



ILO EVALUATION

- **Evaluation Title:** Final Internal Evaluation of the Strengthening Social and Solidarity Economy Policy in Asia
- **ILO TC/Symbol:** RAS/19/02/KOR
- **Type of Evaluation:** Final Internal Evaluation
- **Country(ies):** Regional, China, Indonesia, Japan, Malaysia, the Philippines, Republic of Korea
- **Date of the evaluation:** 31 August 2021
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- **ILO Administrative Office:** Cooperatives Unit (COOP)
- **Date project ends:** June 2021
- **Donor (country and budget):** the Republic of Korea, USD 600,000 (including a 1% UN levy)
- **Evaluation Manager:** Simel Esim
- **Key Words:** social and solidarity economy, enterprises, decent work, sustainable development, Asia

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

Contents

List of acronyms or abbreviations.....	3
Executive summary	4
1. Project background	10
2. Evaluation background	12
3. Criteria and Questions	12
4. Methodology	14
5. Main findings	15
5.1. Relevance and strategic fit of the project	15
5.2. Coherence	16
5.3. Validity of the project design	18
5.4. Project effectiveness	19
5.5. Efficiency of resource use and management arrangements.....	22
5.6. Impact orientation	22
5.7. Sustainability of project outcomes.....	23
5.8. Cross-cutting issues	24
6. Conclusions	26
7. Lessons learned and good practices	27
8. Recommendations	29
9. Appendix	30
Appendix 1: Terms of Reference	32
Appendix 2: List of interviewees	47
Appendix 3: List of documents consulted	48
Appendix 4: Questionnaire	50
Appendix 5: Lessons Learned and Good Practices	52

List of acronyms or abbreviations

ACT/EMP	Bureau for Employers' Activities
ACTRAV	Bureau for Workers' Activities
ASEAN	Association of Southeast Asian Nations
ASEC	Asian Solidarity Economy Council
CSIER	Center for Social Innovation, Education and Research
DWCP	Decent Work Country Programme
GSEF	Global Social Economy Forum
ICA	International Cooperative Alliance
ILC	International Labour Conference
ILO	International Labour Organization
ILS	International Labour Standards
ITC	International Training Centre of the International Labour Organization
ITUC-AP	International Trade Union Confederation-Asia Pacific
KoSEA	Korea Social Enterprise Promotion Agency
MoEL	Korean Ministry of Employment and Labour
MOEF	Korean Ministry of Economy and Finance
NGO	Non-Governmental Organization
OECD	Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development
OECD-DAC	OECD Development Assistance Committee
PARDEV	Department of Partnerships and Field Support
P&B	Programme and Budget
RIPESS	Intercontinental Network for the Promotion of Social Solidarity Economy
RB	Regular Budget
SNU	Seoul National University
SNUAC	Seoul National University Asia Center
SSE	Social and Solidarity Economy
UNEG	United Nations Evaluation Group
UN ESCAP	United Nations Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific
UNTFSE	UN Inter-Agency Task Force on Social and Solidarity Economy

Executive summary

Purpose and scope of the evaluation

This final evaluation report summarizes key findings, conclusions, lessons learned and recommendations from the project, “Strengthening Social and Solidarity Economy Policy in Asia,” implemented between June 2019 – June 2021.

The purpose of the evaluation is to serve accountability and learning. It is expected to provide recommendations for implementing the next phase of this project¹ and future development and implementation of similar projects. The primary audiences for the evaluation are the ILO, the donor, and the constituents. The evaluation covers the period from the beginning of the project in June 2019 until the evaluation time (July to September 2021).

Project overview

The Strengthening Social and Solidarity Economy Policy in Asia project was undertaken by the ILO, with the implementing partner, Korea Social Enterprise Promotion Agency (KoSEA) and two sub-contractors, Center for Social Innovation Education and Research (CSIER), Seoul National University for the Research component and Underdogs (Korean social enterprise specialized in training) for the Capacity-building. The programme started in June 2019 and ended, following a twelve-month cost extension in June 2021. It was funded by the Korean Ministry of Employment and Labour (MoEL) with the total budget of USD 600,000 (including a 1 per cent UN levy). The ILO’s Cooperatives Unit (COOP) oversaw its management and implementation.

The project’s objective is to contribute to ILO Programme and Budget (P&B) Outcome 4 “Sustainable enterprises as generators of employment and promoters of innovation and decent work.” The project aimed to enhance the understanding of ILO constituents and other relevant stakeholders on the SSE in the region and to provide technical support to countries to develop and/or mainstream SSE in their national development policies and programmes.

The project consisted of research and capacity building that were implemented at the national and regional levels. The country components were implemented in China, Indonesia, Japan, Malaysia, the Philippines, and Republic of Korea. The research component developed an analytical tool to understand the SSE in each country and undertook multiple country case studies on the SSE based on the tool. In the second component, ILO constituents and other relevant stakeholders participated in a capacity building workshop to deepen their understanding of opportunities and challenges facing SSE actors and strengthen their technical capacity towards developing and/or strengthening their SSE policies.

Evaluation process and methodology

The evaluation is structured into four phases: i) Inception, ii) Data collection and preliminary analysis; iii) Data analysis and synthesis, and iv) Finalization of draft report. The evaluation took place between July and September 2021.

The evaluation applied triangulation to increase the validity and rigor of the evaluation findings, engaging with key stakeholders of the project during the data collection and reporting stages. It consisted of a desk review, interviews and a quantitative/qualitative assessment of data (participant list, project documents, tools, etc.).² The interviews were conducted with representatives of tripartite Constituents, regional organizations (i.e. International Co-operative Alliance –Asia Pacific, International Trade Union Confederation – Asia Pacific, Global Social Economy Forum), former project staff, enterprises specialists and project officers in ILO field offices (i.e. Jakarta, Bangkok, Tokyo, and Manila), researchers and staff from KoSEA and Underdogs (See Appendix 2 for a complete list of interviewees).

The following criteria were used in the evaluation:

1. Relevance and strategic fit of the project

¹ The ILO has launched the second phase of the project expanding the scope to six additional countries - Thailand, Vietnam, Mongolia, Kyrgyzstan, Laos and Cambodia. See here: https://www.ilo.org/global/topics/cooperatives/projects/WCMS_817001/lang-en/index.htm

² See Appendix 4

2. Coherence
3. Validity of the project design
4. Project effectiveness
5. Efficiency of resource use and management arrangements
6. Impact orientation
7. Sustainability of project outcomes
8. Cross-cutting issues (i.e. gender equality and non-discrimination, disability inclusion, just transition to environmental sustainability, social dialogue, International Labour Standards)

Three types of indicators (input, process and outcome) were used:³

- Input: funding or key partners;
- Process: activities and outputs; and
- Outcome: expected effects linked to the three main objectives⁴ of the project as stated in the concept note.

The three main objectives of the project were to:

- Conduct research on the status of SSE in Asia with a proposed analytic framework;
- Assess the impact of SSE on job creation; and
- Provide technical support to the countries in need to develop or strengthen their SSE policies and programmes.

Findings

Relevance and strategic fit of the project

The findings highlight the relevance of the project with development plans, constituents' needs, and the overall programme of the ILO. There are a few shortcomings that need to be borne in mind, however. Firstly, the limited involvement of social partners in the overarching design of the programme, and the finding that many respondents lacked an understanding of the relationship among the project's objectives, outcomes, and outputs. This may be due to the absence of an articulated, and clearly communicated, overarching Theory of Change that is used as a basis for determining the relevance of the specific activities.

Coherence

The project has internal coherence, involving enterprise specialists and relevant technical staff in ILO field offices, which contributed to enhancing the capacities of field staff on the SSE. It emerges from the interviews, however, that synergies between the programmes could be improved. The project was not able to fully leverage the ILO contributions, through its comparative advantages (such as international labour standards, and the ILO's Decent Work Agenda) partly due to the project implementors' (KoSEA, sub-contractors) lack of knowledge about the ILO. Regarding external coherence, there was some collaboration with partner institutions, but their level of involvement could have been strengthened in the design and implementation stages.

Validity of the project design

A concept note detailing the background, rationale, and outcomes and a budget was provided while a project strategy including a theory of change, risk analysis and feasibility assessment were missing. They could have been useful to

³ These indicators have been quantitative and qualitative in nature

monitor, track and evaluate the effectiveness of the project against its outcomes. The project title “Strengthening Social and Solidarity Economy in Asia” and its objectives may have been overly ambitious considering that very few policies on SSE are in place⁵ in the region, and the understanding around the SSE is in its initial stages in Asia. The inclusion of an employment dimension was not realistic, considering that the concept of the SSE is not well established and obtaining data on employment is challenging due to the scarcity of data and difficulty in measurement.

Effectiveness

Most of the outcome and output targets have been achieved. Due to the COVID-19 pandemic challenges, the project duration was extended for six months, and activities were converted to a hybrid (conference) and online (workshop) formats. Despite the challenges, the ILO carried out the project activities successfully in cooperation with implementing partner and sub-contractors. A mapping of the SSE landscape and good practices in six Asian countries were shared, creating a foundation for mainstreaming SSE in policies and programmes. Policymakers, practitioners, and relevant stakeholders were better equipped with a common understanding of values and contribution of SSE to decent work.

Efficiency of resource use and management arrangements

The project has made an efficient resource use, achieving all the project outputs in a timely manner. However, the project did not generate any savings from the project activities and there was no budget allocated for follow-up and communication and dissemination activities. The complex management structure (ILO, implementing partner, sub-contractor, researchers) made it difficult to monitor, track expenditures and redirect savings to other priority activities. The involvement of the implementing agency (KoSEA) resulted in additional costs, while its role may have been redundant and unnecessary (overlapping with the role of the ILO project team).

Impact orientation

The impacts at the country level vary considerably depending on the level of interest and willingness of national stakeholders to engage in the topic. While project outputs have been successfully achieved, it may be too early to assess the long-term impact of the project, given that developing or adopting legislations and policies is a lengthy process, that often extends beyond lifespan of a project.

Sustainability

The COVID-19 pandemic has impacted the sustainability of project activities in two important ways: it led to renewed interest from stakeholders on the SSE's role in COVID-19 response and recovery. However, the travel restrictions have limited face-to-face interactions, that are key to community building and mutual learning. Whether the net benefits of the intervention are likely to continue or not is contingent upon the stakeholders' commitment, and external factors, such as the political and economic conditions. The upcoming general discussion on the SSE at the 110th International Labour Conference in June 2022 and the continuation of the efforts through the second phase of the project will help sustain the gains from this project in the long-term.

Cross-cutting issues

The project has sufficiently incorporated and addressed gender and social dialogue elements while some others, such as disability, International Labour Standards and other vulnerable groups have only been marginally addressed. This may be due to the lack of consideration of the cross-cutting issues in the project design and in the monitoring framework and the implementing partner's lack of knowledge of the ILO's normative framework and decent work considerations. There were several efforts from the ILO project team toward addressing these concerns with mixed results.

⁵ Except for the Republic of Korea where a Framework Bill on the SSE is currently pending in Congress.

Lessons Learned and Good Practice

Based on the learnings reported in the Progress Reports, and the interviews with key stakeholders, the following lessons have been identified:

Tripartite approach is effective in leveraging the potential of the SSE to address unmet needs. Growing inequalities, persistent unemployment and environmental considerations have come to the fore as priority policy issues, even more so considering COVID-19. The project helped foster greater awareness on the SSE's contribution to inclusive and sustainable development to the stakeholders in the Asia and Pacific region. Some challenges have hampered the project implementation, due to external (e.g. lack of willingness of stakeholders to engage in this topic, competing conceptual understandings on the SSE) and internal factors (e.g. lack of capacities and resources at the national and regional levels). Establishing and maintaining close collaboration with ILO field offices, constituents and key partners is critical to ensure national ownership and project sustainability.

There is a need to increase the capacity of ILO's country offices in the region. Strengthening ILO field staff capacities on the SSE can lead to increased national ownership and a stronger engagement with national stakeholders. It can also promote intra-regional dialogue and improve the flow of information from headquarters to the regional and country offices. The ILO HQ can strengthen the collaboration with regional and country office in the region and support the field staff to play their role.

Effort is needed to establish procedures to guarantee the best knowledge management strategy. A knowledge management strategy was missing in the project design, to identify the gaps and implement actions in coordination with key actors (i.e. ILO field offices, constituents, partners) and ensuring that research framework make the best use of ILO's comparative advantage. The acquired "know-how" remained as tacit knowledge and were not institutionalized, which led to a knowledge gap when the staff in charge left the project. A procedure needs to be in place and implemented to ensure the knowledge and materials are not lost.

There is a room for improvement on the efficiency of the budget. The complex management structure (ILO, implementing partner, sub-contractors) made it difficult to monitor the budget allocation and spending, and to redirect the savings to other priority activities. A direct management of the budget by the ILO could have led to savings by cutting down the costs of the management fee of the implementing agency, and when converting the activities from in-person to hybrid or online formats. The savings could have been redirected to complement the budget for follow-up and communication and dissemination activities.

The risk management strategy could have led to a better mitigation of potential risks. While the project managed to address the challenge posed by the COVID-19 pandemic, the project team could have developed a risk register in the design stage to identify the risks in the different dimensions of the project (i.e. management structure, local/regional contexts and activities/outputs), and feed the results of the assessments into monitoring and reporting.

The research methodology did not sufficiently capture SSE organizations operating in the informal economy. The methodology should be adapted to the diverse realities around the institutional forms for a better comparison of the SSE across the six Asian countries. Efforts should be geared towards moving away from a limited framework such as social enterprise/social business approach that may be more prominent in East and Southeast Asia to the SSE, that promotes participation, consultation, democratic and joint action. The work should leverage the existing knowledge base in the region and contextualize the findings.

The following good practices were identified:

The online capacity-building workshop serves as a good practice for learning. Held online due to COVID-19 travel restrictions, the workshop used innovative approaches, such as the virtual tours, allowing participants to experience the SSE organizations in action in the Republic of Korea. The needs assessment survey encouraged an early involvement of the participants, and the agenda reflected the needs and interests of the participants. The duration of the workshop was adequate and there was gender balance in the participants. However, the content could have strengthened its policy orientation, for which the sub-contractor would have needed more guidance or its role in the design and implementation be reduced.

The project team, together with the implementing partner and sub-contractors **effectively implemented the COVID-19 contingency plans**, and convert the conference into a hybrid, and workshop in an online format. Holding the conference in a hybrid format led to a wide reach, to raise awareness and strengthen the knowledge and capacity of the SSE stakeholders in the Asia and Pacific region and beyond. The workshop was converted to an online format, and 37 participants (as opposed to 23 that were planned) could be accommodated in the workshop.

The project's follow-up activities deepened the engagement with national stakeholders. The project staff realized the need for an in-depth engagement with the national stakeholders to cultivate national dialogue and foster national ownership of the project outcomes. This took the form of inputs to the national policy dialogue in the Philippines, national webinars held in Indonesia, Japan and planned in Malaysia. The events brought together policy makers and practitioners to increase their understanding on the SSE and support the mainstreaming of SSE in their policies and programmes.

The project staff recognized the **need for stronger communication of the findings from the research and capacity building components** of the project and produced a project video and a series of policy briefs that were disseminated widely through the ILO website and presented at national and regional workshops.

Additional lessons learned and good practices were identified in the interviews, covering various technical, procedural and management issues. See Appendix 5 for these lessons learned and good practices.

Recommendations

Programming:

Recommendation 1: Strengthen the programme-wide theory of change (project team, high, medium-term, low)⁶

A comprehensive project strategy including a theory of change, logical framework, risk analysis and feasibility assessment should be established at an early phase. They should be used as a basis to monitor, track and evaluate the effectiveness of the project against its outcomes. The Theory of Change should establish links between what the initiative does (activities, outputs), what it achieves (outcomes, impact) and the context where it operates. A risk register could be used to identify the various risks, their likelihood and importance, and mitigation measures.

Recommendation 2: Develop clear knowledge and risk management strategy (project team, high, long-term, low)

The project team could establish procedures to document project related communication and resources (including non-English materials) to facilitate the stocktaking of good practices, processes, and procedures. This will support the transition of responsible staff (i.e. secondment staff, consultants, interns) and institutionalize the knowledge and resources especially in the lead up to and beyond International Labour Conference 2022.

Recommendation 3: Improve design and implementation of the budget (project team, high, medium-term, low)

The project team could strengthen the budget oversight by closely monitoring and tracking the budget. This is especially important when the Implementing Partner is involved, and the project has a complex structure (ILO, implementing partner, sub-contractors). It should also earmark sufficient funds in the design phase for communication and dissemination activities and for follow-up activities.

Recommendation 4: Develop and implement a knowledge management strategy (project team and consultants, medium, medium-term, low)

The project staff could document project related communication and materials, to ensure the “know-how” stays within the institution. This will ensure a smooth knowledge transfer when the responsible project staff changes and in applying the lessons from past projects to design future interventions. A post-event evaluation could be conducted to assess what went well, what did not, and what could be improved. Good practices and lessons learned should be documented and shared with the relevant stakeholders.

Recommendation 5: Allow for better use of in-house know-how and expertise (project team, high, medium-term, medium)

⁶ In parenthesis: who is called upon to act; priority or importance (high, medium, low); time frame for implementation (short-term, medium-term, long-term, not applicable); resource implications (e.g. low, medium, high)

The ILO could manage the project directly without an implementing agency. This will lead to more effective utilization of ILO staff expertise, resources and know-how and achieve improved efficiency in decision making by removing the extra layers of bureaucracy. It will also be able to incorporate the inputs of ILO field offices and partners in a more expedited and efficient manner and encourage better monitoring of the research capacity building work, in terms of quality control and accountability vis-à-vis the national researchers undertaking the studies.

Coherence:

Recommendation 6: Ensure better integration of decent work considerations (project team, and consultants, high, medium-term, medium)

The research could strengthen the SSE's link to ILO normative framework, and its adherence to decent work and ILO crosscutting issues such as gender and non-discrimination, and formalization of the informal economy. It should also provide up-to-date and relevant data and information on the contribution of SSE organizations to decent work and sustainable development that can be used by national governments and SSE movements to design and implement policy and advocacy strategies. The ILO could conduct orientation sessions with the researchers on key elements of decent work related to the SSE.

Recommendation 7: Develop and implement a knowledge management strategy (project team and consultants, medium, medium-term, low)

The project staff could document project related communication and materials, to ensure the "know-how" stays within the institution. This will ensure a smooth knowledge transfer when the responsible project staff changes and in applying the lessons from past projects to design future interventions. A post-event evaluation could be conducted to assess what went well, what did not, and what could be improved. Good practices and lessons learned should be documented and shared widely internally and with relevant stakeholders.

Visibility:

Recommendation 8: Strengthen communication and dissemination activities (project team, medium, long-term, medium)

Sufficient funds should be earmarked for communication and dissemination activities at the design phase. A communication strategy could be designed in a participatory manner involving relevant stakeholders. It is important to communicate the project news and outputs throughout the project. Various modalities (i.e. social media, newsletter, publications, press release) should be used, contextualizing the message to the target audience, and translating into national languages, when appropriate.

Collaboration and Sustainability:

Recommendation 9: Strengthen the involvement of ILO country office, constituents, and partners (project team, medium, long-term, medium)

Involving constituents, ILO field offices and partners from the early stage of the project implementation will be important to strengthen national ownership and secure the sustainability of project outputs and outcomes. The project team should map the interventions led by other institutions at regional and country levels. A focal point could be appointed from ILO's regional/country offices to coordinate the project, in partnership with the ILO HQ, and national and regional advisory committees could oversee the implementation of the project and provide inputs throughout the process.

Recommendation 10: Strengthen the sustainability of the project (project team, medium, long-term, high)

The project can ensure sustainability by promoting the continuous exchange among internal and external stakeholders to foster mutual exchange and learning. It should also maximize the in-house expertise and networks (e.g. field offices, ITC-ILO), and explore synergies with interventions undertaken by partner institutions. UNTFSSSE could also play a more prominent role in strengthening the SSE in Asia and the Pacific region. ILO could use its current position as the Chair to support such development.

1. Project background

The concept of social and solidarity economy is less well-known in most of Asia compared to other parts of the world, such as Europe, Latin America, and some parts of Africa. SSE organizations play an important role in decent work, employment creation, rights at work, social dialogue, and social cohesion. For example, mutuals and cooperatives facilitate access to social protection for the most vulnerable especially in rural and informal economies.

In many Asian countries, it is difficult to identify which entities fall under the SSE in the absence of national legal and policy frameworks on the SSE. Creating an enabling legal and policy framework could enhance visibility and bring greater awareness on the contribution of the SSE in achieving inclusive and sustainable development.

To enhance the understanding on the SSE in Asia and the Pacific region and to provide technical support to countries in developing or mainstreaming the SSE in their policies or programmes, the Korean Ministry of Employment and Labour (MoEL) agreed to support the ILO's "Strengthening Social and Solidarity Economy Policy in Asia" project proposal in May 2019. Since the launch of the project in September 2019, the ILO has worked closely with the Korea Social Enterprise Promotion Agency (KoSEA) in the implementation of the project in six countries in Asia: China, Indonesia, Japan, Malaysia, the Philippines and Republic of Korea.

Besides KoSEA, two sub-contractors were involved in the implementation: Center for Social Innovation Education and Research (CSIER) at Seoul National University for the Research component and Underdogs (a Korean social enterprise specialized in training) for the Capacity Building component. The project's initial duration was 18 months but it was granted a no-cost extension until June 30 2021 due to the COVID-19 pandemic and initial delays in project implementation. The total budget was USD 600,000 (including a 1 per cent UN levy).

The initial aims outlined in the concept note are:

- Conduct research on the status of SSE in Asia with a proposed analytical framework;
- Assess the impact of SSE on job creation; and
- Provide technical support to countries that need to develop or strengthen their SSE policies and programmes.

The two components of the project and the corresponding outputs are:

Research component:

- Carry out desk reviews to develop an analytical framework on the SSE and how to measure its impact on employment creation in a country;
- Conduct multiple country case studies in Asia on the SSE and its impact on employment creation. Explore the possibility of establishing the SSE model fit for Asia which could play a role for further guidance on SSE policy;
- Elaborate on the Korea SSE policy research based on the previous ILO study⁷ to use the findings and lessons from Korea's experience as a key reference for establishing a normative SSE model in Asia;
- Hold a conference on the findings and lessons from the research to conduct a preliminary needs assessment of the region.

Capacity Building component:

- Plan capacity building activities based on the needs assessment in the region, e.g. adapting the research outcomes into training materials and conducting a training workshop;
- Build a close relationship between the implementing Korean agency and other relevant organizations (e.g. ILO-International Training Centre Turin, Global Social Economy Forum -GSEF in Seoul) for knowledge exchange;
- Build a community of practice for SSE in Asia to ensure the sustainability of the project outcomes in collaboration with KoSEA which would play a key role in organizing and operating the networking group;
- Draft an outcome report that integrates the results and outcomes of the research and capacity building components and identifies the next steps forward.

This project was the first ILO development cooperation project on the SSE in Asia and the Pacific region. The only formal initiative from the ILO prior to this project in the region was SSE Academy that took place in Seoul in 2017⁸. In the last decade, ILO Bangkok and ILO COOP had joint initiatives on cooperatives policy reform (e.g. Sri Lanka, Indonesia, Vietnam),

⁷ Peter Utting, [Public policies for Social and Solidarity Economy: Assessing Progress in Seven Countries](#) (ILO, 2017).

⁸ ILO, ["ILO SSE Academy in Seoul concluded successfully,"](#) 10 July 2017.

and training tools (e.g. Cambodia, Myanmar, Laos, Mongolia, Nepal, India)⁹. Considering the development of the SSE is in its early stages in the region, this project played an important role in raising constituents and key stakeholders' awareness of the concept of the SSE and its contribution to decent work and sustainable development.

SSE partners in Asia and the Pacific region have requested the ILO to expand its work on SSE in the region, by calling for a regional working groups of UNTFSSSE, and for the ILO to strengthen its engagement with regional institutions (e.g. Asian Development Bank, Association of Southeast Asian Nations, United Nations Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific) to further promote the SSE.

⁹ For instance, [Think.Coop](#) was developed jointly by the ILO Decent Work Team Bangkok and the ILO's Cooperatives Unit.

2. Evaluation background

Following the ILO's guidelines, a final internal evaluation is required as an integral part of the implementation of technical cooperation projects to provide accountability and to foster learning and knowledge exchange.

This evaluation has been conducted according to the criteria established by the [OECD/DAC Evaluation Quality Standard](#) and the [UNEG Code of Conduct for Evaluation in the UN System](#). This evaluation followed the [ILO policy guidelines for results-based evaluation](#) and related guidance, notably [Checklist 4.8 "Writing the inception report"](#); [Checklist 4.1 "Validating methodologies"](#); and [Checklist 4.2 "Preparing the evaluation report"](#).

3. Criteria and Questions

The evaluation applied key criteria to answer the following questions:

Relevance and strategic fit

- Does the project objectives and design respond to beneficiaries', global, country, and partner/institution needs, policies, and priorities and do they remain valid over time?
 - Has it continued to do so in the COVID-19 context?

Coherence

- What links have been established so far with other activities of the UN or other cooperating partners operating in the country in areas related to the project?
- Was the project able to leverage the ILO contributions, through its comparative advantages (including tripartism, international labour standards, ILO Decent Work Team)?

Validity of the project design

- Was the strategy for the sustainability of project results defined clearly at the design stage of the project?
- Were the objectives of the project clear and realistic?
- What challenges and risks have been identified during the project lifespan that could have potentially hindered progress in delivery of outputs and achievements of outcomes as planned?
 - What corrective actions were taken to address these challenges?

Effectiveness

- Has (and to what extent) the project achieved, or is expected to achieve, its objectives, and its results, including any differential results across groups?
- To what extent has the COVID-19 pandemic influenced project results and effectiveness and how did the project address this influence and adapted?
- What, if any, unintended results of the project have been identified or perceived?
- Was the coordination and partnership with main stakeholders effective? Were the project partners able to fulfil the roles expected in the project strategy? Were there any capacity challenges?

Efficiency

- Has the intervention delivered, or is likely to deliver, results in an economic and timely way?

Impact orientation

- Is it likely that the project outcomes will generate a long-term positive change?
- Has the ownership at national level been promoted and achieved?

Sustainability

- Do the net benefits of the intervention continue, or are likely to continue?
- How has the sustainability of the project been affected by COVID-19 situation, and how did the project address obstacles (if any) to achieve the project results?

Cross-cutting issues

- How has the intervention addressed men's and women's specific strategic needs as well as other cross-cutting issues (i.e. disability inclusion, just transition to environmental sustainability, social dialogue, International Labour Standards)?
- Were other vulnerable groups considered, and if so, how?

4. Methodology

The evaluation was carried out in adherence with the ILO evaluation framework and the ILO policy guidelines for results-based evaluation. Sex-disaggregated data and consideration for the different needs of women and men and marginalized groups were considered throughout the evaluation process.

The evaluation has applied triangulation as a method to increase the validity and rigor of the evaluation findings, engaging with key stakeholders of the project during the data collection and reporting stages. This triangulation included a desk review of relevant materials, and interviews with relevant stakeholders.

The evaluation has undertaken the following:

Desk review (see complete list in Appendix 3):

- Brief overview of the project on ILO webpage
- Project concept note
- Implementation Agreement
- Work plan
- Concept note and agenda for the research conference
- Final research report
- Progress reports (2019 and 2020)
- Capacity building workshop plan
- Training needs analysis results
- Workshop invitation letter
- Workshop program schedule
- Workshop materials (list of participants, presentations, etc).
- Workshop satisfaction survey results
- Research budget
- Capacity building budget
- Write ups and resources
- Outcome Report (final report)
- Project document for second phase

Review of literature

Analysis of evaluation guidelines from OECD-DAC and ILO

Interviews with key informants/stakeholders

Interviews were conducted with key informants: project staff and stakeholders (including beneficiaries of the project).

Data was provided by the project manager at ILO, the implementing agency (KoSEA) as well as the sub-contractors (CSIER, Seoul National University and Underdogs).

All three types of indicators were used:

- Input: funding or key partners;
- Process: activities and outputs and
- Outcome: expected effects linked to the three main objectives of the project.

5. Main findings

This chapter summarizes the findings of the evaluation. The observations are structured along the evaluation criteria and the evaluation questions.

5.1. Relevance and strategic fit of the project

Do the project objectives and design respond to beneficiaries', global, country, and partner/institution needs, policies, and priorities and do they remain valid over time?

The analysis of external documents and interviews affirm that the project focus is considered relevant for all its components. The SSE has gained interest from SSE partners in Asia and the Pacific region, and the ILO has received requests to expand its work on the SSE, including an establishment of UNTFSS regional working groups and to strengthen ILO's engagement with regional organizations (i.e. Asian Development Bank, Association of Southeast Asian Nations, United Nations Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific) to maximize synergies in promoting the SSE in the region.

The SSE is also featured in the Philippines' Decent Work Country Programme (DWCP) under Outcome 1.2: "Pilot/demonstration projects on the establishment of a community investment fund at the LGU level to support Social Solidarity Economy (SSE) enterprises" and "Action programme for business/employers' organizations in setting up business advisory/assistance and trainers' training services for MSMEs, including Social Solidarity Economy (SSE) enterprises."

The initiative brought awareness to constituents on the values, principles and organizational forms that fall under the SSE. It also highlighted SSE organizations' contribution to decent work and sustainable development agenda. The mapping of the SSE organizations in six countries brought clarity as to which SSE organizations, based on their economic, social, and democratic features, can be considered as part of the SSE. This could help policy makers design policies and programmes aligned with the principles and values of the SSE.

The project provided valuable inputs in the ongoing policy development process on SSE. This is the case for the Presidential Regulation on National Entrepreneurship prepared in Indonesia¹⁰ and the draft Poverty Reduction through Social Entrepreneurship (PRESENT) Bill in the Philippines¹¹. Building on the adoption of the Workers Cooperative Bill in Japan in 2020, and the renewed interest in the SSE's potential as a social welfare partner and in addressing inequality, the ILO Tokyo Office, and the Japan Cooperative Alliance (JCA) co-hosted an online webinar on the SSE¹². These initiatives attest to the project's relevance.

Some stakeholders expressed that they were not consulted and/or involved in the design of the project. For instance, the International Cooperative Alliance – Asia and Pacific (ICA-AP), representing cooperative movements in the member countries in the region, were only involved in the capacity building component of the project. Having the inputs from constituents and relevant stakeholders from the early stage could have strengthened the project's relevance, aligned with their needs and priorities.

Has it continued to do so in the COVID-19 context?

The relevance of the project has increased given the important role played by SSE organizations during the COVID-19 response and recovery. The pandemic has accentuated inequalities, and the need to expand access to quality jobs and strengthen safety net for vulnerable groups.

¹⁰ The ILO held a national webinar on supporting the National Entrepreneurship Program through the Social and Solidarity Economy. See: https://www.ilo.org/jakarta/whatwedo/eventsandmeetings/WCMS_815524/lang--en/index.htm.

¹¹ A coalition of actors from civil society are engaged in advocacy to ensure that the PRESENT Bill is broadened beyond issues of market access and financial support for social entrepreneurs to a range of benefits for informal economy workers, other SSE organizations and their support organizations.

¹² This event provided an initial opportunity for the participants to learn about the SSE, including through various examples in Japan. See: https://www.ilo.org/global/topics/cooperatives/news/WCMS_832520/lang--en/index.htm.

The capacity building workshop had a session on “SSE and COVID-19” with case studies on the Korean government’s response to the COVID-19 pandemic, and examples of consumer and health, welfare and social cooperatives providing essential goods and services to the affected members and wider public during COVID-19. The showcase of good practices helped the workshop participants gain inspiration on how local, and national governments can integrate cooperatives and other SSE organizations into public relief strategies as partners and beneficiaries.

The research did not sufficiently address the impact of COVID-19 on the SSE landscape, given that the research draft was advanced when evidence on the impact of COVID-19 started to emerge. The series of policy briefs, that summarizes the key findings from the research report featured some examples of SSE organizations’ responses to the COVID-19 pandemic in the six countries. This includes protecting smallholder farmers’ food production, promoting alternative forms of financing, and work with community partners to respond to community-based needs. Further elaboration on this element could have increased the relevance of this project, to include quantitative assessments on job creation and good practices of COVID-19 recovery related policies by governments, SSE institutions and advocacy networks.

5.2. Coherence

What links have been established so far with other activities of the UN or other cooperating partners operating in the country in areas related to the project?

The project fostered collaboration with institutions supporting the development of the SSE. Opportunities for collaboration were sought with global institutions and regional networking groups, particularly with Asia Solidarity Economy Council (ASEC), the International Network for the Promotion of Social and Solidarity Economy (RIPESS)’s regional network in Asia. Three members from the Executive Committee of ASEC carried out the research for Malaysia, Indonesia, and the Philippines. Their expertise and knowledge were an asset for the project to widen the knowledge base on the SSE, raise awareness and impact policymaking. The research conference announcement and the results were disseminated on ASEC webpage and its social media¹³. The Secretary General of the Global Social Economy Forum (GSEF) and Regional Director of ICA-AP participated in the project activities and the final evaluation of the project. Through this initiative, contacts were initiated with employers’ and workers’ organizations at the regional and national levels.

There is an increasing interest and demand for capacity building on the SSE in Asia and the Pacific region, attested by a mapping of the regional activities on the SSE:

Activity	Description	Organizers	Date
8 th Edition of the ILO Academy on Social and Solidarity Economy	An inter-regional training opportunity that gathers practitioners and policymakers from around the world, to share their experiences and meet leading SSE specialists. The 8 th edition of the ILO Academy was held in Seoul, Republic of Korea, with a focus on SSE ecosystems and the future of work.	ILO	June 26-30 2017
Strengthening Civil Society Participation in Social Enterprise Education and Development (CSO-SEED)	An EU-British Council project that aims to improve civil society participation in policy reforms to develop an environment conducive to decent work, job creation and small and medium enterprises development through the promotion of social enterprise. The project was implemented in the Autonomous Region of Muslim Mindanao (ARMM), along with other Bangsamoro areas in Mindanao.	Financed by European Union and co-financed and implemented by British Council	December 2015-2018
ASEC Online SSE Academy	It featured the presentation of 13 case studies from 6 countries in Asia in five sessions. The case studies highlight good practices of SSE organizations practicing five	Asian Solidarity Economy Council (ASEC)	May-July 2020

¹³ See: <http://www.asec-sse.com/2020/09/ilo-mapping-of-sse-in-asia.html>

	dimensions of the SSE: social responsible governance, edifying values, community social economy benefit, ecological conservation and economic sustainability. The sessions was followed by networking and communication activities.		
ASEAN Civil Society Conference/ASEAN People's Forum (ACSC/APF2020)	A regional meeting held under the theme "Southeast Asian People Solidarity for an Inclusive, Cohesive and Responsive Community" with workshops on Transformative and Solidarity Economy and others	ASEAN Civil Society Conference ASEAN People's Forum	November 5-7 2020
Asia Europe People's Forum (AEPF)	A Forum held under the theme "Asia Europe People's Forum for a Just, Peaceful and Sustainable World." It consists of dialogues, workshops, actions, policy debates and plenary sessions. The outcome of this meeting will be in the form of a Final Declaration presented to the 13 th Asia Europe Meeting (ASEM13) where heads of states from Asia and Europe will have discussions on future priorities and plans.	Asia Europe People's Forum (AEPF)	May 17 and 24 2021
Engendering Social and Solidarity Economy	An online training program on the SSE that ran through the Data, Knowledge, and Information Launcher (DaKILa) online learning platform.	University of the Philippines Center for Women's and Gender Studies in cooperation with UN Women and ASEC	June 15 to July 30 2021
ASEAN Social Enterprise Development Programme (ASEAN-SEDP)	An initiative by the ASEAN Foundation, with support from GIZ on behalf of the German Federal Ministry for Economic Cooperation and Development (BMZ) and SAP that offers an opportunity for social enterprises to grow and achieve sustainability by providing them with access to capacity building, mentorship, networking, funding grants and wider market across ASEAN.	ASEAN Foundation, GIZ	February-October 2021

Other related initiatives include country level activities such as the five-cluster dialogue on enterprise formalization that started in 2019 in the Philippines, two webinars organized in collaboration with Fair Trade organizations and [Homenet](#) in Indonesia and presentation in collaboration with local cooperative federations in the Forum for Economic Democracy in Indonesia.

The evaluation did not find any specific links of the project with other UN agencies or international actors. Nonetheless, the prominent role of the ILO in the UN Inter-agency Taskforce on Social and Solidarity Economy (UNTFSSSE) and the involvement of key actors active in the promotion of the SSE in Asia can be considered as an initial level of coordination and could be further strengthened. Possible collaboration opportunities could be explored with the Asian Development Bank, Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN), the South Asian Association for Regional Cooperation (SAARC) and the Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific (UN ESCAP) to benefit from their experience and expertise in the region.

As an initial research and capacity building initiative in Asia, the project contributed to transferring knowledge from HQ to field, which will be continued through the second phase of the project. The field offices, including the enterprises specialists and relevant technical staff in ILO Bangkok, Manila, Tokyo and Jakarta offices were informed and involved in the project. The nature of the follow-up activities was determined in close cooperation and consultation with ILO Enterprises specialists, relevant technical staff, and national stakeholders in the target countries.

Was the project able to leverage the ILO contributions, through its comparative advantages (including tripartism, international labour standards, ILO Decent Work Team)?

The evaluation findings showed that the project made sufficient efforts to involve tripartite constituents in the capacity-building phase. Nominees were sought from ACTRAV and ACT/EMP for the representatives from workers' and employers' organizations from six countries, and relevant ministries/departments were contacted through ILO field offices (i.e. ILO Jakarta, Manila, Tokyo). Moreover, regional organizations in the AP region (ITUC-AP and Asean Confederation of Employers (ACE)) were invited.

The research lacked reference to decent work and ILO international labour standards. The Decent Work agenda has not been considered in the research framework and there is little mention of workers or, employers' associations, with exception of the Philippines study. This was partly due to the implementing agency, sub-contractors and researchers lacking knowledge on ILO's work on the SSE. The interviews with ILO staff revealed that the complex layer of structure (ILO, implementing partner, sub-contractors, national researchers) made it difficult to establish quality controls and accountability vis-à-vis the national researchers undertaking the studies. The unique tripartite structure of the ILO and its normative capacity could be further leveraged in future activities (training, research, dissemination, etc.).

International Labour Standards (ILS) related to the SSE were integrated in the capacity building workshop, such as the [ILO Recommendation on the Promotion of Cooperatives, 2002 \(No.193\)](#). The session on "Informal Economy and SSE" highlighted the [ILO Recommendation on Transition from the Informal to the Formal Economy, 2015 \(No. 204\)](#) as a key reference to facilitate the transition of workers and economic units from the informal to the formal economy, considering the significance of the informal economy in the region, particularly in countries in Southeast Asia.

5.3. Validity of the project design

Was the strategy for the sustainability of project results defined clearly at the design stage of the project? Were the objectives of the project clear and realistic?

An effective strategy for the sustainability was missing in the project design. During the project conception stage, a concept note detailing the background, rationale, outcomes, and a budget was provided while a project strategy including a theory of change, risk analysis and feasibility assessment were missing. They could have been useful to monitor, track and evaluate the effectiveness of the project against its outcomes.

Some interviewees felt that the project objective¹⁴ was not realistic as having concrete impact on policies requires a long-term horizon, and further commitments and ownership from key stakeholders. The title of the project "Strengthening Social and Solidarity Economy Policy in Asia" was misleading as none of the six target countries had a SSE policy except for the Republic of Korea. The objectives may have been ambitious, what should have been to raise awareness on the SSE and facilitate dialogue among constituents and stakeholders and contribute to the knowledge base in Asia.

The inclusion of employment dimension was not realistic considering that the concept of the SSE is not well established in most of the countries and obtaining data on employment is challenging due to the scarcity of data and difficulty in measurement.

What challenges and risks have been identified during the project lifespan that could have potentially hindered progress in delivery of outputs and achievements of outcomes as planned? What corrective actions were taken to address these challenges?

Some key challenges and risks and the corrective actions undertaken are:

- **A risk management strategy or at brief ex-ante risk assessment was missing from the project design.** The project staff undertook an exercise to assess challenges and potential risks associated with COVID-19 restrictions and corrective actions. Several meetings were held with the implementing partner throughout the project to

¹⁴ The objective was outlined as followed in the concept note: "Practitioners, policy-makers and relevant stakeholders in SSE entities in Asia are better equipped with common understanding of values and contribution of SSE to decent work focusing on quality job creation. This understanding ultimately results in forming better SSE policy tailored to the national context in each country."

review the implementation strategy, and make the necessary adjustments (i.e. revising the agenda of the capacity-building workshop to an online format).

The impacts of COVID-19 led to project delays and change in modalities of the activities. The COVID-19 restrictions have led to unforeseen delays in the implementation of the project activities, notably the postponement of the planned activities, the research conference and in-person capacity-building workshop. Despite the challenges, ILO carried out the project activities successfully in cooperation with implementing partner and sub-contractors. Holding the conference in a hybrid format led to a wide reach, to raise awareness and strengthen the knowledge and capacity of the SSE stakeholders in Asia and the Pacific region and beyond. The workshop was converted to an online format, and 37 participants (as opposed to 23 initially planned for) could be accommodated in the workshop.

- **The research methodology did not sufficiently capture the SSEOs operating in the informal economy.** The analytical framework for the mapping of the SSE institutions is from a legal and institutional approach capturing formal institutions. While this framework may be conducive for countries that have well developed legal frameworks (i.e. Republic of Korea), it did not sufficiently capture the country contexts in Southeast Asia where informality is widespread (i.e. associations and self-help groups). The research revealed that a research framework that is better adapted to the diverse realities around the institutional forms (traditional and modern, formal and informal) is needed for a better comparison of the SSE across the six Asian countries. The analytical framework will be refined in the second phase of the project to capture SSE organizations operating in the informal economy in addition to those that are formally registered.
- **There was a low level of participants from China, and Japan for the capacity-building workshop.** Out of 37 participants, there were only two from Japan and one from China. Despite the considerable efforts that ILO project team took to inform and invite constituents and relevant stakeholders, the Ministry in charge of cooperatives in China expressed that the SSE is not one of their priority items at its present time. For Japan, the Ministry felt they lacked knowledge on the topic and did not feel ready to engage yet. The corrective action taken was to disseminate the workshop news in Mandarin¹⁵ and Japanese¹⁶, and a follow-up national webinar in Japan to raise awareness on the SSE.
- **The short duration of the project and lack of resources were cited as a key challenge.** In this case the corrective action was the no-cost extension and securing a continued commitment from the donor. However, this extension was also linked to the late start of the project. Due to shortage of funds, the project team was able to complement the gaps with Regular Budget (RB) sources, and borrowing from second phase budget to undertake follow-up activities and communication and dissemination.

A lack of a knowledge management strategy meant some of the key resources and lessons learned were lost. The project was initiated and managed by a secondment staff from the Korean Ministry of Economy and Finance. The high turnover of staff, among other factors, made it difficult to expand the personal learning into organizational learning and sustain the networks. In anticipation of the departure of the secondment staff, a junior staff was hired under the project in June 2020 to continue the implementation of the project.

5.4. Project effectiveness

Has (and to what extent) the project achieved, or is it expected to achieve, its objectives, and its results, including any differential results across groups?

The two main outcomes of the project were:

- Broaden the knowledge base on the SSE in six countries in Asia by providing a mapping of the SSE landscape and
- Increase the capacity of constituents and relevant stakeholders (including ILO Offices in the region) to support the development of SSE policy and/or mainstream the SSE in policies and programmes.

¹⁵ See: <http://www.jianzhengnet.com/plus/view.php?aid=13385>

¹⁶ See: <https://www.businesswire.com/news/home/20210331005362/ja/>

- In the **Philippines**, ILO COOP and Manila supported the national consultation process by providing technical inputs to the drafts of the revised Poverty Reduction through Social Entrepreneurship (PRESENT) Bill. The organizations from the informal sector, spearheaded by the National Anti-Poverty Commission Workers in the Informal Sector (NAPC-WIS) and Alliance of Workers in the Informal Sector (ALLWIES) are advocating for broadening the Bill's focus beyond social enterprises, to mainstream of Social and Solidarity Economy (SSE) concept in the PRESENT Bills.
- In **Indonesia**, ILO Jakarta, National Development Planning Agency (BAPPENAS), Ministry of Cooperative and SMEs of Indonesia, Asian Solidarity Economy Council and Bina Swadaya Foundation organized a national webinar "Supporting the National Entrepreneurship Program through the SSE."¹⁷ The webinar brought together policy makers and practitioners to share knowledge and perspectives on how Indonesia could build a conducive ecosystem for SSE. The inputs from the webinar will inform the national entrepreneurship framework.
- In **Japan**, ILO Tokyo co-organized a webinar "TSUNAGARU by the Social and Solidarity Economy" with Japan Cooperative Alliance (JCA), with support from the Ministry of Health, Labour and Welfare (MHLW) on December 16, 2021. The objective is to raise awareness on the SSE to the national stakeholders through concrete examples and discuss challenges and opportunities for strengthening the SSE in Japan.

All seven targets formulated in the concept note were documented as achieved in the Final Progress Report (covering the period May 2019 to July 2021) by the project management team. The interviews with stakeholders showed that the project contributed to the following positive impacts on the policy process:

- Providing inputs to policy process in the Philippines regarding the draft "Poverty Reduction through Social Entrepreneurship" Bills.
- Providing support towards the development of a national entrepreneurship framework, aimed at providing a conducive environment for start-ups, including social enterprises in Indonesia.
- Providing an initial opportunity for participants to learn about the SSE, including through various examples in Japan.

Although not directly linked to the outcomes of the project, the term "social economy" and its contributions to sustainable development was mentioned for the first time in the SDG Voluntary National Review¹⁸ submitted in July 2021 by the Malaysian government.

To what extent has the COVID-19 pandemic influenced project results and effectiveness and how did the project address this influence and adapted?

There has been an increased interest and recognition of the role played by SSE organizations in COVID-19 response and recovery. It raised the profile of the SSE given its' role in addressing inequality, poverty, and other social deficits, which came to the fore during the policy discussions.

Some key challenges that influenced the effectiveness of the project were:

- Some researchers had difficulties accessing data during the research components due to restrictions around in-person meetings and some data not being available online.
- Some participants felt the opportunities for networking was lost, as they would have preferred face-to-face interactions.
- The absence of in-person interactions impacted the sustainability of the Community of Practice (CoP) among researchers and key stakeholders.

The project staff implemented corrective actions to address the challenges including:

- The project was extended for six months, following the delays in project implementation due to COVID-19 which mainly occurred during the research phase.
- The modality of the key activities had to be changed (the international research conference was held in a hybrid format and the capacity-building workshop online), as well as the design and implementation of the capacity-building workshop (i.e. inclusion of a session on SSE and COVID-19, and a virtual tour).

¹⁷ See: https://www.ilo.org/global/topics/cooperatives/sse/WCMS_815673/lang--en/index.htm

¹⁸ See Box Article 5: Social and Community Enterprises, Economic Planning Unit, Prime Minister's Department, [Malaysia Voluntary National Review \(VNR\)](#), 2021.

The corrective actions and the interest generated by the project are likely to be sustained beyond the duration of the project. This has been attested by the increasing demand from constituents and key stakeholders to hold follow-up activities, and their interest in learning from other country experiences, as in the case in Japan, Indonesia, and Malaysia.

What, if any, unintended results of the project have been identified or perceived?

The project generated positive unintended results, notably:

- Extended networks of researchers and stakeholders at the national and regional levels in Asia and the Pacific region;
- The expressed need for ILO country office to engage deeper with constituents and relevant stakeholders on the SSE;
- Greater awareness of the diversity in terms of the types of SSE organizations that either share features commonly associated with the SSE or are potentially supportive of the SSE;
- Request for the ILO to establish a regional body of the UNTFSS in Asia and the Pacific;
- Request from national stakeholders for the ILO to hold follow-up activities on the SSE or support the policy dialogue;
- ICA has produced a paper¹⁹ on the perspectives of cooperative apexes/federations regarding their interest and engagement with the SSE.

Was the coordination and partnership with main stakeholders effective? Were the project partners able to fulfill the roles expected in the project strategy? Were there any capacity challenges?

Most of the interviewees from the organizations involved (ILO, SNU, Underdogs and KoSEA) viewed the coordination as sub-optimal, due to the complex three-level structure (ILO, implementing partner, sub-contractors). This structure made it difficult to monitor the research and capacity building work, in terms of quality controls and accountability vis-à-vis the national researchers undertaking the studies, and the sub-contractors that implemented the project activities.

Having both implementing agency and sub-contractors led to extra layers of bureaucracy, overlap of responsibilities, and hindered efficient decision-making. Some interviewees have pointed to the need for ILO to directly manage sub-contractors or their activities or at least to consider the need for direct communication with the ILO Cooperatives Unit.

Given that it was the first time that the external partners were engaged in ILO project, they lacked understanding of ILO's work and how to leverage ILO comparative advantage (tripartism, decent work agenda, international labour standards) and incorporate them in the outputs. As an example, the research lacked reference to decent work and ILO international labour standards, despite ILO's extensive feedback to the research drafts, relayed in writing, and through zoom meetings, and sharing of issue and country specific materials. This proved to be a challenge for researchers who were not familiar with ILO's work on the SSE.

The capacity-workshop was rated as overall highly positive in the satisfaction survey. However, the action planning exercise on the last day may not have been tailored or adapted to respond to the needs of constituents and stakeholders wishing to develop policies and/or mainstream the SSE in their relevant policies and programmes. This may partly be due to the sub-contractor that is specialized in working mainly with start-ups and social entrepreneurs and not with the main target audience of the workshop (i.e. public officials, representatives of workers' and employers' organizations, coop federations, and SSE practitioners). While the participants appreciated their methodology and techniques as interactive and innovative, especially the study tour, it may have lacked impact and practicality in terms of real-world applications. As a case in point, the average rating for on the question "How likely is it that you will apply some of what you have learned?" was low (2.5 out of 4)²⁰.

¹⁹ Balasubramanian Iyer et al., "Centering cooperatives and cooperative identity within the social and solidarity economy: Views from the Asia-Pacific cooperative apexes and federations," *Journal of Co-operative Organization and Management* 9, No. 2 (2021).

²⁰ 4 being very likely and 1 being not likely at all

5.5. Efficiency of resource use and management arrangements

Has the intervention delivered, or is likely to deliver, results in an economic and timely way?

Most of the respondents indicated that the activities provided good value for the resources invested. Regarding the optimal use of funds however, some respondents remarked that the resources could have been used more efficiently²¹.

The project had several challenges regarding the resource management:

- **the lack of budget for communication and dissemination activities:** there was no budget for communication and dissemination related activities, such as a project video, webpage, interpretations during webinars, translation, and layout of publications. Due to the shortage of funds, the gaps had to be complemented with RB sources and second phase budget.
- **the limited savings generated from the conversion of activities to hybrid and online formats:** The changed modality of the research conference and workshop led to use of the savings from logistics (e.g. airfare, accommodation, transportation, meals, coordination for the field visits) for facilitating communication through digital platforms (i.e. Notion, Collective Brain, Zoom, BeeCanvas, Slack), editing videos, organizing the virtual tour and disseminating press releases of workshops news in six languages. As well, a higher number of participants (37 as opposed to 23) could be accommodated in the workshop. The complex management structure made it difficult for the ILO to monitor the sub-contractors' expenditures, that were relayed by the implementing partner. A close monitoring of the budget would have allowed for savings, making it possible to reallocate to other priority activities.
- **the complex management arrangement resulted in extra effort in coordination and resources:** The implementing agency, KoSEA's role (overseeing sub-contractors' work, which then reported to the ILO) may have been redundant and unnecessary, resulting in additional costs (17,000 USD was spent on KoSEA's project management services). Establishing contracts directly with SNU and Underdogs to implement the project may have resulted in a more efficient use of funds and ensured better monitoring of the research and capacity building work, in terms of quality control and accountability vis-à-vis the national researchers undertaking the studies.

5.6. Impact orientation

Is it likely that the project outcomes will generate a long-term positive change?

The immediate objective of the project was at the end of the project, "ILO constituents, co-operators, decision makers, and their development partners, will have access to studies, data and knowledge on the overview of SSE landscape in six countries in Asia, and have an increased understanding of the contribution of SSE to human-centered future of work in Asia and the Pacific."

The long-term objective of the project is its contribution to ILO's Programme and Budget 2020-21 Outcome 4 on *"Promoting sustainable enterprises"*, and to Output 4.1, *"Increased capacity of member States to create an enabling environment for entrepreneurship and sustainable enterprises"*.

Looking at the various results described in "Project Effectiveness (Section 5.4)," one can certainly conclude that there has been a strong contribution to Output 4.1. All activities that correspond to the project outcomes were successfully implemented.

However, interviewees expressed that it may be too early to assess the long-term impact of the project, given that policy development process requires a long-term horizon that extends beyond the project duration, and external factors that are outside the control of the project such as the interest and willingness of the stakeholders to promote the SSE, and to some extent, country's political and economic conditions. Interviewees generally agreed that the project helped raise

²¹ The analysis is based on a limited number of answers since most of the interviewees were not in the position to respond to this question.

awareness on the SSE and provided a valuable platform for open dialogue and collaboration among national and regional stakeholders in Asia and the Pacific region.

The impacts at the country level vary considerably. In Republic of Korea, the impacts are deemed high, given the well-established and vibrant social economy ecosystem, and as attested by the strong interest and involvement of Korean stakeholders such as the donor, implementing partner, sub-contractors, etc. in the project. In Indonesia, the project led to a stronger engagement with the constituents to raise awareness on the SSE and provided valuable inputs towards the National Entrepreneurship Framework. In China, however, the ILO Cooperatives Unit's attempts to engage with the constituents and key stakeholders has been unsuccessful. The findings from this evaluation attest that impacts are likely higher in countries where national stakeholders have existing interest and have identified areas of need in promoting the SSE.

ILO's Cooperatives Unit is continuing its efforts to raise awareness on the SSE through a second phase, which expands the scope to six additional countries in Asia²². At the end of the project, it aims to elaborate a normative model on the SSE which can be identified across all twelve countries of the first and second phase. The impact would largely depend on the stakeholders' engagement and ownership. This may require a stronger engagement with the constituents, and SSE practitioners in the countries, in partnership with relevant ILO country offices, and other organizations. Building the capacity of ILO country offices on this topic would be an essential step towards implementing future projects in a decentralized manner.

Has ownership at national level been promoted and achieved?

The level of ownership varies depending on the country and can be divided into three parts:

- Insufficient level of ownership: China, Japan and to a certain extent Malaysia. For China, it is linked to not having a local researcher, and low involvement of national constituents and stakeholders. In Malaysia, it may be due to the absence of a country office.
- Countries with sufficient level of ownership: Philippines and Indonesia. The researchers and the country offices played a prominent role in deepening the engagement with the constituents and relevant stakeholders.
- Countries with a strong ownership: Republic of Korea. This is due to the strong involvement of key actors such as the implementing partner, donor, sub-contractors, conference, and workshop participants.

Six out of thirteen interviewees considered that ownership at national level has not been achieved or insufficiently so. Some point out to the lack of involvement of key stakeholders such as ILO constituents from an early stage of the project. Although constituents were invited to the research conference, they were not sufficiently consulted or involved in the research process (i.e. selection of the national researchers, review of the analytical framework and research drafts). Involving them from the early stages of the project implementation could have cultivated a better national ownership and could have secured the sustainability of project outputs and outcomes. As a corrective measure, opportunities for collaboration and engagement with constituents and national stakeholders were sought during the capacity-building component. Constituents took part in the capacity-building workshop and follow-up activities in selected countries, in collaboration with ILO field offices (i.e. ILO Manila, ILO Jakarta).

Extra efforts may be needed to involve key stakeholders, such as cooperatives apex organizations. One interviewee signaled that if COVID-19 is to be prolonged, it may make it more difficult to establish strong relationships with constituents and other relevant stakeholders, due to the difficulty of meeting in person.

5.7. Sustainability of project outcomes

Do the net benefits of the intervention continue, or are they likely to continue?

The interviewees noted positively that the net benefits of the intervention are likely to continue. They recognized the need to continue the efforts both in terms of financial resources and ensuring commitment from the stakeholders.

²² The six countries of focus are: Cambodia, Laos, Mongolia, Kyrgyzstan, Thailand and Vietnam. For more information on the second phase, see here: <https://www.ilo.org/global/topics/cooperatives/projects/sse-asia/lang--en/index.htm>.

The project activities and the follow-up activities (webinar in Japan, Indonesia and planned for in Malaysia, inputs for the Bills in the Philippines) and communication and dissemination activities (policy briefs, project video, web page) reinforce the potential for a sustained impact. Key country officials, as well as representatives of organizations such as ICA or GSEF remarked that the sustainability can be ensured through strengthening the regional community on the SSE.

The inclusion of the SSE in the 110th International Labour Conference in 2022 will likely help sustain the gains from the project in the long-term. The dissemination of the project findings will increase constituents and stakeholders' awareness on the SSE's contribution to decent work and ensure the sustainability of project outcomes.

The second phase of the project, launched in July 2021, which expands the scope to six additional countries in Asia, is expected to elaborate a normative model for SSE which can be identified across all twelve countries (based on the values and principles of the SSE).

How has the sustainability of the project been affected by COVID-19 situation, and how did the project address obstacles (if any) to achieve the project results?

The findings present a mixed result regarding the impact of COVID-19 on the sustainability of the project. On one hand, the sustainability has been strengthened due to the increased interest in the SSE in the COVID-19 recovery and in the long-term response. On the other hand, the travel restrictions have limited face-to-face interactions, that are key to community building and learning. Some interviewees signaled that it was difficult to meet with public officials in person, which has hampered their efforts to undertake advocacy activities, and the online or hybrid events did not allow for a more natural interaction with the participants, where such conversations can lead to sharing of knowledge, resources, and collaboration opportunities.

Despite the difficulties, some interviewees reported that the online tools have facilitated the follow-up meetings and webinars to be held. The national webinars in Indonesia and Japan that were held virtually were successful in reaching a wider audience and led to cost savings, which could be cited as a positive impact towards the sustainability of the project.

5.8. Cross-cutting issues

How has the intervention addressed men's and women's specific strategic needs as well as other cross-cutting issues (i.e. disability inclusion, just transition to environmental sustainability, social dialogue, International Labour Standards)?

Gender

The approach to gender equality seems to be viewed by many interviewees from a narrow perspective, i.e. the inclusion of gender equality consideration in the workshop and the participation and involvement of women in the project activities. A transversal approach may be needed, to assess whether research included gender biases or establishing indicators beyond the number of women that participated in key activities.

Gender was not integrated in the objectives, outcomes, outputs, and indicators nor in its monitoring framework. This may attest to the lack of theory of change and risk assessment strategy.

For research, reference to gender in the methodology or in the analysis was largely missing. This was only addressed in the later stage of the research, at the request of the ILO project team, where researchers included a section in the country cases on considerations of gender and the SSE, considering the high proportion of women in the informal economy in some countries.

In the capacity-building workshop, gender balance was a key criterion in the selection of participants (20 out of 37 participants were female). The consideration for gender equality was featured in the needs assessment survey, and integrated in the workshop, including a virtual tour to a women-owned cooperative in a rural setting in the Republic of Korea.

Disability

There was no mention of disability considerations in the project and no persons of disability participated in the research conference or the capacity-building workshop. In the capacity-building workshop design, responsible ILO staff wanted to invite a representative of an organization that provides rehabilitation services to persons with disabilities in the Philippines, but the person could not be accommodated due the competing priority topics and time constraints on the workshop schedule. The project could have integrated consideration of disability inclusion, that is human rights-based and centered on a gender responsive approach.

Social dialogue

Social dialogue has been considered throughout the outputs and activities. The project provided a platform for open dialogue and collaboration of governments, employers' and workers' organizations. In the research conference and the capacity-building workshop, the representatives from the workers' and employers' organizations shared their commitment to engage in social dialogue toward strengthening the SSE in Asia and the Pacific region. Some interviewees signaled that there is a need to expand the scope of the membership of the tripartite bodies and social dialogue structures, in addition to government, workers' and employers' organizations to include civil society organizations.

International Labour Standards

Although the ILO does not have a dedicated standard on the SSE, cooperatives are the subject of Promotion of Cooperatives Recommendation, 2002 (No. 193). Since the adoption of the Recommendation No. 193, around 115 countries have made use of its guidance in revising the cooperative policies and legislation. R193 and Transition from the Informal to the Formal Economy Recommendation, 2015 (No. 204) were mentioned and integrated in the outputs and activities.

Some interviewees remarked that the relevant ILS for the SSE was not sufficiently integrated despite it being a relevant comparative advantage of the ILO. This may partly be attributed to the implementing agency and sub-contractors, and the researchers not being familiar with ILO's work on the SSE.

Were other vulnerable groups considered, and how?

There was no systematic approach to the inclusion of other vulnerable groups in the intervention but considering the nature of the SSE many target groups were mentioned either in the research or the capacity-building component.

Among the vulnerable groups mentioned were the elderly and children. Refugees, migrants and ethnic minorities seem to be absent with the exception of the Malaysia case study²³. The issue of LGTBI refugees was featured in one of the follow-up activities, the webinar on Cooperative models for transgender communities in Indonesia.²⁴ The lack of the consideration of other vulnerable groups could be partly attributed to the analytical framework used in the research that did not accommodate this issue.

²³ This maybe due to the fact the researcher is specialized in Ethnic Studies.

²⁴ See: https://www.ilo.org/global/topics/cooperatives/news/WCMS_776094/lang--en/index.htm

6. Conclusions

Relevance and strategic fit of the project

The findings highlight the relevance of the project with development plans, constituents' needs, and the overall programme of the ILO. There are a few shortcomings that need to be borne in mind, however. Firstly, the limited involvement of social partners in the overarching design of the programme, and the finding that many respondents lacked an understanding of the relationship among the project's objectives, outcomes, and outputs. This may be due to the absence of an articulated, and clearly communicated, overarching Theory of Change that is used as a basis for determining the relevance of the specific activities.

Coherence

The project has internal coherence, involving enterprise specialists and relevant technical staff in ILO field offices, which contributed to enhancing the capacities of field staff on the SSE. It emerges from the interviews, however, that synergies between the programmes could be improved. The project was not able to fully leverage the ILO contributions, through its comparative advantages (such as international labour standards, and the ILO's Decent Work Agenda) partly due to the project implementors' (KoSEA, sub-contractors) lack of knowledge about the ILO. Regarding external coherence, there was some collaboration with partner institutions, but their level of involvement could have been strengthened in the design and implementation stages.

Validity of the project design

A concept note detailing the background, rationale, and outcomes and a budget was provided while a project strategy including a theory of change, risk analysis and feasibility assessment were missing. They could have been useful to monitor, track and evaluate the effectiveness of the project against its outcomes. The project title "Strengthening Social and Solidarity Economy in Asia" and its objectives may have been overly ambitious considering that very few policies on SSE are in place²⁵ in the region, and the understanding around the SSE is in its initial stages in Asia. The inclusion of an employment dimension was not realistic, considering that the concept of the SSE is not well established and obtaining data on employment is challenging due to the scarcity of data and difficulty in measurement.

Effectiveness

Most of the outcome and output targets have been achieved. Due to the COVID-19 pandemic challenges, the project duration was extended for six months, and activities were converted to a hybrid (conference) and online (workshop) formats. Despite the challenges, the ILO carried out the project activities successfully in cooperation with implementing partner and sub-contractors. A mapping of the SSE landscape and good practices in six Asian countries were shared, creating a foundation for mainstreaming SSE in policies and programmes. Policymakers, practitioners, and relevant stakeholders were better equipped with a common understanding of values and contribution of SSE to decent work.

Efficiency of resource use and management arrangements

The project has made an efficient resource use, achieving all the project outputs in a timely manner. However, the project did not generate any savings from the project activities and there was no budget allocated for follow-up and communication and dissemination activities. The complex management structure (ILO, implementing partner, sub-contractor, researchers) made it difficult to monitor, track expenditures and redirect savings to other priority activities. The involvement of the implementing agency (KoSEA) resulted in additional costs, while its role may have been redundant and unnecessary (overlapping with the role of the ILO project team).

²⁵ Except for the Republic of Korea where a Framework Bill on the SSE is currently pending in Congress.

Impact orientation

The impacts at the country level vary considerably depending on the level of interest and willingness of national stakeholders to engage in the topic. While project outputs have been successfully achieved, it may be too early to assess the long-term impact of the project, given that developing or adopting legislations and policies is a lengthy process, that often extends beyond lifespan of a project.

Sustainability

The COVID-19 pandemic has impacted the sustainability of project activities in two important ways: it led to renewed interest from stakeholders on the SSE's role in COVID-19 response and recovery. However, the travel restrictions have limited face-to-face interactions, that are key to community building and mutual learning. Whether the net benefits of the intervention are likely to continue or not is contingent upon the stakeholders' commitment, and external factors, such as the political and economic conditions. The upcoming general discussion on the SSE at the 110th International Labour Conference in June 2022 and the continuation of the efforts through the second phase of the project will help sustain the gains from this project in the long-term.

Cross-cutting issues

The project has sufficiently incorporated and addressed gender and social dialogue elements while some others, such as disability, International Labour Standards and other vulnerable groups have only been marginally addressed. This may be due to: the lack of consideration of the cross-cutting issues in the project design and in the monitoring framework and the implementing partner's lack of knowledge of the ILO's normative framework and decent work considerations. There were several efforts from the ILO project team toward addressing these concerns with mixed results.

7. Lessons learned and good practices

The lessons learned through the project include:

Tripartite approach is effective in leveraging the potential of the SSE to address unmet needs. Growing inequalities, persistent unemployment and environmental considerations have come to the fore as priority policy issues, even more so considering COVID-19. The project helped foster greater awareness on the SSE's contribution to inclusive and sustainable development to the stakeholders in the Asia and Pacific region. Some challenges have hampered the project implementation, due to external (e.g. lack of willingness of stakeholders to engage in this topic, competing conceptual understandings on the SSE) and internal factors (e.g. lack of capacities and resources at the national and regional levels). Establishing and maintaining close collaboration with ILO field offices, constituents and key partners is critical to ensure national ownership and project sustainability.

There is a need to increase the capacity of ILO's country offices in the region. Strengthening ILO field staff capacities on the SSE can lead to increased national ownership and a stronger engagement with national stakeholders. It can also promote intra-regional dialogue and improve the flow of information from headquarters to the regional and country offices. The ILO HQ can strengthen the collaboration with regional and country office in the region and support the field staff to play their role.

Effort is needed to establish procedures to guarantee the best knowledge management strategy. A knowledge management strategy was missing in the project design, to identify the gaps and implement actions in coordination with key actors (i.e. ILO field offices, constituents, partners) and ensuring that research framework make the best use of ILO's comparative advantage. The acquired "know-how" remained as tacit knowledge and were not institutionalized, which led to a knowledge gap when the staff in charge left the project. A procedure needs to be in place and implemented to ensure the knowledge and materials are not lost.

There is a room for improvement on the efficiency of the budget. The complex management structure (ILO, implementing partner, sub-contractors) made it difficult to monitor the budget allocation and spending, and to redirect the savings to other priority activities. A direct management of the budget by the ILO could have led to savings by cutting down the costs of the management fee of the implementing agency, and when converting the activities from in-person to hybrid or online formats. The savings could have been redirected to complement the budget for follow-up and communication and dissemination activities.

The risk management strategy could have led to a better mitigation of potential risks. While the project managed to address the challenge posed by the COVID-19 pandemic, the project team could have developed a risk register in the design stage to identify the risks in the different dimensions of the project (i.e. management structure, local/regional contexts and activities/outputs), and feed the results of the assessments into monitoring and reporting.

The research methodology did not sufficiently capture SSE organizations operating in the informal economy. The methodology should be adapted to the diverse realities around the institutional forms for a better comparison of the SSE across the six Asian countries. Efforts should be geared towards moving away from a limited framework such as social enterprise/social business approach that may be more prominent in East and Southeast Asia to the SSE, that promotes participation, consultation, democratic and joint action. The work should leverage the existing knowledge base in the region and contextualize the findings.

The following good practices were identified:

The online capacity-building workshop serves as a good practice for learning. Held online due to COVID-19 travel restrictions, the workshop used innovative approaches, such as the virtual tours, allowing participants to experience the SSE organizations in action in the Republic of Korea. The needs assessment survey encouraged an early involvement of the participants, and the agenda reflected the needs and interests of the participants. The duration of the workshop was adequate and there was gender balance in the participants. However, the content could have strengthened its policy orientation, for which the sub-contractor would have needed more guidance or its role in the design and implementation be reduced.

The project team, together with the implementing partner and sub-contractors **effectively implemented the COVID-19 contingency plans**, and convert the conference into a hybrid, and workshop in an online format. Holding the conference in a hybrid format led to a wide reach, to raise awareness and strengthen the knowledge and capacity of the SSE stakeholders in the Asia and Pacific region and beyond. The workshop was converted to an online format, and 37 participants (as opposed to 23 that were planned) could be accommodated in the workshop.

The project's follow-up activities deepened the engagement with national stakeholders. The project staff realized the need for an in-depth engagement with the national stakeholders to cultivate national dialogue and foster national ownership of the project outcomes. This took the form of inputs to the national policy dialogue in the Philippines, national webinars held in Indonesia, Japan and planned in Malaysia. The events brought together policy makers and practitioners to increase their understanding on the SSE and support the mainstreaming of SSE in their policies and programmes.

The project staff recognized the **need for stronger communication of the findings from the research and capacity building components** of the project and produced a project video and a series of policy briefs that were disseminated widely through the ILO website and presented at national and regional workshops.

8. Recommendations

The recommendations presented in this section have been formulated based on the findings and the conclusions of this evaluation.

Programming:

Recommendation 1: Strengthen the programme-wide theory of change (project team, high, medium-term, low)²⁶

A comprehensive project strategy including a theory of change, logical framework, risk analysis and feasibility assessment should be established at an early phase. They should be used as a basis to monitor, track and evaluate the effectiveness of the project against its outcomes. The Theory of Change should establish links between what the initiative does (activities, outputs), what it achieves (outcomes, impact) and the context where it operates. A risk register could be used to identify the various risks, their likelihood and importance, and mitigation measures.

Recommendation 2: Develop clear knowledge and risk management strategy (project team, high, long-term, low)

The project team could establish procedures to document project related communication and resources (including non-English materials) to facilitate the stocktaking of good practices, processes, and procedures. This will support the transition of responsible staff (i.e. secondment staff, consultants, interns) and institutionalize the knowledge and resources especially in the lead up to and beyond International Labour Conference 2022.

Recommendation 3: Improve design and implementation of the budget (project team, high, medium-term, low)

The project team could strengthen the budget oversight by closely monitoring and tracking the budget. This is especially important when the Implementing Partner is involved, and the project has a complex structure (ILO, implementing partner, sub-contractors). It should also earmark sufficient funds in the design phase for communication and dissemination activities and for follow-up activities.

Recommendation 4: Develop and implement a knowledge management strategy (project team and consultants, medium, medium-term, low)

The project staff could document project related communication and materials, to ensure the “know-how” stays within the institution. This will ensure a smooth knowledge transfer when the responsible project staff changes and in applying the lessons from past projects to design future interventions. A post-event evaluation could be conducted to assess what went well, what did not, and what could be improved. Good practices and lessons learned should be documented and shared with the relevant stakeholders.

Recommendation 5: Allow for better use of in-house know-how and expertise (project team, high, medium-term, medium)

The ILO could manage the project directly without an implementing agency. This will lead to more effective utilization of ILO staff expertise, resources and know-how and achieve improved efficiency in decision making by removing the extra layers of bureaucracy. It will also be able to incorporate the inputs of ILO field offices and partners in a more expedited and efficient manner and encourage better monitoring of the research capacity building work, in terms of quality control and accountability vis-à-vis the national researchers undertaking the studies.

Coherence:

²⁶ In parenthesis: who is called upon to act; priority or importance (high, medium, low); time frame for implementation (short-term, medium-term, long-term, not applicable); resource implications (e.g. low, medium, high)

Recommendation 6: Ensure better integration of decent work considerations (project team, and consultants, high, medium-term, medium)

The research could strengthen the SSE's link to ILO normative framework, and its adherence to decent work and ILO crosscutting issues such as gender and non-discrimination, and formalization of the informal economy. It should also provide up-to-date and relevant data and information on the contribution of SSE organizations to decent work and sustainable development that can be used by national governments and SSE movements to design and implement policy and advocacy strategies. The ILO could conduct orientation sessions with the researchers on key elements of decent work related to the SSE.

Recommendation 7: Develop and implement a knowledge management strategy (project team and consultants, medium, medium-term, low)

The project staff could document project related communication and materials, to ensure the “know-how” stays within the institution. This will ensure a smooth knowledge transfer when the responsible project staff changes and in applying the lessons from past projects to design future interventions. A post-event evaluation could be conducted to assess what went well, what did not, and what could be improved. Good practices and lessons learned should be documented and shared widely internally and with relevant stakeholders.

Visibility:

Recommendation 8: Strengthen communication and dissemination activities (project team, medium, long-term, medium)

Sufficient funds should be earmarked for communication and dissemination activities at the design phase. A communication strategy could be designed in a participatory manner involving relevant stakeholders. It is important to communicate the project news and outputs throughout the project. Various modalities (i.e. social media, newsletter, publications, press release) should be used, contextualizing the message to the target audience, and translating into national languages, when appropriate.

Collaboration and Sustainability:

Recommendation 9: Strengthen the involvement of ILO country office, constituents, and partners (project team, medium, long-term, medium)

Involving constituents, ILO field offices and partners from the early stage of the project implementation will be important to strengthen national ownership and secure the sustainability of project outputs and outcomes. The project team should map the interventions led by other institutions at regional and country levels. A focal point could be appointed from ILO's regional/country offices to coordinate the project, in partnership with the ILO HQ, and national and regional advisory committees could oversee the implementation of the project and provide inputs throughout the process.

Recommendation 10: Strengthen the sustainability of the project (project team, medium, long-term, high)

The project can ensure sustainability by promoting the continuous exchange among internal and external stakeholders to foster mutual exchange and learning. It should also maximize the in-house expertise and networks (e.g. field offices, ITC-ILO), and explore synergies with interventions undertaken by partner institutions. UNTFSSSE could also play a more prominent role in strengthening the SSE in Asia and the Pacific region. ILO could use its current position as the Chair to support such development.

9. Appendix

The Appendix contains:

- Terms of Reference
- List of Interviewees
- List of documents consulted
- Questionnaire
- Lessons Learned and Good practices

Appendix 1: Terms of Reference



International Labour Organization

TERMS OF REFERENCE

**Strengthening Social and Solidarity Economy Policy in Asia (Ministry
of Employment and Labor, Republic of Korea) Version 23 June 2021**

Final Internal Evaluation

Project Title	Strengthening Social and Solidarity Economy Policy in Asia
Project Code	RAS/19/02/KOR
Administrative Unit	ILO COOP
Geographical Coverage	Asia (Republic of Korea, China, Japan, Indonesia, Malaysia, the Philippines)
Donor	Ministry of Employment and Labor, Republic of Korea
Budget	USD 600,000 (incl. 1% UN levy)
Implementation period	June 2019 – June 2021 (two years)
ILO Technical Units	ILO COOP
Type of evaluation	Final Internal Evaluation
Date of the evaluation	July 2021 – September 2021
Evaluation Manager	Simel Esim

Table of Contents

1. BACKGROUND INFORMATION	3
1.1. Background of the project to be evaluated	3
1.2. Strengthening Social and Solidarity Economy Policy in Asia.....	3
1.3. Evaluation background.....	4
2. OBJECTIVE AND SCOPE OF THE EVALUATION	4
2.1. Objective	4
2.2. Scope	5
3. EVALUATION CRITERIA AND KEY QUESTIONS	5
3.1. Evaluation criteria.....	5
3.2. Key Evaluation Questions	6
a. Relevance and strategic fit.....	6
b. The validity of the project design.....	6
c. Effectiveness	7
d. Efficient use of resources and management arrangements.....	7
e. Main challenges, risks and corrective action	8
f. Orientation to impact and sustainability.....	8
g. Gender equality and non-discrimination	8
4. METHODOLOGY.....	8
4.1. Document Review, scoping and inception	9
4.2. Data collection.....	9
4.3. Preliminary evaluation results presentation workshop.....	10
4.4. Draft and final evaluation report	10
4.5. Final report	10
5. MAIN DELIVERABLES	10
5.1. Inception report	10
5.2. Preliminary findings sharing	11
5.3. First evaluation report draft	11
5.4. Final evaluation report.....	11
6. MANAGEMENT ARRANGEMENTS AND WORK PLAN.....	12
6.1. Composition of the evaluation team.....	12
6.2. Evaluation Manager	12
6.3. Work plan and Time Frame.....	12
6.4. Evaluation Phases.....	12
6.5. Key qualifications and experience of the evaluator.....	13
6.6. The tasks of the Project.....	13
6.7. Resources	13
6.8. Application procedure.....	13
ANNEXES	15

1. BACKGROUND INFORMATION

Background of the project to be evaluated

The concept of SSE is relatively new in most of Asia¹, in contrast to Europe, Latin America and Africa that have long traditions of cooperatives, mutuals and associations. SSE organizations contribute to decent work, employment creation, rights at work, social dialogue, and social cohesion. Cooperative insurance and mutual health insurance organizations provide community-based health insurance for the most vulnerable especially in rural and informal economies.

In many Asian countries, it is difficult to identify which entities fall under SSE in the absence of national legal and policy frameworks on SSE. Creating an enabling legal and policy framework could enhance visibility and bring greater awareness to the contribution of SSE towards achieving inclusive and sustainable development.

To enhance the understanding on the SSE in Asia and the Pacific region and to provide technical support to countries in need to develop/strengthen their SSE policies, the Korean Ministry of Employment and Labour (MoEL) agreed to support the ILO's "Strengthening Social and Solidarity Economy Policy in Asia" project proposal in May 2019. Since the launch of the project, the ILO worked closely with the Korea Social Enterprise Promotion Agency (KoSEA) in the implementation of the project to strengthen the SSE policies across Asia since September 2019.

1.1. Strengthening Social and Solidarity Economy Policy in Asia

The project targets six countries in Asia (Republic of Korea, China, Japan, Indonesia, Malaysia, the Philippines) and consists of two components:

- **Research:** develop an analytical tool to understand the SSE in each country, and undertake multiple country case studies on the SSE based on the tool;
- **Capacity building:** carry out capacity building activities for the ILO constituents and other key stakeholders in the six countries to deepen their understanding of opportunities and challenges facing SSE actors and strengthen their technical capacity toward developing and/or strengthening their SSE policies.

The project contributes directly to realizing Sustainable Development Goal 8, "Decent Work and Economic Growth." Specifically, it contributes to the realization of two targets (SDGs 8.3², 8.5³) under this goal, although the SSE brings positive impact on the achievement of Goal 8 as a whole.

The aforementioned activities will help the ILO to support its Decent Work Agenda through providing

¹ In South Asia, self-help and community groups are widespread. Parts of East and South East Asia give prominence to social enterprises within SSE.

² Promote development-oriented policies that support productive activities, decent job creation, entrepreneurship, creativity and innovation, and encourage the formalization and growth of micro-, small- and medium-sized enterprises, including through access to financial services.

³ By 2030, achieve full and productive employment and decent work for all women and men, including for young people and persons with disabilities, and equal pay for work of equal value.

data and information on the role of SSE organizations in the world of work that can be used by national governments and SSE movements to integrate SSE institutions' concerns into their sustainable development strategies.

Under the ILO Programme and Budget 20-21, the project directly contributes to “Promoting sustainable enterprises.” Particularly, the project will work towards the realization of Output 4.1 “Increased capacity of member States to create an enabling environment for entrepreneurship and sustainable enterprises” and Output 4.3 “Increased capacity of member States to develop policies, legislation and other measures that are specifically aimed at facilitating the transition of enterprises to formality.”

Key milestones of the policy project include:

- Kick-off meeting of project in Yogyakarta, Indonesia (10 November 2019)
- 1st Interim workshop (8 May 2020)
- 2nd Interim workshop (21 August 2020)
- International research conference (22 September 2020)
- Capacity building workshop (29 – 31 March, 2021)
- Production of policy briefs based on mapping study (April – September, 2021)

The key results areas, as reported the project are

- Enhanced understanding of the institutional landscape of Social and solidarity economy organizations (SSEOs) and policy implications in six countries in Asia;
- Deepened understanding of the SSE, including opportunities and challenges facing SSE actors;
- Strengthened technical capacity of participants towards developing and/or strengthening their SSE policies and programmes.

The project started on 31 May 2019 and ends 30 June 2021.

1.2. Evaluation background

ILO considers evaluation as an integral part of the implementation of technical cooperation projects accountability, learning and planning and building knowledge. Provisions are made in all projects in accordance with ILO evaluation policy and based on the nature of the project and the specific requirements agreed upon at the time of the project design and during the implementation of the project as per established procedures. An internal final evaluation is required.

This evaluation should be conducted in the context of criteria and approaches for the international development assistance as established by; the OECD/DAC Evaluation Quality Standard; and the UNEG Code of Conduct for Evaluation in the UN System. In particular, this evaluation will follow the [ILO policy guidelines for results-based evaluation](#); and [related guidance](#), notably [Checklist 4.8 “Writing the inception report”](#); [Checklist 4.1 “Validating methodologies”](#); and [Checklist 4.2 “Preparing the evaluation report”](#).

2. OBJECTIVE AND SCOPE OF THE EVALUATION

2.1. Objective

The evaluation objectives are:

- a. Analyze the implementation strategies of the project concerning their potential **effectiveness** in achieving the project outcomes; including unexpected results and identifying factors affected project implementation such as providing a COVID-19 response;
- b. Review the institutional set-up, capacity for project implementation, coordination mechanisms and the use and usefulness of management tools including the project monitoring tools and work plans (**efficiency**);
- c. Review the strategies for **sustainability** of the project – what is the likelihood of the work continuing, once the project is completed in June 2021;
- d. Identify the contributions of the project to the SDGs, the ILO Decent Work Country Programme, Programme and Budget and its synergy with other projects and programs;
- e. Identify **lessons and potential good practices** for the different key stakeholders; and
- f. Provide strategic **recommendations** for the different key stakeholders to improve the implementation of the project results and similar projects in the future.

The evaluation key users are the identified stakeholders and include:

- International Labour Organization
- Korea Social Enterprise Promotion Agency (KoSEA), implementing agency
- Seoul National University (SNU) research team and the researchers of six country cases
- Underdogs, sub-contractor for the capacity building component
- The donor, Ministry of Employment and Labor (MOEL), Republic of Korea
- ILO constituents (i.e. representatives of governments, workers' and employers' organizations)
- Former project staff member

2.2. Scope

The scope of the evaluation in terms of the operational area is six countries in Asia (Republic of Korea, Japan, China, Malaysia, Indonesia and the Philippines) and will cover the period of June 2019 – June 2021. It will cover all the planned outputs and outcomes under the project, with particular attention to synergies between the research and capacity building components of the project: i) enhancing understanding of the institutional landscape of the SSEOs and ii) contribution to increased awareness strengthening the capacity of constituents and other stakeholders to develop and/or strengthen SSE policies and programmes in six countries in Asia.

It will further look at the integration of ILO and donor cross-cutting themes such as Gender and non-discrimination, Informal economy and Formalization, Decent Work, Rural development, Crisis recovery, Social dialogue, International Labour Standards and Sustainable Development.

3. EVALUATION CRITERIA AND KEY QUESTIONS

3.1. Evaluation criteria

The evaluation should be carried out in the context of the criteria and approaches for international

development assistance as established by OECD/DAC Evaluation Quality Standard. The ILO policy guidelines for results-based evaluation and the technical and ethical standards and abide by the Code of Conduct for Evaluation on the UN System are established within these criteria and the evaluation should, therefore, adhere to these to ensure an internationally credible evaluation.

Throughout the evaluation question, the evaluation will further look at the integration of ILO and donor cross-cutting themes Gender and non- discrimination, disability inclusion, just transition to environmental sustainability, Social dialogue, International Labour Standards and Sustainable Development.

The review will address the following ILO evaluation criteria;

- Relevance and strategic fit of the project;
- The validity of the project design;
- Project effectiveness;
- The efficiency of resource use; and management arrangements;
- Sustainability of project outcomes
- Impact orientation;
- Cross-cutting issues (i.e., Gender equality and non-discrimination, disability inclusion, just transition to environmental sustainability, social dialogue, International Labour Standards)

3.2. Key Evaluation Questions

The evaluator shall examine the following key issues;

a. Relevance and strategic fit

- Was the project coherent with the Governments objectives, National Development Frameworks, the DWCP, the UNSDCF, and beneficiaries' needs, and does it support the outcomes outlined in ILO's CPOs as well as the SDGs?
- How did the project complement and fit with other on-going ILO programmes and projects in the countries?
- What links have been established so far with other activities of the UN or other cooperating partners operating in the Country in the areas of the job creation, entrepreneurship, innovation and formalization of MSMEs?
- Was the project able to leverage the ILO contributions, through its comparative advantages (including tripartism, international labour standards, ILO Decent Work Team etc.)?
- To what extent has the ILO project provided a timely and relevant response to constituents' needs and priorities in the COVID-19 context?

b. The validity of the project design

- Assess if the design took into account, in a realistic way, the institutional arrangements, partnerships, roles, capacity and commitment of stakeholders;
- To what extent were the relevant external factors and assumptions identified at the time of design? Were the underlying assumptions on which the project has been based proven to be true?
- Was the strategy for the sustainability of project results defined clearly at the design stage of

the project?

- Were the objectives of the project clear, realistic and were they achieved within the established schedule and with the allocated resources (including human resources)?
- Did the outputs identified in the proposal contribute to the achievement of the overall objective of the project?
- Has the project structure, working with implementing agency (KoSEA) and sub-contractors (SNU, Underdogs) been a good approach to achieve the project results?
- To what extent is the ILO COVID-19 response intervention built upon a robust TOC for an integrated and harmonized action with existing ILO operations at country level?

c. Effectiveness

- To what extent has the project achieved its results at outcome and output levels, with particular attention to the project objectives?
- What, if any, unintended results of the project have been identified or perceived?
- What have been the main contributing and challenging factors towards project's success in attaining its targets including internal and external factors to the project? How has project management dealt with them?
- Was the coordination and partnership with main stakeholders effective? Were the project partners able to fulfill the roles expected in the project strategy? Were there any capacity challenges?
- Examine how the project interacted and possibly influenced national-level policies and debates on the SSE and other relevant themes (i.e. informal economy, rural development, crisis recovery).
- To what extent is the COVID-19 pandemic influenced project results and effectiveness and how the project have addressed this influence and adapted?
- Does the (adapted) intervention models used in the project suggest an intervention model for similar crisis response?
- Has the project fostered ILO constituents' active involvement through social dialogue in articulating, implementing and sustaining coherent response strategies to mitigate the effects of the pandemic on the world of work? To what extent has the project engaged with stakeholders other than ILO constituents for sustainable results?

d. Efficient use of resources and management arrangements

- Were the available technical and financial resources adequate to fulfil the project plans? Were there a need to reallocate resources or adjust activities or results to achieve its outcomes?
- Were the resources (human resources, time, expertise, funds etc.) allocated strategically to provide the necessary support and to achieve the broader project objectives?
- Was the project MandE strategy contributing to project management, learning and accountability? Were the time frames for project implementation and the sequencing of project activities logical and realistic?
- To what extent has the project leveraged new or repurposed existing financial resources to mitigate COVID-19 effects in a balanced manner? Does the leveraging of resources take into account the sustainability of results?

e. Main challenges, risks and corrective action

- What challenges and risks⁴ have been identified during the project lifespan that could have potentially hindered progress in delivery outputs and achievements of outcomes as planned? What corrective actions were taken to address these challenges?

f. Orientation to impact and sustainability

- Is it likely that the project outcomes will generate a long-term positive change?
- Has the ownership at national level been promoted and achieved?
- Has the phase-out strategy for the implemented? Was it sufficiently articulated towards this goal?
- What was the likely contribution of the project initiatives, including innovative approaches and methodologies piloted, to broader development changes in the area of intervention, including those laid out in the ILO Decent Work Agenda, Decent Work Country Programmes and National Development Programmes?
- Is it likely that the project outcomes will contribute to enabling the SSE in Asia and the Pacific?
- How has the sustainability approach of the project been affected by the COVID-19 situation in context of the national responses and how project addressed it with the stakeholders moving forward on the project results?
- How likely will the ILO project lead to results that will be sustained or integrated in other post-pandemic response over time? Has the ILO project developed a sustainability strategy and worked with constituents and other national counterparts to sustain results during the recovery stage?

g. Gender equality and non-discrimination

- How has the intervention addressed men and women specific strategic needs? What are possible long-term effects of the project on gender equality?
- Were other vulnerable groups have been considered, how?
- To what extent has the project been relevant and led to results on other cross-cutting issues (i.e. disability inclusion, just transition to environmental sustainability, social dialogue, International Labour Standards)?

4. METHODOLOGY

The following is the suggested methodology for the evaluation that can be adjusted by the consultant if considered necessary in accordance with the scope and purpose of the evaluation with approval of ILOCOOP and ILO EVAL.

The evaluation should be carried out under the relevant parts of the ILO Evaluation Framework and Strategy; the [ILO Policy Guidelines for Results-Based Evaluations 2020](#). Gender concerns should be addressed under [ILO Guidance note 3.1: "Integrating gender into the monitoring and evaluation"](#). Adequate methodology and data collection should be applied in the evaluation to ensure the data is sex-disaggregated and different needs of women and men and marginalized groups targeted by the project are considered throughout the evaluation process ("no one left behind").

The evaluation will apply a mix methods approach, including triangulation to increase the validity and rigour

⁴ Suggested areas of concern could be the following: Unexpected change in external environment such as the COVID-19 pandemic, community/political opposition, policy changes, difficulties in inter-agency coordination, lack of constituent or implementing partner commitment/ownership, implementing partner (constituents or other entities) performance, etc.

of the evaluation findings, engaging with key stakeholders of the project, as much as feasible, at all levels during the design, data collection and reporting stages.

Due to the onset of the COVID-19 pandemic and its impact on the world of work, this evaluation will be conducted in the context of criteria and approaches outlined in the ILO internal guide: [Implications of COVID-19 on evaluations in the ILO: An internal Guide on adapting to the situation](#) (version March 25,2020). The evaluation will be conducted home-based virtually.

The following elements are the proposed methodology:

4.1. Document Review, scoping and inception

The evaluator will receive a briefing by the project team at ILO COOP. After that, the consultant will review the project document, work plans, progress reports, research reports, and other documents produced since the project started.

After the end of the desk review, the evaluator will prepare a brief Inception report. The report will outline the methodological approach, evaluation instruments and the questions (questions in the ToRsto be refined based on the knowledge gained through desk-review and initial briefing), a list of stakeholders to be interviewed, a work plan, an indicator matrix with the evaluation questions, and outline of the evaluation report. The structure and format of the inception report will follow the [EVAL Guidance note on Inception report](#) (see Annex I).

4.2. Data collection

Interviews (online) with project staff and stakeholders will take place. An indicative list of persons to be interviewed will be prepared by the Project in consultation with ILO COOP. The list will be validated by the consultant, who can request additional stakeholder groups to include in the data collection process. An initial list include (at national and subnational level as applicable):

- International Labour Organization
- Implementing agency, Korea Social Enterprise Promotion Agency (KoSEA)
- Seoul National University (SNU) research team and the researchers of six country cases
- Underdogs, sub-contractor for the capacity building component
- The donor, Ministry of Employment and Labor (MOEL), Republic of Korea
- ILO constituents (i.e. representatives of workers' and employers' organizations)

4.3. Preliminary evaluation results presentation workshop

An internal meeting to present the report findings and complete data gaps with key stakeholders, ILO staff and partners shall be organized. The evaluator will facilitate the internal meeting which will be held online. The meeting will be attended by the project and other ILO relevant staff and key stakeholders.

This will be an opportunity for the evaluator to gather further data, present the preliminary findings for verification, present recommendations and obtain feedback. The evaluator will be responsible for developing the agenda and facilitation of the workshop. The identification of the number of participants of the workshop and logistics will be the responsibility of the project team in consultation with the evaluator.

4.4. Draft and final evaluation report

After gathering data, the evaluation team will develop a draft evaluation report (see Deliverables below for the report outline its content) in line with [EVAL Checklist 4.2](#). The total length of the report should be a maximum of 30 pages for the main report, excluding annexes. The report should be sent as one complete document. The project manager will circulate the draft report to keystakeholders, the project staff and the donor for their review and forward the consolidated comments to the evaluator.

4.5. Final report

The evaluator will finalize and submit the final report to the evaluation manager in line with EVAL Checklist 4.2. The report should address all comments and/or provide explanations of why comments were not taken into account. A summary of the report, a data annexe and the lessons learned and good practices fact sheets from the project should be submitted as well. The quality of the report will be assessed against [ILO/EVAL's Checklist4.9](#). The evaluation manager will review the final version and submit to ILO COOP and EVAL for final review. The final evaluation report, good practices and lessons learned will be storage and broadly disseminated through the EVAL's database [i-eval Discovery](#) as to provide easy access to all development partners, to reach target audiences and to contribute to maximizing the benefits of the evaluation.

5. MAIN DELIVERABLES

The main deliverables of the evaluation are:

5.1. Inception report

An inception report- upon the review of available documents and an initial discussion with the project management). The inception report will:

- i. Describe the conceptual framework that will be used to undertake the evaluation;
- ii. Elaborate on the methodology proposed in the TOR with changes as required;
- iii. Set out in some detail the data required to answer the evaluation questions, data sources by specific evaluation questions, data collection methods, sampling and selection criteria of respondents for interviews;
- iv. Detail the work plan for the evaluation, indicating the phases in the evaluation, their key deliverables and milestones;

- v. Set out the list of key stakeholders to be interviewed and the tools to be used for interviews and discussions;
- vi. Set out an outline for the final evaluation report.

5.2. Preliminary findings sharing

The ILO will organize a virtual meeting to discuss the preliminary findings of the evaluation after data collection is completed. The evaluator will set the agenda for the meeting. The presentation should provide a brief review of key results for each evaluation criteria. The workshop will be technically organized by the evaluator with the logistic support of the project.

5.3. First evaluation report draft

The first draft of Evaluation Report should be revised incorporating ILO COOP's comments and inputs. The project team holds the responsibility of approving this draft in coordination with the Evaluation Focal Point in Enterprises Department. The draft review report will be shared with all relevant stakeholders and a request for comments will be asked within a specified time (not more than 14 working days).

The final version of the evaluation report shall incorporate comments received from ILO and other key stakeholders. Any identified lessons learnt, and good practices will also need to have standard annex templates (one lesson learnt and one Good Practice per template to be annexed in the report) as per EVAL guidelines.

5.4. Final evaluation report

The final version of the evaluation report shall incorporate comments received from ILO and other key stakeholders. Any identified lessons learnt and good practices will also need to have standard annex templates (one lesson learnt and one Good Practice per template to be annexed in the report) as per EVAL guidelines.

The final version is subjected to final approval by the Department Evaluation Focal Point in Enterprises, in coordination with EVAL.

The draft and final versions of the evaluation report will be in English (maximum 30 pages plus annexes), following EVAL Checklists And will be developed under the following structure

- a. Cover page with key project data (project title, project number, donor, project start and completion dates, budget, technical area, managing ILO unit, geographical coverage); and evaluation data (the type of evaluation, managing ILO unit, start and completion dates of the evaluation mission, name(s) of the evaluator, date of submission of evaluation report).
- b. Table of contents
- c. Acronyms
- d. Executive Summary
- e. Background of the project and its intervention logic
- f. Purpose, scope and clients of evaluation
- g. Methodology and limitations

- h. Presentation of findings (by criteria)
- i. Conclusions
- j. Recommendations (including to whom they are addressed, resources required, priority and timing)
- k. Lessons learnt and potential good practices

Annexes (TOR, table with the status achieved of project indicators targets and a brief comment per indicator, list of people interviewed, Schedule of the overview of meetings, list of documents reviewed, lessons and good practices templates per each one, other relevant information).

- Executive summary in ILO EVAL template

6. MANAGEMENT ARRANGEMENTS AND WORK PLAN

6.1. Composition of the evaluation team

The evaluation will be conducted by an international evaluation consultant. The project manager and administrative assistant of the project will assist in logistics and helping to secure interview appointments. The evaluator will be a highly qualified senior evaluation specialist with extensive international experience. S/he should also be knowledgeable about the SSE, preferably in Asia and the Pacific context.

6.2. Evaluation Manager

The evaluator will report to ILO COOP and should discuss any technical and methodological matters that arise with the project team. The evaluation will be carried out with support and services from the ILO COOP team in Geneva HQ.

6.3. Time Frame and payment

The total duration of the evaluation process is estimated to be 20 working days. The evaluation is scheduled for July-September 2021. A lump sum of USD 12,000 will be paid upon completion of the deliverables upon satisfaction of the ILO.

6.4. Evaluation Phases

Activity	Duration	Resp	Dates	Outputs
Contract Signing		ILO COOP and the project	July 15 –16 2021	Signed Contract
Desk review and inception report	3 days	Consultant	End of July to early August	Inception Report approved by ILO COOP
Stakeholders' interviews	3 days total	Consultant	Early to mid August	
Preliminary results presentation workshop	3 days	Consultant with project support	August 16-18	
Report drafting	10 days	Consultant	Mid to end of August	Draft Report approved by ILO COOP
Circulation of the draft and inclusion of feedback	(10 days)	Project manager	End of August	Comments from stakeholders
Final version inclusion of feedback	1 day	Consultant	First week of September	Revised final Report

Approval of the evaluation report	(5 days)	ILO COOP EVAL	Mid- Sep- tember	Final report approved by EVAL
Total	20			

6.5. Key qualifications and experience of the evaluator

The consultant should have the following qualifications:

- Master degree in Business Management, Social Sciences, Economics or related graduate qualifications
- A minimum of 7 years of professional experience specifically in evaluating international development initiatives (UN and other international organizations) in the areas of policy, skills, employment, decent work and rights-based approaches in the normative framework and operational dimensions, policy and management of development programmes, preferably in Africa.
- Proven experience with logical framework and theory of change approaches and other strategic planning approaches, MandE methods and approaches (including quantitative, qualitative and participatory), information analysis and report writing.
- Knowledge and experience of the UN System of ILO's roles and mandate and its tripartite structure as well as UN evaluation norms and its programming is desirable;
- Knowledge and experience on ILO's work on Social and Solidarity Economy
- Understanding of the development context of Asia and the Pacific is an advantage.
- Demonstrated ability to deliver quality results within strict deadlines.
- Excellent communication and interview skills,
- Experience facilitating workshops for evaluation findings.
- Not have been involved in the project as consultant or staff.

6.6. The tasks of the Project

The project management team will provide logistical support to the evaluator and will assist in providing the project documents and setting up interviews. The projects will ensure that all relevant documentation is up to date and easily accessible (in electronic form in a space such as Google Drive) by the evaluator from the first day of the contract (desk review phase).

6.7. Resources

Estimated resource requirements at this point:

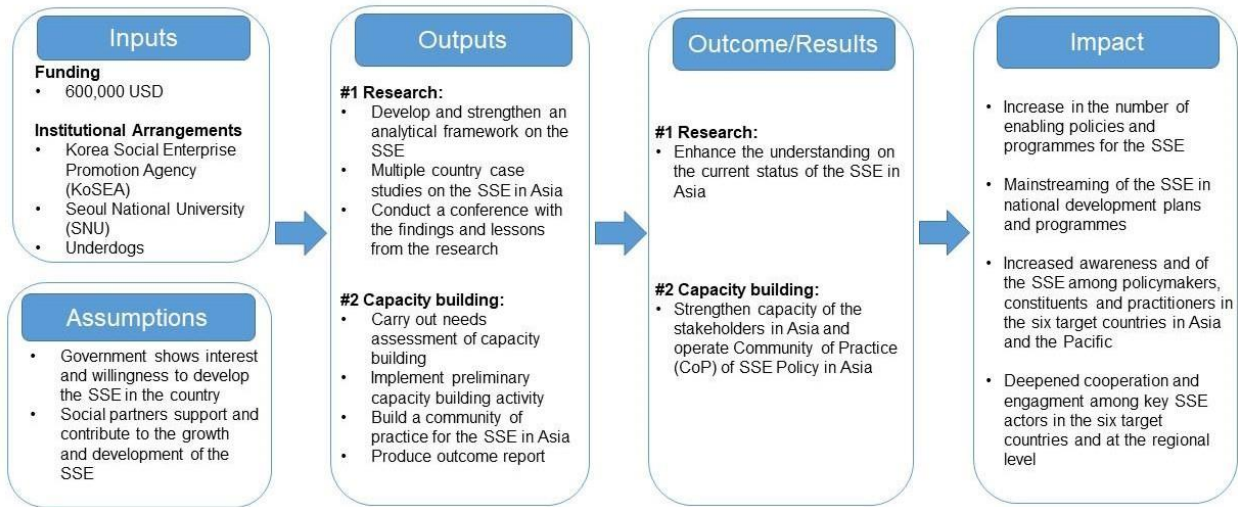
- Evaluator honorarium for 20 days
- Communication cost (according to specific needs)
- Administrative assistant
- Stakeholders' workshop

6.8. Application procedure

Candidates intending to submit an expression of interest must supply the following information:

- A description of how the candidate's skills, qualifications and experience are relevant to the required qualifications of this assignment (maximum 2 pages).
- A list of previous evaluations that are relevant to the context and subject matter of this assignment, indicating the role played by then consultant(s) applying (they can be highlighted in the CV).
- A statement confirming their availability to conduct this assignment, and the daily professional fee expressed in US dollars (indicating also fees received for similar assignments in the last 2 years as a reference).
- A copy of the candidate's curriculum vitae.
- A statement confirming that the candidates have no previous involvement in the implementation and delivery of the project to be evaluated or a personal relationship with any ILO Officials who are engaged in the project.
- The names of two referees (including phone and email) who can be contacted.
- A sample of a report in which the evaluator has played similar role for the position he/she is applying.

Theory of Change



Appendix 2: List of interviewees

Interviewee	Institution
Young Hyun Kim	Ministry of Economy and Finance, Republic of Korea
Simel Esim	ILO COOP
Valentina Verze	ILO COOP
Jiae Seo	Korea Social Enterprise Promotion Agency
Youngjoo Kim	Underdogs
Hiroki Miura	Seoul National University
Euiyoung Kim	Seoul National University
Eri Trinurini	Bina Swadaya Foundation
Benjamin Quiñones	Asian Solidarity Economy Council
Denison Jayasooria	National University of Malaysia
Yumi Nabeshima	ILO Tokyo
Tendy Gunawan	ILO Jakarta
Hideki Kagohashi	ILO Manila
Jürgen Schwetmann	Independent Consultant
Francis Kim Upgi	International Trade Union Confederation – Asia Pacific
Trevor Sworn	Board of Cambodian Federation of Business Associations and Employers
Irene Sta. Ines	Department of Finance, Philippines
Balu Iyer	International Cooperative Alliance - Asia and Pacific
Laurence Kwark	Global Social Economy Forum

Appendix 3: List of documents consulted

1. **Project concept note:** approved by ILO's Partnerships and Field Support department (PARDEV) and the donor, Ministry of Employment and Labour (MOEL) for funding
2. **Implementation Agreement:** agreement that has been signed with Korea Social Enterprise Agency (KoSEA), who oversaw the implementation of the project
3. **Workplan:** outlines the main deliverables and the timeline
4. **Project budget:** based on the outcomes, outputs and activities
5. **Final research report:** submitted by the research team in Seoul National University (SNU), sub-contractor for the research component of the project. The research team consisted of country case researchers for the six countries: Republic of Korea, China, Japan, Indonesia, Malaysia and the Philippines
6. **Progress report 2019:** outlines the summary of the main activities, summary outputs, budget, assessment of challenges, and lessons learned from June to December 2019
7. **Progress report 2020:** outlines the summary of the main activities, summary outputs, budget, assessment of challenges and lessons learned from January to December 2020
8. **Capacity-building workshop plan:** describes the background, objective, methodology and content and preliminary agenda of the capacity-building workshop.
9. **Training needs analysis results:** we conducted a training needs assessment of the participants prior to the workshop. You will find the questions and their responses.
10. **Workshop invitation letter:** a sample of the invitation letter sent to workshop nominees (i.e. constituents, coop movements, practitioners, researchers other stakeholders from six countries)
11. **Workshop program schedule:** schedule for the online capacity-building workshop (3 days). It was implemented by a sub-contractor, Underdogs, a social enterprise specialized in training/capacity development for start-ups
12. **Workshop materials:** contains workshop information, including a list of participants, a description of each session with PPT presentations.
13. **Workshop satisfaction survey results:** participants completed satisfaction survey to give us feedback on the workshop
14. **Research budget:** detailed breakdown of the expenditure by output for the research component, submitted by sub-contractor, SNU research team
15. **Capacity building budget:** detailed breakdown of the expenditure by output for the capacity building component, submitted by sub-contractor, Underdogs
16. **Write-ups and resources:** write-ups and links to conference and workshop pages
17. **Interim and final reports** submitted by the implementing agency, KoSEA
18. **Implications of COVID-19 on evaluations in the ILO:** An internal guide on adapting to the situation
19. **TOR for production of policy briefs:** consultant to summarize the key findings from the final research report
20. **Policy briefs:** summarizes the key findings of the final research report for Indonesia, the Philippines, Japan and China
21. **Proposal for the project "Strengthening SSE Knowledge Base":** includes a component on strengthening SSE policies in Asia with a focus on six countries in Asia (Thailand, Vietnam, Mongolia, Kyrgyzstan, Laos and Cambodia)

22. **Decent Work Country Programmes:** DWCP for China 2016-2020, Indonesia 2020-2025, Malaysia 2019-2025, DWCP Philippines 2020-2024
23. **ILO Programme and Budget 2020-21**
24. **SNUAC proposal:** for implementation of the second phase of the project on SSE in Asia
25. **Descriptions of follow-up activities:** that have been completed or are ongoing (i.e. project video, webpage, national webinar in Indonesia).

Appendix 4: Questionnaire

1. Does the project objectives and design respond to beneficiaries', global, country, and partner/institution needs, policies, and priorities?
2. Has it continued to do so in the COVID-19 context?
3. What links have been established so far with other activities of the UN or other cooperating partners operating in the country in areas related to the project?
4. Was the project able to leverage the ILO contributions, through its comparative advantages (including tripartism, international labour standards, ILO Decent Work Team etc.)?
5. Was the strategy for the sustainability of project results defined clearly at the design stage of the project? Were the objectives of the project clear, realistic?
6. What challenges and risks have been identified during the project lifespan that could have potentially hindered progress in delivery of outputs and achievements of outcomes as planned? What corrective actions were taken to address these challenges?
7. Has (and to what extent) the project achieved, or is it expected to achieve, its objectives, and its results, including any differential results across groups?
8. To what extent has the COVID-19 pandemic influenced project results and effectiveness and how did the project address this influence and adapted?
9. What, if any, unintended results of the project have been identified or perceived?
10. Was the coordination and partnership with main stakeholders effective? Were the project partners able to fulfill the roles expected in the project strategy? Were there any capacity challenges?
11. Has the intervention delivered, or is it likely to deliver, results in an economic and timely way?
12. Is it likely that the project outcomes will generate a long-term positive change?
13. Has ownership at national level been promoted and achieved?
14. Does the net benefits of the intervention continue, or are they likely to continue?
15. How has the sustainability approach of the project been affected by the COVID-19 situation in context of the national responses and how the project addressed it with the stakeholders moving forward on the project results?
16. How has the intervention addressed men's and women's specific strategic needs as well as other cross-cutting issues (i.e. disability inclusion, just transition to environmental sustainability, social dialogue, International Labour Standards)?
17. Were other vulnerable groups considered, how?

Other questions used depending on the role of the interviewee on the project:

- How was the project designed?
- How did you adapt to COVID-19?

- Were there any relevant constraints or opportunities related to collaborating institutions?
- Did you design a risk management strategy?
- Has the project structure, working with implementing agency (KoSEA) and sub-contractors (SNU, Underdogs) been a good approach to achieve the project results?
- What have been the main contributing and hindering factors towards the project's success?
- Were the resources sufficient for the designed activities and outputs? And the time frame?
- To what extent has the project leveraged new or repurposed existing financial resources to mitigate COVID-19 effects in a balanced manner?
- How was the workshop designed?
- Were participants asked to prepare reports on topics related to their respective expertise?

Appendix 5: Lessons Learned and Good Practices

Lessons learned

Project Title: Strengthening Social and Solidarity Economy Policy in Asia

Project TC/Symbol: RAS/19/02/KOR

Name of Evaluator: Samuel Barco Serrano

Date: August 2021

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

Brief description of lesson learned (link to specific action or task)	Tripartite approach is considered as effective in leveraging the potential of the SSE to address unmet needs.
Context and any related preconditions	The concerned region is Asia and the potential is present in most of the countries of the region.
Targeted users / Beneficiaries	Project staff, public officials, workers' and employers' organizations, SSE practitioners and advocacy organizations
Challenges /negative lessons - Causal factors	External (e.g. lack of willingness of stakeholders to engage in this topic, competing conceptual understandings on the SSE) and internal factors (e.g. lack of capacities and resources at the national and regional levels)
Success / Positive Issues - Causal factors	The social dialogue efforts can be strengthened building on the momentum created by the first phase into the second phase and contributing to the upcoming general discussion on the SSE at the ILC in 2022.
ILO Administrative Issues (staff, resources, design, implementation)	A staff in charge should ensure consistency when it comes to communication flow (both internal and external), and consulting with workers' and employers' organizations through ACTRAV and ACT/EMP

Project Title: Strengthening Social and Solidarity Economy Policy in Asia

Project TC/Symbol: RAS/19/02/KOR

Name of Evaluator: Samuel Barco Serrano

Date: August 2021

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

Brief description of lesson learned (link to specific action or task)	Effort is needed to establish procedures to guarantee the best knowledge management strategy
Context and any related preconditions	This should be an established practice across different projects
Targeted users / Beneficiaries	Project staff, Implementing Agency, Partners
Challenges /negative lessons - Causal factors	This may be a challenge in managing the knowledge flow given the regional scope of the project, that has six countries as focus.
Success / Positive Issues - Causal factors	The social dialogue efforts can be strengthened building on the momentum created by the first phase into the second phase, and contributing to the upcoming general discussion on the SSE at the ILC in 2022.
ILO Administrative Issues (staff, resources, design, implementation)	Establish a knowledge management strategy, communicate internal procedures and set accountability mechanism, such as through performance management framework (i.e. BoC and EoC).

Project Title: Strengthening Social and Solidarity Economy Policy in Asia

Project TC/Symbol: RAS/19/02/KOR

Name of Evaluator: Samuel Barco Serrano

Date: August 2021

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

Brief description of lesson learned (link to specific action or task)	There is a room for improvement on the efficiency of the budget
Context and any related preconditions	A closer monitoring of budget and identifying where savings could be generated (i.e. change of events from on-site to online/hybrid formats).
Targeted users / Beneficiaries	Project staff
Challenges /negative lessons - Causal factors	A complex management structure (ILO, implementing agency, sub-contractors) make it difficult to monitor and track the budget, and redirect savings to priority activities
Success / Positive Issues - Causal factors	A clear budget that is realistic, based on the outcomes, and is adaptable in case of unexpected changes.
ILO Administrative Issues (staff, resources, design, implementation)	A staff in charge should frequently monitor the budget and consult with the financial officer to seek advice and support when necessary.

Project Title: Strengthening Social and Solidarity Economy Policy in Asia

Project TC/Symbol: RAS/19/02/KOR

Name of Evaluator: Samuel Barco Serrano

Date: August 2021

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

Brief description of lesson learned (link to specific action or task)	Establishing a risk management strategy could have led to a better mitigation of potential risks
Context and any related preconditions	This became relevant in the context of COVID-19
Targeted users / Beneficiaries	Project staff
Challenges /negative lessons - Causal factors	The project activities were delayed, and the workshop was converted to an online format on a short notice given the uncertainty over COVID-19 restrictions
Success / Positive Issues - Causal factors	Corrective actions were taken despite the challenges caused by COVID-19
ILO Administrative Issues (staff, resources, design, implementation)	The staff in charge should develop a risk register in the design stage to identify the risks in the different dimensions of the project (i.e. management structure, local/regional contexts and activities/outputs), and feed the results of the assessments into monitoring and reporting.

Project Title: Strengthening Social and Solidarity Economy Policy in Asia

Project TC/Symbol: RAS/19/02/KOR

Name of Evaluator: Samuel Barco Serrano

Date: August 2021

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

Brief description of lesson learned (link to specific action or task)	The research methodology did not sufficiently capture SSE organizations operating in the informal economy
Context and any related preconditions	This became relevant in the context of COVID-19
Targeted users / Beneficiaries	Project staff, Implementing Partner, Consultants
Challenges /negative lessons - Causal factors	The methodology was not practical and could not be applied to all six countries, with different contexts
Success / Positive Issues - Causal factors	The methodology will be improved upon in the second phase of the project
ILO Administrative Issues (staff, resources, design, implementation)	The methodology should be adapted to the diverse realities around the institutional forms for a better comparison of the SSE across the six Asian countries. Efforts should be geared towards moving away from a limited framework such as social enterprise/social business approach that may be more prominent in East and Southeast Asia to the SSE, that promotes participation, consultation, democratic and joint action.

Project Title: Strengthening Social and Solidarity Economy Policy in Asia

Project TC/Symbol: RAS/19/02/KOR

Name of Evaluator: Samuel Barco Serrano

Date: August 2021

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

Brief description of lesson learned (link to specific action or task)	There is a need to increase the capacity of ILO's country offices in the region
Context and any related preconditions	This will depend on the capacity of the ILO's country office in terms of staff and resources, and work priorities based on PandB and DWCP
Targeted users / Beneficiaries	Project staff (both HQ and field)
Challenges /negative lessons - Causal factors	Lack of focal point in the country may make it challenging to get the national stakeholders on board and foster national ownership
Success / Positive Issues - Causal factors	The focal points for the first phase were identified, and led to successful collaboration
ILO Administrative Issues (staff, resources, design, implementation)	The ILO HQ may need to invest in the development of the capacity of ILO's country offices through resources and capacity development

Good practices

Project Title: Strengthening Social and Solidarity Economy Policy in Asia

Project TC/Symbol: RAS/19/02/KOR

Name of Evaluator: Samuel Barco Serrano

Date: August 2021

The following good practice has been identified during the evaluation. Further text explaining the practice may be included in the full evaluation report

Brief summary of the good practice (link to project goal or specific deliverable, background, purpose, etc.)	The online capacity-building workshop serves as a good practice for learning
Relevant conditions and Context: limitations or advice in terms of applicability and replicability	Only participants who have good connectivity can benefit from the online workshop, and it is also reliant on good functioning of the technology (i.e. web-based conference platform like Zoom)
Establish a clear cause-effect relationship	The workshop used innovative approaches, such as virtual tours; the needs assessment survey encouraged an early involvement of the participants; the agenda reflected the needs and interests of the participants
Indicate measurable impact and targeted beneficiaries	Participants rated the workshop as 4.5 (on a scale of 1-5) on their overall level of satisfaction and found the objectives "very clear." All respondents replied that the workshop fulfilled expectations. The targeted beneficiaries of the workshop were tripartite delegations, practitioners, and researchers in the SSE movement, and representatives from international organizations
Potential for replication and by whom	Lack of focal point in the country may make it challenging to get the national stakeholders on board and foster national ownership
Upward links to higher ILO Goals (DWCPs, Country Programme Outcomes or ILO's Strategic Programme Framework)	Output 4.1: Increased capacity of member States to create an enabling environment for entrepreneurship and sustainable enterprises Output 4.3: Increased capacity of member States to develop policies, legislation and other measures that are specifically aimed at facilitating the transition of enterprises to formality
Other documents or relevant comments	

Project Title: Strengthening Social and Solidarity Economy Policy in Asia

Project TC/Symbol: RAS/19/02/KOR

Name of Evaluator: Samuel Barco Serrano

Date: August 2021

The following good practice has been identified during the evaluation. Further text explaining the practice may be included in the full evaluation report

Brief summary of the good practice (link to project goal or specific deliverable, background, purpose, etc.)	The project team, together with the implementing partner and sub-contractors effectively implemented the COVID-19 contingency plans, and converted the conference into a hybrid, and workshop in an online format
Relevant conditions and Context: limitations or advice in terms of applicability and replicability	Implementing partner and sub-contractors should possess adequate capacity and resources to turn the events in a hybrid or online formats
Establish a clear cause-effect relationship	Holding the conference in a hybrid format led to a wide reach, to raise awareness and strengthen the knowledge and capacity of the SSE stakeholders in the Asia and Pacific region and beyond
Indicate measurable impact and targeted beneficiaries	The targeted beneficiaries of the workshop were tripartite delegations, practitioners, and researchers in the SSE movement, and representatives from international organizations. The research conference was live streamed on YouTube with over 400 participants and 1,400 viewers online from Asia and beyond. A higher number of participants (37 as opposed to 23) could be accommodated in the capacity-building workshop
Potential for replication and by whom	The project team can frequently monitor the evolving situation around COVID-19, and implement the contingency plan, in consultation with implementing partner, ILO field offices, constituents, and other concerned stakeholders
Upward links to higher ILO Goals (DWCPs, Country Programme Outcomes or ILO's Strategic Programme Framework)	N/A
Other documents or relevant comments	

Project Title: Strengthening Social and Solidarity Economy Policy in Asia

Project TC/Symbol: RAS/19/02/KOR

Name of Evaluator: Samuel Barco Serrano

Date: August 2021

The following good practice has been identified during the evaluation. Further text explaining the practice may be included in the full evaluation report

Brief summary of the good practice (link to project goal or specific deliverable, background, purpose, etc.)	The project's follow-up activities deepened the engagement with national stakeholders
Relevant conditions and Context: limitations or advice in terms of applicability and replicability	The project staff realized the need for an in-depth engagement with the national stakeholders to cultivate national dialogue and foster national ownership of the project outcomes. This took the form of inputs to the national policy dialogue in the Philippines, national webinars held in Indonesia, Japan and planned in Malaysia
Establish a clear cause-effect relationship	The events brought together policy makers and practitioners to increase their understanding on the SSE and support the mainstreaming of SSE in their policies and programmes
Indicate measurable impact and targeted beneficiaries	<p>The project undertook three follow-up activities due to the interest generated by the project activities and responding to the request of the national stakeholders. The targeted beneficiaries for awareness raising and policy support on the SSE include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Indonesia: Ministry for National Development Planning, Ministry of Cooperatives and Micro, Small and Medium Enterprises• Japan: Ministry of Health, Labour and Welfare• Philippines: Department of Finance, Department of Labor and Employment• Malaysia: Ministry of Entrepreneur Development and Cooperatives
Potential for replication and by whom	Based on the lessons and good practices from holding the webinars, the project team can replicate such events and adapt it to other countries at the request of national stakeholders
Upward links to higher ILO Goals (DWCPs, Country Programme Outcomes or ILO's Strategic Programme Framework)	<p>Output 4.1: Increased capacity of member States to create an enabling environment for entrepreneurship and sustainable enterprises</p> <p>Output 4.3: Increased capacity of member States to develop policies, legislation and other measures that are specifically aimed at facilitating the transition of enterprises to formality</p>
Other documents or relevant comments	

Project Title: Strengthening Social and Solidarity Economy Policy in Asia

Project TC/Symbol: RAS/19/02/KOR

Name of Evaluator: Samuel Barco Serrano

Date: August 2021

The following good practice has been identified during the evaluation. Further text explaining the practice may be included in the full evaluation report

Brief summary of the good practice (link to project goal or specific deliverable, background, purpose, etc.)	The project staff recognized the need for stronger communication of the findings from the research and capacity building components of the project and produced a project video and a series of policy briefs that were disseminated widely through the ILO website and presented at national and regional workshops
Relevant conditions and Context: limitations or advice in terms of applicability and replicability	The project team recommends communicating the project results throughout the project, and not only at the beginning or end. A communication strategy can be developed in a participatory manner, working with DCOMM, the programme donors and other partners. The project budget should account for communications needs at the design stage
Establish a clear cause-effect relationship	The capacity-building workshop news was disseminated in six languages in the target countries, resulting in a wider reach at the national level
Indicate measurable impact and targeted beneficiaries	The targeted beneficiaries were tripartite delegations, practitioners, and researchers in the SSE movement, and representatives from international organizations
Potential for replication and by whom	The project team can liaise with field offices (regional/national) to translate and disseminate project outputs at the national level
Upward links to higher ILO Goals (DWCPs, Country Programme Outcomes or ILO's Strategic Programme Framework)	N/A
Other documents or relevant comments	