information and that same or similar responses will be gathered if administered under similar conditions.

The qualitative information collected will be analyzed and triangulated to derive trends and conclusions. This analysis is also expected to reveal any limitations experienced by the Project during the implementation stage.

b. MTR criteria:

The MTR has been based on the following evaluation criteria: Relevance, effectiveness, efficiency, Coherence, and sustainability as defined in the ILO Policy Guidelines for results-based evaluation, 2020 in line with OECD/DAC guidelines:

The following are the evaluation questions that has been used in the MTR. The evaluator has adapted the evaluation criteria and questions as appropriate to the criteria.

Review Criteria	MTR Questions
RELEVANCE	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • MTR has reviewed to what extent the objectives of Safe and Fair Migration Policy Project consistent with beneficiary requirements, country needs, global priorities, international normative frameworks, and adherence of partners' and donor policies, especially with regards to migrants' rights and gender equality.

Review Criteria	MTR Questions
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Reviewed how the SLMP project worked with the workers and employers' organizations (Trade Unions, LFEAs, and CSOs) • Relevance to Donor priorities of Swiss Agency for Development & Cooperation and Ultimate beneficiaries: • Relevance to migrant workers and their families (All women and men) • Other projects of ILO Colombo and Regional (GOALS Project) - project methodologies and approaches in line with the national and project partners' priorities, capacities, and expectations? • Should the project design and methodology be modified to improve its relevance in the second half of the project? If so, how? • To what extent has the project been affected by the COVID-19 pandemic and economic crisis, and How well had the project adjusted to this?
COHERENCE	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • To what extent has the project worked in collaboration with other ILO projects in Sri Lanka and the sub-region (SA) to maximize efficiency and effectiveness? • To what extent has the project added value and collaborated with others who are doing similar work in Sri Lanka and the sub-region and not duplicating the efforts with others • The extent to the project links with SDC Global Programme Migration and Forced Displacement
PROGRESS and EFFECTIVENESS	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • To what extent has the project been making progress toward its planned objectives? • What has been achieved so far? • What are the major constraints so far? - What are the challenges that result in delays in implementation by project partners?
EFFECTIVENESS of management arrangements (including monitoring and evaluation)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Have the project approaches appropriately matched the capacity (including political space) of the project partners for their action? • What measures are required to improve the capacity of project partners in the second half of the project? • Has the project received adequate political, technical, and administrative support from its national partners? • To what extent have the project's interventions so far contributed to promoting safe labour migration? • Was there a clear understanding of the roles and responsibilities of all parties involved? • How effective is communication between the project team, the ILO, and the project partners, stakeholders as well as the donor?

Review Criteria	MTR Questions
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What should be improved in the second half of the project?
EFFICIENCY of resource use	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Have resources (funds, human resources, time, expertise etc.) been allocated strategically to achieve outcomes? • Was the project implemented as planned, what have been the factors that affected the timely delivery of activities and finance and what countermeasures have been taken to achieve project outcomes? • To what extent the project has leveraged resources with other projects/programmes and possible partnerships with other institutes to enhance the project efficiency and impact?
SUSTAINABILITY And IMPACT of the project	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • How could the project support increased commitment, ownership, buy-in and support? • Is there both capacity and commitment from different stakeholder groups to achieve project outputs and outcomes? • How likely is the project will achieve its objectives in the second half of the project and what elements need to be taken into account to ensure the sustainability of outcomes? • To what extent has the project contributed to the ILO – SDC – GOSL sustainable partnership? • To what extent has the project contributed to strengthening GOSL-trade union policy dialogues in migrants’ rights protection?
Cross-cutting issues	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • To what extent has the project yielded the expected results and that it has adhered to ILO norms and standards (ILS, social dialogue, and tri-partism) • The extent the project promotes tri-partism • To what extent has the project promoted non-discrimination, gender equality, and rights based approaches? • The evaluations will address the ILO’s crosscutting policy drivers – gender equality, non-discrimination, and social transformation. In terms of this evaluation, this implies involving both men and women, and other social/cultural categories as relevant by country in the consultation, evaluation analysis and evaluator. • Moreover, the evaluator should review data and information that are disaggregated by sex at a minimum and assess the relevance and effectiveness of gender-related strategies and outcomes to improve lives of women and men. All this information should be included in the inception report and mid-term review report.

The MTR also reviewed cross-cutting issues of special interest to the ILO. It was complied with evaluation criteria related to ILO’s mandate in cross-cutting policy drivers and pro-poor focus and

inclusion issues, namely, project's responsiveness to issues relating to gender equality, rights-based approach, and project's relevance and contribution to SDG and related targets as prioritized by the national sustainable development strategy and DWCP.

MTR Findings

The Theory of Change of the Project is well founded. The logic is reflected in the Results Framework. Overall, the indicators in the Results Framework are valid. The Project set in place response to Covid-19 pandemic, and introduced actions to overcome economic and social hardships of migrant communities.

Outcome # 1; Fostering fair and ethical recruitment, skills recognition and certification, and sustainable reintegration through institutional enhancement and a 'Whole-of-Government' approach.

Outcome # 2; Fair and ethical recruitment, skills recognition and certification, and sustainable reintegration is fostered through institutional enhancement and the 'Whole-Of-Government-Approach'

Outcome # 3; improved evidence-base on labour migration to inform knowledge, dialogue, policy and action

9. SLMP PROGRESS - UPTO AUGUST 2023

Achievements of Outcome 1;

Under outcome 1; the project seeks to improve existing labour migration systems and policies, primarily of the Ministry and the SLBFE to support the protection and well-being of Migrant Workers and their families by sustainable implementation of the new Policy while aligning these to standardized regional frameworks particularly in the areas of fair recruitment, skills qualifications and reintegration.

At the Ministry, an inhouse Training Unit is reinforced for continuous capacity building of key personal on Labour Migration and a Knowledge Hub is being developed to inform policy discourse. The programme has supported, implementation of the new Policy by establishing a clear monitoring mechanism as stipulated within the policy guidelines and emergency support protocols in the wake of COVID -19.

Enhancing the benefits of the labour migration governance framework (the National Policy on Migration for Employment and the Sub-Policy and National Action Plan on Return and Reintegration) through improved monitoring and review of its implementation outward labour migration policies and plans are better implemented and monitored by the GoSL

Under the first outcome of the project, it is expected to capacitate the Trade Unions to engage in the district, national, regional, and global dialogues on the governance of safe and regular labour migration.

Through the SLMP Project; the policy has to be converted to practical implementation. With this objective, it is planned to develop necessary training manuals and a training tool-kit for the use of training purposes and knowledge enhancement of trade union members. Hence, seven trade unions working on migrant rights protection were invited to a consultation and it was remarkable to see the active participation of female trade union members. (One

leader and seven other officers) at this consultation. The inputs and suggestions of this consultation has been considered at the development stage of the training manual and the tool-kit. The topics consulted during the workshop were:

- Governance of migration (legal, policy, and institutional frameworks)
- Welfare and well-being of migrant workers and family members; and
- The role of trade unions in the sphere of labour migration in Sri Lanka.

The ToT unit of the State Ministry had some trainer manuals and handouts developed through HELVETAS in 2019. But there was a need to revisit and update the content to match the current environment. Some of the training topics have not developed necessary training guides. The purpose of the trainer manual and handouts is to organize, by explaining, how trainers are going to train their target trainees. A trainer manual guarantees that trainees do not miss important instructions. Therefore, the Project expects to assist the ToT unit to revisit existing trainer manuals, update them and develop guides for new topics.

The proposed topics for trainer manuals and handouts were; fair recruitment, international labour standards, national labour migration policies, regional and global commitments, trafficking and forced labour, new trends in labour migration, safe labour migration, Family Development Plan, Care Plan, psychosocial development, and stress management etc.

The trainer manuals and handouts to be easy to follow, layout concepts in clear language, use relevant examples and imagery. As such, there is a need to partner with HELVETAS who has developed the existing trainer manuals to conduct orientation for the master trainers in the ToT unit. Key Activities/Responsibilities of HELVETAS Under the overall supervision of a nominated senior officer from the State Ministry of FEP&MD and National Project Coordinator of the Safe Labour Migration Project Phase IV, the HELVETAS had performed the following specific tasks.

- Conduct consultations with the senior officials from the State Ministry to identify the requirement.
- Conduct a rapid assessment of the master trainers in the ToT unit to identify their capacity.
- Revisit the existing trainer manuals and handouts and update them to match the current requirement
- Developed manuals and handouts for the new topics which have no existing manuals

Development guidelines for identified activities of Foreign Employment Development Officers (FEDO's) developed 'Family Care Plan' and 'Family Development Plan' for the use of Development Officers on their service delivery in the field. Pre-test the manuals, handouts, plans and guidelines with selected master trainers and DOs Present the manuals, handouts, plans and guidelines to the Technical Review Committee appointed by the State Ministry for endorsement. Finalize the manuals, handouts, plans and guidelines. Translation of manuals, handouts, plans and guidelines to local languages. Layout design and printing of manuals handouts and guidelines completed.

The seven trade union leaders who work for migrant workers' rights protection were appointed as an advisory committee to guide the ILO and HELVETAS in this regard. Training modules and tool-kit development of this assignment were handled by HELVETAS, and the suggested modules were presented to the participants to obtain feedback. The listed topics were presented at the discussion which has been further reviewed and altered based on the feedback received from the trade union members with their extensive experience in the following labour migration subject areas.

- An understanding of labour migration in Sri Lanka
- Labour migration governance in Sri Lanka
- Issues faced by migrant workers throughout the migration cycle and roles, responsibilities, and services of the Sri Lanka Bureau of Foreign Employment (SLBFE)
- International commitments on labour migration towards the protection of the rights of migrant workers
- Social protection
- An introduction to gender, ethnicity, geographical diversity, child protection, disability, religious diversity
- Skills development of migrant workers
- Financial Literacy
- Organizing migrant workers

Through this initiative, ILO expects to train trainers from respective trade unions as master trainers with the aim of creating awareness for a wider audience on protecting the rights of migrant workers. The ILO looks forward to providing continuous assistance to strengthen the trade unions through its development initiatives.

Achievement of Outcome 2; Fostering fair and ethical recruitment, skills recognition and certification, and sustainable reintegration through institutional enhancement and a 'Whole of-Government' approach.

The MTR has reviewed the strategic priorities of the foreign employment sector in Sri Lanka, as presented in the most recently updated National Policy Framework on Foreign Employment.

As per the Policy Framework, the following areas were listed as Strategic Priorities for 2022-2026: Mainstreaming project strategies into national policy framework is a significant achievement of the Project.

Core Policy Area	Strategies adapted
1. Governance of labour migration to promote decent and productive employment	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Strengthen the legal, regulatory and institutional framework for governance of labour migration. • Promote Policy linkages, institutional coherence and multi-sectoral coordination. • Capacity development of key stakeholders to support an effective labour migration sector. • Strengthen structures and systems to ensure professionalization of the recruitment sector

Core Policy Area	Strategies adapted
2. Secure rights and protection of migrant workers and ensure the wellbeing of their families	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The SLBFE handles complaints and grievances of migrant workers while they are employed abroad and take necessary steps to settle them with the assistance of the respective local recruitment agents and the Sri Lanka Embassies abroad. • Strengthen and promote well-planned, coordinated, and efficient and gender responsive service delivery to migrant workers and their family members. • Strengthen grievance handling and dispute resolution mechanisms for the protection and security of migrant workers. • Establish social security systems for migrant workers in-country in collaboration with host country governments and employers. • Educate and empower migrant workers and build alliances to influence policy and programmes on migration.
3. Promotion of employment opportunities for skilled and semi- skilled migrant workers in local and global economies	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Strengthen sectoral coordination and invest in skills development to meet global and local labour market demands. • Strengthen and upgrade national skill development plans and the qualification framework in line with regional and international standards. • Expand the scope and institutional capacity to facilitate the local labour force to take up diverse opportunities in the global labour market. • Facilitate Recognition of Prior Learning (RPL) and other schemes for returnee migrant workers.
4. Enhance benefits of migration and its nexus with national development	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Migration for Employment is a development goal in national strategies and action plans. • Multi-sectoral facilitation of reintegration of migrant returnees and development of human and social capital. • Engage migrant communities and overseas Sri Lankans as partners in development. • Increase and manage migrant worker remittances for productive investment.

Achievements of Outcome 3; Expectation of the outcome 3 is; improved evidence-base on labour migration on knowledge, dialogue, policy and action.

The ILO-SLMP plays a crucial role in researching and improving the evidence base on labour migration in various countries, including Sri Lanka. The ILO's work in this area aims to inform knowledge, facilitate dialogue, shape policy, and promote concrete actions to enhance the labour migration experience for both Sri Lankan migrant workers and host countries. Here are some key aspects of how the ILO contributes to this process:

Core Policy Area	Strategies Adapted
1. Research and Data Collection:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The ILO through its SLMP Project supported key partners to conduct research and data collection on various aspects of labour migration in Sri Lanka. This includes analysing migration trends, labour market conditions, and the impact of migration on both sending and receiving countries. This research helps build an evidence-based understanding of labour migration dynamics.
3. Policy Development:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Based on its research findings, the SLMP project collaborated with the Sri Lankan government and other stakeholders to develop and refine policies related to labour migration. These policies aim to protect the rights and well-being of Sri Lankan migrant workers while promoting the economic benefits of migration.
4. Capacity Building:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The Project through their partners provided training and capacity-building programs for government officials, labour organizations, recruitment agencies, and other relevant stakeholders. These programs help build the skills and knowledge needed to effectively manage labour migration and protect the rights of migrant workers.
5. Promotion of Decent Work:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The Project enhanced to promote the concept of "decent work" for migrant workers, which encompasses fair wages, safe working conditions, and social protection. This advocacy helps ensure that Sri Lankan migrants enjoy decent working conditions in host countries.
6. Awareness and Advocacy:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The Project engaged in awareness-raising campaigns to inform potential migrant workers about their rights and responsibilities. Additionally, it advocates for policies that reduce the vulnerabilities of migrant workers to exploitation and abuse.
7. Dialogue and Cooperation:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The Project facilitates dialogue and cooperation among governments, employers, trade unions, and civil society organizations to address labour migration issues collectively. This multi-stakeholder approach helps develop comprehensive solutions and policies.
8. Monitoring and Evaluation:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The Project monitors the implementation of labour migration policies and programs in Sri Lanka and assesses their impact. This ongoing evaluation ensures that policies are effective and responsive to changing circumstances.

Achievements of Objectives:

The main objectives of this project are to provide support to the government to finalize the update of the National Policy on Migration for Employment; develop a comprehensive labour migration data and knowledge system, strengthen Foreign Employment Development Officers for better service delivery, establish a 'Whole of Government' approach, and negotiate and implement bilateral labour agreements. The update of national policy was started by the SLMP Phase III but it was not completed within the project period. Therefore, the current phase is finalizing public consultations, the final review, along with the preparation of the final policy document and its debriefing. This will lead to the establishment of a policy monitoring steering committee as Output 1 of the project plan. The ILO completed two rounds of technical assistance to update the policy in 2021 and 2022 and tabled it to the Cabinet in September 2022. But the Cabinet requested to revisit and re-align the policy to the current government development policy strategies. Therefore, the third round of technical assistance for the updating of the policy and the action plan has completed. The Ministry of Labour & Foreign Employment has tabled the revised policy to the Cabinet and the Ministry has informed that the revised Policy was approved by the Cabinet on 4th of September 2023.

The project engaged with the civil society organization network 'Voice of Migrants' (VoM), which consists of more than 30 national and regional CSOs, trade unions, INGOs, and think tanks. A joint action plan has been developed with Voice of Migrants (VoM), but the project expects to further strategize VoM work and will be further refined to address current challenges. The main objective of the project is to provide necessary assistance and strengthen advocating capacities of CSOs and trade unions to protect the rights of migrant workers. Trade Unions are a one major constituent of ILO Tri Partite approach. Voice of Migrants (VoM) play a trade union role and as a civil society role in the safe migration project. VoM is play a key role in working with the Migrant workers in the country. There are five (5) trade unions, 565 migrant societies a coalition of 26 CSO's working through Voice of Migrants (VoC). There are over 900 members in those 565 Migrant Societies. VOM is working in following districts; Killinochchi, Batticaloa, Ampara, Nuwaraeliya, Kurunegala, Galle, Matara, Hambantota, Anuradhapura and Kandy. They will expand their coverage by starting offices in Colombo, Gampaha and Puttalam.

VOC works as a CSO organization in the field of migrant worker rights. They involve with, Migrant Worker Societies, TU's, and with FEDO's. Their scope of engagement are; awareness creation, training of TU's, conduct Campaigns, lobbying with policy makers; on migrant worker Voting Rights, Remittance management, improvement of Family Background Reports with information of both men and women and all dependents, not limiting to below two year children etc.

Also, VOM is working on preparing a comprehensive database on returnee migrant workers.

VOM is keen on developing a comprehensive Family Development Plan for migrant worker families. According to the VOM, the migrant worker priorities are different of what are given at the moment; such as duty free Electric Cars. VOM is helping migrant worker societies to develop their priority list, including, construction of houses, meet education needs of the children, fulfilling utility requirements, to start a business to meet a sustainable family

income etc. Also VOM thinks, that every migrant worker should have a proper Family Development Plan/ Business Plan before they migrate.

The project has identified skills recognition and certification as key elements of migration-focused skills development. Therefore, the project is working with the Tertiary and Vocational Education Commission (TVEC) to digitalize the Recognition of Prior Learning (RPL) process to increase the efficiency and effectiveness of skills recognition. The ILO/SDC priority sectors in the scope of the project, which are hospitality, construction, and care works will be supported by the e-RPL system for better access to skills recognition. The ILO international experiences were also considered to develop the comprehensive system. The e-RPL system will link with the National Skills Passport, a product that is in place to provide skills certifications. The NVQ Circular 02/2021 of the Tertiary and Vocational Education Commission (TVEC) outlines the process of awarding NVQs in the e-RPL system through Recognition of Prior Learning (RPL) with a special focus to migrant workers.

The project has a limited linkages with the sub-regional GOALS project funded by SDC, and provides coordinating support in the implementation of its few specific activities in Sri Lanka. Supporting the South Asian Qualification Reference Framework and Colombo Process consultations are the activities which have some indirect links. The project supported the regional office to share country experiences among SA countries in many forms. Other than the regional engagements, the project coordinated with ILO headquarters to link Sri Lankan counterparts in global forums related to migration activities.

The project was initially started with the State Ministry of Foreign Employment Promotions & Market Diversification as the key stakeholder. Due to the recent changes in the governance mechanism, there were many portfolio changes. Since the state ministry portfolio became a division under the Ministry of Labour & Foreign Employment and the same staff continues, it can be more convenient the coordination and implement with a good understanding of the ministry. Government priorities and policies related to labour migration have significantly changed which needs to realign some project activities in line with these new changes.

The economic crisis and specifically the fuel issue experienced in the middle of the last year led to the delay in all government functions specially the field operations. It affected the project implementation at the field level. In the second quarter of the year 2022, there were continuous protests throughout the country and it leads to political instability. Therefore, the ministry did not take any policy decisions for practical implementations other than day-to-day operations. Implementation of the activities anyway slowed down because of the instability of the political and economic situation.

Sri Lanka saw a record high labour migration in 2022. Over 300,000 of people moved to other countries in search of jobs in foreign currency after the Sri Lanka's currency collapsed and inflation increased to an all-time high.

Sri Lanka's rupee fell over 60 percent in 2022 – from 200 rupees to 360 rupees – after the central bank printed billions of rupees to finance the government spending in the face of

higher state expenditure and lower government revenue. The money printing also resulted in the inflation rising to record 73 percent in September.

Sri Lanka saw 311,269 people leaving the country in 2022, the highest in history. Previously, the country's annual peak was 300,413 in 2014. It was more than double of the migrated population of 121,795 in the previous year, the central bank data showed.

The government has announced a raft of incentives for those who send foreign currency remittances to the country. But the country is yet to see a significant increase in foreign remittances in proportion to the increase in labour migration last year. The worker remittances 2022, decreased by 36 percent to \$3.3 billion in the first 11 months of the year compared to the previous year's \$5.2 billion, the central bank data showed.

10. MID TERM REVIEW (MTR) FINDINGS AND ASSESSMENT ON RELEVANCE, COHERENCE, EFFECTIVENESS, EFFICIENCY, SUSTAINABILITY AND CROSS CUTTING AREAS.

RELEVANCE TO GOVERNMENT POLICIES; The Project is prepared based on the Government Policies and Vis – Versa; as a result; some of the Government Policies are prepared based on the Safe Migration Policy Project outlines.

- National Labour Migration Policy 2008
- National Human Rights Action Plan 2017-2021
- Special Gazette paper No. 2187/27 - 2020 dated 09.08.2020
- “Vistas of Prosperity and Splendour” government’s policy statement and changed with new government policy on migrant work.
- Corporate Plan 2019-2023 of the SLBFE
- As per the direction of the Parliament COPE Committee; a Sub Committee was formed with the Ministry of Labour and Foreign Employment, Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Tertiary and Vocational Education Commission (TVEC) and SLBFE to develop necessary policies for Safe Migration.

RELEVANCE TO GLOBAL PRIORITIES

The relationship between the ILO Safe Migration Project and Swiss Development Cooperation (SDC) priorities have been seen in the following ways:

- **Human Rights and Social Justice:** Both the ILO and Swiss Agency for Development & Cooperation (SDC) have a commitment to promoting human rights and social justice. A Safe Migration Project aligned with SDC priorities by focusing on ensuring that the rights of migrant workers are protected, and they are treated fairly and equitably.
- **Poverty Reduction and Economic Development:** Safe and well-managed migration can contribute to poverty reduction by creating opportunities for individuals to find better employment and economic prospects. Swiss Agency for Development & Cooperation (SDC) emphasis on sustainable economic development has intersected with the ILO project's aim to ensure migrants have access to decent work and fair wages.
- **Gender Equality:** Migration often has gender-specific implications, with women and men experiencing migration differently. Both entities might prioritize projects that address gender inequalities in the context of migration, ensuring that women migrants are empowered and protected.

- Capacity Building and Governance: Swiss Agency for Development & Cooperation often focuses on building the capacity of governments and institutions in partner countries. Collaboration with the ILO could involve strengthening the governance and regulatory frameworks related to migration, enhancing the ability of governments to manage migration flows effectively and protect migrants' rights.
- Health and Well-being: Ensuring the health and well-being of migrants is important for both the ILO and Swiss Agency for Development & Cooperation. Project addressed access to healthcare, social services, and living conditions that contribute to migrants' overall quality of life.
- SLMP is prepared by including relevant SDG priorities; Target 5, 8, 10 and 17.

RELEVANCE TO GLOBAL COMPACT FOR SAFE, ORDERLY AND REGULAR MIGRATION (GCM)

GCM has not been ratified by Swiss. Therefore, SDC strongly advised not to spend Swiss funds on any GCM activity although it is a key activity. The new decision came after designing of the project. SLMP Project anyhow not utilized SDC funds for GCM activities.

Anyhow, the Global Compact for Safe, Orderly, and Regular Migration (GCM) framework is being implemented in various countries to improve migration practices. The GCM was adopted by the United Nations in 2018 and provides a comprehensive and cooperative framework to address migration on a global scale.

Although the donor funds are not utilising for GCM activities, the GCM components are included to government policies. The GCM emphasizes the importance of cooperation among various stakeholders, including state institutions, the private sector, international organizations, and civil society, to ensure safe and orderly migration while protecting the rights of migrants. This involve measures such as;

- Capacity Building: Strengthening the capacity of state institutions involved in migration management, such as labour ministries and immigration authorities, to effectively regulate and oversee labour migration.
- Private Sector Engagement: Collaborating with the private sector, including recruitment agencies and employers, to ensure fair recruitment practices, proper employment contracts, and decent working conditions for migrants.
- Protection of Rights: Implementing mechanisms to protect the rights and well-being of migrant workers, including access to legal assistance, healthcare, and social services.
- Information and Awareness: Providing accurate and transparent information to potential migrants about their rights, destination countries, job opportunities, and potential risks associated with migration.
- Data Collection and Monitoring: Establishing systems to collect data on labour migration trends, remittances, and the well-being of migrants, which can inform evidence-based policies.
- Collaboration with International Organizations: Working with international organizations, such as the ILO, International Organization for Migration (IOM) and relevant UN agencies, to receive support and guidance in implementing best practices.
- Policy Alignment: Adapting national policies and regulations to be in line with international labour and migration standards, as outlined in the GCM.

By adopting such measures, Sri Lanka work towards safer and more beneficial labour migration experiences for its citizens while also contributing to the broader goals of the GCM. It's important to note that successful implementation requires ongoing commitment, coordination, and monitoring from all stakeholders involved.

RELEVANCE TO SDG GOALS;

The Project is designed in line with following SDG Targets;

- SDG Target 5 on gender equality and women and girls' empowerment by mainstreaming gender as a cross cutting theme across interventions
- SDG Target 8 on growth and decent work, specifically Target 8.8. on protecting labour rights and promoting safe and secure working environments for all workers including migrant workers, in particular women migrants, and those in precarious employment
- SDG Target 10 on reducing inequalities, specifically Target 10.7 on facilitating orderly, safe and regular migration of people, through the implementation of planned and well-managed migration policies.
- SDG Target 17 on global partnerships on sustainable development which includes improving data systems.

RELEVANCE TO DECENT WORK COUNTRY PROGRAM (DWCP) OF ILO;

Supported by the Government of Switzerland, this Safe Migration programme aims at ensuring an effective implementation of the Sri Lanka National Labour Migration Policy while promoting decent work through good governance, protection and empowerment of migrant workers. Also the Project is directly linked to labour migration in Sri Lanka is well-governed, orderly and regular for all women and men, ensuring decent, safe and productive employment.

SLMP Project is well aligned with the Country's Decent Work Country Program (DWCP) which was facilitated by ILO.

RELEVANCE TO SLBFE FIVE YEAR CORPORATE STRATEGIC PLAN

As a result of Safe Migration Project, a key stakeholder of the Project, SLBFE prepared their five year Corporate Strategic Plan based on the SLMP Project Objectives. Accordingly, the Strategic Plan is focused on following 04 Core Policy Areas.

- Core Policy Area 1: Governance of labour migration to promote decent and productive employment
- Core Policy Area 2: Secure rights and protection of migrant workers and ensure well-being of their families
- Core Policy Area 3: Promotion of employment opportunities for skilled and semi-skilled migrant workers in local and global economies
- Core Policy Area 4: Enhance benefits of migration and its nexus with national development

RELEVANCE TO IMPACTS OF COVID 19 PANDEMIC;

In the context of the COVID-19 pandemic, effective communication, and timely action on labour migration governance are important to all ILO constituents as well as other stakeholders. Development Partners, Think-Tanks, and Non-Governmental Organisations were timely provided necessary information.

Economic instability caused by the increasing number of returnee migrant workers due to job loss in countries of destination, and the severe impact on the wellbeing of migrant workers' families and the community at large.

In the context of COVID-19, one of the overarching issues were, whether the countries of origin are equipped to engage the returnee migrants into the national labour force; and what reintegration mechanisms operate to facilitate the increasing numbers of returnees. While Sri Lanka was the first in South Asia to introduce a Sub-Policy on Return and Reintegration (2015) as part of its National Labour Migration Policy (2008), the efforts in terms of reintegrating migrant workers were addressed by the policy.

With the pandemic, many Sri Lankans considered seeking employment opportunities overseas, simply for survival, irrespective of the nature and quality of the job. Thus, effective dialogues needed to be taken place on framing Bilateral Labour Agreements to ensure decent work for migrant workers in the host countries.

As a result of COVID 19 Pandemic, another aspect that needed to be looked into was identifying new labour markets. Majority of the South Asian migrant workers end-up in traditional labour markets such as the Middle East and the Arab States. However, "governments in South Asia are now in the process of making bilateral agreements with new labour markets such as Mauritius, Japan, Rumania, Poland, and in Africa as well as Latin America, which is indeed a positive trend" arise as a positive result of the COVID Pandemic.

It is important to recognise issues of social protection, remittances as well as the gendered experiences of female migrant workers, and its intersections across the different issues highlighted above. Women have been to continue to play an important role in labour migration. Thus, concrete actions need to be in place to ensure their protection but also agency; not merely focusing on their vulnerability but also their dignity as migrant workers who immensely contribute to the national economy.

Hence, it is important to identify prevailing policy gaps and address them effectively for women to be able to migrate in a safe, orderly and regular manner. It is important to identify the actions to be taken to strengthen regional dialogues such as the Colombo Process. Further, in ensuring the protection of the migrant workers in line with the Global Compact on Migration framework, UN agencies such as ILO, IOM, and UN Women as well as trade unions and other social partners, and CSOs, have a role to play especially in terms of advocacy.

- COVID-19 impacts, including reduced employment opportunities, and international responses to the pandemic such as restricted international travel, have directly affected Sri Lankan migrants overseas. Over 50,000 Sri Lankan migrant workers have

returned home, creating challenges for existing social protection systems, care networks, and returnee support services.

- GoSL aims to upskill migrant workers and has highlighted the strategic need to promote local employment for migrant returnees to facilitate their return and reintegration into the country. The pandemic has also highlighted the fragility of social cohesion in the country with several incidents of stigmatization, discrimination and hate speech towards returning migrant workers, foreigners and minorities reported during the crisis. Since Sri Lanka had a robust health system compared to countries at a similar economic level and was able to respond to the initial challenges posed by COVID-19. However, pressure on the health system increased significantly following surges in cases in October 2020. The disruption of primary health care services has made access to essential services difficult, particularly for vulnerable groups, including internal migrants, IDPs, asylum seekers and refugees with pre-existing medical conditions.
- In the COVID 19 Pandemic period, the Safe Migration Project worked closely with the Tertiary and Vocational Education Commission (TVEC). As a result, several new developments were introduced to the ILO-Safe Migration Project by the TVEC. Previous RPL system is upgraded with an E – RPL system. Introduced the Skilled Passport system with an e Card. The new e-RPL system helped applicants to understand the status of their e-RPL process.
- Previously the prior learning assessments were done through; VTA, NAITA and DTET only. Now, TVEC has expanded prior learning assessments through some new partners, including; Electricity Board for electricians, Water Board for related occupations, NIPM for plantation workers, SLT for related technicians, Atomic Energy Board, SLITHM for tourism sector employees and SLITA for textile sector workers. As a result of this new introduction, now TVET sector has expand their capacity of annual assessments from 5,000 to 55,000 persons per year. This was a significant increase. Also this new assessment categories are related to skilled and semi-skilled foreign employment occupations.
- ILO Safe Migration Project supported TVEC to conduct a training programs for Assessors to upgrade their training skills.
- With the support of ILO Safe Migration Project, TVEC conducted Knowledge Assessment for 14 occupation sectors through a newly introduced digital platform. The pilot phase completed. The Department of Manpower of the Ministry of Labour has send returned migrants due to the COVID Pandemic for this assessment.
- The Skilled Passport is similar to “Europass” system. Pakistan and Bangladesh are keen to introduce a similar passport for their countries.

COHERENCE

ILO Safe Migration project – Phase IV often ensuring coherence across various dimensions to effectively address the challenges associated with labour migration. Coherence in the context of ILO Safe Migration projects typically refers to the alignment and integration of various components, strategies, and stakeholders to achieve common objectives. Here are some key aspects of coherence in ILO Safe Migration project:

Policy Coherence: Ensuring that migration policies at various levels (national, regional, and international) are coherent and aligned with each other. This involves harmonizing policies related to labour, employment, immigration, and social protection to facilitate safe and orderly migration.

Coherence on Multi-Stakeholder Engagement: Promoting collaboration and coordination among multiple stakeholders, including the key government institutions, employers' organizations, trade unions, civil society, and international organizations. This helps ensure that different actors work together towards common goals, such as protecting the rights and well-being of migrant workers and their families.

Coherence to local and International contexts: Governance of Labour migration within the local and international context is of paramount importance to promote decent and productive foreign employment for Sri Lankans. The Sri Lanka Bureau of Foreign Employment Act No. 21 of 1985 and its subsequent amendments are the main tool for the governance of labour migration within the jurisdiction of Sri Lanka while the UN conventions, ILO conventions, Bi-lateral and multi-lateral MOUs and agreements exist as the major determinants and guiding principles of the labour migration in the international context.

The policies and strategies for governance of labour migration should be formulated in line with the prevailing global, political and economic atmospheres, social and economic needs of countries of origin and countries of destination, and also after paying due consideration on the market needs. Accordingly, Thrust Area 1 of the SLBFE Corporate Strategic Plan has been developed, taking all the aforesaid aspects into account and also with the view to guide the way forward for the development of required physical, human and legal infrastructure in line with the Mission statement of the SLBFE

Data and Research Coherence: Gathering and sharing accurate and up-to-date data and research on migration trends, labour market conditions, and the impact of migration policies. Coherent data and research are essential for evidence-based policymaking and program development. One of the key outputs is to analyse data on labour migration for the development of the "Knowledge Hub". Under the same output, a key activity is to curate research studies conducted on Labour Migration during the recent past for the use of stakeholders, while identifying knowledge gaps for evidence-based policymaking.

It is also expected that the 'Knowledge Hub', as part of the Ministry of Labour and Foreign Employment (MoL&FE), will be capacitated to commission research, publish knowledge products, and conduct knowledge-sharing events.

An important first step towards establishing and capacitating the 'Knowledge Hub' is the compilation and review of research studies on Labour Migration in Sri Lanka, South Asia and other relevant contexts, conducted during the past five years to: obtain an overview of findings and recommendations, identify research gaps, and examine current trends in the sphere of Labour Migration.

South Asia Centre for Labour Mobility and Migrants (SALAM) was launched by the Governance of Labour Migration in South and South-East Asia (GOALS), a regional programme jointly implemented by the International Labour Organization (ILO), the

International Organization for Migration (IOM), and UN Women, with the support of the Swiss Agency for Development and Cooperation.

The hub seeks to be a one-stop platform serving policy makers, civil society actors, social partners and other stakeholders with knowledge, information, networks, and policy solutions leading to positive changes in labour migration policies and practices.

Coherence to Capacity Building and Training: Providing training and capacity-building programs that are coherent with the needs of migrant workers, employers, and relevant authorities. This includes ensuring that training programs are consistent with international labour standards and best practices. TOT program has trained 30 FEDO's in the first program and the second TOT is planned for another 35 FEDO's.

Coherence to Information Dissemination and Awareness: Ensuring that information and awareness-raising campaigns are coherent and effective in reaching potential migrants and employers. Information should be accurate, accessible, and available in multiple languages.

Coherence to Legal and Regulatory Frameworks: Ensuring that legal and regulatory frameworks at the national and international levels are coherent and supportive of safe migration. This may involve advocating for changes in laws and regulations that may pose risks to migrant workers.

Coherence to Safety Measures: Coherent safety measures should be in place to protect the rights and well-being of migrant workers throughout their migration journey, from recruitment to return. This includes mechanisms to prevent exploitation, abuse, and human trafficking.

Coherence to Monitoring and Evaluation: Implementing a coherent system for monitoring and evaluating the impact of safe migration initiatives and adjusting strategies as needed to achieve better outcomes.

Coherence to Partnership Building: Developing coherent partnerships with organizations, agencies, and governments in both source and destination countries to enhance the effectiveness of safe migration programs.

Coherence to Sustainability: Ensuring that safe migration initiatives are coherent with long-term sustainability goals, taking into account economic, social, and environmental factors.

In summary, coherence in ILO Safe Migration project is about aligning policies, stakeholders, data, capacity-building efforts, information campaigns, legal frameworks, safety measures, monitoring, and partnerships to create a comprehensive and effective approach to addressing the challenges and promoting safe and orderly migration. This approach aims to protect the rights and well-being of migrant workers and ensure that labour migration benefits both individuals and countries involved.

EFFECTIVENESS

Effectiveness in the context of ILO Safe Migration project has been assessed through various key performance indicators and impact areas:

Reduction in Unsafe Migration Practices: One of the primary goals of safe migration projects is to reduce unsafe migration practices, such as human trafficking and irregular migration. The effectiveness can be measured by assessing whether these practices have decreased among Sri Lankan migrant workers. According to the SLBFE and registered foreign employment agencies they assured that, unsafe migration is significantly reduced.

Enhanced Legal and Regulatory Frameworks: The effectiveness of ILO projects can be evaluated by examining whether they have contributed to improvements in the legal and regulatory framework related to migration in Sri Lanka. This includes reforms to labour laws and regulations to protect the rights of migrant workers.

Increased Awareness and Access to Information: An effective safe migration project should lead to increased awareness among potential migrant workers about the risks and opportunities of migration. Evaluations may focus on the dissemination of accurate and timely information to migrants and their families.

Improved Pre-departure Training: Evaluations can assess whether pre-departure training programs have been effective in equipping migrants with the necessary skills and knowledge to work safely and legally in destination countries.

Protection of Migrant Workers' Rights: Effectiveness can be measured by the extent to which the ILO project has contributed to the protection of the rights of Sri Lankan migrant workers abroad, including their working conditions, wages, and access to social services.

Support Services for Returning Migrants: Evaluations may examine the availability and quality of support services for returning migrants, including reintegration programs and access to healthcare and psychosocial support.

Monitoring and Reporting Mechanisms: The effectiveness of ILO Safe Migration projects can also be assessed by the existence and functionality of monitoring and reporting mechanisms for migrant workers' issues, including cases of exploitation or abuse.

Collaboration with Stakeholders: The extent to which the ILO project has successfully collaborated with Sri Lankan government agencies, civil society organizations, employers, and other stakeholders in implementing safe migration initiatives.

Economic and Social Impact: Evaluations may analyse the economic and social impact of safe migration projects on Sri Lankan communities, including remittances, poverty reduction, and local development.

Long-term Sustainability: Assessing whether the outcomes and benefits of safe migration projects are sustainable over the long term, including measures to ensure the continuity of safe migration efforts beyond the project's duration.

To assess the effectiveness of a specific ILO Safe Migration Project in Sri Lanka, it would be essential to review project-specific reports, evaluations, and data collected during and after the project's implementation. Additionally, consulting with stakeholders, including migrant workers and their families, government agencies, and NGOs involved in migration issues, can provide valuable insights into the project's impact. Keep in mind that project

effectiveness can vary depending on project design, funding, and the evolving context of migration in Sri Lanka.

This programme aims at ensuring an effective implementation of the Sri Lanka National Labour Migration Policy while promoting decent work through good governance, protection and empowerment of migrant workers.

Grassroots level engagement with Migrants and their families through CSO's, TU's and FEDO's; although the FEDO's are not a direct partner of the Project, Ministry considered FEDO's local level involvement as a crucial engagement of the Ministries core involvement.

CSO's and Foreign Employment Development Officers (FEDOs) in Sri Lanka play a crucial role in facilitating and regulating the process of foreign employment for Sri Lankan migrant workers. Their primary responsibility is to ensure that potential migrant workers are informed, prepared, and protected throughout the entire process of seeking employment abroad. Here are some key roles and responsibilities of CSO's in Sri Lanka:

- Pre-Departure Orientation: CSOs provide pre-departure orientation and training to potential migrant workers. This includes educating them about their rights and responsibilities, the legal procedures involved in overseas employment, the culture and laws of the destination country, and how to safeguard themselves against potential exploitation.
- Documentation and Legal Procedures: They guide potential migrants through the documentation and legal procedures required for overseas employment. This includes assistance with obtaining passports, visas, work permits, and other necessary documents.
- Job Matching: CSOs help match potential migrants with suitable job opportunities abroad based on their skills, qualifications, and preferences. They work to ensure that job placements are legitimate and in compliance with labour laws.
- Information Dissemination: They are responsible for disseminating accurate and up-to-date information about various aspects of overseas employment, such as working conditions, wages, living conditions, and potential risks.
- Counselling and Support: CSOs provide counselling and support to potential migrants who may have concerns, fears, or doubts about working abroad. They address queries related to the migration process and offer emotional support.
- Awareness Campaigns: They participate in and organize awareness campaigns in local communities to educate potential migrants and their families about safe migration practices, potential risks, and the importance of seeking employment through legal channels.
- Verification and Monitoring: CSOs verify the legitimacy of overseas employment agencies and job offers to prevent fraudulent activities and protect potential migrants from exploitation.
- Documentation Verification: They ensure that contracts and agreements between migrants and employers are fair, transparent, and in compliance with labour regulations. They also assist in verifying the authenticity of employment contracts.

- Emergency Assistance: In cases of emergencies, CSOs provide assistance to migrant workers abroad, including coordinating with Sri Lankan embassies or consulates in the destination country to address issues such as medical emergencies, legal disputes, or repatriation.
- Reintegration Support: Upon the return of migrant workers to Sri Lanka, FEDOs may offer reintegration support, including vocational training, counselling, and assistance in finding local employment opportunities. FEDOs also prepare Family Development Plans and Care Plans for vulnerable children.
- Data Collection and Analysis: They collect data on migrant workers, their experiences, challenges, and feedback. This information is crucial for policy development, program improvement, and addressing emerging issues.
- Collaboration with Stakeholders: CSOs collaborate with various stakeholders, including government agencies, non-governmental organizations (NGOs), international organizations, and labour unions, to ensure comprehensive support for migrant workers.

Overall, CSOs and Foreign Employment Development Officers (FEDO) play a critical role in protecting the rights and welfare of Sri Lankan migrant workers, promoting safe migration practices, and contributing to the country's overall development through the earnings and experiences of overseas workers.

EFFICIENCY

At this phase of the project, ILO is facilitating its partners to implement project activities rather than supporting them to make policy. Ministry of Foreign Employment, Sri Lanka Bureau of Foreign Employment, workers' organizations, employers' organizations, Association of Licensed Foreign Employment Agencies, private employment agencies, civil society organizations, academic institutions, think tanks etc. are implementing their previously made action plans at this phase.

The Project is focussed on implementation of the activities in the sub-policy document, which complements the National Labour Migration Policy and focuses on 5 strategies. It also contains a detailed Action Plan under each strategy.

The sub-policy contains specific strategic intervention in support of social reintegration, economic reintegration, physical and psychological wellbeing of returnees and their family members, mobilization and empowerment of migrant returnees, and the effective management of the return and reintegration process. Its implementation has been monitored and reviewed periodically.

SUSTAINABILITY

The Project worked with different stakeholders in Sri Lanka including the Ministry of Labour and Foreign Employment, the key government player for foreign employment; Sri Lanka Bureau of Foreign Employment (SLBFE), the key technological and training partner, Tertiary and Vocational Education Commission (TVEC), Licensed Foreign Employment Agencies, Trade Unions etc.

Project sustainability is based on the work and responsibilities among different partners engaged in the project. Their buying in the project concept is important for the future sustainability of the project. Every partner should have a core area of their institutional mandate.

Project supported to uplift ALFEA recognition at the national level. However, the sustainability is questionable after the phasing out of the project. Therefore project facilitates formal recognition of ALFEA by EFC to get them into the tripartite framework. EFC should agree to have a mechanism to include ALFEA into the tri-partite ILO framework.

CROSS CUTTING

The MTR also reviewed cross-cutting issues of special interest to the ILO. It was complied with review criteria related to ILO's mandate in cross-cutting policy drivers and pro-poor focus and inclusion issues, namely, project's responsiveness to issues relating to gender equality, rights-based approach, and project's relevance and contribution to SDG and related targets as prioritized by the national sustainable development strategy and Decent work Country Program (DWCP).

11. MID TERM PROGRESS SUMMARY OF THE ILO - SLMP IV PROJECT

IMMEDIATE OBJECTIVE ACHIEVEMENT				
Indicator	Baseline	Indicator Milestone (compare planned against actual)	Target (end-of-project total)	Immediate Objective summary
Output 1.1: Institutional capacity to coordinate and monitor implementation of outward Labour Migration policies and plans strengthened				
1.1.1 National Policy Steering Committee functioned	National Labour Migration Policy 2008	NPME approved by the Cabinet (Y/N) Steering Committee appointed by SMFE (Y/N) # of Steering meetings conducted	Y Y 5	Cabinet Paper for new Policy has been approved by the Cabinet in September 2023.
1.1.2 Improved data management system is hosted to operationalized (Y/N)	The field data system introduced by phase III	System development plan approved (Y/N) Data system established (Y/N)	Y Y	
1.1.3 Foreign Employment Development Officers ToT unit functioned	35 master trainers	Set of ICT equipment provided (Y/N) Trainer manual and guideline approved (Y/N) # of master trainers trained. City and Guilds trained the first trainer group of 35 DO's. Next TOT for another 30 DO's to be started soon. Selection completed	Y Y Total number would be 65	The Ministry/SLBFE to prepare a proposal of data management system development Development of training manual and DO guideline
Output 1.2: Stakeholder participation in national, regional and global policy dialogues facilitated				
1.2.1 Civil society empowered on the engagement of LM policy dialogues		# of civil society coalitions formed # of consultation, discussion, and meetings held between National and district-level stakeholders # of cross-learning sessions conducted	5 3 6	A national action plan developed TU consultations conducted

1.2.2 Trade unionists demonstrated knowledge enhancement on the engagement of LM policy dialogues		# of TU, CSO and Migrant societies engaged in the dialogues. # of trade unionists and CSOs trained on safe labour migration and rights protection	25 25 master trainers	Develop MW rights protection training toolkit
Output 1.3: GoSL capability of meeting regional and global commitments and adoption of best practices increased				
1.3.1 # of int'l commitments adopted by the GoSL		# of consultations held # of international commitments recommended	2 1	Ministry to develop GCM national implementation plan with UNNM
1.3.2 # of bilateral agreements/amendments drafted with a more gender-responsive and rights-based approach		# officers trained for design and negotiation of BLA # of international best practices recommended to the GoSL	2 5	Country best practices shared with CP member states Set of officers trained by ITC/ILO National training and implementation plan developed
Output 2.1: LFEAs commitment to incorporate fair and ethical recruitment practices enhanced				
i. # of joint advocacy and action plans developed to institutionalize fair and ethical recruitment practices		# of stakeholder closed-door consultation on legal and policy reform	3	Conduct LFEA closed-door discussion

2.1.2 # of master trainers on fair recruitment produced (within the industry)	LFEA Training Manual 2018	-Revisit the training manual developed by NILS and update (Y/N) # LFEA members trained	Y 250	No immediate objective
2.1.3 # of actions taken to SLBFE to improve licensing and monitoring	CoEC for LFEA	-Code of ethical conduct updated (Y/N) # Action proposed to SLBFE to improve licensing and monitoring of LFEAs	Y 3	No immediate objective
Output 2.2: Departing and returning migrants, particularly women accessibility for skills recognition and certification through e-RPL improved				
2.2.1 e-RPL accepted for launching by EFC and TVEC (Y/N)	Semi-automated RPL system	- e-RPL is established and functioned (Y/N)	Y	e-RPL system development initiated
2.2.2 # of migrant workers assessed by pilot e-RPL testing		# of migrant workers accessed e-RPL and Skills Passport	500	No immediate objective
2.2.3 Regional Qualification Framework adapted by TVEC	National Vocational Qualification Framework	# of technical workshops coordinated # of national symposiums held	2 1	Technical workshop coordinated
Output 2.3: "Whole-of-Government" approach for strengthening implementation of the sub policy on return and reintegration initiated				
2.3.1 # of actions in sub policy of return and reintegration accepted for implementation by key migration partners	National COVID 19 response plan 2020 Sub policy on return and reintegration 2015	- Develop an emergency response plan(Y/N) - Update sub policy on reintegration (Y/N)	Y Y	Study effectiveness of the sub policy Develop an emergency evacuation response plan

2.3.2 'Whole-of Government' approach is convened to the high level forum (inter-ministerial, administrators, policy and decision-makers etc.) (Y/N)	National action plan on return and reintegration 2015	Terms of Reference for 'Whole of Government' approved (Y/N) # forums facilitated to implement Whole of Government approach	Y 2	No immediate objective
Output 3.1: 'Knowledge Hub' with requires human resource skills and systems for generating evidence for policymaking, contributing to national, regional and global dialogues is established				
3.1.1 Knowledge Hub endorsed by the State Ministry (Y/N)		-Operationalized the Knowledge Hub (Y/N) # System development completed # administrators trained for KH	Y 5	Platform development completed
3.1.2 # of staff demonstrated knowledge enhancement on data analysis and reporting through ILO/ITC online course		# of officers trained by ITC/ILO for evidence-based policy making # of capacity building workshop conducted	5 2	First batch of officers (ML&FE/SLBFE) trained Coordinated Sri Lankan trainees for GOALS/ITC course
Output 3.2: Information management system to analyse data on LM for the 'Knowledge Hub' operationalized				
3.2.1 # of persons including policymakers accessed the information management system		-Desk research on existing knowledge products completed (Y/N) # sessions for dissemination of findings conducted	Y 2	Desk review completed and launched
Output 3.3: GoSL capacity to generate knowledge products and host knowledge share events improved				

3.3.1 # of staff demonstrated knowledge enhancement on evidence-based policymaking through ILO/ITC online course		# of officers trained by ITC/ILO for evidence-based policy making # of capacity building workshop conducted	10 2	No immediate objective
3.3.2 # of research studies published		# officers trained for research proposals development # researches commissioned # National symposium on Int'l Migrants Day conducted	5 5 2	Three research proposals developed One research commissioned

12. GAPS IDENTIFIED

- a) Concrete actions need to be in place to ensure women migrant workers protection not merely focusing on their vulnerability but also their dignity as migrant workers who immensely contribute to the national economy.
- b) Coordination between the levels must be streamlined to include FEDOs in the respective districts and to define each other's roles. The actions of FEDOs should be directed by the national policy.
- c) Monitoring of Bilateral Agreements (BLAs) and MoUs with labour receiving countries to be monitored regularly and effectively.
- d) Data is required to plan for migration and follow up on returned migrants. Therefore, data must be gathered on all categories of migrants during the entire migration cycle.
- e) Currently men make up two-thirds of migrants, yet the policy continues to be dominated by concerns of domestic female workers.
- f) There is limited information on the impact on male migrant workers' families. Interviews revealed that spouses taking on all family responsibilities alone and at times, faced harassment and abuse resulting in protection and security issues.
- g) With regard to the protection of migrant workers' families, the emphasis is on children under 18 years. However, there are other members such as the elderly, sick and disabled who also require support.
- h) Migrant workers and their families, have little confidence in the grievance handling system that currently exist. The relationship between agencies and the SLBFE has created a perception among migrant workers and their families that the system is biased against them. In addition, the complaints and redress system is still not decentralised, making the mechanisms difficult for migrant workers and their families to access.
- i) The services in the north and east of the county need to be enhanced, especially with officers who speak local languages, as in other parts of the country. Prospective migrants in these areas therefore, tend to rely on recruitment intermediaries, which may increase their vulnerability to exploitation and abuse.
- j) There is limited awareness of welfare services available for migrant workers and their families. Migrant workers do not know much about insurance schemes, housing loans, low-interest credit, scholarship schemes and other support offered.
- k) Concerns were raised about the lack of a pension scheme, although this was proposed by the Government in 2015.
- l) The reasons for seeking migrant work are often to fulfil basic, short term needs as opposed to long term investment purposes. From a development perspective, this is far from satisfactory, as it does not break the cycle of poverty or of migration.

13. REPLICABLE GOOD PRACTICES IDENTIFIED

- a) **Project inputs to National Policy;** The MTR has reviewed the strategic priorities of the foreign employment sector in Sri Lanka, as presented in the most recently updated National Policy Framework on Foreign Employment. Mainstreaming project strategies into the national policy framework is a significant achievement of the Project.

- b) **Establishment of NAP and PAC:** The setting up of National Advisory Committee on Labour Migration (NAC) chaired by the Minister and the Programme Advisory Committee (PAC) chaired by the Secretary as monitoring and steering mechanisms of the policy shows the government keenness, ownership and buying in interest.
- c) **MOU's and Bilateral Agreements:** The number of Memoranda of Understanding and Bilateral Agreements that have been signed between Sri Lanka and countries of destination has increased.
- d) **Minimum Wages:** Agreements for minimum wages for workers of specific skills categories.
- e) **Grievance Handling:** Strengthened migrant worker grievance handling processes in Sri Lankan Diplomatic Missions with support of the Operational Manual.
- f) **Training of Trade Union members as Trainers for Migrant Workers;** Rather than train external group, providing the responsibility of training migrant workers to Trade Union members is a good initiative from ILO side. With the knowledge and experience of trade unions, they can play a significant role in this regard with a commitment.
- g) **TVET Sector**
 - I. With the experience of their involvement in the Phase 111, IOM in partnership with the TVEC has developed two courses in Domestic House Keeping and Advanced Care Giving. TVEC has approved both these courses as NVQ Level 4 courses.
 - II. Several ongoing interventions aimed at improving and recognising the skills of migrant workers. Among them were, electronic-RPL (e-RPL) and strengthening the existing RPL system conducted by the ILO's Safe Labour Migration Programme (SLMP) and the Swiss Development Corporation (SDC);
 - III. Career guidance practitioner reforms and re-skilling conducted by the IESC, the SLMP, and the SDC;
 - IV. The technical and vocational education and training (TVET) sector reforms conducted by the TVEC and the Skills Development, Vocational Education, Research, and Innovation State Ministry.
 - V. The Skills Passport is an initiative of the Tertiary and Vocational Educational Commission (TVEC) of the Ministry of Skills Development, Employment and Labour Relations, together with The Employers' Federation of Ceylon (EFC) and the SLMP Project of the International Labour Organization (ILO).
 - VI. A returnee migrant worker can now assert his or her expertise and experience to gain visibility of potential employers in Sri Lanka by presenting a proof that is embedded with skills and qualifications of a worker, acquired informally, along with references. The passport allows both the employer and skilled workers of Sri Lanka to identify their experience under the national skills assessment systems, explore job opportunities with an adequate wage, decent work conditions and further training for re-skilling and up-skilling.
- h) **Empowerment and Protection;** Two migrant relief centres were setup by the SLBFE in the vicinity of the 2 international airports to assist migrant workers at pre-departure and upon return, should they be in distress or require support.

- i) **Migration and Development:** A sub-policy and National Action Plan to support return and reintegration of migrant workers was developed in 2015.
- j) **Reintegration Unit:** the Reintegration Coordination Unit set up at the SLBFE.
- k) **Use technology:** Use of technology for communication, such as SMS to inform Foreign Employment Development Officers (FEDOs) of the status of the FBR of a migrant worker, and online job banks.

14. KEY RECOMMENDATIONS AND AREAS FOR IMPROVEMENT – BASED ON THE PROJECT PLAN

Outcome 01: Outward labour migration policies and plans are better implemented and monitored by the GoSL.

Output 1.1: Strengthened human resource and technological capacity to implement, coordinate & monitor outward labour migration related policies & plans

1.1.1. Steering mechanism ('Secretariat') to monitor implementation of the National Policy on Migration for Employment (NPME), Sub-Policy and National Action Plan (NAP) on Return and Reintegration, and service the National Advisory Committee on Labour Migration is established

1.1.2. SMFEP&MD's technological capacity for coordination of stakeholders and monitoring implementation of the NPME, Sub-Policy, NAP and other strategic plans enhanced

1.1.3. SMFEP&MD monitoring and review of implementation of the NPME, Sub-Policy, NAP and other strategic plans is enhanced through strengthening its Training of Trainers (ToT) Unit

No	Recommendations	Responsible
01	Progress monitoring system has to be based on a short, medium and long term action plan based on the Sub-Policy and National Action Plan (NAP) on Return and Reintegration, and to be monitored through the NAC and PAC	NAC chaired by the Minister and the PAC chaired by the Secretary.
02	Clearly identify time-bound action plans with responsibilities for different agencies.	SMFEP&MD
03	Create a mechanism for return and reintegration of migrant workers	SMFEP&MD
04	Increase the number of Memoranda of Understanding and Bilateral Agreements that have been signed between Sri Lanka and countries of destination.	MOFA, SMFEP&MD, SLBFE
05	Data System should be established on all categories of migrants covering entire migration cycle.	SMFEP&MD /SLBFE

No	Recommendations	Responsible
06	As per the direction of the Parliament COPE Committee; a Sub Committee with the Ministry of Labour and Foreign Employment, Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Tertiary and Vocational Education Commission (TVEC) and SLBFE to be established and to develop necessary policies for Safe Migration.	Sub Committee
07	In order to ensure policy coherence, the mainstreaming of migrant workers' issues with other national policies, needs to be based on the principles and framework of a national employment policy. The SMFEP&MD must be responsible for ensuring such cohesion and alignment with core principles of the migrant labour policy.	SMFEP&MD
08	Training opportunities for migrant workers should be built in to the education and training process so that the decision to migrate is made with far more awareness and much earlier. The existing system of training can be made far more responsive to labour trends in migrant receiving countries.	TVEC/ SLBFE/ CSO partners
09	Strengthened migrant worker grievance handling processes in Sri Lankan Diplomatic Missions with support of the Operational Manual.	MOFA, SMFEP&MD, SLBFE

Output 1.2: Increased engagement in national, regional and global policy dialogues by under-represented district and national-level stakeholders (especially trade unions)

1.2.1. Civil Society Organisations, Migrant Workers Societies and Trade Unions form coalitions for joint actions and advocacy

1.2.2. Trade Unions engagement in national, regional and global dialogues on governance of safe and regular Labour Migration is increased

No	Recommendation related to the Project Component	Responsible Agency
01	Further strengthen the engagement with Civil Society in the policy implementation.	SMFEP&MD
02	Partner with Civil Society Organizations (CSO's) that specialize in migrant rights and labour issues. These organizations often have expertise and resources to support awareness campaigns.	Development Partners, CSO's, FEDO's.
03	Migrant Societies to be strengthen and to provide more responsibilities. Returned Migrant Workers to be included as "Barefoot Consultants" into these Migrant Societies.	FEDO's/CSO's/ VOM

No	Recommendation related to the Project Component	Responsible Agency
04	Organize regular information sessions and workshops in local communities to provide potential migrants with accurate and up-to-date information about the migration process, including legal procedures, documentation, work conditions, and potential risks.	CSO's/FEDO's
05	SLBFE offices located in Districts and Provinces to improve local service delivery. Clients feel more comfortable to talk in familiar settings, in their preferred local language. FEDO's to work together with them.	SMFEP&MD, SLBFE
06	Engage local community leaders, religious figures, and influential individuals to endorse and support the awareness campaigns, lending credibility and trust to the information being shared.	CSO's, FEDO's, Development Partners.
07	The services of the SLBFE in the north and east of the county need to be enhanced, especially with officers who speak local languages, as in other parts of the country. Prospective migrants in these areas therefore, tend to rely on recruitment intermediaries, which may increase their vulnerability to exploitation and abuse.	SLBFE

Output 1.3: GoSL is capable of meeting regional and global commitments on safe labour migration; and identify regional and global best practices for adoption in Sri Lanka, including in labour mobility agreements

1.3.1. GoSL's global (Global Compact on Migration) and regional (Colombo Process and Abu Dhabi Dialogue) commitments on safe labour migration are met, including through adoption of regional and global best practices

1.3.2. Government of Sri Lanka utilises gender-responsive and rights-based approaches when preparing, negotiating and implementing Bilateral Labour Agreements and Memorandum of Understanding with Countries of Destination

No	Recommendation related to the Project Component	Responsible Agency
01	MOL to work closely with SDG Secretariat to improve, or development of, new policies and guidelines with regard to migrant workers, and should be aligned with Sri Lanka's targets of the Sustainable Development Goals.	SMFEP&MD /SDG Secretariat
02	Provide information about legal avenues for potential migrants to seek assistance, should they encounter issues abroad. This can include contact information for local embassies or consulates.	SMFEP&MD/ SLBFE

No	Recommendation related to the Project Component	Responsible Agency
03	Explore and increase Government to Government recruitment schemes, which have proved to be effective and more protective of workers.	MOFA/ SMFEP&MD/ SLBFE
04	Increase the capacity and resources of labour sections of Sri Lankan Diplomatic Missions to respond effectively to migrant worker issues by strengthening their knowledge of processes and procedures introduced by SLBFE, legal expertise and psychosocial capacities.	MOFA/ SMFEP&MD / SLBFE

Outcome 2: Fair and ethical recruitment, skills recognition and certification, and sustainable reintegration is fostered through institutional enhancement and the 'Whole of-Government-Approach

Output 2.1: Licensed Foreign Employment Agents (LFEAs) incorporated fair and ethical recruitment practices in their self-regulation; while the Sri Lanka Bureau of Foreign Employment (SLBFE) strengthened monitoring and compliance of LFEAs with fair and ethical recruitment practices

2.1.1. Licensed Foreign Employment Agents (LFEAs) incorporating fair and ethical recruitment practices in self-regulation; while the Sri Lanka Bureau of Foreign Employment strengthening monitoring and compliance of LFEAs with fair and ethical recruitment practices

No	Recommendation related to the Project Component	Responsible
01	There should be an efficient tracking system to identify illegal migrant agencies	SMFEP&MD / SLBFE
02	Develop mobile applications that provide migrants with information on legal processes, documentation, rights, and safety measures. This can be particularly useful for younger individuals who are more likely to use technology.	SMFEP&MD, SLBFE, Legal Advisory Services
03	ALFEA need to promote and protect the interests of its member agencies and support efficient ethical recruitment practices within the foreign employment industry.	ALFEA/SLBFE
04	ALFEA to work with SLBFE and the ministry and help to track illegal Foreign Employment Agencies.	ALFEA/SLBFE
05	Offer counselling services for potential migrants to discuss their concerns, questions, and fears about migrating. Trained counsellors can provide personalized guidance and address specific issues.	FEDO's, SDA's, HRDA's, Career Guidance Officers at DS level

No	Recommendation related to the Project Component	Responsible
06	Use creative approaches like community theatre, art exhibitions, and cultural events to convey messages about safe migration practices and potential challenges in an engaging and memorable way.	CSO's/ FEDO's/ local media

Output 2.2. Better access to skills recognition and certification through E-RPL for departing and returning migrant workers, particularly women, improved their decent employment opportunities

2.2.1: Recognition of prior learning digitalised (E-RPL) for skills recognition and certification to be more accessible to more migrant workers

2.2.2. Pilot test e-RPL in selected sectors (care work, construction and tourism) in collaboration with employers' and workers' organisations

2.2.3. Facilitating South Asia Skills Qualification Reference Framework to be aligned with national skills qualification framework, for endorsement and adoption by Sri Lanka

No	Recommendation related to the Project Component	Responsible Agency
01	The e-RPL system to be improved with helping to recognise experience gained by migrant workers in their work in foreign countries. In turn they can obtain Skill Passports. All licenced agencies are to be provided with necessary awareness on both e-RPL and Skill Passport system.	TVEC/SLBFE/ ALFEA/CSO's
02	Migrant Workers focused Technical and Vocational Education and Training (TVET) Information System to be developed	TVEC/ SMFEP&MD,
03	As economies and labour market conditions change, TVET digital information systems to be transformed to cater better services for its stakeholders.	TVEC
04	TVEC to work in line with the South Asia Skills Qualification Reference Framework to be aligned with national skills qualification framework, for endorsement and adoption by Sri Lanka	TVEC/ SMFEP&MD,
02	Conduct skill development workshops in local communities to enhance the employability of potential migrants, making them better prepared for the job market abroad.	VTA, NAITA, and other TVET institutions, SDA's, HRDA's, FEDO's
03	Use of technology for communication, such as SMS to inform Foreign Employment Development Officers (FEDOs) of the status of the FBR of a migrant worker, and online job banks.	SMFEP&MD, FEDO's

No	Recommendation related to the Project Component	Responsible Agency
04	Extensive pre-departure orientation centres across the country with specific and standardized curricular at National Vocational Qualification (NVQ) level 3.	TVEC, SLBFE, CSO's

Output 2.3: Initiate 'Whole-Of-Government-Approach' for strengthened implementation of the Sub Policy on Return and Reintegration (Areas 2 and 5)

2.3.1. Dialogues and Capacity-Building for 'Whole-Of Government-Approach' (WoGA)

2.3.2. Co-ordinating, Monitoring and Implementation of the Sub-Policy and National Action Plan on Return and Reintegration by the SLBFE and SMFEP&MD, with civil society participation, to be operationalised

No	Recommendation related to the Project Component	Responsible Agency
01	Establish feedback mechanisms to gather information from past migrants about their experiences. This can help in refining awareness campaigns and addressing emerging issues.	SLBFE, FEDO's.
02	The Family Care Plan (FCP), which has been initiated by the SMFEP&MD, should be made mandatory for all migrant workers as a way of strengthening support for migrant worker families.	FEDO /MFE

Outcome 3: Improved evidence-base on labour migration to inform knowledge, dialogue, policy and action

Output 3.1. 'Knowledge Hub' with required human resource skills and systems for generating evidence for policymaking, contributing to national, regional and global dialogues is established

3.1.1: Establishing and operationalising 'Knowledge Hub'

3.1.2: Capacitating 'Knowledge Hub' for GoSL's SDGs, GCM and other data and information needs on Labour Migration

No	Recommendation related to the Project Component	Responsible Agency
01	Expedite the revision of legislation for managing labour migration and harmonise national law with international conventions ratified by Sri Lanka, while giving way to a stronger alignment with international labour standards.	ILO/MFE/SLBFE/ ALFEA/ Knowledge Hub
02	Establish resource centres in local communities where potential migrants can access information booklets, pamphlets, videos, and other resources related to migration, work opportunities, and legal rights	FEDO's @ DS level, CSO's

No	Recommendation related to the Project Component	Responsible Agency
03	Offer language and cultural training to potential migrants to help them adapt to the destination country's environment more effectively.	SLBFE, CSO's
04	Conduct labour market trend analysis and identify training requirements in host countries and link with pre-departure training of migrant workers. Share this information with local level FEDO's, licenced FE Agencies and with CSO partners.	Knowledge Hub/ SLBFE/ FEDO's/ CSO's

Output 3.2: Data management system analysing data on labour migration for the 'Knowledge Hub' is operationalised

3.2.1: Curating Safe Labour Migration Programme (Phases IV) research and key documents for stakeholders

No	Recommendation related to the Project Component	Responsible Agency
01	There could be digital innovation, adaptation, and acceleration according to the changing needs of the labour markets, users, available technologies, and trends.	TVEC/SLBFE
02	TVET Information Systems is to design, develop and maintain various computerized information systems to facilitate TVET activities, including the following; e-RPL (electronic Recognizing Prior Learning) Skills Passport etc.	TVEC/SLBFE

Output 3.3. GoSL has improved capacity to generate knowledge products and host knowledge share events

3.3.1. Capacitating 'Knowledge Hub' on Evidence-Based Policymaking in Labour Migration

3.3.2: Capacitating 'Knowledge Hub' to commission research and conduct knowledge sharing events

No	Recommendation related to the Project Component	Responsible Agency
01	Establish databases at national as well as subnational level so that information flows both ways efficiently and between relevant ministries. These databases need to be updated regularly. The availability of such information will facilitate the implementation of the return and reintegration sub-policy more effectively.	SMFEP&MD / FEDO/ SLBFE/ TVEC/TU's/ CSO's
02	SMFEP&MD to take the leadership to strengthen a Knowledge hub with the involvement of relevant stakeholders, including; SLBFE, EFC, CSO's, TU's, ALFEA, TVEC etc. to meet knowledge gaps and develop necessary policies and action plans.	SMFEP&MD

No	Recommendation related to the Project Component	Responsible Agency
03	There is limited awareness of welfare services available for migrant workers and their families. Migrant workers do not know much about insurance schemes, housing loans, low-interest credit, scholarship schemes and other support offered.	FEDO's / CSO's
04	Utilize local media, radio stations, and television channels to disseminate information about safe migration practices, legal rights, and potential risks associated with migration.	SLBFE/ FEDO's/ CSO's

15. IMPACTS

1. Governments in South Asia are now in the process of making bilateral agreements with new labour markets such as Mauritius, Japan, Rumania, Poland, and in Africa as well as Latin America, which is indeed a positive trend” arise as a positive result of the COVID Pandemic.
2. The ILO/SDC priority sectors in the scope of the project, which are hospitality, construction, and care works will be supported by the e-RPL system for better access to skills recognition. The ILO international experiences were also considered to develop the comprehensive system. The e-RPL system has linked with the National Skills Passport, a product that is in place to provide skills certifications.
3. Recognising Prior Learning- e-RPL; The NVQ Circular 02/2021 of the Tertiary and Vocational Education Commission (TVEC) outlines the process of awarding NVQs in the e-RPL system through Recognition of Prior Learning (RPL) with a special focus to migrant workers.
4. Regional linkages: The project has a some indirect linkage with the sub-regional GOALS project funded by SDC, and provides coordinating support in the implementation of its activities in Sri Lanka. Supporting the South Asian Qualification Reference Framework and Colombo Process consultations are those indirect linkages. The project supported the regional office to share country experiences among SA countries in many forms. Other than the regional engagements, the project coordinated with ILO headquarters to link Sri Lankan counterparts in global forums related to migration activities.
5. The National Ownership, as well as the Sustainability, of the Safe Labour Migration Programme has been reinforced from the inception of Phase IV of the Project, by ensuring that all interventions are not dependent on external resources from development cooperation but rather that these resources provide a bridge to continue and complete the journey to self-resourcing of the national machinery for implementation of the National Policy on Migration for Employment and the Sub-Policy and National Action Plan on Return and Reintegration.

Strengthening of Training Unit of the Ministry; Project has supported to update and localise trainer manuals and tools for the use of ToT unit of the Ministry, trade unions and CSOs, as well as to conduct training sessions to capacitate all master trainers in those institutions. Through this partnership, the ILO in Sri Lanka expects to expand its tripartite-plus network on labour migration.