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Title: Supporting migrant returnees and communities in vulnerable situations to uplift their livelihoods, enhance their skills and promote safe and regular migration (UPLIFT)

ILO DC/SYMBOL: LKA/24/01/IOM

Type of Evaluation: Project

Evaluation timing: Final

Evaluation nature: Internal

Project countries: Sri Lanka

P&B Outcome(s):

- Output 7.2. Increased capacity of Member States to strengthen social protection systems and ensure sustainable and adequate financing and sound governance
- Output 6.4. Increased capacity of Member States to develop fair and effective labour migration frameworks
- Output 3.2. Increased capacity of Member States to develop inclusive, sustainable and resilient skills and lifelong learning systems
- Output 4.1. Increased capacity of constituents to create enabling environments for entrepreneurship, sustainable enterprises, decent work and productivity growth

SDG(s): SDG 8 (Target 8.5) SDG 5 (Target 5.5) SDG 10 (Target 10.2) SDG 13 (Target 13.3)

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Name of evaluator(s): Asitha Seneviratne

Name of Evaluation Manager: Sriyani Mudiyansele

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Acronyms List

CO – Country Office
DWT – Decent Work Technical Support Team
DWCP – Decent Work Country Programme
EFC – Employers’ Federation of Ceylon
E-RPL – Electronic Recognition of Prior Learning
FCCISL – Federation of Chamber of Commerce and Industry in Sri Lanka
GOALS – Governance of Labour Migration in South and South-East Asia
ILO – International Labour Organization
ILS – International Labour Standards
IOM – International Organization for Migration
MSME – Micro, Small and Medium Enterprises
NAITA – National Apprentice and Industrial Training Authority
NCS – National Competency Standards
NEDA – National Enterprise Development Authority
NPC – National Project Coordinator
NUSS – National Union of Seafarers Sri Lanka
NYSC – National Youth Services Council
RPL – Recognition of Prior Learning
SDG – Sustainable Development Goal
SLTDA – Sri Lanka Tourism Development Authority
SSW – Specified Skilled Worker
TVEC – Tertiary and Vocational Education Commission
TVET – Technical and Vocational Education and Training
TWY – Together With Youth
UNIVOTEC – University of Vocational Technology
UNSDCF – United Nations Sustainable Development Cooperation Framework

Executive Summary

The UPLIFT project, implemented by ILO and IOM in Sri Lanka (March 2024 – February 2025), aimed to enhance the skills, livelihoods, and reintegration of migrant returnees while promoting safe and regular migration. Focused on employability, economic resilience, and policy strengthening, the project-initiated trainings by targeting youth strengthening TVET system by more focusing on migration perspective.

The significant achievement under this project was the establishment and strengthening of partnerships with key stakeholders at both national and sub-national levels. While most of the projects are being implemented at the national level, there is a notable gap in operations at the sub-national level, particularly at the district level. A key achievement during this period was the strategic shift in project implementation, moving from a predominantly national focus to a stronger emphasis on sub-national levels.

Two courses—Work-Based Learning in Tourism – Multitasking and Specified Skilled Worker (SSW) Nursing Carer—have been officially endorsed as NVQ Level 3 standard qualifications. This endorsement by TVEC followed a thorough evaluation of the updated curriculum and the quality of the training programs, ensuring alignment with the set standards. Both courses are now available to the public under Sri Lanka's TVET system.

The evaluation found the project highly relevant to national policies, effectively implemented despite external challenges, and efficient in resource utilization, with 94% of the budget spent. Key successes include institutional adoption of work-based learning programs, enhanced women's economic participation, and strengthened government data collection mechanisms. Lessons highlight the importance of strategic partnerships, targeted interventions, and digitalization. Recommendations focus on sustaining training programs, expanding the RPL system, strengthening stakeholder collaboration, and ensuring gender and disability inclusion. The project significantly contributed to Sri Lanka's economic recovery, creating lasting impacts on employment and migration governance.

1. Context and Project Description

1.1 Socio-economic context of Sri Lanka

Sri Lanka's socio-economic landscape has been profoundly affected by the COVID-19 pandemic, leading to rising unemployment and inactivity rates, particularly among youth and individuals with middle-level skills. The pandemic exacerbated pre-existing labour market challenges, including widening gender gaps in labour force participation and increasing job insecurity.

In 2022, Sri Lanka faced a severe economic crisis, triggering political instability, widespread public protests, and a slowdown in governance and development efforts. The resulting socio-political unrest, coupled with economic hardship, led to a sharp increase in both legal and irregular migration as individuals sought better opportunities abroad. That year, over 311,000 Sri Lankans migrated for foreign employment—the highest number ever recorded—while a record 875,000 passports were issued, and more than 1,600 individuals were apprehended attempting irregular migration. These trends heightened risks associated with human smuggling, trafficking, and other illicit activities.

Many migrants left without adequate skills, making it difficult to secure decent employment abroad. Upon return, they faced reintegration challenges due to a lack of support services and structured guidance. Additionally, limited awareness of safe migration pathways and national qualification frameworks has further contributed to the rise in irregular migration. Grassroots-level experiences indicate that returning migrants often struggle to reintegrate due to insufficient support mechanisms.

In response to these challenges, there is an urgent need to support the Government of Sri Lanka's (GoSL) efforts to promote safe and regular migration, enhance skills acquisition and recognition, and facilitate safe labour migration and sustainable reintegration. The UPLIFT project build on the Skills and reintegration model jointly developed and piloted by IOM, ILO, and UN Women under the regional UN program Governance of Labour Migration in South and South-East Asia (GOALS). It aims to strengthen migration governance, equip migrants with necessary skills, and enhance reintegration support services, ultimately contributing to safer and more sustainable migration pathways.

1.2 Project Description, objectives and the expected results

The project is jointly implemented by IOM and ILO, aiming to contribute to the sustainable socioeconomic reintegration of returnees, the skill development and livelihoods of aspirant migrant workers, and the support of socioeconomically vulnerable communities and victims of human trafficking.

The project has four key expected outcomes as outcomes 1 and 2 are led by IOM, while outcomes 3 and 4 are led by ILO. The two agencies collaborate in areas where their implementation efforts comes across these outcomes.

- Outcome 1: Vulnerabilities of returnees and other rural communities are mitigated through enhanced access to Sustainable Enterprises and/or resilient livelihood opportunities (IOM)

- Outcome 2: Irregular migration and human trafficking risks are mitigated through information relating to safe and regular migration, necessary technical support and tools/infrastructure to the Government (IOM).
- Outcome 3: Increased employability of women and men including youth (both locally and abroad) through enhanced skills development interventions (ILO and IOM).
- Outcome 4: Government and other relevant stakeholders have access to evidence-based data for effective policy formulation and decision making (ILO).

The ILO component was implemented through two main outcomes, four key outputs, and thirteen specific activities.

Outcome 3: Increased employability of women and men including youth (both locally and abroad) through enhanced skills development interventions.

Output 3.1: Increased access to labour market by migrant returnees to gainfully be employed in local labour market or to successfully manage their enterprises effectively.

- 3.1.1 Conduct Career counselling and guidance, job fairs and employment direction: Organize targeted job fairs focused on local businesses and returnee skills. Connect employers directly with qualified candidates.
- 3.1.2 Facilitate the conduct of relevant training to prospective beneficiaries including business development training, mentorship, and micro-loans to assist returnees in starting or expanding their own businesses.
- 3.1.3 Facilitate networking and business development support: Facilitate networking opportunities between returnees and local businesses to build connections and explore potential partnerships.
- 3.1.4 Facilitate to strengthen the TVET system through the digitalisation to facilitate skills recognition and validation of skills and qualifications of return migrants

Output 3.2: Aspirant migrants enhance their skills in Care, Tourism and Maritime sectors

- 3.2.1 Facilitate development/adaptation of Target-specific training programs including curriculum update.
- 3.2.2 Facilitate the conduct of flexible and accessible training options: Offer diverse training modes, including online learning, blended learning, and part-time schedules, to cater to different learning styles and accommodate existing commitments.
- 3.2.3 Capacitate Vocational Training Instructors, Master Trainers and Centre managers on training delivery based on the new adaptation techniques
- 3.2.4 Facilitate the conduct of Skills certification and recognition: Partner with recognized certification bodies to provide recognized certificates upon completion of training, enhancing candidates' employability.

Output 3.3: Increased labour force participation of women in local economic activities and employment opportunities through promotion of work-based learning programmes and entrepreneurship.

Activity 3.3.1: Partner with Federation of Chamber of Commerce and Industry (FCCISL)/NAITA in collaboration with Trade Unions and Employers to conduct the quality apprenticeship/work-based learning programmes, particularly for women.

Activity 3.3.2: Organize targeted trainings and workshops on practical skills relevant to local economic activities, like financial literacy, marketing, digital literacy, and basic business skills

Activity 3.3.3: Assist women entrepreneurs in marketing their products and services through networking events, online platforms, and access to local supply chains

Outcome 4: Government and other relevant stakeholders have access to evidence-based data for effective policy formulation and decision making

Output 4.1: Government stakeholders enhance their knowledge and capacities on data collection mechanisms pertaining to returnees at district level.

Activity 4.1.1: Design and conduct capacity building programmes on data collection mechanism for government officers at district level (Puttalam, Kurunegala, Nuwara Eliya, Galle, Matara)

Activity 4.1.2: Strengthen the capacity of district level labour migration data hubs to provide information and advice and services to returning migrants including with regard to labour market reintegration, skills development and recognition and entrepreneurship.

1.3 Key collaborators

The project was implemented jointly by the ILO and IOM, with IOM serving as the lead agency responsible for managing the administrative process in collaboration with the Japanese donor.

On the ILO's side, the project engaged the following tripartite constituents as the Ministry of Labour; the Ministry of Education, Higher Education, and Vocational Education; the Ministry of Industry and Commerce; the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Foreign Employment, and Tourism; the Chamber of Commerce and Industry in Sri Lanka; the Tertiary and Vocational Education Commission (TVEC); and trade unions, including the National Union of Seafarers Sri Lanka (NUSS). Additionally, civil society organizations played a key role in this partnership.

1.4 Management and Implementation arrangement

The project was jointly implemented by the ILO and IOM, with IOM acting as the lead agency responsible for overseeing the administrative processes in collaboration with the Japanese donor.

The project operates under the ILO Country Office for Sri Lanka and the Maldives under the technical guidance of the Senior Skills Specialist in ILO Decent Work Technical Support Team (DWT) in South Asia and in collaboration with the SKILLS branch in head quarter.

The project activities were executed by the ILO, with the National Project Coordinator (NPC) based at the ILO Country Office for Sri Lanka and the Maldives assuming a key project management role under the guidance of the Senior Skills Specialist from the DWT in South Asia. In addition to the NPC, the Senior Admin Programme Assistant provided programmatic support, handling administrative and financial tasks, while the communication officers managed the project's communication activities.

The ILO's project implementation was carried out at both the national and sub-national levels, covering nine districts at the sub-national level, including Kurunegala, Puttlam, Galle, Matara, Nuwara Eliya, Jaffna, and Trincomalee. At the national level, the project focused on three districts: Colombo, Gampaha, and Kalutara.

2. Evaluation Purpose and Methodology

2.1 Purpose, Scope and Objectives

The purpose of the evaluation is to assure the accountability and learning to the ILO constituents and key stakeholders. The evaluation does this by assessing the achievement of the project against its plan and identifying challenges and any external factors that may have affected the project and its implementation.

The final evaluation intends to examine the relevance, effectiveness, efficiency, impact and sustainability of the project. It focuses on whether the project has delivered the expected outcomes in light of time and budget. The evaluation also examined achievements, good practices and lessons learned from the project in order for the key stakeholders to identify key areas which are replicable and the necessary conditions for sustainability. Knowledge and information obtained from the evaluation will be used as basis for better design and management for results of future ILO activities. The evaluation also supports public accountability of the donor and ILO.

The scope of the evaluation examined the period of project period until the end of February 2025. The two project outcomes of ILO Component are addressed, (1) Increased employability of women and men including youth (both locally and abroad) through enhanced skills development interventions, and (2) Government and other relevant stakeholders have access to evidence-based data for effective policy formulation and decision making (ILO). The evaluation also integrates gender equality as across cutting concern throughout its methodology and all deliverables.

The clients and users of this internal evaluation include ILO officials, and the partners of the project, in particular the tripartite constituents in Sri Lanka.

2.2 Evaluation Methodology

The evaluation adopts the ILO's Evaluation Guidelines as the basic evaluation framework. It was carried out in accordance with ILO standard policies and procedures and complied with evaluation norms and followed ethical safeguards.

The evaluation methodology included:

- Desk review and analysis of documents related to the project, including the initial project document, progress report, workshop and mission reports, and relevant correspondence.
- Desk review of other relevant documents such as the Decent Work Country Programme, United Nations Sustainable Development Cooperation Framework (UNSDCF) for Sri Lanka, national documents on Skills and Migration Framework, etc.
- In person interview with key stakeholders including national counterparts

2.2.1 Evaluation Questions and Data Sources

Criteria	Questions
Relevance and Strategic fit (Is the intervention doing the rights things?)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • To what extent the project objectives/outcomes were relevant to the needs of the stakeholders including the tripartite constituents, workers, national development and Skills migration framework? • How well did the project contribute to the achievement of the DWCP 2018 – 2022 outcomes and UN Sustainable Development Cooperation Framework (UNSDCF) 2023 – 2027 Sri Lanka? • How well did the project adapt its interventions to the changing context specifically under the Post Crisis economic crisis situation in 2023 to address priority needs of the above-mentioned groups and framework? • To what extent have gender considerations been integrated into the design, planning and implementation of the project and the results achieved?
Coherence (How well does the intervention fit? – Internal Coherence & External Coherence – to create synergies and avoid duplication of effort)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Are the intervention strategies, outcomes and assumption appropriate for achieving the planned results and the stated purpose within the given timeframe, resources available and the social, economic and political environment? • To what extent are the project design (priorities, outcomes, outputs and activities) and its underlying theory of change logical and coherent? • How well has the project have complemented and/or harmonized or well-coordinated with other actors and their interventions on migration and skills development in Sri Lanka?
Effectiveness (Is the intervention achieving its objectives?)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What progress has the project made towards achieving its planned objectives and expected key results? • Were management, administrative and monitoring arrangements for the project adequate and have they facilitated good results and efficient delivery? • To what extent and how have stakeholders (ILO constituents) been involved in the project implementation? • Have implementing partners provided adequate support for effective project implementation?

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • How effectively have the project management and ILO monitored project performance and results? • How effectively have the project interventions integrated gender? To what extent are indicators, outputs, outcomes and objectives gender- sensitive? • How effective is communication between the project team, the ILO and the implementing partners as well as the donor? • What are the less learnt and good practices? • What could have been done differently?
Efficiency (How well are resources being used?)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Have resources (financial, human resources, technical support, time, etc.) been allocated strategically to achieve the project outputs and outcomes and overall objectives? • Have resources been used efficiently? Have activities supporting the strategy been cost-effective? • Were the project's activities and operationalization in line with the schedule of activities as defined by the work plan? If not, what are the factors that hinder timely delivery and what are the counter measures taken to achieve project outcomes and impact during the life of the project? • To what extent the project has leveraged resources with other projects within the country programme internally or possible partnerships with other organizations and outside the country to enhance the project impact and efficiency?
Impact (What difference does the intervention make?)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What are the emerging impacts of the project and the changes that can be linked to the project interventions? (both intended and unintended impacts of the project) • To what extent has the project interventions buy-in from the constituents and connect to the actual adaptation at a national and sub-national level? • Are national partners likely to continue working on project's achievement or carry forward its results? • How effectively has the project built necessary capacity of people and institutions of national partners and implementing partners?
Sustainability (Will the benefits last?)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • To what extent will the results of the project continue after the project has ceased? • What strategies has the project put in place to ensure continuation of actions initiated after the project support ends? How effective and realistic was the exit strategy of the project? • How effectively has project built national ownership and capacity? • Are project results, achievements and benefits likely to be durable? Has the project developed tools, methodology and training package that can be re-used in the future by ILO constituents?

Cross-cutting	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • To what extent did the project effectively mainstream international labour standard, tripartite mechanism and social dialogue, gender, disability and non-discrimination in project strategies and interventions? • To what extent have gender equality and disability been mainstreamed in the project design and implementation? • Have the project interventions been relevant to women and other marginalized groups and addressed their interests & needs? • Has the project been able to leverage the ILO contributions, through its comparative advantages including International Labour Standards, social dialogue and tripartism? • To what extent has the project considered relevant SDG targets and indicators? Has the intervention made a difference to specific SDGs the project is linked to?
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2.2.2 Evaluation Schedule

In coordination with the project staff, the evaluation conducted in February and March 2025. This included project orientation, document review, listing of stakeholders to be consulted, preparation of the protocols, data collection scheduling, key informant interviews, data analysis, report writing, and finalisation.

2.2.3 Data Collection Methods

The evaluation applied a mixed-methods approach, engaging the key stakeholders of the project. It adopted elements of utilisation-focused evaluation approaches to enhance the ownership and utility of the findings. The review was completed through a desk review and key informant interviews (KII), conducted either via a virtual platform or, where necessary, by visiting the implementing partners in person.

The review methodology involved a thorough examination of the intervention's Theory of Change. This included a detailed analysis of the underlying assumptions, risk and mitigation strategies, as well as the alignment between the different levels of results and the ILO's strategic goals and outcomes at global and national levels, as well as with the relevant SDGs and related targets. The methodology included multiple methods, with analysis of both quantitative and qualitative data, to capture the interventions' contributions to the achievement of outcomes. To the extent possible, the data collection and analysis included a focus on issues related to the ILO's normative work, social dialogue, gender equality, disability inclusion, diversity, and non-discrimination.

2.2.4 Data Analysis

The evaluation triangulated the findings from the document review and the key informant interviews to address each evaluation theme and question.

2.3 Limitations and Mitigating Strategies

The evaluation was conducted using a combination of desk research, field visit interviews, and analysis of existing data provided by the project or obtained from key stakeholders. However, the study faced several limitations. One of the key constraints was the unavailability of original survey data, such as baseline and endline surveys, which were not feasible to conduct within the evaluation timeframe.

Measuring efficiency posed additional challenges due to the absence of predefined efficiency indicators within the ILO framework and the limited availability of comprehensive data on project inputs and outputs. As a result, efficiency assessments had to rely on the best possible analysis of existing information rather than precise efficiency metrics.

Furthermore, the relatively short duration of the evaluation period restricted the ability to assess the long-term impact on beneficiaries. Without sufficient time to observe sustained outcomes, the evaluation primarily focused on short-term effects and available indicators of progress.

3. Evaluation Findings

This section presents the findings in response to the evaluation questions, organized according to the following criteria: relevance to stakeholders (section 3.1), coherence (section 3.2), effectiveness of the interventions (section 3.3), management effectiveness and resource efficiency (section 3.4), and potential impact and sustainability (section 3.5).

3.1 Relevance to Stakeholder Needs and Priorities

The relevance of the project objectives and interventions to the needs and priorities of its stakeholders is crucial to achieve impact and sustained results. This section addresses how the project continues to address national needs and align with the priorities of the ILO's constituent partners, including how it adapts to evolving national policy processes.

The evaluation found out the project design is highly relevant to Sri Lanka's socio-economic challenges, supporting post-pandemic and economic recovery efforts, migration, MSMEs, and the tourism sector. It aligns with key national policies, including the National Policy and Action Plan on Migration for Employment (2023-2027) and the National Strategic Action Plan to Combat Human Trafficking. Additionally, it supports the National Skills Development Plan to reduce unskilled labour.

Driven by a direct request from the Government of Sri Lanka, the project reflects national reform priorities and enjoys strong support from employers' and workers' organizations. The Employers' Federation of Ceylon (EFC) has expanded its membership to include foreign employment agencies, promoting skilled migration, while workers' organizations endorse its skills development initiatives, essential for economic recovery.

The project design has been approved by the constituents which has relevant with the country context and demand driven.

3.2 Coherence

This section assesses how well the project aligns with other ILO interventions on skills and employability .

3.2.1 Contribution to ILO Programmes and Conventions

The project aligns with the UNSDCF (Outcomes 3 & 4), Decent Work Country Programme (DWCP), and CPOs 102 & 107, contributing to key Programme & Budget (P&B) outputs, including skills development, entrepreneurship, social protection, and labor migration frameworks.

It directly supports DWCP Outcomes 3.2 (improving labor market outcomes for low-skilled migrants) and 1.1 (increasing employment opportunities), while contributing to SDG 8: Decent Work and Economic Growth.

The project is aligned with ILO's priorities on Skills, Employability, Apprenticeships, and Lifelong Learning and addresses key sectors under the Future of Work—Care Economy, Tourism, and the Platform Economy. A gender-responsive approach ensures inclusivity, reinforcing ILO's commitment to gender equality.

3.2.2 Coherence at the Country-Level

The project supports Sri Lanka's post-pandemic recovery, economic growth, migration, MSMEs, and tourism, aligning with key policies such as the National Policy on Migration for Employment (2023-2027) and the National Skills Development Plan to reduce unskilled labor.

It strengthens the Recognition of Prior Learning (RPL) system to certify migrant workers' skills, addressing gaps in awareness and implementation under the Sub-Policy on Return and Reintegration. Additionally, it aligns with the National Youth Policy (2014) and Technical & Vocational Education Policy (2018) to enhance skills training and promote safe, skilled labor migration for Sri Lankan workers, particularly youth.

The project has effectively strengthened the Recognition of Prior Learning (RPL) system, enabling migrant workers to certify their skills for better reintegration. It has expanded work-based learning programs in the tourism and maritime sectors, leading to NVQ Level 3 qualification endorsements, while the nursing care program equips workers for international healthcare opportunities. A digital literacy initiative for women in tourism enhances their competitiveness, and demand-driven training programs ensure alignment with labour market needs. Additionally, by strengthening the TVET sector, the project improves access to high-quality, industry-relevant vocational education, contributing to sustainable employment and economic growth.

3.3 Effectiveness of Interventions

This section examines the extent to which the project is on track towards achieving its intended objectives. This section draws upon reported results, incorporates qualitative feedback from stakeholders on the effectiveness of the intervention, and analyses factors influencing these achievements. This section also tackles the evaluation questions related to gender mainstreaming in the project design and implementation and addresses cross-cutting issues of importance to the ILO, such as the International Labour Standards, social dialogue, and tripartism.

Overall, the project has made significant progress, **supporting migrant returnees and vulnerable**

communities by enhancing their livelihoods, improving their skills, and promoting safe and regular migration. The project aligns with key areas such as employability, lifelong learning, social inclusion, and technical and vocational education and training (TVET). By leveraging digitalization, capacity building programs, and job market integration, UPLIFT seeks to create sustainable opportunities for individuals seeking better employment prospects locally and abroad.

System Development & Digitalization

A significant milestone of the project was the successful development and implementation of an Online Knowledge Assessment System and an Electronic Recognition of Prior Learning (E-RPL) system. These digital tools have been instrumental in assessing and recognizing the skills of workers, allowing them to gain formal qualifications and access better job opportunities. Additionally, the National Competency Standards (NCS) were digitalized, ensuring that the training curriculum remains relevant to industry needs. The project also upgraded several vocational training modules, including Advanced Caregiving and Specified Skilled Worker (SSW) training, ensuring that trainees acquire the necessary skills to meet both local and international labor demands.

Strengthening Data Collection Mechanisms

To enhance monitoring and evaluation efforts, the project strengthened its data collection and tracking mechanisms. This improvement ensures that stakeholders can assess the effectiveness of interventions, identify gaps, and make data-driven decisions to improve program delivery. A structured support system has been established to monitor the progress of beneficiaries, helping to tailor future interventions based on real-time data.

Skills Recognition & Training Programs

The UPLIFT initiative placed a strong emphasis on skills recognition and capacity building. Through the Recognition of Prior Learning (RPL) system, workers in key sectors such as automobile, construction, healthcare, hospitality, beauty, agriculture, and manufacturing were able to have their existing skills formally certified. This process not only validated their expertise but also increased their employability in competitive job markets.

Additionally, the project conducted extensive training programs across various sectors. In the field of nursing care, 200 trainees from four districts successfully completed the Specified Skilled Worker (SSW) Nursing Care Programme, with 160 individuals sitting for the Japanese skills test and 150 passing. In the tourism and maritime sectors, 491 youth, including 119 women, were trained under a work-based learning program designed to equip them with practical skills. A total of 42 trainers were also trained to ensure the sustainability of these programs. Moreover, a special multi-tasking program endorsed at NVQ Level 3 was introduced to enhance employability in multiple industries.

The maritime sector saw notable progress with 26 young women trained in deck rating, tourism, and seafaring jobs. Among them, 10 trainees have already secured employment, while 16 are completing their on-the-job training. This initiative has opened new pathways for young women to enter non-traditional job roles, promoting gender inclusivity in the industry.

Employment & Entrepreneurship Support

To facilitate better employment outcomes, the project provided career guidance, job referrals, and market linkages. Efforts were made to connect trained individuals with opportunities in the tourism and MSME sectors, ensuring a smooth transition from training to employment. Additionally, the

reintegration of migrant returnees into the workforce was prioritized by supporting their entrepreneurial ventures and helping them establish small businesses.

The training programs have been well-received by the TVET sector, with institutions adopting these modules for long-term use. The project's impact is evident in the number of individuals who have successfully gained employment, enhanced their skills, or started their own businesses as a result of the interventions.

3.3.1 Focus on ILO Cross-cutting Policy Issues

The evaluation examines the extent to which the project effectively integrated international labour standards, tripartite mechanisms, gender equality, disability considerations, and non-discrimination into its strategies and interventions

The project effectively integrated ILO's cross-cutting policy priorities, including gender equality, social dialogue, decent work, social justice, and employment policy. It ensured gender balance across training programs, consultation workshops, and district-level interventions, enhancing women's participation and retention in the labor market. By incorporating International Labour Standards (ILS) into its skills development and safe labor migration strategies, the project strengthened labour protections and utilized tripartite mechanisms, such as validation workshops and training, to continue the social dialogue and stakeholder engagement. Additionally, it prioritized disability inclusion and non-discrimination, particularly in work-based learning programs in tourism, maritime, and care sectors. By facilitating access to vocational training pathways, the project enabled youth with disabilities to develop employability skills and integrate into the labor market, promoting social justice and equal opportunities for all.

3.4 Management Effectiveness and Resource Efficiency

The project demonstrated strong management effectiveness and resource efficiency, ensuring impactful delivery across seven districts in Sri Lanka within a short implementation period.

3.4.1 Management Structure, Human Resources and Delivery

The management structure was well-defined, with a three-member team supported by technical experts from DWT in skills and migration. The National Project Coordinator (NPC) led the initiative, with a Senior Programme Assistant handling both programmatic and administrative/financial responsibilities, and a Communication Officer managing outreach and visibility. Despite its lean structure, the team efficiently managed national and sub-national interventions, effectively coordinating with stakeholders to achieve project objectives within the given timeframe.

3.4.2 Effectiveness of Monitoring, Evaluation and Learning

In terms of monitoring, evaluation, and learning, the project maintained effective financial oversight and ensured strategic allocation of resources. As of February 28, 2025, 94% of the total budget had been utilized, with the remaining committed funds expected to be fully expended by March 31, 2025. The evaluation found that the project's funds, human resources, time, and expertise were

strategically allocated to maximize impact, with no significant evidence of resource mismanagement or inefficiencies.

3.4.3 Financial Resource Efficiency

The project also exhibited high cost-effectiveness, with resources directed towards demand-driven interventions that addressed stakeholders' direct needs. This proactive approach minimized delays in stakeholder buy-in, ensuring that activities were efficiently implemented. Additionally, strong internal coordination and commitment among project partners contributed to optimal resource utilization, yielding a significant return on investment.

Despite facing external challenges such as two national elections and disaster situations within a 12-month period, the project successfully met its objectives. The ability to navigate these disruptions while ensuring timely delivery highlights the project's adaptability, resilience, and effective planning, ultimately contributing to its overall success.

The overall project financial expenditure shows as

Category	Totals	% of Total
Outcome 1	Managed by IOM	
Outcome 2	Managed by IOM	
Outcome 3	804,891.52	80%
Outcome 4	32,174.88	3%
Staff+ Operational+ M&E Cost	88,656.96	9%
Programme Support	64,800.64	6%
Total	990,524.00	99%

The evaluation noted that the project has allocated more resources to the project activities and managed to keep the operational expenditure and programme support cost at 15% of the overall budget. As of 28 February 2025, according to ILO financial records, the project performed a financial delivery rate of 99%.

3.5 Potential Impact and Likelihood of Sustainability

The work-based learning programs in Tourism and Nursing Care, endorsed by TVEC at NVQ Level 3, have created long-term benefits for skill development. Both NAITA and NYSC have adopted these programs and continue to offer them through their district centers, ensuring widespread accessibility and sustainability.

In the tourism sector, 26 women entrepreneurs managing homestay businesses have successfully expanded their operations through the Airbnb platform, enhancing their economic independence. Additionally, the establishment of the Sri Lanka Tourism Entrepreneurship Association has strengthened collective advocacy, providing these women with a platform to influence policy decisions and drive industry growth.

The TVET sector has been further reinforced through the implementation of the E-RPL system and Skills Passport. This initiative has significantly impacted returning and aspiring migrant workers, enabling them to gain formal recognition of their skills through the RPL certification process, benefiting over 5,000 individuals.

Furthermore, the maritime sector training has opened new employment pathways, with 10 women successfully securing opportunities to work on ships, marking a significant step towards gender inclusion in the industry.

These initiatives collectively contribute to long-term economic growth, skill development, and policy influence, ensuring sustained impact across multiple sectors.

4. Lessons Learned and Emerging Good Practices

Throughout the project implementation, several key lessons have emerged, reinforcing the importance of strategic planning, stakeholder engagement, and sustainability measures.

The project **successfully leveraged partnerships with existing training institutions**, namely NAITA (National Apprentice and Industrial Training Authority) and NYSC (National Youth Services Council), to implement a work-based learning program in the tourism sector and nursing care. NAITA, being an apprenticeship-based institute, played a pivotal role in delivering the program through its district centers. This initiative provided rural youth with direct access to industry-linked training, enabling them to gain hands-on experience and enhance their employability.

Notably, this was the first time such a demand-driven work-based learning program was introduced in Sri Lanka, catering to the needs of both the industry and young job seekers. A key lesson learned from this initiative is that strong partnerships are essential for successful training programs. The collaboration with NAITA and the tourism industry facilitated smooth program execution and ensured industry acceptance. Both the industry and NAITA demonstrated full support during the rollout phase, reinforcing the importance of stakeholder engagement in vocational training programs.

A **well-defined project blueprint** proved to be a critical success factor, as it provided a clear direction and ensured high-quality outcomes. The strategic design of interventions, combined with thorough planning, enabled the achievement of impactful and sustainable results. Additionally, adopting a needs-driven approach played a vital role in ensuring relevance and effectiveness. By aligning interventions with the most pressing needs of constituents and leveraging political momentum, the project demonstrated responsiveness to evolving demands, thereby increasing its overall impact. Effective internal coordination further strengthened the ability to translate identified needs into actionable strategies.

The ILO's unique comparative advantage was evident in its ability to provide specialized expertise in areas such as skills for employability, social dialogue, and entrepreneurship development. Technical interventions, including TVET system strengthening, work-based learning, and skills recognition initiatives, required a high level of specialization, which the ILO was well-positioned to deliver.

The project also demonstrated the value of having a clear focus of intervention, as concentrating efforts on well-defined objectives led to more practical and achievable outcomes. Avoiding overly ambitious goals and instead prioritizing targeted, realistic interventions increased the likelihood of success and long-term sustainability. Additionally, strategic stakeholder engagement played a key role in driving reforms and ensuring effective project implementation. Engaging key stakeholders as active

participants and change agents helped create an enabling environment for policy influence, while also building sustainable ecosystems and networks that could continue supporting the project's objectives beyond its completion.

An important takeaway from this initiative was that even short projects can create significant impact when meticulously planned and executed. Success was not necessarily determined by the scale of the project but rather by strategic decision-making, stakeholder collaboration, and efficient implementation processes. The project also highlighted several good practices, particularly in partnership development and resource utilization. Establishing strong collaborations with government training institutes such as NAITA and NYSC proved to be instrumental in rolling out training programs and ensuring their long-term sustainability. By equipping these institutions with the necessary capacity and technical know-how, the project enabled them to continue delivering training programs independently, thereby ensuring a lasting impact. Additionally, the maximum utilization of resources contributed to maximizing benefits for the target communities. By efficiently allocating financial, technical, and human resources, the project ensured that interventions had far-reaching and sustainable socio-economic benefits.

Overall, the project's success was driven by strategic planning, targeted interventions, and strong stakeholder engagement, demonstrating that well-executed initiatives, regardless of scale, can contribute to long-term and meaningful change. The lessons learned and good practices identified will serve as a foundation for future projects, guiding efforts toward greater sustainability, efficiency, and impact.

4.1 Lessons Learned

4.2 Emerging Good Practices

5. Conclusions

The evaluation concluded the project successfully addressed critical socio-economic challenges in Sri Lanka, aligning with national priorities and policies related to post-pandemic recovery, economic growth, and labour migration. Its relevance, coherence with national and international frameworks, and efficient resource utilization have contributed to tangible impacts, including the enhancement of work-based learning, skills development, and employment opportunities for marginalized groups, particularly women. The project demonstrated strong management effectiveness, adaptability in the face of challenges, and a sustainable approach to capacity-building, particularly with key stakeholders such as NAITA and NYSC. The evaluation appreciates the timely implementation of the project with efficient delivery rate with a short time span.

Notable successes include the establishment of the Sri Lanka Tourism Entrepreneurship Association, the empowerment of women entrepreneurs in the tourism sector, and the certification of migrant workers' skills through the Recognition of Prior Learning (RPL) system. These achievements reflect the project's alignment with ILO's cross-cutting policy issues, such as gender equality, social dialogue, and disability inclusion, ensuring that interventions were both inclusive and impactful.

6. Recommendations

Sustainability of Programs: To ensure the continued success of the project's interventions, efforts should focus on further strengthening partnerships with local institutions like NAITA and NYSC, and ensuring they have the capacity to independently deliver training programs. This will ensure long-term sustainability beyond the project's lifecycle.

Expanding the RPL System: The RPL system should be further expanded, particularly to include more migrant workers and women, to enhance the employability of these groups. Continued efforts to raise awareness about the RPL process will ensure greater adoption and long-term impact.

Gender and Disability Inclusion: Future projects should continue prioritizing gender and disability inclusion by creating more accessible pathways for underrepresented groups to access training and employment opportunities. Gender-responsive strategies and non-discriminatory policies should remain integral to future interventions.

Enhancing Stakeholder Engagement: While stakeholder engagement has been effective, further enhancing collaboration among employers, workers, and government entities will strengthen the project's policy influence and sustainability. Building on the success of the Sri Lanka Tourism Entrepreneurship Association, similar platforms should be developed for other sectors.

Replication of Short-term Projects: As the evaluation has highlighted, even short-term projects can lead to significant outcomes when strategically implemented. Future interventions should continue to focus on targeted, realistic objectives that align closely with the needs of the community, ensuring that each project maximizes its impact regardless of size.

ANNEXES

Annex A. List of Stakeholders Interviewed

Implementing Partner	Contact Details
TVEC	Dr. Lalithadeera, Director General, Tertiary and Vocational Education Commission (TVEC) Sri Lanka- dg@tvec.gov.lk Dr. Ajith Polwatta, Deputy Director General Tertiary and Vocational Education Commission (TVEC) Sri Lanka - ajith@tvec.gov.lk
NAITA	Mr. Channa Subasingha, Director-RPL , National Apprentice and Industrial Training Authority (NAITA), dirquality@naita.gov.lk
NYSC, TWY	Mr. Rashitha Delapola, Director-Training, National Youth Services Council (NYSC) rashitha.delapola@gmail.com Mr. Mohan Perera, Managing Director, Together With Youth (TWY) Sri Lanka. mohan@togetherwithyouth.org
NUSS	Mr. Plaitha Athukorala, Union Leader, National Union of Seafarers (NUSS). nuss.sl@outlook.com
NYSC, TVEC, TWY	Dr. Janaka Jayalath, Director University of Vocational Technology (UNIVOTEC)- jayalath@tvec.gov.lk Mr. Rashitha Delapola, Director-Training, National Youth Services Council (NYSC) rashitha.delapola@gmail.com Mr. Mohan Perera, Managing Director, Together With Youth (TWY) Sri Lanka. mohan@togetherwithyouth.org
FCCISL	Mr. Keerthi Gunawardena, President, Federation of Chamber of Commerce and Industry in Sri Lanka (FCCISL)- fccisl.international@gmail.com
SLTDA, PASS ASIA, NEDA	Mr. Danuka Liyanagamage, Director National Enterprise Development Authority (NEDA), dhanuakl@gmail.com Dr. Samantha Pathrathna, National Consultant Pass Asia, 2050samantha@gmail.com
SLTDA, PASS ASIA	Ms. Tharanga Rupasingha, Director, Sri Lanka Tourism Development Authority (SLTDA)- tharangar@srilanka.travel
	Dr. Samantha Pathrathna, National Consultant Pass Asia, 2050samantha@gmail.com
NEDA, PASS ASIA	Mr. Danuka Liyanagamage, Director, National Enterprise Development Authority (NEDA), dhanuakl@gmail.com Dr. Samantha Pathrathna, National Consultant Pass Asia, 2050samantha@gmail.com
Ministry of Education- Industry Sector Council	Ms. Himali Athaudage, Additional Secretary, Ministry of Education, higher education and Vocational training-hathaudage@gmail.com
Foreign Employment Division, Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Foreign Employment and Tourism	Mr. Nikiralkanth, Senior Assistant Secretary , Foreign Employment Promotion Division, Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Foreign Employment, Tourism - nikaril@gmail.com

Annex B. List of Desk Review Documents

1. Pro Doc
2. Technical progress report
3. Project monitoring system
4. Project Progress Reports
5. Project documents
6. National Labour Migration Policy
7. National Skills Development Plan
8. COVID Response Plan



Template 4.1: Lessons Learned

Annex C. Performance Monitoring Plan Indicator Results

	Indicators	Data Source and Collection Method	Baseline	Target
Objective:				
To contribute towards the sustainable socioeconomic reintegration and/or uplifting of skills/livelihood of returnees, aspirants, and victims of trafficking.				
Outcome 1: Vulnerabilities of returnees and other rural communities are mitigated through enhanced access to Sustainable Livelihood Opportunities.				
Indicator: Percentage of targeted population that report having improved living standards (Baseline: 0 Target: 70%)				
Output 1.1: Migrant returnees and vulnerable communities gain access to sustainable and resilient livelihood opportunities	# of returnees and host community members accessing sustainable and resilient livelihood opportunities and/or infrastructure support.	Rapid Needs Assessments Monitoring visits	0	20
	# of vulnerable victims of trafficking or abuse assisted.	Vulnerability screenings and reintegration plans developed for victims of trafficking.	0	7
	# of community level interventions supported	Field visits Monitoring reports	0	4
Activities that lead to Output 1.1:				
Activity 1.1.1 Conduct a rapid needs assessment to identify the target groups and enterprises for community level interventions projects in four identified districts.				
Activity 1.1.2 Provide return assistance to victims of trafficking in extremely vulnerable situations and individualized reintegration and reintegration plans developed.				
Activity 1.1.3 Conduct business counselling and/or skills development / industry specific trainings.				
Activity 1.1.4 Produce a comprehensive assessment on the outcomes/impact of the livelihood and community level assistance				
Outcome 2: Irregular migration and human trafficking risks are mitigated through information relating to safe and regular migration pathways.				
Indicators: % of sample government officials and community members who report increased knowledge of safe and regular migration pathways				
# of government entities demonstrate that they use the tools, equipment infrastructure they received with the support				
Output 2.1: Government stakeholders and the public have access to information on safe migration pathways, risks of irregular migration, human	# of government officials and community members reached through capacity building programmes	Training records/attendance sheets	0	700
	A variety of outreach mechanisms developed and utilized for the targeted audiences	Awareness session reports/event monitoring/community survey	No	Yes



Template 4.1: Lessons Learned

smuggling and trafficking and tools to mitigate irregular migration.	# of State entities supported with tools/infrastructure to mitigate the risks of human trafficking	Donation Acceptance forms / internal records	0	2
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Activities that lead to output 2.1

Activity 2.1.1 Conduct training and awareness sessions on safe migration pathways, risks of irregular migration, human smuggling stakeholders and community members in irregular migration prone locations.

Activity 2.1.2 Conduct a public information campaign through information, education, and communication (IEC) materials and o

Activity 2.1.3 Conduct career guidance and awareness programmes targeting youth and facilitate the acquisition of required ski

Activity 2.1.4 Provide support to upgrade relevant government units (law enforcement, Immigration, Victim and Witness Protec Trafficking Task Force etc.) in the form of tools and equipment to mitigate the risks of irregular migration, human smuggling, an

Activity 2.1.5 Provide technical and other support to the National Anti-Human Trafficking Task Force to strengthen the Nationa human trafficking.

Outcome 3: Increased employability of women and men including youth (both locally and abroad) through enhanced skills d

Output 3. 1: Increased access to labour market by migrant returnees to gainfully be employed in local labour market or to successfully manage their enterprises effectively	# training modules upgraded and digitalized to be used as part of the training	Availability of training modules	0	25
	# of vocational training centres supported with equipment /infrastructure to facilitate more effective employment training (IOM)	Official requests/Donation Acceptance forms / internal records	0	3
Output 3.2: Aspirant migrants enhance their skills in care, tourism, and maritime.	# of vocational training and SLBFE instructors from the government, centre managers and SIYB master trainers trained	Training records	0	200
Output 3.3: Increased labour force participation of women in local economic activities and employment opportunities through promotion of work-based learning programmes and entrepreneurship.	# of migrant returnees who benefit from capacity building on financial support services for SME development and market linkage	Project reports/records	0	300



Template 4.1: Lessons Learned

Activities that lead to output 3.1

- Activity 3.1.1: The National vocational qualification system is strengthened through increased access to quality prior learning (RPL), skills passport and the assessment process.
- Activity 3.1.2: Returnees and communities have access to skill upgradation/ recognition through referral and ce
- Activity 3.1.3: Support to NAITA, SLBFE and relevant state vocational training institutions to upgrade the infrastructure and required technical support (IOM.)

Activities that lead to output 3.2

- Activity 3.2.1: Upgrade the curriculum according to the current market demand and digitalize vocational qualifications /sectors for offering blended learning (using digital media) at selected facilities.
- Activity 3.2.2: Capacitate Vocational Training Instructors, Master Trainers and Centre managers on updated cu
- Activity 3.2.3: Conduct trainings at district level by using the updated curriculum.

Activities that lead to output 3.3

- Activity 3.3.1: Design and conduct the quality apprenticeship/work-based learning programmes by FCCISL/N Employers, particularly for women.
- Activity 3.3.2: Support to employers and job seekers to meet their requirements on employment oppo strengthening of employers' network, Public Employment Service Centres at District level.
- Activity 3.3.3: Conduct the trainings for returnees on entrepreneurship skills (ILO's training on SIYB, Core skill Skills and support to create the market linkages.

Outcome 4: Government and other relevant stakeholders have access to evidence-based data for effective policy formulation

Indicator: Data collection mechanism developed and accessible

Output 4.1: Government stakeholders enhance their knowledge and capacities on data collection mechanisms pertaining to returnees at district level.	# of government officials trained on data collection mechanisms	Availability of data collection mechanism, training records	0	250
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Activities that lead to output 4.1

Activity 4.1.1. Design and conduct the capacity building programs on data collection mechanism for the Government officers at

Activity 4.1.2: Strengthen the district level labour migration data hub through the CSOs and government officers.



Annex E. ILO Lessons Learned and Emerging Good Practice Templates

Title: Supporting migrant returnees and communities in vulnerable situations to uplift their livelihoods, enhance their skills and promote safe and regular migration (UPLIFT)

Project DC/SYMBOL: LKA/24/01/IOM

Name of Evaluator: Asitha Seneviratne

Date: 27 March 2025

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

LESSON LEARNED ELEMENT	Leveraged partnerships with existing training institutions
Brief description of lessons learned (link to specific action or task)	<p>The project successfully leveraged partnerships with existing training institutions, namely NAITA (National Apprentice and Industrial Training Authority) and NYSC (National Youth Services Council), to implement a work-based learning program in the tourism sector and nursing care. NAITA, being an apprenticeship-based institute, played a pivotal role in delivering the program through its district centers. This initiative provided rural youth with direct access to industry-linked training, enabling them to gain hands-on experience and enhance their employability.</p> <p>Notably, this was the first time such a demand-driven work-based learning program was introduced in Sri Lanka, catering to the needs of both the industry and young job seekers. A key lesson learned from this initiative is that strong partnerships are essential for successful training programs. The collaboration with NAITA and the tourism industry facilitated smooth program execution and ensured industry acceptance. Both the industry and NAITA demonstrated full support during the rollout phase, reinforcing the importance of stakeholder engagement in vocational training programs</p>
Context and any related preconditions	<p>Several preconditions influenced the project implementation. Firstly, the institutional frameworks and infrastructure of NAITA and NYSC played a crucial role in rolling out the training programs effectively. Secondly, there was a clear demand from industries, particularly in tourism and healthcare, for skilled workers who could enter the workforce with practical experience. Finally, government policies that promote vocational training and skills development provided a favourable environment for implementing this initiative. These factors collectively created a strong foundation for the success of the project</p>
Targeted users / Beneficiaries	Youth in Sri Lanka, Return migrants, aspirant migrants



Template 4.1: Lessons Learned

Challenges /negative lessons - Causal factors	<p>Despite its success, the project faced several external challenges that impacted its implementation. One of the major challenges was political disruptions, as the project had to navigate two national elections. These elections caused delays and uncertainty, making it difficult to maintain a steady implementation timeline. Additionally, the project faced obstacles due to disaster situations in certain districts, which disrupted the training schedule and limited access to beneficiaries. Another key challenge was the adaptation of the work-based learning model. Some stakeholders initially found it difficult to transition from traditional classroom-based training to the work-based learning approach. This highlighted the need for more orientation and capacity-building efforts to ensure smooth implementation. These challenges emphasize the importance of having risk management strategies and flexible implementation approaches in future projects to mitigate external disruptions.</p>
Success / Positive Issues - Causal factors	<p>One of the major successes of the project was the institutional adoption of the work-based learning model by NAITA. The fact that NAITA integrated this model into its training programs ensured that the initiative would continue beyond the project's timeline. This institutional buy-in was a key factor in the sustainability of the program.</p> <p>Another positive outcome was the strong acceptance of the initiative by the tourism sector. Employers recognized the value of the program in producing skilled workers who met industry standards. The high level of engagement from the industry played a significant role in the program's success.</p> <p>Furthermore, the project saw strong participation from youth, demonstrating the demand for such training programs. The combination of industry demand and youth interest confirmed that work-based learning is a valuable approach to vocational training. This experience highlights the importance of aligning training programs with industry needs and institutional frameworks to ensure long-term impact.</p>
ILO Administrative Issues (staff, resources, design, implementation)	<p>One of the key administrative challenges of the project was staffing constraints. The initiative was implemented with a limited team of only three project staff members, which posed difficulties in managing large-scale coordination and stakeholder engagement. A larger team would have allowed for better outreach, monitoring, and program support.</p>



Template 4.1: Lessons Learned

Title: Supporting migrant returnees and communities in vulnerable situations to uplift their livelihoods, enhance their skills and promote safe and regular migration (UPLIFT)

Project DC/SYMBOL: LKA/24/01/IOM

Name of Evaluator: Asitha Seneviratne

Date: 27 March 2025

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

LESSON LEARNED ELEMENT	A well-defined project blueprint proved to be a critical success factor, as it provided a clear direction and ensured high-quality outcomes
Brief description of lessons learned (link to specific action or task)	Successful project outcomes rely on strategic planning, execution, and a needs-driven approach, ensuring interventions address critical issues while aligning with political momentum. Timely resource mobilization fosters impact and trust, while the ILO's specialized expertise enhances value in technical areas. A clear focus on realistic objectives prevents overambition and ensures achievable results. Engaging stakeholders as change drivers strengthens collaboration, and even short projects can have a significant impact when well-planned and executed, proving that success is driven by strategic decision-making and effective implementation, rather than long term project.
Context and any related preconditions	The sustainability of a project relies significantly on needs-driven approaches and timely resource mobilization. While the ILO may not operate as a humanitarian agency, securing funding during crises can be challenging. Nonetheless, it's crucial to leverage moments aligned with the ILO's mission, such as addressing decent work crises, to engage with constituents early on and discuss preliminary actions.
Targeted users / Beneficiaries	ILO's tripartite constituents
Challenges /negative lessons - Causal factors	Given that the average size of ILO projects is not substantial, it's imperative to reassess approaches to knowledge dissemination and capacity building. The impact of ILO projects largely hinges on the actions taken by its constituents. Therefore, it's prudent to include a clear implementation strategy within the capacity building component to ensure effective utilization of acquired knowledge and skills.
Success / Positive Issues - Causal factors	The project's success can be attributed to its cost-effectiveness and return on investment. The project maintained a clear and focused scope, avoiding overly ambitious goals in favour of practical and feasible objectives. Additionally, the project's highly technical intervention, such as the Skills for employability, Life Long Learning added significant value, as it is a specialized expertise not readily available elsewhere.



Template 4.1: Lessons Learned

ILO Administrative Issues
(staff, resources, design,
implementation)

A high potential impact project required adequate to continue its impact and expand the coverage nationwide, where ILO needs to pay attention on adequate resources available for the expansion.



Title: Supporting migrant returnees and communities in vulnerable situations to uplift their livelihoods, enhance their skills and promote safe and regular migration (UPLIFT)

Project DC/SYMBOL: LKA/24/01/IOM

Name of Evaluator: Asitha Seneviratne

Date: 27 March 2025

The following emerging good practice has been identified during the course of the evaluation. Further text can be found in the full evaluation report.

GOOD PRACTICE ELEMENT	A project success was not necessarily determined by the scale of the project but with a good collaboration with stakeholders
Brief summary of the good practice (link to project goal or specific deliverable, background, purpose, etc.)	Establishing strong collaborations with government training institutes such as NAITA and NYSC proved to be instrumental in rolling out training programs and ensuring their long-term sustainability. By equipping these institutions with the necessary capacity and technical know-how, the project enabled them to continue delivering training programs independently, thereby ensuring a lasting impact. The maximum utilization of resources contributed to maximizing benefits for the target communities. By efficiently allocating financial, technical, and human resources, the project ensured that interventions had far-reaching and sustainable socio-economic benefits.
Relevant conditions and Context: limitations or advice in terms of applicability and replicability	Relevant to ILO Country Office and projects where projects are implemented addressing decent work in the same or related sectors.
Establish a clear cause- effect relationship	Contributes to the coherence and efficiency within country-level programming
Indicate measurable impact and targeted beneficiaries	Tripartite partnership
Potential for replication and by whom	All stakeholders including ILO Country Office
Upward links to higher ILO Goals (DWCPs, Country Programme Outcomes or ILO's Strategic Programme Framework)	Decent Work Country Programme 2018-2024
Other documents or relevant comments	



Template 4.2: Emerging good practices