



ILO EVALUATION

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- **Name of consultant(s):** Angelica Munoz Marmolejo, M&E and Knowledge Sharing Officer, ILO Regional Office for Africa
- **ILO Administrative Office:** SECTOR
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- **Evaluation Manager:** Alessandra Scomazzon, Tech Officer, Project Management & Resource Mobilization – Maria Beatriz Mello da Cunha – Specialist Spec, Sectoral and Programme Issues
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This evaluation has been conducted according to ILO’s evaluation policies and procedures. It has not been professionally edited, but has undergone quality control by the ILO Evaluation Office

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Project Background

Governments, employers' and workers' organizations and businesses continue to navigate an increasingly uncertain future shaped by climate change, demographic shifts, geopolitics, automation, digitalization and other megatrends. These global challenges and drivers of change impact societies, economies and labour markets in different ways depending on their preparedness to govern and address these global changes. At the same time, a country's integration into global and regional value chains influence its responses to arising disruptions.

On 23 February 2022, the European Commission adopted its Communication on Decent Work Worldwide that reaffirms the European Union's (EU) commitment to champion decent work in Europe and around the world. Decent work is critical to ensuring that sustainable economic growth goes hand in hand with social justice as well as with respect for human rights and labour and environmental standards. The EU promotes decent work across all sectors and policy areas in line with a comprehensive approach that addresses workers in domestic markets, in countries the EU trades with, and in global supply chains.

In this context, the "Supply Chains for a Sustainable Future of Work" (SCSFW) project is aimed at advancing decent, focusing on selected supply chains in Colombia, Malaysia, and Namibia, which are linked to the European Union market. With a budget of EUR 770,921.00 over 12 months, the project builds on lessons learned from the previous "Sustainable Supply Chains to Build Forward Better" (SSCBFB) project.

The SCSFW project responds to the challenges that world of work is facing by promoting resilient, inclusive, and sustainable supply chains, with a specific focus on coffee in Colombia, rubber gloves in Malaysia, and fisheries in Namibia. These sectors contribute significantly to their respective economies but face decent work deficits, including informality, low wages, and poor working conditions.

The project provided technical support and capacity-building initiatives for governments, employers, and workers in these countries to improve compliance with national laws and international labour standards, promote social dialogue, and advance responsible business conduct. It also aimed to strengthen the capacity of European enterprises with operations in these supply chains to address decent work challenges and conduct due diligence in line with the UN Guiding Principles on Business and Human Rights.

Implemented under direct technical backstopping from the ILO's Sectoral Policies Department, in collaboration with the respective ILO country offices, the project engaged tripartite constituents (governments, employers, and workers) at the global and national levels. The project outcomes and outputs are:

Outcome 1: Tripartite constituents and stakeholders have further advanced decent work in fairer, more resilient, inclusive and sustainable coffee and cocoa supply chains connecting the respective sector in Colombia and the EU market.

Output 1.1. Technical support and training on enhancing compliance with national laws and regulations and respecting the principles contained in international labour standards, in particular on the realization of the Fundamental Principles and Rights at Work in the coffee and cocoa supply chains in Colombia.

Output 1.2. The capacity of tripartite constituents and social dialogue mechanisms are further strengthened to develop and implement policies and

measures to promote decent work for resilient, inclusive and sustainable supply chains.

Outcome 2: Tripartite constituents and stakeholders have further developed and implemented policies and measures to advance decent work in a more resilient, inclusive and sustainable rubber glove supply chain connecting the respective sector in Malaysia and the EU market.

Output 2.1. Policy advice and support to tripartite processes to develop and implement policies and measures to promote decent work for resilient, inclusive and sustainable rubber glove supply chains.

Output 2.2. Technical support and training provided on compliance with national laws and regulations and respect for the principles contained in international labour standards and.

Outcome 3: Tripartite constituents and stakeholders have further developed and implemented policies and measures to advance decent work in a resilient, inclusive and sustainable fisheries supply chain in Namibia.

Output 3.1. Policy advice and support to tripartite processes to develop and implement policies and measures to promote decent work for a resilient, inclusive and sustainable fisheries supply chain.

Output 3.2. Technical support and training on compliance with national laws and regulations and respecting the principles contained in international labour standards as well as.

Outcome 4: Tripartite constituents and enterprises active in the EU market have a better understanding of decent work challenges and opportunities in selected supply chains for enhancing due diligence.

Output 4.1. Increased knowledge and capacity of constituents and enterprises to engage more effectively in due diligence in selected sectors and to address structural decent work deficits

Output 4.2 Sectoral social dialogue on the topic of human rights due diligence among actors along supply chains has been further strengthened

The project's development objective was to **foster resilient and sustainable supply chains by promoting fairer labour practices, gender equality, and human rights across key sectors.**

The SCSFW project was guided by the 2022-23 and 2024-25 Programme and Budget outcomes, particularly in relation to promoting decent work, gender equality, and labour protection.

The SCSFW project used a supply chain approach to advance full and productive employment and decent work in three sectors, one sector per country. The supply chains targeted by the project were selected in consultation with ILO country offices (Cos), the social partners, and the European Commission during the inception phase of the previous SSCBFB project.

Evaluation objectives

Evaluation is an essential element of project management, being it a tool for decision-making, knowledge identification, generation and sharing, and as a scientific manner to provide verifiable evidence on the relevance, effectiveness, efficiency, impact and sustainability of projects. Provisions for evaluation are made in all projects according to the [ILO evaluation policy](#), based on these guidelines, this project is subject to 1 (one) internal final evaluation.

The primary objective of this final internal evaluation has been to assess **the project's overall performance in terms of its relevance, effectiveness, efficiency, impact, and sustainability**. The evaluation will inform **decision-making** for future interventions and contribute to organizational learning within the ILO, its constituents, and other stakeholders, while ensuring **accountability** to the Project's Development Partner - the European Commission, and the involved stakeholders.

The evaluation sought to achieve the following specific objectives:

1. **Assess the achievement of project outcomes and outputs:**
 - Evaluate the extent to which the project achieved its intended outcomes and outputs, particularly **in advancing decent work within the targeted supply chains (coffee in Colombia, rubber gloves in Malaysia, and fisheries in Namibia) and in promoting compliance with international labour standards (ILS)**.
 - Identify key factors, both internal and external, that influenced the project's performance, including the effectiveness of strategies employed and the challenges encountered in implementing activities.
2. **Contribute to Sustainable Development Goals (SDG) and ILO strategic outcomes of its P&B:**
 - Assess the alignment of the project's objectives and outcomes with the ILO's Programme and Budget Outcomes 2.5 in 22/23 and 1.5 in 2024/25 (Increased capacity of constituents to implement sectoral international labour standards, codes of practices, and tools) and 3.2. in 2022/23 and 3.3 in 2024-25 (Increased capacity of Member States to create decent work in rural areas).
3. **Analyze the effectiveness of the project's implementation strategies:**
 - Examine the effectiveness of the project's implementation strategies in relation to the project's activities and their management. This will assess the efficiency and effectiveness of project activities based on concept notes, monitoring data (if available), and key informant interviews.
4. **Analyze the efficient use of financial, human, and material resources:**
 - Assess the efficiency of financial, human, and material resources utilized during the implementation of the project. This includes evaluating the contribution of ILO staff, as well as the local human and material resources available in each country, such as the experience of stakeholders in implementing similar interventions and traditional knowledge among beneficiaries.
5. **Examine the project's potential for sustainability:**
 - Assess the strategies implemented by the project to ensure sustainability of its outcomes after the conclusion of funding. This will include evaluating the capacity of local stakeholders and institutions to maintain project results and identifying the mechanisms put in place to ensure long-term sustainability.
6. **Identify lessons learned and good practices to inform future strategic planning:**

- This will gather insights that can be applied to improve the design and implementation of future projects, ensuring that successful approaches are documented and disseminated.
7. **Provide recommendations to the ILO and project stakeholders:**
- This will include guidance on overcoming challenges, strengthening project achievements, and planning for future interventions.
8. **Enhance organizational learning:**
- Generate insights into the lessons learned from the project's design, implementation, and monitoring, highlighting both successful practices and areas requiring improvement.
 - Document the approaches and tools that contributed to addressing decent work deficits in supply chains, providing a roadmap for replicating and scaling up these practices in future ILO initiatives or in other regions.

Limitations of this evaluation

While the evaluation aimed to provide a comprehensive and objective assessment, four key limitations were identified:

1. As per the ILO EVAL guidelines for projects under USD 1 million, this evaluation was conducted internally. Internal evaluations offer several benefits like a reduced cost for the project and the utilization of in-house expertise. Nevertheless, the internal element tends to also provide certain limitations, one notable challenge is the dual role of the evaluator, who may be wrongly perceived as part of the project team by some stakeholders, or as a donor by others, rather than as an independent reviewer. To mitigate these challenges, the evaluator took a deliberate step to establish her role as an independent reviewer from the beginning of each stakeholder interview. This included clearly communicating the purpose, scope, and impartial nature of the evaluation during initial interactions with stakeholders. For some cases, a detailed evaluation brief was shared with all stakeholders by the evaluation managers, prior to interviews, emphasizing the evaluator's independence and the evaluation's alignment with ILO's EVAL guidelines. Furthermore, efforts were made to maintain a neutral stance during interviews and discussions, focusing on evidence-based assessment. By fostering open and transparent communication, the evaluator was able to build trust, reduce misunderstandings, and ensure that stakeholders felt comfortable providing honest feedback.
2. A significant challenge encountered during the identification of stakeholders for the Malaysia component. Unlike other components of Colombia and Namibia, where stakeholder lists were pre-identified and regularly updated, for Malaysia, the evaluation found gaps in stakeholder records, project staff in the country during the period of the evaluation, and the lack of sustained relationships by staff in Geneva. The evaluation manager provided support in this area; however, identifying the most relevant individuals and organizations proved challenging. Most key stakeholders had transitioned to other careers or positions, making it difficult to trace them and gather their insights. As a result, the evaluation's findings for the Malaysia component were somewhat limited in scope and depth compared to other components. This challenge highlights the importance of maintaining comprehensive and up-to-date stakeholder databases to facilitate smoother evaluations and ensure critical perspectives are not

missed. It also underscores the need for stronger institutional stakeholder relationships rather than individual-based connections. In this regard, greater involvement from the Regional Office for Asia in project implementation could help ensure sustained engagement with key stakeholders, fostering continuity and institutional memory beyond individual staff transitions.

3. The evaluation was conducted entirely online. Although funding for evaluation was available the financial rules of the ILO do not allow the projects to make commitments (in this case for evaluation missions) after the project conclusion date. Virtual methods, such as video calls and online surveys, can provide valuable data but may not fully capture the intricacies of field-level activities, interpersonal dynamics, and environmental factors that are observable during in-person visits. Moreover, virtual interactions often lack the spontaneity and depth of face-to-face engagements. Stakeholders might behave differently in online settings, influenced by factors such as limited connectivity (in Namibia some of the stakeholders needed to take the interviews from the ILO office), or the perceived formality of virtual interviews. Additionally, the absence of field visits precluded opportunities for direct observation of project outcomes and stakeholder interactions, which are critical for validating self-reported data and gaining a comprehensive understanding of the project's impacts at the grassroots level. Overall, while the online-only approach ensured that the evaluation could proceed despite logistical barriers, it also underscored the importance of incorporating hybrid evaluation methods, when feasible, to balance cost-efficiency with the need for deeper, context-specific insights.
4. While the evaluation aimed to provide a comprehensive and objective assessment of Outcome 4, its findings were subject to limitations, as activities related to this outcome were organized and implemented by different colleagues across various project components. This fragmentation made it difficult to trace a cohesive strategy for strengthening due diligence and social dialogue across the supply chains targeted by the project. A major limitation was the inability to fully assess the extent to which tripartite constituents and enterprises improved their understanding of decent work challenges and opportunities in selected supply chains. While individual events and initiatives, such as the "From Planting to Cup" dialogue and the ILO TCLF toolkit, contributed to increased awareness, the lack of an integrated monitoring approach made it difficult to measure how these efforts translated into tangible changes in due diligence practices. Similarly, assessing strengthened sectoral social dialogue on human rights due diligence, was challenging due to the absence of a systematic approach to capturing stakeholder commitments and follow-up actions.

Evaluation scope

Timeline

The evaluation analysis covered the period between 1 March 2023 and 31 August 2024.

Geographical coverage

The evaluation assessed the achievement of project outcomes and outputs in the three target countries: Colombia, Namibia and Malaysia (to the extent possible).

External considerations

The evaluation took into consideration external factors such as political, economic, or social challenges in each country that may have influenced project outcomes. Furthermore, the

evaluation addressed its relevance to the ILO crosscutting issues, focusing on the promotion of gender equality.

Clients of the evaluation

The findings, conclusions, and recommendations of this evaluation will be used by a range of stakeholders, including primary and secondary clients. These clients are expected to benefit from the insights generated by the evaluation to inform decision-making, improve project performance, and support future strategic initiatives.

Primary clients:

- **ILO project team and the Sectoral Policies Department (SECTOR):** The ILO project team, along with SECTOR, will be the primary users of the evaluation findings. The evaluation will provide the project team with evidence-based insights to improve the design and implementation of future projects. The evaluation will also contribute to organizational learning within SECTOR and hopefully be transferred to other departments within the ILO HQ to help in refining strategies for future sectoral interventions.
- **ILO country offices and decent work teams (DWTs):** The ILO offices in the participating countries (Colombia, Malaysia, Namibia) and relevant Decent Work Teams are expected to use the evaluation to learn about interventions at the sectoral level and for resource mobilization. The evaluation will inform future capacity-building efforts, policy advisory services, and technical assistance activities at the national and regional levels.
- **European Commission (DG-Employment):** As the donor of the project, the European Commission (DG-Employment) will use the evaluation to assess the project's contribution to its policy priorities on promoting decent work globally. The evaluation will provide accountability for the use of funds and assess whether the project has effectively contributed to the European Union's broader objectives regarding decent work and sustainable development in global supply chains.

Secondary clients:

- **Tripartite constituents** (Governments, Employers' Organizations, Workers' Organizations): The tripartite constituents involved in the project will benefit from the evaluation findings, which will inform ongoing policy development, social dialogue, and efforts to promote decent work in the respective sectors. These stakeholders will also gain valuable insights into how international labour standards and social dialogue mechanisms can be strengthened at the national level.
- **Enterprises and supply chain actors:** Companies and stakeholders in the supply chains that were targeted by the project, particularly those with operations or interests in the EU market, will benefit from the evaluation's assessment of the project's impact on responsible business conduct and decent work compliance. The evaluation will provide enterprises with a clearer understanding of the challenges and opportunities in addressing decent work deficits in their supply chains.

Evaluation criteria and questions

The evaluation was conducted using the OECD Development Assistance Committee (DAC) criteria, which provide a comprehensive framework for assessing development projects. For this evaluation, each criterion was assessed by analysing various project documents and through tailored questions posed during key informant interviews.

The criteria include:

- **Relevance:** Evaluating the extent to which the project's objectives are consistent with beneficiaries' needs, global and national priorities, and the ILO's strategic outcomes.
- **Coherence:** Assessing the internal consistency of the project's design, including alignment with other ILO initiatives and external alignment with European Union policies and other international frameworks.
- **Effectiveness:** Measuring the extent to which the project achieved its intended outcomes and outputs, particularly in addressing decent work deficits and promoting compliance with international labour standards (ILS).
- **Efficiency:** Evaluating the efficient use of financial, human, and material resources in delivering project results, including timeliness and cost-effectiveness.
- **Impact:** Assessing the broader effects of the project on beneficiaries, stakeholders, and supply chain sustainability, including both intended and unintended outcomes.
- **Sustainability:** Examining the likelihood of the project's results being maintained over time, particularly through strengthened local capacities and institutional frameworks.

The evaluation of the SCSFW project was guided by a set of comprehensive questions designed to assess the above-mentioned criteria:

Question	Data collection method / Key informant
<p>Relevance</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • To what extent did the SCSFW project's approach address these deficits? • To what extent the project including the promotion social dialogue and gender equality, non-discrimination in alignment with the needs of stakeholders and the broader policy environment? 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Document review • National tripartite stakeholders • ILO • End-beneficiaries
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • How aligned was the project's focus with key ILO frameworks, such as P&B outputs 1.5 and 3.2 in 2022-23 and 2.5 and 3.3 in 2024/25, the ILO Strategy on Decent Work in Supply Chains, and relevant ILO normative instruments, in addressing the most pressing decent work challenges? 	<p>Document review</p>
<p>Coherence:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • How appropriate and coherent was the project's design in addressing decent work challenges specific to each sector and country? • To what extent did the project integrate and align with existing national and international frameworks, ensuring consistency and complementarity with other initiatives? • Were interventions designed to fit each of the countries? • Were necessary adjustments made to enhance coherence and goal achievement 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Document review • ILO • National tripartite stakeholders
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • How coherent and internally consistent were the project's strategies and activities with the ILO's overall outcomes, ensuring that interventions were well-integrated with decent Work country programmes 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Document review • National tripartite stakeholders

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • To what extent were the project's financial, human, and material resources used efficiently? • How did the project team ensure cost-effectiveness and the optimal allocation of resources to achieve intended outputs and outcomes? 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • ILO • Document review
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • How efficiently were activities implemented? • Where activities implemented in a timely manner? • What factors (internal or external) contributed to any delays or inefficiencies? Did the project had in place mitigation strategies to allow its efficiency? 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Document review • National tripartite stakeholders • ILO
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • To what extent did the project achieve its intended outputs and outcomes, particularly in improving decent work conditions? 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Document review • National tripartite stakeholders • ILO
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • How effectively did the project engage with key stakeholders—government agencies, employers, and workers and other organizations — to design and implement activities, ensuring strong partnerships and shared ownership of project goals? 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Document review • National tripartite stakeholders • ILO
<p>Impact:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What have been the short-term impact of the SCSFW project on improving working conditions and promoting decent work in the coffee, rubber gloves, and fisheries sectors? • What tangible changes have been observed in the targeted supply chains? • What is what is the potential of the project to change the lives and working conditions of its target groups? 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Document review • National tripartite stakeholders • ILO • End-beneficiaries
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • How likely are the results of the SCSFW project to be sustained post-completion, particularly in terms of the capacities built, stakeholder ownership? • and the enabling environment for decent work in the targeted supply chains? 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Document review • National tripartite stakeholders • ILO • End-beneficiaries
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What follow-up mechanisms or activities have been established to support the continuation and sustainability of the project's benefits in the future? • How well have these mechanisms been integrated into national systems and stakeholder processes? • Are country stakeholders ready to support the continuation of the project results/activities? If so, how? If not, why? 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Document review • National tripartite stakeholders • ILO • End-beneficiaries
<p>All criteria – learning focus!</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What are the key lessons and best practices from the project's design, research, and implementation phases that can inform future interventions in similar contexts? 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Document review • National tripartite stakeholders • ILO
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What challenges arose during the implementation of the project, and how were they addressed to ensure the successful delivery of outputs and outcomes? 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Document review • National tripartite stakeholders

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What lessons can be learned for future project management? 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • ILO
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Methodology

The evaluation adopted a mixed-methods approach, combining both qualitative and quantitative data to assess the performance of the “Supply Chains for a Sustainable Future of Work” project. The methodology included a detailed analysis of secondary data and the collection of primary data through remote, online interviews. This approach ensured the triangulation of data, considering the above-mentioned limitations.

Data collection methods

Secondary data review - The evaluator conducted a thorough review of available project documentation, including:

- Background reports and related data
- Development cooperation reports
- ILO country programme documents by country (when available)
- National development frameworks by country (when available)
- Studies and research undertaken by the project
- United Nations development frameworks by country (when available)

This review allowed the evaluator to build a strong understanding of the project's goals, activities, and performance, forming the basis for the primary data collection phase.

Primary data collection - Primary data was collected through semi-structured online interviews with key stakeholders including ILO staff, tripartite constituents (governments, employers, and workers), and local partners in Colombia, Malaysia, and Namibia.

21 individuals were interviewed for this evaluation, 3 interviews contributed to the overall understanding of the project (3 countries), 8 focused on the Namibia component, 8 focused on the Colombia component, 2 focused on the Malaysia component. Evaluation interviews for the Global, Namibia and Malaysia components were conducted in English. Evaluation interviews for the Colombia component were conducted in Spanish.

Ethical Considerations

The evaluation was guided by the highest ethical standards, adhering to the [ILO's Code of Conduct for Evaluators and](#) the UN Evaluation Group (UNEG) guidelines. The evaluator maintained independence and impartiality, ensuring that findings and recommendations are anonymous, unbiased and objectively presented. Key informant interviews were briefed on the purpose, methods, and use of the evaluation data. Confidentiality will be strictly maintained through the whole evaluation process and upon its conclusion, with all personal and sensitive information handled discreetly, ensuring that no harm comes to participants as a result of their involvement.

The evaluation process also took into close consideration the respect for cultural norms and sensitivities in each country, with careful consideration of local customs, gender dynamics, and social contexts. Given the diversity of the project locations (Colombia, Malaysia, Namibia), the evaluator adapted the evaluation tools to fit local realities and ensure that interactions are respectful and inclusive.

Transparency was a cornerstone of the process, with clear communication to all stakeholders about the purpose, methodology, and expected outcomes of the evaluation. Additionally, extra

care was taken to avoid any potential harm to participants, particularly as all data collection was conducted online, considering time zone differences and connectivity challenges. Strict data collection protocols were used, and data was only stored in an official ILO laptop.

The evaluator, although internal, acted in all objectivity and independence. The evaluator also confirms not to have any linkages with the project or any previous personal or professional linkages with the project team or evaluation manager.

The evaluator did not find any wrongdoing, unethical behaviour, or misconduct during the evaluation process.

Evaluation findings

Relevance

The SCSFW project demonstrated **high relevance** across Colombia, Namibia, and Malaysia by strategically addressing key decent work deficits in globally significant supply chains—coffee, fisheries, and rubber gloves. Its interventions tackled critical challenges unique to each sector. The project’s design aligned with ILO frameworks, including P&B outputs on promoting fundamental principles and rights at work, OSH, and rural development. It resonated with national priorities, such as Colombia’s Plan Nacional de Desarrollo 2022-2026 in its sections on *Trabajo Digno y Decente*, Namibia’s Vision 2030, and Malaysia’s National Action Plan on Forced Labour (NAPFL). Additionally, its alignment with the EU’s Corporate Sustainability Due Diligence Directive and international governance frameworks reinforced its global relevance, addressing decent work in supply chains linked to European markets.

The SCSFW project’s relevance across Colombia, Namibia, and Malaysia is underscored by its strategic focus on addressing decent work deficits in key sectors—coffee in Colombia, fisheries in Namibia, and rubber gloves in Malaysia. These sectors were chosen based on their economic importance, significant challenges in compliance with international labour standards (ILS), and their linkages to global supply chains, particularly with the European market.

In all three countries, the project targeted sector-specific decent work challenges, including the following:

- **Colombia:** The coffee sector faced high levels of informality, seasonal migration of workers, and limited social protections for coffee pickers, many of whom also operate as small-scale producers.
- **Namibia:** The fisheries sector exhibited gaps in workplace inspections, coordination among tripartite constituents, and a lack of standardized contracts for fishers.
- **Malaysia:** The rubber glove sector faced various decent work deficits, including in particular forced labour and unfair recruitment practices affecting mostly migrant workers.

Relevance vis-a-vis ILO programmatic priorities

The project aligns with key ILO Programme and Budget (P&B) 2024-25 and 2022-25 outcomes 2024–25, particularly:

- P&B Output 1.5 (2024–25) and Output 2.4 (2022-23): The project supported constituents in implementing sectoral international labour standards and tools. For instance, the development of standardized contracts in Namibia’s fisheries sector and

the promotion of fair recruitment practices in Malaysia's rubber glove sector align with this objective by enhancing sectoral resilience and promoting decent work.

- P&B Output 3.3 (2024–25) and Output 3.2 (2022–23): The project's efforts to promote decent work in Colombia's coffee sector and Namibia's fisheries sector align with the focus on creating decent work in rural areas. This included addressing informality, supporting rural skills training, and fostering social dialogue, particularly benefiting youth and women.
- P&B Output 1.4 and Output 7.1 (2022–23): The project enhanced the capacity of Member States to respect, promote, and realize fundamental principles and rights at work. This was achieved through efforts to eliminate forced labour and ensure the non-discrimination of migrant workers in Malaysia's rubber glove sector, improve social dialogue in Colombia's coffee sector, and institutionalize decent work mechanisms in Namibia's fisheries sector, including the promotion of occupational safety and health (OSH). These initiatives support compliance with Conventions Nos. 87 and 98 on freedom of association and collective bargaining, as well as the Protocol of 2014 to the Forced Labour Convention.
- P&B Output 6.1 (2024–25) and Output 7.2 (2022–23): In Namibia and Malaysia, the project promoted occupational safety and health (OSH) as part of broader compliance efforts. Joint inspections of fishing vessels in Namibia and training for rubber glove manufacturers in Malaysia addressed critical OSH gaps, aligning with the Promotional Framework for Occupational Safety and Health Convention, 2006 (No. 187), fundamental OSH Conventions No. 155 and 187 and in the case of Namibia the Labour Inspection Convention, 1947 (No. 81).
- P&B Output 6.4 and Output 7.5 (2022–23): The project's focus on migrant worker protections in Malaysia contributed to the development of fair labour migration frameworks, enhancing recruitment pathways and working conditions in the rubber glove sector and promoting the elimination of forced labour and modern slavery in the industry.

Relevance vis-a-vis national development instruments

The project also aligns with national development priorities:

Colombia's National Development Plan (2022–26)

The project's emphasis on promoting decent work through social dialogue, certification of skills, and addressing informality resonated strongly with Colombia's policy of *Trabajo Digno y Decente*. Specifically, the project contributed to:

- Strengthening labour inspections and ensuring compliance with labour standards.
- Promoting the certification of skills for coffee pickers through SENA, aligning with the Plan's focus on rural skills training and formalization.
- Enhancing social dialogue through *Mesas Ejecutivas*, which mirrored the Plan's emphasis on tripartism and collective bargaining.

Namibia Vision 2030

The SCSFW project aligned significantly with Namibia Vision 2030, particularly its emphasis on promoting decent and dignified work as a foundation for economic transformation. By focusing on improving working conditions, fostering social dialogue, and enhancing labour inspection systems in the fisheries sector, the project directly supported Vision 2030's goals of ensuring decent work environments that safeguarded worker rights, incomes, and safety. The establishment of mechanisms such as the National Coordination Mechanism for Decent Work

in Fisheries and the development of standardized employment contracts for fishers demonstrated the project's alignment with Namibia's commitment to strengthening tripartite social dialogue and modernizing labour practices. Additionally, the capacity-building initiatives for labour inspectors and maritime authorities reinforced the Vision's call for stronger oversight and inspection systems to ensure compliance with national and international labour standards. By addressing challenges such as informal employment and the absence of standardized contracts, the project contributed to the Vision's overarching goal of formalizing employment, enhancing safety, and achieving inclusive economic growth, particularly in rural and vulnerable sectors.

Malaysia National Action Plan on Forced Labour (2021–2025) (NAPFL)

The SCSFW project in Malaysia aligned closely with the objectives outlined in the NAPFL 2021–2025, particularly in supporting government, employers, and workers' organizations to address forced labour in the rubber glove sector. The project contributed to the NAPFL's goals by promoting fair recruitment practices, building employer awareness, and enhancing the capacity of key stakeholders to identify and address forced labour. Its engagement with the Malaysian Employers Federation (MEF) and the Malaysian Rubber Council (MRC) strengthened migration management and recruitment practices, directly addressing key priorities of the NAPFL. Additionally, the project's training and awareness-raising initiatives among employers and workers advanced the NAPFL's aim to enhance understanding of forced labour. By fostering multi-stakeholder collaboration and supporting legal compliance with ILO Convention 29, the project complemented the NAPFL's overarching strategy to improve enforcement, victim protection, and public awareness.

[Relevance vis-à-vis relevant European Union policies](#)

EU Directive on Corporate Sustainability Due Diligence (CSDD)

The SCSFW project demonstrated significant alignment with the principles and objectives of the EU Directive on Corporate Sustainability Due Diligence (CSDD). By focusing on enhancing compliance with international labour standards across global supply chains in Colombia, Namibia, and Malaysia, the project contributed to inform stakeholders about the Directive's requirements for responsible business conduct.

EU Raw Materials Initiative and Critical Raw Materials Action Plan

The SCSFW project aligns with the objectives of the Raw Materials Initiative and the Critical Raw Materials Action Plan by addressing governance gaps and promoting sustainable and responsible practices in sectors linked to global supply chains. Through its interventions in Colombia, Namibia, and Malaysia, the project contributes to creating fairer and more sustainable sourcing practices, ensuring adherence to international labour standards and reducing adverse social and environmental impacts.

Specifically, in Malaysia, the project's work in the rubber glove sector, a critical industry for global health supply chains, indirectly supports the principles of the Critical Raw Materials Action Plan by ensuring that production practices adhere to fair recruitment standards and reduce forced labour risks. The engagement with employers' organizations and the promotion of due diligence practices aligns with the Initiative's call for higher governance standards and social responsibility in supply chains.

EU International Ocean Governance Agenda and Common Fisheries Policy

The SCSFW project in Namibia aligns closely with the EU International Ocean Governance agenda and the Common Fisheries Policy, particularly in its promotion of decent work in

fisheries. Through its targeted interventions, the project supports key EU objectives, including ratification and implementation of the ILO Work in Fishing Convention (C188) and the elimination of forced labour and other human rights violations in the fisheries sector.

The project enhanced compliance with international labour standards in Namibia's fisheries sector by facilitating the implementation of C188 provisions. This included the development of standardized employment contracts for fishers and strengthening labour inspection mechanisms through capacity-building for inspectors and maritime authorities. These measures directly contribute to the EU's commitment to fostering decent work in fisheries globally.

The project aligned with the EU's emphasis on addressing forced labour in fisheries by conducting joint inspections of fishing vessels, raising awareness among stakeholders, and developing training programs for employers and workers. These efforts help ensure that forced labour and other exploitative practices are identified and mitigated, supporting the EU's broader strategy to combat human rights violations in fisheries.

While Namibia is not directly engaged under the EU's Sustainable Fisheries Partnership Agreements SFPAs, the project's focus on social provisions and decent work practices mirrors the objectives of these agreements. The project's efforts to enhance oversight and inspection capabilities in Namibia indirectly support the EU's goals to address forced labour in the context of IUU fishing. Strengthened inspection systems and improved labour conditions reduce vulnerabilities that contribute to exploitative practices, aligning with the EU's integrated approach to fisheries governance.

Coherence

The SCSFW project demonstrated a highly coherent design by aligning its objectives with sector-specific challenges, national priorities, and international frameworks across Colombia, Namibia, and Malaysia. While the project's tailored approaches enhanced its relevance and alignment, some gaps in stakeholder engagement, gender equity, and resource allocation impacted its overall coherence, particularly in addressing systemic and cross-cutting issues comprehensively. Despite these limitations, the project's design provided a strong foundation for advancing decent work agendas in all three countries.

The project design demonstrated a high degree of coherence in aligning with the broader goals of promoting decent work in global supply chains. However, challenges related to stakeholder engagement, resource allocation, and management adjustments revealed areas for improvement.

The project was tailored to address critical issues in each sector:

- **Colombia (Coffee):** Efforts focused on formalizing labour, promoting gender equality, and fostering social dialogue. Activities such as competency certifications through SENA and the establishment of regional tripartite committees aligned well with sectoral challenges.
- **Namibia (Fisheries):** The project addressed decent work deficits by setting up a tripartite Coordination mechanism, improving occupational safety and health, and promoting gender-sensitive policies in fishing and factory settings.
- **Malaysia (Rubber Gloves):** It tackled decent work, and in particular forced labour, challenges through research, employer capacity building, and the development of a guidebook aligned with the NAPFL. However, gaps remained in addressing root causes

like discrimination and gender-specific vulnerabilities among migrant workers as a crosscutting issue at the ILO.

While the project design addressed sector-specific challenges, it did not fully integrate gender and non-discrimination considerations within a supply chain approach in some countries, such as Malaysia and Namibia. In these cases, the project primarily focused on supply chain components dominated by male workers. However, gender-related vulnerabilities extend beyond the gender composition of the workforce. A more comprehensive approach could have assessed the barriers women face in accessing these key sectors of the economy and identified strategies to promote greater inclusion and equity.

Some members of the technical team noted that gender integration was limited due to the male-dominated nature of the fishing and rubber glove sectors. The evaluation, therefore, finds that with larger project components and additional funding in each country, it might have been possible to incorporate aspects of the supply chain where women are more actively engaged, ensuring a more inclusive approach.

Concerning knowledge sharing, as a general recommendation for regional projects is to share the experiences of how the implementation methodologies may have worked differently in each of the countries, however knowledge sharing activities are costly, and time consuming i.e. at the ILO for the organization of regional activities projects need to submit approval request to the GB two months in advance, which may not be applicable for projects of short duration.

The project's approach to stakeholder engagement varied across countries:

- **Colombia:** Strong local ownership and engagement with state-level and local governments (for example the strong engagement of the Huila Government, in Colombia) including through the Subcomisión Departamental de Concertación de Políticas Salariales y Laborales and their leading role in the mesa ejecutiva, the SENA, trade unions, and coffee cooperatives facilitated successful interventions.
- **Namibia:** Tripartite collaboration was effective, but lengthy bureaucratic processes occasionally delayed stakeholder participation.
- **Malaysia:** While awareness-raising activities were successful, stakeholder engagement beyond the project remains limited. Initial resistance from employers, especially in acknowledging forced labour issues, required sustained efforts to build consensus. Finally, ILO staff and stakeholder turnover was high, putting at risk the sustainability of the interventions.

Specific insights per country are as follows:

Colombia

The project design in Colombia demonstrated strong coherence by aligning effectively with the specific needs of the coffee sector while incorporating broader national and sub-national (for example the acuerdo de competitividad para el sector cafetero en el Huila) strategies and international labour standards. The focus on formalizing labour, promoting gender equality, and fostering social dialogue reflected a comprehensive and context-sensitive approach.

The project addressed critical challenges in the coffee sector:

Formalization of labour: With the majority of coffee pickers working informally, the project prioritized initiatives to promote the formalization of informal employment. Key activities included the certification of labour competencies through SENA, which not only recognized workers' skills but also enhanced their recognition as valuable stakeholders in the supply chain and is expected to increase their employability and income.

Gender equality: The project acknowledged the strong presence of women in the coffee sector, where around 30% of producers are women, and tackled persistent gender inequities. Efforts included:

- Supporting the inclusion of gender-specific targets and policies within the coffee sector, including as part of the [Sectoral Agreement on the Coffee Sector Competitiveness in the Coffee Sector in the Huila Department](#) and the [Pact to harvest decent work](#).
- Promoting the participation of women in various dialogue platforms on coffee, including in the [regional committee on coffee value chain in the Huila Province](#); and incorporating gender equity into their regulations and activities, ensuring women's voices were represented in decision-making processes.
- Providing training for women leaders to increase their capacity to participate in governance structures.
- Promoting cultural change by addressing traditional gender roles and fostering the inclusion of women in leadership roles, including by addressing societal attitudes that perpetuate inequities.
- Targeting women producers and workers in the labour competency certification.

Social dialogue: The establishment of Mesas Ejecutivas fostered tripartite dialogue among coffee sector stakeholders, including smallholder producers, exporters, unions, and government representatives. These forums institutionalized collaborative planning processes and created a shared vision for addressing decent work deficits. By focusing on inclusivity and participation, the project empowered workers, including women and indigenous populations, to engage meaningfully in dialogue and advocacy.

Furthermore, the project effectively integrated with Colombia's National Development Plan (2022–26), aligning with its emphasis on Trabajo Digno y Decente. Key contributions included:

- Supporting labour formalization and rural skills training through partnerships with institutions like SENA.
- Promoting social dialogue and collective bargaining, ensuring the participation of diverse stakeholders in decision-making processes.
- Enhancing gender equity by incorporating gender-specific targets and policies within the coffee sector.

The project's alignment with Colombia's existing cooperative models further strengthened its coherence. By leveraging the cooperative structure—widely prevalent in the coffee sector—it maximized stakeholder engagement and resource utilization.

The project extended its focus to the sub-national level, engaging local governments, buyers, and other stakeholders in dialogue and decision-making. This localized approach enhanced responsiveness to regional realities and specific challenges faced by smallholder coffee producers in the Project's area of intervention Huila Colombia, many of whom operate on less than two hectares of land.

Finally, the partnership with SENA for labour competency certifications was a cornerstone of the project's success. It not only formalized workers' skills but also created a foundation for sustainable capacity building in the coffee sector. The involvement of public institutions, universities, and private stakeholders in these efforts underscored the project's coherence with national strategies and long-term goals.

Namibia

The project demonstrated a high degree of coherence in addressing the fishing industry's distinct challenges in Namibia. Its design and implementation were well-aligned with the sector's specific needs namely:

- Ensuring the safety of workers, particularly aboard vessels. Current challenges include inadequate and poor-quality Personal Protective Equipment (PPE) and unsafe working conditions at sea.
- Access to vessels to monitor compliance with OSH and labour standards.
- Lack of standardized policies and limited capacity to conduct effective inspections.
- Capacity of stakeholders on international labour standards.
- Limited awareness of labour rights and OSH practices among workers and employers.
- Lack of collaboration between employers and workers are critical to addressing workplace issues.

One of the project's significant achievements was its responsiveness to the lack of adequate Personal Protective Equipment (PPE) and unsafe working conditions aboard vessels. Workers frequently reported issues concerning the quality and availability of PPE, which employers claimed had been provided. Through capacity-building efforts and consistent dialogue, the project facilitated improvements in OSH awareness and compliance, ensuring that workers aboard vessels and in factories were better protected. The distribution of practical guidance materials, such as leaflets on staying safe while working aboard vessels, further empowered workers and demonstrated the project's commitment to addressing pressing safety concerns.

Adjustments were made during implementation to enhance coherence and effectiveness. Recognizing the challenges posed by ministry approval processes, which often delayed participation in workshops, the project maintained ongoing communication with stakeholders to mitigate time disruptions and other challenges. Sensitization efforts were tailored to local contexts, with steering committee meetings bringing together tripartite representatives and fostering collective ownership of project outcomes. The creation of mixed forums that included HR representatives and union members was particularly effective in enhancing social dialogue and collaboration.

The project's design was consistent with the ILO's broader outcomes and national priorities. It strengthened OSH measures through initiatives such as joint inspections aboard vessels, capacity-building workshops for labour inspectors, and the introduction of standardized employment contracts in the fisheries sector.

The fishing industry in Namibia presents unique dynamics, with women predominantly working in factories and men typically employed aboard vessels. Gender considerations were incorporated into project activities, though challenges remained in encouraging female participation in leadership roles and aboard vessels, where confined spaces and cultural perceptions posed significant barriers. Nonetheless, the project raised employer awareness about the importance of non-discrimination and equal opportunities, paving the way for gradual shifts in workplace practices.

Malaysia

The project design in Malaysia exhibited both strengths and limitations in addressing the challenges of forced labour and decent work deficits in the rubber glove sector. While the design was coherent in aligning with key national and international frameworks, the implementation faced challenges due to lack of a consistent ILO presence in the country and challenges in stakeholder engagement.

In general terms, the project effectively addressed the specific challenges and needs of Malaysia's rubber glove sector by targeting critical areas of forced labour, building stakeholder capacity, and promoting consensus-driven actions to foster decent work conditions.

The rubber glove sector, a cornerstone of Malaysia's manufacturing industry, and an essential import product of the European Union, faces persistent decent work challenges, including forced labour, which particularly impacts its large migrant workforce.

The sector's fragmented stakeholder landscape required concerted efforts to foster collaboration and consensus. The project engaged employers, trade unions, and government representatives to validate the findings of its research report. This process was instrumental in building agreement on the sector's challenges and the need for coordinated action.

The project facilitated discussions to establish a sector-wide action plan for promoting decent work. Although initial resistance from some employers posed challenges, sustained dialogue helped achieve consensus on key priorities.

The project conducted Malaysia's first in-depth analysis of decent work issues in the rubber glove sector, producing a well-researched report that provided a foundation for future interventions. Despite reservations from some stakeholders, the findings were instrumental in advancing discussions on decent work and forced labour.

Employers' understanding of forced labour and international standards was enhanced through targeted workshops, training programs, and direct consultations. These efforts helped reshape industry practices, including revising codes of conduct.

Nevertheless, there were some shortages on the project's implementation in Malaysia. While technical assistance from ILO specialists based in HQ was instrumental, their roles were limited due to the lack of regular country presence, and the geographical distance to enable lasting relationships with valuable stakeholders.

The project leaned heavily on employer engagement without equally strong collaboration with trade unions and civil society, due to the limitations that stem from the country context. While employers were key to addressing forced labour, the limited capacity of trade unions to represent workers in this sector and advocate on their behalf limited the broader social dialogue needed for sustainable change.

Furthermore, despite forced labour's strong links to discrimination gender issues were not integrated into the project's design. Opportunities to address related challenges were, therefore, overlooked.

Effectiveness

The project demonstrated high effectiveness across the three countries—Colombia, Namibia, and Malaysia—by addressing sector-specific challenges, fostering tripartite collaboration, and advancing decent work principles. It effectively leveraged research, capacity-building, and stakeholder engagement to align interventions with national priorities and international frameworks, delivering tangible outcomes despite resource constraints.

Colombia

In Colombia the project effectiveness was very high. The project effectively addressed key challenges in the coffee sector while fostering measurable progress toward promoting decent work. To achieve this objective, the project leveraged research-driven approaches, capacity-

building initiatives, and stakeholder engagement to align closely with sector-specific needs, while simultaneously integrating local and national frameworks into its strategy.

To guide the project's results, the [Rapid Study on Decent work challenges and opportunities in the coffee supply chain in Colombia](#) provided a comprehensive understanding of systemic challenges in the coffee sector, such as informal employment, gender inequality, and inadequate health and safety protocols. This study served as a roadmap for designing targeted interventions, and its findings were disseminated widely, including to over 300 participants at the graduation of certified coffee pickers. Furthermore, the study informed the creation of the *Mesa Ejecutiva*, an executive body focused on advancing decent work in the coffee supply chain. These research-driven initiatives ensured that the project was grounded in the realities of the sector, enhancing its relevance and impact.

The certification of more than 2,500 coffee pickers, from Huila and 7 other departments and more than 22 municipalities, through SENA marked a significant achievement in the project's capacity-building efforts. By validating workers' competencies, this initiative provided formal recognition of their skills, paving the way for improved income opportunities and greater job security. The certification programme also set the stage for generational continuity in the sector, addressing the long-term sustainability of the coffee supply chain. This initiative not only met the immediate needs of workers but also established a replicable model that could be scaled to other regions, amplifying its impact.

The project also demonstrated its commitment to promoting gender equality and social inclusion within the coffee sector. Women, who constitute 30% of coffee producers in Colombia, were actively included in project activities. Training programmes featured gender-specific modules, while the *Mesa Ejecutiva* provided a platform for amplifying women's voices in decision-making processes. By addressing cultural barriers such as "machismo" and promoting women's participation, including in decision-making roles, the project contributed to advancing equity in a traditionally male-dominated sector.

A key pillar of the project's implementation was its focus on social dialogue and stakeholder engagement. The institutionalization of the *Mesa Tripartita de Asuntos Internacionales del Sector Café* enabled meaningful collaboration among producers, unions, exporters, and government entities. This platform facilitated the alignment of local actions with national priorities, ensuring that policies and initiatives were both context-specific and sustainable. Regional dialogues, such as the *Diálogos Vinculantes Territoriales* in Pitalito, further reinforced the project's commitment to inclusive and participatory approaches. These mechanisms not only fostered consensus-building but also institutionalized collaborative planning processes, creating a sustainable foundation for future interventions.

The project's alignment with Colombia's National Development Plan (2022–26) further underscored its effectiveness. By strengthening labour inspection mechanisms, supporting the formalization of labour through certifications, and institutionalizing social dialogue platforms, the project directly contributed to national goals for promoting decent work and sustainable economic development. This alignment enhanced the project's credibility and ensured that its interventions were integrated into broader policy frameworks.

Despite its successes, the project faced challenges that highlighted areas for improvement. Resistance to discussions issues around freedom of association revealed the complexities of Colombia's labour landscape, requiring persistent and persistent engagement. Additionally, resource constraints limited the scope of certification programs and infrastructure improvements. However, the project mitigated these challenges by fostering partnerships with

local governments and international organizations, including GIZ and FAO, which helped to pool resources and expertise, and through strong collaboration at office level.

Namibia

In Namibia the project effectiveness was very high. The project was well aligned with sector-specific challenges in the fishing industry, promoting tangible improvements in occupational safety and health (OSH), and improving collaboration and capacity amongst the fishing sector stakeholders. The project effectively addressed key gaps in the Namibian fisheries sector while promoting compliance with international labour standards, particularly the Work in Fishing Convention, 2007 (No. 188).

The introduction of joint inspections in Walvis Bay and Lüderitz in marked a significant step toward improving enforcement mechanisms. These inspections uncovered systemic issues, including discrepancies in contractual arrangements, noncompliance with overtime regulations, and outdated risk assessments. The project successfully targeted these pressing issues, laying the foundation for sustained compliance and improved working conditions.

Furthermore, the standardized employment contract for the Namibian fishing sector, developed in alignment with ILO Work in Fishing Convention, 2007 (No. 188) and national laws, demonstrated the project's effectiveness in creating practical tools to address noncompliance. This initiative was validated through a tripartite workshop held in March 2023, which involved all key stakeholders, including government authorities, employers, and workers' representatives. The contract addressed critical gaps in employment conditions, ensuring fairness, clarity, and adherence to international labour standards.

At the same time, the project invested heavily in capacity building for both authorities and workers, reflecting its commitment to sustainable improvements in the sector. Notable achievements included:

- Training and certification of 44 labour inspectors, shop stewards, fisheries inspectors, and fisheries observers in OSH, equipping them to better detect and remediate safety issues in the fishing sector.
- Conducting a workshop on rights, duties, and obligations for shop stewards, vessel captains, and fishers in October 2023, which enhanced awareness of labour rights and promoted sustained compliance with legal and safety standards.

To support the work of national stakeholders, the project also developed a toolkit on the fisheries supply chain, providing guidelines on OSH, forced labour, and responsible business conduct. This toolkit served as a comprehensive resource for both enforcement authorities and businesses.

Of similar importance, the establishment of the National Coordination Mechanism on Decent Work in the Fisheries Sector further exemplified the project's effectiveness in institutionalizing improvements. This mechanism promotes social dialogue among tripartite constituents and ensures compliance with Convention No. 188, demonstrating a strategic approach to governance in the sector.

At the same time, the project fostered sectoral social dialogue through initiatives such as the launch of the National Coordination Mechanism and the organization of a Business Forum on advancing decent work in Namibia's fisheries supply chain. These events raised awareness among stakeholders about decent work challenges and opportunities, while also addressing the potential impact of the EU's Corporate Sustainability Due Diligence Directive. The forums

facilitated discussions on human rights, environmental sustainability, and economic growth, ensuring that all stakeholders were actively involved in the process.

Moreover, the project organized a freedom of association and collective bargaining workshop in September 2023, enhancing negotiation skills and promoting dispute resolution among stakeholders. This initiative strengthened the capacity of social partners to advocate for fair labour practices and fostered a culture of collaboration in the sector.

Malaysia

In Malaysia the project was effective in bringing to the fore the employment and labour challenges facing the rubber glove sector in Malaysia and intended to promote decent work principles and aligning with national and international frameworks. Through research, capacity-building initiatives, and stakeholder engagement, the project achieved significant progress, though limitations in some areas suggest further opportunities for enhancement.

The project's publication of the "Decent Work Challenges and Opportunities in the Rubber Glove Sector" of June 2023 was a major achievement – it was among pioneer studies on the subject - providing a comprehensive analysis of employment issues, forced labour practices, and suggesting recommendations for improvement. This report guided the development of the Action Plan on Decent Work, validated by tripartite constituents in March 2023, which addressed five core areas: employment and productivity, social dialogue, OSH, forced labour, and labour inspection.

The project's emphasis on capacity-building was critical to its success. Notable achievements include:

- Capacity-building programs with the Malaysian Trades Union Congress (MTUC): These programs promoted freedom of association and collective bargaining, culminating in the publication of a strategy document for use in Migrant Resource Centres and other future MTUC initiatives.
- The project supported the Malaysian Rubber Glove Manufacturers Association (MARGMA) in drafting a code of conduct that integrated international labour standards through the ILO Helpdesk for Business on International Labour Standards.

Of similar importance, the Due Diligence Toolkit on Fair Recruitment toolkit provided industry stakeholders with practical tools to improve recruitment practices and mitigate forced labour risks.

The project-initiated discussions with the Ministry of Human Resources (MOHR) and the Department of Labour (DOL) to enhance the task force's scope and include tripartite and sectoral stakeholders in compliance planning. However, this was not constituted.

Note that the information for Malaysia was not triangulated due to the lack of contact with key informants in the country, including staff.

Achievement of project outcomes

Outcome 1: Tripartite constituents and stakeholders have further advanced decent work in fairer, more resilient, inclusive, and sustainable coffee supply chains connecting Colombia to the EU market.

The project effectively advanced decent work in the coffee supply chain by:

- Institutionalizing Social Dialogue: The creation of the Mesa Tripartita de Asuntos Internacionales del Sector Café, led by the Ministry of Labour and supported by the ILO, fostered multi-stakeholder engagement. This provided an institutional mechanism

for addressing decent work deficits, strengthening policies, and improving compliance with labour standards.

- **Enhancing Worker Competencies:** The certification of more than 2,500 coffee pickers through SENA was a significant milestone, showcasing the project's ability to formalize labour, enhance worker skills, and contribute to better livelihoods. The certification program demonstrated a direct link between capacity building and improved labour conditions.
- **Stakeholder engagement:** By engaging smallholders, cooperatives, unions, exporters, and local governments, the project fostered a collaborative environment that supported both local needs and compliance with EU market expectations.

Outcome 2: Tripartite constituents and stakeholders have further developed and implemented policies and measures to advance decent work in a more resilient, inclusive, and sustainable rubber glove supply chain connecting the respective sector in Malaysia and the EU market.

The project demonstrated progress toward this outcome through targeted interventions and stakeholder collaboration. For example, the Action Plan on the Promotion of Decent Work in Malaysia's Rubber Glove Supply Chain, validated on 7 March 2023, addressed key areas of employment, social dialogue, occupational safety and health (OSH), forced labour, and labour inspection. Its tripartite validation demonstrated stakeholder alignment and commitment to sectoral improvements. By addressing forced labour and enhancing compliance measures, the action plan directly supports the broader goals of creating a resilient and sustainable supply chain in Malaysia.

At the same time the Decent Work Challenges and Opportunities in the Rubber Glove Sector Report, published on 27 June 2023, provided a comprehensive analysis of decent work deficits. This research informed the development of the action plan and sectoral strategies, ensuring interventions were evidence-based and tailored to sectoral needs.

Outcome 3: Tripartite constituents and stakeholders have further developed and implemented policies and measures to advance decent work in a resilient, inclusive, and sustainable fisheries supply chain in Namibia.

The project demonstrated significant progress toward this outcome by introducing and strengthening critical policies and mechanisms in the fisheries sector. The National Coordination Mechanism on Decent Work in the Fisheries Sector was established, providing a governance framework to oversee decent work conditions and sectoral social dialogue. This mechanism aligns directly with the objectives of Outcome 3 by institutionalizing measures to enhance labour standards and ensure compliance with the Work in Fishing Convention, 2007 (No. 188).

At the same time the development of a standardized employment contract for fishers addressed key challenges in the sector, such as discrepancies in contractual arrangements, lack of clarity on wage provisions, and limited social protection. The tripartite validation of this contract demonstrated stakeholder buy-in and ensured alignment with international and national legal frameworks.

The project trained and certified 44 labour inspectors, shop stewards, fisheries inspectors, and fisheries observers in occupational safety and health, enhancing their ability to detect and address noncompliance in the sector. Furthermore, the joint labour inspections conducted promoted by the project identified key compliance issues, such as inadequate OSH measures, unfair dismissals, and payment discrepancies. These inspections resulted in concrete enforcement actions, including compliance orders, violation notices, and fines.

Outcome 4: Tripartite constituents and enterprises active in the EU market have a better understanding of decent work challenges and opportunities in selected supply chains for enhancing due diligence.

The project has made notable progress in building knowledge and capacity among stakeholders, particularly in the coffee and textile sectors, through several events:

The "From Planting to Cup" event held in Bogotá on April 24, 2024, created an important platform for engaging coffee exporters, marketers, and key supply chain actors in meaningful dialogue. The event focused on addressing challenges faced by coffee growers and pickers while promoting the role of social dialogue in improving productivity, decent wages, and labour competencies. These contributions reinforced institutional support for improving social and labour conditions within the sector.

The project also successfully showcased its work in the coffee sector at the Rural Development Academy, where stakeholders were able to engage in discussions on how to optimize the impact of supply chain interventions using a combination of national and international, mandatory and voluntary measures.

In Colombia, the rapid study on decent work conditions in Colombia and its findings (produced in the framework of the first phase – SSCBFB project) provided a roadmap for stakeholders, highlighting systemic issues like informality and gender inequity. The study was presented at high-visibility events such as FICCA-2022, reinforcing its value as a tool for decision-making and advocacy. The inputs from the study were used, during the SCSFW project, to reach a competitiveness agreement as a 16-year regional policy for the supply chain.

At the same time, the Business Forum on Advancing Decent Work in the Namibian Fisheries Supply Chain served as a platform for stakeholders to discuss decent work challenges and opportunities. It fostered alignment between local practices and international regulations, such as the EU's Corporate Sustainability Due Diligence Directive.

Finally, the project contributed to Malaysia's participation in Alliance 8.7, with MRC and MARGMA expressing interest in supporting the roadmap, emphasizing their commitment to combatting forced labour and ensuring ethical practices.

Similarly, the evaluation finds that the project played an important role in strengthening social dialogue by bringing together key supply chain actors to discuss human rights due diligence. During the "From Planting to Cup" coffee sector stakeholders engaged in dialogue about the structural challenges they face. This initiative is expected to have helped on the alignment of stakeholder perspectives on issues such as wages, labour certification, and sectoral competitiveness.

In addition to these achievements, the project finalized the development of an ILO Textile, Clothing, Leather, and Footwear (TCLF) Toolkit, consolidating various ILO normative, policy, training, research, and data resources into a single, accessible platform. This toolkit provides stakeholders—including businesses, policymakers, trade unions, and workers' organizations—with a streamlined way to access key information. The toolkit is designed to be a dynamic resource, with ongoing updates to ensure it remains relevant as new research and best practices emerge. With support of the project, SECTOR also developed an ILO Live Map of TCLF Projects, which provides an interactive, centralized overview of ILO textile sector programs and projects.

On this last item, while the toolkit and project map improved access to information, there is no yet evidence of how enterprises are using these resources to address due diligence requirements in their supply chains.

Efficiency

The Project was **efficient** in achieving significant outcomes across three countries despite limited resources and logistical challenges, thanks to its effective collaboration, targeted interventions, and streamlined coordination mechanisms. However, certain limitations, such as ambitious project design and staffing challenges, affected the depth and sustainability of some initiatives. Efficient mechanisms, such as team meetings and collaboration with sector experts, helped mitigate some challenges, but the structural issues of staff retention and short project duration remained critical barriers.

The project aimed to address significant and complex issues across three countries—Namibia, Colombia, and Malaysia. However, this evaluation finds that the financial resources available were low compared to the scope (i.e. three countries and three different sectors), projects of similar size at the ILO typically require a higher level of resources for comparable outcomes. Nevertheless, it is important to note that the project being evaluated, built on a first phase. Therefore, for the evaluated period, engagements were already created, and the project could directly work on implementation.

The limited budget led to the scaling back of activities (for example the number of inspections in Namibia), and increased the reliance of the project on technical staff from Geneva who often needed to stretch amongst projects and regular responsibilities. This impacted the depth of implementation in Malaysia, and could potentially affect the sustainability of interventions in Colombia and Namibia, in the case where no budget is allocated for the sectors in the short term.

While no-cost extensions were granted without issue, it was noted that these requests were made by the ILO later than it may have been preferred by the EC. This caused additional work for financial units at the EC. However, the Development Partner understand this as a necessary step to ensure long-term engagement and continuity in project implementation. It is advisable to the ILO's finance and PARTNERSHIPS teams to speed up these requests to facilitate processes and enable funding requests to be managed on time by Development Partners.

Concerning staffing:

- The project was overseen by a Chief Technical Adviser (CTA) who provided overall strategic guidance. However, her departure approximately four months before the project's official end date led to delays in implementation. As a result, a no-cost extension was requested to compensate for the delay and ensure the completion of planned activities. The departure of personal to oversee the whole project implementation affected documentation, and potential for sustainability (especially in Malaysia).
- In Colombia, the project management at the country level was highly effective, working very efficiently at the country office level, promoting teamwork and mobilizing additional projects and ensuring smooth stakeholder engagement.
- In Namibia, the NPC demonstrated strong engagement and knowledge, particularly with the fishing sector, enhancing stakeholder relationships. It is important to recognize the excellent role of the NPC in Namibia to establish a relationship with national stakeholders in a country where the ILO had no well-established relationships, and no office.
- In Malaysia the project faced challenges in recruiting a National Project Coordinator due to a limited pool of candidates with expertise in employment, labour issues, and the rubber glove sector. To mitigate this, the project leveraged staff from other initiatives in the country with strong knowledge of decent work issues. However, the lack of direct engagement with these staff members during the evaluation process limited the ability to assess their contributions. Greater involvement from the Regional Office for Asia and the Pacific in

project implementation and staffing decisions could help ensure institutional continuity, sustained stakeholder engagement, and stronger expertise alignment in future initiatives.

The creation of small teams, including shared financial assistants, was efficient in terms of cost sharing, but added pressure on the NPCs.

Regular team meetings were established by the project management based in headquarters. These were highlighted as a positive mechanism for information sharing and fostering a sense of belonging among team members, which likely contributed to smoother operations across countries. Furthermore, close collaboration with SECTOR specialists from Geneva was efficient in aligning the project design with sector-specific challenges and opportunities and promoted capacity building for national staff.

Concerning stakeholder engagement, in Namibia, the fishing sector stakeholders, including the government and businesses, were well-engaged, demonstrating enthusiasm for improving labour standards. Similarly, in Colombia, the NPC's proactive approach fostered strong relationships with stakeholders, including cooperatives, unions, enterprises and local governments demonstrated to be highly efficient. Engagement in Malaysia was weaker due to the sensitive nature of the challenges facing the sector, the high staff turnover, and a limited engagement from the Regional Office for Asia and the Pacific resulting in difficulties in sustaining consistent relationships with stakeholders. The project was also affected by turnover of staff in key partner institutions in MARGMA and MRC, however this information was not triangulated due to the lack of contact with these institutions.

Beyond national stakeholder engagement, it was the importance of direct engagement between the project teams and the EU delegations at the country level was appreciated. This approach facilitated smoother coordination and ensured alignment with national and international priorities.

The ILO was commended for being responsive to donor queries and maintaining regular updates through formal mechanisms like steering committee meetings. This transparency and responsiveness were crucial for maintaining donor confidence and operational alignment.

Country level efficiency (Colombia and Namibia)

In **Colombia**, financial and human resource constraints occasionally delayed activities or reduced their depth. However, the project's innovative use of existing tools, and findings from earlier regional projects, allowed for efficient resource allocation. These tools informed interventions tailored to the needs of coffee pickers, highlighting their aspirations and addressing their challenges. The project coordinator in Colombia played a pivotal role in optimizing resources, fostering strong partnerships, and implementing cost-sharing mechanisms, which allowed the project to achieve significant milestones despite the constraints.

In **Namibia**, due to financial limitations not all needs were addressed and activities had to be prioritized, i.e. joint inspections and capacity building, that addressed critical immediate needs in the fisheries sector. In the case of Namibia, the project made efficient use of technical support from ILO experts in Pretoria and Harare, particularly on maritime issues and labour standards. This guidance was instrumental in developing training materials, toolkits, and standardized employment contracts. Although delays occasionally arose due to PROCUREMENT timeframes and requirements, these challenges were mitigated through strong stakeholder collaboration.

Impact and sustainability potential

The SCSFW project demonstrated **substantial short-term impacts in Colombia and Namibia, with promising pathways for long-term sustainability in Colombia and Namibia**. However, its ability to deliver sustained, long-term benefits will depend on stronger alignment with global policy priorities, government ownership, and proactive resource mobilization to maintain momentum. This requires a strategic, phased approach where initial successes are leveraged to attract continued investments and partnerships. The evaluation was unable to assess impact and sustainability potential of the Malaysia component due to the lack of data.

While the European Commission is committed to promoting decent work worldwide—particularly in light of the forthcoming **Corporate Sustainability Due Diligence Directive (CSDDD)**, which will enter into force in 2027—several key points emerge regarding sustainability, continuity, and strategic alignment. For projects to deliver meaningful results, their effects must extend beyond the immediate implementation phase. The focus should not be on specific countries but on ensuring that global supply chains operate ethically and sustainably. This perspective underscores the importance of national ownership and integration of project results into government frameworks to ensure sustained impact.

Planning and securing funding for multi-year initiatives is a time-consuming process, and funding for the continuation of the activities of the project has been secured at a certain extent for Namibia (RBTC). For the Malaysia component, national stakeholders seemed to have shown some level of commitment to match the EU contributions, however due to the weak relationship with institutions, this commitment was no longer mentioned during the evaluation. It was mentioned that the turnover of staff affected the project, which highlights the need of establishing institution-to-institution relationships, less reliant on individuals.

A concept note has been submitted to the EC to continue the work initiated in Malaysia for activities in the rubber glove sector, however until the finalization of this evaluation no funding was allocated.

Colombia has succeeded, the FORLAC II initiative is leveraging project structures and knowledge, notably through the Mesa Ejecutiva in Huila, which serves as a key counterpart for testing the new AI chatbot tool. This work is jointly funded by FORLAC, the ILO Regional Office, and SECTOR RB. Additionally, SENA continues to offer certification, and ILO's work on the rural economy is integrating lessons learned from the project, albeit in different sectors. NPC has also mobilized resources, including through GIZ, to sustain some of the activities.

Unfortunately, challenges in securing funding continuity can jeopardize project sustainability. A clear **exit strategy**, along with mechanisms for national ownership and resource mobilization, would have been crucial to bridging the gaps. However, this was not developed by the project.

Country level impact and sustainability (Colombia and Namibia)

In **Colombia** the project shows tangible short-term and potential long-term impacts, particularly on working conditions, decent work promotion, and empowerment within the coffee supply chain.

The project's ability to empower workers and formalize their competencies has been transformative. The certification of competencies through SENA, was repeatedly cited as a significant achievement. For many coffee pickers, this marked the first time they had received formal recognition of their skills, which enhanced their dignity and motivated them to seek better working conditions. The certifications not only validated their expertise but also created

opportunities for improved income and job stability, which are critical for sustaining livelihoods. Stakeholders observed a shift in attitudes, with coffee pickers gaining a stronger voice in decision-making processes. SENA has shown commitment to continue to promote this certification for coffee pickers, and even to expand it to other sectors. One of the areas of interest for the ILO in Colombia, is to analyse the impact of the certification on the actual income of the workers in a long term.

The project also achieved progress in social dialogue and collective action. The establishment of committees and platforms such as the Mesa Ejecutiva allowed stakeholders across the supply chain to connect and collaborate. For the first time, coffee pickers, producers, unions, and local governments engaged in structured discussions about decent work conditions, living wages, and social protection. This interaction fostered a deeper understanding of systemic challenges and encouraged practical solutions such as proposals for formalization and living wage frameworks. As noted by stakeholders, the space enabled coffee workers to “dialogue” and promote their rights collectively, marking a critical step forward. The estate government showed strong commitment to continue to support this dialogue and welcomed the initiative to be replicated across sectors.

Stakeholders also highlighted the project’s role in promoting gender equality. The sectoral study conducted by the project, had already pre-identified significant challenges faced by women in the coffee sector, particularly their underrepresentation and lack of social protection. The project addressed this through capacity-building and inclusion initiatives, resulting in visible change, such as the election of the first female president of a coffee value chain committee. This achievement underscores progress in elevating women’s representation and ensuring their perspectives are integrated into decision-making processes. However, stakeholders noted the ongoing need to address the disproportionate vulnerability of women, particularly regarding social protection gaps.

In addition, stakeholders emphasized the importance of better working environments and social protection for coffee pickers. Workers’ representatives shared concerns about inconsistent provisions of meals, transportation, and basic amenities when moving from one farm to another. They highlighted the necessity of securing long-term benefits such as pensions and improved wages to ensure that their work remains sustainable and dignified. The recognition of these systemic challenges within project dialogues has helped to frame practical pathways for reform and could be supported by future projects in the sector. However, addressing some of these changes was outside the scope of the project.

Stakeholders noted that lessons learned from pilot initiatives in Huila are now being considered for national replication, demonstrating the project’s scalability and systemic relevance. This includes the integration of formalization strategies, certification programmes, and worker-driven initiatives into broader policy frameworks.

In **Namibia** the project shows tangible short-term and potential long-term impacts fishing sector, particularly in improving working conditions, strengthening collaboration among stakeholders, and fostering compliance with international labour standards.

A key achievement was the introduction of joint inspections, which marked a game-changing shift for the sector. Before the project, labour inspections were fragmented, with minimal collaboration among government ministries. The project facilitated coordinated inspections among the Ministry of Labour, Industrial Relations and Employment Creation (MLIREC), the Ministry of Fisheries and Marine Resources (MFMR), and the Ministry of Works and Transport (MWT). These joint inspections directly benefitted hundreds of fishers in Walvis Bay and Lüderitz by identifying critical issues such as discrepancies in employment contracts, unpaid

overtime, lack of safety provisions, and gaps in risk assessments. The inspections were complemented by the development of adapted tools, such as the field guide for inspectors and a standardized employment contract for fishers. Employers' representatives participating in this evaluation showcased their willingness to continue to open the doors of the vessels for these inspections.

The project also contributed to long-term systemic changes through the establishment of the National Coordination Mechanism on Decent Work in the Fisheries Sector. This mechanism institutionalized dialogue between government, employers, and workers, creating a platform for regular engagement. Stakeholders highlighted that tripartite collaboration has now become the norm, replaced previous silos and fostered greater policy alignment and accountability. The Ministry of Labour's commitment to hosting quarterly meetings and serving as the secretariat demonstrates strong government ownership and a clear pathway for sustaining the project's benefits.

Capacity building emerged as another notable success. The training and certification of labour inspectors equipped them with the skills to identify and remediate OSH issues on fishing vessels effectively. In parallel, workshops targeting shop stewards, vessel captains, and fishers raised awareness about their rights, duties, and obligations, empowering them to advocate for improved working conditions. This has created a cascading effect, as trained workers and inspectors are now seen as trainers of others, ensuring continued capacity development in the sector.

Stakeholders noted a significant improvement in safety awareness and compliance among vessel owners and captains. Employers, once resistant to collaboration, are now engaging more positively with government and unions. As one stakeholder observed, relationships have moved "from sour to sweet," reflecting a new level of trust and shared understanding across the sector. This cultural shift is critical for sustaining the project's impacts, as it enables ongoing dialogue and problem-solving.

The project also addressed freedom of association and collective bargaining, promoting a better understanding of workers' rights and strengthening enforcement mechanisms. Tools developed during the project, such as training materials and contract templates, are now embedded in national systems and provide practical resources for future compliance efforts.

However, stakeholders highlighted the gap between small and large companies in their ability to comply with international standards. While larger companies, certified under schemes like MSC (Marine Stewardship Council), have the resources to meet market requirements, smaller players face challenges related to certification costs and social protection measures. This disparity highlights the need for continued support tailored to small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs) to ensure that no segment of the sector is left behind.

The sustainability of the project's results appears promising, driven by strong political will and ownership among stakeholders. Government authorities have demonstrated commitment by integrating the project's outcomes into their annual plans, including continued joint inspections and policy enforcement. Stakeholders acknowledged that while financial constraints remain a challenge, the project's achievements have set a clear roadmap for advancing decent work.

In **Malaysia** the evaluator found not enough data to assess the impact and sustainability potential of the project interventions.

Lessons learned

Adapting ILO Engagement and Capacity in Malaysia

The ILO must rethink its development interventions and engagement strategies in contexts like Malaysia, where economic growth is strong, governance structures are well-established, and labour market dynamics are distinct and very much influenced by neighbouring countries. As a major recipient of migrant workers with unique institutional realities, Malaysia requires a tailored approach to engagement that aligns with national priorities and governance structures, rather than relying on standardized approaches.

Although, the ILO development cooperation approach already introduces context-specific engagement models. In Malaysia, this would mean focusing on the country's specific labour market challenges, migration policies, and governance frameworks, and maintaining in-country presence.

At the same time, maintaining strong institutional stakeholder relationships is essential. One key challenge is ensuring that partnerships with governments, employers, and workers' organizations are sustained at an institutional level, rather than being dependent on individual staff members, who may change jobs without strong hand overs. For this reason, the evaluation finds that the project could have leveraged from the Regional Office for Asia and the Pacific to take a more proactive role in implementation, ensuring that engagement strategies are institutionalized, fostering long-term collaboration, and providing tailored technical support that aligns with Malaysia's governance and labour market structures.

Beyond the specific project, the ILO must reassess its role as an employer in Malaysia to ensure it remains competitive in attracting and retaining top talent. Offering more stable contracts by creating a base of staff who can change from one project to another and career development opportunities, will allow the ILO to maintain a strong presence and influence in Malaysia's evolving and competitive labour landscape.

The importance of balancing budget with expected results

Although the project was a continuation of a previous project, its design remained considerably ambitious, spanning three countries with distinct challenges and contexts, and working in 3 different sectors.

While the intent to address diverse supply chains in Colombia, Malaysia, and Namibia showcased the ILO's commitment to global impact, the scope often exceeded the financial and human resources available.

To address this, future multi-country projects should adopt a more focused and strategic approach. Prioritizing fewer countries or limiting interventions to specific, high-impact areas within each country could ensure that resources are allocated effectively, and outcomes are achieved comprehensively. This approach would allow for a more significant and sustainable impact.

Good practice

Effective coordination supports decent work improvement at all levels of the supply chain

Effective coordination between public and private actors plays a crucial role in improving working conditions and promoting decent work in supply chains. The experience of Mesas Ejecutivas in Colombia and joint labour inspections in Namibia illustrates how a collaborative approach can identify and resolve systemic issues affecting workers while strengthening labour market governance.

Mesas Ejecutivas were established to facilitate social dialogue among governments, employers, and workers, while also integrating other relevant stakeholders. These platforms have helped to better understand the challenges related to decent work, identify barriers to productivity, and develop solutions tailored to the realities of supply chains. Through this participatory approach, they have improved institutional coordination, enhanced professional skills, and promoted the inclusion of vulnerable groups in labour development policies.

In Namibia's fisheries sector, joint labour inspections conducted in Lüderitz and Walvis Bay exposed significant gaps in employment conditions, occupational safety and health, and compliance with maritime regulations. With the participation of competent authorities, these inspections benefited 306 workers and led to the implementation of corrective measures, including compliance orders and fines. This joint effort underscored the importance of rigorous monitoring and inter-institutional collaboration to ensure safe and legally compliant working conditions.

One of the key lessons learned from these experiences is the need for shared leadership and integrated planning to sustain the initiatives undertaken. Supporting the continuation of the Mesas Ejecutivas and the expansion of joint labour inspections would provide a broader perspective on sectoral challenges, while regular follow-up ensures continuous improvements in working conditions. Cooperation between institutions and stakeholders has also proven effective in implementing labour policies aligned with the real needs both for workers and businesses.

A sustained collaboration between regulatory authorities, employers, and trade unions is necessary to reinforce compliance and ensure long-term decent work practices. Additionally, adopting a monitoring and evaluation system would help measure progress and adjust strategies based on results.

In conclusion, the experience of Mesas Ejecutivas and joint labour inspections in Namibia demonstrates that effective coordination among labour market actors is a powerful tool for promoting decent work and ensuring the sustainability of supply chains.

Conclusion

The SCSFW project demonstrated strong relevance, coherence, effectiveness and efficiency, its impact at the short term seems to be high for Colombia and Namibia, with potential for sustainability. By strategically addressing decent work deficits in the coffee, fishing, and rubber glove sectors, the project aligned with national development priorities, ILO frameworks, and international policy agendas, such as the forthcoming EU Corporate Sustainability Due Diligence Directive (CSDDD). Its design responded effectively to sector-specific challenges, such as informality and lack of social protection in Colombia, fragmented inspections and unsafe working conditions in Namibia, and forced labour practices in Malaysia. However, variations in implementation across the countries and systemic gaps—such as gender integration and knowledge-sharing—highlight areas for improvement.

The project's coherence was evident in its alignment with national policies like Colombia's National Development Plan (2022–2026), Namibia's Vision 2030, and Malaysia's NAPFL (2021–2025). By fostering social dialogue, formalizing labour practices, and strengthening occupational safety and health systems, the project promoted compliance with international labour standards. Nevertheless, coherence was weakened by inconsistent engagement of stakeholders, particularly in Malaysia, where limited involvement of trade unions and civil

society reduced the breadth of interventions. Furthermore, a stronger mechanism for regional learning and exchange would have amplified results.

Effectiveness was high in Colombia and Namibia, where the project delivered measurable outcomes, including the certification of coffee pickers through SENA in Colombia and the establishment of joint labour inspections and standardized contracts in Namibia. These achievements improved working conditions, promoted formalization, and institutionalized mechanisms for social dialogue and governance. In Malaysia, the project successfully raised awareness of forced labour challenges and produced key tools, such as the Decent Work Challenges and Opportunities report. However, implementation gaps—such as high staff turnover in Malaysia, and insufficient gender integration in Namibia and Malaysia components—impacted overall effectiveness.

Despite its resource constraints, the project demonstrated commendable efficiency through cost-sharing mechanisms, strategic use of existing tools, and collaboration with ILO technical experts. The proactive engagement of national project coordinators in Colombia and Namibia significantly enhanced resource utilization, stakeholder participation, and ownership. However, in Malaysia, efficiency was hindered by staffing challenges, a lack of regional office leadership, and difficulties sustaining relationships with stakeholders.

The project had tangible short-term impacts, particularly in Colombia and Namibia, where improved working conditions, capacity building, and formalization efforts have directly benefitted workers and stakeholders. The certification of competencies for coffee pickers in Colombia was transformative, enhancing workers' dignity, income opportunities, and participation in social dialogue. In Namibia, the introduction of joint labour inspections and a national coordination mechanism strengthened collaboration, compliance with labour standards, and awareness of OSH. However, Malaysia's impact and sustainability potential remain difficult to assess due to insufficient data and stakeholder engagement challenges.

Finally, the project's long-term sustainability will depend on stronger alignment with global policy priorities, proactive resource mobilization, and national ownership. In Colombia and Namibia, the institutionalization of project outcomes—such as SENA certifications and the National Coordination Mechanism—provides a foundation for continued progress. However, clear exit strategies, phased follow-up mechanisms, and integration into national systems are essential to bridge funding gaps and maintain momentum in all projects implemented by the ILO. Moving forward, robust monitoring and evaluation systems, improved gender integration, and enhanced regional office leadership will be critical to ensure long-term impact and sustainability.

Recommendations

1. Enhance Monitoring and Evaluation (M&E)

Timeline: 2025 for any new projects

Requested to act upon: SECTOR level project managers and project design teams

Resource implications: medium

Level of priority: high

The absence of a robust Monitoring and Evaluation (M&E) system in the project made difficult for the evaluator to assess progress, measure outcomes, and determine impact. While reports and studies were available, they lacked alignment with a framework of indicators, which existed

in the project document, but was not used for monitoring and reporting. This gap made it difficult to identify and follow the Project's theory of change.

To address this, future projects should prioritize the development of a comprehensive M&E framework at the project design phase and guidelines for its use for monitoring and reporting by project teams at the country level, and project managers. This framework must include both qualitative and quantitative indicators that align with project outputs and outcomes, supported by clear baselines and targets.

Additionally, systematic data collection mechanisms should be embedded into project activities to ensure regular monitoring and reporting. This will enable project teams to generate evidence-based data, assess progress against indicators, and adapt interventions as needed. Building the capacity of project teams at the ILO and national stakeholders for example implementing partners in M&E processes is critical to ensure consistent data gathering, analysis, and reporting throughout the project cycle.

Future projects should develop an M&E system and indicator framework at the project design to be evaluable and enhance its accountability and ability to demonstrate tangible results.

2. Strengthening field office leadership in stakeholder engagement

Timeline: 2025 for any new projects

Requested to act upon: ILO Management at field level

Resource implications: medium

Level of priority: medium

To ensure long-term stakeholder engagement and institutional continuity, ILO field offices should take the lead in relationship-building and maintenance rather than leaving this to stand-alone projects. Stakeholder engagement must be a strategic function embedded within the broader ILO country presence, ensuring that institutional relationships are sustained beyond individual project cycles.

When project teams alone manage stakeholder relationships, partnerships often become dependent on individuals rather than institutions, leading to disruptions when key staff change. Additionally, where field offices have been less involved in engagement efforts, project teams have struggled to sustain momentum and leverage local knowledge effectively.

A revised project management approach should ensure that Regional and field offices provide structured, long-term engagement mechanisms, enabling ongoing coordination and policy dialogue with governments, employers, and workers' organizations, while at the same time ensuring sustainability of project interventions.

ANNEX 1 : Evaluation TOR

Terms of Reference (ToR)
Final internal evaluation
“Supply Chains for a Sustainable Future of Work”

I. Project information

Project title	Supply Chains for a Sustainable Future of Work
Countries	Global, Colombia, Malaysia, Namibia
Project DC code	GLO/22/29/EUR
Evaluation type	Internal
Evaluation timing	Final
Donor	European Commission, DG-Employment
Administrative unit	Sectoral Policies Department (SECTOR)
Technical unit	SECTOR / E2M, FACT and MARITRANS
P&B outcome	1.5 & 3.3
SDG	SDG 8: Decent work and economic growth

Duration	17 months
Start date	1 March 2023
End date	31 August 2024
Budget	EUR823,530.00 with a co financing of EUR123,530.00 from ILO

II. Background

Governments, businesses, employers’ and workers’ organizations continue to navigate an increasingly uncertain future shaped by climate change, demographic shifts, geopolitics, automation, digitalization and other megatrends. These global challenges and drivers of change impact societies, economies and labour markets in different ways depending on their preparedness to govern and address these global changes. Furthermore, a country’s integration into global and regional value chains influence how well it can turn these challenges into opportunities and therefore require urgent attention and action in order to realize an inclusive and sustainable future of work with full, productive and freely chosen employment and decent work for all.

On 23 February 2022, the European Commission adopted its Communication on Decent Work Worldwide that reaffirms the European Union’s (EU) commitment to champion decent work both at home and around the world. Decent work is critical to ensuring that sustainable economic growth goes hand in hand with social justice as well as with

respect for human rights and labour and environmental standards. The EU promotes decent work across all sectors and policy areas in line with a comprehensive approach that addresses workers in domestic markets, in countries the EU trades with, and in global supply chains.

In this context, the EU-funded project **“Supply chains for a sustainable future of work (SCSFW)”** promotes decent work globally by focusing on selected supply chains connecting specific sectors in three countries (Colombia, Malaysia, and Namibia) and the EU market.

The project built on and consolidated the good practices and lessons learned during the implementation of the EU-funded project **“Sustainable Supply Chains to Build Forward Better”** (GLO/20/40/EUR), which has developed new knowledge, tools, guidance and provides policy advice, technical assistance and training to address decent work challenges and opportunities in five sectors and countries: coffee in Colombia, electronics in Vietnam, fisheries in Namibia, rubber gloves in Malaysia and textiles and clothing in Madagascar. A particularly important lesson learned from the SSCBFB project is that supply chains can serve as vital entry points to advance decent work, not only in the five selected supply chains, but also in the wider economy of the countries concerned.

The SCSFW project uses this supply chain approach to advance full and productive employment and decent work in three selected sectors (coffee in Colombia, fisheries in Namibia, rubber gloves in Malaysia). These sectors are of key importance for the countries concerned and for the European market: coffee in Colombia, rubber gloves in Malaysia and fisheries in Namibia. The three supply chains included in this project were selected in consultation with ILO COs, the social partners, and the European Commission during the inception phase of the SSCBFB project.

The SCSFW project provides technical support through tools development and initiatives to strengthen capacities of constituents and key stakeholders in the three countries and along the supply chains, including in the EU. This includes the provision of technical advice and assistance to improve compliance with national laws and regulations and to respect the principles contained in international labour standards. In addition, support to tripartite social dialogue processes and platforms was provided to develop and implement policies and measures to promote decent work for more resilient, inclusive and sustainable supply chains. The project also equips constituents and enterprises active in the EU market that have operations in the three selected supply chains with an improved understanding of the decent work challenges and opportunities in the three selected supply chains and ILO’s guidance for enterprises to realize decent work for all. This includes better preparing enterprises, constituents and other key stakeholders to advance responsible business conduct, including by conducting due diligence in line with the UN Guiding Principles on Business and Human Rights, while also deepening their ability to contribute to gender equality and inclusion.

The SCSFW is implemented by the ILO's Sectoral Policies Department (SECTOR) with the technical assistance of other relevant departments and technical units and the support of ILO Country Offices (CO), Decent Work Teams (DWT) and Regional Offices (RO) covering the countries concerned, and in close consultation with DG-Employment and EU Delegations in the three countries.

The initiative contributes to long-term changes through:

Outcome 1: Tripartite constituents and stakeholders have further advanced decent work in fairer, more resilient, inclusive and sustainable coffee and cocoa supply chains connecting the respective sector in Colombia and the EU market.

Output 1.1. Technical support and training on enhancing compliance with national laws and regulations and respecting the principles contained in international labour standards, in particular on the realization of the Fundamental Principles and Rights at Work in the coffee and cocoa supply chains in Colombia.

Output 1.2. The capacity of tripartite constituents and social dialogue mechanisms are further strengthened to develop and implement policies and measures to promote decent work for resilient, inclusive and sustainable supply chains.

Outcome 2: Tripartite constituents and stakeholders have further developed and implemented policies and measures to advance decent work in a more resilient, inclusive and sustainable rubber glove supply chain connecting the respective sector in Malaysia and the EU market.

Output 2.1. Policy advice and support to tripartite processes to develop and implement policies and measures to promote decent work for resilient, inclusive and sustainable rubber glove supply chains.

Output 2.2. Technical support and training provided on compliance with national laws and regulations and respect for the principles contained in international labour standards.

Outcome 3: Tripartite constituents and stakeholders have further developed and implemented policies and measures to advance decent work in a resilient, inclusive and sustainable fisheries supply chain in Namibia.

Output 3.1. Policy advice and support to tripartite processes to develop and implement policies and measures to promote decent work for a resilient, inclusive and sustainable fisheries supply chain.

Output 3.2. Technical support and training on compliance with national laws and regulations and respecting the principles contained in international labour standards as well as.

Outcome 4: Tripartite constituents and enterprises active in the EU market have a better understanding of decent work challenges and opportunities in selected supply chains for enhancing due diligence.

Output 4.1. Increased knowledge and capacity of constituents and enterprises to engage more effectively in due diligence in selected sectors and to address structural decent work deficits.

Output 4.2 Sectoral social dialogue on the topic of human rights due diligence among actors along supply chains has been further strengthened.

III. Purpose and objectives of the evaluation

According to the ILO, evaluation is an essential component in the implementation of development cooperation projects. In the ILO, evaluations are primarily used as a management and organizational learning tool to help constituents and staff members support decent work and social justice. As such, evaluation is a critical means to improve decision-making, generate knowledge in the organization and provide verifiable evidence of relevance, effectiveness, efficiency, impact and sustainability.

Provisions for evaluation are made in all projects according to the [ILO evaluation policy](#), as per the nature of the project and project specific conditions agreed upon during the design phase or as activities are being carried out.

As pertains to this initiative, a [final internal evaluation](#) should be conducted. The purpose of an internal evaluation is programme improvement and organizational learning.

In this regard, the present final evaluation will be used to assess the achievement of project outcomes and outputs, and will specifically identify the main challenges and constraints to realizing project results. The evaluation shall assess key areas of success and lessons learned, particularly in terms of project results on the promotion, respect and realization of principles contained in international labour standards and compliance with national labour laws at country level, and on improving EU stakeholders' understanding of decent work challenges and opportunities in the sectors.

Finally, the evaluation will assess strengths and weaknesses in project design, strategy and implementation, and will generate recommendations for improvement. In doing so, the evaluation will consider project duration and financial resources allocation and sustainability.

IV. Evaluation scope

The evaluation analysis will cover the period between **1 March 2023 and 31 August 2024** and will assess the achievement of project outcomes and outputs at global and country levels. Project duration, funding, political and social constraints, factors related to human resources and the capacities of country and regional offices should be taken into account. Furthermore, the evaluation will address its relevance to the ILO's cross-cutting issues, including the promotion of International Labour Standards (ILS), the enhancement of social dialogue, the advancement of gender equality and non-discrimination, and the facilitation of a just transition to environmental sustainability.

The evaluation will consider the extent to which the project contributed to ILO's Outcomes 1 and 3, and more specifically to Outputs 1.5 Increased capacity of constituents, partners, and stakeholders to implement sectoral international labour standards codes of practices, guidelines and tools, and 3.3. Increased capacity of Member states to formulate and implement policies and strategies for creating decent work in rural areas.

The evaluation will take place from August 2024 to January 2025 and will involve secondary sources and remote primary data collection. It will commence with an initial discussion with the project team at the ILO Geneva HQ and other ILO specialists involved in the implementation of the project.

The primary clients of the evaluation will be the ILO, ILO constituents in the partner countries and the European commission. Secondary clients might include international organizations, including agencies of the United Nations, working on similar issues, in the same regions and on projects of comparable scope, design and level of activity.

V. Evaluation criteria and questions

The criteria on which the evaluation will be based are **relevance, validity, efficiency, effectiveness, orientation towards impact and sustainability.**

Relevance

To what extent did the SCSFW project's approach effectively address identified decent work deficits specific to the selected sectors (coffee in Colombia, rubber gloves in Malaysia, and fisheries in Namibia), notably on promotion of ILS, social dialogue, gender equality and non-discrimination and just transition?

- How well did the project's focus and approach align with the ILO's P&B outputs 1.5 and 3.3, the ILO Strategy on Decent Work in Supply Chains and other ILO normative instruments?

Validity of the design

- How appropriate was the project's design in addressing the sector-specific decent work challenges and the needs of ILO constituents in each country? Were any readjustments made to ensure achievement of project goals?
- Were the project's strategies and activities coherent and logical contributing to the ILO Outcomes?

Efficiency

- To what extent were project's financial and human resources utilized efficiently to achieve project outputs and outcomes?
- How timely was the project in implementing its activities and achieving its outputs and outcomes? What, if any, factors contributed to delays?

Effectiveness

- To what extent did the project achieve its intended outputs and outcomes, particularly in improving decent work conditions and addressing ILO cross-cutting issues within the three targeted sectors?
- How effectively did the project engage and collaborate with stakeholders, including government agencies, employers, and workers, in the design and implementation of its activities?

Orientation towards Impact

- To what extent has the SCSFW project contributed to enhancing sustainable working conditions and promoting decent work within the targeted supply chains, specifically in the coffee, rubber gloves, and fisheries sectors, in line with the project's overall objective?

Sustainability

- To what extent are the outcomes of the SCSFW project likely to be sustained after the project's completion?
- What mechanisms or follow-up activities have been put in place to ensure the long-term impact of the project?

Lessons learned and good practices

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

The evaluator can adapt the evaluation criteria and questions; however, any fundamental changes should be agreed between the evaluation focal point/project manager and the evaluator and reflected in the inception report.

VI. Methodology

The evaluation will use a mixed method approach through an analysis of both existing project documentation as well as primary data obtained through online interviews and focus group discussions (FGDs). No missions are foreseen for this final internal evaluation.

Secondary sources

The evaluator will be requested to review and analyse the project document, project progress reports, workshop and meeting reports, and terms of references of consultants and studies. Moreover, the evaluator will analyse relevant documentation of the first phase project “Sustainable Supply Chains to Build Forward Better” (GLO/20/40/EUR).

Primary data

The evaluator will conduct interviews with the ILO project team, the EU DG Employment, ILO country offices involved, and relevant tripartite constituents. This mixed methodological approach will allow for the triangulation of data.

The evaluator will conduct up to a total of 20 interviews. In Colombia, given the multitude of stakeholders involved in the project activities and implementation, the evaluator could consider organise an FDG. For Namibia and Malaysia, the evaluator is expected to conduct approximately 4 to 5 interviews. The organisation of the FDG, as well as the set-up of interviews with national stakeholders will be facilitated by the ILO national coordinators and ILO backstopping officials.

Analysis of primary and secondary data will be guided by the evaluation questions captured in Section V. Gender equality and non-discrimination will act as a cross-cutting theme throughout the entire evaluation process, including in the collection and analysis of data. Where possible, the methodology will ensure equal representation of women and men in the data collection phase. The evaluation will follow the ILO EVAL Guidelines on integrating gender equality and disability. Evaluators may propose changes to the evaluation methodology, subject to discussion with the ILO Project Manager and SECTOR Evaluation focal point.

The specific evaluation methodology utilized will be captured in the inception report.

VII. Main deliverables

The main deliverables of the evaluation include:

- i. Meeting with project team** (August - September 2024)
 Work on the evaluation will begin with an initial discussion with the project team to gain greater understanding of the project objectives and activities, share relevant project documents, review the ToR and agree on the evaluation questions and the overall framework of the evaluation.
- ii. Review of project documentation** (September 2024)
 The evaluator will review existing project documentation prior to the stakeholder interviews. As mentioned in the previous section, this will include the project document; progress reports; workshop and meeting reports; terms of references; and national studies and tools, as well as selected / relevant documentation relative to the project Sustainable Supply Chains to Build Forward Better (GLO/20/40/EUR).
- iii. Preparation of inception report** (September 2024)
 The evaluator will prepare an inception report. As per [the ILO Guidance Note on internal evaluations](#), an inception report ensures a common understanding of the ToR by all those involved in the evaluation process. The elements of an inception report include administrative information; background and context; purpose, scope and clients; criteria and questions; methodology; deliverables; and work plan. The inception report will be reviewed by the project team for comments prior to the commencement of interviews and published in the ILO *i-track 2.0* system.
- iv. Stakeholder interviews and FDGs** (October – November 2024)
 Following the initial discussion, the development of the inception report and the review of project documentation, the evaluator will hold interviews with the ILO project team, the EU DG Employment, ILO regional and country offices, and representatives from government ministries and agencies, workers’ and employers’ organizations involved in the project implementation.
- v. Development of draft evaluation report and presentation of preliminary findings** (November – December 2024)
 Following analysis of primary and secondary data, a draft evaluation report will be completed for review and comments by the ILO project team, other ILO officials, the EU DG EMPLOYMENT and project stakeholders. The report will be developed according to the following ILO template:

 - i. Title page
 - ii. Table of contents
 - iii. Abbreviations
 - iv. Executive summary
 - v. Background/project description
 - vi. Summary of project results/outcomes
 - vii. Purpose of evaluation

- viii. Evaluation methodology
- ix. Evaluation findings
- x. Evaluation conclusions and recommendations
- xi. Annexes

In order to facilitate exchanges and communication of results, the evaluator may also deliver, by 15th December, an online presentation of preliminary evaluation findings to the project team and relevant stakeholders.

vi. Development of final evaluation report (January 2025)

The evaluator will incorporate comments from the ILO project team, other ILO officials, the EU DG EMPLOYMENT and project stakeholders on the draft evaluation report, as appropriate, to complete the final project evaluation report by end of January 2025.

The quality of the report will be assessed against the relevant [EVAL checklists](#). The deliverables will be submitted in the English language and structured according to the [ILO templates](#). Approval of the report is the responsibility of the Departmental Evaluation Focal Point in Sector, and EVAL.

VIII. Management arrangements and work plan

As per the ILO evaluation policy, internal evaluations are managed by the project manager, with the support of the Department Evaluation Focal Point. The present evaluation will be managed by SECTOR's E2M Unit, which was responsible for the project implementation. The evaluation will take place from August 2024 to January 2025 and is expected to take about 25 working days. Regular updates on the progress of the evaluation will be provided to facilitate continuous support from the ILO project team. The project manager will correspond with the evaluator virtually via Microsoft Teams.

The Evaluator is responsible for conducting the evaluation according to the ToR. S/He will be responsible for the following:

- Attending an initial discussion with the ILO project team on the project and evaluation by 15th National coordinator September 2024.
- Reviewing project background documents provided by the ILO project team (project proposal, progress reports, etc.) by 30th September 2024.
- Preparing an inception report, which will include the evaluation questions, workplan and stakeholders to be interviewed by 30th September 2024.
- Developing and implementing the evaluation methodology (reviewing project documents and conducting interviews with relevant stakeholders) by 31st October 2024.
- Preparing and submitting an initial draft of the evaluation report by 30th November 2024.

- Deliver an online presentation of preliminary findings by 13th December 2024.
- Drafting and submitting the final evaluation report, which will address the feedback provided on the initial draft report by 10th January 2025.

With the support of the Department Evaluation Focal Point, the E2M Unit will be responsible for:

- Drafting the ToR and incorporating feedback from key ILO stakeholders and EVAL by 31st August 2024;
- Organizing an initial discussion with the evaluator on the project and evaluation by 15th September 2024;
- Gathering and making accessible all project documentation to the evaluator by 15th September 2024;
- Preparing a list of potential interviewees for the evaluation by 15th September 2024;
- Reviewing the inception report and providing feedback by 4th October 2024;
- Reviewing the initial draft report and providing feedback by 6th December 2024;
- Circulating the draft report to project stakeholders for comments by 15th December 2024;
- Facilitating the organisation of a presentation of preliminary findings to the project team and relevant stakeholders by 13th December 2024;
- Consolidating the comments received and submitting them to the evaluator by 20th December 2024;
- Reviewing the final draft of the report by 15th January 2025;
- Sending the final report to the Department Evaluation Focal Point, for approval, who will forward it to EVAL for inclusion in i-eval Discovery database by 15th January 2025 and preparation of the management response;
- Disseminating the final report to the donor and the other relevant stakeholders.

IX. Legal and ethical matters

The internal evaluation will comply with UN Norms and Standards. The evaluator will abide by the EVAL's Code of Conduct for carrying out evaluations. UNEG ethical guidelines will be followed. The evaluator should not have any links to project management, or any other conflict of interest that would interfere with the independence of the evaluation.