

Final internal evaluation for the “Teaching and the teaching profession in a digital world: COVID-19 and beyond” project

Summary

Project title	Teaching and the teaching profession in a digital world: COVID-19 and beyond
Countries	Bosnia and Herzegovina, Côte d’Ivoire, Germany, Kenya, Rwanda and Zambia
Project DC code	GLO/20/44/DEU
Evaluation type	Internal
Evaluation timing	Final
Donor	Deutsche Gesellschaft für Internationale Zusammenarbeit (GIZ)
Administrative unit	Sectoral Policies Department (SECTOR)
Technical unit	SECTOR/Public and Private Services Unit (SERVICES)
P&B outcome	Outcome 2 and 5
SDG	SDG 4 on quality education
Duration	27 months
Start date	1 January 2021
End date	31 March 2023
Budget	USD \$716,846
Date of the evaluation	27 February 2024
Name of the internal evaluator	Verena Schmidt
Evaluation Manager	Nikolina Postic
Key Words	Education; Teaching Profession; Digitalization; Decent Work; Africa; Europe; SDG 4

This evaluation has been conducted according to the ILO’s evaluation policies and procedures. It has not been professionally edited.

Table of contents

Table of contents 2

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS 3

LIST OF ACRONYMS..... 4

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY 5

 Background and context..... 5

 Methodology 5

 Key findings, lessons learned, good practices and recommendations 6

 Lessons Learned 7

Good practices 7

 Recommendations..... 8

INTRODUCTION TO THE EVALUATION 9

 Purpose, scope and clients of the evaluation..... 9

1. INTRODUCTION 10

 1.1 Project background..... 10

 1.2 Evaluation Workplan/ Main deliverables 12

 1.3 Criteria and Questions 12

 1.4 Evaluation interviews with key stakeholders 14

 1.5 Methodological limitations 15

 1.6 Adherence to ILO Guidance and formatting requirements:..... 15

2 FINDINGS..... 15

 2.1 Relevance and strategic fit 15

 2.2 Validity of the project design 17

 2.3 Efficiency 19

 2.4 Effectiveness 20

 2.5 Impact and Sustainability 22

3 LESSONS LEARNED AND GOOD PRACTICES 24

 3.1 Lessons Learned 24

 3.2 Good Practices..... 25

 4.1 Project’s Relevance and strategic fit..... 26

 4.2 Validity of the project design 26

 4.3 Efficiency 27

 4.4 Effectiveness 27

 4.5 Impact and sustainability 27

5. RECOMMENDATIONS 27

 5.1 Create more and effective synergies within ILO 27

 5.2 Develop a project to include follow-up implementation 28

 5.3 Design a Sustainability/exit plan for the project 28

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

The internal evaluation of the project “Teaching and the teaching profession in a digital world: COVID-19 and beyond” was conducted between May and December 2023 in collaboration with ILO colleagues at HQ, constituents and other stakeholders¹. I would like to express sincere thanks to all parties involved in this study for their support and valuable contributions. A particular thanks to the project team and EVAL for their invaluable support.

¹ In this report, “stakeholders” are defined according to the Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD)’s definition of its Development Assistance Committee (DAC): “Stakeholders are agencies, organizations, groups, or individuals who have a direct or indirect interest in the development intervention or its evaluation. A subset of stakeholders, “constituents” refers to the constituents of the ILO, namely governments and employers’ and workers’ organizations. For further information see section on “Evaluation interviews with key stakeholders”.

LIST OF ACRONYMS

ACT/EMP	Bureau for Employers' Activities
ACTRAV	Bureau for Workers' Activities
CO	Country office
DC	Development cooperation
DIALOGUE	Social Dialogue and Tripartism Unit
EVAL	Evaluation Office
GIZ	Deutsche Gesellschaft für Internationale Zusammenarbeit
SDG	Sustainable Development Goal
SECTOR	Sectoral Policies Department
SKILLS	Skills and Employability Branch
TOR	Terms of Reference
WORKQUALITY	Conditions of Work and Equality Department

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Background and context

The current evaluation lays out the project background and methodology, as well as the results of the evaluation for the project *Teaching and the teaching profession in a digital world: COVID-19 and beyond*. The project was supported by outcome-based funding from *Deutsche Gesellschaft für Internationale Zusammenarbeit* (GIZ) towards the achievement of Outcome 2 (2022-23), specifically Output 2.4 *Increased capacity of Member States to apply sectoral international labour standards, codes of practice and guidelines*, as well as Outcome 5 (2022-23) on skills and lifelong learning to facilitate access to and transitions in the labour market, in particular Output 5.4 *Increased capacity of Member States to support digital transitions of skills development systems and develop digital skills*. Furthermore, the project was linked to Sustainable Development Goal (SDG) 4 on quality education and responded to the acceleration of digital teaching and learning brought on by the COVID-19 pandemic.

Launched on 1 January 2021, the International Labour Organization (ILO)-GIZ *Teaching and the teaching profession in a digital world: COVID-19 and beyond* initiative is a second phase to an earlier ILO-GIZ initiative on *Digitalization, the future of work and the teaching profession*, which commenced in November 2019 and focused on five Eastern African countries. The objective of the second phase was to expand the knowledge-base on digitalization in teaching and education, as developed by the first initiative, by including other regions in Africa as well as Europe, with the overall aim of promoting dialogue within and between regions on both the challenges and opportunities of digitalization in teaching and learning, including with attention to teacher working conditions and opportunities for training and professional development. The partner countries included **Côte d'Ivoire**, **Kenya**, **Rwanda** and **Zambia** in Africa, and **Bosnia and Herzegovina** and **Germany** in Europe.

The project was managed by Ms Nikolina Postic, Technical Officer, Sectoral Policies Department (SECTOR). She worked closely with her supervisor Mr Oliver Liang, Head of Private and Public Services Sectors Unit of SECTOR. The responsible officer of the project was Ms Alette van Leur, Director of SECTOR. The evaluation manager was Ms Maria Beatriz Mello da Cunha, evaluation focal point, SECTOR.

Methodology

The evaluation set out to answer a list of specific questions organized according to the thematic criteria described below, as agreed upon by the evaluation manager and the evaluator. The methodology for data collection and analysis was primarily qualitative in nature. Data were obtained from key informant interviews. The list of informants can be found in Annex 4.

The analysis of both primary and secondary data was structured around evaluation questions outlined in the Evaluation Question Matrix (EQM) and was underscored by a gender-focused approach, consistent with ILO guidelines on integrating gender equality, non-discrimination and disability throughout the evaluation process (see Annex 5).

Key stakeholders, varying by country, were interviewed to gather insights into project activities, progress and recommendations for future projects with similar foci. Questions were designed to assess the quality and relevance of project activities, progress towards impactful outcomes and stakeholder input for future initiatives. The interviews also delved into internal and external factors influencing project implementation.

However, the project experienced some methodological challenges. In some countries, the availability of interviewees was restricted, potentially introducing bias in the analysis due to a limited pool of respondents. Efforts to incentivize interviews by offering allowances were

hindered by budgetary timelines and challenges in obtaining an internal evaluator to complete the evaluation within those budgetary timelines. Furthermore, only a small number of stakeholders responded to the national workshop participant follow-up surveys.

Moving forward, the evaluation report will be reviewed by GIZ, national consultants, constituents and ILO field offices in partner countries to gather comments and feedback, enhancing the report's comprehensiveness and accuracy.

The principal internal clients for the final evaluation are ILO SECTOR, ILO field offices, ILO constituents in the partner countries, ILO Department for Multilateral Partnerships and Development Cooperation (PARTNERSHIPIS) and ILO Evaluation Office (EVAL). External clients include GIZ and other education sector stakeholders in the participating countries.

Key findings, lessons learned, good practices and recommendations

Summary of main findings

Relevance and Strategic Fit

The project successfully expanded knowledge on teaching and learning in an increasingly digital world. It was aligned with SDG 4, ILO Outcomes 2 and 5 and the 1966 ILO/UNESCO Recommendation concerning the Status of Teachers. The project responded to constituent needs, particularly concerning knowledge and exchange on teachers' working conditions and post-COVID-19 challenges and opportunities in education. Stakeholders valued the background studies and workshops and viewed the project very positively.

Validity of the Project Design

The project's overall strategy effectively met identified needs, yet faced challenges in certain aspects. Understanding the criteria for selecting countries proved complex for some stakeholders, while insufficient commitment from some ILO country offices led to frustrations.

Efficiency

In terms of efficiency, the project's management was commendable, operating smoothly with minimal staff and remaining responsive to the needs of constituents and consultants. The expenses were justifiable, supported by documented achievements and positive stakeholder feedback.

Effectiveness

Interesting and impactful studies were successfully completed in all participating countries, with most made available on the project website, except the one from **Germany** which is currently under review. While workshops were conducted in four partner countries, challenges arose in organizing workshops in **Côte d'Ivoire** and **Germany**.

Impact and Sustainability

The project showed evidence of making an impact, particularly in fostering inclusive sectoral dialogue, which was perceived as highly beneficial by stakeholders. Moreover, stakeholders in **Kenya**, **Zambia**, and **Rwanda** are actively implementing workshop recommendations, while GIZ offices are following up on suggestions in **Kenya** and **Bosnia and Herzegovina**, indicating a positive trend toward sustainability and continued impact.

Lessons Learned

1. **Criteria for selection of countries were not transparent enough**

Countries were chosen based on constituent interests, priorities of decent work country teams, country office readiness and donor interest, resulting in a diverse selection across Central Africa, West Africa, East Africa, the European Union, and Southeast Europe. Stakeholder feedback sought more comparable choices, questioning why **Bosnia and Herzegovina** and **Germany** had been selected. Although the project team had explained the selection criteria to stakeholders throughout the project, questions remained amongst some of the stakeholders.

2. **Internal communication in the ILO is important for project collaboration**

In relation to **Côte d'Ivoire**, conflicting priorities hindered the organization of a national workshop despite constituent requests. To enhance execution, thorough briefings during project design for country offices and dedicated staff oversight are crucial.

3. **Sharing knowledge accumulated in the project in global events was key**

Leveraging education networks facilitated collaborations, offering insights, expert consultants and research access. Platforms like the International Task Force on Teachers for Education 2030 and projects such as *Digitalization, the future of work and the teaching profession* and the ILO Technical meeting on the future of work in the education sector in the context of lifelong learning for all, skills and the Decent Work Agenda (2021) played a key role, enabling profound engagement, knowledge access and alignment with SDG 4 on quality education.

4. **Cultural sensitivity was important for planning the workshops**

Understanding diverse country contexts shaped research outcomes. National workshops required meticulous planning accommodating various nuances.

5. **Close communication with consultants was key during COVID-19**

The persistent impact of COVID-19 stressed the need for regular communication within the project team, allowing necessary adjustments for continuous work and impactful outcomes. Sustaining this communication approach remained crucial to navigate unforeseen challenges and maintain project momentum.

Good practices

1. **Collaborative Communication**

A close collaboration between the project team and the donor fostered joint selection of participating countries, encouraging discussions on challenges, potential follow-ups and mutual learning. The detailed terms of reference (ToRs) that the project team developed for the consultants and the close monitoring of the research progress ensured rich contextual information, high-quality outputs, consultant ownership and high-quality and accessible research products.

2. **Inclusive Sectoral Dialogue on ICT and Education**

The future of education hinges on quality teachers with decent working conditions and this project's adaptability and timely initiation positions the project strategically for an evolving landscape. Stakeholders highly appreciated the timely discussions of the impact of digitalization on the teaching profession as well as the inclusive nature of the

workshops, involving diverse stakeholders from various sectors. Collaboration with ILO Skills and Employability Branch (SKILLS) field specialists facilitated broader stakeholder involvement, making the collaboration more impactful.

3. Strengthening national capacity through peer-to-peer learning

National workshops prioritized interactive methodologies and minimized lectures, which participants valued for their engaging approach. A technical workshop involving national consultants provided valuable learning experiences, empowering consultants to better understand the impact of ICT on teachers' working conditions. The national workshops and the technical workshop increased national capacity and peer-to-peer learning, were much appreciated by participants and led to important recommendations and conclusions.

Recommendations

1. Create more and effective synergies within ILO

Creating better synergies within the ILO is important for more effective implementation of projects. This could be achieved with initial and advanced clarity on expected technical and logistical support from field offices. SECTOR has partnered up with SKILLS and the Youth employment team to create such synergies in some of the countries. Furthermore, even better synergies might have achieved by being clearer and upfront on expected technical and logistical support from field offices.

Addressed to	Priority	Resource	Timing	Related to
ILO SECTOR and field offices	High	Medium	Mid-term	Findings and conclusions: 3.2 Validity of the project design; 3.4 Effectiveness

2. Develop a project to include follow-up implementation

Addressed to	Priority	Resource	Timing	Related to
ILO SECTOR	Medium	Medium	Mid-term	Findings and conclusions: 3.2 Validity of the project design

Develop a project to follow-up on the recommendations and conclusions of studies and workshops.

ILO SECTOR	Medium	Medium	Mid-term	Findings and conclusions: 3.2 Validity of the project design
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3. Design a Sustainability/exit plan for the project

A sustainability plan could include continued collaboration with constituents and/or other national counterparts beyond the implementation period of the project.

Addressed to	Priority	Resource	Timing	Related to
ILO SECTOR	Medium	Medium	Mid-term	Findings and conclusions: 3.6 Impact and Sustainability

INTRODUCTION TO THE EVALUATION

The ILO views evaluation as an integral aspect of implementing development cooperation activities. This specific evaluation represents the final assessment of the ILO's project on *Teaching and the teaching profession in a digital world: COVID-19 and beyond*, funded by GIZ. The evaluation has been conducted within the ILO.

The evaluation employed a methodology that blends the analysis of existing project documentation with primary data obtained through key informant interviews. This inclusive approach involved examining a range of documents such as project reports, meeting records, concept notes, budgets and financial statements. The evaluation also encompassed interviews with various stakeholders, including the ILO project team, the donor (GIZ), ILO country teams, project consultants and participants of the national workshops, which comprised representatives from government bodies, social partners and international organizations. Additionally, the evaluator conducted a secondary analysis of participant follow-up surveys to the national workshops from **Bosnia and Herzegovina, Kenya, Rwanda** and **Zambia** to gauge progress on workshop commitments. This methodological mix facilitated data triangulation, enhancing the assessment's reliability.

The analysis of both primary and secondary data was structured around evaluation questions outlined in the Evaluation Question Matrix (EQM) and was underscored by a gender-focused approach, consistent with ILO guidelines on integrating gender equality, non-discrimination and disability throughout the evaluation process.

Key stakeholders, varying by country, were interviewed to gather insights into project activities, progress and recommendations for future projects with similar foci. Questions were designed to assess the quality and relevance of project activities, progress towards impactful outcomes and stakeholder input for future initiatives. The interviews also delved into internal and external factors influencing project implementation, including collaboration with ILO representatives and the political context in partner countries.

Purpose, scope and clients of the evaluation

This internal evaluation serves a dual purpose.

- a) Give an assessment of the project's design, its relevance to the social, political and economic context of partner countries and its alignment with the needs and priorities of key stakeholders (*relevance*). Assess the *effectiveness* and *validity* of project strategies, implementation modalities and partnership arrangements to produce planned project outputs and outcomes, *efficiency* of resources used within the project and overall project *sustainability* and *impact*.
- b) Document challenges, lessons learned, good practices and recommendations for future similar projects.

The evaluation covers project implementation from 1 January 2021 to 31 March 2023.

The evaluation report will be reviewed by the ILO project team, national consultants, constituents and ILO field offices in the partner countries to gather comments and feedback to enhance the report's comprehensiveness and accuracy.

The principal internal clients for the final evaluation are ILO SECTOR, ILO field offices, ILO constituents in the partner countries, ILO Department for Multilateral Partnerships and Development Cooperation (PARTNERSHIPS) and ILO EVAL. External clients include GIZ and other education sector stakeholders in the participating countries. The findings will be disseminated through the ILO's Evaluation SharePoint.

1. INTRODUCTION

1.1 Project background

The ILO-GIZ [Teaching and the teaching profession in a digital world: COVID-19 and beyond](#) initiative, launched on 1 January 2021, stands as the second phase to the ILO-GIZ initiative on [Digitalization, the future of work and the teaching profession](#), which focused on five Eastern African countries between November 2019 and December 2021. This subsequent phase aimed to broaden understandings of digitalization in education and its impact on teaching and the teaching profession by expanding its reach to other regions in Africa, as well as Europe. The overall aim of the project was to foster dialogue on challenges and opportunities in relation to digitalization in teaching and learning within and between countries and regions. During the project duration, the ILO Technical meeting on the future of work in the education sector in the context of lifelong learning for all, skills and the Decent Work Agenda, 17–21 May 2021 took place. The conclusions of this meeting were taken into account in the implementation of the project. The project aimed to achieve the following outcomes and outputs:

1. **Outcome 1:** New knowledge and capacities regarding the integration of technology in education and its potential contributions for decent work and quality education developed

Output 1.1: Research on the impact of digitalisation in education and on the teaching profession in the medium- and long-term

Activity 1.1.1: Develop terms of reference for the research and the recruitment of consultants in consultation with ILO constituents, relevant branches and departments, country offices and external partners, with a focus on gender equality

Activity 1.1.2: Conduct six case studies on country-specific conditions, experiences, practices, policies and medium- and long-term plans

Activity 1.1.3: Validate the case studies through virtual consultations with ILO constituents, relevant branches and departments, country offices, and external partners, with a focus on gender equality

Output 1.2: Technical workshop to assess current practices and analyse future trends and prospects in relation to digitalisation in education

Activity 1.2.1: Organize a technical workshop to exchange and analyse experiences and practices in relation to digitalisation in the education sector

Activity 1.2.2: Draft a final report detailing the outcomes of the discussions, including points of consensus and key findings

2. **Outcome 2:** Social dialogue between governments, employers' and workers' organisations and other education stakeholders enhanced to leverage technology for teaching and learning toward decent work and quality education

Output 2.1: Policy recommendations for digitalisation in education, adopted by tripartite constituents

Activity 2.1.1: Organize national workshops to exchange and analyse experiences and practices in relation to digitalisation in the education sector

Activity 2.1.2: Draft a final report detailing the outcomes of the discussions, including points of consensus and key findings

Activity 2.1.3: Develop policy recommendations for digitalisation in education.

The partner countries – **Côte d’Ivoire, Kenya, Rwanda, and Zambia** in Africa, and **Bosnia and Herzegovina and Germany** in Europe – played pivotal roles in this initiative. The timeline and milestones unfolded as follows:

Throughout the lifespan of the project, the ILO actively disseminated information about the project in internal and external meetings, fostering knowledge exchange and seeking opportunities for collaboration.

- On 15 January 2021, the project manager started working on the project following a competition.
- By April 2021, the terms of reference for recruiting in-country consultants received approval following a rigorous review by multiple ILO departments, including the ILO Bureau for Employers’ Activities (ACT/EMP), the ILO Bureau for Workers’ Activities (ACTRAV) and GIZ.
- By July 2021, the recruitment of consultants from Bosnia and Herzegovina, Côte d’Ivoire, Kenya, Rwanda and Zambia was completed.
- From August to November 2021, the ILO provided comprehensive feedback and technical support for drafts submitted by these consultants, each undergoing a meticulous revision process spanning at least three iterations.
- By January 2022, an initial conceptual edit of the studies was completed, followed by professional editing in February 2022. The translation of the study in Côte d’Ivoire into English was accomplished by July 2022.
- Consultants for drafting of the national study for Germany were recruited in October 2021. Subsequently, between their recruitment and August 2022, they submitted two paper proposals, a survey instrument and an initial draft of the study, which underwent multiple rounds of review and feedback. A new submission, rooted in the revised study draft, was completed in March 2023 and is currently undergoing a final review for eventual publication on the project webpage.
- A significant milestone occurred on 3 December 2021, as the ILO, in collaboration with GIZ, Enabel – the Belgian Development Agency and VVOB – Education for Development, organized a session titled ‘Digital Teaching Innovations and the Teaching Profession’ during the 13th Policy Dialogue Forum of the International Task Force on Teachers for Education 2030 in Kigali, Rwanda. This session, enriched by insights from both phases of the ILO-GIZ initiative, featured presentations by the project manager and the Rwanda-based consultant, stimulating discussions based on their findings and recommendations.
- In January 2022, the groundwork for a consultant technical workshop to exchange and analyse digitalization experiences in education was laid out, culminating in a session held on 3 March 2022, involving national consultants and project partners. The outcomes were encapsulated in a report validated by all participants.
- Formulating a general concept note for national workshops to devise policy recommendations for digitalization in education in February 2022.
- Developing country-specific concept notes for the workshops in Zambia, Kenya and Bosnia and Herzegovina from April to June 2022, leading to workshops held in each country – Zambia on 20-21 July 2022, Kenya on 28-29 July 2022 and Bosnia and Herzegovina on 5-6 October 2022.
- These workshops, which engaged governments, social partners and international organizations, resulted in actionable recommendations for an equitable and inclusive approach to digitalization in education. The conclusions were documented in respective reports.

- In 2023, an online participant follow-up survey to the national workshops assessed progress on the recommendations and commitments made, confirming positive strides.
- A workshop in Rwanda held on 1-2 March 2023, organized in partnership with the ILO SKILLS, mirrored the outcomes of the 2022 workshops. A participant follow-up survey in August and September 2023 consolidated these findings.

1.2 Evaluation Workplan/ Main deliverables

Description of key dates of the evaluation

The ToRs for the final evaluation (dated 23.3.2023) were used to guide the evaluation process. The ILO project team in SECTOR facilitated the identification of key documents for inclusion in the document review and key stakeholders for the interviews.

The main deliverables of the evaluation included:

- i. **Meeting with project team** (April 2023)
Work on the evaluation began with an initial discussion with the project team to gain greater understanding of the project objectives and activities, share relevant project documents, review the ToRs and agree on the evaluation questions and the overall framework of the evaluation.
- ii. **Review of project documentation** (April - May 2023)
The evaluator reviewed existing project documentation prior to the stakeholder interviews. These include the project document and minutes of approval, progress reports, workshop and meeting reports, project concept notes and terms of references and national studies.
- iii. **Inception report** (June - August 2023)

An inception report was prepared on 9 June 2023 with common evaluation instruments to be applied in project assessment, which preceded the elaboration of this draft report. The inception report was based on conversations and exchanges with the ILO project team (Ms Nikolina Postic and Mr Oliver Liang) as well as feedback from the project team on an initial draft. A revised draft was shared with the evaluation manager (Ms Nikolina Protic). The final version of the inception report was shared with the evaluation manager on 15 August 2023 following revisions provided by the project team.
- iv. **Stakeholder interviews** (June - October 2023)
- v. **Development of the draft evaluation report** (October - December 2023)
- vi. **Development of final evaluation report** (January – February 2024)
The evaluator incorporated comments from the ILO project team, other ILO officials, the donor and project stakeholders on the draft evaluation report, as appropriate, to complete the final project evaluation report. The final report was submitted to EVAL on 26.2.2024.

1.3 Criteria and Questions

The criteria on which the evaluation was based are relevance, validity, efficiency, effectiveness, impact and sustainability. The following questions were developed and agreed upon with the project team in the ToRs and inception report (see Annex 2).

Relevance

- To what extent did the project's focus and approach respond to issues facing teachers and the teaching profession in an increasingly digital world (including in the era of COVID-19)?
- To what extent did the project's focus and approach align with the objectives of SDG 4 (quality education), ILO Outcome 2 (sectoral international labour standards) and 5 (skills development systems and digital skills), and normative instruments of the ILO (including the [1966 ILO/UNESCO Recommendation concerning the Status of Teachers](#))?

Validity

- To what extent did the project's design and approach support the achievement of project outcomes? Were any readjustments made to ensure achievement of project goals?
- To what extent did the project take into account gender equality concerns relevant to the project context?

Efficiency

- To what extent were project's financial and human resources utilized efficiently to achieve project outputs and outcomes?
- To what extent did the project ensure timely achievement of project outputs? What, if any, factors contributed to delays? [This project needs to be understood in the context of the COVID-19 pandemic, which restricted travel and face-to-face meetings from March 2020 to the end of 2021.]

Effectiveness

- To what extent were project activities, outputs and outcomes achieved according to the project plan?
- To what extent did the project involve relevant stakeholders and partners in the design and implementation of activities?
- How effective was communication between the project team, the donor, the researchers and national/regional offices?

Impact

- To what extent did the project's activities contribute to increased dialogue between governments and employers' and workers' organizations on issues concerning teachers and the teaching profession?

Sustainability

- To what extent will the activities of the project support or lead to new initiatives focused on improving the conditions and status of teachers?
- To what extent will the activities of the project support or lead to new initiatives on improving dialogue between governments and employers' and workers' organizations on issues concerning teachers and the teaching profession?

The evaluation also assessed the challenges encountered and the lessons learned in the implementation of the project in order to identify good practices and recommendations for future initiatives. These included:

- What good practices can be learned from the different phases of the project (project design, research studies, national workshops, etc.) that can be applied to similar future projects?
- What were the main challenges encountered in the implementation of the project?
- How were these challenges addressed to ensure achievement of project outputs and outcomes?

Gender equality was a cross-cutting theme throughout the entire evaluation process, including in the collection and analysis of data. The evaluation followed the ILO EVAL Guidelines on integrating gender equality, non-discrimination and disability.

METHODOLOGY

The evaluation used a mixed methodological approach through an analysis of both existing project documentation as well as primary data obtained through interviews. In terms of the former, the evaluation took into consideration project progress reports, workshop and meeting reports, project concept notes and ToRs, national studies, budgets and the final financial statement (see Annex 3). The evaluation involved interviews with the ILO project team, the donor (GIZ), ILO decent work country teams, project consultants and participants from the national workshops, which included representatives from government ministries and agencies, social partners and international organizations. Furthermore, the evaluator undertook a secondary analysis of participant follow-up surveys, which were conducted virtually with participants of the national workshops (**Bosnia and Herzegovina, Kenya, Rwanda and Zambia**) to gauge progress on the commitments made at the workshops. This mixed methodological approach allowed for the triangulation of data.

Analysis of primary and secondary data was guided by the evaluation questions captured in section 1.4 of this report (see also EQM in Annex 5). Gender served as a cross-cutting theme throughout the entire evaluation process, including in the collection and analysis of data. The evaluation followed the ILO EVAL Guidelines on integrating gender equality, non-discrimination and disability.

1.4 Evaluation interviews with key stakeholders

The key stakeholders interviewed varied from country to country, but in general included the following:

- Donor representatives
- ILO project team members in Geneva
- ILO specialists in the field backstopping in-country activities
- Ministries of education and labour
- Trade unions representing teachers
- Representatives of private sector education providers
- National and international organizations (UNESCO, UNICEF, World Bank, etc.)

The semi-structured interviews with the key stakeholders were conducted either in-person in Geneva at ILO Headquarters or virtually via Microsoft Teams. The evaluator also completed a secondary analysis of the responses of the online follow-up surveys conducted with national workshop participants in **Bosnia and Herzegovina, Kenya, Rwanda and Zambia**. The questionnaire and interview questions were designed to obtain feedback on:

- the quality and relevance of the project activities;
- progress towards impact of project activities;
- stakeholder recommendations for future projects with a similar focus.

Questions were designed to assess the internal and external factors affecting project implementation, including regarding collaboration with ILO representatives, as well as the social, political and economic context in the partner countries.

1.5 Methodological limitations

The project team undertook comprehensive efforts to engage stakeholders for interviews; however, the interview strategy was constrained by the limited availability of some in-country participants. In **Côte d'Ivoire**, only the national consultant could be interviewed as a national workshop was not held in the country. In **Bosnia and Herzegovina**, only the ILO sub-regional specialist backstopping the project agreed to be interviewed. The national consultant was not available for an interview during the evaluation period. In **Rwanda**, trade union representatives did not reply to requests for an interview. In **Germany**, no interviews were carried out as the study required extensive revisions and the national workshop was not organized. In countries where no stakeholder or only one or few persons could be interviewed, there may be bias in the analysis.

During the inception meeting, the evaluator asked the project team whether it might be possible to offer a small allowance to the interviewees as an incentive to participate. The project team subsequently contacted the donor to determine whether the evaluation budget line could be used for this purpose (as opening the evaluation budget line requires the approval by the donor). Approval was not obtained.

Furthermore, the response rate to the national workshop participant follow-up surveys in some countries were limited, despite several reminder messages. While one-third of participants responded in Kenya and **Zambia**, only two responses were received from **Bosnia and Herzegovina**, and only one response was received from **Rwanda**. The surveys were conducted six months following the organization of the workshops.

1.6 Adherence to ILO Guidance and formatting requirements:

The quality of this report was assessed against relevant ILO EVAL checklists. The deliverables were submitted in the English language and structured according to the ILO templates, namely:

- formulating and presenting recommendations;
- identifying and presenting lessons learned; and
- identifying and presenting emerging good practices.

The ILO Code of Conduct was signed and shared with the ILO evaluation manager.
[Microsoft Word - Evaluators_code%20of%20conduct_Final_EVAL_7.11.18.doc \(ilo.org\)](#)

2 FINDINGS

2.1 Relevance and strategic fit

The current section analyses the relevance and appropriateness of the project to the ILO Programme and Budget and to national and international development frameworks, including to the SDGs. It also analyses the relevance of the project for ILO constituents and the strategic fit of the project activities with on-going ILO programmes, projects or activities in each of the country. Additionally, this section considers the extent to which the project is relevant in the COVID-19 pandemic context, as well as in the context of recovery and/or restructuring processes.

Summary of main findings:

Based on the collected evidence, the final evaluation confirms the project's overall relevance. The *Teaching and the teaching profession in a digital world: COVID-19 and beyond* project was successful in examining the impact of technology on teachers' working conditions, including during the COVID-19 crisis and its immediate aftermath.

The first phase of the project, undertaken between November 2019 and December 2021, commenced prior to the COVID-19 pandemic (although it included follow-up studies on the impact of the pandemic on teaching and learning). The current phase under review took place during the height of COVID-19 pandemic and in the immediate aftermath. It was found to be extremely relevant due to its focus on the impact of digitalization on teachers and teaching. Due to the shutdown of educational institutions in various partner countries, the digitalization of the education sector became a priority and was implemented at high speed. Of particular interest to unions and governments was the impact of digitalization on teachers.

During COVID-19 and in its immediate aftermath, many of the partner countries transitioned teaching and learning online and accelerated the uptake of technology in education. This had significant impact on teachers in terms of training in the use of technology, fear of loss of employment due to a perception that technology could replace the role of the teacher and increased workload, resulting in burnout and impacting work-life balance. In some countries, the introduction of new technologies and modalities of teaching and learning without the provision of training or technology for teachers led to frustration among teachers. During that period, many of the other projects in the education sector focused on the impact of digitalization on students, whereas the ILO project was one of the few to focus on the impact of technology on teaching and the teaching profession, making it highly relevant.

National studies commissioned under the project, as well as national workshop reports and interviewees confirmed that the project responded to the needs of beneficiaries, and that it was aligned with national priorities, particularly in the area of working conditions, as well as SDG 4 (quality education), ILO Outcomes 2 (sectoral international labour standards) and 5 (skills development systems and digital skills) and normative instruments of the ILO (including the [1966 ILO/UNESCO Recommendation concerning the Status of Teachers](#)). Some programmatic synergies were observed with country work of GIZ.

With regards to the synergies and complementarities with other ILO programmes, the final evaluation found several synergies and complementarities:

- The GIZ is following up on the project recommendations through their country offices in **Rwanda** and **Bosnia and Herzegovina**. According to stakeholder, the project led to improved social dialogue among different stakeholders in **Rwanda**.
- In **Zambia**, the Ministry of Technology and Science developed a National ICT Policy, which was launched in 2023 after the workshop. The policy addresses the issue of ICT skills to be developed by the education and training sector.
- In **Kenya**, the workshop recommendations and conclusions were disseminated to all education stakeholders. The project consultant made a presentation on the results of the national workshop to the pedagogical institute of **Kenya**. Following the project, the project consultant was nominated to a government committee to further follow-up on the conclusions reached in the study and during the national workshop.
- The ILO youth employment team committed to follow-up on the recommendations in one partner country.

Overall relevance of the project

In September 2022, the UN Secretary-General convened the Transforming Education Summit in response to the three-pronged crisis heightened by the COVID-19 pandemic: a crisis of equity and inclusion, a crisis of quality and a crisis of relevance. Leveraging the report of the UNESCO International Commission on the Future of Education, the Summit sought to fundamentally rethink the purpose, content and delivery of education in the 21st century and

to elevate education in national and global political agendas to mobilize ambition, solidarity and solutions to transform education. The ILO was one of the key players in the digitalization stream of the Summit. The national studies were a very important empirical basis for the digitalization stream. As a result, several stakeholders engaged with the question on the impact of digitalization on teachers. The ILO's participation in the Summit resulted in ILO being selected by the UN Secretary-General to co-lead (with UNESCO) the High-Level Panel on the Teaching Profession, which had a focus on technology. The final report and recommendations of the Panel drew on the findings of the studies that were developed as part of the project.²

The constituents, and in particular the teachers' unions, emphasized the importance of voicing their concerns over increased workloads since the beginning of the COVID-19 pandemic, which was partially caused by additional demands arising from the accelerated uptake of technology for teaching and learning. The national workshops were important fora for teachers' unions as they were attended by high-level representatives from ministries of labour and education.

2.2 Validity of the project design

This section of the evaluation examines and analyses the coherence and validity of the project design.

Summary of main findings:

Overall, the logic that underlies the project was found to be solid, and both the strategy as well as the intervention model addressed the needs identified by national constituents and the ILO in a logical manner. However, the final evaluation identified some weaknesses in the project design, including:

a) Selection of countries

The countries were selected in terms of interests of constituents, developments in relation to digitalization in education and in other sectors, UNESCO, ILO decent work country teams, regional ILO and GIZ offices and the availability and interest of country offices (both ILO and GIZ) to support and follow-up on the project. As a result, countries from different regions in Africa were selected, in addition to one from the European Union and one from Southeast Europe. Several stakeholders mentioned that they thought better results in terms of comparability could have been achieved had the countries been more similar. However, the first phase of the project focused on Eastern Africa and the donor had requested the project team to expand to other countries and regions to facilitate inter-regional learning. Several stakeholders also questioned why **Bosnia and Herzegovina** and **Germany** were selected, given that both are economically much more developed and since they are complex due to the devolution of education to states/entities. Some stakeholders also questioned why the project did not select a country that is leading on education and technology, and that could have acted as a good practice case. Indeed the project team had initially considered Estonia as a partner country as a good practice case but ILO Budapest and the GIZ office in Bosnia and Herzegovina had a preference for Bosnia Herzegovina due to potential synergies with other projects.

b) Commitment of ILO country offices

In **Côte d'Ivoire**, a validation workshop of the national study could not be carried out despite requests by constituents and meetings between the ILO project team and country office personnel during which interest was expressed. Due to a lack of responsiveness from the country office, it was never made clear as to why the

² <https://www.ilo.org/global/industries-and-sectors/education/teaching-profession/lang--en/index.htm>

organization of the workshop could not proceed. For future projects, it might be beneficial to perhaps include a step in the design phase of the project that ensures country offices are fully aware of the workplan and can assign a staff member to follow up on project activities.

c) Available time and resources

Consultations with some key stakeholders identified some challenges in terms of follow-up. Stakeholders were consulted on the design. Excellent studies were prepared and very useful workshops took place; however, due to limited funding and time constraints (which were influenced by the donor), the project design did not foresee any further follow-up. Although the consultations, studies, workshops and exchanges were highly appreciated, some stakeholders would have liked the project to follow-up on the recommendations developed during the tripartite workshops. However, one stakeholder indicated that the project had done enough by facilitating discussion of the challenges related to the working conditions of teachers and that the national constituents should now follow-up on study findings and workshop conclusions.

In **Germany** and **Côte d'Ivoire**, while national studies were prepared, no national workshops were organized. This may have limited the impact. This could not be verified since it was not possible to interview the constituents in these two countries.

- d) Focus on the impact of digitalization on the working conditions of teachers
- e) The project successfully responded to challenges brought about by the COVID-19 pandemic and emerging contextual challenges. Stakeholders confirmed unanimously that the project was particularly relevant due to the rapid uptake of technology in teaching and learning during the COVID-19 pandemic. Stakeholders also indicated that the approach of the ILO to specifically examine the impact of digitalization on teachers and their conditions of work was quite unique, as this is usually only a secondary or minor consideration.

Integration of ILO cross-cutting policy areas

Gender equality and non-discrimination

Principles of gender equality and non-discrimination were mainstreamed throughout the project. The project team attempted to recruit women consultants wherever possible. The ToRs for the national studies emphasised the need for gender sensitive considerations and gender disaggregated data. The project team also encouraged gender equity during the workshops, leading to almost equal representation of men and women during the workshops on average, which is an excellent result. However, there were some national differences in terms of women's participation: in Bosnia and Herzegovina, women represented 70 per cent of participants, whereas in Kenya, they represented only 25 per cent of all participants.

Based on the reports of the national workshop discussions and conclusions, the workshops had the following gender composition:

Country	Number of female participants out of total participants	Percentage of female participants out of total participants
Bosnia and Herzegovina	23/33	70%
Kenya	8/23	35%
Rwanda	18/51	35%
Zambia	16/25	64%
Average		51%

The stakeholders generally appreciated the focus on gender equality and non-discrimination in the project. Some were not familiar with the concept of gender equality.

One stakeholder mentioned that **Zambia** is a highly gendered country. For example, there is a belief that only women should work in early education, whereas that would be “taboo” for men. Men are expected to work in secondary and tertiary education. The same respondent was surprised that more women than men participated in the national workshop in **Zambia**, and reported that the reality on the ground is very different.

Tripartism and Social Dialogue

One of the two main objectives of the project was to increase social dialogue between governments and social partners in the education sector, particularly in relation to digitalization and the teaching profession. The stakeholders interviewed in **Bosnia and Herzegovina, Kenya, Rwanda** and **Zambia** emphasised the important role that the project played in terms of improving sectoral dialogue on the teaching profession in the respective countries.

Just Transition to Environmental Sustainability

Although just transition is expected to be mainstreamed during the 2022-23 biennium, **the project team were not aware of this when they designed the project in 2020. Therefore**, this aspect is not clearly reflected in the design of the *Teaching and the teaching profession in a digital world: COVID-19 and beyond* project, and the final evaluation found no indication of progress on this in the implementation reports or in the interviews with stakeholders.

2.3 Efficiency

The efficiency section explores how efficiently the ILO allocated and managed human and financial resources in implementing activities of the *Teaching and the teaching profession in a digital world: COVID-19 and beyond* project, as well as the extent to which the ILO has been able to take a leadership role in generating partnerships and in leveraging partner resources.

Summary of main findings:

The evaluation found that the results justify the project expenses.

The stakeholders interviewed all thought that the project was run efficiently. One P3 project management post was financed by the project, as well as various national consultants. The project underestimated the funds required for commissioning a study in **Germany**, particularly the overhead costs of some tertiary institutions to engage their professors in research. Locating researchers under the provided budget was one of the main reasons that the recruitment process took longer in Germany than in the other countries. At that time, it appeared that there would not be sufficient funds to finance the other studies; therefore, ILO SECTOR contributed to the funding of two national studies.

The project team was seen as extremely efficient in terms of responding to requests by constituents and consultants. The stakeholders interviewed thought the project team was highly efficient and that they kept in close contact with the consultants and that the project team supported the consulted very effectively.

One stakeholder said that the project was very good value for money and that it achieved a significant number of outputs given the limited time and financial resources and given that the project was undertaken during the COVID-19 pandemic.

Allocation of resources

Based on a review of relevant documentation provided to the evaluator by ILO project team, and taking into account feedback received from stakeholders during the interviews, the results that were achieved justify the expenses of the project.

The budgetary implementation was consistent with the level of the project’s performance, and in line with the achievement of expected results and established objectives. In view of the fact that the project only had one international staff member, this is a significant achievement.

Overall budget execution rates were good, and were reported at 88 per cent, which is very good given the challenges caused by the COVID-19 pandemic. It is noteworthy that two studies were funded by the ILO SECTOR regular budget to balance higher than expected costs related to the study in **Germany**.

In the end, two workshops that had been planned and budgeted for could not be carried out, namely in **Germany** due to delays in finding suitable consultants and finalizing the study, and in **Côte d’Ivoire** due to a lack of response from the ILO country office.

Furthermore, the budget line for monitoring and evaluation could not be accessed following the end of the project as the agreement from the donor was not received. This resulted in the ILO returning unspent funds to the donor, namely USD 83,536.56 (12 per cent of the total income was returned). The donor indicated to the ILO project team that the unspent funds would be used at the 2024 Policy Dialogue Forum of the International Task Force on Teachers for Education 2030 in order to share and disseminate the findings and conclusions of the project.

An up-to-date breakdown of the expense rates of the budget for the ILO component is as follows:

Budget line	% Execution of total budget
Staff and operational cost	71%
- <i>Staff cost</i>	58%
- <i>Operational cost</i>	13%
Outcome 1 – new knowledge and capacities regarding the impact of technology in education and its potential contribution for decent work and quality education	15%
Outcome 2 – Social dialogue among governments, employers’ and workers’ organizations and other education stakeholders enhanced to leverage technology for teaching and learning towards decent work and quality education	14%

A breakdown of the budget reveals that both budget outcomes had similar spending rates. For Outcome 1, Output 1.1 for research used 90 per cent of the budget, while Output 1.2 for the technical workshop used ten per cent. For Outcome 2, the funds were spent on preparing policy recommendations for digitalization in education, which were adopted by tripartite constituents at national workshops.

The project manager position, which accounted for 81 per cent of operational costs, was dedicated to managing consultants, organizing workshops, and editing studies in direct support of Outcomes 1 and 2.

Moreover, the ILO dedicated time of the Director of the Sectoral Policies Department, the Head of the Public and Private Services Unit (also senior education sector specialist), technical specialists from the ILO’s Skills and Employability Branch as well as administrative staff time to this project.

2.4 Effectiveness

This section provides an overview of the project management structures and arrangements. Specifically, it assessed how project management responded and to what extent and in what

ways it adjusted to challenges arising from the COVID-19 pandemic. This section also provides an overview of the main results achieved and challenges encountered in the implementation of the project and whether there were any unexpected results.

Summary of main findings:

The ILO had a limited number of staff assigned to the project, namely one international staff member (P3 grade), which was financed through the project, and one regular budget staff member (P5 grade) who supervised the work. The international staff member was on maternity leave for six months in 2022, during which time she was replaced by two contract personnel. Furthermore, the project was assisted by secretarial support financed through the regular budget of the ILO.

According to all the stakeholders interviewed, the project team provided excellent technical support. They were seen as well organized, responsive and providing high-quality feedback. They also demonstrated flexibility, which was particularly important due to the effects of the COVID-19 pandemic.

The project successfully generated an increased awareness about the relevance of the impact of digitalization on the teacher profession and on teaching and learning, as well as on the importance of achieving SDG 4 on quality education in at least four of the partner countries where workshops were organized (**Bosnia and Herzegovina, Zambia, Kenya and Rwanda**). The impact on **Germany** and **Côte d'Ivoire** could not be verified as no interviews were carried out in these countries.

Summary Overview			
Country	Research paper developed	Research published	Workshop carried out
Bosnia and Herzegovina	Y	Y	Y
Côte d'Ivoire	Y	Y	N
Germany	Y	N	N
Kenya	Y	Y	Y
Rwanda	Y	Y	Y
Zambia	Y	Y	Y

Effectiveness in general

The project team finalized national studies in all of the partner countries. These studies are all publicly available through the [project website](#), except for the **German** study, which is currently being reviewed. The studies are interesting, concise and accessible, with each including an introduction, brief overview of the education sector, overview of digitalization in education and teaching, ongoing initiatives and best practices and policy recommendations. The studies range in length between 30-75 pages.

The project organized tripartite workshops in **Bosnia and Herzegovina, Kenya, Rwanda and Zambia**.

Technical workshop

The project team organized a hybrid technical workshop with the consultants who wrote or were in the process of drafting the national studies. The event was hosted by the German consultants in their institute and all of the consultants from the project participated. Some consultants participated in-person and others virtually due to COVID-19 protocols. The workshop involved sharing key findings from their research as well as highlighting best practice examples. According to the workshop report and the interviews with the stakeholders, this workshop was a great success and an important learning opportunity for the consultants and the ILO. Since the consultants were key stakeholders in the education sector, they have some capacity to follow-up on recommendations in their national contexts.

Summary of country specific findings

In **Côte d'Ivoire**, the constituents were keen to hold a workshop on digitalization in education and requested the project team several times to organize a workshop. For unspecified reasons, the ILO country office was not available to organize a workshop or to follow-up on the national study.

The donor specifically requested that the project include **Germany** as one of the focus countries. GIZ, however, almost exclusively works in developing countries; as such, there was some confusion as to why the project would include **Germany** as one of the partner countries. Due to the additional research step in selecting states, in recruiting consultants under the limited budget, delays in submission of study drafts and the need for extensive revisions and additional research on the part of the ILO project team, the project expired before the study could be published and the national workshop organized.

In **Bosnia and Herzegovina**, some stakeholders questioned the rationale as to their inclusion in a project primarily based in Africa. Several stakeholders mentioned that the project might have been more beneficial to the country had it selected geographically similar countries.

Stakeholders in **Bosnia and Herzegovina, Kenya, Rwanda and Zambia** appreciated that all the relevant stakeholders were invited to the workshop. This was seen as unique as trade unions are often not invited. Stakeholders from the private school sector are often left out according to a stakeholder in **Zambia**). Stakeholders in **Kenya** specifically praised that the technical and vocational education and training (TVET) sector was included in the workshop. They also mentioned that GIZ in **Kenya** was very helpful in finding the right interview partners.

Communications with the project team

All stakeholders were full of praise for the ILO project team. The project team was seen as extremely helpful and efficient. They were patient with national consultants in terms of delays that were partially caused by the COVID-19 pandemic. The project team was always willing to help when the consultants were developing their studies. They responded very quickly to queries in a solution-oriented manner. They provided very sound technical support.

The donor was grateful for the excellent communication and for being closely involved in the project. They benefited a lot from being so closely involved. It should be noted that the donor participated in all workshops through different representations. Stakeholders in **Zambia** particularly praised that a Zambian national from ILO Headquarters was involved in the national workshop.

2.5 Impact and Sustainability

The section covering impact relates to the strategic orientation applied in influencing wider and long-term development changes in education. The section describing sustainability assesses the likelihood that the objectives pursued by the project will be continued or even scaled up and replicated by national partners.

Summary of main findings:

Although it may yet be too early to fully assess the project's impact, the final evaluation found indication of emerging evidence of impact, specifically the appreciation of inclusive social dialogue, namely bringing together different government agencies (as employers) and teachers' unions, as well as other stakeholders from the TVET sub-sector, private schools and ICT agencies. Constituents in **Zambia**, **Kenya** and **Rwanda** intend to continue this dialogue.

However, it was also critically noted by some stakeholders that the project was relatively short and that it was not possible to do further follow-up on study and workshop recommendations during the project duration. One stakeholder mentioned that the stakeholders should not always rely on donor funding and should organize their own workshops and meetings.

Orientations towards impact

In **Kenya**, the workshop recommendations and conclusions were disseminated to all education stakeholders. The Ministry of Education received donor funding, including to achieve better connectivity within educational institutions. The project consultant made a presentation on the results of the national workshop to the pedagogical institute of **Kenya**. The government was interested in these results and following the project, the project consultant was nominated to a government committee to further follow-up on the conclusions reached in the study and during the national workshop. One of the unions set up a platform to educate members on various issues concerning teachers, including digitalization. However, some stakeholders in **Kenya** mentioned that no effort had been made to make the study and the workshop conclusions more accessible to ordinary teachers and the general public. Therefore, according to them, the project will not have "any real impact". However, this is something that the constituents in Kenya might decide to follow-up on themselves.

In **Zambia**, the Ministry of Technology and Science established an ICT committee comprising all ICT lecturers and headed by the training manager to foster training on the use of digital platforms for online teaching and learning. Laptops were procured for training staff to support access to online platforms. The Ministry of Technology and Science developed a National ICT Policy, which was launched in 2023 after the workshop.³ The policy addresses the issue of ICT skills to be developed by the education and training sector. Technical Education, Vocational and Entrepreneurship Training (TEVET) institutions have mainstreamed the digitalization of skills development and service provisions. Furthermore, GIZ offered to provide funding for a follow-up project; however, none of the constituents followed-up on this.

In **Rwanda**, the workshop led to improved dialogue among different stakeholders. It facilitated cross-sectoral collaboration by bringing together representatives from government, educational institutions, the private sector and civil society. Following the workshop, a comprehensive needs assessment was carried out to identify specific digital skills gaps among youth and teachers and to develop tailor-made training programmes. Additionally strong collaborations were formed between the government and public schools to develop and implement digital skills training programs. Workshop outcomes informed the development of the ILO project "Boosting Decent Jobs for and Enhancing Skills for Youth in Rwanda's Digital Economy" funded by Luxemburg (2023-27) (RWA/23/01/LUX).

Furthermore, the GIZ country team participated in the national workshop and will incorporate the conclusions of the workshop in their workplan.

In **Bosnia and Herzegovina**, one major institute of education will support projects and programmes that aim to strengthen the digital skills of students and teachers. GIZ is following up on the results of the workshops in the country. ILO Budapest is planning to procure funds for a related project. These projects are intended to result in greater impact and sustainability. ILO SECTOR will continue to respond to requests by constituents wherever possible.

³ [National-ICT-Policy-2023.pdf \(mots.gov.zm\)](#)

Orientations towards sustainability

Overall, the basis for sustainability was established to some extent through high quality technical assistance. The evaluator did not find any evidence of the development of an explicit sustainability/exit strategy for the project. Such orientations or guidance might include continued collaboration on both of these aspects of the project with the constituents and/or other national counterparts beyond the implementation period.

However, since February 2023 the ILO has been co-leading the High-Level Panel on the Teaching Profession which was established by the UN Secretary-General. The High-Level panel cited the studies and used the findings of the project on several occasions. The project team hope that this will lead to funding opportunities that would allow to follow-up on some of the recommendations of the project (particularly on social dialogue). Furthermore, the youth employment team is committed to follow-up on the recommendations in at least one of the partner countries in Africa.

The ILO is uniquely qualified to promote and mainstream social dialogue in education. It was hoped that the project could apply for a follow-up project; however, this was not possible as the donor had changed funding priorities due to the geopolitical situation.

3 LESSONS LEARNED AND GOOD PRACTICES

The evaluation identified key lessons learned and good practices, which were driven by both the challenges faced as well as the project results. In this section, the most relevant of these are listed so that they can be taken into consideration in future interventions.

3.1 Lessons Learned

3.1.1 Criteria for selection of countries were not transparent enough

The chosen countries stemmed from a blend of factors: constituent interests, interest by UNESCO and ILO decent work country team, regional ILO and GIZ offices, the readiness of country offices (both ILO and GIZ) to provide support and follow up on the the project. This resulted in a diverse selection, encompassing two from Central Africa, one from West Africa, another from East Africa, one from the European Union, and one in Southeast Europe. Feedback from stakeholders indicated a desire for greater comparability among the chosen states. Some questioned the selection of **Bosnia and Herzegovina** and **Germany**. Some also raised queries about why a country leading in education and technology was not chosen as a potential exemplary case. Although the project team had explained the selection criteria to stakeholders throughout the project, questions remained amongst some of the stakeholders.

3.1.2 Internal communication in the ILO is important for project collaboration

In **Côte d'Ivoire**, despite constituent requests, the validation workshop for the national study could not proceed due to other priorities of the country office. To enhance project execution, it's crucial during the project design phase to ensure the CO is fully briefed on the workplan and designates a staff member for ongoing project oversight. This proactive engagement could align priorities and ensure dedicated support for the project's success.

The following three lessons learned were mentioned by the project team in their final report and were confirmed by the evaluator:

3.1.3 Sharing knowledge accumulated in the project in global events was key

The project leveraged established networks within the education domain, fostering collaborations with key stakeholders who offered valuable insights, recommended proficient consultants, and facilitated access to crucial research and data. These networks, cultivated through educational platforms like the International Task Force on Teachers for Education 2030 and the Digitalization, the Future of Work, and the Teaching Profession initiative, played a pivotal role. Without their existence, establishing and maintaining profound engagement and accessing diverse knowledge and methodologies would have posed significant challenges. The continuous nurturing of these networks will foster extensive knowledge sharing and collaborative efforts, aligning with the project's objectives and contributing to the realization of Sustainable Development Goal (SDG) 4, focusing on quality education.

3.1.4. Cultural sensitivity was important for planning the workshops

The project underscored the significance of comprehending diverse country contexts and intricacies, acknowledging their influence on shaping the research process and outcomes. This understanding was particularly vital in orchestrating national workshops, where meticulous planning had to accommodate national, sectoral, social, and political nuances, alongside institutional capacities and priorities. To better cater to these distinctive national contexts, incorporating dedicated national project officers would have further augmented the project's effectiveness.

3.1.5 Close communication with consultants was key during COVID-19

The persistent impact of the COVID-19 pandemic into the initial quarter of 2022 emphasized the critical need for regular communication among the project team, including GIZ. This open line of communication facilitated necessary adjustments in activities, ensuring the seamless continuation of work and the continual generation of impactful outcomes. Maintaining this communicative approach remained imperative to navigate unforeseen challenges and sustain the project's momentum effectively.

3.2 Good Practices

3.2.1 Collaborative Communication

The project team and the donor fostered an exceptionally close collaboration. Ongoing discussions regarding challenges and best practices led to a joint selection of partner countries, considering potential follow-up opportunities for both the ILO and the donor. This cooperative relationship facilitated productive discussions and mutual learning. The comprehensive and detailed Terms of Reference which were developed by the project team provided rich contextual information, greatly appreciated by various national consultants. Close monitoring of research progress through regular meetings and detailed feedback on drafts ensured high-quality outputs and instilled a sense of ownership among the national consultants.

3.2.2 Inclusive Sectoral Dialogue on ICT and Education

The future of education hinges on quality teachers with decent working conditions and this project's adaptability and timely initiation positions the project strategically for an evolving landscape. This project's strategic timing amid and following the COVID-19 pandemic, along with the adaptable nature of the project staff, positioned it advantageously within this evolving landscape. Collaboration with the SKILLS field colleague in **Rwanda** and **Bosnia and Herzegovina** proved advantageous. SKILLS'

distinct relationships with governments allowed for broader stakeholder involvement, making the workshops more relevant and impactful.

3.2.3 Strengthening national capacity by peer-to-peer learning

National workshops utilized highly interactive methodologies, minimizing traditional lectures, a strategy well-received and valued by participants due to its engaging approach. Stakeholders praised the inclusive approach of the workshops. Efforts by the ILO and the donor to incorporate diverse stakeholders—from teachers' unions, various government ministries and agencies, private schools, technology providers, to individual schools—were highly appreciated. This inclusive setup was seen as a pioneering effort in the education sector in Rwanda, as noted by multiple stakeholders. A technical workshop convened all national consultants, providing invaluable learning experiences for the ILO, the donor, and the consultants themselves. Leveraging their expertise and authority in the educational field, this collaboration will further empower them in enhancing teachers' working conditions.

4. CONCLUSIONS

The following chapter presents a **synthesis of the conclusions drawn from the analysis of the findings** and is organized in correspondence with the evaluation sections: Project's Relevance and strategic fit; Validity of the project design; Project effectiveness; Efficiency; Effectiveness of Impact and Sustainability orientation.

4.1 Project's Relevance and strategic fit

4.1.1 Based on the collected evidence, the final evaluation confirms that the "Teaching and the teaching profession in a digital world: COVID-19 and beyond" project has managed to successfully increase the knowledge base on this topic.

4.1.2 The project was closely aligned with SDG 4 on quality education, ILO Outcome 2 (sectoral international labour standards) and 5 (skills development systems and digital skills), and the [1966 ILO/UNESCO Recommendation concerning the Status of Teachers](#).

4.1.3 Most stakeholders regarded the "Teaching and the teaching profession in a digital world: COVID-19 and beyond project" as positive. They underlined the importance of the background studies and benefited a lot from participating in the workshops.

4.1.4 The project responded to the needs of the constituents particularly in terms of working conditions of teachers. The teaching sector and the teaching profession was heavily impacted by COVID-19 and the project was an important opportunity to take stock of opportunities and challenges.

4.2 Validity of the project design

4.2.1 Generally, the logic that underscored the project was found to be solid. The strategy as well as the intervention model were addressing the identified needs in a logical manner.

4.2.2 However, three weaknesses in the project design emerged:

- a) Some stakeholders found the selection criteria difficult to understand and would have preferred to have more similar countries in the project.
- b) At least one CO was not fully committed to support the project in organizing a workshop. This led to frustrations on the part of constituents.
- c) Many stakeholders would have liked the project to be involved in follow-up on the recommendations of the studies and workshop. However, this was not foreseen in

the project funds due to lack of funds and a relatively short duration of the project.

4.3 Efficiency

4.3.1 The project was run very efficiently. Only one P3 post was funded through the project. The project team was seen as extremely efficient in terms of responding to requests by constituents and consultants.

4.3.2 Based on a review of the relevant documentation provided to the evaluator by the project team and taken into account the feedback of stakeholders, the results achieved during the project justify the expenses of the project.

4.3.3 The overall financial executing rates were good at 88 per cent. 12 per cent of the funds were returned as two of the planned and budgeted workshops could not be carried out.

4.4 Effectiveness

4.4.1 The project team finalized national studies in all partner countries. The studies are all available through the project website, except the study on **Germany** which is currently under review.

4.4.2 The project organized workshops in four partner countries (**Bosnia and Herzegovina, Kenya, Rwanda** and **Zambia**). It was not possible to organize a workshop in **Côte d'Ivoire** as the ILO CO was not able to support the project due to other commitments. In **Germany**, the study could only be finalized so late that there was not sufficient time to organize a workshop.

4.5 Impact and sustainability

4.5.1 The final evaluation has found evidence of impact and sustainability in terms of inclusive sectoral dialogue, which was considered very useful by the stakeholders.

4.5.2 In **Kenya, Zambia** and **Rwanda** stakeholders are following up on implementing recommendations by the workshops. GIZ countries offices are following up on the recommendations in **Kenya** and **Bosnia and Herzegovina**.

5. RECOMMENDATIONS

The following recommendations are based on the findings and flow from lessons learned and the conclusions. The recommendations might be useful to the ILO and GIZ for any future projects.

5.1 Create more and effective synergies within ILO

Addressed to	Priority	Resource	Timing	Related to
ILO SECTOR and field offices	High	Medium	Mid-term	Findings and conclusions: 3.2 Validity of the project design; 3.4 Effectiveness

Creating better synergies within the ILO is important for a more effective project implementation. It is important that the project can fully benefit from and have access to experience, expertise, programmes and resources that are currently available within the ILO field offices. SECTOR has partnered up with SKILLS and the Youth employment team

to create such synergies in some of the countries.. More synergies could have been achieved by being even clearer and more upfront on expected technical and logistical support from field offices.

5.2 Develop a project to include follow-up implementation

Addressed to	Priority	Resource	Timing	Related to
ILO SECTOR	Medium	Medium	Mid-term	Findings and conclusions: 3.2 Validity of the project design

Develop a project to follow-up on the recommendations and conclusions of studies and workshops.

5.3 Design a Sustainability/exit plan for the project

Addressed to	Priority	Resource	Timing	Related to
ILO SECTOR	Medium	Medium	Mid-term	Findings and conclusions: 3.6 Impact and Sustainability

Develop a sustainability of an explicit exit plan which would include continued collaboration on both with the constituents and/or other national counterparts, beyond the implementation period of the project.