



ILO EVALUATION

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This evaluation has been conducted according to ILO's evaluation policies and procedures. It has not been professionally edited but has undergone quality control by the ILO Evaluation Office.

Final Independent Evaluation of the ILO Lab, Phase II

Final Report

FINAL REPORT

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ACRONYMS AND ABBREVIATIONS

ADA	Austrian Development Agency
AIMS	Approach to Inclusive Market Systems for Refugees and Host Communities
BEAM	Building Effective and Accessible Markets
CDC	UK's Development Finance Institution
DAC	Development Assistance Committee
DCED	Donor Committee for Enterprise Development
DFAT	Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade
EU	European Union
FCDO	Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Office, UK
G7	'Group of 7' - the G7 countries include the United States, the United Kingdom, Germany, Canada, Japan, France and Italy
GIZ	The German Agency for International Cooperation
IFC	International Finance Corporation
ILO	International Labour Organisation
ITC	International Training Centre of the ILO at Turin, Italy
JICA	Japan International Cooperation Agency
MoFA	Danish Ministry of Foreign Affairs
MRM	Monitoring and Results Measurement
MSA	Market Systems Analysis
MSD	Market Systems Development
NORAD	Norwegian Agency for Development Cooperation
OSH	Occupational Safety and Health
RMA	Rapid Market Assessment
SDC	Swiss Agency for Development and Cooperation
SDG	Sustainable Development Goal
SCORE	Sustaining Competitive and Responsible Enterprises
SECO	Swiss State Secretariat for Economic Affairs
Sida	Swedish International Development Cooperation Agency
ToC	Theory of Change
ToR	Terms of Reference
UNIDO	United Nations Industrial Development Organisation
USAID	United States Agency for International Development
VCD	Value Chain Development
WEHU	Trade Promotion within SECO

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Project background

The 'Market Systems Development for Decent Work' project, known as the Lab, is a global project implemented by the International Labour Organization (ILO) and funded by the Swiss State Secretariat for Economic Affairs (SECO).

The purpose of the project is to institutionalise and mainstream a market systems approach to decent work, both inside and outside the ILO. The rationale for this is that by working to improve market systems, development projects will be able to deliver more and better jobs, more sustainably.

The project seeks to achieve this firstly by partnering with projects to apply components of a market systems approach to job quality, and in doing so show how sustainable market systems solutions can be delivered to improve working conditions, and secondly by generating and institutionalising knowledge that plugs key gaps, both inside and out of the ILO. The Lab targets three key beneficiary communities with research findings and support to apply a market systems approach to decent work: the ILO, SECO and the wider market systems development (MSD) community.

Purpose and primary use of the evaluation

The purpose of this final independent evaluation of the Lab's Phase II is to contribute to both accountability and learning. From an accountability perspective, the objectives of the evaluation are to explore the performance of the ILO Lab in Phase II (Lab 2) through five key criteria, specifically its relevance and strategic fit; progress and effectiveness; management effectiveness; impact orientation and sustainability; and efficiency (see 'Evaluation criteria' in Section 3.1). From a learning perspective, the objective of the evaluation is to understand what worked, what didn't work, and why, in order to inform the design and implementation of future knowledge generation projects.

The primary clients of the evaluation and the main audience of the report are SECO, the ILO including the Lab project team, and the wider Enterprises Department. Secondary clients of the evaluation include other key market systems donors and MSD practitioners, as well as the ILO's Governing Body.

The evaluation covered the whole period of Lab 2; from its design in the first half of 2017, to its implementation from October 2017 to present. There is no geographical coverage for evaluating this global project.

Evaluation methods

Information was collected using four methods: a self-assessment exercise, a review of project documents and monitoring and results measurement (MRM) data, an anonymous online survey, and remote semi-structured interviews. These methods were chosen to address the evaluation questions in a way that captured a wide range of perspectives, allowed for both anonymous and situated responses, and enabled triangulation between sources, method and types of data.

Findings

Relevance and strategic fit

Overall, Lab 2's objectives were found to be consistent with the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) and to represent a good fit within the ILO's strategic framework. By generating knowledge on how MSD can be applied to decent work, Lab 2 contributes directly to SDG 8 and to the ILO's Programme and Budget Outcome 4. The Lab is meeting an important need

within the ILO through its efforts to promote sustainability, scale, analysis-driven intervention design, adaptive management, and rigorous measurement, all of which are important for meeting donors' expectations and achieving programme objectives.

The Lab was also found to have both leveraged and built the ILO's comparative advantage by uniquely positioning itself to leverage the ILO's credibility, networks and technical knowledge about decent work whilst simultaneously drawing on the MSD community's expertise on systems development. Through its relationships in the MSD community, the Lab built the ILO's credibility in arenas where it has not traditionally had a strong presence. According to donors, in doing so it positioned the ILO as the sole multilateral with MSD competency – a point that is of notable importance to funders who want to increase their MSD programming. Representatives of the donor community from the DCED MSD working group expressed a high value for the Lab's work and were unanimous in their view that it enhances and strengthens their relationship with the ILO.

The Lab's niche focus on the application of market systems approaches to decent work also made it highly relevant to the wider MSD community, where increasing interest in systemic approaches to development and a growing emphasis on decent work in donor agendas have led to demand for knowledge about this. The Lab is the only identified MSD knowledge hub with an explicit focus on decent work.

The Lab's objectives were found to be partly consistent with SECO's needs. The Lab's measurement objectives and research on the connection between productivity and decent work are relevant to SECO, and SECO view the Lab's in-depth analysis to identify needs and assess feasibility prior to intervention design as important and consistent with their needs. However, there was little demand for the Lab's work from SECO-funded projects as the Lab's inputs were not seen as relevant to non-MSD SECO-funded projects.

A key finding with respect to Lab 2's objectives is that the feasibility of sustainably embedding the Lab's methods and knowledge in the ILO was constrained by incentives and capacity in the organisation. The Lab is a small initiative that does not have the institutional mandate or authority to integrate a systems approach to decent work into the ILO's work. Lab 2 showed that it is possible to have an influence by generating, disseminating and supporting the application of knowledge about MSD, but given the institutional context it was unrealistic to expect that Lab 2 could mainstream or institutionalise the approach across the ILO within a timeframe of three years. Different stakeholders had different expectations about the extent to which Lab 2 was expected to do this; it would have been valuable to have more rigorous communication between the ILO and SECO during the design phase to explicitly interpret the Lab's objectives in light of what was feasible. It is also important to evaluate what was achieved in light of what was feasible.

The original project strategy would have benefited from a more clearly articulated Theory of Change (ToC) that showed the expected pathways of change, a narrower set of objectives, and a more explicit vision for sustainability. Applying MSD's sustainability questions to the Lab's own work means asking "*Who will do...?*" and "*Who will pay for...?*" for the activities the Lab does after it closes. Addressing these questions in the design phase and translating them into a clearly articulated ToC would have clarified expectations and objectives.

Progress and effectiveness

Lab 2 has performed very well against its logframe indicators, particularly at the output level where many of its results exceed targets. Notable achievements include that the Lab has partnered with approximately nineteen projects; published forty briefs, guidance documents and research products since October 2017 (with another three forthcoming); increased page views on its website by approximately 60% in three years; and presented at an astonishing

forty-three events, seminars, webinars and training sessions. On the survey conducted for this evaluation, 100% of the six Lab project clients who responded reported being satisfied (66%) or very satisfied (33%) with the collaboration. It was not possible to disaggregate quantitative results by gender.

These achievements represent a remarkable level of productivity relative to resources, particularly given that the Lab built a reputation for a high level of technical expertise, for producing well-written, accessible publications and for running dynamic, engaging and relevant in-person events and trainings. Across thirty-six interviews, there was near unanimous praise for the exceptional quality of the Lab's work.

Although most respondents assessed Lab 2 to have low visibility across the ILO, relative to its size, resources, and institutional influence, it achieved a fair level of visibility. This is growing noticeably thanks to the team's re-emphasis of knowledge dissemination activities alongside knowledge generation; the communications strategy in the second half of Lab 2 has proved effective.

The Lab has been influential within the ILO, considering what was feasible. There is now wider awareness of the approach and its potential merits in multiple parts of the ILO than there would have been without the Lab's work, and in some parts of the ILO, the level of interest in and knowledge about market systems approaches has changed significantly. Encouragingly, there are early signs of ownership within these 'pockets' of interest and capacity, such as independent investment in the approach, adaptation of the approach to solve specific problems, and institutionalisation of components of the approach in policies and methodologies. Examples include:

- the ENTERPRISES department, within which the market systems approach is well-known and has been adapted and applied by multiple teams to diverse sectors and contexts;
- the ILO MSD network, which has over a hundred members;
- the ownership and use of the market systems approach to inform future investment decisions in the Central and Eastern Europe region;
- the institutionalisation of the market systems analyses in a LABADMIN/OSH toolkit, which has itself been adapted and embedded within a G7 occupational safety and health (OSH) initiative, implemented by the ILO in eight countries;¹
- Road to Jobs, a Sida-funded project which worked closely with the Lab and which largely credits their successes to their use of the market systems approach;
- Growing interest in the use of market systems analyses (MSAs) in multiple parts of the ILO, including Fundamentals and SECTOR; and
- Institutionalisation of market systems thinking in multiple ILO policies and guidance documents.

Tracing the Lab's 'success stories' shows that the most meaningful examples of influence have come through relationships with individuals for whom the market systems approach can solve a problem or add value to their agenda, rather than through formal institutional agreements. It also shows that building these relationships, supporting the adoption and adaptation of the approach needed to foster independent ownership and investment, and facilitating the

¹ LABADMIN/OSH is a branch of the ILO. See <https://www.ilo.org/global/about-the-ilo/how-the-ilo-works/departments-and-offices/governance/labadmin-osh/about-us/lang--en/index.htm>

organic spread of the approach takes time. Lab 2 has been most effective when it has adapted its strategy to accommodate these realities.

The Lab has added significant value to debates on how a systems approach can be used to address decent work deficits both within and beyond the ILO. It has published a substantial number of quality outputs addressing knowledge gaps in the field and, thanks to revitalising its communications strategy, has also had very good reach relative to its size and budget.

Lab 2 has built a strong reputation and good visibility in the donor community, largely thanks to its engagement with the DCED MSD Working Group within which it is influential and highly regarded. Members of the group value the quality of Lab 2's technical expertise, the collaborative approach Lab 2 takes to working with the group and its niche focus on market systems for decent work. Strong relationships between Lab 2 and members of the group have led to fruitful partnerships.

Lab 2 has achieved all three objectives for its work with SECO – publishing a measurement toolkit online, publishing five replicable business models for working with enterprises to create more and better jobs, and providing technical assistance to SECO-funded projects. However, outcomes have not been as impactful as expected. One exception is notable: SECO's standard indicators for the next four- or five-year period are strongly influenced by the Lab's research and will be supported by a how-to guide on measuring job quality.

Lab 2's research and measurement practice was gender-sensitive. Women's representation was explicitly considered in sector selection, and the differential constraints and benefits for women and men shaped research and findings in Rapid Market Assessments (RMAs) and MSAs. The Value Chain Development for Decent Work Guide, which Lab 2 contributed heavily to developing and revising, is strong on gender equality and other inclusivity issues, and some of Lab 2's other tools also provide guidance on how to mainstream gender in market system approaches. However, the Lab could have done more to mainstream gender in its work, particularly towards the beginning of Lab 2. More recently, the Lab team have recognised this and made efforts to address it, for example by increasing gender-sensitivity in their market research, by publishing a brief on a key gender-related area, and by hosting an event focused on gender in market systems programming.

One obstacle to progress for Lab 2 was that it was more difficult than expected to identify project partners that were a good fit for Lab 2's knowledge generation agenda, and once a partnership had been agreed, the Lab had little control over when and how work proceeded. Finding partners and working to their timetables and needs has been resource intensive.

Furthermore, working through partners often involved trying to integrate parts of MSD into non-MSD projects. One of Lab 2's most successful partnerships was with the Road to Jobs project in Afghanistan. Road to Jobs was designed as an MSD project (with input from Lab 1) and Lab 2 has played a critical role in supporting it with analysis, implementation and measurement. Lab 2 has found it difficult to find similar projects to partner with. One effect of this is that the Lab has lacked a compelling 'big win' that demonstrates the effectiveness of the approach empirically. Lab team members and supporters have long argued that it would be valuable for the Lab to run an action research 'demo-project' autonomously, however, the project was not designed with enough funding to do so.

Lab 2 also faced institutional barriers to progress including resistance to their influencing agenda. Responding to recommendations from the mid-term evaluation and to their own learning, Lab 2 adapted their strategy in the second half of phase 2 in ways that proved effective. Changes that were made include:

- Shifting from a 'hierarchical' institutionalisation strategy to a targeted 'network-and-nodes' strategy that prioritises relationship building

- Shifting from an ‘influencing’ stance to a ‘supporting’ stance, by looking for the win-win instead of pushing MSD as a solution
- Shifting from producing knowledge to synthesising knowledge
- Recognising the importance of language and avoiding the term ‘market’ where possible
- Starting *Coffee &...* events for debate, discussion and relationship building.

The combined effect was a growing momentum in the Lab’s visibility and influence within the ILO in the second half of Lab 2.

Impact orientation and sustainability

By generating knowledge on when and how a market systems approach can be used to facilitate full and productive employment and decent work for all, the Lab has contributed to SDG 8. The Lab has also been influential within the ILO by contributing to growing interest and competence in an area which is of direct relevance to the ILO’s strategic priorities and of interest to its funders. Lab 2’s efforts have contributed to a greater awareness of the market systems approach and an improved knowledge base among ILO staff. The active internal ILO-MSD network now has over a hundred members and there are multiple examples of practical application of components of MSD across the ILO, especially but not exclusively within the ENTERPRISES department. However, while the project has been effective in embedding elements of the MSD approach within the ILO, relative to its available resources and timeframe, this impact has yet to reach scale or sustainability. Without an ongoing presence and resource like the Lab in the ILO the sustainability of what has been achieved to date is at risk.

In SECO Headquarters there is a growing appetite for incorporating systems thinking in future development programming, as evidenced by SECO’s enthusiasm for the Lab’s involvement in the future ‘Productivity Ecosystem’ project, which SECO intends to fund. SECO’s standard indicators for measuring job quality, that are built on Lab research, are likely to affect measurement for at least the next four to five years, if not beyond. As many of the SECO-funded projects that the Lab worked with were not MSD projects, there is minimal evidence of sustainable impact among them, beyond the fact that some of them intend to institutionalise what they learned from the Lab about measuring job quality.

The Lab has contributed to an improved knowledge base in the wider MSD community on when and how a market systems approach can be used for decent work and has added significant value to debates in the field. This is likely to be sustained, as key players will continue researching and investing in a market systems approach to decent work. The resources the Lab has produced will also remain available to the field. However, without the Lab’s presence and promotion, visibility and the aspects of the ILO’s comparative advantage built by the Lab will diminish.

Effectiveness of management arrangements

The quality of the Lab’s work is very high and the team themselves are exceptionally well regarded. Collaborators, clients, donor representatives and colleagues alike describe Lab 2 team members as competent, efficient, motivated, dynamic, collaborative, responsive, and good at managing complex sets of relationships well. The team’s technical expertise outstripped their understanding of the ILO as an institution, but this was complemented by the support of colleagues in ENTERPRISES department management. Both technical and institutional knowledge provided critical to Lab 2’s progress and effectiveness.

The resources available to the Lab were appropriate relative to its objectives, except that to have a significantly scaled and sustainable influence on the ILO would have required considerably more than three years.

Lab 2's MRM was adequate and supported by good records, but as it was focused on logframe targets, strategic decisions were driven more by the targets themselves than by a theory of change. The team reviewed progress regularly and consistently. In the second and third years of Lab 2, and particularly following the mid-term evaluation, these reviews supported good adaptive management practices. (The disruption caused by high staff turnover towards the end of the first year is one reason strategic pivots were not made earlier.)

Evaluation findings suggest that the changes the team made to strategy and tactics were effective. Some, like renewed investment in the Lab's knowledge dissemination strategy, led to impressive concrete results. Others, such as the *Coffee &...* initiative, came too late in light of the overall length of the project and the disruptions caused by COVID-19 to be as effective as they might otherwise have been.

The Lab team adapted well to the COVID-19 pandemic. It did affect progress – putting a halt to the newly developed *Coffee &...* and preventing staff from travelling – but the team pivoted to use the opportunity for knowledge synthesis and dissemination and have been remarkably productive despite the disruption.

Concerns with regard to gender equality did emerge and the Lab responded to them by prioritising gender equality more highly, by hosting the gender *Coffee &...* event, by publishing the brief on childcare and by making sector selection and MSAs more gender sensitive.

Efficiency

Despite the challenges it faced in identifying appropriate partners, Lab 2 was very successful in soliciting co-funding to support project implementation. The vast majority of Lab 2's partners contributed resources to shared activities, amounting to approximately 1.3 million USD – an additional 65% - of project funds. This meant the Lab was able to effectively double its human resources. The project was efficient at using the available resources to deliver quality outputs and the budget was well-managed, which has enabled a three-month no-cost extension.

The biggest mitigation to the question of whether the Lab represents good value for money is the fact that without further investment, many of the results are unlikely to be sustained. This reflects issues of feasibility and strategy rather than efficiency.

Conclusions

Lab 2's niche focus on the application of a market systems approach to decent work has enabled it to perform functions that have been relevant and strategically important to the ILO, SECO and other donors, as well as being useful to the wider field of MSD implementers. In particular, Lab 2 has been able to both leverage and build the ILO's comparative advantage by positioning the ILO as the sole multilateral with MSD competency and the 'go-to' resource for donors interested in funding systemic approaches to decent work.

As a knowledge generation project, Lab 2 has been successful. The Lab has produced numerous publications and hosted more than forty events and training sessions, on relevant topics, at an exceptionally high standard. In doing so it has become a respected technical expert among influential donors and implementers and has contributed significantly to debates on how a systems approach can be used to address decent work deficits, both within and beyond the ILO. This impact will likely last and, were the Lab able to continue, is poised to grow.

The structure of the ILO, and the incentives and capacities in many parts of the organisation, have been a challenge for Lab 2's objective of influencing the ILO to mainstream a market systems approach to decent work. Given the institutional context, it was unrealistic to expect that the Lab could achieve wide institutionalisation of the approach within a timeframe of three years.

Despite this, and despite obstacles and setbacks to progress, Lab 2 made good progress relative to what was feasible, especially in the latter half of Phase 2. It has undoubtedly had an influence within the ILO, contributing to growing interest and competence in an area which is of direct relevance to the ILO's strategic priorities. In the process, it has learned a lot about how change happens in an institution like the ILO – lessons which the ILO could draw upon in the future and which could shape future influence if resources are put to that end. The changes Lab 2 made to its own strategy in light of this learning have yielded promising results, though some came too late, and too close to COVID-19, to be as impactful as they might otherwise have been.

At this stage, it is unlikely that the Lab's methods, knowledge, and influence will be effectively sustained by other parts of the ILO without ongoing support from technical specialists. In the institutional context, internal expertise with strong external relationships is best placed to provide this expertise. The question is then how such expertise can be sustainably funded. The evaluation findings suggest that the ILO, SECO and other donors who have benefited from the Lab's work thus far would all benefit from retaining the functions the Lab performs in the ILO.

The Lab is too small of a project and represents expertise in a technical area of work that is too new to the ILO for it to trigger significant internal funding mechanisms at this stage. However, even without the prospect of sustainability as originally envisioned, the relevance and strategic importance of the Lab's work could justify a long-term donor investment in more gradual change if it were supported by strong signs of ownership from the ILO.

Lessons

- By combining the ILO's reputation and knowledge about decent work with the MSD community's systems development expertise, it is possible to carve out a niche which is in high demand and of significant value to the ILO, its donors and the wider field.
- Planning for sustainability requires asking "Who will do this in the long run?" and "Who will pay for this in the long run?" before an intervention starts, and then designing the intervention around the answers.
- Technical assistance is not enough to change behaviour unless it is linked to incentives.
- Changing incentives is ambitious and takes time.
- Certain tactics are more effective than others for promoting behaviour change in large, complex organisations.
- Results-based adaptive management is as important for objectives like "influence" that are difficult to measure, as it is for more tangible objectives.
- The market systems approach is most valuable when it is applied as a 'whole' rather than in parts.

Emerging good practices

- Lab 2 is a model for taking an ‘inter-disciplinary’ approach to developing technical knowledge, by combining expertise from two different communities of practice.
- Lab 2 leveraged co-funding that enabled it to effectively double its resources and achieve a high level of productivity and efficiency relative to the initial investment.

Recommendations

- *Recommendation 1: ILO - demonstrate internal ownership of and support for the Lab to donors (high priority)*
- *Recommendation 2: SECO (and other potential donors) - invest funding to retain the Lab in the ILO for the long-term (high priority)*
- *Recommendation 3: Design any future project on a deeper understanding of what is feasible (high priority)*
- *Recommendation 4: Build a detailed Theory of Change into the design of any future project and use it as the basis for adaptive management (high priority)*
- *Recommendation 5: Build on the strategies and tactics that Lab 2 has developed, testing and adapting them where necessary (high priority)*
- *Recommendation 6: Prioritise funds for demonstration (medium priority)*
- *Recommendation 7: Improve recruitment of technical officers for MSD projects (medium priority)*

1. PROJECT BACKGROUND

The 'Market Systems Development for Decent Work' project, known as the Lab, is a global project implemented by the International Labour Organization (ILO) and funded by the Swiss State Secretariat for Economic Affairs (SECO).

The purpose of the project is to institutionalise and mainstream a market systems approach to decent work, both inside and outside the ILO. The rationale for this is that by working to improve market systems, development projects are expected to be able to deliver more and better jobs, more sustainably.

The Lab is housed within the Small and Medium Enterprises Unit (SME) of the Enterprises Department (ENTERPRISES) of the ILO. In the Unit, the Lab is part of a larger team which includes the thematic areas of Value Chain Development, Approach to Inclusive Market Systems (AIMS) for Refugees and Host Communities, Entrepreneurship and Women's Entrepreneurship Development (WED). The Lab is managed from the ILO Headquarters in Geneva and implements through a small team of staff and a long-term consultant, reporting to the ILO Value Chain Development Coordinator.

The project has a budget of CHF 2,000,000 and is in its second phase. The first phase ran from 2014 to 2017. The second and final phase began in October 2017 and is expected to finish at the end of December 2020. In the second phase, the project sought to improve the uptake and application of the market systems approach to decent work through two core objectives:

- **Objective 1:** Improve job quality in selected global, regional and national value chains to provide a 'demonstration effect' showing how sustainable market systems solutions can be delivered to improve working conditions.
- **Objective 2:** Generate and institutionalise knowledge that plugs key gaps in understanding, internal and external to the ILO, of when and how a market systems approach can be used to create more and better jobs.

These two objectives target three key beneficiary communities: the ILO, SECO and the wider market systems development (MSD) community. The Lab has identified different needs in these beneficiary communities in relation to its programme objective. For the ILO, the Lab's focus is on demonstrating the value of a market systems approach to decent work and on supporting colleagues to incorporate parts of an MSD approach into their work. One of the objectives is to embed the Lab's methods and knowledge into other parts of the ILO to maximise the likelihood of sustainability beyond the end of SECO funding. For SECO, the focus is on generating and disseminating knowledge about how to measure job quality, on researching the relationship between productivity and decent work and developing replicable business models for decent work with enterprises, and on providing technical assistance to other SECO-funded projects. For the wider MSD community, the focus of the Lab's work is on generating and disseminating knowledge about the approach's applicability to decent work objectives.

The Lab's activities fall into two workstreams. The first of these is knowledge creation and sharing. The intervention logic in this workstream is that by identifying and then plugging key gaps in the ILO, SECO and the MSD community's understanding of how and when a market systems approach can be used to create more and better jobs, the Lab can both demonstrate the value of a market systems approach to decent work and provide the guidance needed to apply it, thereby persuading more people to use and institutionalise it.

The second workstream involves working through partnerships to institutionalise the market systems approach in the ILO, SECO and beyond. These partnerships take a variety of forms. In some cases, collaborations are focused on building aspects of the market systems approach into institutional policies and organisational guidance, or on delivering training to staff. Partners have included SECO's Trade and Promotion team (WEHU), the ILO headquarter units, and external bodies like Sida.

In other cases, the Lab's partnership work has been with field projects, to embed aspects of a market systems approach to decent work in programming on-the-ground. The Lab's partners for this work include projects supported by SECO or Swiss funding, ILO field projects, and external market systems and private sector development projects.²

Partnerships with field projects are intended to support programme objectives in two ways. Firstly, when programming is successfully improved through use of a systems approach to decent work, the project can be used as an example to persuade a wider set of stakeholders of the value of the Lab's methods and approaches. Secondly, working with field projects generates knowledge and learning, which feeds into the Lab's first workstream. Much of the Lab's work with field projects has focused on market research (sector selection, market system analyses and rapid market assessments) and on improving monitoring and results measurement.

Although the Lab is a global project, a requirement of the second phase of the project is to maintain a geographic focus, where possible, on SECO priority countries (Albania, Colombia, Egypt, Ghana, Indonesia, Kyrgyzstan, Peru, Serbia, South Africa, Tajikistan, Tunisia and Vietnam) and complimentary countries (Bolivia, Myanmar and Nepal). The second phase has also focused on generating knowledge about MSD in non-agricultural sectors, such as tourism, construction, manufacturing and agro-processing, where the body of knowledge on market systems is less robust and the decent work challenges are more complex.

2. EVALUATION BACKGROUND

2.1. Purpose and primary use of the evaluation

The aim of evaluation in the ILO is to promote accountability and learning³ and this evaluation relates to both purposes.

From an accountability perspective, the objectives of the evaluation are to explore the performance of the ILO Lab in Phase II (Lab 2) through five key criteria, specifically its relevance and strategic fit; progress and effectiveness; management effectiveness; impact orientation and sustainability; and efficiency (see 'Evaluation criteria' in Section 3.1). This involves assessing the progress of the Lab against its planned delivery (mainly against the logframe, six-month strategies and overall project objectives but also, where relevant, assessing Lab activities not reflected in the logframe). It involves an assessment of whether Lab 2 achieved what it set out to achieve – specifically the extent to which the Lab has influenced a systemic approach being adopted within the ILO and in SECO, and decent work being effectively addressed in market systems programming. The Lab's performance will be assessed in the context of the ILO's strategic objectives and priorities too, including the extent to which the Lab was able to advance gender equality, inclusion of people with disabilities and other non-discrimination issues in its activities.

From a learning perspective, the objective of the evaluation is to understand what worked, what didn't work, and why. This understanding can then be applied by the ILO, SECO and other potential donors in the future. For the ILO, the evaluation is intended to generate learning on what the ILO can do to ensure that market systems application continues in the organisation, including in the context of the COVID-19 pandemic, and on what could be done to achieve outcomes in future knowledge-generation initiatives. For SECO, and for other potential donors, the evaluation is expected to identify what ideas and practices to take forward and consider for a similar project in the future.

² Initially, the Lab also tried to partner with private sector companies, but beyond a single case study conducted in partnership with PanAust and RMIT University, this line of work was not ultimately pursued.

³ ILO Evaluation Policy (2017) available at: http://www.ilo.ch/wcmsp5/groups/public/---ed_mas/---eval/documents/policy/wcms_603265.pdf

As the Lab is itself a learning and influencing project, the learning objectives – including a rigorous and critical assessment of both successes and failures – are central to the evaluation objectives. To this end, a public webinar has been included as a deliverable of the evaluation, as a mechanism for communicating the learning from the evaluation to a wider audience. As the TOR expresses, the evaluation could itself contribute to meeting the project objectives by generating knowledge and learning for the Lab’s beneficiary communities (the ILO, SECO and the wider MSD community). This learning could be used to translate lessons into the design of future projects, thus contributing to sustainability and scale of the market systems approach, within and beyond the ILO.

The Terms of Reference (TORs) for this evaluation are provided in Annex 2.

2.1.1. Scope of the evaluation

The evaluation covered the whole period of Lab 2; from its design in the first half of 2017, to its implementation from October 2017 to present, so that the evaluation provides a complete perspective of the project’s development, evolution and current status. The evaluation briefly took stock of the Lab’s first phase (2014-2017) for context. It did not evaluate the project (Lab 1) during that period.

There is no geographical coverage for evaluating this global project. The scope of the evaluation includes both of the Lab’s workstreams.

2.1.2. The clients of the evaluation and the main audience of the report

The primary clients of the evaluation and the main audience of the report are:

- SECO
- The ILO
- The Lab project team
- The wider Value Chain Development, SME Unit and Enterprise Team in ILO headquarters, as well as collaborating and supporting field offices and headquarters units

Secondary clients of the evaluation include:

- Other key market systems donors and MSD and MSME development practitioners
- The ILO’s Governing Body, and the ILO Constituents.

2.1.3. Evaluation dates

This evaluation was launched on August 12th. The draft Inception Report was submitted on September 11th. A data collection and analysis period commenced immediately after approval of the Inception Report. A debrief of preliminary findings was given to the Lab team and evaluation manager on October 7th and this report was submitted on October 9th. Feedback from the ILO and SECO was received on October 26th and the final report, incorporating all necessary changes was submitted to the ILO on October 30th.

3. METHODOLOGY

3.1. Evaluation criteria

In accordance with the ILO evaluation guidelines, DAC evaluation criteria and the ToR for this assignment, the evaluation criteria are relevance, effectiveness, impact, sustainability and efficiency. Reflecting Section 3.4 of the *ILO policy guidelines for results-based evaluations* and as per the TOR for this assignment, these criteria were addressed in the following categories:

- **Relevance and strategic fit:** the extent to which the objectives of the project are consistent with the ILO, SECO and external market practitioners’ needs, and with the relevant SDGs; the

extent to which the project plays on the ILO's comparative advantages and fits within the wider ILO strategic framework; and the extent to which the project's strategy, objectives and assumptions are appropriate for achieving planned results.

- **Progress and effectiveness:** the extent to which the project achieved (or is anticipated to achieve) its objectives, the obstacles that were encountered, and the learning that was (or was not) implemented as a result.
- **Effectiveness of management arrangements:** the extent to which institutional and management capacities and arrangements supported the achievement of results, including internal capacity and resourcing, monitoring and results measurement, and adaptive management practices. This category also includes the extent to which the resources available were adequate for meeting the project objectives.
- **Impact orientation and sustainability:** The strategic orientation of the project towards making a significant contribution to broader, long-term, sustainable development changes, and the likelihood that the results can be maintained or even scaled up after the close of the project.
- **Efficiency:** the extent to which the project delivered its outcomes and outputs with efficient use of resources, including efforts/successes in soliciting public-private partnerships for the most cost-effective implementation of activities.

In addition, each of these categories will also be assessed with attention to gender equality, inclusion of people with disabilities and other non-discrimination issues, as reflected in the evaluation questions.

3.2. Evaluation questions

During the inception period, and in collaboration and conversation with the evaluation manager and the Lab team, the questions outlined in the TOR were developed into a more detailed framework of questions and sub-questions in each of the evaluation criteria categories. The approved evaluation questions are presented below. These questions guided the evaluator in designing the methodology, conducting data collection and analysis, and drawing conclusions.

3.2.1. Relevance and strategic fit:

Relevance

- Was the objective of the project (namely, to “Institutionalise and mainstream a market systems approach to decent work, both inside and outside the ILO”) consistent with:
 - a) the ILO's needs?
 - b) external market systems practitioners' needs?
 - c) SECO's priorities and needs?
 - d) the SDGs?

ILO strategic fit

- Does the project play on (e.g. both leverage and build) the ILO's comparative advantages?
- Do the Lab's objectives fit well within the wider ILO strategic framework, including the relevant SDGs?

Project strategy, objectives and assumptions

- Were the original project strategy, objectives and assumptions appropriate for achieving planned results?
 - a) **Outcomes:** were the project's two objectives (as in the logframe) appropriate for achieving the impact-level objective?

- b) **Outputs:** were the specified outputs (as in the logframe) appropriate for achieving the outcomes?
- Were the original project strategy, objectives and assumptions appropriate for promoting gender equality, inclusion of people with disabilities and other non-discrimination issues?
- Was the ongoing project strategy appropriate for achieving planned results?
 - a) **Activities:** Did the Lab identify appropriate activities and partners for achieving its outputs and outcomes? Were appropriate leverage points identified, across the three key communities the Lab sought to influence?
- What lessons can be learned for the design of future projects? What worked/what didn't work?

3.2.2. Progress and effectiveness:

Results (activities, outputs, outcomes, impact)

- Has the project implementation been on track according to the logframe/workplans?
- How visible is the Lab?
 - a) What kind of outreach does the Lab have in the ILO, SECO and the wider development community?
 - b) How is the Lab's role and value-add perceived in each of these communities?
- To what extent has the project achieved its objectives in each of the three target communities – the **ILO, SECO** and **wider development practitioners**?
 - a) How have members of each community engaged with the Lab's work? To what extent was there demand for the Lab's work?
 - b) How have members of each community benefited from or been influenced by the Lab's work?
 - c) Has the Lab's work improved application of the market systems approach to achieve decent work, and if so, in what ways?
 - d) Which elements of the market systems approach to decent work are showing most promise in being institutionalised and mainstreamed, and by whom?
 - e) To what extent are there signs of the ILO/SECO adopting a more systemic approach and/or improving measurement practices?
 - f) How far has the Lab added value to debates on how a systemic approach can be used to address decent work deficits among wider development practitioners?
 - g) To what extent is it possible to identify signs of additionality, e.g. that the Lab facilitated benefits that would not have happened without it?
- What results are available against quantitative indicators? (For example, are there figures available on how many jobs that have been created or improved? Can they be disaggregated by gender?)
- How effective was the Lab in advancing gender equality, inclusion of people with disabilities, and other non-discrimination issues within the context of the project's objectives and taking into account the constraints of their partners' priorities?

Learning

- What obstacles did the project encounter during implementation? How did they affect progress? Could the project have better addressed these challenges?
- Has the project's learning been adequately reflected in the project implementation?

3.2.3. Effectiveness of management arrangements

Internal capacity and resourcing

- Was the management and governance arrangement of the project adequate? Was there a clear understanding of roles and responsibilities by all parties involved?

- Did the project receive adequate administrative, technical and – if needed – political support from the ILO, including specialists in the field as well as the responsible technical units in HQ?
- Were the resources available to the Lab appropriate relative to its objectives as laid out in the logframe?
- What institutional barriers, if any, have hindered achievement of the project objectives and impact?

Monitoring and results measurement

- How effectively did the project monitor project performance and results?
 - Was there a monitoring and evaluation system in place?
 - Have targets and indicators been sufficiently defined for the project?
 - Was relevant information systematically collected and collated?
 - Was (qualitative and/or quantitative) information collected at all the relevant levels e.g. outputs, outcomes and impact?
 - Was information effectively communicated to the relevant stakeholders?
- Did the project’s monitoring include monitoring for gender equality, inclusion of people with disabilities and other non-discrimination issues?

Adaptive management

- Was the monitoring and evaluation information used for adaptive management?
 - How has the internal monitoring framework of the Lab contributed to the team’s ability to understand their effectiveness and to flexibly adapt their strategy?
 - Have the strategy, objectives and assumptions been appropriately adapted and updated in light of monitoring and evaluation information?
- Have the recommendations from the mid-term evaluation been sufficiently incorporated into the project?
- Did concerns with regards to gender equality, inclusion of people with disabilities, and other non-discrimination issues emerge, and if so, to what extent did the project strategies and approach, within their overall scope, remain flexible and responsive to them?
- Did the project adapt appropriately in the face of COVID-19?

3.2.4. Impact orientation and sustainability:

Overall impact (see also ‘Progress and effectiveness’ above)

- Did the demonstration effect of improving job quality (core objective 1) and generating and institutionalising knowledge (core objective 2) lead to institutionalising and mainstreaming a market systems approach to decent work, both inside and outside the ILO?
 - a) Is there an improved knowledge base in the ILO on using market systems in and around jobs and job quality?
 - b) Is there an improved knowledge base in SECO on using market systems approaches for decent work?
 - c) Is there an improved knowledge base in the wider development community on using market systems approaches for decent work?
- Has the project reached sufficient scale and depth to justify the donor investment?
- Has the project made a difference to specific SDGs that the project is linked to? If so, how? (Explicitly or implicitly)

Sustainability

- What is the likelihood that Lab methods and knowledge will, in both market systems development and results measurement, be used and applied after the project finishes?
 - a) In the ILO?
 - b) In SECO?
 - c) In the wider development community?
- How, if at all, does the multifaceted crisis induced by COVID-19 affect the potential sustainability of the Lab methods, knowledge and impact?

3.2.5. Efficiency

- How efficient was the project in utilizing project resources to deliver the planned results? How efficient was the project in delivering on its outputs and objectives?
- How successfully has the project been able to solicit partnerships in supporting the project implementation and the beneficiaries?
- Was the project cost effective and did it provide good value for money?
- To what extent did the project leverage resources (financial, partnerships, expertise) to promote gender equality, inclusion of people with disabilities and non-discrimination?

3.3. Evaluation Methods

Information was collected using four methods: a self-assessment exercise, a review of the project documents, website and MRM data, an anonymous online survey, and remote semi-structured interviews. These methods were chosen to address the evaluation questions in a way that captured a wide range of perspectives, allowed for both anonymous and situated responses, and enabled triangulation between sources, methods and types of data (e.g. qualitative and quantitative).

Questions relating to the Lab's advancement of gender equality, inclusion of people with disabilities and other non-discrimination issues were addressed through explicit questions on the survey and in interviews (see Annexes 6 and 7). Discussions about the gender sensitivity of the Lab's work were had with all members of the Lab, with partners, and with other stakeholders including collaborators and donor representatives.

Cross-cutting themes relating to the ILO such as fundamental principles and rights, tripartism and social dialogue were addressed through interview and survey questions about the Lab's relevance to the ILO, its strategic fit, its ability to leverage and/or build the ILO's comparative advantage and the Lab's role within the wider ILO.

3.3.1. Self-assessment exercise

A self-assessment exercise was designed to provide an opportunity for the Lab team to jointly reflect on several of the evaluation questions. The answers provided information which related to several of the evaluation questions, as well as providing an early and foundational understanding of the Lab's activities which helped in the design of interviews and surveys. A blank copy of the self-assessment is provided in Annex 5, with the questions that were addressed during the exercise noted.

3.3.2. Secondary document and data review

The following sets of information formed the basis of desk-based analysis:

- The Lab's project-related documents, including
 - documents about the Lab and its progress, such as 'Six Month Strategies,' 'Annual progress reports' and previous evaluations
 - documents published by the Lab as the outputs of its work
 - informal communications such as emails, feedback on social media etc.

- The Lab’s monitoring and results measurement (MRM) data
- The ILO website and other ILO project’s documentation, where relevant
- Documentation about how the ILO functions as an organisation (to a limited level)

This documentation and data provided critical information for the evaluation, particularly on progress and effectiveness. Quantitative results are based on Lab 2’s MRM data. Where possible, these results were independently verified; this was largely possible at the activity and output level but less doable at the outcome and impact level.

3.3.3. Online survey

An online survey was used to reach a wider number of potential respondents than was possible with interviews, to collect and analyse quantitative data from the Lab’s partners, and to provide a way for individuals to input anonymously.

In total, fourteen people completed the online survey. Respondents were anonymous, but included information about their connection to the Lab. Eleven of the respondents are part of the ILO, six are project partners (four ILO, two external, none SECO-funded), and six work for or closely with the Lab team. Annex 6 explains the survey logic and lists the questions asked for each group of respondents.

3.3.4. Semi-structured interviews

Semi-structured interviews provide a way to dig more deeply into respondents’ experiences and perceptions than surveys allow. Interviews fall on a continuum from informal, unstructured conversations to fully structured questionnaires. For this evaluation, loosely semi-structured interviews were used to enable a conversation to develop whilst covering the necessary topics. Interview guides were developed (see Annex 7) but were not rigidly adhered to. This allowed interviewees to direct the evaluator to pertinent information even when it was not directly asked about, as well as allowing a natural conversation. All interviews were conducted remotely. Interview lengths ranged from thirty minutes to two hours and fifteen minutes, with an average interview length of about an hour.

3.4. Sources of information for interviews and surveys

Fifty-five individuals were invited to respond to the online survey from a group that included the Lab team, other ILO staff including Lab partners and collaborators, partners/collaborators from SECO-funded projects, external partners, and representatives of the external MSD community.

Thirty-six interviews were conducted with stakeholders from the following groups: the Lab team, previous Lab 2 team members, other ILO staff including Lab partners and collaborators, partners/collaborators from SECO-funded projects, external partners, the donor (SECO), and representatives of the external MSD community. The process for identifying interviewees and the final list of individuals interviewed can be seen in Annex 4. Some interviewees were also asked to complete the online survey (anonymously), so there is an overlap in responses.

3.5. Analysis

Data analysis and interpretation often receives insufficient time allocation in review and evaluation work. Without time set aside to intentionally analyse findings, data can inadvertently be interpreted on the basis of impressions, biases or the accidental over-weighting of recently collected data, leading to unexpected or counter-intuitive findings being easily missed.

For this evaluation, survey results were analysed using descriptive statistics. Data from interviews, emails, qualitative survey responses and the self-assessment were coded (using MAXQDA Analytics) against the evaluation questions, Lab 2 partnerships, and themes that emerged inductively from patterns in the data. Segments of data that related to each question or theme were then reviewed

and interpreted in light of each other, their context and emerging patterns. This method enabled triangulation and a rich iterative process of analysis.

3.6. Limitations and bias

As with all research approaches, there are limitations associated with the methodology used:

- This evaluation was necessarily conducted remotely, in the context of the COVID-19 crisis. As such, it was not possible to spend time in person with the Lab project team. This meant that informal conversations and observations that might otherwise have shaped the evaluation and provided subtle insights were inevitably missed. Frequent contact over email and as-needed Skype calls with the Lab 2 Coordinator mitigated this risk.
- Participation in interviews and surveys was voluntary, which biased sampling and limited access to information (particularly on the survey). It was not meaningful to use sampling methods that capture 'representativeness.' Instead, interviewees and survey respondents were identified to capture relevant insights and perspectives.
- Bias was introduced to the evaluation by the fact that the list of people to interview and survey was heavily shaped by the Lab project team, and only includes people who have had some contact with the Lab (thereby failing to capture a more representative perspective from SECO, the ILO or the MSD community). For example, assessment of the Lab's profile within the ILO was limited by the fact that the evaluation was only able to interview and survey people connected to the Lab who, by definition, have a biased view of its visibility.
- The evaluator works for the Springfield Centre which has a reputation for being an advocate of MSD. This may have made people feel uncomfortable with being too negative about the approach, though overall interviewees did seem to be frank and forthcoming.
- Information had to be collected and analysed within a short period of time. This proved challenging for a project with such broad objectives and diverse activities situated in a large complex organisation. Inevitably, the evaluation was limited by these constraints.
- The evaluation is dependent, particularly for quantitative results, on the information the Lab has collected, and hence on the quality and accuracy of that information.

To mitigate these limitations, the evaluation used a mixed-methods approach with a large range of potential interviewees and survey respondents. The evaluation questions have been answered to the extent that information is available, with limitations in findings and gaps highlighted where necessary.

3.7. Stakeholder participation

The primary stakeholders in this evaluation are the Lab project team, followed by the donor and the wider Value Chain Development, SME Unit and Enterprise Team in ILO. Stakeholder participation is central to Springfield's approach to conducting evaluations and despite the challenges of taking a participatory approach when conducting an evaluation remotely, numerous opportunities for the primary stakeholders to shape the evaluation have been built into the methodology. These included:

- Briefing call with Lab Project Coordinator and ILO Value Chain Development Coordinator prior to Inception
- Self-assessment exercise for the Lab project team, in the first week of Inception
- Initial reconstruction of the Lab TOC with the Lab Project Coordinator via Skype
- Discussions on Skype and opportunities to input via email on who should be interviewed and surveyed (Lab project team)
- Opportunity for the Lab project team to input via email on the evaluation questions

- Numerous subsequent emails to clarify findings and request additional information
- Individual interviews (most of approximately two hours) with Lab team members
- Debrief by Skype to shape analysis and conclusions prior to submission of draft report

3.8. Ethics, norms and standards

The guiding principles for this evaluation reflect international good practice principles such as transparency, professionalism, independence, credibility, ethics, and utility, particularly as represented by the ILO Evaluation Policy (2017), ILO evaluation guidelines, the ILO Code of Conduct for evaluators (see Annex 8), the UN evaluation standards and norms and the Springfield Centre’s approach. Specific decisions with respect to consent and confidentiality are outlined below.

Participants were made aware of the purpose of the interviews and surveys through the email inviting them to participate, and, for those who signed up online, through an information and consent form (see Annexes 6 and 7). There is no known risk of harm to participants from participating as a respondent in this evaluation. The potential risks of providing sensitive information are mitigated by the commitments outlined in the information and consent forms and were discussed with interviewees if sensitive information arose. Interview transcripts and completed surveys will not be provided. Participants who signed up online were given the choice as to whether or not they were willing to be listed by name as a respondent in this report.

4. FINDINGS

4.1. Relevance and strategic fit

Overall, Lab 2’s objectives were consistent with the needs of the ILO, the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) and the wider MSD community, and partly consistently with SECO’s needs.

4.1.1. Relevance to the ILO and the SDGs

Lab 2’s objectives fit well within the wider ILO strategic framework. By generating knowledge on how MSD can be applied to decent work, Lab 2 contributes to SDG 8 *‘Promote sustained, inclusive and sustainable economic growth, full and productive employment and decent work for all.’* Survey respondents highlighted the close alignment between SDG 8 and the Lab’s objectives and approach, particularly in terms of its focus on sustainability. Lab 2 also contributes explicitly to Objective 4 of the ILO’s Programme and Budget Outcome 4, *Sustainable enterprises as generators of employment and promoters of innovation and decent work*, especially Output 4.2 on *Strengthening enterprises’ capacity to adopt new business models, technology and techniques to enhance productivity and sustainability*. Formally, the fit between Lab 2’s objectives and the ILO’s strategic framework is very close.

Informally, the Lab’s relevance to the ILO is somewhat contested. A handful of interviewees queried the fit between a market systems approach, which emphasises the importance of incentives, and the ILO’s more rights-based approach. This is understandable, as much work in MSD has focused on commercial incentives, though regulations and standards, as well as moral and social obligations, can all be important incentives in MSD too. As one survey respondent put it, while MSD and a rights-based approach “should not be at odds with one another, the Lab’s work can sometimes be perceived as outside the ILO’s traditional ‘territory.’”

Despite these qualms, most respondents asserted that overall the Lab brings innovation which complements rather than conflicts with the ILO’s rights-based approach, even if the ILO’s structure has limited the extent to which MSD has been adopted and institutionalised (see Section 4.1.5). The Lab is meeting an important need through its efforts to promote sustainability, scale, analysis-driven intervention design, adaptive management, and rigorous measurement, all of which are important for meeting donors’ expectations and achieving programme objectives.

4.1.2. Relevance to the wider MSD community

Lab 2 was found to be highly relevant to the wider MSD community because of its unique focus on the application of market systems approaches to decent work in its knowledge generation agenda.

Historically, MSD projects have focused more on increasing incomes and generating jobs than on job quality.⁴ There has been debate in the field about the importance of job quality in contexts in which “any job is better than no job.” However, interest in the role job quality plays in inclusive, sustainable economic growth is growing, as is an emphasis on decent work in donor agendas. As the Mid-term Review noted, there is also increasing interest in systemic approaches to development, including among development actors who have a history of working on employment and job quality.

The combined effect of these trends is demand for knowledge about the application of market systems approaches to decent work, particularly among donors. The Lab is uniquely placed to meet this demand; as with the Phase 1 Final Evaluation, this evaluation did not identify any other MSD knowledge hub with an explicit focus on decent work.

4.1.3. Relevance to SECO

There are two key areas in which Lab 2’s objectives are consistent with SECO’s needs. Firstly, SECO is committed to improving its measurement of job creation and decent work outcomes and the Lab’s measurement objectives are consistent with SECO’s needs. Secondly, SECO is interested in improving its knowledge about the connection between productivity and decent work and values the Lab’s research on this.

The Lab’s technical advice and training for SECO-funded projects was found to be less relevant than expected. There was little demand for the Lab’s work from SECO-funded projects, in part because there are not many MSD projects in SECO priority countries and the Lab’s focal sectors. As many of the SECO projects that the Lab partnered with were not designed as market systems projects, the Lab’s inputs were not seen as relevant, except where they were focused on measurement. SECO themselves do view the Lab’s in-depth analysis to identify needs and assess feasibility prior to intervention design as important and consistent with their needs. However, SECO-funded project implementers did not seem to value it as highly.

4.1.4. The ILO’s comparative advantage

The Lab both leveraged and built the ILO’s comparative advantage.

Much of the Lab’s relevance to the wider MSD community can be attributed to the ways in which it leveraged the ILO’s comparative advantages. External partners noted in interviews that they were interested in working with the Lab precisely because of the ILO’s reputation for technical expertise in the world of work, and because of its strong public sector networks. As DCED interviewees commented, being part of the ILO also gave the Lab a seat at the table on the DCED MSD Working Group, enabling increased visibility among influential donors and an increased capacity to respond to donors’ needs.

This, in turn, built the ILO’s comparative advantage, attracting donors and other external partners who wanted to leverage the Lab’s niche expertise and positioning. Examples include partnerships with Sida, SDC, Mastercard Foundation and Habitat for Humanity. Through its relationships in the MSD community, the Lab built the ILO’s credibility in arenas where it has not traditionally had a strong presence. According to two interviewees, in doing so it positioned the ILO as the sole multilateral with MSD competency – a point that is of notable importance to funders who want to increase their MSD programming.

⁴ As reported by interviewees with experience in the field. See also [the Lab’s review of the evidence on market systems and job quality from 2017](#).

In working out how MSD aligns with the ILO's values, the Lab's knowledge generation efforts pushed the MSD field to wider application of the approach, whilst also pushing innovation within the ILO. The ILO's credibility and reach were both leveraged and built in disseminating publications. An unexpected finding was that the Lab's objectives positioned it to build relationships across many different parts of the ILO as well as with external stakeholders. One external stakeholder felt that the Lab was able to help navigate 'siloes' in the ILO, making the ILO as a whole a more accessible partner.

Tripartism

An important part of the ILO's comparative advantage is its tripartite approach. The Lab did not do much to leverage the ILO's tripartite relationships. Its objectives did not provide it with much opportunity to work at the national level, and more importantly, the Lab had no mandate to introduce market systems thinking to the ILO's relationships with Ministries of Labour, Employers' Associations and Trade Unions.

However, holistic systems approaches to development are complementary to the ILO's tripartism. Indeed, some ILO interviewees commented that the centrality of tripartism to the ILO suggests that it has always taken a systemic approach to development. By promoting a market systems approach within the ILO, the Lab advanced an innovative approach to strengthening mechanisms of social dialogue.

4.1.5. Objectives and feasibility

Through a comparative analysis drawing on data from all four data collection methods, the evaluation found that different stakeholders held different interpretations of Lab 2's objectives, apparently caused by different understandings of the extent to which Lab 2 was expected to mainstream and institutionalise market systems approaches to decent work in the ILO.

Lab 2's Project Document is clear that one of the reasons for funding a second phase of the Lab was to "internalise," "embed," "mainstream," and "fully institutionalise" parts of the market systems approach to decent work within parts of the ILO, by working with colleagues within and beyond the Enterprise Department. The planned result was that the ILO would be "technically capable to better design and implement projects going forward without depending on the Lab for support." This aligns with SECO's expectations, which were that a second phase of support would enable the Lab to integrate the MSD approach into the ILO, ensuring sustainability of its methods and knowledge.

These expectations need to be evaluated in light of what was feasible. The Lab is a small initiative with relatively little clout in a large organisation. It does not have the institutional mandate or authority to integrate a systems approach to decent work into the ILO's work; only to generate knowledge about it, disseminate that knowledge, promote the approach, and work with those amenable to it.

SECO and the Lab team alike recognise that the feasibility of the Lab's internal influencing agenda was also constrained by the ILO's formal structures and by its informal organisational culture. Formally, the ILO's technical units and branches are structured according to specialisms, and incentives are not aligned with MSD's specialism-ambivalent, sector-oriented approach. Informally, numerous interviewees reported that, as is common in a large organisation, different units, branches, and departments can be territorial, and silo working is common. This can impede collaboration and knowledge dissemination and further reduce incentives to try a new approach.

When it comes to capacity, most ILO MSD programmes are staffed with people familiar with the ILO but not with MSD. This was mentioned repeatedly in interviews as a fundamental barrier to integrating a market systems approach in the ILO. Those in the ILO who have MSD expertise rarely have influence over project staffing decisions, and those who are staffed to MSD projects without MSD experience rarely have success in applying the approach. The end result is that the approach seems to fail (when in fact it was not resourced to succeed) and the incentives for the ILO to apply MSD, as well as for donors to programme MSD projects with the ILO, are further reduced.

Given this context, it was not realistic for the Lab to mainstream or institutionalise the market systems approach to decent work across the ILO. What was feasible in three years for a project in the Lab’s position was to disseminate knowledge about MSD to a large number of people in the ILO, to provide technical support to individuals interested in applying parts of the MSD approach in their work, to collaborate with a small number of colleagues to institutionalise some parts of the approach (or of its underlying principles) in parts of the ILO and perhaps to build a critical mass of enthusiasm for the approach in some units or branches.

Figure 1 shows a rough visualisation of the estimated feasibility of mainstreaming and institutionalising parts of the market systems approach to decent work in the ILO. A heatmap for mainstreaming the MSD approach as a whole would be more pessimistic.

This realism is reflected in the indicators laid out in the Project Document and seems to have been well-understood by the Lab team and its close collaborators, though uncertainty was still expressed about the extent to which the Lab was expected to change institutional practices.

During the transition from Lab 1 to Lab 2 it would have been valuable to have more rigorous communication between the ILO and SECO about what kind of sustainability was feasible. This could have helped to manage expectations in both organisations and provided a stronger foundation for ongoing strategic decision making.



Figure 1: A rough heatmap visualising feasibility in the ILO

4.1.6. Objectives and gender

An analysis of Lab 2’s project documents showed that the original project objectives did not mainstream gender. A commitment was made to take gender considerations into account when choosing sectors, whilst recognising that they would be largely driven by the focus of partner projects and their target groups. Considering Lab 2’s primary objectives and other key criteria, this was appropriate. It would not have been realistic to prioritise gender over other criteria in partner selection decisions given the other constraints Lab 2 had to work with.

The original Project Document stated that analyses, interventions, and evaluations would be designed to be gender inclusive, where possible. Whilst it would not have been reasonable to make gender a criterion for project selection, it would have been appropriate to prioritise designing and promoting gender-sensitive sector selection, market system analyses and rapid market assessment methodologies more highly. This could have been reflected in a logframe target (such as the percentage of market research exercises that applied a gender sensitive lens).

4.1.7. Strategy

It was difficult to evaluate the validity of the original project strategy because whilst the specified outputs *could* lead to the outcomes and programme objective, it is not clear what evidence underpinned the assumption that they *would* do so nor exactly *how* they were expected to. How, for

example, was generating knowledge expected to lead to behaviour change in the ILO unless incentives also changed? How would supporting projects to integrate a market systems lens lead to improved job quality if projects only adopted parts of the approach?

The original project strategy would have benefited from a clearly articulated Theory of Change (ToC) that showed the expected pathways of change. Transformational change was not feasible, but even a plan for incremental change benefits from a solid understanding of incentives, capacities and constraints and of how activities are expected to address them.

A clearer theory of change would also have highlighted the multiplicity of objectives that fell under Lab 2's overall programme objective, when the three project groups were accounted for. The risk of an overly broad focus was identified in the Final Evaluation of Lab 1 and acknowledged by the joint ILO-SECO management response to it. As that response rightly concluded,

“With respect to the breadth of the Lab II focus, it is noted that: 1.) generating new knowledge on decent work in market systems; 2.) supporting SECO funded projects; and 3.) influencing the ILO, can be complementary, however, these three Lab II project groups, more often than not, operate in isolation.”

The mitigation put in place was to review the Lab's pipeline, results and strategy every six months to prioritise and set objectives. This was a helpful decision, but insufficient as a way to narrowly define key objectives, as had been recommended. It would have been preferable to do a disciplined analysis of the complementarity of the different objectives associated with each of the different project groups, and of the ways each of them were expected to contribute to Lab 2's ToC. In light of this, clearer weighting and narrowing of priorities could have been agreed.⁵

Annex 9 shows an attempt to reconstruct a ToC for the Lab. This rough, high-level diagram highlights that even a slimmed-down set of the Lab's objectives assumes a complicated set of relationships between activities and outcomes that need to be tested and evidenced. It shows how activities targeting different communities relate to each other, and to different outcomes. It also expresses more realistic outcomes for knowledge generation and dissemination activities in a context where incentives can't be easily or quickly changed.

The original project strategy also needed a more explicit vision for sustainability. Annex 9 shows red borders around the activities that the Lab does in the reconstructed ToC. Applying MSD's sustainability questions to the Lab's own work means asking “Who will do...?” and “Who will pay for...?” these activities after the Lab closes. The original strategy was not clear about which of the Lab's activities were expected to be sustained, and how.

In line with recommendations from the Final Evaluation of Lab 1, attempts were made to use results chain to adaptively manage Lab 2, and to recalibrate the Lab's design based on how the key assumptions held. However, this proved difficult and was not sustained. Lab 2 did review its progress against the logframe regularly at the six-monthly strategy reviews (had a more clearly articulated ToC been available, this would have been a good forum for reviewing it too). The Lab also conducted other reviews such as its review of the quality and use of MSAs. Following the mid-term review the team made some effective mission-driven strategy shifts (see Section 4.2.7). As a result, in the second half of Phase 2 the Lab was more mission-driven and more effectively identified appropriate activities and partners for achieving its outcomes.

⁵ An interesting finding was that although it was not explicit in project documentation, informally many respondents saw Lab 2's priority objectives as generating knowledge about the application of market systems approach to decent work and influencing the ILO to adopt more systemic approaches in its work.

4.2. Progress and effectiveness

4.2.1. Quantitative results⁶

Lab 2 has performed well against its logframe indicators, particularly at the output level where many of its results exceed targets. Notable achievements include that the Lab has partnered with approximately nineteen projects; published forty knowledge products, including ten MSAs or Rapid Market Assessments (RMAs), with another three underway; increased page views on its website by approximately 60% in three years (the target was 20%); and presented at an astonishing forty-three events, seminars, webinars and training sessions. On the survey conducted for this evaluation, 100% of the six Lab project clients who responded reported being satisfied (66%) or very satisfied (33%) compared to 85% of the five who responded to the same question in 2019 and 79% on the survey in 2017.⁷

Lab 2 also records good progress against outcome and programme objective indicators, including sustainability indicators, though these have been harder to achieve. This is partly because of the institutional context (see Section 4.1.5 above) and partly because those projects that have started using pieces of the market systems approach independently are still interested in accessing inputs from the Lab to support their efforts.

It was not possible to evaluate results against standardised quantitative indicators. The Lab does not facilitate or deliver change to market systems except through project partners, so it is not meaningful to count systems improved, enterprises supported, or jobs improved and attribute those results to the Lab's work. Lab 2's logframe does have an indicator on how many workers have improved working conditions through projects supported by the Lab, but there is no way of assessing the Lab's contribution to these numbers.⁸

Similarly, it was not possible to disaggregate quantitative results by gender. Only one of the indicators (1.2, on improved working conditions) would be meaningfully disaggregated by gender, and the data for results achieved on that indicator come from project partners, whose data is not disaggregated by gender.

4.2.2. Achievement of objectives in the ILO

Demand and visibility

Overall, about half of the Lab's partnerships were with ILO projects, units or departments. Demand for the Lab's technical assistance to projects has been mixed. Some partners, such as the Moldova Decent Work Country Programme and the Scoping SDG Fund in Albania, partnered with the Lab due to a genuine interest in the potential of a market systems approach for achieving their objectives. Some partnerships were shaped by Sida's support for the market systems approach and the Lab's work. Road to Jobs approached the Lab because it had been designed as a market-systems project and needed implementation and measurement support. The Rwanda Informality project involved the Lab because Sida required it to. Other ILO partners were willing to contribute resources towards market research but were less interested in the approach or in incorporating the results in ways that would change programme design or intervention plans.

Although most respondents assessed Lab 2 to have low visibility across the ILO, relative to its size, resources, and institutional influence it achieved a fair level of visibility (see Section 4.1.5 above). However, in the first half of Phase 2 the Lab could have put more emphasis on knowledge dissemination relative to knowledge generation, as the team themselves recognised. This was

⁶ Quantitative results are based on Lab 2's MRM data. See Section 3.3.2

⁷ Due to the small sample sizes and the voluntary nature of participation which skews randomisation, these increases may not be significant.

⁸ An assessment of this could *theoretically* be made, but it would need a different approach to measurement.

detrimental to achieving visibility. Strategic changes the team made in response to this recognition (see Section 4.2.7) worked well and likely contributed to the increase in visibility several interviewees noticed in the second half of Lab 2. The revitalised communications strategy in the second half of Lab 2 has proved effective (see Section 4.2.3).

Influence

The Lab has been influential within the ILO, considering that the baseline for use of a market systems approach in the ILO was very low and the institutional structure is not conducive to its adoption (see Section 4.1.5). There is now wider awareness of the approach and its potential merits in parts of the ILO than there would have been without the Lab's work. There are also some examples of components of the market systems approach being institutionalised in policies and methodologies. Examples of the Lab's influence include:

- **The Enterprises Department:** The market systems approach is now well known across ENTERPRISES, and the department is viewed by donors as having notably increased its capacity for MSD implementation in recent years. Examples of systems thinking becoming mainstreamed in ENTERPRISES include the AIMS project which applies market systems thinking to refugee and host community livelihoods and the Green Jobs Programme which has independently explored the use of market systems analyses with an environmental lens in their work. Systems thinking has also strongly influenced the design of the new 'Productivity Ecosystems' project in the Enterprises department, which is directly attributable to the Lab. This will reportedly be reflected in a forthcoming report of the ILO's Director General for the ILO's Governing Body.
- **The ILO MSD network:** The ILO MSD network is run by a Sida secondee to the ILO SME Unit. This individual first came across the Lab's work online during Lab 1, when she was looking for a way to use the market systems approach to strengthen Sida's work on decent work throughout the organisation. After some initial communication and relationship-building, the Lab was invited to give training to Sida employees on repeated occasions. Sida is a strong proponent of the MSD approach and also sees the ILO as a key partner, so it is highly supportive of the Lab's objectives. It is also impressed with the quality of their work. This was part of the background for Sida to eventually second two individuals to the SME Unit, one of whom initiated and runs the MSD network, collaborating with the Lab. The MSD network has about a hundred members, 20-30 of whom are regularly active. The establishment of the MSD network was made possible by the preparatory work that had been done by the Lab in terms of creating interest, knowledge and capacity development among ILO staff. This had generated a demand for an internal platform for regular exchange and learning about the MSD approach and its practical application, which motivated and led to formation of the network. It has contributed to raising the profile of MSD in the organisation and provides resources and support for people applying the approach. It has also served as an additional channel for the Lab outreach within ILO.
- **The Central and Eastern Europe region:** there are strong indications of growing interest in the use of market systems analyses in the CEE region. For example, the Lab is partnering with the ILO office in the region to conduct two MSAs, intended to deepen understanding of the challenges in the region to shape future investment. The Lab was proactive in developing this partnership but there is now a strong sense of local ownership.⁹ Simultaneously, ILO Moldova is partnering with the Lab to use market systems analysis to construct the next Decent Work Country Programme. This was initiated by a National Coordinator who knew about the Lab's

⁹ The Director of the regional office is familiar with the Lab as he was the Head of the SME Unit when Lab 1 was being designed.

work through the Budapest office's dissemination efforts and the Lab's training in Montenegro. Another country in the region is interested in adopting the approach to shape their next Decent Work Country Programme if it is successful in Moldova.

- **Vision Zero Fund:** Lab 1 worked with a Joint ILO-EU project to develop a research methodology for using a market systems approach to assessing the drivers and constraints for OSH. This was piloted in three countries and developed into a guide and a toolbox in the LABADMIN/OSH branch of the ILO. Vision Zero Fund, an OSH initiative working in eight countries in Asia, Africa and Latin America, decided to pilot the approach in their work. They found it very valuable, as looking holistically at supporting functions and rules added to the kind of analysis that would otherwise normally be done in OSH. They have since embedded the approach across all their projects. Vision Zero Fund continues to work closely with Lab 2, particularly to source consultants qualified to conduct MSAs.
- **Road to Jobs:** Lab 2 has a long-term, close partnership with the Sida-funded Road to Jobs project in Afghanistan.¹⁰ This engagement was facilitated by Sida, who saw one of the Lab 1 presentations on the DCED Results Measurement Standard and decided to fund improved measurement within the project. Sida involved Lab 1 in designing Road to Jobs as an MSD project. Road to Jobs' view is that the Lab's support has been critical to their successes. Staff report strong ownership of the approach, which they will take into future work. Road to Jobs has also been approached to manage at least one future recovery fund in Afghanistan which they attribute to the positioning and perspective a systems approach has given them. Although Road to Jobs would likely have sought external support from MSD consultants if the Lab had not been there, it was felt that internal support was better value for the project and also better enables the spread of the approach within the ILO.
- **Growing interest in MSAs:** Other parts of the ILO have expressed an interest in incorporating MSA tools in their work. For example, Fundamentals are exploring the potential of value chain mapping for research on child labour in supply chains, and SECTOR used a market systems approach for a recent (as yet unpublished) analysis of the mining sector. For the SECTOR analysis, colleagues discussed the approach with a Lab member informally, requested tools, and then conducted the analysis independently. As one survey respondent put it, "there are signs that people consider an MSD project a challenge but also something desirable to have."
- **Policies and guides:** One sign of increasing recognition of the value of a market systems approach to decent work is the institutionalisation of parts of that approach in policies and guides. The mention of the DCED standard in the *EVAL Guidance note on the evaluability of ILO programmes and projects*, and the ongoing work with PARDEV to produce guidance on sustainability drawn from market systems thinking are both examples of organisation-wide policies that have been influenced by the Lab. In addition, market systems thinking has been, or is being, incorporated into more context-specific ILO documents, such as two Value Chain Development (VCD) guides in ILO-Lima, and a COVID-19 recovery guide published by SECTOR.

This selection of examples shows that while there is a long way to go, especially on incorporating the whole MSD approach into any parts of the ILO, the Lab has had an influence. There are encouraging signs of ownership within 'pockets' of interest and capacity, such as independent investment in the approach, adaptation of the approach to solve specific problems, and institutionalisation of components of the approach in policies and methodologies.

The examples also demonstrate that the most meaningful examples of influence have come through relationships with individuals for whom the market systems approach can solve a problem or add

¹⁰ One member of the Lab team spends a significant proportion of her time acting as the MRM officer of the Road to Jobs project.

value to their agenda, rather than through formal institutional agreements. They also show that successful examples of influence has not come about through direct, predictable, causal relationships within the Lab's control. Building relationships, supporting the adoption and adaptation of the approach needed to foster independent ownership and investment, and facilitating the organic spread of the approach has required patience and adaptation.

Lab 2 has learned to respond to these realities. It has been most effective when it has understood and responded to colleagues' needs, using MSD to help them achieve their interests, and when it has flexibly and patiently built relationships, staying in touch over the long-term. It has been less effective when it has persuaded people to use parts of the approach even when they have no long-term incentive to do so. These partnerships have been short-lived and have had little impact.

4.2.3. Knowledge generation and achievement of objectives in the MSD community

Across its two phases, the Lab has produced seventy-four publications addressing knowledge gaps in the field of market systems and decent work. Forty of these were published during Lab 2, and another three are forthcoming. The Lab has also published more than twenty blog posts. Through these publications, it has added value to debates on how a systems approach can be used to address decent work deficits both within and beyond the ILO. Lab 2's contributions include the recently published brief *Child's Play* on MSD and childcare and the forthcoming briefs on child labour and informality which address gaps in knowledge about decent work deficits, as well as broader research such as the Lab's work on productivity and decent work, rules and regulations in MSD, ex-poste sustainability studies for systemic change programmes and a systems approach to youth employment.

Largely in response to declining online engagement, Lab 2 hired a new technical officer in November 2018 and allocated half of her time to improving Lab 2's communications. Under the new communications strategy the Lab's website was restructured to make it more appealing and accessible, and outputs were published more widely on social media and in respected external publications.

Thanks to this investment, Lab 2's work has drastically improved its reach and far exceeded its target for improving page views in the second half of the project. It was not possible to evaluate the impact of this visibility, but it is clear that the Lab has added value to debates on how a systemic approach can be used to address decent work deficits in the MSD community through its knowledge generation.

Lab 2 has enjoyed a strong reputation and good visibility in the donor community, largely thanks to its engagement with the DCED MSD Working Group. Lab 2's technical expertise is well-respected by members of the group within which it is known for its niche expertise on the application of market systems to decent work, as well as for the quality of its work.

The Lab's role on the Working Group has enabled it to build strong relationships with key donors¹¹ which has led to partnerships and influence. Examples include:

- **Research with Habitat for Humanity** on the role working conditions play in the informal housing construction sector in Peru. Habitat for Humanity is now building on the MSA done with Lab 2 to explore the issue in India.
- **Research with Mastercard Foundation** on a systems approach to more and better jobs for young people in sub-Saharan Africa. Mastercard Foundation has captured the learning and plans to feed it into future programming. Lab 2 is also partnering with Mastercard Foundation to do an MSA in Ghana.

¹¹ Members of the group include representatives from CDC, UNIDO, ITC, SDC, Gatsby Africa, World Bank, USAID, Sida, GIZ, DFAT, FCDO, GIZ, Danish MoFA, the EU, NORAD, Mastercard Foundation, ADA and JICA.

- **Supporting the inclusion of decent work in SDC’s future projects.** Initially Lab 2 will run a workshop within SDC to build a common understanding of decent work and how the concept is applied, and to start conversations about how SDC can build that understanding into their work.
- **Gatsby Africa has adopted some of the Lab’s measurements on decent work** into their sector monitoring plans.

While some of these organisations would have sought expertise elsewhere if the Lab was not available, they were specifically interested in working with the Lab because the Lab is uniquely placed to leverage both the ILO’s expertise on decent work and the MSD community’s knowledge on systems approaches to development.

4.2.4. Achievement of objectives in SECO

Lab 2 had three main objectives for its work with SECO. It achieved all three of these, though the outcomes were not as impactful as expected. Firstly, Lab 2 did turn knowledge about measurement of job quality into an online toolkit which, according to the most recent data from the Lab’s MRM system, is being accessed by about 120 users a month.

Secondly, the Lab did document five business models showing how projects have worked with enterprises to create more and better jobs. These knowledge products were expected to be built on information gleaned from SECO-funded projects but it was more difficult than expected to find suitable examples of MSD experience in SECO priority countries and sectors.

Thirdly, although Lab 2 found it difficult to find suitable partners, it did collaborate with SECO-funded projects and units, including Sustaining Competitive and Responsible Enterprises (SCORE). Although Lab 2 did quality work which was generally well received by these partners, not many of them have had the anticipated impact so far. This is for a variety of reasons, such as that:

- the collaboration is still ongoing so there are no results to report yet;
- the engagement was relatively minor;
- the project worked with the Lab because it is SECO-funded but would otherwise have found different solutions;
- the partner was not a market systems project and saw little relevance in Lab 2’s work, or did not have the incentives to build on it;
- the Lab’s measurement guidance was perceived as being overly theoretical and too difficult to operationalise – though this feedback was not unanimous. Several SECO-funded projects valued and applied Lab 2’s measurement guidance.

One exception is notable: SECO’s standard indicators for the next four- to five-year period are strongly influenced by the Lab’s research and will be supported by a how-to guide on measuring job quality.

Beyond these three objectives, SECO benefited from the Lab’s demonstration of good quality in-depth sector selection and market analysis. Representatives from SECO expressed value for this early stage analysis and explained that SECO is learning the importance of diligent early-stage research that challenges assumptions and shapes project and intervention design.

4.2.5. Advancement of gender equality, inclusion of people with disabilities and other non-discrimination issues

There are three main ways Lab 2 could have advanced gender equality within its strategy and objectives. Firstly, it could have disseminated and embedded knowledge on how to do gender-sensitive market research in its sector selections, MSAs, RMAs and how-to guides. Secondly, it could have prioritised gender in its guidance and technical assistance on measurement. Thirdly, it could have

developed briefs and presentations on advancing gender equality when applying a market systems approach to decent work.

Lab 2's research and measurement practice was gender-sensitive. Women's representation was explicitly considered in sector selection, and the differential constraints and benefits for women and men shaped research and findings in Rapid Market Assessments (RMAs) and MSAs. The Value Chain Development for Decent Work Guide, which Lab 2 contributed heavily to developing and revising, is strong on gender equality and other inclusivity issues, and some of Lab 2's other tools also provide guidance on how to mainstream gender in market system approaches.

However, the Lab could have done more to mainstream gender in its work, particularly towards the beginning of Lab 2. Gender-sensitivity was not prioritised as highly in early market research as it was later, and some of Lab 2's tools and guidance do not adequately mainstream gender. In fact, gender is not mentioned at all in the Lab's User-friendly guide to Market Systems Analysis for Decent Work.¹²

This was a point of learning which the Lab 2 team made efforts to address. In the last year, the Lab has published a brief on a key constraint to women's economic empowerment – the unequal, gendered distribution of unpaid care work. This brief was developed because of a demand for more knowledge on gender in the MSD field, and because of a desire by Lab team members to do more to advance gender equality. The second *Coffee &...* event also focused on gender in market systems programming (see Figure 2). The Lab team has also increased gender-sensitivity in their market research.

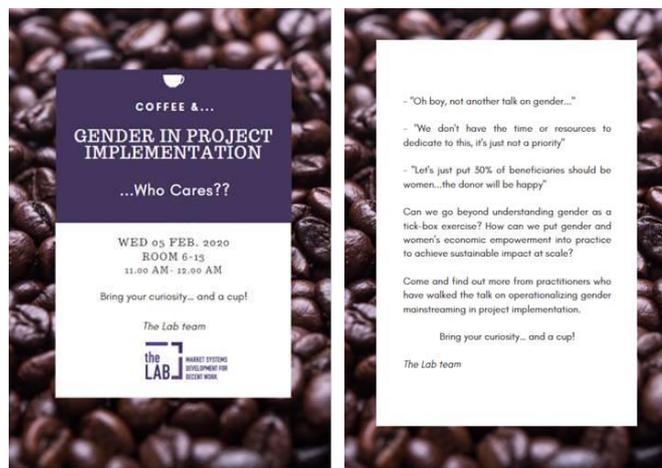


Figure 2: Invitation to the 'Coffee &...' talk on gender

To the extent that the evaluation was able to identify, the Lab did not advance inclusion of people with disabilities and other non-discrimination issues in its work.

4.2.6. Obstacles to progress and learning

One obstacle to progress for Lab 2 was that it was more difficult than expected to identify project partners that were a good fit for Lab 2's knowledge generation agenda, and once a partnership had been agreed, the Lab had little control over when work could proceed. Identifying and agreeing partnerships was resource-intensive and the lack of control over work timing and priorities made it difficult to plan and resource work. The Lab addressed it as effectively as they could by planning desk-based knowledge generation work that they could do when planned partnership work fell through.

Another difficulty was that working through partners often involved trying to integrate parts of MSD into non-MSD projects, as very few of Lab 2's partners were themselves MSD projects. An exception was one of Lab 2's most successful partnerships - with the *Road to Jobs* project in Afghanistan. *Road to Jobs* was designed as an MSD project (within input from Lab 1) and Lab 2 played a critical role in supporting it with analysis, implementation and measurement. However, Lab 2 has found it difficult to find similar projects to partner with and as MSD is an integrated approach that is more than the sum of its parts, this has constrained results. As one non-MSD project partner put it, "It's a struggle to layer MSD on top of a non-MSD project."

¹² ILO Lab, 2020, available at: https://www.ilo.org/empent/Projects/the-lab/WCMS_744250/lang--en/index.htm

One effect of this is that the Lab has lacked a compelling ‘big win’ that demonstrates the effectiveness of the approach empirically. The fact that so many partnerships ended with analysis led some observers to comment that the Lab is advocating for an approach that they have not demonstrated works in practice. Lab team members and supporters have long argued that if the Lab could run an action research ‘demo-project’ autonomously they could take an MSA from analysis to action and demonstrate that applying the approach to decent work outcomes yields results, whilst generating knowledge in the process themselves. This idea has been tested, as something similar was done in Peru during Lab 1 which reportedly led to increased interest in the approach in the region. It would be worthwhile to seek funding for further testing of this idea, to see how effective it is as a mechanism for influence.

Another obstacle Lab 2 faced was high staff turnover in the first half of Lab 2. All three of the current technical officers have been recruited during Lab 2 and none came to the Lab with any MSD field experience or with previous knowledge of the ILO. This was managed as effectively as it could have been but did prove disruptive at the time. It is one of the reasons that the strategic pivots the Lab team made following the mid-term review were not made earlier.

4.2.7. Institutional barriers to progress and learning

Lab 2 did face institutional barriers to progress, according to information derived through all four research methods. In addition to the barriers to feasibility discussed in Section 4.1.5, the Lab team found that some colleagues saw a market systems approach to decent work as a threat to the ILO’s ways of working and felt defensive about the Lab’s agenda. The Lab learned that it had to be careful not to disseminate knowledge and guidance that fell into another “territory” within the ILO or that might be *perceived* to conflict with ILO principles.

Echoing and building on learning from Lab 1, Lab 2’s mid-term review recommended several practical ways to improve knowledge dissemination, visibility and influence within the ILO that took the institutional barriers to progress into account. In response to these recommendations and to their own learning, Lab 2 adapted their strategy in the second half of Phase 2. These changes were reported by Lab team members who were involved in making decisions about tactics and priorities as well as by ILO stakeholders external to the Lab who noticed the changes. Changes that were made include:

- **Shifting from a ‘hierarchical’ institutionalisation strategy to a ‘network’ strategy:** Lab 2 initially focused on ILO country/regional offices, units and departments – and related policies and manuals – as the entry point for institutionalisation. However, the mid-term review found that many of Lab 2’s ‘success stories’ came through individuals, not policies – a finding confirmed by this evaluation (see Section 4.2.2). Responding to recommendations from the Mid-term Review, the Lab conducted an influence mapping exercise to identify individuals in the ILO who might be potential champions of the approach within the ILO. They then prioritised relationship and partnership-building with these individuals.
- **Shifting from an ‘influencing’ stance to a ‘supporting’ stance:** Lab 2 team members learned that their influencing agenda was sometimes perceived as being inappropriately ‘dogmatic’ or ‘preachy’ – a perception that was confirmed in some interviews and that has also plagued the MSD field at large. Several team members reflected that they learned the importance of taking time to understand the needs and incentives of other colleagues in the ILO, listening and looking for the ‘win-win,’ instead of pushing MSD as a solution. A key lesson was that whilst institutional barriers to progress could be frustrating, understanding of the nature and culture of the ILO is as important to the Lab’s objectives as technical expertise.
- **Shifting from producing knowledge to synthesising knowledge:** Lab 2 initially published a large number of MSAs and RMAs but it found that these were too long and too context-specific for a wider audience. More significantly, very few led to changed intervention design.

After conducting a review of MSAs' impact¹³ the team shifted their efforts from producing knowledge products to synthesising knowledge and publishing it in more concise, jargon-free formats. The team also shifted towards a more demand-driven approach to knowledge generation.

- **Recognising the importance of language:** The term 'market' triggered immediate suspicion and scepticism in some parts of the ILO. It led to the false perception that the Lab advocates making a commercial business case for every issue. Such a stance would be antithetical to the ILO's emphasis on fundamental human rights, labour conventions, and social dialogue. The Lab recognised this obstacle and learned to be more careful with their language, both formally (for example, the term "market" is less visible in recently published briefs) and informally.
- **Starting *Coffee &...* events:** bringing together much of the above learning, the Lab started a series of informal events that they invited interested colleagues and potential champions of the approach to. These events were framed provocatively, focused on discussion and relationship-building and avoided mentioning market systems explicitly. The *Coffee &...* events in January and February 2020 were well-attended and sparked lively discussion, but unfortunately no events have been held since due to the coronavirus crisis.

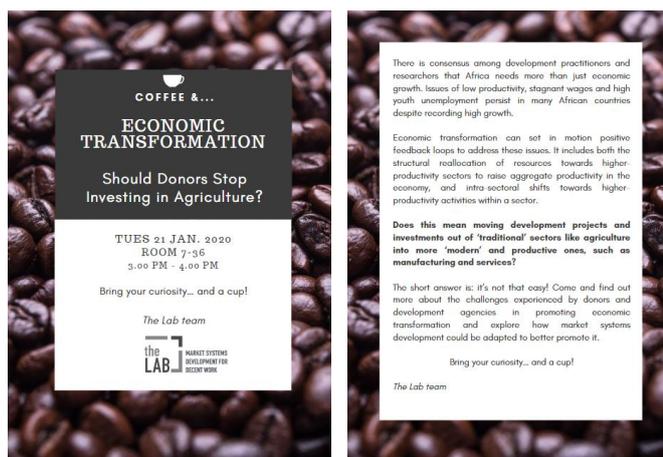


Figure 3: Invitation to the first 'Coffee &...' event

The combined effect of these changes was growing momentum in the Lab's visibility and influence within the ILO in the second half of Lab 2.

4.3. Impact orientation and sustainability

The rationale for advancing a market systems approach to decent work is that by working to improve market systems, development projects will be able to deliver more and better jobs, more sustainably. There have been few opportunities to test this empirically. Instead, the Lab has had to use pieces of the approach in projects to generate more knowledge, whilst making the case on the basis of the available knowledge in publications and events.

4.3.1. Impact orientation and sustainability in the ILO

By generating knowledge on when and how a market systems approach can be used to facilitate full and productive employment and decent work for all, the Lab has contributed to SDG 8, as many respondents pointed out.

The Lab has also had an impact in the ILO; by all accounts, there is greater awareness of the market systems approach and an improved knowledge base on its potential use around jobs and job quality among ILO staff. The active internal ILO-MSD network now has over 100 members and there are multiple examples of practical application of components of MSD across the ILO. This is especially true in the Enterprises Department. Considering the baseline, this is an important achievement.

¹³ ILO Lab, 2019, available at: https://www.ilo.org/empent/Projects/the-lab/WCMS_696156/lang--en/index.htm

Some of the Lab's impact is likely to be sustained. There are now numerous individuals who are committed to learning more about MSD themselves, and who are promoting MSD in their own spheres of influence within the ILO. These individuals will probably continue to find ways of using parts of MSD in their work even without the Lab's presence. The Lab's published guidance will likely continue to be accessed by a slightly wider group, especially as donors signal their value for market systems programming and improved measurement. The third edition of the Value Chain Development guide, which is due to be published in mid-November, represents an important legacy that captures much of the Lab's learning in a guidance document and that is likely to continue being consulted. The most established component of the market systems approach in the ILO is market research (sector selection, MSAs and RMAs). This approach will continue to be used by Vision Zero Fund and likely by other parts of the ILO, with support from the published guidance, the MSD network, individual staff members who are promoting the approach and in some cases, external consultants.

Lab 2 is also leaving a legacy in ENTERPRISES in the form of its inputs into the 'Productivity Ecosystems' project. Whilst this is not an unadulterated market systems project, if the Lab can continue to shape its design to incorporate market systems principles, and if it can be staffed by people with strong market systems capacity, then it has the potential to increase knowledge about and interest in systems approaches within the ILO.

However, while the project has been effective in embedding elements of the MSD approach within the ILO relative to its available resources and timeframe, much of the Lab's impact has been fragmented and is a long way from reaching scale and sustainability. The view of numerous interviewees' is that the components of a market systems approach to decent work are not yet sufficiently embedded to be sustainable without the constant ongoing presence of the Lab or something like it. This is somewhat mitigated by the presence of individual advocates, by early signs of ownership and by continued pressure from donors. For example, one respondent planned to access external MSD training found through the MSD network. However, even those who have adopted and institutionalised parts of the approach in their own work noted that they continue to rely on the Lab for occasional inputs and technical assistance. The incentives and capacity in the ILO are not yet sufficient to maintain the momentum that has been building. Without an ongoing presence and resource like the Lab in the ILO the sustainability of what has been achieved to date is at risk.

4.3.2. Impact orientation and sustainability in SECO

There is an improved knowledge base in SECO on measuring job quality, but not on using a market systems approach for decent work. SECO's standard indicators for measuring job quality, that are built on Lab research, are likely to affect measurement for at least the next 4-5 years, if not beyond as they have been institutionalised. Some of the SECO projects that the Lab partnered with also intend to apply what they learned about measuring job quality from the Lab. There is minimal evidence of any other sustainable impact in SECO-funded partners.

In SECO Headquarters there is a growing appetite for incorporating systems thinking in future development programming, as evidenced by SECO's enthusiasm for the Lab's involvement in the future 'Productivity Ecosystem' project, which SECO intends to fund. There is also reportedly growing recognition of the importance of root cause analysis in programme design. These are not yet well-embedded trends in SECO, so they may not be sustained without ongoing input from the Lab or similar entities.

4.3.3. Impact orientation and sustainability in the wider MSD community

There is an improved knowledge base in the wider MSD community on when and how a market systems approach can be used for decent work that Lab 2 has contributed to through its partnerships, publications and events. This is likely to be sustained in two ways. Firstly, Habitat for Humanity, Mastercard Foundation, Sida and SDC are all likely to continue researching and investing in a market systems approach to decent work. In doing so they will continue to generate and disseminate new

knowledge in the field. If Mastercard Foundation, Sida and SDC also fund market systems programmes with decent work objectives, this will further advance the field, making it increasingly ‘normal’ to apply MSD to decent work and generating knowledge about when and how to do so in the process.

The resources the Lab has produced will also remain available to the field (including through the BEAM Exchange) and will likely continue to be accessed. However, without the Lab’s presence and promotion, the visibility of the work, and the aspects of the ILO’s comparative advantage built by the Lab, will likely diminish.

4.4. Effectiveness of management arrangements

4.4.1. Internal capacity and resourcing

Across thirty-six interviews, there was near unanimous praise for the quality of the Lab’s work. In particular, the team were praised for well-written and well-produced publications. They were also lauded for their technical knowledge and expertise and for their ability to manage complex sets of relationships well in partnerships. Figure 4 shows a selection of respondents’ comments about the quality of Lab 2’s work.



Figure 4: Word cloud showing responses about Lab 2’s quality work

The team themselves are also exceptionally well regarded, both within and beyond the ILO. Interviewees remarked that they appreciate how easy the team are to work with, and described them as being efficient, motivated, competent, dynamic, collaborative, and responsive among other things (see Figure 5).



Figure 5: Word cloud showing a selection of responses about the Lab 2 team

Both institutional and technical knowledge proved essential for achieving the Lab’s objectives.

Internally, the team was well-managed, staff were encouraged and supported to pursue their interests within the scope of the project, and there was generally a clear understanding of roles and responsibilities – this improved as the project developed. More recently, the team have sought

Lab 2 received excellent administrative support, had good communication with SECO and enjoyed an open, supportive and responsive relationship with managers at every level in the Enterprise Department. In particular, the ILO Value Chain Development Coordinator provided exceptional support to the Lab 2 team.

Only a handful of critiques were made about how Lab 2 works, most of which the team have reflected on and responded to themselves (see Section 4.2.7). For example, generally, Lab 2 is seen as being dynamic and agile, but sometimes team members’ lack of experience and knowledge about the ILO as an institution was seen as a weakness. However, the project received good support from the ILO Value Chain Development Coordinator and the Head of the SME Unit whose experience, skills and relationships within the ILO were an asset that

opportunities to collaborate more internally, as tasks have previously tended to be undertaken individually.

The resources available to the Lab were appropriate relative to its objectives, except that to have a significant and sustainable influence on the ILO would require considerably more than three years.

4.4.2. Monitoring and Results Measurement and Adaptive Management

Lab 2 monitored project performance and results against its logframe, which was kept regularly updated. An attempt was made to flesh this out into a results chain and associated indicators, but it was not used for ongoing MRM (see Section 4.1.7). Relevant information to support measurement against the logframe was collected and good records of partnerships, influence, web data and other monitoring information were kept. Primarily quantitative information was collected (in line with logframe targets); it was supplemented by short notes on qualitative information. Information was effectively and regularly communicated to the relevant stakeholders.

Targets and indicators were defined in the logframe during project design. Results against these targets were not disaggregated by gender, disability or other non-discrimination issues, nor, in most cases, would it have been meaningful or possible to do so.¹⁴ Monitoring and evaluation information against these targets and indicators was used for adaptive management. However, as the indicators did not relate to a clear theory of change, sometimes strategic decisions were driven more by the targets themselves than by a theory of change or the Lab's mission. For example, partnerships with SECO-funded projects were intended to generate knowledge or to support integration of a component of the market system approach in the project. They rarely achieved this, but there was little (if any) discussion between SECO and the Lab about whether partnering with a given number of SECO-projects remained an appropriate target.

The Lab conducted six-monthly progress and strategy reviews. Team members also reflected on learning in the course of their regular work, and this learning shaped strategy discussions, contributing to the changes outlined in Sections 4.2.6 and 4.2.7. The internal mid-term review was effective, and the recommendations were mostly incorporated into implementation.

Qualitative and quantitative findings suggest that the changes the team made to strategy and tactics were effective. Some, like renewed investment in the Lab's knowledge dissemination strategy, led to impressive concrete results. Others, such as the *Coffee &...* initiative, came too late in light of the overall length of the project and the disruptions caused by COVID-19 to be as effective as they might otherwise have been.

The Lab team adapted well to the COVID-19. It did affect progress – putting a halt to the newly developed *Coffee &...*, preventing staff from travelling and blocking the face-to-face relationship building that the team might otherwise have done. On the other hand, it also presented an opportunity, freeing up staff time to develop and disseminate new briefs and potentially enabling the Lab to reach a wider audience as more people are engaging online. The team pivoted well to maximise on this opportunity and have remained productive. It's unlikely that COVID-19 will negatively impact the potential sustainability of Lab 2's impact.

Concerns with regard to gender equality did emerge and the Lab responded to them by prioritising gender sensitivity more highly in its research, by hosting the gender *Coffee &...* event, and by publishing the brief on childcare (see Section 4.2.5).

¹⁴ Issues of gender or inclusion are not applicable to some kinds of objectives, such as those that relate only to the numbers of partnerships made. As stated in Section 4.2.1. only one of the Lab's logframe indicators (1.2, on improved working conditions) would be meaningfully disaggregated by gender, and the data for results achieved on that indicator come from project partners, whose data is not disaggregated by gender.

4.5. Efficiency

Despite the challenges it faced in identifying appropriate partners for technical work, Lab 2 was very successful in soliciting co-funding to support project implementation. The vast majority of Lab 2's partners contributed resources to shared activities, amounting to approximately 1.3 million USD – an additional 65% - of project funds. This meant Lab 2 was able to effectively double its human resources and achieve far more than it otherwise could have done.

The project did not do much to leverage resources to promote gender equality, inclusion of people with disabilities and other non-discrimination issues (inviting an external speaker to a '*Coffee &...*' on gender was an exception).

The project was efficient at using the available resources to deliver quality outputs. The small team was productive without sacrificing quality and partners who invested reported getting good value for money from the collaboration. The budget was well-managed, which has enabled a three-month no-cost extension.

Efficiencies were lost by costs associated with being part of the ILO (high salaries and other operational costs, charges to the ILO etc.) and by the inefficiencies associated with having to navigate and work within a large, complex organisation like the ILO. However, logically the Lab had to be part of the ILO in order to influence the ILO, so these costs could not have been avoided. Being internal to the ILO was key to achieving influence Lab 2 was able to have.

The biggest mitigation to the question of whether the Lab represents good value for money is the fact that without further investment, many of the results are unlikely to be sustained. This reflects issues of feasibility and strategy rather than efficiency (see Section 4.1).

5. CONCLUSIONS

5.1. Relevance and strategic importance

Lab 2's niche focus on the application of a market systems approach to decent work has enabled it to perform functions that have been relevant and strategically important to the ILO, SECO and other donors, as well as being useful to the wider field of MSD implementers.

By combining the MSD approach with a focus on decent work, Lab 2 has been able to both leverage and build the ILO's comparative advantage. The Lab has built the ILO's credibility in new arenas, positioning it as a potential partner – and the only potential multilateral partner – for donors interested in funding systemic approaches to decent work. External partners, including influential donors, want to work with the Lab precisely because it represents MSD competency sitting within the ILO – a multinational with a reputation for technical expertise in the world of work, strong public sector networks and international credibility. The explicit and distinctive demand for technical expertise in a market systems approach to decent work from a subset of the ILO's funders is likely to grow as trends suggest increasing attention on both decent work and systemic approaches to development across a wide variety of sectors.

Lab 2 has also played important functions for SECO and other donors. The combination of its unique focus on the application of market systems approaches to decent work, its ability to leverage the ILO's reputation and technical expertise, and its research agenda have made it a valuable source of information about how a decent work agenda can be pursued using systemic approaches, how decent work outcomes can be measured, and what the relationship is between decent work deficits and productivity, all of which are important to project design with and beyond the ILO. Equally as valuable to funders, Lab 2's work within the ILO has strengthened its ability to be an accessible and innovative implementing partner.

5.2. Knowledge generation and dissemination

As a knowledge generation project, Lab 2 has been successful. Despite the challenge of generating knowledge about the application of a market systems approach to decent work when there are so few empirical examples of it, the Lab has produced a remarkable number of publications, events and training sessions to an exceptionally high standard. Lab 2 has successfully identified relevant topics, conducted research with influential partners, and learned to gear its outputs towards the topics most demanded by its target audiences.

In doing so the Lab has become a respected technical expert known among donors for its niche focus on the application of market systems to decent work. It has contributed significantly to debates on how a systems approach can be used to address decent work deficits, both within and beyond the ILO. This impact will likely last and, were the Lab able to continue, is poised to grow.

Initially, the Lab emphasised knowledge generation over dissemination to its detriment, but applying adaptive management principles, it measured and responded to results that showed insufficient outreach. Lab 2 has since revitalised its communication strategy and has successfully improved its reach, exceeding targets threefold.

5.3. Influence within the ILO

The Lab's knowledge generation and project support have contributed to growing awareness of the MSD approach and its potential application in the ILO. As Lab 2 is more fluent in ILO ways of working than most MSD technical specialists, and more fluent in MSD ways of working than most parts of the ILO, its work has provided a 'bridge' between them. The Lab has been influential within the ILO by contributing to growing interest and competence in an area which is of direct relevance to the ILO's strategic priorities and important to multiple funders.

However, Lab 2's project design and objectives were not sufficiently explicit about the possibilities and limitations – particularly with respect to sustainability – that could reasonably be expected in three years. Incentives and capacity within different parts of the ILO as an institution meant that it was not realistic for the Lab to mainstream or institutionalise the market systems approach to decent work across the ILO.

Despite this, and despite obstacles and setbacks to progress, Lab 2 made good progress relative to what was feasible. In the process, it has learned a lot about how change happens in an institution like the ILO. It made good progress in generating and disseminating knowledge about MSD in the ILO, in providing technical support to individuals interested in applying parts of the MSD approach in their work, and in collaborating with a small number of colleagues to institutionalise some MSD principles in ILO policies and guidance. In the first half of Lab 2, resources were spread across a wide range of activities, some of which contributed to achieving targets but did not have the expected results. The changes Lab 2 made to its own strategy in light of this learning have yielded promising results, though they came too late, and too close to COVID-19, to be as impactful as they might have been over a longer timeframe.

5.4. Sustainability and future investment

One of the Lab 2's objectives is to embed methods and knowledge within the ILO before funding comes to an end. Despite this ambition, it is unlikely that the functions performed by the Lab will be taken on effectively and sustainably by other parts of the ILO in the short-to-medium term. MSD is a relatively new approach for many of the ILO units, departments, and country offices, many of which are in the early stages of exploring its potential value. Those teams that are fully committed to using market systems approaches (such as AIMS) are willing and able to seek external technical support, but many of those who have adopted and even institutionalised components of the approach in their own work continue to rely on the Lab either for direct support or for advice on finding external experts.

Given this, the player best placed to generate knowledge, produce guidance, and continue providing technical support on market systems approaches to decent work in the ILO is a small technical unit with strong external relationships, like the Lab. There is therefore a strong argument for retaining the Lab, or a technical unit like it, for the long-term.

The question is then how such a unit can be sustainably funded. The evaluation findings suggest that the ILO, SECO and other donors who have benefited from the Lab's work all have incentives to retain these functions in the ILO.

The strongest argument is for the ILO itself to commit funds to the Lab. Doing so would strategically position the ILO to lead on systemic approaches to decent work, responding to donor demands, and investing in learning, research and knowledge dissemination on a topic that is of direct relevance to the ILO's objectives. There are strong signals from existing funders that investment in the Lab from the ILO would be supported.

An analysis of the ILO's internal funding mechanisms is beyond the scope of this evaluation. However, a realistic appraisal on the basis of conversations with interviewees suggests that it is unlikely that the Lab will be (fully) funded internally at this stage. There is a high level of competition for internal funding in the ILO and historically, core funding for technical expertise has only been allocated after an approach has been a priority for many years (usually a decade or more). Even then investment has often been limited to hiring one individual. The Lab is too small of a project and represents expertise in a technical area of work that is too new to the ILO for it to trigger internal funding mechanisms at this stage.

There is also a good argument for SECO to continue funding the Lab's research and technical work, and indeed for other donors who are benefiting from the Lab's work to co-invest where this is possible.¹⁵ For SECO, further investment would align with its original ambition to build both the ILO's and the wider field's knowledge base on the application of systems development approaches to decent work objectives. It would protect and grow the impact achieved to date, whilst providing an opportunity to reorient the Lab's design and objectives and streamline its activities in line with the lessons learned from Lab 1 and 2. The influence the Lab has had in the ILO is unlikely to be sustained without an ongoing presence and whilst the knowledge Lab 2 generated will remain available to the wider field, it is unlikely to continue being disseminated and developed further without the Lab.

For SECO and other donors, the Lab would also provide a research unit, with specialisms in topics relevant to their work with and beyond the ILO. It could be a source of technical expertise directly applicable to the design, implementation, and measurement of a broad portfolio of systems change programmes that include decent work objectives.

Funding the Lab would also continue to build the capacity of a key multilateral implementing partner, arguably a priority for funders with a long-term relationship to the ILO whose future projects will prioritise decent work outcomes and take a systems approach. Whilst it is important to recognise that sustainability as originally envisioned is not feasible in the immediate future, if there are strong signs of ownership from the ILO, the relevance of the Lab's objectives to SECO and other donors could justify a long-term investment in more gradual change. This investment would need to be carefully tracked, with frequent review of expectations regarding who will perform and pay for the functions the Lab plays in the long run. Nonetheless, whilst inevitably needing to be considerably longer than originally anticipated, such an investment could prove to be a relatively small one relative to the value it provides.

¹⁵ The nature of some funders' relationship with the ILO may however prevent them from being able to earmark funding for specific technical units like the Lab.

6. LESSONS LEARNED

Lesson 1: By combining the ILO's reputation and knowledge about decent work with the MSD community's systems development expertise, it is possible to carve out a niche which is in high demand and of significant value to the ILO, its donors and the wider field.

This combined expertise is important to the ILO because it builds its comparative advantage, positioning it as a responsive implementer with a unique set of competences. It also generates learning that is relevant to key strategic priorities. For donors, Lab 2's niche focus provides expertise not available elsewhere on how to combine two key priorities in programming. For the wider field, Lab 2's knowledge contributes to debates on how MSD can be applied in new sectors, to address decent work deficits beyond income and job creation.

Lesson 2: Planning for sustainability requires asking "Who will do this in the long run?" and "Who will pay for this in the long run?" before an intervention starts, and then designing the intervention around the answers.

A vision for sustainability requires identifying players with both the incentives and capacity to perform and fund the functions to be sustained. One of the goals of funding a second phase of the Lab was to embed methods and knowledge within the ILO and ensure their sustainability, but the project design does not include a clear and realistic vision for who will 'do' and who will 'pay' for this expertise and assistance after the Lab's funding comes to an end. A sustainability analysis would have shown that achieving sustainability for the functions the Lab performs would not be likely within a three-year timeframe. In the context of the ILO structure, a small technical unit like the Lab is an appropriate player to 'perform' the functions the Lab does, but getting core funding for such specialist expertise is notoriously difficult and often doesn't happen until that specialism has been a priority for many years.

Lesson 3: Technical assistance is not enough to change behaviour unless it is linked to incentives.

The Lab's most successful partnerships have been with those who were genuinely interested in how a market systems approach – or components of it – could serve their interests. The Lab also partnered with people who worked with the Lab despite having little *technical* incentive to do so.¹⁶ These partnerships were not as successful even though the quality of the Lab's knowledge, research and capacity building was no different. The difference is that in the successful partnerships, the technical assistance is more effective because of different incentives. Technical assistance, knowledge generation and knowledge dissemination can all be important, but they are unlikely to have significant behaviour change effects unless their use is informed by a deep understanding of incentives.

Lesson 4: Changing incentives is ambitious and takes time.

The lack of project sustainability does not reflect on Lab 2's performance so much as it does on incentives that were beyond the Lab's control. The way the ILO is structured, informal norms that can lead to 'siloes,' high levels of internal competition for funding and mechanisms for staffing projects are all beyond the Lab's influence. Changing incentives is usually far more complex and ambitious than changing capacities; it inevitably takes time. In the case of mainstreaming MSD in the ILO, incentives are most likely to change slowly in response to donor pressure and demonstrable success from the application of the approach in multiple projects.

The Lab cannot control these changes, but it can contribute to them and build on them when they occur. Technical assistance does not change incentives. However, as the ToC diagram in Annex 9 shows, it can leverage and accelerate changes in incentives that are also influenced by other factors. For example, Lab 2 has shown that presenting MSD in ways that are complementary to ILO ways of working, avoiding words like 'market' where they are likely to trigger defensiveness, identifying the

¹⁶ Their incentives to collaborate may have been to meet donor requirements, spend excess budget etc.

units and departments that the approach is likely to be most immediately useful to, building a deep understanding of existing incentives in these units and departments and working with them, building a close working relationship with the ILO's funders most interested in systemic approaches, providing a high level of technical support to any ILO projects that do take a market systems approach and widely disseminating success stories can all contribute to gradually changing perceptions and growing interest in applying the approach.

Lesson 5: Certain tactics are more effective than others for promoting behaviour change in large, complex organisations.

The Lab has learned a lot about strategies and tactics that are effective for promoting a relatively new approach in an institution as complex and large as the ILO. This includes the following lessons:

- In a large organisation like the ILO, an *internal* technical unit is perceived as more accessible and is more likely to be used than equivalent external expertise. It can 'translate' external expertise into more familiar terminology and ways of working, further increasing accessibility and overcoming some of the 'self-sufficiency' of large organisations that can slow innovation.
- In the early stages, informal, relational influence is more effective for generating 'buy-in' for innovation than formal attempts to institutionalise change. Individuals who are convinced of the value of an approach often spread change further and faster than units or departments that have formally adopted a change.
- How an approach or change is presented makes a big difference. Informal perceptions are highly influential. Language and terminology matter.
- High-quality technical knowledge is insufficient to trigger behaviour change on its own but when it is produced in response to demand, solves a problem for its target audience, and is presented in accessible ways it can be influential.
- Knowledge dissemination is as important as knowledge generation. Effective knowledge dissemination requires an intentional strategy, a multi-stranded approach and regular review and adaptation.

Lesson 6: Results-based adaptive management is as important for objectives like "influence" that are difficult to measure, as it is for more tangible objectives.

One of the lessons from the Lab 1 Final Evaluation was that "In order for the project to be able to monitor its progress, determine its strategy and assess its trajectory towards the intended impact, a robust monitoring, evaluation and learning system is crucial."¹⁷ This evaluation echoes the lesson, noting that it was difficult for Lab 2 to measure 'influence' and to formulate a clear ToC that reflected the project design and logframe.¹⁸ Nonetheless, key strategic pivots and effective adaptive management emerged from rigorous review against the Lab's objectives, particularly following the mid-term evaluation. This contributed to a stronger performance in the second half of Lab 2.

Lesson 7: The market systems approach is most valuable when it is applied as a 'whole' than in parts.

One of the obstacles to progress identified in the evaluation was that the Lab too often found themselves in the position of attempting to isolate components of the MSD approach and use them to support non-MSD projects or goals. This was because so far there is little demand for technical support in applying the full MSD approach among ILO and SECO-funded partners. Using parts of the approach also increased interest in the approach as a whole and components of the approach do have

¹⁷ Palladium, 2017, Final Independent Evaluation of 'Market Systems Development for Decent Work – the Lab.'

¹⁸ Attempts to reconstruct the ToC for this evaluation in a way that accurately reflected Lab 2's project design, activities and logframe also proved difficult.

standalone value. Nonetheless, multiple interviewees commented that a lesson learned from Lab 2 was that the MSD approach is most effective when it is applied as a ‘whole.’ This lesson is further evidenced by the Lab’s review of MSAs,¹⁹ many of which did not lead to changed implementation strategies.

7. EMERGING GOOD PRACTICES

Lab 2 is a model for taking an ‘inter-disciplinary’ approach to developing technical knowledge, by combining expertise from two different communities of practice.

By drawing on the ILO’s knowledge about decent work deficits and the MSD community’s knowledge about systemic approaches to development, the Lab was able to generate new knowledge relevant to both communities. Institutionally, designing the Lab as an internal technical unit with objectives that encouraged it to build strong external relationships enabled it to draw on and disseminate knowledge in both communities. This ‘inter-disciplinary’ approach could be replicated when there is a need for new knowledge that combines expertise that is well-established outside the ILO with knowledge that is well-established internally.

Lab 2 leveraged co-funding that enabled it to effectively double its resources and achieve a high level of productivity and efficiency relative to the initial investment.

The Lab’s primary mechanism for leveraging additional resources was to requiring co-investment from partners who benefited from its technical services. For example, the Lab used ‘work months’ invested from ILO project partners to fund two additional members of staff. In addition to increasing the Lab’s resources, co-funding from project partners provided an indicator of ownership and built the expectation that accessing MSD expertise requires a funding investment. Other knowledge generation projects could replicate this.

8. RECOMMENDATIONS

Recommendation 1: ILO - demonstrate internal ownership of and support for the Lab to donors (high priority)

Responsible entity	Priority level	Time frame	Level of resource requirement
ILO	High	Action to be initiated in the short-term, investment will be long-term	Medium – subject to the ability to leverage co-funding.

There is a strong argument for the ILO to invest in the Lab, as doing so advances learning that is directly relevant to its strategic objectives, responds to donors, and positions the ILO as an innovative leader in its areas of expertise whilst developing credibility in new areas of donor interest. Whilst it is recognised that it is not realistic for the ILO to fully fund the Lab on a permanent basis at this stage, for donors to be comfortable making a long-term investment, the ILO needs to send strong signs of internal buy-in. The most effective way to do this would be to find a way to co-fund ongoing knowledge generation and internal technical expertise on market systems approaches to decent work.

¹⁹ ILO Lab, 2019, available at: https://www.ilo.org/empent/Projects/the-lab/WCMS_696156/lang--en/index.htm

Recommendation 2: SECO (and other potential donors) - invest funding to retain the Lab in the ILO for the long-term (high priority)

Responsible entity	Priority level	Time frame	Level of resource requirement
SECO and other potential donors	High	Action to be initiated in the short-term, investment will be long-term	Medium This requires a relatively small investment, but over a long period of time. The level of resource requirements per donor also depends on the number of funders who commit resources.

SECO’s vision for the Lab is still valid. Whilst wide institutionalisation is not feasible in the short-to-medium term, the Lab has shown that influence is possible, albeit the time frame for achieving it is much longer than initially expected. The Lab has also demonstrated the value of knowledge generation on market systems approaches to decent work in its own right. The research and technical expertise the Lab represents, housed within and strengthening the ILO, a key SECO partner, provide reason for SECO to continue investing (ideally alongside the ILO itself and other external donors interested in MSD) in the functions the Lab plays.

Other potential donors’ interest is likely to be similar to SECO’s. Lab 2 has proven the value of having technical expertise on a market systems approach embedded in the ILO to donors who see the ILO as a key partner and who are also interested in MSD. Meanwhile, research and technical expertise on a market systems approach to decent work is useful to these donors in its own right, as it is applicable to the design, implementation, and measurement of a broad portfolio of systems change programmes (with and beyond the ILO) that include decent work objectives.

Further, the Lab’s technical knowledge on systems change will be needed on an ongoing basis in the future productivity ecosystems project, if that project is to build its success on systems approaches. For SECO, it will likely be more efficient, and represent better value for money, to leverage the Lab’s knowledge than to seek to rebuild similar expertise within the project.

It is important to recognise that sustainability as originally envisioned is not feasible in the immediate future, so investment would need to be tracked against progress, with frequent review of expectations regarding who will perform and pay for the functions the Lab plays in the long run. Nonetheless, even a long-term investment in gradual change has the potential to provide good value for money given the relevance and strategic importance of the Lab’s objectives.

Recommendation 3: Design any future project on a deeper understanding of what is feasible (high priority)

Responsible entity	Priority level	Time frame	Level of resource requirement
ILO and new projects’ donors	High	During the design phase of the new project. This is contingent on time-frame of Rec 1 and Rec	Low This recommendation does not require new investment of resources – it is about

		2, but would ideally be short-term.	how to use the resources that would be invested anyway.
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A deep understanding of the organisational incentives, capacities, and constraints to behaviour change across the technical departments and units that are most relevant to the Lab’s objectives should be the basis for a potential Lab 3 design. The ILO has many objectives and agendas, and the design of a potential Lab 3 should be realistic about the feasibility of a small technical unit’s influence relative to the wider institution.²⁰

The design of a potential Lab 3 should respond to the lessons of Lab 2 by minimising investment of Lab resources in conducting MSAs or providing other forms of technical support to non-MSD projects, unless there is a clear strategic rationale for doing so. Logframe indicators will need to be carefully designed and regularly reviewed to ensure that they don’t inadvertently incentivise activities that do not contribute to the Lab’s ToC.

Finally, a design based on a deeper understanding of what is feasible will need to be explicit about what is and what is not realistic with respect to sustainability. The reality is that incentives are a critical part of behaviour change and influencing parts of the ILO to mainstream a market systems approach to decent work, given its current structures, will inevitably be slow work. The Lab’s objectives represent a long-term ambition that will take time but can deliver value to the ILO and its funders. It is important to have a rigorous conversation between the ILO and Lab 3 funders about ‘Who will do?’ ‘Who will pay?’ and “By when?” for each of the functions Lab 3 is expected to play. Shared expectations should be realistic, clearly articulated and regularly reviewed.

Recommendation 4: Build a detailed Theory of Change into the design of any future project and use it as the basis for adaptive management (high priority)

Responsible entity	Priority level	Time frame	Level of resource requirement
ILO and new projects’ donors	High	During the design phase of the new project. This is contingent on time-frame of Rec 1 and Rec 2, but would ideally be short-term.	Medium, assuming external resources are used to support this process.

A detailed Theory of Change that shows the expected pathways to influence and impact provides a way of making the links between activities, outputs, outcomes and impact explicit. This exposes assumptions in the design phase that need to be challenged, tested or reworked. A rigorous ToC also provides a foundation for good adaptive management for both the implementer and the funder.

For the implementer, using a ToC rather than a logframe as the primary measurement and adaptive management tool tends to yield a more a disciplined focus on only those activities, outputs, outcomes and objectives that contribute to impact. It can more quickly expose activities that are not having the expected effect (or at least, that need to be investigated). Many other projects have found that a commitment to measure against the ToC and to regularly review and revise the strategy (as Lab 2 was

²⁰ Assuming more circumspect objectives for Lab 3, it makes sense to continue housing the Lab in the ENTERPRISES department. Understandably, this is the department that is perceived as being the most natural ‘fit’ for the market systems development approach, and interest and capacity are growing across the department.

doing on a six-monthly basis) is well supported by input from an external ‘critical friend’ who can query assumptions and point out things that might have been missed.

For the donor, adaptive management that works to a ToC strengthens a project’s potential impact by shaping the strategy according to what works in practice, instead of what was initially expected to work. Such an approach requires the funder to be highly flexible and willing to revise logframe targets in response to emerging learning. Changes may be frequent and significant but can prevent resources being spent on ineffective activities for too long. This is particularly important for projects such as the Lab which are working in relatively nascent technical fields with complex and ambitious ‘influence’ objectives.

Recommendation 5: Build on the strategies and tactics that Lab 2 has developed, testing and adapting them where necessary (high priority)

Responsible entity	Priority level	Time frame	Level of resource requirement
ILO (with inputs from new project donors in design, and strategy reviews)	High	During and for the life of the next project (or whatever form future technical expertise on MSD4DW in the ILO takes) which is expected to be needed in the long-term until/unless learning shows the recommended strategies are no longer proving effective.	Low This recommendation does not require new investment of resources – it is about how to use the resources that would be invested anyway.

There are promising early signs from the strategies Lab 2 has implemented since its mid-term review. A potential Lab 3 should start by using these strategies and tactics, testing them to see which continue to prove effective and adapting further if necessary.

Lab 3 should continue to:

- focus efforts on knowledge dissemination and relationship building rather than on formal mechanisms for institutionalisation. Inform, discuss, debate, support and educate through events like the *Coffee &...* initiative;
- allocate resources to knowledge dissemination, use multiple strands of dissemination, and adaptively manage the communication strategy;
- present MSD in line with existing incentives and work with people who are genuinely interested in the approach’s potential to solve problems for them. These individuals are not only more likely to own the approach for themselves; they are also more likely to spread it.
- use ‘influence mapping’ to identify individuals, units, departments and regions who have an interest in the market systems approach or for whom the market systems approach might be a good fit, and target efforts towards them;
- minimise the use of ‘market’ terminology in contexts where it negative affects perceptions and use other synonyms, such as “inclusive systems development” instead. Within the ILO, present the approach in language that is familiar and highlights alignment with core ILO values;

- prioritise technical support to MSD projects that can demonstrate the effectiveness of the approach in action;
- take a demand-driven approach to knowledge generation, and prioritise ‘synthesised’ knowledge products with wide applicability over more context- and project-specific knowledge products;
- mainstream gender in its briefs, tools and research;
- deepen understanding of organisational incentives, capacities, and constraints to behaviour change on an ongoing basis and feed that information into strategy discussions and reviews. Understanding of the nature and culture of the organisation is as important as technical expertise.

Recommendation 6: Prioritise funds for demonstration (medium priority)

Responsible entity	Priority level	Time frame	Level of resource requirement
ILO (potentially with other potential donors)	Medium	Medium-term (but to tie in with life of project)	Medium-to-high, subject to the scope and scale of the demonstration project identified

It is recommended that the Lab 3 design allocates funds (or seeks additional funds) to pilot an action research ‘demo-project.’ This would allow the Lab to demonstrate the process of using the MSD approach in a more integrated way, from analysis to action. During the pilot, the Lab should measure to evaluate whether the demo-project is effective as a mechanism for influence (and with whom), or as a means of generating knowledge. If it is influential, further funds could be sought or reallocated to scale up the approach.

Recommendation 7: Improve recruitment of technical officers for MSD projects (medium priority)

Responsible entity	Priority level	Time frame	Level of resource requirement
ILO	Medium	Initiate in the short-term, maintain for the long-term	Medium

One of the findings of this evaluation was that staffing MSD programmes with people who are not familiar with the approach has been a constraint to its success within the ILO. It is recommended that the ILO prioritise MSD expertise as an essential competency when recruiting to MSD projects in order to address this barrier. The ILO should draw on internal expertise from Lab staff and other MSD experts (supplemented as needed by external expertise) in developing recruitment material, and in shortlisting, interviewing, and selecting candidates, in order to improve this aspect of recruitment.

ANNEX 1: LESSONS LEARNED TEMPLATES

Lesson 1

ILO Lesson Learned Template

Project Title: Market systems development for decent work – the Lab – Phase II
Project TC/SYMBOL: GLO/17/06/CHE

Name of Evaluator: Rachel S
 2020

Date: 30th October

The following lesson learned has been identified during the course of the evaluation. Further text explaining the lesson may be included in the full evaluation report.

LL Element	Text
Brief description of lesson learned (link to specific action or task)	By combining the ILO’s reputation and knowledge about decent work with the MSD community’s systems development expertise, it is possible to carve out a niche which is in high demand and of significant value to the ILO, its donors and the wider field.
Context and any related preconditions	External partners, including influential donors, wanted to work with the Lab precisely because it represented MSD competency sitting within the ILO – a multinational with a reputation for technical expertise in the world of work, strong public sector networks and international credibility. The preconditions are that the Lab has developed expertise in jobs, employment and decent work and in MSD. It is therefore uniquely placed to bring them together.
Targeted users / Beneficiaries	The ILO
Challenges /negative lessons - Causal factors	
Success / Positive Issues - Causal factors	Interviewees repeatedly expressed the importance and significance of the Lab’s unique positioning and skill during the evaluation. The Lab’s combined expertise is important to the ILO because it builds its comparative advantage, positioning it as a responsive implementer with a unique set of competences. It also generates learning that is relevant to key strategic priorities. For donors, Lab 2’s niche focus provides expertise not available elsewhere on how to combine two key priorities in programming. For the wider field, Lab 2’s knowledge contributes to debates on how MSD can be applied in new sectors, to address decent work deficits beyond income and job creation.
ILO Administrative Issues (staff, resources, design, implementation)	

Lesson 2

ILO Lesson Learned Template

Project Title: Market systems development for decent work – the Lab – Phase II
Project TC/SYMBOL: GLO/17/06/CHE

Name of Evaluator: Rachel Shah
2020

Date: 30th October

The following lesson learned has been identified during the course of the evaluation. Further text explaining the lesson may be included in the full evaluation report.

LL Element	Text
Brief description of lesson learned (link to specific action or task)	Planning for sustainability requires asking “Who will do this in the long run?” and “Who will pay for this in the long run?” before an intervention starts, and then designing the intervention around the answers.
Context and any related preconditions	One of the Lab’s objectives is to embed their methods and knowledge within the ILO before their funding comes to an end. However, the Lab is playing an important role within the ILO by providing expertise, advice and support to colleagues who are using or experimenting with the approach. The project design does not include a vision for who will ‘do’ and who will ‘pay’ for this expertise and assistance after the Lab’s funding comes to an end.
Targeted users / Beneficiaries	The ILO
Challenges /negative lessons - Causal factors	<p>The Lab’s Project Document does not set a clear, realistic vision for who would eventually ‘do’ or ‘pay’ for the technical advisory work the Lab is doing now. This meant the vision for sustainability was not incorporated into the implementation design.</p> <p>A vision for sustainability requires identifying players with both the incentives and capacity to perform and fund the functions to be sustained. A sustainability analysis would have shown that achieving sustainability for the functions the Lab performs would not be likely within a three-year timeframe.</p> <p>In the context of the ILO structure, a small technical unit like the Lab is an appropriate player to ‘perform’ the functions the Lab does, but getting core funding for such specialist expertise is notoriously difficult and often doesn’t happen until that specialism has been a priority for many years.</p>
Success / Positive Issues - Causal factors	
ILO Administrative Issues (staff, resources, design, implementation)	

Lesson 3

ILO Lesson Learned Template

Project Title: Market systems development for decent work – the Lab – Phase II

Project TC/SYMBOL: GLO/17/06/CHE

Name of Evaluator: Rachel S
2020

Date: 30th October

The following lesson learned has been identified during the course of the evaluation. Further text explaining the lesson may be included in the full evaluation report.

LL Element	Text
<p>Brief description of lesson learned (link to specific action or task)</p>	<p>Technical assistance is not enough to change behaviour unless it is linked to incentives.</p>
<p>Context and any related preconditions</p>	<p>One of the Lab’s objectives was to promote a market systems approach to decent work. It aimed to do this through a) generating and disseminating knowledge that plugged key gaps in understanding about when and how a market systems approach can be used for decent work objectives and b) demonstrating the approach’s effectiveness in practice. This strategy does not – on its own – reflect a deep understanding of the institutional context and incentives that shape people’s behaviours. Some of the technical assistance the Lab provided to partners did not yield results, as the incentives were not in place for people to adopt a new approach.</p> <p>However, once beneficiaries started realizing the ways in which the market systems approach supported their interests, they had an incentive to learn more. The Lab could then target their technical assistance to align with the incentive. By doing this, they had much more success. The Lab’s most successful partnerships have been with those who were genuinely interested in how a market systems approach – or components of it – could serve their interests.</p> <p>Technical assistance, knowledge generation and knowledge dissemination can all be important, but they are unlikely to have significant behaviour change effects unless their use is informed by a deep understanding of incentives. Technical assistance (including capacity building, skills training, awareness raising etc.) is not enough to change behaviour unless it is targeted to link to incentives.</p>
<p>Targeted users / Beneficiaries</p>	<p>SECO-funded projects, ILO, the MSD community</p>

Challenges /negative lessons - Causal factors	
Success / Positive Issues - Causal factors	<p>By getting to know people better, building relationships, learning their incentives and providing information about the approach, the Lab created a space for potential beneficiaries to translate the merits of the approach into their own context. The Lab then responded to the demand for their technical assistance when it arose from those people’s own ideas about how MSD could serve their interests.</p>
ILO Administrative Issues (staff, resources, design, implementation)	

Lesson 4

ILO Lesson Learned Template

Project Title: Market systems development for decent work – the Lab – Phase II

Project TC/SYMBOL: GLO/17/06/CHE

Name of Evaluator: Rachel Shah
2020

Date: 30th October

The following lesson learned has been identified during the course of the evaluation. Further text explaining the lesson may be included in the full evaluation report.

LL Element	Text
Brief description of lesson learned (link to specific action or task)	Usually incentives change in response to a complex set of factors beyond any one project's control. The project cannot directly change incentives, but by being opportunistic – leveraging existing incentives and capitalising on positive changes – it may be able to accelerate changes and promote its agenda. However, this will not happen quickly. Changing incentives is ambitious and takes time. It is usually far more complex and ambitious than changing capacities. Projects whose outcomes rely on changing incentives should be planned and resourced accordingly.
Context and any related preconditions	One of the Lab's objectives is to embed their methods and knowledge within the ILO before their funding comes to an end. However, the way the ILO is structured, its informal norms, staffing projects and many other factors that affect incentives to adopt the Lab's methods and knowledge are beyond the Lab's influence.
Targeted users / Beneficiaries	The ILO
Challenges /negative lessons - Causal factors	Tracing the Lab's success stories shows that working with existing and changing incentives by building relationships, supporting the adoption and adaptation of the approach needed to foster independent ownership and investment, and facilitating the organic spread of the approach takes time.

<p>Success / Positive Issues - Causal factors</p>	<p>In the case of mainstreaming MSD in the ILO, incentives are most likely to change slowly in response to donor pressure and demonstrable success from the application of the approach in multiple projects.</p> <p>The Lab cannot control these changes, but it can contribute to them and build on them when they occur. Technical assistance does not change incentives, but it can leverage and accelerate changes in incentives that are also influenced by other factors. For example, Lab 2 has shown that presenting MSD in ways that are complementary to ILO ways of working, avoiding words like ‘market’ where they are likely to trigger defensiveness, identifying the units and departments that the approach is likely to be most immediately useful to, building a deep understanding of existing incentives in these units and departments and working with them, building a close working relationship with the ILO’s funders most interested in systemic approaches, proving a high level of technical support to any ILO projects that do take a market systems approach and widely disseminating success stories can all contribute to gradually changing perceptions and growing interest in applying the approach.</p>
<p>ILO Administrative Issues (staff, resources, design, implementation)</p>	

Lesson 5

ILO Lesson Learned Template

Project Title: Market systems development for decent work – the Lab – Phase II

Project TC/SYMBOL: GLO/17/06/CHE

Name of Evaluator: Rachel Shah
2020

Date: 30th October

The following lesson learned has been identified during the course of the evaluation. Further text explaining the lesson may be included in the full evaluation report.

LL Element	Text
<p>Brief description of lesson learned (link to specific action or task)</p>	<p>Certain tactics are more effective than others for promoting behaviour change in large, complex organisations.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • In a large organisation like the ILO, an <i>internal</i> technical unit is perceived as more accessible and is more likely to be used than equivalent external expertise. • When introducing a new approach, informal, relational influence is more effective for generating ‘buy-in’ for innovation than formal attempts to institutionalise change. • It can ‘translate’ external expertise into more familiar terminology and ways of working, further increasing accessibility and overcoming some of the ‘self-sufficiency’ of large organisations that can slow innovation. • How an approach or change is presented makes a big difference. Informal perceptions are highly influential. Language and terminology matter. • High-quality technical knowledge is insufficient to trigger behaviour change on its own but when it is produced in response to demand, solves a problem for its target audience, and is presented in accessible ways it can be influential. • Knowledge dissemination is as important as knowledge generation.
<p>Context and any related preconditions</p>	<p>One of the Lab’s objectives is ‘mainstreaming’ and ‘institutionalising’ market systems approaches to decent work. The ILO is a large, complex and sometimes bureaucratic institution. The Lab has learned a lot about strategies and tactics that are effective for promoting a relatively new approach in an institution like ILO.</p>
<p>Targeted users / Beneficiaries</p>	<p>The ILO Large institutions</p>

Challenges /negative lessons - Causal factors	
Success / Positive Issues - Causal factors	<p>The Lab found that it was more effective in achieving its objectives when it pivoted its strategy:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • from a ‘hierarchical’ institutionalisation strategy to a ‘network’ strategy – focusing more on relationships and influencers than on policies • from an influencing stance to a supporting stance, shifting away from dogmatic and idealistic language and moving towards understanding colleagues’ needs and using the approach to serve them • from producing knowledge to synthesizing knowledge that is in demand in the field, and publishing it in accessible, jargon-free outputs • from external language to internal language, particularly by minimizing use of the word ‘market’ • from focusing solely on publications to employing a more diverse set of knowledge dissemination tactics including in-person events. <p>Although there wasn’t a long period of time for testing and measuring, these changes seemed to lead to greater receptivity, easier identification of interested colleagues, and gradually, stronger signs of ownership and organic growth.</p>
ILO Administrative Issues (staff, resources, design, implementation)	

Lesson 6

ILO Lesson Learned Template

Project Title: Market systems development for decent work – the Lab – Phase II
Project TC/SYMBOL: GLO/17/06/CHE

Name of Evaluator: Rachel Shah
2020

Date: 30th October

The following lesson learned has been identified during the course of the evaluation. Further text explaining the lesson may be included in the full evaluation report.

LL Element	Text
Brief description of lesson learned (link to specific action or task)	Results-based adaptive management is as important for objectives like “influence” that are difficult to measure, as it is for more tangible objectives. A robust measurement system tied to a clearly articulated Theory of Change is crucial to drive evidence-based learning and adaptation.
Context and any related preconditions	<p>Lab 2 monitored project performance and results against its logframe, which was kept regularly updated. An attempt was made to flesh this out into a results chain and associated indicators, but it was not used for ongoing monitoring and results measurement in part because there was not a strong Theory of Change in the project design, and in part because measuring ‘influence,’ particularly across a diverse set of objectives and activities, is very difficult.</p> <p>Robust monitoring against a Theory of Change can quickly provide feedback on activities that are not having the expected impact. This is all the more important when the objective is complex and requires frequent reflection.</p>
Targeted users / Beneficiaries	The ILO / Lab team / project staff / donor
Challenges /negative lessons - Causal factors	Monitoring and results measurement can be resource intensive. Measuring influence is difficult, and as influence often takes time, quick feedback is not often apparent even with a strong monitoring system. Monitoring can be subjective. However, without a clear link between activities and expected outcomes, there is a high risk of achieving activity and output targets without them yielding impact.
Success / Positive Issues - Causal factors	Key strategic pivots and effective adaptive management emerged from rigorous review against the Lab’s objectives, particularly following the mid-term evaluation. This contributed to a stronger performance in the second half of Lab 2.
ILO Administrative Issues (staff, resources, design, implementation)	

Lesson 7

ILO Lesson Learned Template

Project Title: Market systems development for decent work – the Lab – Phase II
Project TC/SYMBOL: GLO/17/06/CHE

Name of Evaluator: Rachel Shah
2020

Date: 30th October

The following lesson learned has been identified during the course of the evaluation. Further text explaining the lesson may be included in the full evaluation report.

LL Element	Text
Brief description of lesson learned (link to specific action or task)	The market systems approach is most valuable when it is applied as a 'whole' rather than in parts.
Context and any related preconditions	One of the obstacles to progress identified in the evaluation was that the Lab too often found themselves in the position of attempting to isolate components of the MSD approach and use them to support non-MSD projects or goals. This was for good reasons, but multiple interviewees commented that a lesson learned from Lab 2 was that the MSD approach is most effectively when it is applied as a 'whole.'
Targeted users / Beneficiaries	Project staff and their beneficiaries
Challenges /negative lessons - Causal factors	Working through partners often involved the Lab trying to integrate parts of MSD into non-MSD projects. Whilst there is value on the component parts of MSD, one effect of this was that the Lab lacked a compelling 'big win' that demonstrates the effectiveness of the approach empirically. The fact that so many partnerships ended with analysis led some observers to comment that the Lab is advocating for an approach that they have not demonstrated works in practice. This lesson is further evidenced by the Lab's review of MSAs, ²¹ many of which did not lead to changed implementation strategies.

²¹ ILO Lab, 2019, available at: https://www.ilo.org/empent/Projects/the-lab/WCMS_696156/lang--en/index.htm

Success / Positive Issues - Causal factors	<p>One of Lab 2's most successful partnerships was with the Road to Jobs project in Afghanistan. Road to Jobs was designed as an MSD project (within input from Lab 1) and Lab 2 has played a critical role in supporting it with analysis, implementation and measurement. This led to increased success and impact in the project, capacity growth on project staff, and enthusiasm for the approach. Applying the approach as a 'whole' had a positive effect. Lab staff also reported that applying the approach as a 'whole' in a demonstration project during Lab 1 proved effective for generating enthusiasm and interest in the approach.</p>
ILO Administrative Issues (staff, resources, design, implementation)	

ANNEX 2: TOR FOR THE EVALUATION



International
Labour
Organization

► Terms of Reference

Final Independent Evaluation of “the Lab”, Phase II Final Version

Project title:	Market systems development for Decent Work – the Lab – Phase II
Project code:	GLO/17/06/CHE
Country(ies):	Global programme with country activities
Country Programme Outcome:	GLO153
P&B Outcome:	Outcome 4 – Promoting sustainable enterprises
Implementer:	The Lab
Administrative and Technical Backstopping Unit:	Small and Medium Enterprises Unit (SME) of the ILO’s Enterprises Department (ENTERPRISES) (ENT/SME)
Donor/Development Partner	The Swiss State Secretariat for Economic Affairs (SECO)
Budget	CHF 2,000,000 – equivalent to about USD 2,085,506
Duration	October 2017 – December 2020
Type of Evaluation	Final Independent Evaluation
Timing of Evaluation	August – October 2020

1. INTRODUCTION AND RATIONALE OF THE EVALUATION

The International Labour Organization (ILO) is currently implementing a global project on **'Market Systems Development for Decent Work'**, also known as [the Lab](#). The project, which is funded by the Swiss State Secretariat for Economic Affairs (SECO), and has a budget of CHF 2,000,000, began its second and final phase in October 2017 with its expected finish at the close of December 2020. The project has the over-arching objective of generating knowledge on ways to improve decent work outcomes through market systems development interventions.

The Lab is housed within the Small and Medium Enterprises Unit (SME) of the Enterprises Department (ENTERPRISES) of the ILO. In the Unit, the Lab is part of a larger team which includes the thematic areas of Value Chain Development, Approach to Inclusive Market Systems (AIMS), Entrepreneurship and Women's Entrepreneurship Development (WED). The Lab is managed from the ILO Headquarters in Geneva and implements through a small team of staff and a long-term consultant.

The Lab delivers on its mandate by working through partnerships. Such partnerships have included projects supported by SECO or Swiss funding; ILO field projects, headquarters units and social partners; private sector companies; and external market systems and private sector development projects. The joint work conducted in these partnerships is expected to support partners to address key challenges – to understanding, addressing or measuring decent work outcomes – while also providing a means to create new knowledge and make it available for the wider public.

As required by the project, the Lab has tried to maintain a geographic focus, working to generate evidence and knowledge in both SECO priority countries (Albania, Colombia, Egypt, Ghana, Indonesia, Kyrgyzstan, Peru, Serbia, South Africa, Tajikistan, Tunisia and Vietnam) and complimentary countries (Bolivia, Myanmar and Nepal). The project has a focus on generating knowledge beyond agricultural production – in sectors such as tourism, construction, manufacturing and agro-processing – where the body of knowledge on market systems is far less robust and the decent work challenges more complex. Gender considerations are taken into account within the sectors.

As the project is closing within the year, one of the core project requirements is to conduct a final independent evaluation. The evaluation will be conducted in line with the UN evaluation standards and ILO evaluation guidelines to assess the project implementation performance relative to the initial project design.

These Terms of Reference provide the details for which a qualified consultant or team of consultants can submit a proposal to conduct the ILO's final independent evaluation.

2. PROJECT OBJECTIVES

The Lab tests, scales and shares strategies to maximize the impact of market systems development interventions on decent work. By understanding the market incentives to

improve working conditions for women and men, the Lab identifies innovative 'win-win' solutions that lead to growth and improved competitiveness at the same time as boosting job quality for vulnerable populations. Bridging the worlds of research and practice, the goal is:

Learning through measuring impact, to take...

Action that catalyses...

Better jobs, sustainably and at scale.

The bottom line is to deliver more and better jobs through improved market systems.

The first phase of the Lab, which ran from 2014 to 2017, made major progress in providing 'proof of concept' that a market systems approach can be used to improve decent work outcomes, and that the approach is feasible for the ILO and other implementing institutions to adopt. The Lab also contributed to improvements in the culture of results measurement in the ILO and partner organisations, which laid the bases to better understand impact and generate empirical knowledge to influence future development cooperation strategies. A final independent evaluation of Phase I of the Lab was conducted from June to August 2017, and its recommendations fed into the crafting and implementation of Phase II. One of the suggestions was to develop six-month strategies and have regular check-ins with the donor to inform them if there were any issues with meeting three different project objectives (knowledge generation and institutionalisation within the ILO and SECO, respectively).

Objective

The overall development objective of the Lab's second phase is to improve the application of the market systems approach to achieve decent work objectives through ILO development cooperation as well as partnerships with various departments and units in the ILO headquarters and other development partner programmes and initiatives. This is done to influence development cooperation funding to address and measure decent work deficits more effectively and in a more sustainable and scalable way. To do this, the project has two core objectives:

Objective 1: Improve job quality in selected global, regional and national value chains to provide a 'demonstration effect' showing how sustainable market systems solutions can be delivered to improve working conditions.

Objective 2: Generate and institutionalise knowledge that plugs key gaps in understanding, internal and external to the ILO, of when and how a market systems approach can be used to create more and better jobs.

Rationale and strategic approach

The strategic approach to decent work that the Lab uses has three components:

- i) **A clear and unique value proposition** on improving working conditions for women and men workers in a cost-effective, sustainable and scalable way

- ii) **Rigorously tying co-funding to knowledge production** through its systematic approach to identify knowledge gaps that are relevant for and serve the needs of both practitioners and policy-makers, encouraging local buy-in and ownership
- iii) **A partnership-driven approach** to ensure knowledge is widely disseminated within internal ILO programmes and beyond, in an array of external donors, foundations, private-sector actors, multilaterals and international financial institutions.

The Lab has four product lines and results areas that it channels to support SECO-funded activities within and beyond the ILO, namely:

Analysis – market research and analysis: understanding the business case for improving working conditions, and the underlying sector constraints that inhibit decent work outcomes

Action – market systems interventions: supporting interventions to improve selected decent work deficits through cost sharing, convening actors, brokering relationships and technical advice

Learning – working conditions impact evaluations: measuring, evaluating and reflecting on what’s working, and why, to adjust strategies and document knowledge

Sharing – knowledge products: generating global public goods on proven business models and market analysis methodology, disseminated by running events and supporting communication between practitioners and policy makers.

The Lab’s analyses, interventions and evaluations are gender inclusive, where possible, to help identify the various challenges to, and opportunities to address, decent work through a gender-sensitive lens. For example, the project considers the gender dimensions of discrimination and other decent work deficits that people living in poverty often face, in such a way that poor working conditions tend to affect women and men workers differently, typically being even vaster for women.

An internal mid-term evaluation of the Lab Phase II was conducted in February 2019 and its results have shaped the final part of the project. One of the evaluation recommendations was to undertake an influence mapping to identify key leverage points in the ILO, i.e. a ‘network map’ of Lab activities that show how they are influencing the wider eco-system (**Annex 4**). This mapping could potentially be a way to reconstruct the Theory of Change and in turn be used as the analytical framework for the evaluation.

The project has used a results chain (**Annex 3**) to guide its activities, which are generally encompassed under two key work streams: a) knowledge creation and sharing, and b) market systems institutionalisation.

a) Knowledge creation and sharing

The Lab develops knowledge products which are designed to help both the ILO and external organisations create more and better jobs using the market systems approach.

For the ILO, the products are designed to highlight the mechanics of the approach to ILO colleagues who are less familiar with a systems approach. For external market systems practitioners, the products intend to highlight the decent work component, as these practitioners are often less familiar or more uncertain on how to account for decent work challenges. In the knowledge creation component, the Lab has published guidance documents, knowledge briefs and assessments, which intend to demonstrate how the approach can be used across various sectors and contexts to address and measure an array of decent work challenges.

To raise the visibility of the Lab's work and reach out to a wider practitioner audience, the Lab actively disseminates knowledge products to internal and external stakeholders through a variety of methods and mediums. All research outputs are published on [the Lab website](#) and are disseminated through the events and webinars (DCED, BEAM Exchange and SEEP), knowledge hubs (DCED, BEAM, MarketLinks), social media (LinkedIn, Twitter), and bespoke trainings (SECO, Sida, ILO staff). Internally, the project has promoted its work through informal group discussions open to the ILO, and through webinars and newsletters within the ILO's market systems development network (with ILO staff).

b) Market Systems Institutionalisation

The Lab has worked to institutionalise the market systems approach in both SECO and the ILO. While knowledge generation and dissemination support this mission by building credibility and a knowledge base to work from, direct work with both institutions is also required to ensure that these methods are taken up initially to develop more immediate capacity. Within SECO, the Lab has worked with projects in its Trade and Promotion team (WEHU) to support sector selection, market analysis, project design, and results measurement – both at the project level and at headquarters.

In the ILO, the Lab has worked with headquarters by partnering with teams in the SME unit (SCORE project, the Enabling Environment for Sustainable Enterprises (ESEE) team, and the unit's long-term strategy) and the wider Enterprises Department (the Green Jobs, Multinational Enterprises and Social Finance units). This work has cut across different areas across the ILO (child labour, occupational safety and health, employment policies, project appraisals, evaluations, etc.). The Lab has worked specifically with field projects (in Afghanistan, Mozambique, Rwanda and Zambia) and regional specialists as a means for developing knowledge and expertise that can remain after the Lab finishes.

Fit within and contribution to the ILO strategic framework

The Lab's systemic, innovative approach towards achieving its core objectives contribute to the Sustainable Development Goal (SDG) 8, *Promote inclusive and sustainable economic growth, employment and decent work for all*. Moreover, the project drives implementation of the ILO Programme and Budget (P&B) Outcome 4, *Sustainable enterprises as generators of employment and promoters of innovation and decent work*, especially Output 4.2 on *strengthening enterprises' capacity to adopt new business models, technology and techniques to enhance productivity and sustainability*. The Lab's activities contribute to incorporating

the ILO's cross-cutting policy drivers (CCPDs) on gender equality and non-discrimination as well as on social dialogue, with outputs and/or activities specifically addressing gender issues and specifically strengthening mechanisms of social dialogue.

In short, by testing, scaling and sharing strategies to maximise the impact of market systems development interventions on decent work, the Lab works through partnerships to making the ILO's mandate of promoting decent work for all women and men a reality.

3. PURPOSE AND SCOPE OF THE FINAL EVALUATION

The evaluation will be conducted following the [ILO Evaluation Policy](#) (2017) as well as the UN evaluation standards and norms and the Glossary of key terms in evaluation and results-based management (RBM) developed by the OECD's Development Assistance Committee (DAC). Evaluation in the ILO is mainly used as a management and organizational learning tool that supports programme and policy improvements and promotes accountability and learning. In line with the results-based approach applied by the ILO, the evaluation will focus on identifying and analysing results through addressing key questions related to the evaluation concerns and the achievement of the outcomes/immediate objectives of the project using the logical framework indicators.

The evaluation will address the ILO evaluation concerns as defined in the [ILO Policy Guidelines for results-based evaluation](#). Gender concerns will be integrated based on the [ILO Guidelines on integrating gender equality in monitoring and evaluation](#) and the other CCPDs – promotion of labour standards, social dialogue and just transition to environmental sustainability – will also form an important part of the evaluation.

Purpose of the evaluation

The evaluation will assess the Lab's contribution towards a global practitioner knowledge base, from its knowledge product base and outreach of such, to the extent to which it was able to accelerate the use of market systems within the ILO and in SECO. The evaluation will address the following criteria:

Relevance: the extent to which objectives of the project are consistent with beneficiaries' (ILO, SECO and external market development practitioners) requirements, and relevant to country needs, global priorities and partners and donors' expectations. In addition, relevance relates to whether the project results or approach are strategic and play to the comparative advantage of the ILO, as well as if or how it is relevant in the current scenario of the COVID-19 pandemic;

Effectiveness: the extent to which the project's immediate objectives were achieved, or are expected to be achieved, taking into account their relative importance;

Orientation towards impact: analysis of the project's contribution to broader, long-term, sustainable development changes and institutionalisation of the approach, as well as analysis of the project's 'learning journey' and the extent to which its

learnings on ‘what’s working and why’ have been taken on board and been reflected in the project implementation and documented knowledge;

Sustainability: Evaluation questions of this nature aim to assess the likelihood that the results of the intervention are durable and can be maintained or even scaled up and replicated by intervention partners after major assistance has been completed;

Efficiency: the extent to which the project delivered its outcomes and outputs with efficient use of resources (including management arrangements), including efforts/successes in soliciting public-private partnerships for the most cost-effective implementation of activities. This will include the extent to which the resources available were adequate for meeting the project objectives.

Scope and expectations of the evaluation

The evaluation will cover the whole period of Phase II; from its design in the first half of 2017, to its implementation timeframe from October 2017 to present (July/August 2020). The rationale for covering the full period, even before Phase II’s mid-term evaluation, is to provide a complete perspective of the project’s development, evolution and current status. The evaluation will briefly take stock of the Lab’s first phase (2014-2017), though it will not evaluate the project run during that period. It will however incorporate the design stage of Phase II, which is relevant when it comes to assessing the effectiveness of the intervention logic. The evaluation will assess the Lab’s contribution towards a global practitioner knowledge base, from its knowledge-product base and outreach of such, as well as to what extent it was able to accelerate the use of market systems within the ILO and in SECO. It will also assess the extent to which the Lab project contributes to the ILO’s strategic objectives and regional/country operations. There will be no geographical coverage of the evaluation of this global project.

The evaluation is expected to:

Assess the planned vs. delivered progress of the Lab (mainly against the logframe, six-month strategies and overall project objectives but also, where relevant, contributions/technical inputs to processes at country level not reflected in the logframe);

Inform the ILO about whether the project strategy worked and provide recommendations about what could be done to better achieve the outcomes in future knowledge generation initiatives;

Integrate and analyse gender equality, disability and other non-discrimination issues as cross-cutting concerns throughout its methodology and all deliverables;

Recommend what the ILO can do to ensure that market systems application continues in the organisation, notably in the context of the COVID-19 pandemic;

Identify what SECO or other potential donors should consider for a similar project;

Identify the extent to which the Lab has influenced:

- a) a systemic approach being adopted within the ILO and in SECO
- b) decent work and job quality to be more thoroughly understood, considered and addressed externally and particularly in the market systems community.

The foci of the two key work streams – knowledge creation and sharing and market systems institutionalisation – and the fact that the project has a focus on generating knowledge, signal that the knowledge and institutional learning that the final evaluation will generate, could form an instrumental part of meeting the project objectives. More specifically, the evaluation will be used to translate lessons learned into the design of future projects, thus contributing to sustainability and scale of the market systems approach, within and beyond the ILO.

Clients of the evaluation

Primary clients:

- a) SECO
- b) The ILO
- c) The Lab project team
- d) The wider Value Chain Development, SME Unit and Enterprise Team in ILO headquarters, as well as collaborating and supporting field offices and headquarters units

Secondary clients:

- e) Other key market systems donors and MSD and MSME development practitioners
- f) The ILO's Governing Body.

4. EVALUATION CRITERIA AND METHODOLOGY

Key evaluation criteria and questions

The evaluation will examine the project along the following five criteria. A more detailed analytical framework of questions and sub-questions will be developed by the evaluator in agreement with the evaluation manager and the Lab team:

1. Relevance and strategic fit:

Are the objectives of the project consistent with beneficiaries' requirements (ILO and external market systems practitioners), global partners, donor's priorities and the SDGs?

Does the project play on ILO comparative advantages?

Were the original project strategy, objectives and assumptions appropriate for achieving planned results?

What lessons can be learned for the design of future projects?

Is the project's approach fit for purpose in the current context of COVID-19?

To what extent did the project strategies, within their overall scope, remain flexible and responsive to emerging concerns with regards to gender equality and non-discrimination? Inclusion of people with disabilities?

2. Progress and effectiveness:

Has the project implementation been on track according to the logframe/workplans?

To what extent has the project achieved its objectives and successfully reached its target groups (both ILO and non-ILO practitioners)?

Concerning wider development practitioners, how far has the ILO added value to debates on how a systemic approach can be used to address decent work deficits?

Concerning the institutional level, to what extent has the ILO adopted the use of a more systemic approach?

Has the project been effective in instilling innovation?

What obstacles did the project encounter during implementation? Could the project have better addressed these challenges?

How effective were these measures in advancing gender equality and inclusion of people with disabilities within the context of the project's objectives?

3. Effectiveness of management arrangements

Was the management and governance arrangement of the project adequate? Was there a clear understanding of roles and responsibilities by all parties involved?

Did the project receive adequate administrative, technical and – if needed – political support from the ILO office and specialists in the field as well as the responsible technical units in HQ?

How effectively did the project management monitor project performance and results? Was there a monitoring and evaluation system in place and how effective was it? Was relevant information systematically collected and collated?

Have targets and indicators been sufficiently defined for the project?

Have the recommendations from the mid-term evaluation been sufficiently incorporated into the project?

4. Impact orientation and sustainability:

Is there recognition of an improved knowledge base in the ILO on using market systems in and around jobs and job quality? Can any of the following questions be answered, and disaggregated by gender, where possible?

- c) How many interventions has the Lab supported around the world?*
- d) How many market systems have been improved?*
- e) How many enterprises have been supported to start up and/or improve?*
- f) How many jobs have been created?*
- g) How many jobs have been improved?*

Has the project's 'learning journey' been well documented and utilised? Have the project's learnings on 'what's working and why' been taken on board and been adequately reflected in the project implementation?

Has the project reached sufficient scale and depth to justify the donor investment?

Has the intervention made a difference to specific SDGs that the project is linked to? If so, how has the intervention made a difference? (Explicitly or implicitly)

What is the likelihood that Lab methods and knowledge will, in both market systems development and results measurement, be used and applied after the project finishes?

How likely is it that the project's strategic orientation will be used in the future to systemically respond to the multifaceted crisis induced by COVID-19?

5. Efficiency

How efficient was the project in utilizing project resources to deliver the planned results?

How efficient was the project in delivering on its outputs and objectives?

How successfully has the project been able to solicit partnerships in supporting the project implementation and the beneficiaries?

Was the project cost effective and did it provide good value for money?

To what extent did the project leverage resources (financial, partnerships, expertise) to promote gender equality and non-discrimination? Inclusion of people with disabilities?

To what extent did the project leverage partnerships (with constituents, national institutions and other UN/development agencies) that enhanced the project's relevance and contribution to priority SDG targets and indicators? (Explicitly or implicitly)

Methodology to be followed

The information needs and evaluation questions call for an in-depth understanding of the situation to provide a holistic assessment and interpretation of the project's achievements. The methodology should include examination of the intervention's Theory of Change (ToC) (or request, if feasible, that the evaluator reconstructs one if the ToC is not in place), specifically in the light of the logical connect between levels of results and their alignment with the ILO's strategic objectives and outcomes at the global and national levels, as well as with the relevant SDGs and related targets.

The methodology should be participatory and include multiple methods, with analysis of both quantitative and qualitative data. It should also be able to capture the intervention's contributions to the achievement of expected and unexpected outcomes.

Data and information should be collected, presented and analysed with appropriate gender disaggregation, even if project design did not take gender into account. In addition, to the extent possible, the data collection, analysis and presentation should be responsive to and include issues relating to diversity and non-discrimination, including disability issues.

Various types of information will be collected and triangulated during the evaluation, using the following methods:

1. Document Review:

The evaluator will review the documents outlined in **Annex 1** before conducting any interviews.

2. Interviews:

The evaluator will conduct telephone/Skype interviews with project staff and those that the Lab has worked with, including staff at the ILO in headquarters and in the field as well as with other project partners. The meetings will largely be conducted during one week and will be scheduled at least one week in advance. A tentative list of individuals to be interviewed is included in **Annex 2**. Given the current travel limitations and social distancing requirements, all interviews will be conducted remotely.

3. Survey:

Respondents from the list of Lab stakeholders in Annex 2 are to be invited to complete an anonymous online survey. The survey questions will be developed, disseminated and analysed by the consultant/team.

Steps to be followed

The evaluation will be conducted through the following five key steps:

1. Inception report:

The first deliverable of the consultant/team is an inception report, which details the selected approach and methodology, including the workplan. The evaluator(s) may adapt the methodology spelled out in this ToR, but any fundamental changes should be agreed between the evaluation manager and the evaluator(s), and reflected in the inception report. The methodology should clearly state the limitations of the chosen evaluation methods, including those related to representation of specific groups of stakeholders.

2. Data collection:

After approval of the inception report and the interview schedule, the data collection phase takes place, and the consultant/team conducts interviews and a survey remotely and analyses the findings.

3. Debriefing:

Following the conclusion of the interviews, the evaluator will present preliminary findings to the Lab project team and other primary stakeholders (remotely/virtually).

4. Draft and final report:

A draft report will be prepared for comment in line with ILO Evaluation Checklist No. 5 (*Preparing the Evaluation Report*) and Checklist No. 6 (*Rating the Quality of Evaluation Reports*) including completion of the *ILO Templates for the Executive Summary*, each lesson learned and good practices identified. The final evaluation report will be approved by the ILO Evaluation Office (EVAL).

5. Public webinar:

A webinar with relevant and interested stakeholders will be held (virtually) where the consultant/team will present the results and findings of the final evaluation.

5. OUTPUTS, MANAGEMENT ARRANGEMENTS AND TIME

Main deliverables

The main outputs to be delivered by the evaluator(s) are:

Output	Description	Number of work days	Timeframe
Contracting and initial briefing	Launch of the evaluation	0.5 day	9-14 August 2020
Inception report	Read and review the core set of Lab documents, monitoring data and records. Request any additional documentation required. Identify key stakeholders to interview. Drafting and submission of the inception report. Review and adjustment	5 days	17 August -11 September 2020
Data collection preparation	Craft interview schedule in coordination with the Lab team	2 days	31 August -11 September 2020
Data collection	Conduct a survey and interviews remotely with staff working in the project, project partners, the donor and other closely related stakeholders, and analyse the data	10 days	14 September -03 October 2020

Debriefing via Skype	Following the interviews, the evaluator leads a short debriefing session with the project team and other primary stakeholders to clarify any issues and introduce preliminary evaluation findings	0.5 days	3 October 2020
Draft report	Produce a short (no more than 30 pages) report (templates and annexes not counted in the page numbers) addressing the above evaluation questions. Integrate feedback from the ILO	5 days	28 September – 9 October 2020
Consolidated feedback	The evaluation manager consolidates all feedback and submits to the evaluator for their incorporation	N/A – the ILO will have two weeks to review and comment	12 - 23 October 2020
Final report and presentation	Deliver the final evaluation report and approval by EVAL. Prepare and deliver a presentation of the evaluation's results and findings at a public webinar.	2 days	26-30 October 2020

The evaluator will produce a concise final report according to the ILO evaluation guidelines and will reflect the key evaluation questions. The quality of the report will be determined by conformance with ILO Checklist No. 5 (*Preparing the Evaluation Report*) and Checklist No. 6 (*Rating the Quality of Evaluation Reports*) including completion of the *ILO Templates for the Executive Summary*, each lesson learned and good practices identified. Adherence to these checklists will be considered a contractual requirement when submitting evaluations to ensure full remuneration of the contract. The maximum length of the final report should be no more than 30 pages.

Timeframe

The work will start on 13 August 2020 and will be completed no later than 30 October 2020. The total level of effort (LoE) is expected to be 25 days and will be paid on a lump sum upon delivery of the Final Evaluation Report with the accompanying templates completed.

Assignment administration and management

In order to ensure independence of all deliverables, all submissions will be made through the Evaluation Manager (Matilda Dahlquist, dahlquist@ilo.org). The consultant/team will work closely with both the evaluation manager, ILO EVAL at HQ and the Lab project team.

The evaluator(s) will abide by the EVAL's Code of Conduct for carrying out the evaluations and the UNEG ethical guidelines.

6. EXPRESSION OF INTEREST

All interested candidates (individual or professional team) should submit the following documents to dahlquist@ilo.org no later than close of business of 24 July 2020:

Technical proposal outlining the methodology and approach to be applied (max 5 pages plus annexes)

Financial proposal outlining professional fees and any additional costs

CV(s)

A previous evaluation conducted as an annex

Statement confirming that the candidate(s) do not have any links to project management, or any other conflict of interest that would interfere with the independence of the evaluation.

- **Profile of consultant/team of consultants**

Qualifications and requirements

A minimum of 5 years' professional experience in mid-term, final or post-project evaluations and/or impact assessment of externally funded projects

Must have proven experience of using a systems approach, with preference for applying the approach to private sector development

Understanding and experience of M&E methods and approaches (including quantitative, qualitative and participatory), information analysis and report writing

Strong report-writing skills in English

Strong knowledge management skills

Added Advantage

Experience of conducting evaluations for the ILO or any other UN Agency

Understanding of Decent Work concepts and the ILO's normative mandate

TOR Annex 1

Project-related documents to be reviewed

Lab project document (**critical**)

Six-month strategies (0-6 months, 6-12 months, 12-18 months, 18-24 months, 24-30 months, 30-36 months) (**critical**)

Annual progress reports for the years 2017, 2018 and 2019 (**critical**)

Mid-Term Evaluation (**critical**)

Project Logframe with measured indicators (**critical**)

Phase I Final Evaluation (critical)

Key Publications (**critical**)

- h) Business models for decent work
- i) The SME Measurement Toolkit
- j) The Value Chain Development Guide for Decent work, 3rd Edition
- k) A systemic approach to more and better jobs
- l) Market systems analysis for decent work: A user friendly guide
- m) Can Results Last a Decade? (Sustainability assessment in Sri Lanka)

Key knowledge briefs (**scan**)

- n) How to apply the market systems approach to various themes (youth employment, construction, tourism, childcare, rules and regulations)
- o) Project historical narratives (Yapasa in Zambia and Road to Jobs in Afghanistan)
- p) Private sector business model for decent work (mining in Laos)

Analyses (**scan**)

- q) Rapid Market Assessments (Bolivia, Kyrgyzstan, Myanmar)
- r) Market Systems Analyses (Peru, Mozambique x3, Myanmar x2, Rwanda x2)

Blogs and webinars (**scan**)

- s) Beam Exchange blogs (Analyse that, Should we create decent work or make more work decent?, "Win-Win" must be more than a buzzword, Can results last a decade?, BuildBackBetter Tourism)
- t) Various product blogs on MarketLinks, UrbanLinks and AgriLinks
- u) Systemic Change Walking the Talk
- v) BEAM Exchange "Grab the Mic" Webinars (Business models for decent work, construction, market systems and job quality)
- w) Business fights poverty win-win business models
- x) Content on Lab event on a Systems Approach to More and Better Jobs (February 2020)

Institutionalisation resources (**scan**):

- y) Lab-influenced ILO guidance documents (LabAdmin/OSH, EVAL evaluability, Guide to value chains in the rural economy for formalisation, sustainability “how-to” guidance (draft))
 - z) Market systems analyses conducted without Lab Assistance (Vision Zero Fund x3; Colombia tourism x2, Peru, Tanzania, Zambia)
 - aa) MSD Network material: webinars and monthly newsletters
 - bb) Flyers for Coffee &... - internal presentation series
- Monitoring data and information (**Scan**)
- cc) Project Influence tracker (critical)
 - dd) Web statistics and data
 - ee) Product dissemination tracker
 - ff) Co-funding and fundraising
 - gg) Partnership Tracker
- Any other documents that might be useful for the evaluation

TOR Annex 2

Interviews (TBC)

ILO Headquarters staff:

- ILO Value Chain Development Coordinator
- Lab staff
- Manager, SME Unit
- Manager, EESE team
- Sida market systems secondees
- CTA of SCORE project
- Lab senior advisor
- Specialist, Green Jobs Programme
- Specialist, Informal Economy

ILO Field Staff:

- Road to Jobs Afghanistan (CTA and interim Country Director)
- ILO Enterprise Development Specialists (Lima and Pretoria)
- Market systems specialist, Central Europe

ITC-ILO Turin:

- Value Chain and Enterprise Development Specialist

Other market development practitioners involved with:

- BEAM Exchange
- DCED

Other externals:

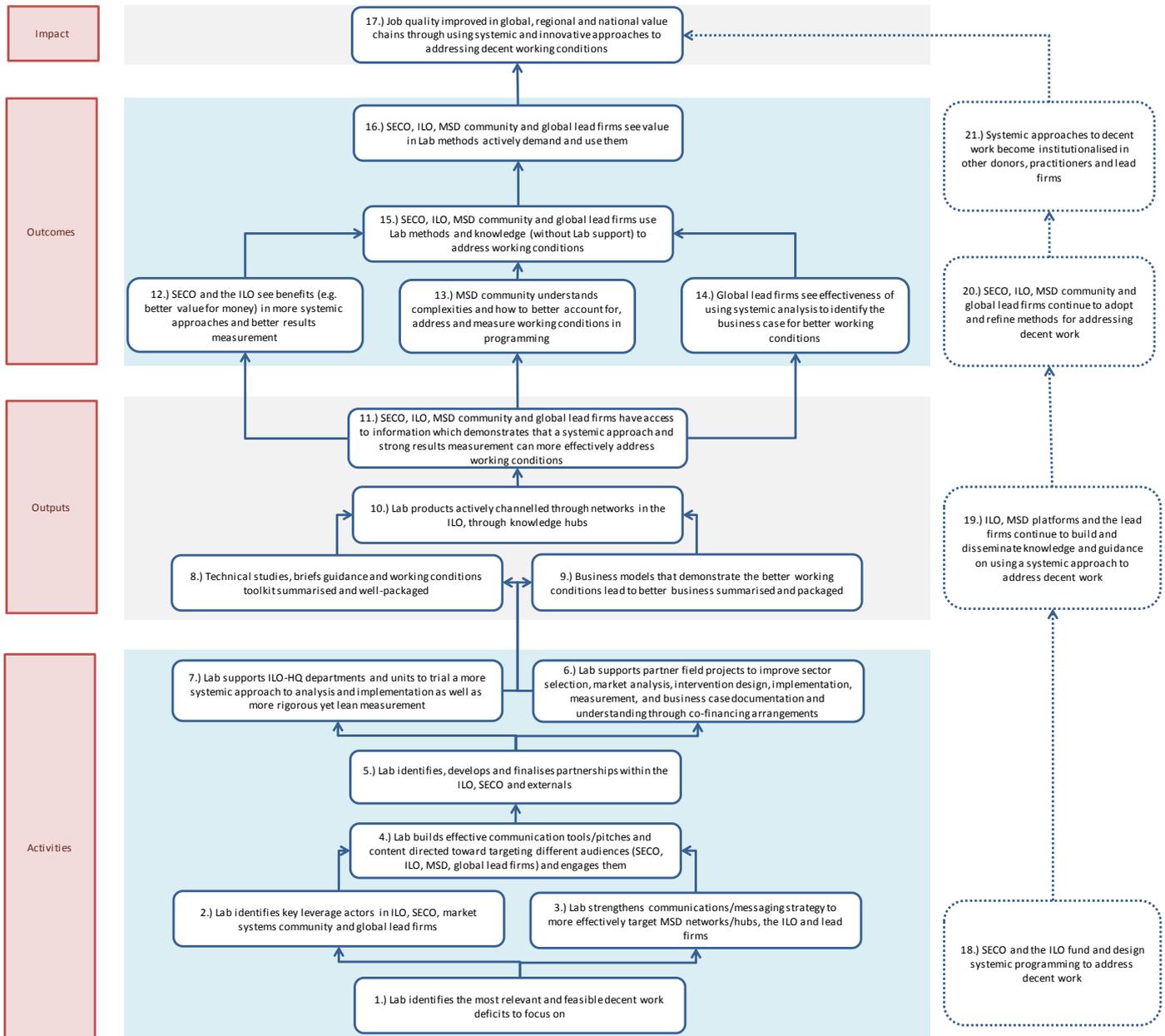
- Sida

MasterCard Foundation
Donor:

SECO

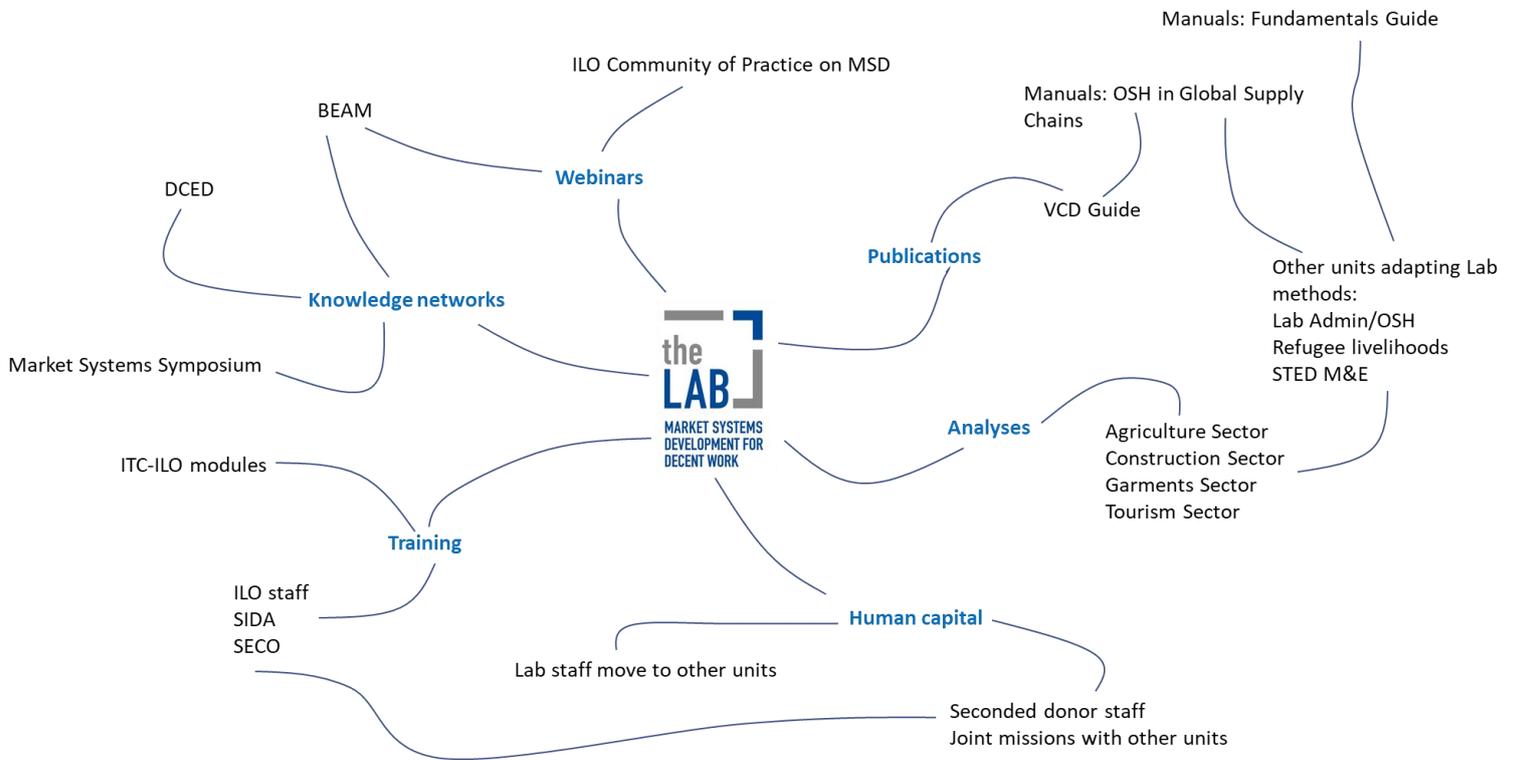
TOR Annex 3

The Lab results chain



TOR Annex 4

The Lab influence mapping (draft)



ANNEX 3: INCEPTION REPORT

INCEPTION REPORT FOR INDEPENDENT FINAL EVALUATION

Final Independent Evaluation of the ILO Lab, Phase II Final Report

Rachel Shah

11 September 2020

1. PROJECT BACKGROUND

The 'Market Systems Development for Decent Work' project, known as the Lab, is a global project implemented by the International Labour Organization (ILO) and funded by the Swiss State Secretariat for Economic Affairs (SECO).

The purpose of the project is to institutionalise and mainstream a market systems approach to decent work, both inside and outside the ILO. The rationale for this is by working to improve market systems, development projects are expected to be able to deliver more and better jobs, more sustainably.

The Lab is housed within the Small and Medium Enterprises Unit (SME) of the Enterprises Department (ENTERPRISES) of the ILO. In the Unit, the Lab is part of a larger team which includes the thematic areas of Value Chain Development, Approach to Inclusive Market Systems (AIMS), Entrepreneurship and Women's Entrepreneurship Development (WED). The Lab is managed from the ILO Headquarters in Geneva and implements through a small team of staff and a long-term consultant, reporting to the ILO Value Chain Development Coordinator.

The project has a budget of CHF 2,000,000 and is in its second phase. The first phase ran from 2014 to 2017. The second and final phase began in October 2017 and is expected to finish at the end of December 2020. In the second phase, the project sought to improve the uptake and application of the market systems approach to decent work through two core objectives:

- **Objective 1:** Improve job quality in selected global, regional and national value chains to provide a 'demonstration effect' showing how sustainable market systems solutions can be delivered to improve working conditions.
- **Objective 2:** Generate and institutionalise knowledge that plugs key gaps in understanding, internal and external to the ILO, of when and how a market systems approach can be used to create more and better jobs.

These two objectives target three key beneficiary communities: the ILO, SECO and the wider market systems development (MSD) community. The Lab has identified different needs in these beneficiary communities in relation to its programme objective. For the ILO and SECO, the focus of the Lab's work is on demonstrating the value of systemic approaches to decent work and on providing guidance on how to use MSD. For the wider MSD community, the focus of the Lab's work is on demonstrating the approach's applicability to decent work objectives, and on providing examples and guidance on the challenges associated with decent work objectives.

The Lab's activities fall into two workstreams. The first of these is knowledge creation and sharing. The intervention logic in this workstream is that by identifying and then plugging key gaps in the ILO, SECO and the MSD community's understanding of how and when a market systems approach can be used to create more and better jobs, the Lab can both demonstrate the value of market systems development for decent work and provide the guidance needed to apply it, thereby persuading more people to use and institutionalise it.

The second workstream involves working through partnerships to institutionalise the market systems approach in the ILO, SECO and beyond. These partnerships take a variety of forms. In some cases, collaborations are focused on building aspects of the market systems approach into institutional policies and organisational guidance, or on delivering training to staff. Partners have included SECO's Trade and Promotion team (WEHU), the ILO headquarter units and social partners, and external bodies like Sida.

In other cases, the Lab's partnership work has been with field projects, to embed aspects of a market systems approach to decent work in programming on-the-ground. The Lab's partners for this work include projects supported by SECO or Swiss funding, ILO field projects, and external market systems and private sector development projects.²²

Partnerships with field projects are intended to support programme objectives in two ways. Firstly, when programming is successfully improved through use of a systems approach to decent work, the project can be used as an example to persuade a wider set of stakeholders of the value of the Lab's methods and approaches. Secondly, working with field projects generates knowledge and learning, which feeds into the Lab's first workstream. Much of the Lab's work with field projects has focused on market research (sector selection, market system analyses and rapid market assessments) and on improving monitoring and results measurement.

Although the Lab is a global project, a requirement of the second phase of the project is to maintain a geographic focus, where possible, on SECO priority countries (Albania, Colombia, Egypt, Ghana, Indonesia, Kyrgyzstan, Peru, Serbia, South Africa, Tajikistan, Tunisia and Vietnam) and complimentary countries (Bolivia, Myanmar and Nepal). The second phase has also focused on generating knowledge beyond agricultural production – in sectors such as tourism, construction, manufacturing and agro-processing – where the body of knowledge on market systems is less robust and the decent work challenges more complex.

2. EVALUATION BACKGROUND

Purpose and primary use of the evaluation

The aim of evaluation in the ILO is to promote accountability and learning²³ and the purpose of this evaluation relates to both.

From an accountability perspective, the objectives of the evaluation are to explore the performance of the ILO Lab in Phase II through five key criteria, specifically its relevance and strategic fit; progress and effectiveness; management effectiveness; impact orientation and sustainability; and efficiency (see 'Evaluation criteria' in Section 4). This involves assessing the progress of the Lab against its planned delivery (mainly against the logframe, six-month strategies and overall project objectives but also, where relevant, assessing Lab activities not reflected in the logframe). It involves an assessment of whether the Lab achieved what it set out to achieve in Phase II – specifically the extent to which the Lab has influenced a systemic approach being adopted within the ILO and in SECO, and decent work and job quality being more thoroughly understood and addressed in the market systems community. The Lab's performance will be assessed in the context of the ILO's strategic objectives and priorities too, including the extent to which the Lab was able to advance gender equality, inclusion of people with disabilities and other non-discrimination issues in its activities.

From a learning perspective, the objective of the evaluation is not just to assess what progress was made but to seek to understand what worked, what didn't work, and why. This understanding can then be applied by the ILO, SECO and other potential donors in the

²² Initially, the Lab also tried to partner with private sector companies, but beyond a single case study conducted in partnership with PanAust and RMIT University, this line of work was not ultimately pursued.

²³ ILO Evaluation Policy (2017) available at: http://www.ilo.ch/wcmsp5/groups/public/---ed_mas/---eval/documents/policy/wcms_603265.pdf

future. For the ILO, the evaluation is intended to generate learning on what the ILO can do to ensure that market systems application continues in the organisation, including in the context of the COVID-19 pandemic, and on what could be done to better achieve outcomes in future knowledge-generation initiatives. For SECO, and for other potential donors, the evaluation is expected to identify what ideas and practices to take forward and consider for a similar project in the future.

As the Lab is itself a learning and influencing project, the learning objectives – including a rigorous and critical assessment of both successes and failures – are central to the evaluation objectives. To this end, a public webinar has been included as a deliverable of the evaluation, as a mechanism for communicating the learning from the evaluation to a wider audience. As the TOR expresses, the evaluation could itself contribute to meeting the project objectives by generating knowledge and learning for the Lab’s beneficiary communities (the ILO, SECO and the wider MSD community). This learning could be used to translate lessons into the design of future projects, thus contributing to sustainability and scale of the market systems approach, within and beyond the ILO.

The Terms of Reference (TORs) for this evaluation are provided in Annex 1.

Scope of the evaluation

The evaluation will cover the whole period of Phase II; from its design in the first half of 2017, to its implementation from October 2017 to present, so that the evaluation provides a complete perspective of the project’s development, evolution and current status. The evaluation will also briefly take stock of the Lab’s first phase (2014-2017) for context; it will not evaluate the project run during that period.

There is no geographical coverage for evaluating this global project. The scope of the evaluation includes both of the Lab’s workstreams.

The clients of the evaluation and the main audience of the report

The primary clients of the evaluation and the main audience of the report are:

- SECO
- The ILO
- The Lab project team
- The wider Value Chain Development, SME Unit and Enterprise Team in ILO headquarters, as well as collaborating and supporting field offices and headquarters units

Secondary clients of the evaluation include:

- Other key market systems donors and MSD and MSME development practitioners
- The ILO’s Governing Body.

3. APPROACH

Guiding principles

The guiding principles for this evaluation reflect international good practice principles such as transparency, professionalism, independence, credibility, ethics, and utility, particularly as represented by the ILO Evaluation Policy (2017), ILO evaluation guidelines, the UN evaluation standards and norms and the Springfield Centre’s approach.

Springfield's approach to evaluation is to be rigorous and independent, particularly in drawing conclusions and making recommendations, whilst using collaborative methodological approaches to involve those with a stake in the initiative under evaluation in the evaluation process. This participatory approach enhances rigour by enabling external evaluators to continually check accuracy and to gain a deeper understanding of what has happened, and why, than they would be able to do from a purely external perspective. It also increases transparency, which generates ownership and builds confidence in evaluation findings. To see how stakeholder participation is built into this evaluation, see 'Stakeholder Participation' in Section 5.

Springfield's approach is significantly shaped by the goal of delivering clear and credible evaluation findings in line with the commissioned objectives that are *useful, relevant, and applicable*, enabling learning both for immediate stakeholders and for the market systems field as a whole. This fits well with this evaluation's objectives (see Section 2).

Conceptual framework

The conceptual framework for this evaluation has three components: the evaluation criteria, the Lab Theory of Change for Phase II, and an analytical lens drawn from market systems development.

The evaluation criteria are laid out in Section 4, below. These criteria are general, and applicable to a variety of development interventions. As such, they have been interpreted in the context of the specific objectives and activities of the ILO Lab to form the evaluation questions, which are also laid out in Section 4. This required (and will continue to require) examining the Lab Phase II's Theory of Change and understanding the intervention logic from design, through activities and outputs, to outcomes and impact.

The Lab promotes market systems development thinking and this thinking is applicable to its own activities too. The Lab intends to institutionalise and mainstream a market systems approach to decent work *sustainably* and *at scale* (to the extent that this is feasible given its time frame, budget and other resources). To that end, an analytical lens drawn from market systems development will be valuable for the evaluation as it will support an analysis of the extent to which any changes the Lab has facilitated are sustainable, looking for indicators of **ownership**, independent **resourcing**, **scale** (and/or **spread**), and **resilience**.

4. EVALUATION FRAMEWORK

Evaluation criteria

In accordance with the ILO evaluation guidelines, DAC evaluation criteria and the ToR for this assignment, the evaluation criteria are relevance, effectiveness, impact, sustainability and efficiency. Reflecting the *ILO policy guidelines for results-based evaluations* (Section 3.4) and as per the TOR for this assignment, these criteria will be addressed in the following categories:

- **Relevance and strategic fit:** the extent to which the objectives of the project are consistent with the ILO, SECO and external market practitioners' needs, and with the relevant SDGs; the extent to which the project plays on the ILO's comparative advantages and fits within the wider ILO strategic framework; and the extent to which the project's strategy, objectives and assumptions are appropriate for achieving planned results.

- **Progress and effectiveness:** the extent to which the project achieved (or is anticipated to achieve) its objectives, the obstacles that were encountered, and the learning that was (or was not) implemented as a result.
- **Effectiveness of management arrangements:** the extent to which institutional and management capacities and arrangements supported the achievement of results, including internal capacity and resourcing, monitoring and results measurement, and adaptive management practices. This category also includes the extent to which the resources available were adequate for meeting the project objectives.
- **Impact orientation and sustainability:** The strategic orientation of the project towards making a significant contribution to broader, long-term, sustainable development changes, and the likelihood that the results can be maintained or even scaled up after the close of the project.
- **Efficiency:** the extent to which the project delivered its outcomes and outputs with efficient use of resources, including efforts/successes in soliciting public-private partnerships for the most cost-effective implementation of activities.

In addition, each of these categories will also be assessed with attention to gender equality, inclusion of people with disabilities and other non-discrimination issues, as reflected in the evaluation questions.

Evaluation questions

During the inception period, and in collaboration and conversation with the evaluation manager and the Lab team, the questions outlined in the TOR have been developed into a more detailed framework of questions and sub-questions in each of the evaluation criteria categories. The proposed evaluation questions are presented below. These questions have guided the design of the proposed methodology (see Section 5).

Relevance and strategic fit:

Relevance

- Was the objective of the project (namely, to “Institutionalise and mainstream a market systems approach to decent work, both inside and outside the ILO”) consistent with:
 - e) the ILO’s needs?
 - f) external market systems practitioners’ needs?
 - g) SECO’s priorities and needs?
 - h) the SDGs?

ILO strategic fit

- Does the project play on (e.g. both leverage and build) the ILO’s comparative advantages?
- Do the Lab’s objectives fit well within the wider ILO strategic framework, including the relevant SDGs?

Project strategy, objectives and assumptions

- Were the original project strategy, objectives and assumptions appropriate for achieving planned results?
 - a) **Outcomes:** were the project’s two objectives (as in the logframe) appropriate for achieving the impact-level objective?
 - b) **Outputs:** were the specified outputs (as in the logframe) appropriate for achieving the outcomes?

- Were the original project strategy, objectives and assumptions appropriate for promoting gender equality, inclusion of people with disabilities and other non-discrimination issues?
- Was the ongoing project strategy appropriate for achieving planned results?
 - a) **Activities:** Did the Lab identify appropriate activities and partners for achieving its outputs and outcomes? Were appropriate leverage points identified, across the three key communities the Lab sought to influence?
- What lessons can be learned for the design of future projects? What worked/what didn't work?

Progress and effectiveness:

Results (activities, outputs, outcomes, impact)

- Has the project implementation been on track according to the logframe/workplans?
- How visible is the Lab?
 - a) What kind of outreach does the Lab have in the ILO, SECO and the wider development community?
 - b) How is the Lab's role and value-add perceived in each of these communities?
- To what extent has the project achieved its objectives in each of the three target communities – the **ILO**, **SECO** and **wider development practitioners**?
 - a) How have members of each community engaged with the Lab's work? To what extent was there demand for the Lab's work?
 - b) How have members of each community benefited from or been influenced by the Lab's work?
 - c) Has the Lab's work improved application of the market systems approach to achieve decent work, and if so, in what ways?
 - d) Which elements of the market systems approach to decent work are showing most promise in being institutionalised and mainstreamed, and by whom?
 - e) To what extent are there signs of the ILO/SECO adopting a more systemic approach and/or improving measurement practices?
 - f) How far has the Lab added value to debates on how a systemic approach can be used to address decent work deficits among wider development practitioners?
 - g) To what extent is it possible to identify signs of additionality, e.g. that the Lab facilitated benefits that would not have happened without it?
- What results are available against quantitative indicators? (For example, are there figures available on how many jobs that have been created or improved? Can they be disaggregated by gender?)
- How effective was the Lab in advancing gender equality, inclusion of people with disabilities, and other non-discrimination issues within the context of the project's objectives and taking into account the constraints of their partners' priorities?

Learning

- What obstacles did the project encounter during implementation? How did they affect progress? Could the project have better addressed these challenges?
- Has the project's learning been adequately reflected in the project implementation?

Effectiveness of management arrangements

Internal capacity and resourcing

- Was the management and governance arrangement of the project adequate? Was there a clear understanding of roles and responsibilities by all parties involved?

- Did the project receive adequate administrative, technical and – if needed – political support from the ILO, including specialists in the field as well as the responsible technical units in HQ?
- Were the resources available to the Lab appropriate relative to its objectives as laid out in the logframe?
- What institutional barriers, if any, have hindered achievement of the project objectives and impact?

Monitoring and results measurement

- How effectively did the project monitor project performance and results?
 - Was there a monitoring and evaluation system in place?
 - Have targets and indicators been sufficiently defined for the project?
 - Was relevant information systematically collected and collated?
 - Was (qualitative and/or quantitative) information collected at all the relevant levels e.g. outputs, outcomes and impact?
 - Was information effectively communicated to the relevant stakeholders?
- Did the project’s monitoring include monitoring for gender equality, inclusion of people with disabilities and other non-discrimination issues?

Adaptive management

- Was the monitoring and evaluation information used for adaptive management?
 - How has the internal monitoring framework of the Lab contributed to the team’s ability to understand their effectiveness and to flexibly adapt their strategy?
 - Have the strategy, objectives and assumptions been appropriately adapted and updated in light of monitoring and evaluation information?
- Have the recommendations from the mid-term evaluation been sufficiently incorporated into the project?
- Did concerns with regards to gender equality, inclusion of people with disabilities, and other non-discrimination issues emerge, and if so, to what extent did the project strategies and approach, within their overall scope, remain flexible and responsive to them?
- Did the project adapt appropriately in the face of COVID-19?

Impact orientation and sustainability:

Overall impact (see also ‘Progress and effectiveness’ above)

- Did the demonstration effect of improving job quality (core objective 1) and generating and institutionalising knowledge (core objective 2) lead to institutionalising and mainstreaming a market systems approach to decent work, both inside and outside the ILO?
 - a) Is there an improved knowledge base in the ILO on using market systems in and around jobs and job quality?
 - b) Is there an improved knowledge base in SECO on using market systems approaches for decent work?
 - c) Is there an improved knowledge base in the wider development community on using market systems approaches for decent work?
- Has the project reached sufficient scale and depth to justify the donor investment?
- Has the project made a difference to specific SDGs that the project is linked to? If so, how? (Explicitly or implicitly)

Sustainability

- What is the likelihood that Lab methods and knowledge will, in both market systems development and results measurement, be used and applied after the project finishes?
 - a) In the ILO?
 - b) In SECO?
 - c) In the wider development community?
- How, if at all, does the multifaceted crisis induced by COVID-19 affect the potential sustainability of the Lab methods, knowledge and impact?

Efficiency

- How efficient was the project in utilizing project resources to deliver the planned results? How efficient was the project in delivering on its outputs and objectives?
- How successfully has the project been able to solicit partnerships in supporting the project implementation and the beneficiaries?
- Was the project cost effective and did it provide good value for money?
- To what extent did the project leverage resources (financial, partnerships, expertise) to promote gender equality, inclusion of people with disabilities and non-discrimination?

5. METHODOLOGY

Methods

Information will be collected using four methods: a self-assessment exercise, a review of the project documents and data, an anonymous online survey, and remote semi-structured interviews. These methods have been chosen to address the evaluation questions in a way that captures a range of perspectives, allows for both anonymous and situated responses, and enables triangulations between types of sources, types of method and types of data (e.g. qualitative and quantitative). Annex 2 expresses, in a matrix format, which methods, used with which sources, are expected to provide information to help answer which evaluation questions.

Self-assessment exercise

During the Inception phase, a self-assessment exercise was designed to provide an opportunity for the Lab team to jointly reflect on several of the evaluation questions. The self-assessment exercise has now been done; the answers provided information which will feed into several of the evaluation questions, as well as providing an early and foundational understanding of the Lab's activities which helped to interpret reading and shape the design of the interviews and surveys. A blank copy of the self-assessment is provided in Annex 3. The questions which were addressed during the exercise were:

- Looking back, to what extent do you think the assumptions embedded in the Lab's design are valid? For example, did the logframe activities (partnerships, knowledge outputs etc.) lead to the outcomes and impact in the logframe?
- If you were designing the Lab from scratch, knowing what you know now, what would you change about the design/strategy?
- To what extent do you think the Lab's work in partnerships has been *additional* to what the projects would have done without the Lab? Overall, what has worked well, and less well in achieving the Lab's objectives?

- To what extent do you think the Lab has been effective in achieving its objectives through generating or institutionalizing knowledge?
- How much progress has the Lab made in Phase 2 at increasing its visibility and communications? Who is aware of the Lab's work?
- What would you point to as the key ways the Lab has contributed to improving the application of a market systems approach to decent work a) in the ILO b) in SECO c) more widely?

Secondary document and data review

Two sets of information have been and will continue to be the focus of desk-based analysis:

- The Lab's project-related documents, including
 - documents about the Lab and its progress, such as 'Six Month Strategies,' 'Annual progress reports' and previous evaluations
 - documents published by the Lab as the outputs of its work
- The Lab's monitoring and measurement data

This documentation and data provides critical information for the evaluation, particularly on progress and effectiveness and particularly as source of quantitative results. It will be reviewed not only as background information, but also as a source in its own right. In addition, documentation about how the ILO and SECO function as organisations, will be reviewed where it is available and where time permits to provide context for understanding how feasible the Lab's objectives were and how realistic its strategy was in those institutional contexts.

Online survey

An online survey will be used to give a greater number of potential respondents the opportunity to input than would be feasible with interviews, to collect and analyse quantitative data from the Lab's partners, and to provide a way for individuals to input anonymously.

The stakeholders to be surveyed include the Lab team, other ILO staff including Lab partners and collaborators, partners/collaborators from SECO-funded projects, external partners, and representatives of the external MSD community. In total, approximately 60 individuals will be invited to respond to the online survey (see Annex 4), though is not expected that all contacts invited to participate will respond. The invited survey respondents include representatives from all three of the Lab's intended beneficiary groups – the ILO, SECO and the wider MSD community.

The survey will be designed using 'skip logic' so that a handful of preliminary questions automatically filter the subsequent questions to be relevant to the respondent. The categories of questions to be asked are as follows:

- Questions for people who have partnered or collaborated with the Lab
- Questions for people whose potential collaborations with the Lab didn't come to fruition
- Questions for people who have worked for the Lab
- Questions for people who have been influenced by the Lab
- Questions about the Lab's influence on the ILO
- Questions about the Lab's influence on SECO
- Questions about the Lab's influence on the external MSD community

Annex 7 lists the proposed questions for each category.

Semi-structured interviews

Semi-structured interviews provide a way to dig more deeply into respondents' experiences and perceptions than surveys facilitate. Semi-structured interviews have been chosen over unstructured or fully structured interviews to enable a conversation to develop whilst retaining some structure. This allows interviewees to direct the evaluator to pertinent information even if it was not directly asked about, whilst also allowing the interviewer to direct interviewees to cover the necessary topics. As specified in the TOR, all interviews will be conducted remotely.

Stakeholders from the following groups will be invited to contribute to the evaluation through semi-structured interviews: the Lab team, other ILO staff including Lab partners and collaborators, partners/collaborators from SECO-funded projects, external partners, the donor (SECO), and representatives of the external MSD community. This includes stakeholders from all three of the Lab's intended beneficiary groups – the ILO, SECO and the wider MSD community.

The final list of contacts invited to interview, with (indicative) mapping, can be seen in Annex 4.

- 5 individuals (the Lab project team technical officers) were invited to two-hour interviews
- 22 individuals were invited to one-hour interviews
- 9 individuals were invited to half-hour interviews

As Annex 4 indicates, some interviewees will also be asked to complete the online survey (anonymously). As with the survey, it is not expected that all contacts invited to participate will respond. The large number of participants invited mean that the final number of interviewees and survey respondents should still provide a wide-ranging set of perspectives.

Sources (for interviews and surveys)

During the inception phase, the evaluator has worked closely with the Lab Project Coordinator to develop a comprehensive list of individuals to be interviewed and surveyed. The process used for identifying and prioritising individuals was as follows:

- A list of potential contacts was generated by the Lab project team.
- The evaluator then added to this list, drawing information from the Lab's influence map, influence tracker, partnership tracker, results chain, logframe, previous evaluations and other documents.
- This longlist was then discussed comprehensively over a Skype consultation with the Lab Project Coordinator and narrowed to a shorter list.
- The Lab Project Coordinator then prioritised the shortlist.
- The evaluator mapped each of the contacts against the Lab's partnership tracker and influence tracker, and further mapped the contacts against the stakeholder groups across the three different beneficiary communities (ILO, SECO and external MSD community). This allowed an assessment of whether an appropriate spread had been achieved. Adjustments were made where needed.
- The prioritised shortlist was sent to the Lab project team for further inputs, and to source contact details where necessary.
- The evaluator then made a final decision on which methods to use with which contacts, taking resource constraints into account.

- Finally, individuals were invited to sign themselves up to an interview time slot and will be invited to respond to the online survey.

Analysis

Data analysis and interpretation often receives insufficient explicit time allocation in review and evaluation work. Without time set aside to intentionally analyse findings, data can inadvertently be interpreted on the basis of impressions, biases or the accidental over-weighting of recently collected data, leading to unexpected or counter-intuitive findings being easily missed.

The primary method of analysis for this evaluation will be thematic: information gathered from multiple sources using multiple methods will be mapped against the evaluation questions, with different pieces of information interpreted in light of other relevant information and then used, as a whole, to answer the evaluation questions. Qualitative information will be used to interpret quantitative information and vice versa, where it is meaningful to do so. The results from the online survey may also be presented independently, using descriptive statistics.

Limitations

As with all research approaches, there are limitations associated with the proposed methodology:

- This evaluation is necessarily being conducted remotely, in the context of the COVID-19 crisis. As such, it is not possible to spend time in person with the Lab project team. This means that informal conversations and observations that might otherwise have shaped the evaluation and provided subtle insights will be missed.
- Participation in interviews and surveys is voluntary; people may not respond, or they may not choose to provide pertinent information. This is the case with all forms of data collection, but is exacerbated when research is conducted remotely, as it is more difficult to build rapport which encourages participation.
- Participants may also find participating in remote interviews and surveys onerous and feel they do not have time to provide large amounts of information. The evaluation questions are wide-ranging but to avoid being overly burdensome to participants, interviews and surveys must necessarily be more limited.
- Information must be collected within the time frame and resource constraints available. As with all research, this limits the potential depth of findings. In particular, time constraints mean that the interviews and surveys will be structured around the pre-determined evaluation questions, in order to efficiently capture as much relevant information within the available time as possible.
- The evaluation is dependent, particularly for quantitative results, on the information the Lab has collected, and hence on the quality and accuracy of that information.
- Given the total number of organisations the Lab partnered with and influenced, and the likelihood that one or more may not respond or may not be available for an interview/survey, it would not be meaningful to attempt to use sampling methods that capture 'representativeness.' Instead, interviewees and survey respondents have been identified to capture relevant insights and perspectives.
- Bias may have been introduced to the evaluation through the fact that the list of people to interview and survey was heavily shaped by the Lab project team, and includes almost entirely people who have had some contact with the Lab (thereby

failing to capture fully external perspectives). This is largely for pragmatic reasons, and is mitigated by the rigorous process of longlisting, shortlisting and prioritising contacts outlined above (see 'Sources').

To mitigate these limitations, the evaluation uses a mixed-methods approach with a large range of potential interviewees and survey respondents. The evaluation will be conducted as rigorously as possible within these limitations, and the evaluation questions will be answered to the extent that information is available, with limitations in findings and gaps highlighted where necessary.

Ethics

This evaluation is underpinned by foundational principles that, along with the ILO Code of Conduct, govern the ethics of this evaluation (see 'Guiding Principles' in Section 3). Specific decisions with respect to consent, confidentiality and stakeholder participation are outlined below.

Consent and confidentiality

Participants will be made aware of the purpose of the interviews and surveys through the email inviting them to participate, and through an information and consent form they will see when signing up for an interview or accessing the online survey (see Annexes 5 and 6). The information and consent form expresses that participation, whilst valued, is voluntary and that participants may decide to decline to participate at any point prior to or during the interview or survey.

The consent form also explains that the interviews are not confidential – the information provided in interviews is of interest precisely because the interviewees are key informants. However, if interviewees wish to provide sensitive information in confidence they may do so, either through the anonymous survey or through discussing the scope of feasible confidentiality with the evaluator.

The online survey is anonymous, though as stated (see Annex 6), information provided in it may inadvertently identify participants to the evaluator. However, all information from the survey will be presented anonymously in the report.

There is no known risk of harm to participants from the process of being interviewed or being surveyed in the course of this evaluation. The potential risk of repercussions due to providing sensitive information is mitigated by the commitments outlined above. Interview transcripts and completed surveys will not be included in the final report, and participants will be given the choice as to whether or not they are willing to be named as a participant in the final report. If they choose not to be, in order to meet the reporting requirements, they will be listed anonymous (with the relevance to the Lab listed instead).

Stakeholder participation

The primary stakeholders in this evaluation are the Lab project team, followed by the donor and the wider Value Chain Development, SME Unit and Enterprise Team in ILO. Stakeholder participation is central to Springfield's approach to conducting evaluations (see 'Guiding Principles' in Section 3) and despite the challenges of taking a participatory approach when conducting an evaluation remotely, numerous opportunities for the primary stakeholders to shape the evaluation have been built into the methodology. These include:

- Briefing call including with Lab Project Coordinator and ILO Value Chain Development Coordinator prior to Inception
- Self-assessment exercise for the Lab project team, in the first week of Inception

- Initial reconstruction of the Lab TOC with the Lab Project Coordinator via Skype
- Discussions on Skype and opportunities to input via email on who should be interviewed and surveyed (Lab project team)
- Opportunity for the Lab project team to input via email during inception on the evaluation questions
- Multiple interviews via Skype with the Lab project team of 1-2 hours (or more) planned as part of data collection phase
- Debrief by Skype to shape analysis and conclusions planned prior to submission of draft report

6. WORKPLAN

Figure 1 lays out the workplan for the evaluation, indicating the phases, timing, deliverables and key milestones.

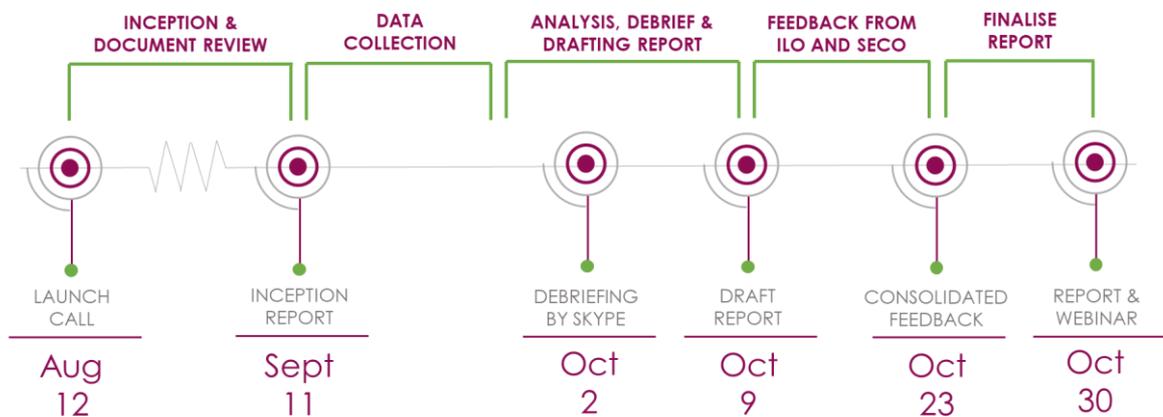


Figure 6: Workplan, showing phases and milestones

7. ADHERENCE TO FORMATTING REQUIREMENTS

This evaluation will be conducted in accordance with the ILO's Code of Conduct, and Springfield acknowledges the ILO's reporting requirements for final independent evaluations as outlined in *Checklist 5: Preparing the Evaluation Report*. Springfield also acknowledges the requirement to fill in the appropriate templates for 'lessons learned' and 'emerging good practices', where relevant, as well as the executive summary template during final reporting..

ANNEX 4: LIST OF PEOPLE INTERVIEWED

Process for identifying individuals

During the inception phase, the evaluator worked closely with the Lab 2 Project Coordinator to develop a comprehensive list of individuals to be interviewed and surveyed. The process used for identifying and prioritising individuals was as follows:

- A list of potential contacts was generated by the Lab project team.
- The evaluator then added to this list, drawing information from the Lab's influence map, influence tracker, partnership tracker, results chain, logframe, previous evaluations and other documents.
- This longlist was then discussed comprehensively over a Skype consultation with the Lab Project Coordinator and narrowed to a shorter list.
- The Lab Project Coordinator then prioritised the shortlist.
- The evaluator mapped each of the contacts against the Lab's partnership tracker and influence tracker, and further mapped the contacts against the stakeholder groups across the three different beneficiary communities (ILO, SECO and external MSD community). This allowed an assessment of whether an appropriate spread had been achieved. Adjustments were made where needed.
- The prioritised shortlist was sent to the Lab project team for further inputs, and to source contact details where necessary.
- The evaluator then made a final decision on which methods to use with which contacts, taking resource constraints into account.
- Finally, individuals were invited to sign themselves up to an interview time slot and to respond to the online survey.
- Follow up emails were sent to individuals who did not sign up for interviews, making it clear that participation was voluntary, but their inputs would be valued.

List of people interviewed

Lab team members, consultants and close collaborators

Name	Role	Organisation
Merten Sievers	ILO Value Chain Development Coordinator	ENTERPRISES Department, ILO HQ
Steve Hartrich	Lab Project Coordinator	ENTERPRISES Department, ILO HQ
Aatif Somji	Lab Technical Officer	ENTERPRISES Department, ILO HQ
Elisa Mandelli	Lab Technical Officer	ILO ENTERPRISES Department, ILO HQ
Ines Bentchikou	Lab Technical Officer	ENTERPRISES Department, ILO HQ
Matt Ripley	Lab Senior Advisor	Consultant to the Lab, ENTERPRISES Department, ILO HQ
Nadège Benz	Lab Administrator	ENTERPRISES Department, ILO HQ
Isaac Cowan Gore	External Consultant	Consultant to the Lab, ENTERPRISES Department, ILO HQ
Gun Erikson Skoog	Senior Specialist on Value Chain and Market Systems Development	ENTERPRISES Department, ILO HQ (Sida secondee)
Callie Ham	Former Lab Technical Officer	ENTERPRISES Department, ILO HQ
Daneila Martinez	Former Lab Technical Officer	ENTERPRISES Department, ILO HQ
Rebeca Granda Marcos	Former Lab Technical Officer	ENTERPRISES Department, ILO HQ

SECO

Name	Role	Organisation
Natalie Rast	Deputy Head, International Labour Affairs	SECO
Andri Meier	Advisor	SECO

Patrick Laederach		SECO
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SECO-funded project partners

Name	Role	Organisation
Nathaniel Amoh Boateng	Head, Planning Monitoring Evaluation & Learning	Solidaridad West Africa
Thomas Bernet	Department of International Cooperation, Group lead on value chains and markets	The Research Institute of Organic Agriculture (FiBL)

ILO staff

Name	Role	Organisation
Dragan Radic	Unit Head, Small Enterprises Unit	ENTERPRISES Department, ILO HQ
Severine Deboos	Team Leader/Specialist, Enabling Environment for Sustainable Enterprises	ENTERPRISES Department, ILO HQ
Camilla Roman	Policy Specialist, Green Jobs	ENTERPRISES Department, ILO HQ
Ockert Dupper	Programme Manager, LABADMIN/OSH	ENTERPRISES Department, ILO HQ
Esther Gomez	Programme and Operations Officer, Development Cooperation	PARDEV, ILO HQ
Tonderai Manoto	Chief Technical Adviser, ILO Road to Jobs Project, ILO Office for Afghanistan	ILO Kabul, Afghanistan
Jens Dyring Christensen	Senior Specialist, Sustainable Enterprises, Decent Work Team for Eastern and Southern Africa	ILO DWT/CO Pretoria, South Africa
Ala Lipciu	National Coordinator, ILO Office for Moldova	ILO Chisinau, Moldova
Annika Moqvist Ugglå	Former RBM Specialist in PARDEV (until 14-07-2019)	PARDEV, ILO HQ
Michael Elkin	Global manager, ILO Sustaining Competitive and Responsible Enterprises (SCORE) programme	ENTERPRISES Department, ILO HQ

ITC - ILO Turin

Name	Role	Organisation
Jose Manuel Checa Medina	Activity manager	ITC-ILO, Turin, Italy

External partners

Name	Role	Organisation
Andrea Inglin	Senior Policy Advisor, Expert Team Inclusive Economic Development, Focal Point Employment & Income	SDC
Elisabeth Montgomery	Programme Manager/Advisor	Sida
Nafis Muntasir	Program Impact Partner, Market Systems	Mastercard Foundation
Sheldon Yoder	Global Manager, Market Systems	Habitat for Humanity
Jim Tanburn	Coordinator	DCED
Mike Albu	Director	Beam Exchange and DCED

An additional two interviewees declined to be named in the final report.

ANNEX 5: DATA COLLECTION INSTRUMENT – SELF ASSESSMENT

A blank copy of the self-assessment is shown starting on the next page.

The questions which were addressed during the exercise were:

- Looking back, to what extent do you think the assumptions embedded in the Lab's design are valid? For example, did the logframe activities (partnerships, knowledge outputs etc.) lead to the outcomes and impact in the logframe?
- If you were designing the Lab from scratch, knowing what you know now, what would you change about the design/strategy?
- To what extent do you think the Lab's work in partnerships has been *additional* to what the projects would have done without the Lab? Overall, what has worked well, and less well in achieving the Lab's objectives?
- To what extent do you think the Lab has been effective in achieving its objectives through generating or institutionalizing knowledge?
- How much progress has the Lab made in Phase 2 at increasing its visibility and communications? Who is aware of the Lab's work?
- What would you point to as the key ways the Lab has contributed to improving the application of a market systems approach to decent work a) in the ILO b) in SECO c) more widely?

SELF-ASSESSMENT

Thank you for taking time to engage as a team with this self-assessment exercise – it takes effort and time, and I know you are still committed to your day-to-day tasks, so thank you!

The purpose of this exercise is to give the Lab team a chance to reflect as a team on many of the key issues that the final evaluation will be focusing on, and to feed those reflections into the final evaluation at an early stage. The exercise will ideally be a chance to step back from the all-consuming nature of *doing* the work, to take a chance as a team to *think about* the work. An honest and reflective perspective on the Lab's work, done in this way by the team closest to it, is invaluable for the evaluation process.

The self-assessment is not intended to replace the time that will be spent interviewing and surveying the Lab team and other respondents, so there will be a chance to explore these issues in more depth, but it does give an early chance for the Lab team to shape the evaluation and highlight issues to the evaluator.

As the purpose of this is to give a frank and informal perspective, please do not feel you need to write long or edited narrative answers to the questions below. The box sizes are not intended to indicate length – feel free to expand or contract them as needed. I have read or will read the documents available, so this is not about reiterating reports etc, but rather giving a more informal, frank and reflective perspective. **Please note that all the questions are relevant to Phase 2 only** (though of course feel free to refer to Phase 1 if relevant).

A useful process for completing the self-assessment is to take each section one at a time, and give individuals a chance to jot down answers to the questions on their own before coming back together to discuss the answers and record something that represents the whole team (whether convergent or divergent – multiple opinions is fine!). However, feel free to use any process you prefer (it would be useful to know who was involved and what process was followed - see box below).

Finally, when an evaluation is done in person, the team has many opportunities to recommend people for them to talk to or to feed in thoughts in an informal way. This is less easy to do remotely, but please feel free at any time to email me on rshah@springfieldcentre.com with any thoughts that occur to you. There is also an optional section at the end of the self-assessment which you can use to comment on the evaluation process.

Thanks again for your time and engagement!

Participants	Who was involved in the self assessment exercise?
Process	What process was used to complete the self assessment exercise?

Relevance and strategic fit

Objectives	In your own words, and from your experience of working at the Lab, what do you see as the key (priority) objectives of the Lab's work?
Relevance	Who is the Lab's work most relevant to? In what ways is it, or is it not, relevant to the ILO (and which parts of the ILO?), SECO, and beyond?
Strategic fit	Is the Lab's work a good fit with the ILO's strategic objectives? If so, in what ways? If not, why not, and what challenges does that present?
Strategy: assumptions	Looking back, to what extent do you think the assumptions embedded in the Lab's design are valid? For example, did the logframe activities (partnerships, knowledge outputs etc.) lead to the outcomes and impact in the logframe?
Strategy: learning	If you were designing the Lab from scratch, knowing what you know now, what would you change about the design/strategy?

Progress and effectiveness

Partnerships: results	Overall, how effective do you think the Lab's partnerships have been for a) embedding market systems approaches in the partner projects and b) generating evidence/demonstration effect for wider learning and change?
Partnerships: examples	Can you give an example of one or more effective and one or more less effective partnerships? What made partnerships effective or otherwise?
Partnerships: strategies	To what extent do you think the Lab's work in partnerships has been <i>additional</i> to what the projects would have done without the Lab? Overall, what has worked well, and less well in achieving the Lab's objectives?
Knowledge: results	To what extent do you think the Lab has been effective in achieving its objectives through generating or institutionalizing knowledge?

Knowledge: examples	What made the difference between effective and less effective pieces of work in knowledge generation or institutionalization? Can you give examples?
Gender and inclusion	What has the Lab done to promote gender equality and non-discrimination? Could it have done more, in the context of its objectives and strategy?
Visibility	How much progress has the Lab made in Phase 2 at increasing its visibility and communications? Who is aware of the Lab's work?
Perceptions of the Lab	How do you think the Lab's is perceived (role and value) a) within other parts of the ILO? b) within SECO? c) by partner field projects d) by other development actors?
Obstacles and learning	Looking back and reflecting on Phase 2 as a whole, what have the biggest obstacles to progress been? What have you learned from your experiences?

Effectiveness of management arrangements and operations

Strengths	What strengths does the Lab have with respect to internal capacity and organizational culture? What, in its management and governance, works well?
Weaknesses	What weaknesses or challenges does the Lab have with respect to internal capacity and organizational culture? What does not work well?
Resourcing	Has the Lab received adequate resourcing (administrative, financial, technical and political) to achieve its objectives? If not, what have the challenges been?
MRM	How well has the monitoring and evaluation system worked? Have results at output, outcome and impact levels been used to make decisions? If so, how?
Institutional risks	What institutional barriers have hindered the Lab's progress? To what extent have these been possible to overcome? What might be learned for the future?

Responding to the mid-term evaluation

The Phase II mid-term evaluation made six recommendations, listed below. Please comment briefly on each of them explaining what was done to incorporate the recommendation into the project implementation, and, more importantly, to reflect on how well it worked or didn't work.

Recommendation 1: Develop a strategic framework for institutionalisation
Recommendation 2: Undertake influence mapping to identify key leverage points.
Recommendation 3: Scope out a Systems Accelerator
Recommendation 4: Introduce go/no-go criteria for supporting Market Systems Analysis
Recommendation 5: Shift from knowledge generation to knowledge synthesis
Recommendation 6: Contribute to addressing the MSD evidence gap

The evaluation itself (optional)

If you would like to, please use this section to comment on the process for the final evaluation itself and to leave any further comments you would like to make. There will also be other opportunities to feed into the evaluation. Please note that I cannot guarantee to respond to suggestions about how to manage the evaluation process, but I will take them into account.

Questions	Are there particular questions that you would particularly like the evaluator to address or pay attention to? (Please refer to the TOR for a preliminary list of evaluation questions.)
Respondents	Are there particular individuals or organisations that you think it would be valuable for the evaluator to interview or survey? If so, please list them here. (Please refer to Annex 2 of the TOR for a preliminary list of proposed interviewees).
Further information	Is there anything else you would like to add or highlight, either with respect to the evaluation process, or to things that the Self-Assessment did not ask about, which you think are relevant?

ANNEX 6: DATA COLLECTION INSTRUMENT – SURVEY

Survey logic

The survey was designed using ‘skip logic’ so that a handful of preliminary questions automatically filter the subsequent questions to be relevant to the respondent. The categories of questions that were asked are as follows:

- Questions for people who have partnered or collaborated with the Lab
- Questions for people whose potential collaborations with the Lab didn’t come to fruition
- Questions for people who have worked for the Lab
- Questions for people who have been influenced by the Lab
- Questions about the Lab’s influence on the ILO
- Questions about the Lab’s influence on SECO
- Questions about the Lab’s influence on the external MSD community

Survey questions

No questions were ‘mandatory.’ At the end of each section, the survey respondent was prompted with “If you were not able to answer some of the questions in this section, feel free to explain why here: _____”

Preliminary questions

1. What is the nature of your connection to the Lab? (tick all that apply)
 - a. Partnership/collaboration
 - b. Partnership/collaboration that didn’t come to fruition
 - c. Work(ed) for the Lab (staff member, consultant etc.)
 - d. Influenced by the Lab’s work
 - e. Know of the Lab, but have not collaborated with them
 - f. Other (please specify)
2. Are you part of the ILO? (yes/no)
If the project/organisation you represent is part of the ILO, please tick yes.
3. Are you part of or funded by SECO? (yes/no)
If the project/organisation you represent is part of the ILO, please tick yes.

Partnership / Collaboration

Questions with a quantitative response scale are marked with an asterisk.

These questions will be asked to those who ticked “Partnership/collaboration” in “Preliminary questions.”

1. What did you collaborate with the Lab on? (tick all that apply)
 - a. Market research and analysis (including sector selection, rapid market assessment and market system analyses)
 - b. Monitoring and results measurement
 - c. Intervention design, pilots, and implementation
 - d. Training
 - e. Developing institutional policies or guidelines
 - f. Other (Please specify what kind of work you collaborated with the Lab on (unless you would rather not do so for reasons of anonymity)
2. Please indicate how satisfied you have been in your collaboration with the Lab* (5 point scale)

- a. Can you explain why?
3. Has your collaboration with the Lab improved application of the market systems approach (including measurement practices) in your project/organisation?* (4 point scale)
 - a. If no: Why do you think that is?
 - b. If yes: Can you give details of what has improved, and how it has improved?
4. If you had not collaborated with the Lab, do you think you would have sought equivalent support elsewhere? (yes/no)
5. To what extent do you think your collaboration with the Lab generated benefits that would not have come about without their input?* (4 point scale)
6. How well did the Lab manage its resources and staff in its collaboration with you?* (4 point scale)
 - a. Do you have any further comments about how the Lab managed resources and staff?
7. How effective was the Lab in advancing gender equality, inclusion of people with disabilities and/or other non-discrimination concerns in its collaboration with you?* (4 point scale)
 - a. Do you have any further comments on how the Lab handled or advanced gender equality, inclusion of people with disabilities and/or other non-discrimination issues?
8. To what extent do you think there is demand for the Lab's work?* (4 point scale)
 - a. Do you have further comments on demand (e.g. which aspects of the Lab's work are most in-demand, by whom etc)?
9. To what extent have the knowledge or products generated in your collaboration with the Lab been influential in your project/organisation?* (4 point scale)
 - c. If not at all: Why do you think they have not been influential?
 - d. If very little, somewhat or to a great extent: How have they been influential?
10. To what extent have the knowledge or products generated in your collaboration with the Lab been influential BEYOND your project/organisation – to your knowledge? (For example, have other projects or organisations sought to copy or learn from your collaboration?)* (4 point scale)
 - a. If not at all: Why do you think they have not been influential?
 - b. If very little, somewhat or to a great extent: How have they been influential?
11. How likely are you/your organisation to use Lab methods, knowledge and/or approaches in the next two years?* (4 point scale)
 - a. Why do you think that is?
 - b. Which methods/knowledge/approaches do you think are most likely to be used long-term?
12. How likely do you think it is that a market systems approach will be used within your organisation in five years' time?* (4 point scale)
 - a. Why do you think that is?
13. Overall, how could the Lab have improved its collaboration with you? (open-ended)
14. Do you have any other comments on your work with the Lab?

Projects that didn't come to fruition

These questions were asked to those who ticked "Partnership/collaboration that didn't come to fruition" in "Preliminary questions."

1. Why didn't the collaboration/partnership come to fruition?
2. Is there anything the Lab could have done better?

Lab team

These questions were asked to those who ticked "Work(ed) for the Lab (staff member, consultant etc.)" in "Preliminary questions."

8. In your experience of working with/on the Lab team, were roles and responsibilities clear?
9. In your experience of working with/on the Lab team, was it clear to you what the Lab was trying to achieve and how your work contributed to that?
10. Did you feel you had the necessary resources and support to do your job/assignment effectively? If not, what could have made it better?
11. Please name one key strength of how the Lab works.
12. Please name one key weakness of how the Lab works.
13. In your opinion and from your observations, how efficient was the Lab in using its resources to deliver results?
14. Have you experienced, observed or participated in examples of the Lab adapting its approach and strategy in light of learning? Can you give examples?
15. What institutional barriers, if any, have hindered achievement of the project objectives and impact?
16. Do you have any other comments on the Lab's resourcing, capacity, approach or organisational arrangements?

Influenced by the Lab's work

This question were asked to those who ticked "Influenced by the Lab's work" in "Preliminary questions."

1. How have you, your project, or your organisation been influenced by the Lab's work?

ILO – relevance and influence

These questions were asked to those who ticked "yes" under "Are you part of the ILO?" in "Preliminary questions."

1. The Lab's objective is to "Institutionalise and mainstream a market systems approach to decent work, both inside and outside the ILO." Is this objective relevant to the ILO's needs?
 - a. If yes: why do you think it is relevant?
 - b. If no: why not?
2. How visible is the Lab within the ILO?* (4 point scale)
3. To your knowledge, how is the Lab perceived within the ILO (i.e. what do people think it offers)?
4. Do you see any signs of a market systems approach being institutionalised or mainstreamed within the ILO?
 - a. If yes: Please provide examples.
 - b. If yes: Do you think the Lab's work contributed to this?
5. Do you see any signs of improved measurement practices being institutionalised or mainstreamed within the ILO?
 - a. If yes: Please provide examples.
 - b. If yes: Do you think the Lab's work contributed to this?
6. What (if any) influence has the Lab had in the ILO? Please include examples if possible.
7. From your observations, does the Lab play on (leverage or build) the ILO's comparative advantages? (yes/no)
 - a. If yes: How so?
 - b. If no: Why not?

8. In your opinion, do the Lab's objectives fit well within the wider ILO strategic framework, including the relevant SDGs? (yes/no)
 - a. If yes: How so?
 - b. If no: Why not?
9. Do you have any further comments on the Lab's relevance to or role within the ILO?

External – relevance and influence

These questions were asked to those who ticked "no" under "Are you part of the ILO?" AND under "Are you part of or funded by SECO?" in "Preliminary questions."

1. The Lab's objective is to institutionalise and mainstream a market systems approach to decent work. Is this objective relevant to market system development practitioners' needs? (yes/no)
 - a. If yes: why do you think this is relevant?
 - b. If no: why not?
2. How visible is the Lab within the market systems development community? (4 point scale)
3. To your knowledge, how is the Lab perceived within the MSD community (i.e. what do people think it offers)?
4. Do you see any signs of MSD practitioners or organisations institutionalising, mainstreaming or increasingly applying a market systems approach to decent work? (yes/no)
 - a. If yes: please provide examples.
 - b. If yes: Do you think the Lab's work contributed to this? (yes/no)
5. Do you see any signs of MSD practitioners or organisations institutionalising, mainstreaming or increasingly applying improved approaches to measuring decent work outcomes? (yes/no)
 - a. If yes: please provide examples.
 - b. If yes: Do you think the Lab's work contributed to this? (yes/no)
6. Do you know of any examples of the Lab's influence – direct or indirect – on the wider MSD community?
7. From your observations, does the Lab play on (leverage or build) the ILO's comparative advantages? (yes/no)
 - a. If yes: How so?
 - b. If no: Why not?
8. Do you have any further comments on the Lab's relevance to or role within the MSD community?

SECO – relevance and influence

These questions were asked to those who ticked "yes" under "Are you part of or funded by SECO?" in "Preliminary questions."

1. The Lab's objective is to "Institutionalise and mainstream a market systems approach to decent work." Is this objective relevant to SECO's needs? (yes/no)
 - a. If yes: why do you think this is relevant?
 - b. If no: why not?
2. How visible is the Lab within SECO? (4 point scale)
3. To your knowledge, how is the Lab perceived within SECO (i.e. what do people think it offers)?
4. Do you see any signs of a market systems approach being institutionalised or mainstreamed within SECO?
 - a. If yes: please provide examples.
 - b. If yes: Do you think the Lab's work contributed to this? (yes/no)

5. Do you see any signs of improved measurement practices being institutionalised or mainstreamed within SECO?
 - a. If yes: please provide examples.
 - b. If yes: Do you think the Lab's work contributed to this? (yes/no)
6. What (if any) influence has the Lab had in SECO? Please include examples.
7. Do you have any further comments on the Lab's relevance to or role within SECO?

Information and consent for survey

This survey is to gather information for the final independent evaluation of the ILO Lab Phase II. The information will be used for both accountability and learning.

This survey is anonymous. It is possible that the information you provide may inadvertently identify you to the evaluator, but survey results will be fully anonymised in reporting. Participation is voluntary – if you would rather not participate at any time, simply close this screen. Once you have submitted your survey it is not possible to withdraw participation as the results are anonymised. **Continuing with the survey indicates consent to participate.**

If you have any concerns or questions or if you would like further information or updates on findings, please feel free to contact either Rachel Shah (rshah@springfieldcentre.com) – the consultant conducting the evaluation - or the ILO evaluation manager Matilda Dahlquist (dahlquist@ilo.org).

ANNEX 7: DATA COLLECTION INSTRUMENT – INTERVIEW GUIDES

Interview guides were adapted for each interviewee, and were not stuck to rigidly, but rather used as a list of topics and questions to cover in the course of the conversation. The following interview guides were used as a base for adapting and are indicative of the questions covered in interviews.

Interview guide - Lab team

Introduction:

- ***Brief introduction to eval process***
 - How well it performed against its objectives
 - How relevant its objectives were
 - Management and efficiency
 - Sustainability
- ***Thank you for agreeing to be interviewed and for your time***

Role and general:

Could you tell me a bit about your role in the team?

How long have you worked/engaged with the Lab? How did you come to this role?

What have you worked on, or are working on?

Prompt for:

- Projects
- Briefs
- Training
- Proposals

Overall

How do you explain the Lab's work to people other than your colleagues?

What do you see as the key objectives/priorities of the Lab's work? Weighting of the objectives.

Do you know of anyone else trying to do something similar in or out of the ILO?

Objectives

Thinking about each of the objectives, what has the strategy been and what progress have you made in each of them?

Mainstreaming decent work within MSD community

Do you see signs of sustainability?

Institutionalising MSD in the ILO

Do you see signs of sustainability?

Institutionalising MSD in SECO

Do you see signs of sustainability?

Partnerships

What do you see as the primary goal of partnership work? What is the Lab trying to achieve through partnership work?

What do you PARTNERS hope to get out of the partnership?

What's worked well, what hasn't worked well in terms of partnership work?

What have the biggest challenges been in partnership work?

- How did they affect progress?
- What was done to address these challenges?

Is there any work on partnerships that you're particularly proud of or that proved really effective?

What makes a partnership work well, or not?

How has COVID-19 affected your partnership work?

Overall, how effective do you think the Lab's partnerships have been for

A) embedding market systems approaches in the partner projects

B) generating evidence/demonstration effect for wider learning and change?

Do you see signs of sustainability?

Knowledge generation work

What do you see as the primary goal of knowledge generation work? What is the Lab trying to achieve?

What's worked well, what hasn't worked well?

Is there any knowledge generation work that you're particularly proud of or that has proved really effective?

Has any of the knowledge generation work proved less effective?

What made the difference to whether something was effective or not?

What have the biggest challenges been?

- How did they affect progress?
- What was done to address these challenges?

Overall, how effective do you think the Lab's knowledge generation work has been?

How has COVID-19 affected your knowledge generation work?

Assumptions/TOC:

How do your logframe indicators relate to your ultimate goal?

Have adaptations been made?

Were the resources available to the Lab appropriate relative to its objectives as laid out in the logframe?

Working within the ILO

What institutional barriers have hindered achievement of the project objectives and impact?

Has the project benefited from/been able to leverage advantages of being part of the ILO?

How has the Lab been received within the ILO?

- Units where it has been particularly well received?
- Units where it didn't work so well?
- Any reasons you think this was the case (good/bad)
- Any ways it could have been improved?

Does the project fit within the ILO's strategic goals?

Has the Lab contributed to SDGs?

Team/management

How is the team structured? How are roles and responsibilities divided? Is it clear who does what?

How are key strategy and management decisions made?

- What has been your role in decision making?
- When have you been engaged? How often? Etc....
- If not covered: what about which projects to do?
- What are the priorities in deciding?

How does communication/management happen?

Is there any area of support that you have lacked, in pursuing your objectives? Technical, management, administrative, political?

How well resourced do you feel? Do you feel you have adequate time to achieve what you have to achieve?

What is the focus in your day-to-day work e.g. what do you see as KPIs of your work? Does that/how does that work for you?

What are some of the strengths of the team?

What hasn't gone so well, what has been a challenge or weaknesses of the team?

Were you familiar with MSD when you joined? Training, induction etc...

MRM, adaptation and learning

How do you monitor project performance and results?

How do you use and report results?

Understanding of MTR recommendations and some of the specific actions taken on their basis.

Has learning been reflected in implementation? Can you think of any examples?

Gender and inclusion

What do you do to advance gender, inclusion of people with disabilities and other non-discrimination issues?

Was the original project strategy appropriate for advancing gender equality, inclusion of people with disabilities or other non-discrimination issues?

When concerns have emerged, how has the project responded?

Does your monitoring and/or MSAs and/or other work and research disaggregate by gender?

Have you leveraged resources or partnerships to advance inclusion?

Efficiency

Are you involved in managing the budget and resources?

How efficient is the Lab at utilising resources to deliver results?

Was the project cost-effective, in your view?

The Lab seems to have been pretty successful in sourcing external funds – how does this affect it?

Conclusions

What lessons can be learned for the design of future projects?

Do you see the Lab as a success?

Is there anything else that you wanted to say?

Interview guide - SECO

Introduction:

Brief introduction to myself and the final eval of Phase 2 of the Lab

- Were you involved in shaping the TOR?
- Evaluating
 - How well it performed against its objectives
 - How relevant its objectives were
 - Management and efficiency
 - Sustainability

Thank you for agreeing to be interviewed. Any questions for me?

Role and General:

Could you describe your position and what that means for your involvement with the Lab?

Overall, how do you see the relationship between SECO and the Lab?

- Have the six-month strategy meetings been helpful/worked well?
- Are there other points of input into decision making?
- What is required of the Lab?

Design and SECO's ambitions

What was SECO's ambition for the Lab? What were its expectations?

- What 'gap' was SECO hoping to fill by funding Phase 2? What was the rationale?

How do you weight the Lab's three objectives, in Phase 2?

Has its ambition/expectation been fulfilled?

- If so, in what ways?
- If not, why not?

Looking back, do you think the approach to achieving those objectives worked well?

- How well do you think the logframe indicators relate to the overall programme objective?

Any reflections on the criteria/requirements for projects to partner with?

Does SECO have any similar knowledge-generation projects?

- If yes: how does the Lab compare?
- Is there appetite for funding similar projects in the future?

Progress and effectiveness

In your view, was the Lab able to achieve its objectives?

- To what extent?
- What do you see as successes?
- What do you see as areas that were not successful?
- Do you think the Lab effectively identified leverage points and prioritised activities?

Has its partnership work or its knowledge generation work been more effective?

- Partnership
- Knowledge generation

What obstacles were encountered in implementation?

How did the Lab respond to these?

Did you see learning reflected in implementation?

Have you received any direct or indirect feedback about the Lab's work and its execution?

What could the Lab have done differently/better?

- Partnership
- Knowledge generation

SECO

How visible is the Lab within SECO?

To what extent was there demand for the Lab's services and/or products?

One of the Lab's objectives is to institutionalise market systems approach to decent work within SECO. Is that relevant to SECO's needs and priorities?

- HQ?
- SECO projects?

Do you see signs of increasing/better application of the market systems approach within SECO?

- Do you see a growing knowledge base and interest in SECO for utilising a market systems approach to decent work?
- Which bits? Measurement?
- Has the Lab contributed to this?
- Would it have happened without the Lab?
- What is the likelihood that Lab methods and knowledge will be used and applied after the project finishes in SECO?

Has the Lab contributed to SDGs?

The ILO

Has the Lab been able to leverage advantages of being part of the ILO?

What institutional barriers, if any, have hindered achievement of the project objectives and impact?

Do you see signs of the ILO institutionalising, or mainstreaming, MSD approach?

Do you see growing knowledge base on MS4DW in the ILO?

How likely is it that the Lab will increasingly institutionalize MS4DW?

Implementation and management

How satisfied are you – or is SECO – with how the Lab was implemented?

In your view, did the project adapt appropriately in the face of COVID-19?

What are some of the strengths of the team?

What have been challenges or weaknesses of the team?

Does the Lab monitor performance and results well? How satisfied are you with reporting and communication?

Efficiency

Does SECO think the Lab has provided good value for money? Has the project had sufficient impact - reached sufficient scale and depth - to justify SECO's investment?

In your view, were the resources available to the Lab appropriate relative to its objectives as laid out in the logframe?

Did the Lab use its resources effectively?

What is SECO's view on the partnerships' the Lab has leveraged?

Gender and inclusion

How well has the Lab advanced gender equality, inclusion of people with disabilities and other non-discrimination issues?

Was the original project strategy appropriate for advancing gender equality, inclusion of people with disabilities or other non-discrimination issues?

Conclusion

What lessons can be learned for future project? What worked/what didn't work? What would you do differently if you could start from the beginning?

Do you see the Lab as a success?

Is there anything else that you wanted to say?

Interview Guide – ILO Partner

Introduction:

- **Brief introduction to final eval of Phase 2 of the Lab**
 - Evaluating the following:
 - How well it performed against its objectives
 - How relevant its objectives were
 - Management and efficiency
 - Sustainability
- **Thank you for agreeing to be interviewed**
 - Wanted to talk to you in the context of your collaboration with the Lab
 - And also of your wider knowledge of the ILO and the Lab's role within it

Collaboration

I've read a bit about your collaboration with the Lab from their documents/briefs, but could you summarise the collaboration from your perspective?

- Probe according to reading/background knowledge, if not mentioned

How did the collaboration come about? How did you hear about the Lab?

- Why were you interested in working together?
- ***What were your ambitions for the collaboration?***

Has the project/organisation benefited from the collaboration with the Lab?

- What need has your collaboration with the Lab met for your project or organisation?
- How has it contributed to achieving your own objectives?

Did you encounter any challenges in collaborating with the Lab?

- What were they?
- How did they affect progress?
- How were they addressed?
- Could they have been better addressed?

Did you see any signs of learning and adaption in the Lab's response to challenges?

Additionality – To what extent do you think you could have accessed the benefits the Lab provided in other ways?

- *Would* you have been likely to access that kind of input in other ways?

Management and Implementation

[Project] has co-funded the collaboration with the Lab –have you got good value for money in doing so?

- Has the Lab been efficient in using resources to deliver planned results?
- Overall, were there enough resources to deliver on objectives in the collaboration?

***In terms of how the collaboration was managed: were roles and responsibilities clear?
Was communication good?***

Did the Lab team prioritise activities well, for impact/results?

Were any gender, inclusion or other non-discrimination concerns addressed in the course of the collaboration?

- Did the Lab's work contribute to advancing these concerns?
- How effective was the Lab in this area?
- Were any issues that arose adequately addressed?

Overall would you say collaborating with the Lab went well?

- Why/why not?

Are there ways the Lab could have (further) improved the way they managed the collaboration?

Impact and sustainability

Overall, has your collaboration with the Lab improved application of the market systems approach (including measurement practices) in your project/organisation?

Do you think it is likely that Lab methods and knowledge will be used and applied after the collaboration finishes?

Do you see any signs of 'spread'?

- e.g. are there others coming to ask you about your collaboration, borrowing/copying tools and approaches, or otherwise becoming interested in benefits you have gained from your collaboration with the Lab?

Are there signs of any aspects of the MS4DW becoming more institutionalised/mainstreamed – either in your project or more broadly in the ILO and beyond?

Any sense of whether the Lab's inputs been 'additional' in terms of impact on beneficiaries? Or SDGs?

Visibility and influence in the ILO

How do you see the Lab's role in the ILO more broadly?

What kind of visibility does the Lab have in the ILO more broadly?

- How do you think others perceive it and its offer?
- Has it become a go-to resource, and if so, what for?
- Do you think what the Lab offers is well-defined?

What kind of influence has the Lab had within the ILO?

Is there a demand for its services/products?

Was the strategy appropriate for achieving their objectives? Were the objectives realistic/feasible?

Relevance to ILO

Is the Lab's mandate relevant to the ILO? Is it meeting a need?

- Is there a good fit, strategically?

Does the Lab leverage – or build - the ILO's comparative advantages?

- If so, in what ways?

Are there any institutional barriers that have hindered achievement of the project objectives and impact?

Overall conclusions

What lessons can be learned for future project?

Is there anything you would add that I didn't ask about?

Interview Guide – Partnerships that didn't come to fruition

Introduction:

- ***Brief introduction to final eval of Phase 2 of the Lab***
 - Evaluating the following:
 - How well it performed against its objectives
 - How relevant its objectives were
 - Management and efficiency
 - Sustainability
- ***Thank you for agreeing to be interviewed***
 - Wanted to talk to you in the context of the Lab's contact with DCED
 - And also of your wider knowledge of the MSD/PSD community

Collaboration

What was your interest in partnering with the Lab?

How did you hear about the Lab in the first place?

From your perspective, why didn't the partnership come to fruition?

Is there anything the Lab could have done differently/better?

Did you source equivalent/similar support elsewhere?

Perception of the Lab and its relevance

How would you describe the Lab to others?

What do you see as its main offer/value add?

- Do you know of any other initiatives doing anything similar?
- If yes, how do these other initiatives compare to the Lab?

Is the Lab's mandate relevant to projects' concerns/priorities?

What kind of visibility does it have in the field?

Do you see a demand for its services/products in the field?

Overall conclusions

Is there anything you would add that I didn't ask about?

Interview Guide – ILO staff (non-partner projects)

Introduction:

- ***Brief introduction to final eval of Phase 2 of the Lab***
 - Evaluating the following:
 - How well it performed against its objectives
 - How relevant its objectives were
 - Management and efficiency
 - Sustainability
- ***Thank you for agreeing to be interviewed***
 - Wanted to talk to you in the context of...

Role and general

What kind of contact/collaboration have you had with the Lab?

How do you see its role within the ILO? What are its key objectives?

Collaborations/influence

Tell me about your experience of collaborating with the Lab / How did the Lab influence you?

How did you hear about the Lab?

How have you/your unit benefited from the Lab's services/products?

Are you part of the MSD network? How valuable do you find it?

Visibility and influence in the ILO

What kind of visibility does the Lab have in the ILO more broadly?

- How do you think others perceive it and its offer?
- Has it become a go-to resource, and if so, what for?
- Do you think what the Lab offers is well-defined?

What kind of influence has the Lab had within the ILO?

Is there a demand for its services/products?

Is the Lab's mandate relevant to the ILO? Is it meeting a need?

- Is there a good fit, strategically?

Does the Lab leverage – or build - the ILO's comparative advantages?

- If so, in what ways?

Impact and sustainability

One of the Lab's objectives is to institutionalise and mainstream a MS4DW approach in the ILO? Do you see signs of movement in the ILO towards using systems approaches to decent work?

Do you see signs of an improved knowledge base on market systems in and around jobs and job quality?

- What signs?
- Which components?
- Mainstreaming?
- Institutionalising?

What do you think the Lab has contributed to?

- Might this have happened without the Lab?

Do you think it is likely that Lab methods and knowledge will be used and applied after the Lab finishes?

Has the Lab contributed to SDGs?

Are there ways the Lab could have (further) improved the impact they have had?

Strategy and Implementation

In your view were the objectives realistic/feasible?

Was the strategy appropriate for achieving their objectives?

Has its partnership work or its knowledge generation work been more effective?

Did the Lab identify relevant leverage points and prioritise activities well?

Has the project benefited from/been able to leverage advantages of being part of the ILO?

Are there any institutional barriers that have hindered achievement of the project objectives and impact?

What would you see as strengths of the Lab's implementation?

What (if anything) could the Lab have done differently/improved to have increase their influence?

Conclusions

What lessons can be learned for future project? What worked/didn't work?

Do you see the Lab as a success?

Is there anything you would add that I didn't ask about?

Interview Guide - External partner

Introduction:

- ***Introduce myself***
- ***Brief introduction to final eval of Phase 2 of the Lab***
 - Evaluating the following:
 - How well it performed against its objectives
 - How relevant its objectives were
 - Management and efficiency
 - Sustainability
- ***Thank you for agreeing to be interviewed***
 - Wanted to talk to you in the context of...
- ***Any questions for me?***

Collaboration

I've read a bit about your collaboration with the Lab from their documents/briefs, but could you summarise the collaboration from your perspective?

How did the collaboration come about? How did you hear about the Lab?

Why were you interested in working together? What were your ambitions for the collaboration?

Has the project/organisation benefited from the collaboration with the Lab?

- What need has your collaboration with the Lab met for your project or organisation?
- How has it contributed to achieving your own objectives?

Did you encounter any challenges in collaborating with the Lab?

- What were they?
- How did they affect progress?
- How were they addressed?
- Could they have been better addressed?

To what extent do you think you could have accessed the benefits the Lab provided in other ways?

- Would you have been likely to access that kind of input in other ways?

Are there signs of any aspects of the MS4DW becoming more institutionalised/mainstreamed – either in your project or more broadly in the ILO and beyond?

- Prompt re greater emphasis on decent work

Do you anticipate there being any long-term effects of your work with the Lab?

How did the actual collaboration go, e.g. were roles and responsibilities clear? Was communication good? What was the quality of work like?

Was gender mainstreamed in the MSA? Did any gender or inclusion issues come up?

- Did the Lab's work contribute to advancing these concerns?
- How effective was the Lab in this area?
- Were any issues that arose adequately addressed?

Are there ways the Lab could have (further) improved the way they managed the collaboration?

Overall conclusions

What lessons can be learned for future project?

Is there anything you would add that I didn't ask about?

Interview Guide – Former Lab team member

Introduction:

- ***Brief intro to me***
- ***Brief introduction to eval process***
 - How well it performed against its objectives
 - How relevant its objectives were
 - Management and efficiency
 - Sustainability
- ***Thank you for agreeing to be interviewed and for your time***
- ***Any questions?***

Role and general:

Could you tell me a bit about your history with the Lab – how you got involved in the Lab?

If you can remember, what did you work on while you were there?

Prompt for:

- Projects
- Briefs
- Training
- Proposals

Talk through each of the key projects

How do you explain the Lab's work to other people?

How successful was/is the Lab in achieving its objectives?

What worked well, what didn't work well in terms of partnership work?

What worked well, what didn't work well in terms of knowledge generation work?

Did the strategy for achieving its objectives make sense?

Did you encounter any institutional barriers?

Were you familiar with MSD when you joined? Training, induction etc...

Was it part of your work to advance gender, inclusion of people with disabilities and other non-discrimination issues?

Why did you leave?

What are some of the strengths of how the Lab was set up at the time?

What hasn't gone so well, what has been a challenge or weaknesses of how the Lab was managed?

What are you doing now?

Do you still use MSD in your work?

Does the Lab fit within the ILO's strategic goals? Is it relevant to its needs?

Conclusions

What lessons can be learned for the design of future projects?

Do you see the Lab as a success?

Is there anything else that you wanted to say?

Information and consent for interviews

The following information and consent form was shown to interviewees when they signed up to book an interview time slot using the link provided to them.

Consent form

Purpose: The purpose of this interview is to gather information to inform the final evaluation of the ILO Lab Phase II. The final evaluation examines the Lab's relevance to the ILO, SECO and the wider development community, the project strategy, progress and effectiveness, management arrangements, impact orientation, sustainability and efficiency. The interview will ask about your own experience and perspective on the ILO Lab and its work as it relates to these issues. It will be conducted by Rachel Shah, a consultant from the Springfield Centre.

Participation is voluntary: We would really value your participation but if you would rather not participate, there is absolutely no pressure to do so. If at any point during the interview, you decide you would rather not participate, let Rachel know and she will end the interview.

Confidentiality: Information provided in the interview is considered confidential (subject to statutory and safeguarding exceptions). It will be used to inform the evaluation findings, which will be developed on the basis of analysis and triangulation of information from multiple sources and a mixed-methods approach. Individual sources will not be named in the evaluation report, and every effort will be made to ensure that sensitive information cannot be traced to its source. Rachel can provide further information about the scope and limitations of confidentiality on request. There is also a separate anonymous online survey you can use to provide confidential information.

Accountability and avoidance of harm: If you have any concerns or questions whatsoever, please feel free to contact either Rachel Shah (rshah@springfieldcentre.com) or the ILO evaluation manager Matilda Dahlquist (dahlquist@ilo.org).

I have read the information and am happy to be interviewed.

I am happy for my name, role and project or organisation to be listed in the final report as a participating interviewee.

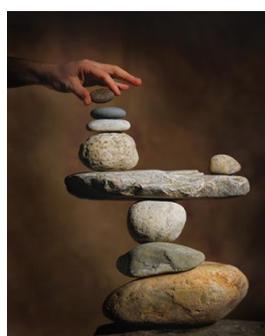
yes no

(Optional) Organisation / Project:

(Optional) Role:

(Optional) Relationship to the ILO Lab:

ANNEX 8: SIGNED CODE OF CONDUCT



ILO Code of Conduct Agreement for Evaluators



International
Labour Office

Evaluation Office

Code of Conduct Agreement with ILO Evaluation Consultants¹

1. The personal and professional conduct of an ILO evaluator should be beyond reproach at all times. Any deficiency in their conduct may undermine the integrity of the evaluation, and more broadly evaluation in the ILO.
2. The principles presented in this agreement are fully consistent with the Standards of Conduct for the International Civil Service by which all UN staff are bound and by those set by the United Nations Evaluation Group (UNEG) for evaluators working with the UN System.
3. The Code of Conduct provisions here apply to all stages of the evaluation process from the conception to the completion of an evaluation and the release and use of the evaluation results.
4. To promote trust and confidence in evaluation in the ILO and the UN system, all ILO evaluation consultants are required to commit themselves in writing to this Code of Conduct, specifically to the following obligations:

Independence

5. Evaluators shall ensure that independence of judgement is maintained and that evaluation findings and recommendations are independently presented.

Impartiality

6. Evaluators shall operate in an impartial and unbiased manner and give a balanced presentation of strengths and weaknesses of the policy, program, project or organizational unit being evaluated.

Conflict of Interest

¹ Adapted from the UNEG Evaluation Code of Conduct, available at <http://www.unevaluation.org/unegecodeofconduct>.

Honesty and Integrity

8. Evaluators shall show honesty and integrity in their own behaviour, negotiating honestly the evaluation costs, tasks, limitations, scope of results likely to be obtained, while accurately presenting their procedures, data and findings and highlighting any limitations or uncertainties of interpretation within the evaluation.

Competence

9. Evaluators shall accurately represent their level of skills and knowledge and should work only within the limits of their professional training and abilities in evaluation. An evaluator is expected to decline assignments for which they do not have the skills and experience to complete an evaluation successfully.

Accountability

10. Evaluators are accountable for the completion of the agreed deliverables of the Terms of Reference, within the agreed upon timeframe and budget. These deliverables include adherence to formatting and content quality as laid out in the Terms of Reference and the [Checklist on Preparation of the Evaluation Report](#).

Obligations to participants

11. Evaluators shall respect and protect the rights and welfare of human subjects and communities, in accordance with the UN Universal Declaration of Human Rights and other human rights conventions. Evaluators shall respect differences in culture, local customs, religious beliefs and practices, personal interaction, gender roles, disability, age and ethnicity, while using evaluation instruments appropriate to the cultural setting. Evaluators shall ensure prospective participants are treated as autonomous agents, free to choose whether to participate in the evaluation. Evaluators shall make themselves aware of and comply with legal codes (whether international or national) governing, for example, interviewing children and young people.

Confidentiality

12. Evaluators shall respect people's right to provide information in confidence and make participants aware of the scope and limits of confidentiality, while ensuring that sensitive information cannot be traced to its source.

Avoidance of Harm

13. Evaluators shall act to minimise risks and harms to, and burdens on, those participating in the evaluation, without compromising the integrity of the evaluation findings.

Accuracy, Completeness and Reliability

14. Evaluators have an obligation to ensure that evaluation reports and presentations are accurate, complete and reliable. Evaluators shall explicitly justify judgements, findings and conclusions and demonstrate underlying rationale, in order that stakeholders may assess them.

Transparency

15. Evaluators shall clearly communicate to stakeholders the purpose of the evaluation, the criteria applied and the intended use of findings. Evaluators shall ensure that stakeholders have a say in shaping the evaluation and shall ensure that all documentation is readily available to and understood by stakeholders.

Omissions and wrongdoing

16. Where evaluators find evidence of wrong-doing or unethical conduct, they are obliged to report it to the proper oversight authority.

Agreement to abide by the provisions of the Code of Conduct for ILO Evaluation

I confirm that I have read and understood the provisions of this Agreement and that I will abide by the ILO Code of Conduct for Evaluation.

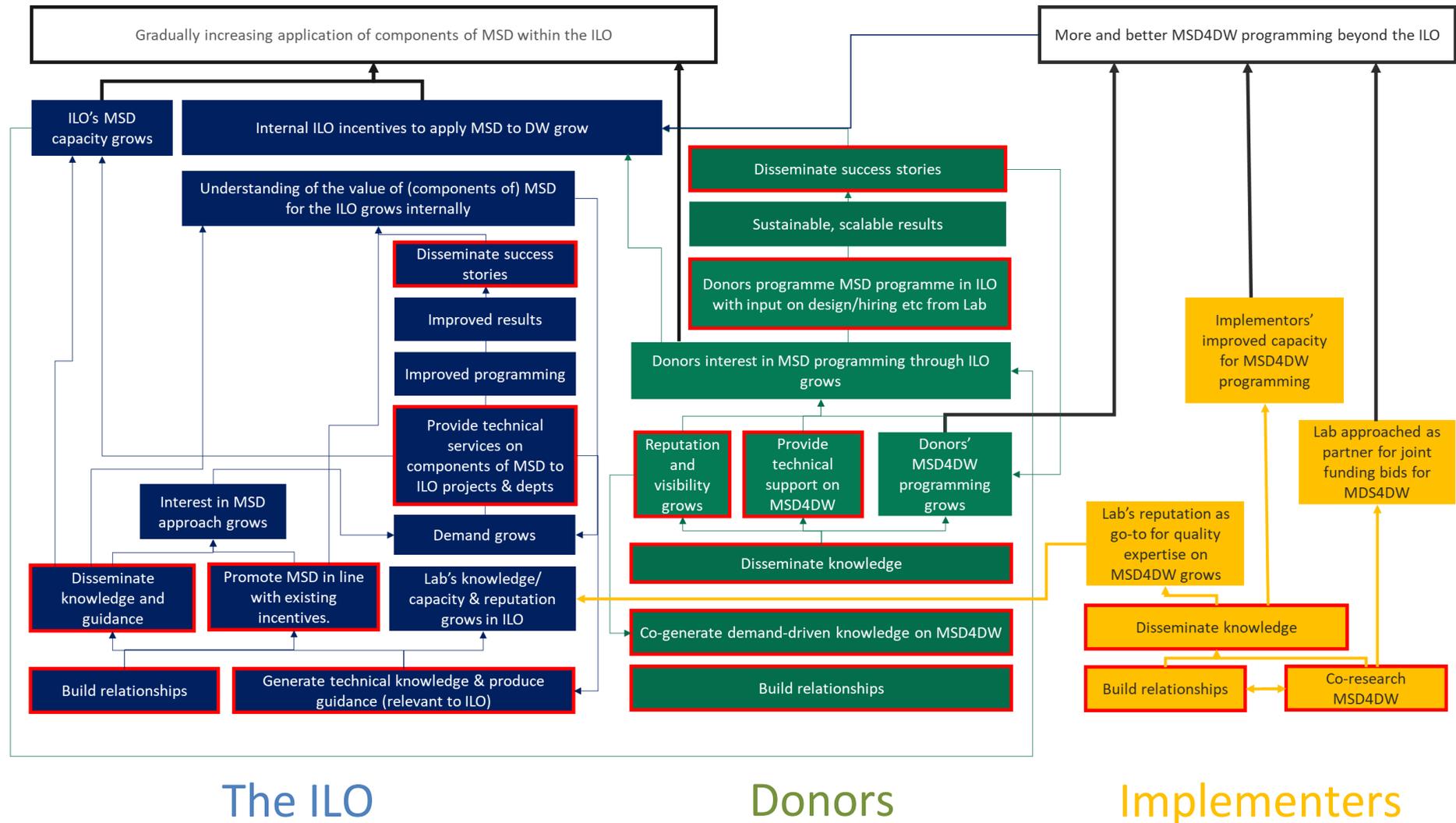
Name of Consultant: **Rachel Shah**

Signed at (place) on (date) **UK on 14th August 2020**



Signature: _____

ANNEX 9: A ROUGH RECONSTRUCTION OF A THEORY OF CHANGE FOR THE LAB



ANNEX 10: EMERGING GOOD PRACTICE TEMPLATES

An inter-disciplinary internal technical unit

ILO Emerging Good Practice Template	
Project Title: Market systems development for decent work – the Lab – Phase II Project TC/SYMBOL: GLO/17/06/CHE	
Name of Evaluator: Rachel Shah Date: 30th October 2020	
The following emerging good practice has been identified during the course of the evaluation. Further text can be found in the full evaluation report.	
GP Element	Text
Brief summary of the good practice (link to project goal or specific deliverable, background, purpose, etc.)	<p><i>Lab 2 is a model for taking an ‘inter-disciplinary’ approach to developing technical knowledge, by combining expertise from two different communities of practice.</i></p> <p>By drawing on the ILO’s knowledge about decent work deficits and the MSD community’s knowledge about systemic approaches to development, the Lab was able to generate new knowledge relevant to both communities. Institutionally, designing the Lab as an internal technical unit with objectives that encouraged it to build strong external relationships enabled it to draw on and disseminate knowledge in both communities.</p>
Relevant conditions and Context: limitations or advice in terms of applicability and replicability	<p>This is applicable to technical specialists whose role it is to draw on specialist knowledge external to the ILO and promote it within the ILO in order to build the ILO’s strengths and comparative advantage. It applies primarily when that field is less well known or understood internally.</p>
Establish a clear cause-effect relationship	<p>External players could not have promoted the MSD approach within the ILO in the way the Lab did, as internal stakeholders sometimes perceived the knowledge to be surplus to requirements, irrelevant or a threat to ILO ways of working. However, by taking an interdisciplinary approach, the Lab was able to translate the knowledge into formats that were relevant to the ILO’s needs, increasing receptivity and interest.</p> <p>In working out how MSD knowledge aligns with the ILO’s values, the Lab’s knowledge generation efforts pushed the MSD field to wider application of the approach, whilst also pushing innovation within the ILO. This led to new knowledge of relevance to both communities.</p> <p>This inter-disciplinary internal/external positioning also enabled the Lab to build the ILO’s comparative advantage in new arenas. External partners noted in interviews that they were interested in working with the Lab precisely because of the ILO’s reputation for technical expertise in the world of work, and because of its strong public sector networks, combined with MSD technical competence.</p>

<p>Indicate measurable impact and targeted beneficiaries</p>	<p>Impact is seen in the Lab’s influence within and beyond the ILO. Within the ILO numerous colleagues attempted applying components of the approach in new ways that align with ILO ways of working, including shaping intervention design, as a participatory mechanism for shaping a Decent Work Country Programme, as a diagnosis tool in an OSH project, as part of the Green Jobs Programme, and much more. Beyond the ILO organisations like Habitat for Humanity, Sida and Mastercard Foundation partnered with the ILO for research, knowledge generation and training because of its niche expertise in two complementary communities of practice.</p>
<p>Potential for replication and by whom</p>	<p>This ‘inter-disciplinary’ approach could be replicated when there is a need for new knowledge that combines expertise that is well-established outside the ILO with knowledge that is well-established internally.</p>
<p>Upward links to higher ILO Goals (DWCPs, Country Programme Outcomes or ILO’s Strategic Programme Framework)</p>	<p>In this case, the knowledge generated was of relevance to the ILO’s Programme and Budget Outcome 4 and SDG 8. Depending on the two communities of practice brought together in an inter-disciplinary way, different upward links may apply.</p>
<p>Other documents or relevant comments</p>	<p>NA</p>

Leveraging co-funding

ILO Emerging Good Practice Template

Project Title: Market systems development for decent work – the Lab – Phase II
Project TC/SYMBOL: GLO/17/06/CHE

Name of Evaluator: Rachel Shah

Date: 30th October 2020

The following emerging good practice has been identified during the course of the evaluation. Further text can be found in the full evaluation report.

GP Element	Text
Brief summary of the good practice (link to project goal or specific deliverable, background, purpose, etc.)	<p><i>Lab 2 leveraged co-funding that enabled it to effectively double its resources and achieve a high level of productivity and efficiency relative to the initial investment.</i></p> <p>In addition to increasing the Lab's resources, co-funding from project partners provided an indicator of ownership and built the expectation that accessing MSD expertise requires a funding investment.</p>
Relevant conditions and Context: limitations or advice in terms of applicability and replicability	<p>The Lab's primary mechanism for leveraging additional resources was to require co-investment from partners who benefited from its technical services. For example, the Lab used 'work months' invested from ILO project partners to fund two additional members of staff.</p>
Establish a clear cause-effect relationship	<p>By leveraging additional funds, Lab 2 was able to hire more staff, effectively doubling its human resources and achieve far more than it otherwise could have done.</p>
Indicate measurable impact and targeted beneficiaries	<p>The vast majority of Lab 2's partners contributed resources to shared activities, amounting to approximately 1.3 million USD – an additional 65% – of project funds.</p>
Potential for replication and by whom	<p>Other knowledge generation projects that provide technical services could replicate this.</p>
Upward links to higher ILO Goals (DWCPs, Country Programme Outcomes or ILO's Strategic Programme Framework)	<p>This good practice enhances efficiency and could link to any objective.</p>
Other documents or relevant comments	<p>NA</p>