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Independent high-level evaluation of the ILO's strategies and actions for promoting decent work in the rural economy (with a focus on rural employment), 2016-2023

CONTENTS

Abl	breviations and acronymsbreviations and acronyms	5
Ack	knowledgements	7
Exe	ecutive summary	8
Pur	pose and scope	9
Key	rfindings by evaluation criteria	10
Ove	erall assessment	13
Cor	nclusions and lessons learned	14
Rec	commendations	14
1.	Introduction	17
	Purpose and scope of the evaluation	18
	Methodology	19
	Overall summary ratings	26
	Limitations and constraints	27
2.	ILO's work on advancing decent work in the rural economy	28
	Overview of the rural economy	29
	ILO's mandate and strategic framework regarding decent work in the rural economy	29
	Reconstructed theory of change	33
	Results framework	35
	Mapping of ILO's actions on promoting DWRE across P&B outcomes and outputs	37
	ILO's programming, including CPO analysis, and expenditure overview during the	
	period 2016–2023	
3.	Evaluation findings	
	Relevance	
	Alignment with the principles enshrined in key conventions and recommendations	
	Alignment with SDGs and UNSDCFs Alignment with constituents' and partners' needs	
	Inclusion of lessons learned from past experience and response to new trends	
	Response to COVID-19	
	Coherence	54
	Articulation of ILO's work with priorities set out from the 2011 strategy to 2019 centenary declaration	
	Programme synergies and complementarities across global, regional and CPO levels	57
	External synergies and partnerships with international agencies and ILO's comparative advantage	58
	Effectiveness	60
	▶ Progress on P&B outcomes	62
	Achievement on normative mandate and cross-cutting issues	
	► Effect of ILO's work in advancing employment policies in the rural sector	
	Actions to mitigate the effects of COVID-19 on DWRE	
	▶ Effect on ILO programming as a result of DWRE's transition from P&B outcome 5 to P&B output 3.2	82

	Efficiency	83
	▶ Management structure and implementation arrangements	84
	▶ Human resources	86
	Financial management	88
	▶ Monitoring, evaluation, and reporting	91
	Likelihood of impact and sustainability	93
	Impact of ILO's actions on policy improvements and other enabling tools	
	▶ Impact of ILO's actions on strengthened capacities of constituents	95
	▶ Internal and external factors constraining impact	96
	▶ ILO's approach to ensuring sustainability	
	Opportunities and challenges to sustainability	97
4.	Conclusions, lessons learned and emerging good practices	99
	Conclusions	100
	Lessons learned	103
	Emerging good practices	104
5.	Overall assessment	106
6.	Recommendations	108
7.	Office response	113
8.	Annexes	114
	Annex 1. List of documents reviewed	
	Annex 2. List of stakeholders interviewed	120
	Annex 3. List of technical conventions relevant to the rural economy	
	Annex 4. HLE terms of reference	
	,	

List of figures	
Figure 1. Theory of change	34
Figure 2. Distribution of CPOs by outcomes (P&B 2020–23)	37
Figure 3. Percentage of DC projects launched between 2016 and 2023 by region	38
Figure 4. Annual breakdown of expenditure on DWRE by region, 2016–2022	4
Figure 5. Ratings on the relevance of ILO actions on promoting DWRE across	
surveyed stakeholders	43
Figure 6. Ratings on the coherence of ILO actions on promoting DWRE across	
surveyed stakeholders	54
Figure 7. Percentage of surveyed partners agreeing or strongly agreeing with ILO's	58
comparative advantage	56
Figure 8. Ratings on the effectiveness of ILO actions on promoting DWRE across surveyed stakeholders	6
Figure 9. Prevalence of capacity building in DW results achieved across the biennia	64
Figure 10. Prevalence of knowledge generation and dissemination in DW	
results achieved across the biennia	7
Figure 11. CEACR comments referring to rural questions	73
Figure 12. Principal pattern of rights-based transformation of rural economies as evidenced in	
assessed interventions	74
Figure 13. Prevalence of policy-related actions in DW results achieved across the biennia	78
Figure 14. Ratings on the efficiency of ILO actions on promoting DWRE	
across surveyed stakeholders	83
Figure 15. Total expenditure on promoting DWRE, 2016–2022	88
Figure 16. Number of projects launched by year, 2016–2023	89
Figure 17. DWRE annual delivery rate of XBDC resources, 2016–2022	90
Figure 18. Ratings on the sustainability of ILO actions on promoting DWRE across surveyed stakeholders	93
Figure 19. Evaluation of the ILO's strategies and actions for promoting DW in the	
rural economy – ratings by criterion	10
List of tables	
Table 1. Evaluation matrix for relevance	20
Table 2. Evaluation matrix for coherence	2
Table 3. Evaluation matrix for effectiveness	2
Table 4. Evaluation matrix for efficiency	23
Table 5. Evaluation matrix for impact and sustainability	24
Table 6. Summary of P&B outcomes and indicators related to DWRE	3!
Table 7. Regional distribution of DC projects launched between 2016 and 2023	39
Table 8. DC project distribution by biennium: a breakdown of project start and end years	39
Table 9. Funding distribution by region: XBDC, RBSA, and RBDC contributions	40
Table 10. International Labour Convention compliance rates by region	4
Table 11. Relevant projects and funding by partner agencies, 2016–23	59
Table 12. P&B targets against indicators (DWRE), 2016–21	62
Table 13. Progress on P&B indicators	63
Table 14. Regional distribution of DW results, 2016–2021	63
Table 15. Staffing assigned to DWRE (forestry, agriculture, construction,	
and tourism unit) – SECTOR	83
Table 16. DWRF in the Planning and Budget Results Framework, 2016–2023	9.

ABBREVIATIONS AND ACRONYMS

ACI	Areas of Critical Importance
AFDB	African Development Bank
СВА	Collective bargaining agreement
CCAS	Committee on the Application of Standards
CEACR	Committee of Experts on the Application of Conventions and Recommendations
СРО	Country programme outcome
СТА	Chief technical adviser
DC	Development cooperation
DWCP	Decent Work Country Programme
DWRE	Decent Work in the Rural Economy
DWT	Decent Work Team
EIIP	Employment-Intensive Investment Programme
EVAL	ILO Evaluation Office
FAO	Food and Agriculture Organization
FPRW	Fundamental Principles and Rights at Work
GB	Governing Body
GFJTU	General Federation of Jordanian Trade Unions
HLE	High-level evaluation
IFAD	International Fund for Agricultural Development
ILC	International Labour Conference
ILO	International Labour Organization
ILS	International Labour Standards
INDER	Rural Development Institution
ITCLO	International Training Centre of the ILO
JAPDEVA	Board of Port Administration and Economic Development of the Atlantic Coast of Costa Rica
JCFA	Jordanian Association for Cut Flowers & Ornamental Plants
LFS	Labour force survey
MOU	Memorandum of understanding
NRES	National Rural Employment Strategy
OBW	Outcome-based work
OSH	Occupational Safety and Health
P&B	Programme and budget
PIR	Programme Implementation Report
RB	Regular budget
RBDC	Regular Budget Development Cooperation

RBSA	Regular Budget Supplementary Account
RO	ILO regional office
SD	Social dialogue
SDG	Sustainable Development Goal
TA	Technical assistance
TAML	Tea Association of Malawi
ТоС	Theory of change
ToR	Terms of reference
TREE	Training for Rural Economic Empowerment
UNDP	United Nations Development Programme
UNEP	United Nations Environment Programme
UNIDO	United Nations Industrial Development Organization
UNICEF	United Nations Children's Fund
UNSDCF	United Nations Sustainable Development Cooperation Framework
UNMPTF	United Nations Multi-Partner Trust Fund
VTC	Vocational Training Corporation
WB	World Bank
WIND	Work Improvement in Neighbourhood Development
XBDC	Extra-budgetary Development Cooperation



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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

PURPOSE AND SCOPE

The HLE reviewed the Office's efforts towards promoting decent work in the rural economy (DWRE) in 2016–23, focusing predominantly on Outcome 5 of the ILO's Programme and Budgets for 2016–17 and 2018–19, and Output 3.2 of the Programme and Budgets for 2020–21 and 2022–23. The evaluation paid particular attention to the promotion of rural employment, while also assessing the role of social dialogue, social protection and ILS in these efforts. The HLE was conducted based on data derived from various methods: (a) synthesis review of 32 evaluation reports; (b) review of ILO documentation; (c) interviews with ILO staff, constituents and donors, and UN and other partners; (d) nine case studies (five in-depth country case studies, two light case studies, and two thematic studies); and (e) surveys among ILO staff, constituents and partners¹.

KEY FINDINGS BY EVALUATION CRITERIA

A. Relevance

KEY FINDING 1

ILO programming on DWRE is relevant to constituents' needs and country priorities. However, the degree of involvement in formulating the ILO's programming was found to vary among constituents, with governments heavily influencing the agenda.

KEY FINDING 2

Whereas ILO programming on promoting DWRE reflected the learning drawn from experience, responses to new and emerging trends were not systematically captured, limiting the quality of responsiveness to constituent demands. Lessons learned were generally not adequately documented, posing challenges to country-level programming.

Programming aligned well with country priorities and was relevant to the needs of all constituents. DWCPs featured priorities for the rural economy, depending on national and development contexts. Programming was relevant to the ILO's 2019 Centenary Declaration, the United Nations Sustainable Development Cooperation Framework, and the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development.

Owing to limited representation of rural workers and micro and small enterprises, their priorities were incorporated in ILO programming indirectly through alignment with government policies.

Initiatives narrowly focused on agriculture and infrastructure, whereas support for tourism picked up after 2020. Responses to new and emerging trends have not been systematically integrated into ILO programming. Countries with rapidly developing rural economies expressed the need for more advanced support. The absence of systematic documentation of lessons learned posed challenges in formulating effective programming at the country level.

¹ These included: in-depth case studies in Colombia, Indonesia, the Lao People's Democratic Republic, Madagascar and Morocco; "light" case studies in Jordan and Uzbekistan; and thematic case studies on the ILO's Contributions to Integrating DWRE into National Employment Policies and their Outcomes, and the ILO's Partnerships for Promoting DWRE. A total of 239 informants (70 per cent men, 30 per cent women) were interviewed. Survey response rates were 17 per cent for staff, 39 per cent for constituents and 40 per cent for partners.

B. Coherence

KEY FINDING 3

The 2011 <u>ILO strategy on DWRE</u> has neither been fully implemented nor monitored or evaluated since its formulation. Implementation arrangements outlined in the strategy are not instituted.

KEY FINDING 4

Limiting DWRE to a stand-alone outcome/output obscures the ILO's collective gains in the rural economy, as 76 per cent of its work in the rural economy was undertaken under outputs not related to DWRE. Lack of an Organization-wide theory of change on promoting DWRE, combined with the lack of effective collaboration mechanisms across ILO departments, prevented systemic integration.

KEY FINDING 5

Despite the comparative advantage of the ILO's mandate, actions on promoting DWRE primarily focused primarily on employment promotion and social dialogue, while social protection was marginalized. Although interventions appeared well grounded in international labour standards, they were rarely promoted. Ratification of DWRE-related technical Conventions is limited in many countries, leaving workers in the rural economy not covered by these instruments.

The ILO's strategy on DWRE, formulated in 2011, although broad in scope, remained a static document and has not been reviewed, despite considerable changes and emerging trends globally.

Promotion of DWRE is a transversal topic, addressed by ten outcomes of the 2016–19 Programme and Budgets and eight outcomes of the 2020–23 Programme and Budgets. Thirty-three per cent of DWRE-related Country Programme Outcomes (CPOs) were linked to Outcome 4 – Sustainable Enterprises, and 32 per cent to Outcome 3 – Employment. The remaining CPOs were spread across the rest of the outcomes in 2020–23. Not implementing the institutional mechanisms prescribed by the 2011 strategy and the lack of an effective Organization-wide collaboration mechanism prevented explicit systemic integration.

DWRE programmes focused primarily on employment promotion and social dialogue. While programming contributed to supporting the ratification of key Conventions, the promotion of international labour standards and social protection was marginally reflected in planning and implementation. Just transition was absent, despite its importance for rural employment, as highlighted in the 2019 Centenary Declaration.

C. Effectiveness

KEY FINDING 6

Multipronged integrated support yielded the most significant results, especially when targeting the creation of an enabling environment, leveraging market forces and fostering constituent ownership. However, most of the ILO's initiatives on promoting DWRE were implemented at pilot scales in silos, without instituting means for further replication and upscaling.

KEY FINDING 7

Gender equality was effectively mainstreamed, but interventions did not always succeed in promoting it. Young people were supported by capacity-building and linkages to job markets. While marginalized groups such as refugees, migrants and indigenous communities benefited from programming, disability inclusion was mostly overlooked.

Capacity-building, knowledge generation, social dialogue, technical support for policy development and enterprise-level bipartite cooperation were predominant means of action, with governments and workers/workers' organizations as primary beneficiaries. Support for employers' organizations was relatively modest. Actions reoriented in response to COVID-19 entailed a shift to no-contact delivery, knowledge and research, OSH support, and job recovery through employment-intensive investment programmes.

While project-level targets were often met, success against Programme and Budget targets oscillated between overachievement and underachievement due to unrealistic planning. Significant results were obtained when multipronged and integrated support was provided. However, the HLE found an overwhelming proportion of DWRE-related initiatives were implemented in isolation under various programming outcomes, and on a localized and pilot scale, without the means for replication and upscaling. For instance, of the 27 CPOs incorporating knowledge generation, 22 per cent involved preparation of documents without linkages to other means of action. Limited dissemination also prevented adoption by constituents.

By design, market-oriented projects risked excluding marginalized community members. Gender equality was consistently integrated into programming, but effectiveness was poor in terms of its promotion. Young people were supported through capacity-building and linkages to job markets.

D. Efficiency

KEY FINDING 8

The staffing structure at headquarters appeared adequate, while in regional and country offices it was sparse. The Sectoral Policies Department (SECTOR) lacks an explicit mandate and means for promoting DWRE systemically.

KEY FINDING 9

The availability of financial resources for DWRE has gradually increased, due to constituent demand and donor interest, with 90 per cent of the financing donor-based. However, the absence of a cohesive resource mobilization strategy resulted in fragmented programme delivery and little control over medium-to-long-term planning. The total expenditure on promoting DWRE in 2016–22 amounted to US\$87 million, with an average annual delivery rate of 62 per cent.

KEY FINDING 10

The ILO has engaged in partnerships with other UN agencies through non-binding agreements. Country-level collaboration resulted in 53 joint interventions, for a total of approximately US\$41 million during 2016–23.

SECTOR, entrusted to lead the coordination of the ILO's action on DWRE, lacks the explicit mandate and capacity to promote DWRE systemically, as it is primarily responsible for developing global policy, guidance tools and knowledge products, and organizing sectoral tripartite meetings. While staffing at headquarters is somewhat in line with the requirements of DWRE promotion, staffing structures at the regional and country levels are inefficiently lean. The absence of dedicated rural economy specialists in four of the five regional offices is a weakness. Staff turnover at the regional and country levels has been high, with no succession planning and long recruitment processes causing implementation delays and coordination challenges.

No structured approach exists for cross-country/cross-regional collaboration, leading to a fragmented organizational approach to promote DWRE. When consulted, 38 per cent of surveyed staff rated the coordination between headquarters and regional and country level as satisfactory.

The average annual expenditure on promoting DWRE increased from US\$8 million (for 2016 to 2019) to US\$18.3 million (for 2020 to 2022). Sixty-nine per cent of this increase was due to migration of CPOs from other outcomes to Output 3.2. However, the average annual delivery rate during the evaluation period stayed at 62 per cent (48 per cent in 2022).

The Programme and Budget framework, as a primary programme planning and progress monitoring tool for DWRE, presents shortcomings, as it does not cover the breadth of activities undertaken in this area. Other results frameworks, such as DWCPs and projects, failed to capture monitoring and reporting targets or deliverables and results dissemination, thereby hindering the scaling-up and replication of initiatives.

Global partnerships – building upon the ILO's comparative advantages, and centred on knowledge and advocacy with strategic development partners and UN agencies – were established, such as the International Partnership for Cooperation on Child Labour in Agriculture, Global Accelerator on Jobs and Social Protection for Just Transitions, and the Decent Work for Equitable Food Systems Coalition. The Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO) and the International Fund for Agricultural Development (IFAD) were prominent partners.

E. Sustainability

KEY FINDING 11

The ILO's actions had a positive impact on the capacities of governments and workers' organizations at the local level. Advocacy support was provided to employers' organizations to promote DWRE. However, sustainability and long-term changes remained limited, notably for job creation.

KEY FINDING 12

While training and capacity-building, policy influence, social dialogue, market systems development and partnerships with constituents promoted sustainability, the lack of clear strategies for upscaling, limited financial resources and technical capacity persisted as major threats.

To ensure sustainability, the ILO used multiple strategies and means of action, including training and capacity-building, policy influence, social dialogue, market systems development and partnerships with constituents. However, with a few exceptions, sustainability remains a major concern, with influencing factors being the lack of clear exit strategies for continuation and upscaling, insufficient post-project follow-up and support, and political will. Limited financial resources and technical capacities were also noted as major impediments.

F. Emerging impact

KEY FINDING 13

The ILO's actions on policy improvements yielded results of varying levels, from achieving structural and transformative impacts, improvements in regulatory frameworks and adoption of strategic guidelines, to the development and approval of strategies/policies only.

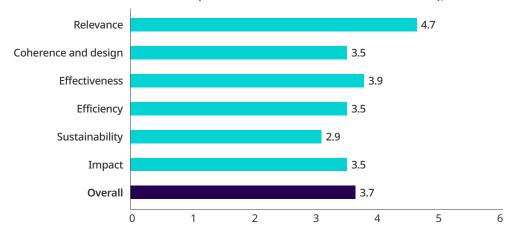
KEY FINDING 14

Small project size, limited resources, unclear theory of change and absence of synergies were identified as internal constraints to impact. Persistent limited constituent capacities and buy-in, lack of infrastructure, political instability, and COVID-19 featured as external impact constraints.

On a smaller scale, the ILO had a positive impact on constituent capacities, often in the form of (a) support to governments on DWRE planning and programme development (for example, Madagascar, Peru and South Africa); (b) establishment and/or strengthening of workers' organizations (Uzbekistan), including guidance and advocacy in collective bargaining and on the FPRW; and (c) advocacy to employers' organizations to promote decent work principles and OSH and improve employer–worker relations (Indonesia), among other initiatives.

OVERALL ASSESSMENT

FIGURE 1: OVERALL ASSESSMENT OF THE ILO'S STRATEGIES AND ACTIONS TO PROMOTE DECENT WORK IN THE RURAL ECONOMY (WITH A FOCUS ON RURAL EMPLOYMENT), 2016–23²



Overall Assessment Ratings. Relevance: 4.7; Coherence and Design: 3.5; Effectiveness: 3.9; Efficiency: 3.5; Sustainability: 2.9; Impact: 3.5; Overall: 3.7

² Scale: 6 = Highly satisfactory; 5 = Satisfactory; 4 = Somewhat satisfactory; 3 = Somewhat unsatisfactory; 2 = Unsatisfactory; 1 = Highly unsatisfactory.

CONCLUSIONS AND LESSONS LEARNED

While funding for DWRE-related initiatives steadily increased from 2016 to 2022, the average annual delivery rate demonstrates that the ILO is not well equipped to fully utilize these resources. ILO programming is not adequately leveraging areas of comparative advantage in the promotion of DWRE, including promotion of international labour standards and social protection, nor sufficiently integrating just transition or disability, to further its DWRE agenda.

The assignment of cross-cutting topics, such as the rural economy, to a particular outcome or output does not adequately present the Organization-wide contribution made towards achievements in such areas of work. Sustained programming using multifaceted and well-integrated approaches can result in the most positive impact towards promoting DWRE.

In the context of limited resources and capacities, partnerships with other international agencies can facilitate the filling of crucial gaps. Furthermore, the involvement of government agencies beyond ministries of labour can also improve effectiveness of projects by facilitating buy-in and establishing intergovernmental linkages and coordination.

Sustainability is a major concern across the board, mostly owing to ineffective or absent exit strategies.

RECOMMENDATIONS

Recommendation 1

The ILO should review and update the 2011 strategy document in view of the emerging global trends and existing ILO strategies. The strategy should be further expanded by means of a well-articulated theory of change to promote systemic integration of DWRE across the ILO and to ensure sufficient emphasis on all four pillars of decent work and the cross-cutting areas so as to accommodate evolving realities of the world of work.

The strategy should be complemented by a comprehensive results framework, time bound plan of action, a monitoring and reporting framework, an intra-organizational coordination framework that provides clear roles and responsibilities, and a fundraising strategy to overcome the issues of fragmented programming.

Responsible units	Priority	Time implication	Resource implication
ADG/Jobs and Social Protection (JSP): EMPLOYMENT (through a participatory approach involving all relevant departments and units from all clusters)	(8)	Short-term	Low

Recommendation 2

The ILO should strengthen coordination and stewardship of DWRE programming. A review is needed to identify a leading entity (for example, department, unit or mechanism) within the ILO with the mandate and technical capacity suitably aligned with promoting DWRE, and to provide strong stewardship to DWRE programming as a cross-cutting topic.

An Organization-wide strategy should be developed and implemented by this entity following the "3D" principle of Direction, Dialogue and Dissemination. For example, a well-functioning coordination mechanism is needed to provide cohesive direction across the ILO for DWRE programming. It should also facilitate dialogue between headquarters and regional and country offices, and disseminate monitoring results.

Responsible units	Priority	Time implication	Resource implication
ADG/JSP: EMPLOYMENT (through a participatory approach involving ENTERPRISES, SOCPRO, SECTOR, FUNDAMENTALS, DIALOGUE, LABADMIN/OSH, GEDI, INWORK, NORMES, ACTEMP, ACTRAV, regional directors (DWTs, regional offices, country offices))	(B)	Short-term	Low

Recommendation 3

The ILO should focus on programming of DWRE-related actions for sustained impact. Project designs should rely on integrated approaches and focused efforts to be implemented over extended periods to address systemic DWRE-related issues, while also integrating international labour standards and social protection, and explicitly mainstreaming gender equality, youth and persons with disabilities.

For meaningful impact and scaling-up, it is important for the ILO to identify key subsectors where work has yielded significantly positive results, such as work with palm oil and coffee plantation workers, followed by the development of ILO-specific approaches and tools to support rural workers.

Focusing on emerging trends can help the ILO find a niche in areas such as the use of digitization as a means of action and climate change adaptation strategies for rural workers, which can also help expand its scope to other growing rural industries with decent work deficits, such as renewable energy and light engineering.

To overcome the pervasive challenge of unsustainability, it is critical that sustainability strategies be incorporated in project design for durable impact, ranging from simple measures, such as local capacity-building, to more complicated measures, such as linkages with markets.

Responsible units	Priority	Time implication	Resource implication
ADG/JSP: EMPLOYMENT (through a participatory approach involving ENTERPRISES, SOCPRO, SECTOR, FUNDAMENTALS, DIALOGUE, LABADMIN/OSH, GEDI, INWORK, NORMES, RESEARCH, STATISTICS, PARTNERSHIPS, ACTEMP, ACTRAV, regional directors (DWTs, regional offices, country offices))	(19)	Short- to medium-term	Low

Recommendation 4

The ILO should revamp monitoring and reporting processes of its actions on promoting DWRE. In addition to the Programme and Budget results framework, progress on the updated DWRE strategy must be monitored and reviewed regularly, in accordance with its own complementary results framework to inform programming work.

Consolidated, reliable and up-to-date DWRE monitoring data must also be available in a readily analysable format to generate lessons learned and identify emerging trends to inform programming decisions.

Responsible units	Priority	Time implication	Resource implication
ADG/JSP: EMPLOYMENT		Short-term	Low
ADG/GRD: SECTOR	⊕⊳		
ADG/CS: PROGRAM			
EVAL			

Recommendation 5

The ILO should adopt transformative means of action.

For optimal use of limited resources at the country level, the ILO should strengthen support for policy development as a transformative means of action for promoting DWRE, and advocate for the implementation of policies and strategies through capacity-building, social dialogue, advocacy and market systems development. Strategies to include rural workers in programme planning must be proactively adopted, such as focus on cooperative development.

Responsible units	Priority	Time implication	Resource implication
ADG/JSP: EMPLOYMENT (through a participatory approach involving ENTERPRISES, SOCPRO, SECTOR, FUNDAMENTALS, DIALOGUE, LABADMIN/OSH, GEDI, INWORK, NORMES, PARTNERSHIPS, ACTEMP, ACTRAV, regional directors (DWTs, regional offices, country offices))	(B)	Ongoing	Low

Recommendation 6

The ILO should continue to extend and strengthen the scope of partnerships to promote DWRE.

Developing and maintaining partnerships requires extensive advocacy and outreach efforts across the UN system and other strategic partners of choice, such as IFIs, to familiarize them with the ILO's DWRE mandate and achievement of results. The ILO should develop a partnership strategy addressing global, regional and country-level partnerships for DWRE programming. The strategy should be supported by a time bound implementation plan, as well as adequate human and financial resources, and clear political commitment.

Responsible units	Priority	Time implication	Resource implication
ADG/JSP: EMPLOYMENT		Medium-term	Low
ADG/GRD: SECTOR	(⊕)		
ADG/ECR: PARTNERSHIPS			



► INTRODUCTION

18

INTRODUCTION

The Evaluation Office (EVAL) of the International Labour Organization (ILO) conducted a High-Level Evaluation (HLE) of the ILO's Strategies and Actions for Promoting Decent Work in the Rural Economy (with a focus on rural employment) over the period from 2016 to 2023. In November 2022, the Governing Body (GB) approved EVAL's rolling workplan which included an HLE of the ILO's strategies and actions to promote Decent Work in the Rural Economy (DWRE). HLEs are governance-level evaluations that aim to generate insights into organizational-level performance within the context of the ILO's results-based management system. As outlined in the evaluation's Terms of Reference (ToRs), the report as well as the Office's response to its findings and recommendations will be discussed in the GB session in October-November 2023. A management response and follow-up plan will be prepared by the Office and monitored during implementation.

The evaluation was implemented by a mixed evaluation team, comprising Senior Evaluation Officers at ILO headquarters (HQ) in close cooperation and collaboration with a team of experts from Cynosure and external collaborators with expertise in International Labour Standards (ILS), Rural Employment, and Social Protection and Safeguards.³

PURPOSE AND SCOPE OF THE EVALUATION

The overarching purpose of the HLE is to provide insights into the ILO's strategy, programme approach, and interventions promoting DWRE for the years 2016 and 2023. Furthermore, the HLE also includes forward looking considerations and provides findings, lessons learned, and emerging good practices for improved decision-making within the context of the next ILO strategic framework. Therefore, the current HLE includes both summative as well as formative approaches. The recommendations from the HLE cover various organizational levels, including global/HQ, regional and country programming.

The HLE involved a comprehensive assessment of the efforts made by the Office in promoting Decent Work in the Rural Economy (DWRE) throughout the specified timeframe. The primary objectives of the evaluation are as follows:

- ▶ Provide an **account to the Governing Body** regarding performance of the strategy and key results.
- Provide an **opportunity to learn** what works well and what less well in the implementation of ILO's strategy for promoting decent work in the rural economy, with a focus on rural employment with a view to changing priorities in the ILO.
- Explore the **efficiency gains** in the external and internal coherence, including synergies with strategic partners and between different ministries at the country level.
- Explore the **implications of the changes in the results framework** during the period under review.
- Support the Office and its constituents in making informed decisions about the **future directions** in this area of work, and in light of changing ILO priorities.

The external Evaluation Team comprised Ms. Umm e Zia as the Evaluation Team Leader, Mr. Dwight Ordóñez as the Co-Evaluator, Mr. Joel Hourticq as the Decent Rural Employment Expert and Mr. Joost Kooijmans as the International Labour Standards and Social Protection Expert, with assistance and support from Mr. Faaiz Irfan.

While acknowledging its links with other Programme and Budget (P&B) outcomes and outputs, the evaluation primarily focused on the ILO's work on promoting DWRE from 2016 to 2023 which comprised the P&Bs for 2016–17, 2018–19, 2020–21 and 2022–2023. This predominantly included Outcome 5 on Decent work in the rural economy (2016–2019), as well as Output 3.2 (2020–2023). In line with the ToRs, the evaluation also paid particular attention to the promotion of rural employment, while including the Social Dialogue, Social Protection, and International Labour Standards pillars of Decent Work within the scope of the HLE. In addition, the evaluation took into consideration the ILO's work on cross-cutting issues relating to social dialogue, gender equality, the empowerment of youth, and environmental sustainability.

METHODOLOGY

Evaluation approach

The HLE aimed to provide insights into the ILO's strategies, programme approach, and interventions promoting DWRE from 2016 to 2023. The evaluation was conducted in accordance with EVAL Protocol No 2.1: Policy Outcomes and Institutional Evaluations (High-level Evaluations), Version 3, March 2021. It assessed the relevance, coherence, effectiveness, efficiency, likelihood of impact, and sustainability of these strategies using a reconstructed theory of change (ToC)⁵ and outcome-based evaluation approach. Furthermore, various types of case studies (that is, critical instance, programme implementation and programme effects) were conducted as part of the evaluation approach. Case studies were both country-based and thematic. Section 1.2.4 provides more details on the nature, characteristics and selection of the case studies.

The methodology was based on the ILO's evaluation policy and procedures, which adhere to international standards and best practices, articulated in the OECD/DAC Principles and the United Nations Evaluation Group (UNEG) Norms and Standards for Evaluation in April 2016. The HLE employed a consultative and participatory approach, utilizing mixed methodologies to gather qualitative and quantitative data. It considered the ILO's normative and social dialogue and tripartite mandate, gender equality and inclusion, just transition, and contribution to the targets of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development. Special consideration was given to existing guidance from EVAL on the subject matter.⁶

Issues pertaining to environmental sustainability, gender equality and non-discrimination, normative work, and SD were addressed through specific evaluation questions and data triangulation. Technical expertise on international labour standards and fundamental principles and right at work, social dialogue and tripartism, and gender equality and non-discrimination were brought in by the evaluation team. Mainstreaming gender equality implied the involvement of both men and women in the consultations, evaluation analysis and evaluation team. Moreover, the evaluators reviewed root causes of gender gaps and barriers, and the challenges faced by women, youth, and other vulnerable or marginalized groups in the context of rural economies (employment as well as other enabling factors associated with DWRE). The evaluation reviewed data and information that was disaggregated by sex and assessed the relevance and effectiveness of gender and disability inclusion related strategies and outcomes.

⁴ This HLE primarily focused on Outcome 5 (2016–2019) and Output 3.2 (2020–2023) that specifically pertained to DWRE. Other activities under other outcomes that were found to contribute to aspects of DWRE, for example, the Development and Investment Branch (DEVINVEST), the Social Protection Department (SOCPRO), the Enterprises Department (ENTERPRISES), etc., were also reviewed by the evaluation team.

⁵ See section 2.3

⁶ ILO, "Integrating gender equality in monitoring and evaluation", Guidance Note 3.1, 2020; ILO, "Adapting evaluation methods to the ILO's normative and tripartite mandate", Guidance Note 3.2, 2020.

The evaluation findings were validated and made reliable by triangulating results from different data sources and methods. By triangulating the results obtained from different data sources and methods and highlighting areas of convergence and divergence, the team ensured the validity and reliability of the evaluation findings.

Evaluation framework: Criteria and questions

Overall, the HLE was undertaken in line with the OECD/DAC Evaluation criteria of Relevance, Coherence, Effectiveness, Efficiency, Likelihood of Impact, and Sustainability and followed ILO's Evaluation Protocol for high-level evaluations.

The following outlines the proposed preliminary structure of the HLE.

Relevance has been assessed to the extent that the ILO's contribution to DWRE has been responsive to ILO's constituents as well as global, national, and partner/institutions' needs, and the relevance of ILO's work in the context of COVID-19 during the last biennium. In particular, the evaluation assessed the role and relevance of the ILO's work in creating an enabling environment for DWRE, as a key element of global and national development strategies (table 1).

TABLE 1. EVALUATION MATRIX FOR RELEVANCE

QUESTIONS

SOURCES OF INFORMATION

How well is the ILO's strategy to promote DWRE informed by and fits the needs and concerns of ILO constituents and partners in the rural economy? How were the constituents' needs assessed by the ILO in formulating and designing its response? To what extent do lessons learned from past experience inform ILO's current work?

- Synthesis Review Report
- Review of other evaluation reports to identify ILO's engagement with Member State officials; workers' organizations; employers' organizations in designing ILO's work.
- ▶ Review of GB/ILC outcome documents/proceedings
- Extent to which interviewees (high-level ILO Member State officials; workers' organizations; employers' organizations) agree that ILO's actions promoting DWRE are relevant to their needs
- Analysis of constituents' demands for the promotion of DWRE relative to the actual response capacity of ILO and the availability of specialists on the matter
- ▶ Perceptions of surveyed constituents and stakeholders considering ILO's work on promoting DWRE as "Highly relevant" or "Relevant"
- Perceptions (of both interviewees and survey respondents) of additional services ILO could offer

To what extent are the ILO strategy and actions on DWRE (rural employment and other enabling factors of DWRE) aligned to and promote the principles enshrined in key Conventions and Recommendations? To what extent does ILO's work on promoting DWRE align with the SDG outcomes?

- ▶ Review and analysis of key Conventions and Recommendations
- ▶ Review of project evaluation reports and thematic mapping of ILO's strategic actions and approaches from P&B documents, Outcome-based Workplan
- ▶ Perceptions of ILO staff (at HQ, regional and country levels)
- Mapping of ILO interventions and actions and their contributions to and synergies with the relevant SDGs.

Have the strategy, the results framework, and intervention models shown responsiveness and flexibility to integrate emerging lessons from the field and from evidence-based research findings? To what extent have ILO interventions reacted to new trends (including demographic changes, digitalization, climate change and globalization)?

- Review of project evaluation reports and outcomes of the synthesis review to identify how and to what extent ILO interventions have reacted (or not) to new trends and global changes.
- Examples provided by interviewed ILO staff (HQ and field) regarding ILO interventions that have incorporated innovative solutions or actions in the design and/or implementation of interventions that respond to changing global trends.
- Perceptions of interviewed and surveyed ILO staff (HQ and country-level) on what the ILO can and should do to be more responsive to emerging trends and global changes.

To what extent has ILO pivoted/ repurposed interventions related to promoting DWRE in the context of COVID-19? What changes in approaches and strategies related to promoting DWRE have been instituted as a result of lessons learned from COVID-19? To what extent did the response to COVID-19 base its interventions on constituents' and beneficiaries' needs?

- Review of project evaluation reports to identify any changes to interventions delivered since 2020, and the extent to which they align with the P&B 2020–21 and P&B 2022–23
- Review of the final report on the Independent High-Level Evaluation of ILO's COVID-19 response 2020–22
- ► Examples provided by interviewed ILO staff (HQ and field) regarding ILO interventions that were repurposed in the context of COVID-19 and whether, in interviewees' opinions, they fell in line with broader ILO work on DWRE
- ▶ Perceptions (of both interviewees and survey respondents) of ILO's adaptive response to COVID-19

Coherence has been assessed with respect to compatibility of the ILO strategy on DWRE with ILO's global and national plans as well as with other international conventions, programmes, and strategies, and its integration into the United Nations Sustainable Development Cooperation Framework (UNSDCF) in each selected country (table 2). In addition, the comparative advantage of ILO over other international stakeholders was also assessed.

TABLE 2. EVALUATION MATRIX FOR COHERENCE

QUESTIONS

SOURCES OF INFORMATION

How well has the ILO strategy addressed / was articulated with the priorities for ILO actions set out in the 2011 Strategy on Unleashing Rural Development Through Productive Employment and Decent Work and the 2019 ILO Centenary Declaration?

- ➤ The thematic mapping of ILO strategy to the principles enshrined in ILO Conventions and Recommendations relevant to rural economy, rural employment, and other aspects (such as sustainable enterprises, working conditions, etc.), as well as other relevant international instruments on human rights and gender equality.
- ► Thematic mapping of the ILO Strategic Plans, P&Bs, PIRs, and Decent Work Country Programmes (DWCPs) since 2016 to the 2011 Rural Development Strategy and 2019 ILO Centenary Declaration
- ▶ Perception of ILO staff working in different sectors and/or thematic areas to gauge level of synergies with ILO's work on DWRE
- ▶ Review of SDGs, MOUs, etc.
- Review of project evaluation reports and outcomes of synthesis reviews to assess the level of coherence of previous ILO interventions

How well does the ILO's strategy on promoting DWRE address the need for synergies and complementarities with other P&B outcomes? How has the strategy been translated into actions and initiatives at country level? How well do the CPOs link to global outcome and indicators? Do the CPOs present an adequate mix of interventions related to DWRE? How coherent are HQ and country-level initiatives?

- Mapping of ILO interventions and actions and their contributions to and synergies with other P&B Outcomes between 2016 and 2023
- ▶ Perceptions and opinions of senior ILO staff from other units on synergies and integrations with other P&B Outcomes
- Synthesis Review Report

How well does the ILO's strategy align with and complement (with a focus on comparative advantage) other relevant international agencies (e.g. FAO, IFAD, WB) working on promoting DWRE, including at the level of the UNSDCF? What is the comparative advantage of ILO vs. other organizations (FAO, IFAD, WB, etc.) in promoting DWRE at the country and global levels? How is DWCP used as an instrument to ensure coherence for DWRE?

- Perceptions and opinions of interviewed ILO Staff, Member State officials, and partner representatives
- Review of strategy and planning documents of other international agencies such as FAO, IFAD, and WB and on select interviews with key informants from such partner international agencies
- Review of relevant United Nations Development Assistance Framework (NDAF) in selected countries addressed by the evaluation
- ▶ Perceptions of ILO staff (at HQ, regional and country levels)
- Perceptions of interviewees (workers' organizations and employers' organizations).
- Review of relevant strategic, programmatic, and evaluation documents pertaining to DWCP for select case study countries

Effectiveness has been assessed to the extent to which ILO meet its strategic objectives set by the GB after the 2008 ILC discussion and conclusions with regards to promoting DWRE. To what extent did it contribute to relevant P&B and DWCP expected results? And, how effective has ILO support been to its constituents and partners through various forms of direct services and support?

TABLE 3. EVALUATION MATRIX FOR EFFECTIVENESS

QUESTIONS

SOURCES OF INFORMATION

To what extent has the ILO progressed on its committed outcomes and indicators on promoting DWRE? How timely has this support been? To what extent did the ILO achieve results on its normative mandate and across cross-cutting issues (social dialogue, empowerment of women, youth and other vulnerable groups, environmental sustainability, etc.)?

To what extent has the ILO been able to apply innovative approaches for an effective and timely action to mitigate the immediate effects of the pandemic on workers and employers in the rural economy? Are there areas where strengthened efforts and attention are needed?

- ▶ The number of outcomes achieved based on the information in the relevant PIRs, and CPO analysis based on the Decent Work Results Dashboard information, and the ILO Development Cooperation Dashboard.
- Review of project evaluation reports and outcomes of the synthesis review and interviews with ILO staff (at HQ and country levels) to identify areas where strengthened efforts and attention are needed.
- ▶ Analysis of type and extent of constituents' involvements in interventions selected for case studies (e.g., intervention oversight; intervention activity selection; discussion on the scope and programmatic/thematic focus of interventions and/or social dialogue on broader thematic areas beyond the interventions) through interviews with constituents and evaluation reports.
- ▶ With regards to normative mandate, the analysis will examine interventions on a normative continuum: 'Intervention without reference to norms', 'Norms underpin intervention but not set out in their terms'; and 'Interventions set out in terms of norms', as per ILO Evaluation Office Guidance Note 3.2: Adapting Evaluation Methods to the ILO's Normative and Tripartite Mandate.⁷ The analysis will also examine any indications of progress recorded under the ILO supervisory mechanisms, particularly in relation of the Committee of Experts (CEACR) recommendations and the Commission on Application of Standards (CCAS) decision.
- ▶ With regards to gender equality, non-discrimination, and inclusion, the review and analysis will encompass how and to what extent ILO strategy and projects integrated gender-responsive goals, used relevant ILO guidance on gender, measures of success, and impacts, based on the availability of gender-disaggregated data. The review will also assess how and to what extent interventions have integrated principles of non-discrimination and inclusion based on the impacts for vulnerable and marginalized groups, and Indigenous communities.

Has the transition from P&B Outcome 5 (2016-2019) to an output in the P&Bs for 2020-23 strengthened or weakened the work on promoting DWRE in the ILO?

- ▶ Comparative analysis of project interventions prior to and after transition to Output 3.2 in the P&Bs to assess the change in type and scope of ILO interventions;
- Analysis based on the evaluations of projects implemented after 2019 well as the synthesis review to assess any strengths and weaknesses with the change to Output 3.2 in the P&Bs in terms of type and scope of ILO interventions;
- ▶ Perception of ILO staff on the strengths and weaknesses of transitioning from P&B Outcome 5 (between 2016 and 2019) to Output 3.2 (2020 and beyond)

Efficiency has been assessed to the extent that results were delivered in an economic and timely way through the use of various inputs, such as human resources, finances, partnerships, monitoring, etc. In doing so, the evaluation analysed the Office's capacities and performance regarding the implementation of the P&B priorities from HQ, regional offices, field offices (in selected countries), and the International Training Centre of the ILO (ITCILO), including management arrangements, coordination, and global and national partnerships involving constituents and other key international organizations and, in particular, Rome-based agencies.

TABLE 4. EVALUATION MATRIX FOR EFFICIENCY

QUESTIONS

Is the organizational/

management structure for delivering the outcome/output compatible to the strategy/ actions? How well do the means of action, management arrangements, and internal coordination mechanisms facilitate the delivery of the ILO's strategic objectives, at HQs and country level? Are there adequate financial and human resources to implement the strategy as intended? And how efficiently are these resources being used?

SOURCES OF INFORMATION

- Assessment of organizational staffing and management structure at the HQ and country levels in terms of staff turnover, leveraging external collaborators and partner resources, among others
- ► Comparative analysis of ILO units and structures pertaining to promoting rural employment and other factors associated with DWRE with those of other Outcomes
- Assessment of Operational efficiency (percentage of budget approved that was actually spent);

What has been the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic on the ILO's operations to promote DWRE?

- ▶ ILO staff perception of the extent to which changes in human resources and operational and management arrangements caused by COVID-19 pandemic were sufficient (or not) to meet challenges associated with the COVID-19 pandemic
- Review of evaluations of projects implemented in the pandemic context and from outcomes of the synthesis review to assess opportunities, challenges, and lessons learned in terms of meeting operational challenges resulting from the COVID-19 pandemic

Does the current monitoring and reporting (Outcome and indicators) allow for tracking the progress and informing the strategy? Does the current monitoring and reporting plan collect data disaggregated to relevant criteria and monitor crosscutting themes (SD, environmental sustainability, etc.)?

- Findings emanating from evaluations of rural economy interventions conducted in 2016-2022 and Synthesis Review Report
- Assessment of the extent to which systematic collection of disaggregated data has been undertaken at ILO

Likelihood of impact and sustainability - has assessed the evidence on the overall sustainability and contribution to legislative, behavioural, and institutional changes of ILO's work in fostering Decent Work in rural areas since 2016, including results and impact of capacity building related initiatives to maximize the support to constituents in the rural economy, fostering a favourable environment for Decent Work.

TABLE 5. EVALUATION MATRIX FOR IMPACT AND SUSTAINABILITY

QUESTIONS

To what extent have ILO actions had an impact in the form of increased capacity and policy improvements needed to work towards promoting DWRE?

How does the design and implementation of ILO actions maximize ownership for these results to be mainstreamed at national policy level?

To what extent has the ILO contributed to strengthening capacities of governments, workers' and employers' organizations' representatives so they can better serve the needs of their members?

SOURCES OF INFORMATION

- ▶ Perceptions of interviewed ILO constituents and staff on the greatest contribution of ILO's intervention towards the achieved results in select case studies,; and whether lessons from the field are incorporated in future
- ▶ Interviews with direct beneficiaries in case study countries, in some instances (if possible)
- ▶ Staff and constituent satisfaction with Outcome indicators
- ▶ Perceptions of beneficiaries as collected through the Synthesis report and any ongoing evaluations
- ▶ Using case studies of selected interventions to examine whether the results accomplished contributed to increased capacity, necessary tools or policy improvements, and the extent to which the impacts can be observed and are likely to be sustained

Lessons learned, emerging good practices and recommendations: The HLE on promoting DWRE also provides forward looking findings, lessons learned, and emerging good practices for improved decision-making within the context of the next strategic framework. The lessons learned and forward-looking considerations cut across all of the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development - Development Assistance Committee (OECD-DAC) evaluation criteria. To that end, the evaluation was guided by the following specific questions pertaining to lessons learned, recommendations, and emerging good practices:

- ▶ What are the areas of success for the ILO? Are there lost opportunities?
- What are the emerging lessons and good practices for the future, specifically in the postpandemic context?
- What are the emerging recommendations for future strategy and actions on the theme of promoting decent work in the rural economy, with a focus on employment?

Data collection tools

The assessment and conclusions of the evaluation were developed from various sources. These drew on pre-existing data, primary data collection and comparisons. The evaluation followed a multilevel approach that allowed data triangulation.

The following data collection instruments were used by the evaluation.

Secondary resources: A collection and desk review of available resources was carried out to analyse all relevant documentation, including declarations, instruments, policies and strategies, guidelines, project documents and published outputs, progress reports, previous country-level evaluations of Decent Work in the Rural Economy, and data downloaded from the internet. The evaluation also considered the findings of the Synthesis Report, which was based on a review of a subset of all DWRE country-level evaluations for the period under review. The list of documents reviewed over the course of the HLE is provided in Annex 1.

Onsite and virtual interviews: A first round of interviews with ILO staff members was conducted during the inception phase by the Team Leader during a mission to ILO HQ. These interviews served the dual purpose of refining the scope of the evaluation and collecting initial evaluation evidence. A second round of interviews with ILO staff was conducted during the data collection phase. During this stage, interviews were also carried out with country-level constituents and partners, including UN agencies, bilateral or multilateral donor agencies, academic and research organizations, nongovernmental organizations (NGOs), and stakeholders representing the private sector. In total, the evaluation conducted interviews with 239 individuals (168 men: 70 per cent; 71 women: 30 per cent). A list of various stakeholders interviewed over the course of the HLE is provided in Annex 2.

Case studies: Based on the proposed definition of DWRE as well as the reformulated ToC of ILO strategies and actions promoting DWRE, an exhaustive analysis of the ILO actions and interventions implemented globally between 2016 and 2023 addressing rural economy/ employment was undertaken for the purpose of selecting country and thematic/regional case studies.

The evaluation encompassed in-depth case studies focusing on the promotion of DWRE in five ILO country programmes (Colombia, Indonesia, Lao People's Democratic Republic, Madagascar and Morocco). The case studies were conducted using a combination of desk research and interviews with constituents and ILO staff, providing valuable insights into the implementation and impact of these initiatives. In addition, "light" case studies based entirely on a review of secondary data was undertaken by EVAL for Jordan and Uzbekistan. The Evaluation Team also selected two thematic studies based on input from stakeholders at HQ and feedback from staff in ILO's Evaluation Office. The two thematic case studies focused on: 1) ILO's Contributions to Integrating Decent Work in the Rural Economy into National Employment Policies and their Outcomes; 2) ILO's Partnerships for Promoting Decent Work in the Rural Economy.

Online surveys: To gather information from the broad range of stakeholders, the evaluation carried out three surveys in English, French and Spanish. Survey responses were used to triangulate the patterns that emanate from the above-mentioned sources, and never as the unique source of evidence to support a finding. Details of the surveys are as follows:

▶ ILO staff: A questionnaire was distributed amongst a purposive sample of 356 ILO staff members at HQ and in the regional and field offices to collect information on the ILO's DWRE strategies, approaches and outputs across the evaluation criteria. The survey was open for three weeks and feedback was gathered from 62 ILO staff working on DWRE issues, at HQ (24) and in the field (38). This resulted in a response rate of 17 per cent. The data have not been weighted to reflect the demographic composition of each target population.

- ▶ **ILO constituents:** A questionnaire was distributed to a purposive sample of 156 constituents including representatives of government ministries, and workers' organizations, and employers' organizations. The survey which was open for four weeks was completed by 61 constituents (a response rate of 39 per cent).
- ▶ ILO partners: A questionnaire was distributed to a purposive sample of 89 partners to collect information on the promotion of decent work in the rural economy. These partners included organizations such as the FAO, IFAD, the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), the United Nations Industrial Development Organization (UNIDO), the United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP), the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC) Secretariat, the World Bank Group, and the OECD. The survey which was open for three weeks was completed by 36 partners (a response rate of 40 per cent). The HLE found that 14 per cent of respondents represented bilateral or multilateral donor agencies. In addition, respondents included academic and research organizations, NGOs, and stakeholders representing the private sector, including independent external collaborators. However, none represented a UN agency.

Case studies selection

The criteria for selecting case studies ensured a comprehensive and diverse representation. Projects and interventions pertaining to P&B Outcome 5 (2016–2019) and P&B Output 3.2 (2020–2023) and implemented between 2016 and 2023 were considered, along with geographic diversity. The selection included medium-to-large budget projects or countries that had received substantial support, spanning different types of ILO interventions and emphasizing long-term investment and sustainability of results. Funding diversity was emphasized, incorporating Regular Budget (RB), Regular Budget Supplementary Account (RBSA), and Extra-budgetary Development Cooperation (XBDC) sources. The case studies encompassed programmatic and normative work, addressing ILO's cross-cutting policy drivers and spanning sectors such as agriculture, floriculture, skills development and vocational training, Employment-Intensive Investment Programmes (EIIPs), and tourism, among others. Special attention was given to tripartite actors, vulnerable groups, and collaboration with UN agencies and international organizations. Successful and challenging projects were considered, avoiding countries with concentrated investments in a single topic, those countries having had recent evaluations or parallel evaluation processes, and those with security concerns.

Thematic case studies were selected based on specific criteria and considerations. The first case study assesses ILO's partnerships with international cooperation agencies focusing on the rural economy, and prioritizing collaboration with FAO and IFAD by examining their contributions to promoting decent work. The selection process involved examining partnerships at different levels, prioritizing relevant UN partners, and considered success stories and challenges in the field. The second case study examines the extent to which decent work in the rural economy has been integrated into national employment policies, starting with the five countries selected for the case study under this HLE (Colombia, Indonesia, Lao People's Democratic Republic, Madagascar and Morocco) and including Brazil, Egypt, and Viet Nam. The evaluation team also assessed the implementation of these policies to understand their outcomes.

OVERALL SUMMARY RATINGS

In line with ILO EVAL's protocols, a summary rating is expressed by the independent evaluation at the end of the evaluation report. The assessment is based on the six evaluation criteria and the respective questions outlined in the ToR and the inception report. It uses a six-point scale ranging from "highly satisfactory", "satisfactory", "somewhat satisfactory", "somewhat unsatisfactory", "unsatisfactory", and "highly unsatisfactory".

- ▶ Highly satisfactory: when the findings related to the evaluation criterion show that ILO performance related to criterion has produced outcomes which go beyond expectation, expressed specific comparative advantages and added value, produced best practices.
- ▶ Satisfactory: when the findings related to the evaluation criterion show that the objectives have been mostly attained and the expected level of performance can be considered coherent with the expectations of the national tripartite constituents, beneficiaries and the ILO itself.
- ▶ Somewhat satisfactory: when the findings related to the evaluation criterion show that the objectives have been partially attained and that the expected level of performance could be for the most part considered coherent with the expectations of the national tripartite constituents, beneficiaries and the ILO itself.
- ▶ Somewhat unsatisfactory: when the findings related to the evaluation criterion show that the objectives have been partially attained and the level of performance show minor shortcomings and are not fully considered acceptable in the view of the ILO national tripartite constituents, partners and beneficiaries.
- ▶ Unsatisfactory: when the findings related to the evaluation criterion show that the objectives have not been attained and the level of performance shows major shortcomings and are not fully considered acceptable in the view of the ILO national tripartite constituents, partners and beneficiaries.
- ► Highly unsatisfactory: when the findings related to the evaluation criterion show that expected results have not been attained, and there have been important shortcomings, and the resources have not been utilized effectively and/or efficiently.

The ratings correspond to an aggregate of scores provided by the separate synthesis review of evaluation reports, scores provided by the evaluation team based on primary and secondary data, and ratings from the surveys of constituents, ILO staff and other multilateral partners.

LIMITATIONS AND CONSTRAINTS

The evaluation team identified the following limitations within the assignment.

Breadth of the topic: The breadth of the subject matter posed a challenge when assessing the interconnectedness of P&B Outcome 5/Output 3.2 with other policy outcomes and outputs and various units within the ILO. This complexity necessitated a comprehensive review of related documents and interviews at both the global and country levels. The absence of a clearly defined and comprehensive global strategy or ToC for ILO's work on promoting Decent Work in the Rural Economy further complicated the development of an analytical framework for this evaluation.

ILO's project categorization: The ILO's project categorization had certain limitations. As some projects contributed to multiple CPOs, and were shown repetitively across different CPOs within the same country, the evaluation faced challenges when conducting financial and CPO-level analyses of the projects. Moreover, the ILO's financial data did not distinguish between expenditure made towards the various outputs. Furthermore, since various programme areas have implemented actions on promoting DWRE, in the absence of a "marker" identifying such projects, the HLE team had to manually scrutinize ILO monitoring data to identify relevant projects, which was a time-consuming process.



► ILO'S WORK ON ADVANCING DECENT WORK IN THE RURAL ECONOMY

ILO'S WORK ON ADVANCING DECENT WORK IN THE RURAL ECONOMY

OVERVIEW OF THE RURAL ECONOMY

Poverty is predominantly a rural phenomenon. Seven out of 10 people live in extreme poverty while 1.5 billion people living alongside them are moderately poor and reside in rural areas.⁸ Each country's total population varies significantly but over 50 per cent of the world's rural population live in countries where rural inhabitants make up more than 60 per cent of the population.⁹ Furthermore, an estimated 70 per cent of the world's rural population resides in low-income or lower-middle-income countries, which underscores the crucial role of rural development in fostering progress in these nations.¹⁰

The agriculture sector is the cornerstone of rural economies. Over a billion people, nearly one third of the global labour force, are employed in the agriculture sector. Although the share of employment in the sector has fallen from 45 per cent to 34 per cent over the past two decades, many developing countries, particularly in East and Southeast Asia, South Asia and sub-Saharan Africa, have a high share of agricultural workers. The agricultural sector is also an important source of female employment, with women comprising 41 per cent of the world's agricultural labour force with their share being more pronounced in low-income countries (49 per cent), and in many Southeast Asian and sub-Saharan African countries where they account for more than 60 per cent of the agricultural labour force.



While on-farm agricultural production remains the primary economic activity in rural areas, rural economies also include non-farm economic activities in sectors such as mining, manufacturing, utilities, construction, commerce, tourism, transport, and other goods and services.

Between 2005 and 2019, the share of non-agricultural employment in total rural employment increased from 38.7 per cent to 49.5 per cent.¹³ In addition, non-farm rural economic activities generate an estimated 35–50 per cent of rural incomes in developing countries.¹⁴

Rural economies are characterized by several severe decent work deficits. In particular, poverty in emerging and developing countries is primarily considered to be a rural phenomenon, as rural areas are home to an estimated 88 per cent of the world's working poor. Approximately, two thirds of the people living in extreme poverty (65 per cent) are engaged in agriculture. Additional challenges prevalent in rural economies include weak labour market institutions, widespread underemployment, low incomes, limited access to social protection, and high informal

⁸ ILO, <u>"Advancing Social Justice and Decent Work in Rural Economies"</u>, *ILO Policy Brief, 2022*.

⁹ UN DESA, World Social Report 2021: Reconsidering Rural Development, 2021.

¹⁰ UN DESA, World Social Report 2021.

¹¹ ILO, "Decent and Productive Work in Agriculture", Decent Work in the Rural Economy Policy Guidance Notes, 2019.

¹² ILO, "Empowering Women in the Rural Economy", Decent Work in the Rural Economy Policy Guidance Notes, 2019.

¹³ UN DESA, "Investing in the Future of Rural Non-farm Economies", Policy Brief No. 120, 2021.

¹⁴ UN DESA, Policy Brief No. 120.

¹⁵ ILO, "Portfolio of Policy Guidance Notes on the Promotion of Decent Work in the Rural Economy", Decent Work in the Rural Economy Policy Guidance Notes, 2019.

¹⁶ ILO, World Employment and Social Outlook: Trends 2023, 2023.

employment.¹⁷ Overall, rural populations (80 per cent) are nearly twice as likely to be in informal employment than those in urban areas (44 per cent), with the largest rates of informality in rural areas in Africa (88 per cent) and Asia and the Pacific (85 per cent).¹⁸ In particular, the agriculture sector has the highest level of informal employment at 94 per cent.¹⁹

Rural populations face higher risks of malnutrition and hunger, poor health, work-related injuries, natural disasters, and climate change as well as social risks such as child labour and social marginalization. A substantially higher proportion of rural populations (56 per cent) are excluded from health coverage compared to urban populations (22 per cent).²⁰ The agriculture sector is also marked by high prevalence of child labour and forced labour. Globally, 70 per cent of all children are in child labour, of whom 112 million are in agriculture.²¹ Forced labour is prevalent in remote rural areas, in agriculture and fishing, where there is an estimated 11 per cent of forced labour.²²

Despite these challenges, there is widespread recognition that rural economies hold considerable potential to drive sustained, inclusive, and sustainable economic growth, create productive jobs, improve food security, and address environmental and climate change concerns.²³ Development of rural economies is crucial to the achievement of most Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). Consequently, promoting inclusive, sustainable, and resilient rural economies is key to ensuring that the world is on track to meet them.

ILO'S MANDATE AND STRATEGIC FRAMEWORK REGARDING DECENT WORK IN THE RURAL ECONOMY

The ILO has a longstanding history and experience in rural development, including promotion of rural employment and decent work, which has been a key presence on the ILO's agenda since the Organization's establishment in 1919. Engagement in rural issues was incorporated as part of the ILO's mandate in the third session of the International Labour Conference (ILC) in 1921. In 1960, ILO's passed a resolution on its contribution to raising incomes and living conditions in rural communities, particularly those of developing countries. However, the 1970s and 1980s were decisive in terms of ILO's attention to rural issues.

The emergence of newly independent ILO Member States with primarily agrarian economies were experiencing persistent poverty and unemployment despite solid growth rates.²⁴ Consequently, ILO's focus and actions on agriculture, rural enterprises, rural employment, women in rural economies, rural workers' capacity building, and cooperatives through the establishment of various programmes and over 14 units within the Organization to engage in various aspects of rural development work. Indeed, it is estimated that, during this time, about 80 per cent of the Employment Department's work and nearly 70 per cent of ILO's technical cooperation were dedicated to rural development.²⁵

During this time, the ILO adopted over 30 ILS that directly targeted agriculture and rural development and covered a range of issues such as rights at work, employment opportunities, social protection and social dialogue. The setting, promotion, ratification, and supervision of ILS is a critical function of the ILO and is one of its two permanent comparative advantages. These ILS are considered essential to guiding national legislation and policy in addressing rural labour protections.

¹⁷ ILO, Portfolio of Policy Guidance Notes on the Promotion of Decent Work in the Rural Economy, 2019.

¹⁸ ILO, Women and Men in the Informal Economy: A Statistical Picture (3rd ed.), 2018.

¹⁹ ILO, Women and Men in the Informal Economy: A Statistical Picture.

²⁰ ILO and FAO, Extending Social Protection to Rural Populations: Perspectives for a Common FAO and ILO Approach, Geneva, 2021

²¹ ILO, "Advancing Social Justice and Decent Work", Policy Brief, 2022.

²² ILO, "Advancing Social Justice and Decent Work", n.d.

²³ GB. 310/ESP/1

²⁴ GB. 310/ESP/1, para. 8

²⁵ GB. 310/ESP/1

²⁶ ILO, <u>Programme and Budget for the Biennium 2022–23</u>, 2021, para. 11.

²⁷ GB. 310/ESP/1, para. 29

Changing socio-economic landscapes in the 1990s saw widespread decline in interest in rural areas, as governments pivoted towards spending cuts and reducing state investment, which resulted in lower investments in physical and social infrastructure and support for agriculture. In addition, decreased commodity prices coupled with difficulties in accessing markets of developed countries also rendered investments in agriculture less attractive compared to those in industry and services, which were deemed more promising sectors. These general changes in attitudes were mirrored in the ILO which saw important internal restructurings that displaced its work on rural issues. Several ILO rural structures and units were dismantled or faced sharp reductions in staffing and financial resources. Rural dimensions in ILO's overall work plan gradually disappeared and ceased to be listed as a cross-cutting or integrated theme in the P&B documents after the 1994–1995 biennium.



Rural activities were first merged with ILO's actions on the informal economy but no clear distinction between rural informality and urban informality was made. This moved ILO's work from a rural focus to a more urban one.

The decade of 2000s saw a gradual revival of rural issues in the international development agenda. Although commercial agriculture, industrialization, globalization and free trade were considered the engines of development in the 1990s, they were unable to deliver in terms of growth, employment creation and poverty reduction. Pockets of poverty and even extreme poverty persisted with increased concentration in rural areas. Consequently, the global development agenda pivoted towards an increased commitment to rural areas and populations which indirectly revived the ILO's mandate on the issue as well. For instance, the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs), through their call for the eradication of extreme poverty and hunger, provided a major point of re-entry for the ILO's involvement in rural issues.

For instance, the early 2000s saw a resumption of standard-setting activities particularly relevant to rural contexts through the adoption of the Safety and Health in Agriculture Convention (No. 184) and Recommendation (No. 192), 2001, the Promotion of Cooperatives Recommendation, 2002 (No. 193), and the Work in Fishing Convention (No. 188) and Recommendation (No. 199), 2007.³¹ In 2008, the International Labour Conference (ILC) adopted a Resolution and Conclusions on promoting rural employment for poverty reduction by setting a clear mandate and guidelines for future ILO rural work. The Plan of Action identified priorities encompassing all four ILO strategic objectives and called for a combination of interventions such as technical cooperation, policy advice, capacity building and advocacy work.³² As a follow up to these conclusions, the Governing Body (GB) adopted a strategy on promoting decent work for rural development in March 2011. The strategy called for making rural work and development an ILO priority, advocating for the diversification and upgrading of rural economies through integrated approaches, emphasizing capacity building for rural work, empowering rural youth and women, and establishing external partnerships.³³

²⁸ GB. 310/ESP/1, para. 21

²⁹ Loretta de Luca et al. Unleashing the Potential for Rural Development through Decent Work: Building on the Rural Work Legacy: 1970–2010 (ILO, 2011).

³⁰ Loretta de Luca et al. (ILO, 2011).

³¹ GB. 310/ESP/1

³² GB. 310/ESP/1

³³ GB. 310/ESP/1

Subsequently, the ILO 2015 General Survey concerning the right of association and rural workers' organizations instruments carried out by the ILO Committee of Experts on the Application of Conventions and Recommendations (CEACR) assessed the state of rural workers' rights to freedom of association and the ability of rural workers' organizations to effectively advocate for their members.³⁴ The CEACR found that while the right of association is recognized in most countries, there were significant barriers to its effective exercise in rural areas.

These barriers include limited access to information, resources and legal support, as well as discriminatory attitudes towards rural workers. Rural workers' organizations also face significant challenges, including limited access to funding and resources, insufficient legal recognition, and a lack of capacity and skills. Additional factors undermining the right to organize include the informality of the sector and heterogeneity of existing labour relations; socio-economic and cultural disadvantages, particularly experienced by women and vulnerable groups; inequitable labour relationships and distribution of benefits; lack of education and awareness; prevalence of child labour, forced labour and discrimination; and insanitary, unstable and isolated living conditions. The General Survey also noted new and emerging challenges in the form of greater inequalities due to expanded globalization; complex global supply chains obscuring responsibilities; the increased use of migrant and outsourced workers, particularly for seasonal work; the incidence of HIV/AIDS; and significant environmental and climatic pressures.

The survey recommended a number of actions to address these challenges, including increasing awareness and understanding of rural workers' rights, providing capacity building and technical support to rural workers' organizations, and improving legal frameworks to better protect the rights of rural workers. The Committee of Experts called on the ILO to make available its expertise and technical assistance (TA), including through the compilation of good practices, and support to strengthen labour inspection.

In its consideration of the General Survey, the ILC Committee on the Application of Standards (CCAS) broadly endorsed its findings and recommendations.³⁵ It reiterated that the ILO should promote the ratification and implementation of Conventions Nos 11 and 141, as well as Labour Inspection (Agriculture) Convention, 1969 (No. 129), given the critical role of labour inspection in ensuring the full implementation of the instruments in rural areas. The Conference Committee also recommended that the ILO should undertake research to identify possible responses to the challenges in the rural economy, while harnessing the potential of rural workers' and employers' organizations, particularly using new communication technologies in improving the effectiveness of its consultation, capacity building, awareness raising and training initiatives in rural areas.

Against this background, the promotion of decent work in the rural economy was embedded in several indicators of the P&B 2012–13. In the 2014–15 biennium, promoting decent work in the rural economy was incorporated into one of the eight Areas of Critical Importance (ACI) approved by the ILC in the framework, ³⁶ namely, ACI-5. The ILO's work through ACI-5 sought to consolidate the ILO's portfolio of work in rural areas with a view to define a strategic focus for future biennia through a rights-based rural development approach. Moreover, ACI-5 also sought to generate knowledge and develop innovative tools to support constituents in addressing decent work challenges in rural areas through three interrelated areas of work: (a) decent work for disadvantaged, marginalized and vulnerable rural populations; (b) decent work for rural workers in supply chains; and (c) decent work for rural workers on plantations.

Moving forward, promoting decent work in the rural economy was further embedded in the Organization's work as one of 10 Programme and Budget (P&B) Outcomes in the period 2016–19, and a specific Output in the P&B documents for the period 2020–23.

³⁴ ILO, Giving a Voice to Rural Workers, Report of the Committee of Experts on the Application of Conventions and Recommendations, Report III (Part 1B), International Labour Conference, 104th Session, 2015. The Survey covered the Right of Association (Agriculture) Convention, 1921 (No. 11), the Rural Workers' Organisations Convention (No. 141) and Recommendation (No. 149), 1975.

³⁵ ILO, Giving a Voice to Rural Workers. International Labour Conference, 104th Session, June 2015, Provisional Record 14(Rev.).

³⁶ GB.322/POL/2

At its 329th session in March 2017, the Governing Body concluded that poverty in emerging and developing countries was predominantly a rural phenomenon. High levels of poverty in rural areas, decent work deficits, informality and vulnerability to climate change persist today, and continue to threaten social justice. The *ILO Centenary Declaration for the Future of Work* (2019) set out to advance decent work in the rural economy by calling on the ILO to focus, inter alia, on "promoting the transition from the informal to the formal economy, while giving due attention to rural areas".³⁷ More concretely, the Centenary Declaration underscores the need to strengthen the capacities of constituents to address decent work deficits in the rural economy through sectoral policies and investments in strategic sectors, as well as promoting the ratification and implementation of relevant ILS.

Most recently, the ILO Global Call to Action for a human-centred recovery (2021) underscores the need to "develop and implement comprehensive, innovative and integrated approaches to curb the spread of informality and accelerate the transition to the formal economy [...] paying due attention to the rural economy".

RECONSTRUCTED THEORY OF CHANGE

The ToC of ILO's strategies and actions for promoting DWRE has been formulated and elaborated based on the strategic directions given by the most recent texts laying the basis of ILO's intervention in the rural sector, that is, the Conclusions on Promoting Rural Employment for Poverty Reduction adopted at the 97th Session (2008) of the International Labour Conference, and the Strategy for Unleashing Rural Development through Productive Employment and Decent Work adopted at the 310th Session (2011) of the Governing Body – and the P&B documents covering the period of this HLE. It also incorporates the inputs provided by relevant ILO stakeholders to the ToC version presented in the concept note, ToRs and the inception report of the evaluation.

These strategic documents called for specific attention to technical areas around the four pillars of Decent Work (Employment, Social Protection, Social Dialogue and Rights), complemented by the necessity to enrich rural data which were deemed insufficient to adequately support rural work. During the evaluation, a cross-cutting focus was directed towards women, youth and other vulnerable groups. A cross-cutting policy driver on just transition to environmental sustainability was also introduced in the P&B 2018–19 as a contribution to the implementation of the 2030 Agenda and the concern expressed in the 2016 resolution on Advancing Social Justice through Decent Work with respect to the rapidity of environmental changes and their impact on the world of work, and environmental sustainability was later embedded in Policy Outcome 3 as of 2019–2020. The GB's strategy of 2011 also emphasized the need for greater mainstreaming and better coordination of rural work within the Organization and with external partners.

The reconstructed ToC, as implied by the 2008 and 2011 strategic documents and the 2016–23 P&B documents, is presented below.

FIGURE 1. THEORY OF CHANGE

Areas of work **Means of action Outcomes Impacts Productive Rural Employment** Advocacy and policy and Rural Empowerment & Full, productive, freely legislative work Development (i) EIIP and community works to improve chosen and sustainable infrastructure; (ii) formalization; employment for all in (iii) enabling business environment, including Capacity and awareness rural areas access to markets, financial services and digital **Economic Growth** development transition; (iv) value chain development; (v) entrepreneurship development for modernization and diversification; (vi) jobs and Development wealth creation, including generation of green **Poverty Reduction** Decent work and cooperation jobs, resilient agriculture, and cooperatives; structural deficits in (vii) promotion of sustainable enterprises; rural areas are (viii) productivity enhancement; (ix) food security; Partnership and policy Higher countered (x) skills development, lifelong learning and productivity and cooperation career guidance improved enabling environment for Knowledge building and **Social Protection** enterprises sharing statistics Extension of contributory and non-contributory social protection mechanisms to rural areas Climate Change Mitigation & **Social Dialogue and Tripartism** Adaptation (i) supporting national tripartite bodies for social **Assumptions** dialogue more inclusive; (ii) strengthening **Gender Equality** tripartite bodies to enable them to be more Political commitment of member and Noneffective in organising their diverse potential discrimination constituencies 2. Funding Priorities of donors

Capacity and commitment of

and guidance provided by ILO

tripartite constituents to implement technical cooperation

ILS Rural Coverage

(i) Ratification of Convention; (ii) application of fundamental Conventions (child labor, forced labor, FOA and collective bargaining, non-discrimination, OSH) and priority Conventions (tripartism, employment policy, extension of labor inspection systems; (iii) implementation of other relevant ILS to rural employment

Data

(i) Build the capacity of national statistical offices to collect and analyze labor statistics disaggregated by rural-urban areas; (ii) expansion of the ILOSTAT database to include short-term and annual indicators for key decent work indicators disaggregated by rural-urban areas; (ii) work with selected labor ministries and national training centres to produce data on skills needs and development; (iv) undertake policy-oriented research on the links between decent job creation, rural development and structural transformation (including the role of new technologies) and on socioeconomic issues in the key rural economy sectors

Cross-Cutting Areas

Gender Equality and Non-discrimination, Youth, and Other Vulnerable Groups
Just transition to Environment Sustainability (Policy Driver in 2018-2019, embedded in Policy Outcome 3 afterwards)

Organizational Strategy

(i) Improve integration of rural perspective into the work of ILO at HQs, field offices and ITC/ILO units, including that of high-level ILO management and of the constituents; (ii) improve internal coordination on rural problematics (a. establish a dedicated team at strategic level to maintain an ILO vision and general direction, prompt action, coordination and delivery ILO-wide, build linkages with external actors, and help to deliver, disseminate and advocate specific products and approaches; b. redynamize the rural focal points network; c. establish an electronic platform on rural work; d. establish thematic clusters (rural-friendly agribusiness value chains, career guidance and relevant skills acquisition in rural contexts, tourism in rural areas, food security, social protection floor, a culture of rural occupational safety and health, international labor standards rural coverage, reaching and giving a voice to rural employers and workers))

RESULTS FRAMEWORK

The evaluation covers the period 2016–2023, which is three full biennia (2016–17, 2018–19 and 2020–21) and a partial biennium (2022–23). Since 2016, the ILO has utilized rights-based rural development and local resources-based approaches to strengthen the capacity of its constituents. The aim is for them to develop and implement policies and programmes for the promotion of productive employment, decent work, and inclusive productive transformation of rural areas. Programmatically, work towards promoting rural employment and decent work was undertaken through a specific outcome of the P&B 2016–19 (Outcome 5: Decent work in the rural economy). In addition, DWRE was reflected in all the remaining P&B outcomes on jobs creation, social protection, sustainable enterprises, formalization of the informal economy, standards-related actions, labour inspection, labour migration, employers' and workers' organizations, and the protection of workers.

In June 2018, the GB directed the Office to develop the P&B proposal for 2020–21 in line with the ILO Centenary Declaration. The 2019 Centenary Declaration sets the long-term direction of the ILO in its pursuit of social justice through a fair, inclusive, and secure future of work with full, productive, and freely chosen employment and decent work opportunities for all. The Declaration sets the long-term impact that ILO aims to achieve and frames its contribution to the 2030 Sustainable Development Agenda. In addition, a subsequent session of the GB held in March 2019 called for an improved methodology for formulating the results framework for the subsequent P&B documents which reflected the outcomes of the ILO Centenary Declaration.

Based on the strategic direction provided to the Office by the GB, the 2020–21 P&B document aimed to introduce a more rigorous measurement system and prioritized results framework centred on eight policy outcomes and three enabling outcomes that incorporate cross-cutting policy drivers and the Centenary initiatives. With regards to the ILO's actions on promoting DWRE, these were primarily structured around Output 3.2 (Increased capacity of Member States to formulate and implement policies and strategies for creating decent work in the rural economy) of Outcome 3 (Economic, social and environmental transitions for full, productive and freely chosen employment and decent work for all). Table 6 summarizes the P&B outcomes and outputs since 2016 that directly pertain to DWRE.

TABLE 6. SUMMARY OF P&B OUTCOMES AND INDICATORS RELATED TO DWRE

BIENNIUM	OUTCOME/OUTPUT	INDICATOR 1	INDICATOR 2	INDICATOR 3
2016–17	Outcome 5: Decent work in the rural economy	Member States that have taken concrete steps to integrate decent work into rural development policies and strategies	Member States in which constituents have set up targeted programmes that contribute to decent work and productive employment in rural areas	Member States that have enhanced their knowledge base, analytical capacity and statistics on decent work in the rural economy
2018–19	Outcome 5: Decent work in the rural economy	Number of Member States that formulate or adopt strategies or policies that target employment and decent work in rural areas	Number of Member States that have taken concrete steps to promote employment and decent work in rural areas	Number of Member States that have established or strengthened mechanisms for consultation and social dialogue in the rural economy
2020–21 & 2022–23	Output 3.2: Increased capacity of Member States to formulate and implement policies and strategies for creating decent work in the rural economy	Number of Member States with measures for decent work in rural areas	n/a	n/a

As the above table indicates, the strategic framework measuring the ILO's work on promoting DWRE, as reflected in the P&B outcomes, has undergone changes over the biennia under the purview of this HLE. In addition to the transition from an outcome to an output, some key differences also emerged in indicators across the biennia. For instance, while the P&B 2016–17 emphasized enhanced knowledge base, analytical capacity, and statistics on decent work in the rural economy, the subsequent P&B 2018–19 shifted the emphasis on mechanisms to consultation and social dialogue in the rural economy. With the shift towards the new results framework being utilized since the 2020–21 biennium, the DWRE work under Output 3³⁸ relates to the formulation and implementation of policies and strategies. Progress towards Output 3.2 is measured by one indicator which reports on the "number of Member States with measures for decent work in rural areas".

How is the ILO measuring the promotion of decent work in the rural economy? An indicative definition for "measures" found against Indicator 1 of Output 3.2 in the P&B 2020–21 encompassed:

- A. Strengthened capacities to develop and implement policies, strategies, and job creation programmes prioritizing employment and Decent Work in rural areas;
- B. Development and implementation of targeted employment-intensive investment programmes (EIIPs) in sectors of rural economy;
- C. Development and expansion of innovative programmes into new sectors; and
- D. Strengthened public and private sectors' capacities to implement, monitor, and evaluate employment programmes and building capacity of national statistical offices to collect and analyse labour statistics.

Whereas the P&B 2022-23 indicates "measures" as:

- A. Development of policies, plans, strategies and measures in line with relevant ILS that support Decent Work in specific sectors of the rural economy and strengthening capacity for their implementation;
- B. Improving legal and institutional framework, particularly for sectoral social dialogue in the rural economy, and strengthening capacity of government agencies and rural workers' and employers' organization;
- C. Implementation of targeted interventions to promote inclusive productive transformation and Decent Work.

While the P&B documents provide some direction, they vary in detail and focus from one biennium to another in light of changing priorities and in response to the evolving context. For instance, there is a lot of emphasis on job creation policies and programmes in the P&B 2020–21, but the P&B 2022–23 does not explicitly reference job creation. Furthermore, whereas the P&B 2020–21 focused on "building the capacity of national statistical offices to collect and analyse labour statistics disaggregated by rural or urban area", no reference was made to the ILO's work in labour statistics under Output 3.2 in the P&B 2022–23 document. ILS and productivity were not referenced at all in the P&B 2020–21, and any reference to social protection was missing under Output 3.2 in the P&B 2022–23. These examples illustrate that some areas considered as ILO comparative advantages and/or pillars of Decent Work are not consistently represented in the P&B, which is being used as a key strategic document for the formulation of ILO's programming at global, regional and country levels. The constant shift of focus and measures in the results framework leads to an overview of variable results that raises a question about the focus of ILO's strategy in the rural economy.

³⁸ Work on promoting decent work in the rural economy and rural employment has primarily been undertaken through Output 3.2.

MAPPING OF ILO'S ACTIONS ON PROMOTING DWRE ACROSS P&B OUTCOMES AND OUTPUTS

As mentioned above, in addition to undertaking work on the promotion of DWRE under P&B Outcome 5/Output 3.2, numerous other P&B outcomes and outputs have also contributed to DWRE.

An extensive analysis of the DC Dashboard and DW Results since 2020 revealed 186 CPOs which had components related to the rural economy.³⁹

Of these, a total of 44 CPOs (24 per cent) amount to an average annual expenditure of roughly US\$11.1 million were linked directly to Output 3.2, thereby indicating that over three-quarters of the ILO's work involving components of the rural economy was not being reported under Output 3.2. Apart from Output 3.2, these CPOs are spread across all eight outcomes and 28 other outputs, with varied levels of concentration and with an average annual expenditure of US\$54.5 million. This broad dispersion of the rural economy across 85 per cent of the total policy outputs (out of 33 in total) lends greater credence to the notion that the rural economy is central to the ILO's work and actions.

The following figure shows the distribution of rural economy-related CPOs across the eight different outcomes in the period 2020–23.⁴⁰ Across the outcomes, the highest concentration of CPOs associated with rural economy are found under *Outcome 4 – Sustainable Enterprises* (33 per cent), closely followed by *Outcome 3 – Employment and Decent Work* (32 per cent). An estimated 28 CPOs (15 per cent) are linked to various outputs under *Outcome 7 – Protection at Work*; 21 CPOs (11 per cent) are linked to outputs under *Outcome 5 – Skills and Lifelong Learning*; and 19 CPOs (10 per cent) are linked to outputs under *Outcome 1 – Social Dialogue*.

9%

29%

Outcome 4 - Sustainable Enterprises

Outcome 3 - Employment and Decent Work

Outcome 7 - Protection at Work

Outcome 5 - Skills and Lifelong Learning

Outcome 1 - Social Dialogue

Outcome 2 - International Labour Standards

Outcome 8 - Social Protection

Outcome 6 - Gender Equality

FIGURE 2. DISTRIBUTION OF CPOS BY OUTCOMES (P&B 2020–23)

Source: DW Results Dashboard 2016–21; DW Results obtained from OBW Dashboard for 2022.

The following table also provides a snapshot of P&B outputs wherein linkages with the rural economy were observed. The analysis revealed that the ILO's work on sustainable enterprises had prominent linkages and connections with the rural economy in the form of development of strategies and/or action plans to improve the enabling environment for the creation and growth of sustainable enterprises (Output 4.1) and implementation of interventions aimed to support enterprise sustainability (Output 4.2). Another key area where linkages with the rural economy were observed was under Output 4.3 (19 CPOs: 10 per cent), which aims at facilitating the transition of enterprises to formality.

³⁹ The total number of CPOs exceed 183 because each one can be linked to multiple outputs as well as indicators within an output

⁴⁰ The total number of CPOs exceed 183 because each one can be linked to multiple outputs as well as indicators within an output.

Given that most of the world's child labour occurs in the agriculture sector, the ILO's actions towards promoting FPRW through Output 7.1 intersect prominently with the rural economy. Furthermore, labour migration (Output 7.5) was found to be another area with linkages to the rural economy, particularly in countries facing significant migrant flows.

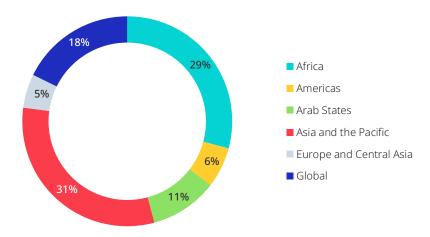
Lastly, Decent Work in the Rural Economy actions were linked with Outcome 5 – Skills and Lifelong Learning through the identification of current skills mismatches and anticipation of future skills needs (Output 5.1), strengthening of skills and lifelong learning policies, governance models and financing systems (Output 5.2), and the design and delivery of skills programmes and recognition mechanisms (Output 5.3).

ILO'S PROGRAMMING, INCLUDING CPO ANALYSIS, AND EXPENDITURE OVERVIEW DURING THE PERIOD 2016–2023

Constituting 90 per cent of the total expenditure on ILO's actions and interventions towards promoting DWRE through Outcome 5 (2016–19 biennia) and Output 3.2 (2020–23 biennia), XBDC-funded initiatives form the largest share of ILO's actions on DWRE in comparison to other funding sources. Between 2016–2023,36F41 there have been a total of 96 XBDC-funded Development Cooperation (DC) projects around the world, specifically linked to Outcome 5 (for the 2016–19 biennia) and Output 3.2 (for the 2020–23 biennia). Of these projects, the majority of programmes (a total of 30 projects corresponding to (31 per cent) have been implemented in Asia, closely followed by Africa (with 28 projects, corresponding to 29 per cent).

Global projects promoting Decent Work in the Rural Economy comprise 18 per cent of the ILO's DC project portfolio. DC projects implemented in the Arab States make up 11 per cent of the total DC portfolio. Only 6 projects and 5 projects have been implemented in the Americas and Europe and Central Asia regions, respectively (figure 3).

FIGURE 3. PERCENTAGE OF DC PROJECTS LAUNCHED BETWEEN 2016 AND 2023 BY REGION



Source: ILO DC Dashboard 2016–2023.

⁴¹ Data obtained from ILO Development Cooperation Dashboard updated 24 May 2023.

These 96 DC projects were implemented in a total of 27 individual countries and include 17 global projects and four regional projects in Africa. Further analysis revealed that an average of two to three projects have been implemented per country during the evaluation period, as the breakdown provided in the table below indicates.

TABLE 7. REGIONAL DISTRIBUTION OF DC PROJECTS LAUNCHED BETWEEN 2016 AND 2023

REGION	NUMBER OF DC1 PROJECTS	NUMBER OF COUNTRIES
Africa	24	11
Americas	6	3
Arab States	10	3
Asia and the Pacific	30	8
Europe and Central Asia	5	2
Regional and global	21	-
Total	96	27

^{- =} not applicable. Source: ILO DC Dashboard 2016-2023.

Of the 96 DC projects launched since 2016 (76 projects: 79 per cent) have closed or are anticipated to close by the end of 2023; 20 (21 per cent) remain active. Across the four biennia, the analysis found that **the greatest number of DC projects were launched in the 2016–17 biennium** (29 projects: 30 per cent), while the number launched more than halved in the 2018–19 biennium (13 projects: 14 per cent) and 2020–21 biennium (14 projects: 14 per cent). While the 2022–23 biennium is still ongoing, the HLE noted that the number of DC projects launched (16 projects as of 24 May 2023) exceeded the number launched in the previous two biennia.

TABLE 8. DC PROJECT DISTRIBUTION BY BIENNIUM: A BREAKDOWN OF PROJECT START AND END YEARS

PROJECT(S)	PROJECT(S) END DATES									
Project(s) Start	2016–17 biennium	2018–19 biennium	2020–21 biennium	2022–23 biennium	2024 and beyond	Grand total	% of total projects			
Prior to 2016	11	8	3	-	2	24	25%			
2016-17 Biennium	2	13	6	6	2	29	30%			
2018-19 Biennium	-	1	4	6	2	13	14%			
2020-21 Biennium	-	-	4	7	3	14	14%			
2022-23 Biennium	-	-	-	5	11	16	17%			
Grand total	13	22	17	24	20	96	-			

^{- =} not applicable. Source: ILO DC Dashboard 2016–2023.

Furthermore, an analysis of the ILO's data on financial expenditures also revealed changes to the ILO's activities promoting DWRE over time. Of the ILO's total XBDC expenditure in 2022, the share of ILO's total expenditure on DWRE was 5.4 per cent. Over this time period, the most significant increase was observed in 2020 when the share of DWRE in total expenditure increased to 5.5 per cent from 2.7 per cent in 2019. However, this sharp rise in DWRE expenditure since the transition is likely due to the migration of several CPOs from other outcomes to Output 3.2, as elaborated in the section on Efficiency.



Between 2016 and 2022, the actual expenditure on ILO's actions and interventions in the rural economy, through Outcome 5 (2016–19 biennia) and Output 3.2 (2020–23 biennia) amounted to US\$87 million.

The overwhelming majority of the expenditure (90 per cent) was made through XBDC resources funded by voluntary non-core contributions from over 100 different resource partners in support of specific projects. The top five donors of the XBDC funding source between 2016 and 2022 included: i) European Union (US\$15,822,042; 20 per cent); ii) Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade (DFAT), Australia (US\$11,879,287; 15 per cent); iii) Government of Netherlands (US\$8,305,783; 11 per cent); iv) United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF) (US\$7,546,202; 10 per cent); and v) the World Bank (US\$7,215,204; 9 per cent). Together, these donors constitute 65 per cent of overall XBDC funding for ILO interventions promoting DWRE.

Approximately 8 per cent of the total expenditure was made through the Regular Budget Supplementary Account (RBSA) while the Regular Budget Development Cooperation (RBDC) resources were used for 2 per cent of total expenditures over the time period.

TABLE 9. FUNDING DISTRIBUTION BY REGION: XBDC, RBSA, AND RBDC CONTRIBUTIONS

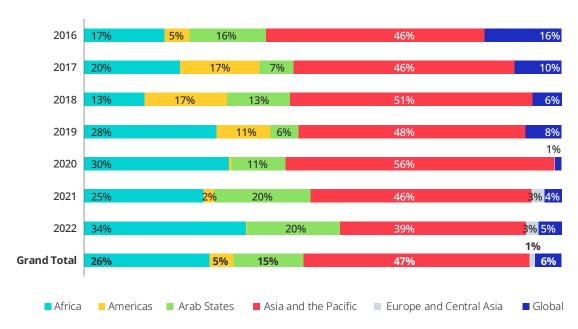
REGIONS	FUNDING SOURCE							
	XBD (US\$)	RBSA (US\$)	RBDC (US\$)	Total (US\$)	Percentage of total			
Africa	17 803 202	3 892 387	1 051 357	22 746 947	26%			
Americas	3 612 826	389 026	736 694	4738 546	5%			
Arab States	12 051 483	639 446	29 267	12 720 196	15%			
Asia and the Pacific	39 118 723	1 291 648	585 096	40 995 467	47%			
Europe and Central Asia	600 724	421 593	0	1 022 317	1%			
Global	4 515 824	64 829	221 370	4 802 023	6%			
Total	77 702 782	6 698 930	2 623 784	87 025 496	-			

Source: FINANCE Department – 2016–2022 XBDC expenditure figures; 2016–2022 RBDC expenditure details; 2016–2022 RBSA expenditure.

The largest share of total expenditure on interventions related to DWRE were made in the Asia and the Pacific region, which accounted for an estimated 47 per cent of total expenditure. Approximately 26 per cent of total expenditure was in Africa, followed by the Arab States which accounted for 15 per cent. Global interventions on promoting DWRE represented 6 per cent of overall expenditures, while approximately 5 per cent of total expenditures were made in the Americas region. Just 1 per cent of total expenditures were made in the Europe and Central Asia region.

The following figure provides a breakdown of total annual expenditure on DWRE by region between 2016 and 2022. The trends show that Asia and the Pacific received the largest share of expenditure on promoting DWRE, which peaked at 56 per cent in 2020, but has since been declining. Concurrently, the proportion of annual expenditure in Africa has increased significantly since 2016 from 17 per cent to 34 per cent in 2022. However, expenditure on promoting DWRE in the Americas which peaked at 17 per cent in 2017 and 2018, has been negligible since 2019. Furthermore, the share of expenditure on promoting DWRE in the Arab States has seen a sizeable increase of 20 per cent in 2021 and 2022, respectively. Lastly, ILO expenditure on global actions and interventions has also faced a consistent decline from 16 per cent in 2016 to just 5 per cent in 2022.

FIGURE 4. ANNUAL BREAKDOWN OF EXPENDITURE ON DWRE BY REGION, 2016-2022



Source: FINANCE Department – 2016–2022 XBDC expenditure figures; 2016–2022 RBDC expenditure details; 2016–2022 RBSA expenditure.



EVALUATION FINDINGS

EVALUATION FINDINGS

RELEVANCE

KEY FINDING 1

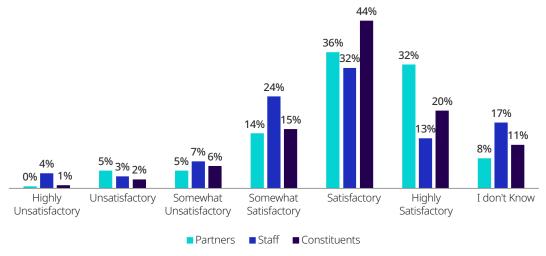
ILO programming on DWRE is relevant to constituents' needs and country priorities. However, the degree of involvement in formulating the ILO's programming was found to vary among constituents, with governments heavily influencing the agenda.

KEY FINDING 2

Whereas ILO programming on promoting DWRE reflected the learning drawn from experience, responses to new and emerging trends were not systematically captured, limiting the quality of responsiveness to constituent demands. Lessons learned were generally not adequately documented, posing challenges to country-level programming.

A survey conducted with the participation of ILO staff, constituents and partners revealed that overall, 59 per cent of all respondents found the relevance of ILO actions on promoting DWRE to be satisfactory or highly satisfactory. A significantly high proportion of partners (68 per cent) and constituents (64% per cent) found the relevance of ILO's actions on promoting DWRE to be satisfactory or highly satisfactory.37F42 In contrast, only 45 per cent of ILO staff who responded to the survey shared this positive view. The following figure provides a breakdown of the overall ratings on relevance by the three different respondent types.

FIGURE 5. RATINGS ON THE RELEVANCE OF ILO ACTIONS ON PROMOTING DWRE ACROSS SURVEYED STAKEHOLDERS



Source: Survey of the ILO staff (N=62), constituents (N=61), and partners (N=36) conducted as part of the HLE.

⁴² Methodological note: Each OECD-DAC criterion was assessed as a composite of several individual items pertaining to the particular criterion. Ratings on each individual component of an OECD-DAC criterion were averaged to arrive at the Overall score for each criterion.

Alignment with the principles enshrined in key conventions and recommendations

COVERAGE OF THE RURAL ECONOMY BY INTERNATIONAL LABOUR STANDARDS

The 2011 Strategy emphasized the importance of ILS in addressing decent work gaps in rural areas. The strategy focused on fundamental standards such as freedom of association, collective bargaining, forced labour, child labour and equality of opportunity. Additionally, the Priority (governance) Conventions related to employment policy and labour inspection were highlighted, noting the extension of labour inspection systems to rural zones was crucial, along with education, awareness raising, and capacity building.

Many Conventions and Recommendations are relevant to the rural economy, including the Fundamental Conventions, Priority Conventions, and Technical Conventions relating to employment in the rural economy. The table below displays the ratification rates of the Fundamental and Priority Conventions across ILO regions.

TABLE 10. INTERNATIONAL LABOUR CONVENTION COMPLIANCE RATES BY REGION

NO.	CONVENTION	REGION					
		Africa (54)	Americas (35)	Arab States (11)	Asia and the Pacific (36)	Europe (51)	Total (187)
Fun	damental Conventions						
1.	C.29 – Forced Labour Convention, 1930	100%	97%	100%	83%	100%	96%
2.	C.98 – Right to Organise and Collective Bargaining Convention, 1949	100%	97%	55%	64%	100%	90%
3.	C.100 – Equal Remuneration Convention, 1951	98%	97%	64%	81%	100%	93%
4.	C.105 – Abolition of Forced Labour Convention, 1957	100%	100%	100%	75%	100%	95%
5.	C.111 – Discrimination (Employment and Occupation) Convention, 1958	100%	97%	91%	72%	100%	94%
6.	C.138 – Minimum Age Convention, 1973	98%	94%	100%	75%	100%	94%
7.	C.182 – Worst Forms of Child Labour Convention, 1999	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%
8.	C.87 – Freedom of Association and Protection of the Right to Organise Convention, 1948	93%	94%	36%	53%	100%	84%
9.	C.155 – Occupational Safety and Health Convention, 1981	41%	48%	18%	25%	59%	40%
10.	C.187 – Promotional Framework for Occupational Safety and Health Convention, 2006	31%	17%	9%	25%	55%	32%
Prio	rity Conventions						
1.	C.81 – Labour Inspection Convention, 1947	89%	83%	91%	39%	94%	80%
2.	C.129 – Labour Inspection (Agriculture) Convention, 1969	20%	29%	9%	3%	2%	30%
3.	C.122 – Employment Policy Convention, 1964	44%	66%	36%	42%	96%	61%
4.	C.144 – Tripartite Consultation (International Labour Standards) Convention, 1976	89%	86%	45%	61%	100%	83%

Source: <u>ILO NORMLEX Database</u>



The Fundamental Conventions enjoy high levels of ratification, typically exceeding 80 per cent or even 90 per cent in most regions.

However, the Occupational Safety and Health Convention, 1981 (No. 155) has a lower ratification rate, especially in the Arab States and Asia and the Pacific regions. The Promotional Framework for Occupational Safety and Health Convention, 2006 (No. 187) also has lower ratification rates. Among the Priority Conventions, the Labour Inspection Convention, 1947 (No. 81) has ratification rates ranging from 80 per cent to 94 per cent across most regions. Furthermore, the Labour Inspection (Agriculture) Convention, 1969 (No. 129) lags significantly behind, particularly in the Asia and the Pacific regions (3 per cent) and Arab States (9 per cent), and its overall ratification rate is only 30 per cent. The Employment Policy Convention, 1964 (No. 122) is a Convention with high significance for DWRE. It enjoys a moderate overall ratification rate (61 per cent), with relatively modest ratification levels across Africa (44 per cent), the Arab States (36 per cent), and Asia and the Pacific (42 per cent).

There are some 36 Technical Conventions that are relevant to the promotion of DWRE (see Annex 2). Some of these Conventions have an explicit application to the rural sector, for example, the Safety and Health in Agriculture Convention, 2001 (No. 184), while most others have relevance because their content applies to work in the rural economy, even if they do not refer explicitly to it. Of these Conventions, 27 per cent have over 50 ratifications, for example the Protection of Wages Convention, 1949 (No. 95), Labour Administration Convention, 1978 (No. 150) and the Collective Bargaining Convention, 1981 (No. 154). Significantly, with 77 ratifications, Workmen's Compensation (Agriculture) Convention, 1921 (No. 12) is among this group. Other specific Technical Conventions on agriculture are the Rural Workers' Organisations Convention, 1975 (No. 141) (41 ratifications); the Safety and Health in Agriculture Convention, 2001 (No. 184) (21 ratifications).⁴⁴ Of the various Conventions specifically relating to fisheries, only the Work in Fishing Convention, 2007 (No. 188) with 21 ratifications is up to date.⁴⁵

ALIGNMENT OF ILO'S STRATEGY AND ACTIVITIES FOR THE PROMOTION OF DWRE WITH CONVENTIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Overall, the programmatic work conducted by the ILO on DWRE aligns well with and appears well grounded in Conventions and Recommendations. However, the HLE found that in most cases this alignment is implicit, and there are few explicit references to ILS in project designs and documents, progress reports and project evaluations. Furthermore, in the majority of projects, the relationship between interventions and the ILO normative standards is not clearly established, and the role of ILS appears to be more of an implicit compass providing a normative frame of action. The same implicit alignment seems to be the norm in DWCPs, where explicit references to Conventions and Recommendations are also limited. By contrast, ILS is generally very visible and well mainstreamed in global products.

⁴³ The Tripartite Consultation (International Labour Standards) Convention, 1976 (No. 144) does not have a direct bearing on DWRE, although it is of course relevant for tripartite consultation and discussion on effective implementation of ILS, including on rural employment.

⁴⁴ Additionally, the specific Conventions on agriculture include: the Sickness Insurance (Industry) Convention, 1927 (No. 24) (21 ratifications and considered outdated); and the Holidays with Pay (Agriculture) Convention, 1952 (No. 101) (46 and considered outdated).

⁴⁵ Minimum Age (Fishermen) Convention, 1959 (No. 112) (outdated); Medical Examination (Fishermen) Convention, 1959 (No. 113) (to be revised); Fishermen's Articles of Agreement Convention, 1959 (No. 114) (to be revised).

⁴⁶ See also Synthesis Review, p. 18.

Examples of such products are the *Policy Guidelines on the Promotion of Decent Work in the Agri-Food Sector*, ⁴⁷ the various training programmes on rural development offered by ITCILO, and joint products such as the ILO/FAO publication *Joining forces to shape the fishery sector of tomorrow. Promoting safety and decent work in fisheries through the application of international standards*. ⁴⁸

The HLE nevertheless found some evidence of the contribution of ILO's DWRE-related interventions in support of the ratification of key Conventions. In Indonesia, the *Sea Fisheries: Strengthened Coordination to Combat Labour Exploitation and Trafficking in Fisheries in Southeast Asia* evaluation noted that the project explicitly supported the ratification and implementation of the Work in Fishing Convention (No. 188), and the accompanying Work in Fishing Recommendation (No. 199), with several resources developed by the project on these instruments. ⁴⁹ Another example is the Floriculture Sector Project in Jordan, which linked project activities to the promotion of the Transition from the Informal to the Formal Economy Recommendation, 2015 (No. 204). ⁵⁰ The HLE evaluation also found evidence of direct contribution of the DWCP in Uzbekistan to the adoption and application of relevant ILO Conventions and Protocols (Nos. 144, 87, 81, 129, and Protocol No. 29) through the ILO's efforts to raise awareness of these standards through translation and dissemination of relevant materials and publications combined with the provision of technical advice and advocacy on issues of importance for Uzbekistan's reform efforts.

Similarly, in some cases, projects were relevant to some Technical Conventions, such as the Collective Bargaining Convention, 1982 (No. 154), the Rural Workers' Organisations Convention, 1975 (No. 141), the Safety and Health in Agriculture Convention, 2001 (No. 184), and the Plantation Conventions, 1958 (No. 110).

About 72 per cent of constituents surveyed by the HLE found the ILO's work and actions to promote DWRE to be highly satisfactorily to satisfactorily aligned with the directions contained in key Conventions and Recommendations. However, in contrast, only 47 per cent of staff believe that ILO's work in promoting DWRE is as per directions contained in key ILO Conventions, which is indicative of the often implicit role of ILS in programme interventions.⁵¹

The HLE also found that a significant number of programme activities are implemented in partnership with other UN agencies and that grant design documents drawn up by other UN partners indicate some unfamiliarity with ILS and ILO constituencies.

Alignment with SDGs and UNSDCFs

ALIGNMENT WITH SDGs

A review of the ILO's P&B documents across the three biennia revealed that ILO outcomes and outputs have linkages with the SDGs and associated targets. Overall, the ILO is the custodian or co-custodian agency for a total of 14 SDG indicators which have been incorporated directly into the ILO results framework as presented in the P&B documents.⁵² Regarding the ILO's actions and interventions for the promotion of DWRE, explicit linkages were also found with all SDGs except SDG 13 (climate action) and SDG 15 (life on land).

An analysis of the CPOs across the three biennia revealed that CPOs working towards promoting DWRE have the strongest linkages with SDG 8, which pertains to promoting sustained, inclusive, and sustainable economic growth, full and productive employment, and decent work for all. Within SDG 8, the ILO's work on promoting DWRE contributes more significantly towards promoting development policies that support decent job creation, entrepreneurship, formalization, and

⁴⁷ ILO, <u>Policy guidelines for the promotion of decent work in the agri-food sector</u>. Meeting of Experts on Decent Work in the Agri-food Sector: An Essential Part of Sustainable Food Systems (Geneva, 8–12 May 2023), MEDWAF/2023/4.

⁴⁸ ILO and FAO, *Joining forces to shape the fishery sector of tomorrow. Promoting safety and decent work in fisheries through the application of international standards*, 2020.

⁴⁹ RAS/16/11/USA, Indonesia has not yet ratified Convention No. 188.

⁵⁰ JOR/19/02/AUS, Decent Work in Jordan's Floriculture Sector.

⁵¹ Information obtained from surveys carried out by the HLE.

⁵² ILO, <u>Programme and Budget for the Biennium 2020–21</u>, 2020, p. 65.

enterprise development (SDG 8.3), achieving full and productive employment and decent work for all (SDG 8.5), and protecting labour rights and promoting safe and secure working environments for all (SDG 8.8).

In addition to SDG 8, CPOs linked to Outcome 5 and Output 3.2 were also found to contribute towards SDG 1 (Ending Poverty), particularly in terms of reducing multidimensional poverty (SDG 1.2) and implementing social protection systems and measures (SDG 1.3). Moreover, the SDG 2.3 was also found to have a direct linkage to the ILO's work on promoting DWRE through its emphasis on doubling the agricultural productivity and incomes of small-scale food producers. The ILO's support to its constituents in developing various national and sectoral policies and strategies on employment social protection, etc., also contributes to SDG 5 (Gender Equality) through the inclusion of gender-responsive considerations and concerns. Under the most recent biennium, CPOs linked to Output 3.2 also contributed to SDG 4 (Education and Lifelong Learning) to support governments in implementing entrepreneurship programmes; SDG 6 (Water and Sanitation) by supporting sustainable development initiatives led by government; and SDG 9 (Resilient Infrastructure) through ILO's EIIP work. Thus, the ILO's actions and interventions linked to Outcome 5 and Output 3.2 contribute to a range of SDGs, in addition to SDG 8 (Economic Growth, Employment, and Decent Work), since promoting Decent Work in the Rural Economy intersects with other thematic areas such as social protection, skills and enterprise development, EIIPs, etc.



The HLE found that overwhelming majority of partners (89 per cent) considered the ILO's commitment to SDGs through its actions and work on promoting DWRE to be highly satisfactory to satisfactory.

However, this sentiment was expressed by only 50 per cent of the ILO staff respondents, which may reflect the fact that limited capacities and fragmented programming at ILO often prevented it from making significant contributions to the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development.

ALIGNMENT WITH UNSDCFS

In terms of alignment of ILO actions with the United Nations Country strategies, including the United Nations Development Assistance Frameworks (UNDAF) and UNSDCF, the HLE found that ILO's promotion of the DWRE portfolio was mostly aligned well at the country level. In some instances, ILO also plays key role in leading particular outcomes of the UNSDCF. For instance, in the Lao People's Democratic Republic, ILO is the co-lead agency with UNICEF for Priority 2 – Inclusive Prosperity. While the Decent Work Agenda has also been integrated into the UNSDCF in the Lao People's Democratic Republic. Similarly, in many countries, DWCP outcomes have been aligned with the UNSDCF. For instance, in Uzbekistan, the HLE noted successful efforts by the ILO to integrate the current DWCP (2021–25) with the UNSDCF for the first time by adjusting its expected outcomes and outputs with UNSDCF outcomes to ensure strong alignment with UN's inter-agency country-level strategy.

However, a review of individual projects across CPOs revealed that references to alignment and linkages to SDGs and the UNSDCF or previous United Nations Development Assistance Frameworks (UNDAFs) are often only generic. Moreover, limited programming partnerships with other UN agencies sometimes mean that the linkages to UNSDCF are not fully translated into practice.

Alignment with constituents' and partners' needs

Overall, the HLE found the ILO's actions on promoting DWRE to be aligned with and relevant to the needs of constituents. Among constituents, the highest rates of satisfaction were expressed in the context of relevance of ILO's DWRE-related actions to the needs of Member States (72 per cent). About 67 per cent of the constituents surveyed reported that the relevance of ILO's actions to needs of workers' organizations was highly satisfactory to satisfactory. However, a lower proportion constituents (56 per cent) considered the relevance of ILO's actions to the needs of employers' organizations to be highly satisfactory to satisfactory.

At the global level, the ILO's tripartite convening mechanisms – the GB and the ILC – set the ILO's agenda and broad policies and function as two key mechanisms that enable its constituents to formulate and shape the ILO's work to address their needs. In the case of the ILO's strategic and policy directions to promote DWRE, both the 2008 *Conclusions on the Promotion of Rural Employment for Poverty Reduction* and the follow-up through the 2011 *Unleashing Rural Development through Productive Employment and Decent Work Strategy* emerged through tripartite consensus at the ILC and GB, respectively.

At the country level, the DWCPs serve as the main vehicle for delivery of ILO support to countries to promote decent work as a key component of national development strategies. The DWCPs are developed through a national consultative process involving the government, employers' organizations, and workers' organizations which reflect the national development priorities as well as constituents' priorities. Priority areas in DWCPs are set based on a systematic analysis of the country context and fidelity to the national development strategies and policies, thereby enabling flexibility and adaptability to various national contexts. In that regard, the DWCPs function as a critical means of informing ILO actions on promoting the Decent Work Agenda at the country level, which have also prominently featured priorities for the rural economy, depending on the national and development contexts. For instance, DWCPs of countries with relatively larger rural populations and decent work deficits in the rural economy prioritize ILO's actions on promoting DWRE, as evidenced by a review of select DWCPs such as the 2017-21 DWCP for the Lao People's Democratic Republic⁵³ and the 2016–20 DWCP for Pakistan,⁵⁴ which centred the rural economy under multiple DWCP priority areas. In contrast, other DWCPs were found to have more localized or specific focus areas in which actions on promoting DWRE can be undertaken, such as the 2020–25 DWCP for Indonesia,⁵⁵ which concentrates actions involving the rural economy under Social Protection (Country Priority 3), and the 2018–22 DWCP for Papua New Guinea which exclusively focuses on employment in the context of the rural economy. 56



Thus, it is evident that the ILO's agenda as well as its strategic direction at both global and country levels are set through the crucial involvement of its constituents.

However, survey responses from ILO staff revealed that only 42 per cent of the overall respondents considered the main mechanisms within the ILO for onboarding constituents' needs into DWRE programming to be highly satisfactory to satisfactory, with a relatively greater proportion of surveyed constituents reporting high satisfaction or satisfaction with country-level engagement with constituents (48 per cent) and DWCP documents (46 per cent) as mechanisms compared to the GB sessions (38 per cent) and ILC (42 per cent).

⁵³ ILO, Decent Work Country Programme for Lao People's Democratic Republic, 2017–2021, 2017.

⁵⁴ ILO, Islamic Republic of Pakistan Decent Work Country Programme, 2016–2020, 2016.

⁵⁵ ILO, Decent Work Country Programme (DWCP) for Indonesia, 2020–2025, 2020.

⁵⁶ ILO, Papua New Guinea Decent Work Country Programme, 2018–2022, 2018.

Among the constituents, governments were seen to have the most active contribution in influencing ILO's DWRE programming initiatives. This resulted in close alignment of programming with national governments' priorities by orienting DWCPs with key relevant government policies, strategies and programmes.

Having said that, some constraints and limitations regarding the adequate representation of rural workers and employers were noted. For example, trade unions and other workers' organizations tend to be fragmented and have low levels of membership in rural areas due to a number of factors including legal constraints, geographical disparity of workers, seasonality, lack of awareness and informality,⁵⁷ Moreover, much of the work in rural economies is undertaken in the form of subsistence farming carried out by smallholder farmers and their families, which are not likely to be well-represented through trade unions. In addition, because agriculture is characterized by self-employment and micro-, small- and medium-sized enterprises (MSMEs), such employers in the rural sectors are also less likely to be adequately represented in employers' organizations such as Chambers of Commerce, where the rural economy may be represented by larger and bigger agro-processing industries. This was noted in Indonesia, where employers' organizations that partner with the ILO in rural employment were representative of their sectors, but informal smallholders were not always represented. Effective and meaningful participation in social dialoque for such small-holders, small business owners, family workers and self-employed workers can be challenging due to the limited types of organizations that can represent them, and competing priorities and interests.58



This gap in involvement was also felt by constituents. For instance, representatives of constituents in Jordan noted that the responsiveness and engagement with the employers' and workers' organizations had been "generally weak" and that the focus for the project was on "supporting government and municipal partners".

The HLE noted that instead, the interests of employers' and workers' organizations were often indirectly represented through government development policies and objectives.

Nevertheless, interventions focused on rural economy implemented by ILO were found to be mostly relevant and responsive to the needs and concerns of constituents. Across the countries analysed in-depth over the course of the evaluation, ILO's work on promoting DWRE encompassed a range of actions such as capacity building, production and dissemination of knowledge, provision of direct TA (for example, policy formulation, development of market-linkages, the strengthening of workers' organizations, etc.), and support on policy development and/or implementation. For instance, in Morocco, the ILO's work has focused on promoting youth and women employability and sustainable enterprises, strengthening labour market institutions, and extending rights at work in the rural sector. In Indonesia, the ILO's work on promoting DWRE has mainly focused on building the capacity of social partners and social dialogue, with relatively little focus on policy support and legislative assistance. Whereas, in the Lao People's Democratic Republic, ILO has focused on the development of the National Rural Employment Strategy (NRES) 2021, capacity building, and TA.

⁵⁷ ILO, *Giving a voice to rural workers*, ILC.104/III/1B, 2015.

⁵⁸ ILO, Decent work deficits among rural workers: Key findings and recommendations for trade unions, 2022.

Box 1. Gaps in respoding to constituents' needs – Morocco and the Lao People's Democratic Republic

However, through a review of evaluation reports as well as interviews with constituents, the evaluation also found cases of gaps in responding to the constituents' needs. In the case of Morocco, representatives of constituents pointed out that while DWRE-related projects pursue the objective of creating more and better employment and, overall, match the country's priorities, some of their implementation modalities are reflective of donor's agendas rather than the country's. A major reason for this dissatisfaction among constituents is likely to be the absence of a DWCP in the country, as none has been formulated in Morocco to date. Consequently, the programme has fallen short of incorporating key contextual issues in its programming, such as the adoption of the New Development Model in 2021, the planned reform of the social protection system, the ambitious objective of 45% of women at work by 2035, etc.; as well as the recently signed UNSDCF (2023–2026). It is worth noting that consultations for the formulation of a DWCP had been initiated in 2019–2020 but had to be interrupted because of the COVID-19 pandemic. This work is expected to resume in the coming months.

Several interviewees also emphasized that in a country like Morocco that has reached a certain level of development and policy-making capacity, the ILO, and other UN agencies and development partners, should focus more on high-level TA and capacity building, allowing the country to be exposed to the best practices observed in the rest of the world, rather than mere implementation of development projects, especially if the latter are to reflect more the donors' agenda than the country's needs.

Similarly, in the case of the Lao People's Democratic Republic, despite the growing importance of plantations, ILO programming pertaining to Outcome 5/Output 3.2 did not include any relevant activities. Having said that, plantation workers have instead been supported through other projects pertaining to Social Protection (P&B Outcome 8) and Skills (P&B Outcome 5), etc.



Inclusion of lessons learned from past experience and response to new trends

At the strategic level, the HLE found that the 2011 Strategy on Promoting Decent Rural Employment was developed through an elaborate stocktaking exercise of the ILO's past work in rural areas which involved condensing lessons learned, synthesizing gaps in coverage, and the implementation of ILS in the domain of rural economy. Hence, the 2011 Strategy was rooted in an evidence-based analysis of the ILO's actions on the rural economy which served to position the Organization to use integrated and mutually reinforcing approaches to address decent work deficits in the rural context.

On a broad level, lessons learned from one biennium feed into the overarching strategic actions of ILO in the next biennium through the P&B documents, and more elaborately in the PIRs developed upon the conclusion of each biennium period. A review of the P&B documents revealed that these lessons have served to critically inform the broad organizational-level approaches that the ILO uses to undertake its actions. For instance, the P&B document for the 2016–17 biennium noted that lessons learned from past experiences led to the design of fewer, larger and better integrated outcomes, design of effective partnerships to achieve impact, and the recognition that meaningful

results require realistic timeframes, among others. With regards to the ILO's actions on promoting DWRE, broad-based lessons learned from previous work were documented in the 2016–17 and 2018–19 P&B documents when Decent Work in the Rural Economy was organized under Outcome 5. These lessons provided guidance on the thematic areas or sectors along with the means of actions (or combinations of actions) that should be the ILO's focus.

The PIRs are more elaborate in their documentation of lessons learned over each biennium. These lessons learned are at the strategic and organizational level and cut across the entirety of ILO's programming and include a range of issues such as: evidence- based knowledge and advocacy, policy coherence, strategic resource usage, results-based management, transparency and accountability. In this context, specific lessons learned regarding promoting DWRE are scant, but some references were found. For instance, the 2020–21 PIR noted that digitization of ILO services can pose problems for inclusivity, particularly in rural areas, due to the gaps in digital infrastructure that hinder connectivity.

At the country level, the DWCPs function as one mechanism through which lessons learned over the course of a period influence the development of subsequent DWCPs. In addition to a review of lessons learned in preceding DWCPs, the ILO's HLEs and reviews of DWCPs also function to document lessons learned and good practices. These lessons learned encompass a wide array of programmatic areas that different CPOs cover, pay particular attention to the ILO's implementation and organizational structures at the country level, and tend to be reflective of the country contexts which serve to guide subsequent planning and programming. However, it was noted that not all DWCPs explicitly document and highlight the lessons learned from the preceding DWCP. For instance, the current DWCPs for the Lao People's Democratic Republic, Philippines, and Malawi document lessons learned from the preceding DWCP, while the current DWCPs for Indonesia, Iraq and Pakistan do not document the lessons learned. At the project level, project evaluations and/or final review or progress reports for DC-funded projects also provide a key avenue for the identification and documentation of lessons learned from the implementation of specific projects.



Overall, the evaluation revealed that the ILO has mostly been successful in including lessons learned on promoting DWRE into subsequent planning and programming through the replication and implementation of approaches that have yielded success and results.

For example, in Indonesia, the lessons learned from early projects have resulted in workers' capacity building, strong involvement of the private sector and reaching smallholders, and use of new technologies, a part-and-parcel of current project interventions.

In some instances, the ILO has also been able to build on the successes achieved to scale interventions up and expand to other sectors and geographical areas. For example, in Indonesia, the lessons learned in the palm oil sector and development of effective approaches on social dialogue, occupational safety and health (OSH), and bipartite cooperation enabled the ILO to expand to other rural sectors such as fishing and seafood processing, dairy farming, seaweed production and rural tourism. In Jordan, the ILO utilized lessons learned in previous phases of the EIIP project to extend the geographical areas covered based on response to needs. In addition to expanded geographical coverage, the project also scaled up its activities from municipal works towards longer-term employment initiatives.

In addition to replicating successful approaches, the evaluation also noted a few cases where lessons learned from unsuccessful approaches have changed ILO's approach to subsequent programming. In Jordan, lessons learned from an earlier phase of the "Addressing Child Labour" intervention resulted in the use of local community-based organizations (CBOs) to provide vocational training instead of vocational training corporations (VTCs), because the long distance to VTC centres hindered the attendance of beneficiaries. However, a notable exception emerged in the case of Morocco where enterprise-level collective bargaining had yielded very limited results under a previous project but was still reintroduced in the subsequent ProAgro project with equally limited results, thereby indicating that lessons from past experience may not always be given enough weight in the formulation of DWRE projects. Overall, the evaluation noted that the absence of a systematic process for documenting lessons learned may have resulted in not all lessons being effectively integrated into subsequent programming. For instance, in the Lao People's Democratic Republic, the absence of local-level stakeholders in consultation processes prevented key practical lessons about decentralization from being incorporated into subsequent programming.

Box 2. ILO response to new and emerging trends relevant to promoting DWRE

With regards to the ILO's response to the new and emerging trends of demographic changes, the evaluation found that the inclusion of emerging trends tends to be undertaken through an ad-hoc approach rather than driven by a systematic or strategic approach and often relies on donor flexibility to fund projects pertaining to such areas. Concerning digitalization, climate change and globalization, the evaluation found that ILO has been most responsive to demographic changes and globalization. A number of the countries where the ILO has implemented initiatives in promoting DWRE have young populations, for example, the Lao People's Democratic Republic, Mozambique, Pakistan and Timor-Leste. At least some programming in these countries has been particularly designed for youth, mostly in the form of skills development and job placements. In response to the rapid growth in international trade, in some countries the ILO has also worked with linking producers to export value chains, for example, palm oil in Indonesia, coffee in the Lao People's Democratic Republic, and cotton in Uzbekistan. On the other hand, despite the strong realization of the impact of climate change on rural economy and agriculture, this topic does not frequently feature in ILO's country-level programming on DWRE. Some exceptions to this were found, for instance, the INSURED project implemented in Cambodia, Indonesia and Uganda that aimed to promote agricultural and climate insurance to cope with the environmental climate risks. In addition, the HLE noted a trend towards increased efforts to incorporate digitalization in recent years in some projects, such as support to a mango traceability system in Haiti, online labour inspections in Indonesia, and the development of a digital rural extension model in Mexico.

The survey undertaken as part of the HLE also support these findings, as **both the ILO staff** and constituents rated the relevance of ILO's DWRE-related work with regards to new and emerging trends at a significantly lower proportion than overall relevance. Although 45 per cent of ILO staff found the overall relevance of ILO's DWRE-related actions to be highly satisfactory to satisfactory, the relevance of ILO's DWRE actions with regards to new and emerging trends was rated as highly satisfactory or satisfactory by just 31 per cent of ILO staff. Similarly, while 64 per cent of constituents rated the overall relevance of ILO's DWRE actions to be highly satisfactory to satisfactory, 53 per cent of constituents found the relevance to new emerging trends was rated as highly satisfactory to satisfactory by only 53 per cent of constituents.

The ILO has responded to evolving situation at the country level by integrating response into its programming. For instance, in the Lao People's Democratic Republic, ILO's DWRE work has been geared towards the country's efforts to graduate from its least developed country (LDC) status. While in Jordan, activities have engaged Syrian refugees after their influx into the former. Similarly, in Morocco, the evaluation noted that the ILO was successful in gaining donor approval and additional funding to modify an existing project to include a component on agriculture and agroindustry decarbonization. Conversely, stakeholders in Morocco also believe that ILO's response has been lacking to support the country's rapid economic growth, including that in the rural economy.

In the Lao People's Democratic Republic, the HLE found that past projects implemented to promote DWRE generally responded to the country's graduation from its LDC status as well as population trends (the latter involving youth-related activities). In addition, the design of the recently initiated Rural Employment Project includes some references to other emerging trends, including Green Skills, and Digitalization.

Response to COVID-19

With the advent of the COVID-19 pandemic, the ILO's response encompassed a range of actions that included technical and advisory support, capacity building of constituents and beneficiaries, advocacy, development of tools, resources, strategies, and action plans for its social partners at both the immediate crisis stage as well as the recovery stage of the pandemic. Overall, the HLE found that the ILO showed flexibility in addressing various emergent needs of its social partners. This support was extended by the ILO to assess the effects of the COVID-19 pandemic on the labour market and especially on vulnerable groups. Additionally, the ILO developed research and advocacy briefs to emphasize the disproportionate impacts of COVID-19 on women and vulnerable groups. These briefs covered various issues, including the care economy, violence and harassment, and the inclusion of diverse groups in COVID-19 mitigation efforts. In short, the ILO's initiatives aimed to mitigate the negative effects of the COVID-19 pandemic on employment, promote sustainable recovery, ensure OSH, and provide support for vulnerable populations and sectors heavily impacted by the crisis. The survey found that 66 per cent of constituents considered the alignment of ILO's response to COVID-19 with their needs and priorities to be highly satisfactory to satisfactory.

The resources allocated to mitigate the pandemic's effects on women workers and vulnerable groups at the country level were primarily directed via existing programmes, such as OSH and labour standards compliance projects, rather than through new initiatives. The HLE noted that existing DC projects, especially small and on-off projects, found it more challenging to pivot towards elaborate actions aimed at mitigating the effects of the COVID-19 pandemic and generally did what they could within their scope. This generally involved trainings on OSH incorporating COVID-19 guidelines and measures, distribution of personal protective equipment (PPE) to beneficiaries to mitigate the risk of contagion, trainings for social partners on COVID-19 prevention protocols, and development of OSH guidelines, handbooks and manuals for sectors, including EIIP (Mozambique), cotton (Pakistan), tourism (Bolivia), and natural stone (India), etc.

A notable exception to the above-mentioned trend that enabled the ILO to play a more direct role towards the COVID-19 recovery was in the form of EIIPs – long used by the ILO as instruments to support the incomes and livelihoods of vulnerable rural populations in response to crises, including natural disasters and conflict. For instance, by undertaking assessments aimed at increasing the capacity of government-funded Public Works Programme in Uzbekistan, the programme was successful in doubling the number of people employed. In addition to expanding existing DC projects, the ILO also launched and implemented new EIIPs in the Asia and Pacific region (Myanmar, Nepal and Timor-Leste) as specific responses to COVID-19.

COHERENCE

KEY FINDING 3

The 2011 <u>ILO strategy on DWRE</u> has neither been fully implemented nor monitored or evaluated since its formulation. Implementation arrangements outlined in the strategy are not instituted.

KEY FINDING 4

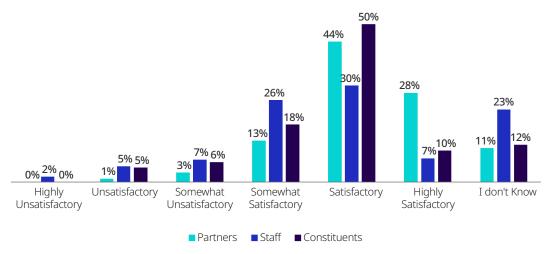
Limiting DWRE to a stand-alone outcome/output obscures the ILO's collective gains in the rural economy, as 76 per cent of its work in the rural economy was undertaken under outputs not related to DWRE. Lack of an Organization-wide theory of change on promoting DWRE, combined with the lack of effective collaboration mechanisms across ILO departments, prevented systemic integration.

KEY FINDING 5

Despite the comparative advantage of the ILO's mandate, actions on promoting DWRE primarily focused primarily on employment promotion and social dialogue, while social protection was marginalized. Although interventions appeared well grounded in international labour standards, they were rarely promoted. Ratification of DWRE-related technical Conventions is limited in many countries, leaving workers in the rural economy not covered by these instruments.

The survey with ILO staff, constituents and partners revealed that overall, **56 per cent of all respondents found the coherence of ILO actions on promoting DWRE to be satisfactory or highly satisfactory.** A significantly higher proportion of partners (72 per cent) followed by constituents (60 per cent) found the coherence of ILO's actions on promoting DWRE to be satisfactory or highly satisfactory. **The lower rating is driven primarily by responses from the ILO staff, with only 37 per cent positive ratings for the coherence of ILO's actions on promoting DWRE.** The following figure provides a breakdown of the overall ratings on coherence by the three different respondent types.

FIGURE 6.RATINGS ON THE COHERENCE OF ILO ACTIONS ON PROMOTING DWRE ACROSS SURVEYED STAKEHOLDERS



Source: Survey of the ILO staff (N=62), constituents (N=61), and partners (N=36) conducted as part of the HLE.

Articulation of ILO's work with priorities set out from the 2011 Strategy to 2019 Centenary declaration

As outlined in the Background Section, the Conclusions from the 97th Session of the ILC in 2008 called on the ILO to engage more decisively in rural areas in a more integrated manner. The 310th Session of the GB in March 2011 culminated in the development of a *Strategy on Unleashing Rural Development* through Productive Employment and Decent Work.

ALIGNMENT WITH PRIORITIES OF 2011 STRATEGY

While focused on productive employment, the 2011 Strategy also encompasses all four Strategic Pillars of Decent Work, including ILS, Social Protection, Employment, and Social Dialogue and Tripartism. In addition, the 2011 Strategy recognizes the multi-faceted and interconnected nature of decent work deficits in the rural economy and called for integrated approaches combining multiple technical areas, types of work, intervention levels, and internal and external actors. The 2011 Strategy identified the following key technical areas that had significant intersections and linkages with the ILO's work on promoting Decent Work in the rural areas and driving rural development: a) sustainable enterprises; b) skills development; c) EIIPs; d) social protection; e) OSH and working conditions; f) ILS; g) social dialogue and strengthening employers' and workers' organizations; and h) youth and women. An analysis of the CPOs revealed that all of the technical areas mentioned in the 2011 Strategy have been addressed by DWCPs and DWRE projects to varying degrees. The relative focus on these areas differed from country to country, and their application also depended on the nature of the particular projects under which they were implemented. However, ILS has been the least addressed area by these programmes. Furthermore, there were no references in the available project documentation and evaluations to the 2011 strategy, an indication of the overall impression during this evaluation that the 2011 ILO Strategy⁵⁹ has moved to the background.

In a similar vein, the 2011 Strategy also underscored the importance of not substituting rural development for other important ILO work areas (such as informality, green jobs and agriculture) and to expand from agricultural productivity and modernization to non-farm activities. Given that the shares of both non-farm employment and incomes have grown to account for roughly half of the total rural employment and incomes, respectively, ⁶⁰ the 2011 Strategy's call to diversify actions was prudent and timely. In that regard, the HLE found that, in addition to construction, the ILO's actions towards promoting DWRE have targeted various types of non-farm activities such as tourism, ⁶¹ fisheries, ⁶² forestry, ⁶³ gypsum ⁶⁴ and natural stone mining, ⁶⁵ and handicrafts, ⁶⁶ among others. The 2011 Strategy also provided direction on the types of work that the ILO's actions on promoting Decent Work in the rural economy should incorporate, namely, capacity building, knowledge building and sharing, technical cooperation, and policy advice and advocacy. The HLE found that the ILO's actions towards promoting DWRE have encompassed all of the different typologies of work in alignment with the 2011 Strategy.

However, the current management arrangements of DWRE at ILO HQ are not well aligned with the guidance provided by the 2011 Strategy. At HQ, SECTOR has been the custodian for P&B Outcome 5 / Output 3.2, responsible for leading the coordination of ILO actions on promoting DWRE.

⁵⁹ GB.310/ESP/1

⁶⁰ UN DESA, Policy Brief No. 120.

⁶¹ BOL109 and ECU153 as per ILO's Decent Work Results Dashboard for the 2020–21 biennium

⁶² LKA107 as per ILO's Decent Work Results Dashboard for the 2018–19 biennium

⁶³ URY156 as per ILO's Decent Work Results Dashboard for the 2016–17 biennium

⁶⁴ BRA101 as per ILO's Decent Work Results Dashboard for the 2020–21 biennium

⁶⁵ IND101 as per ILO's Decent Work Results Dashboard for the 2020–21 biennium

⁶⁶ MDA130 as per ILO's Decent Work Results Dashboard for the 2020–21 biennium

However, the HLE found that SECTOR being responsible for organizing sectoral tripartite meetings, lacks the mandate and technical capacity to lead this highly specialized programme area. In fact, while the 2011 Strategy emphasized topics such as Enterprises, FPRW and Social Protection, none of these areas come within the ambit of SECTOR. This lack of alignment between SECTOR's capacity and mandate with the needs of DWRE has adversely affected the strategic direction available to DWRE programming at all levels, as elaborated in subsequent sections.



The 2011 Strategy also called on the ILO to explicitly and systematically integrate rural perspectives into the work of the ILO at various levels, including HQ, field offices, ITCILO units, high-level ILO management, and constituents.

Considering the fact that all programme outcomes of the P&B have some activities on decent work in the rural areas, it can be argued that rural perspectives have been integrated into ILO's work at various levels, as advised in the 2011 Strategy. However, this integration has been neither intentional nor systematic. Instead, the **key decent work deficits in rural areas, such as high incidences of poverty, inequalities, informality and child labour, etc., as well as their potential to contribute to economic growth make them a natural target for ILO's programming, resulting in the promotion of DWRE as a transversal topic.**

Furthermore, a key lesson learned from the review of ILO's work on the rural economy from the 1970s and 1980s highlighted the need for ILO-wide responsibility coupled with mechanisms to foster collaboration and coordination among different ILO units. Moreover, the 2011 Strategy also called for the institution of a team to shoulder central tasks such as maintaining a vision and general direction, coordinating actions and delivery across the ILO, facilitating the delivery, dissemination, and advocacy of specific products and approaches. In addition, the 2011 Strategy proposed working in thematic clusters in order to focus and prompt work on specific themes and achieve synergies between various ILO units. However, the HLE found that this approach has not been instituted at the ILO since the development of the 2011 Strategy.

Finally, the 2011 Strategy itself does not enjoy frequent mention in programme and project planning documents. Similarly, most staff and country-level constituents are also unaware of the availability of these guidance documents. The findings from the survey reflect this as 29 per cent of ILO staff respondents did not know the extent to which ILO's actions on promoting DWRE aligned with the 2011 Strategy. In addition, the HLE found that the coherence of ongoing ILO initiatives on promoting DWRE with the 2011 Strategy has been possible due to the alignment of relevant P&B outcomes and outputs to the 2011 Strategy. Moreover, since the Strategy provided broad directions, encompassing numerous facets of DWRE, the likelihood of projects and programmes aligning themselves with the Strategy can sometimes happen coincidentally. Lastly, the HLE found that the ILO's 2011 Strategy on DWRE, although broad in scope, remained a static document that has never been reviewed despite considerable changes and emerging trends globally. In fact, implementation of the 2011 Strategy has not been monitored or evaluated since its formulation. As such, the ILO lacks an organizational-level ToC to guide its work on promoting DWRE which is undertaken transversally throughout the Organization.

ALIGNMENT WITH 2019 CENTENARY DECLARATION

Work on promoting DWRE has also been coherent with the strategic direction provided by the 2019 ILO Centenary Declaration. Particular elements of the Centenary Declaration found in the DWRE projects include: the role of private sector as a principal source of economic growth and job creation; support to public sector for the provision of quality public services; skills, freedom of association and right to collective bargaining; eradication of forced and child labour; social dialogue; safe and healthy working conditions; transition to the formal economy; links to domestic and global supply chains; and focus on women and youth. On the other hand, critical elements of the Centenary Declaration that reflect only marginally in ILO's DWRE programming include: just transition, climate change, and inclusion of persons with disabilities.

Programme synergies and complementarities across global, regional and CPO levels

The ILO's P&B framework measures progress on results achieved on indicators pertaining to promoting DWRE previously under Outcome 5 (2016–19 biennia) and currently through Output 3.2 (from 2020 onwards), which are designed to serve as the primary P&B outcomes/outputs pertaining to DWRE. A review of the project documents and evaluation reports for selected interventions linked to Outcome 5 and Output 3.2 revealed that the majority of the projects explicitly align with the objectives of P&B Outcome 5 or Output 3.2 and reference them.

However, as mentioned above and demonstrated through the CPO Analysis in section 2.5, actions and interventions linked directly to Outcome 5/Output 3.2 comprise less than one-quarter (24 per cent) of the overall actions and interventions involving components of the rural economy. Over three-quarters (76 per cent) of such actions are directly linked to other Outcomes/ Outputs, primarily: Sustainable Enterprises, Formalization, Protection at Work, Skills, and EIIPs. A classic example of this was seen in Morocco, where considerable work has been done since 2016 for the promotion of DWRE in the areas of FPRW in the agriculture sector,⁶⁷ promotion of Decent Work in Agribusiness, 68 and migrant women's financial empowerment through small agribusiness, 69 but none of this work has been reported against Outcome5/Output 3.2. Moreover, through the regional project, "Advancing the Decent Work Agenda in North-Africa",70 the ILO (since 2018) has been providing crucial support to Morocco's Government in the formulation, evaluation and updating of the successive national employment strategies (first 2015-2025, now 2025-2035 under preparation) and their regional transpositions. It is anticipated that the promotion of DWRE will be integrated into the National Employment Strategy, although the precise practical modalities are yet to be defined in the framework. Similarly, the transformational impact achieved towards the elimination of child labour in the cotton value chain in Uzbekistan, elaborated in the Effectiveness section, has also not been reported in Outcome 5/Output 3.2.

Given the transversal nature of the ILO's work in the rural economy and its spread across the multiple outcomes/outputs in the P&Bs combined with the lack of a coordinating mechanism as detailed in the Efficiency section, the HLE found the synergies and complementarities of the ILO's work to be lacking. The survey findings also echoed this as only 38 per cent of the ILO staff surveyed rated both the coherence between HQ and country-level initiatives as well as the synergies and complementarities between other P&B outcomes to be highly satisfactory to satisfactory.

Furthermore, the HLE noted that only a handful of projects/programmes have been implemented at global or regional levels. These HLE found that the majority of such projects primarily involve knowledge generation and dissemination, and capacity building, primarily towards promoting

⁶⁷ MAR/16/01/USA under MAR126

⁶⁸ MAR/20/50/DEU under MAR102

⁶⁹ MAR/21/01/ICM under MAR102

⁷⁰ RAF/18/50/SWE and GLO/21/61/SWE

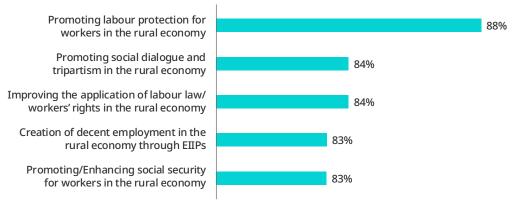
Decent Work in global supply chains.⁷¹ In addition, some of these global and/or regional projects are being implemented in partnership with other international agencies and actors. For instance, the ILO is also partnering with IFAD, Ustadi, and Agro-PME on the implementation of the project JOY (Jobs Open to Youth): Boosting Rural Youth Employment Opportunities through Integrated Agribusiness Hubs in Cameroon and Kenya, which is aimed at boosting rural youth empowerment and decent employment opportunities in Kenya and Cameroon through the provision of innovative financial and non-financial services.⁷² Whereas, the *Decent Work in Nature-based Solutions* is a joint global biennia report series in partnership with UNEP and the International Union for Conservation of Nature (IUCN) aimed to fill knowledge and advocacy gaps on how transitioning to a green economy affects the world of work.⁷³

External synergies and partnerships with international agencies and ILO's comparative advantage

There is agreement among constituents and stakeholders that in the crowded landscape in rural employment, ILO's comparative advantage is its normative mandate, its promotion of the Decent Work Agenda, the focus on ILS, tripartism and the use of social dialogue, and statistics; as well as its engagement on OSH and child labour in agriculture. Furthermore, its close linkages with the ministries of labour make ILO an ideal partner for donors and governments, especially in the areas of skills, employment, migration, and statistics; as well as its expertise on policy and technical matters related to the Decent Work.

The following figure presents the findings of the survey administered to partners on ILO's comparative advantage relative to its peer organizations. Approximately 89 per cent of partners surveyed agreed or strongly agreed that the ILO, in comparison to its peer organizations, possesses a distinct advantage in promoting labour protection for workers in the rural economy. Likewise, the survey also revealed that 84 per cent of the partners surveyed considered the ILO possesses a comparative advantage in the promotion of social dialogue and tripartism as well as improving the application of labour law/workers' rights in the rural economy. The creation of decent employment in the rural economy through EIIPs and promoting social security for rural workers closely followed with 83 per cent of the respondents agreeing or strongly agreeing that these are areas where the ILO possesses a comparative advantage relative to its peers.

FIGURE 7. PERCENTAGE OF SURVEYED PARTNERS AGREEING OR STRONGLY AGREEING WITH ILO'S COMPARATIVE ADVANTAGE IN SELECTED AREAS



Source: Survey of the partners (N=36) conducted as part of the HLE.

⁷¹ Decent Work in Global Supply Chains (GLO/15/11/NET); Sustainable Supply Chains to Build Forward Better (GLO/20/40/EUR), Programme for Sustainability and Standards in Global Supply Chains (RAS/14/03/FRG)

⁷² GLO/21/38/PRO

⁷³ GLO/22/07/UNP

Building on its comparative advantages, the ILO was found to have partnered with other UN specialized agencies that work in the area of rural development. Prime among these are the partnerships with the FAO and IFAD. Partnership arrangements are laid down in cooperation agreements that typically take the form of Memorandums of Understanding (MOUs) or similar non-binding agreements. These instruments vary in substance and detail. Some are toplevel generic⁷⁴ while others are purely administrative.⁷⁵ Most of them do not clearly articulate complementarity, define clear roles and responsibilities, and modalities for continued evaluation. An example of a highly substantive and detailed collaborative arrangement is a new draft Supplementary Arrangement currently being finalized between ILO and FAO to replace the 2004 ILO-FAO MOU, which clearly sets out the complementarity of the two agencies and provides a great deal of detail on thematic areas of collaboration, related modalities and resource mobilization, which may help the respective agencies to continue to engage strategically at global level, produce effective tools and develop more country-level activities on DWRE. The Decent Work for Equitable Food Systems Coalition, co-hosted by IFAD, ILO and CARE International is a new initiative that offers policy advice to support policies and interventions targeting food systems that integrate employment and labour issues and technical support to generate quality employment and entrepreneurship opportunities, and the promotion of workers' rights. The Coalition pursues a systems approach by bringing together ministries of labour, agriculture, and other relevant government institutions, including local governments, employers' and workers' organizations, and non-state actors to advance decent work in food systems.⁷⁶

At the country level, ILO has been reasonably successful translating partnership engagement by undertaking joint action with FAO, IFAD, UNDP, UNEP, UNICEF, UN WOMEN, The World Bank Group and the African Development Bank (AFDB), and various partners in projects funded under the UN Multi-Partner Trust Fund Office (UNMPTF) resulting in 53 joint interventions, for a total of approximately US\$41.6 million during 2016–23, as detailed in the table below.

TABLE 11. RELEVANT PROJECTS AND FUNDING BY PARTNER AGENCIES, 2016–23

PARTNER AGENCY	NO. OF PROJECTS RELEVANT TO DWRE	TOTAL US\$
FAO	6	745 000
IFAD	8	10 400 000
UNDP	2	1 000 000
UNEP	2	200 000
UNICEF	7	12 700 000
UN WOMEN	1	760 000
World Bank	4	7 500 000
AFDB	6	3 900 000
UNMPTF	17	4 445 000
Total	53	41 650 000

Source: ILO DC Dashboard 2016–2023.

However, some interviews also revealed that the ILO was sometimes perceived as too reluctant to engage with stakeholders other than its constituents, and slow to take positions because of its tripartite decision structure. Both ILO staff and staff in partners' organizations noted the lack of resources (time, staff, money) to fully participate, as well as the lack of engagement of senior and executive management to sustain partnerships.

⁷⁴ FAO 2004, IFAD 1978, UNEP 1977, UN-Habitat 1983, UNICEF 1997. The UN Women 2011 MOU is more developed and sets out substantive areas that can be relevant to DWRE cooperation.

⁷⁵ World Bank Group 2016, African Development Bank 1977.

⁷⁶ The Coalition was founded in 2023 and collaborative arrangements are specified in a MOU between the partners. Since it is a recent initiative, this evaluation did not report any findings.



Under the UNMPTF, ILO was an able partner with other UN system partners in 17 projects relevant to DWRE for a total of US\$23,441,378 during 2016–23. Many of these projects involved implementation with multiple partners covering a wide array of UN entities: FAO, International Organization for Migration (IOM), Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights (OHCHR), UNCDF, United Nations Conference on Trade and Development (UNCTAD), UNDP, UNESCO, UN-HABITAT, UNICEF, United Nations Industrial Development Organization (UNIDO), United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA), United Nations Office for Project Services (UNOPS), UN Women, and World Food Programme (WFP).⁷⁷

EFFECTIVENESS

KEY FINDING 6

Multipronged integrated support yielded the most significant results, especially when targeting the creation of an enabling environment, leveraging market forces and fostering constituent ownership. However, most of the ILO's initiatives on promoting DWRE were implemented at pilot scales in silos, without instituting means for further replication and upscaling.

.....

KEY FINDING 7

Gender equality was effectively mainstreamed, but interventions did not always succeed in promoting it. Young people were supported by capacity-building and linkages to job markets. While marginalized groups such as refugees, migrants and indigenous communities benefited from programming, disability inclusion was mostly overlooked.

The HLE found that some of the more prominent activities of the ILO in the rural economy have had FPRW as an entry point and had a supply chain link, for example, cotton, coffee, cocoa, etc. However, despite the presence of a wide array of employment sources and decent work deficits in the rural economy, the HLE observed that ILO's DWRE portfolio has mostly been concentrated in a handful of sectors, including agriculture, aquaculture, forestry, tourism and construction.

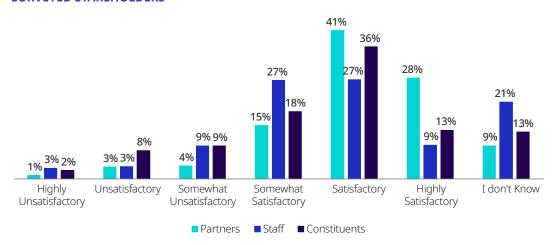
Overall, the HLE found that most of the ILO's work on promoting DWRE was undertaken on a smaller scale, as indicated above. When used, multi-pronged and well-integrated approaches combining different areas of work and means of actions yielded the most substantial results. For example, such an approach was effectively utilized in Malawi where ILO combined knowledge generation, tripartism and capacity building by undertaking a legislative gap analysis and diagnostic studies of the tea sector to enable tripartite constituents and partners to identify decent work deficits in Malawi's tea sector and provide recommendations for action, strengthening capacities of labour inspectors, and integrate ILO-developed OSH guidelines through the Work Improvement in Neighbourhood Development (WIND) tool. Consequently, an agreement was signed between ILO and the Tea Association of Malawi (TAML) in May 2019 which improved the relationship between plantation workers and employers' organizations on tea plantations. Apart from the tea sector, the ILO supported the efforts of the Government of Malawi in the fight against modern slavery and child labour within the tobacco sector by addressing decent work deficits with tripartite partners and improving workers' access to rights. Similarly, in the Lao People's Democratic Republic, the small-scale construction of an irrigation channel led to improved water availability for different uses. It increased the production of higher yielding rice varieties, which improved food security, and enabled the introduction of market-oriented passion fruit production resulting in income generation. This activity also brought community members together for

⁷⁷ Another example of joint activities is the high-level virtual event the Global Solutions Forum (GSF) (2–3 November 2021) to mobilize global action and highlight concrete solutions to eradicate child labour in agriculture. This Forum was convened by FAO, in close collaboration with ILO and in partnership with the International Partnership for Cooperation on Child Labour in Agriculture (IPCCLA) and the Alliance 8.7.

dialogue and decision making on priority needs assessment, such as the donation of land for the irrigation channel, and the establishment of a water users' association. In Indonesia, ILO efforts empowered workers to advocate for their rights and better working conditions through social dialogue resulting in workers' organizations and the Palm Oil Association (employers) signing a joint declaration of cooperation.

The survey with ILO staff, constituents and partners revealed that overall, **51 per cent of all respondents found the effectiveness of ILO actions on promoting DWRE to be satisfactory or highly satisfactory.** Both partners (68 per cent) and constituents (50 per cent) found the effectiveness of ILO's actions on promoting DWRE to be satisfactory or highly satisfactory. In contrast, only 36 per cent of ILO staff rated the coherence of ILO's actions on promoting DWRE to be highly satisfactory or satisfactory. However, the HLE noted that a significant proportion of ILO staff respondents (21 per cent) indicated that they did not know the extent to which the ILO's actions on promoting DWRE had been effective. The following figure provides a breakdown of the overall ratings on effectiveness by the three different respondent types.

FIGURE 8. RATINGS ON THE EFFECTIVENESS OF ILO ACTIONS ON PROMOTING DWRE ACROSS SURVEYED STAKEHOLDERS



Source: Survey of the ILO staff (N=62), constituents (N=61), and partners (N=36) conducted as part of the HLE.

Compared to their overall effectiveness rating (36 per cent), a higher proportion of the ILO staff rated the effectiveness of ILO actions pertaining to the creation of decent employment in the rural economy through EIIPs (46 per cent), integration of women, youth and other vulnerable groups in DWRE programming (45 per cent), promoting labour protection for rural workers (43 per cent) and supporting enterprise development (43 per cent) to be satisfactory or highly satisfactory. Integration of women, youth and other vulnerable groups in DWRE programming was also rated as satisfactory or highly satisfactory by a significantly greater proportion of constituents (61 per cent) compared to the overall effectiveness rating (49 per cent). However, compared to ILO staff (46 per cent), only 36 per cent of constituents rated the effectiveness of ILO's actions pertaining to decent employment creation through EIIPs to be satisfactory or highly satisfactory, indicating a gap in how the ILO and constituents perceive this area of work.

Moreover, 58 per cent of constituents rated the effectiveness of ILO's actions on assistance in ratifying and implementing relevant ILS to be satisfactory or highly satisfactory. In addition, 51 per cent of constituents rated the effectiveness of ILO's actions on promoting social dialogue and tripartism in the rural economy to be satisfactory or highly satisfactory.

Progress on P&B outcomes

Analysis of the P&B frameworks 2016–2023 revealed significant fluctuation in target setting against the indicators assigned to DWRE. As shown in Table 12, the total number of Member States planned to be assisted in P&B 2018–19 were 46, an increase of 70 per cent from the previous P&B 2016–17. This upward adjustment in targets was likely a result of planning decision based on the high achievement for 2016–17. However, there is no evidence that the increase in targets was accompanied by any resource mobilization or other support measures to meet these targets.



Subsequently, as only 63 per cent of the 46 targets were met in 2018–19, the number of targets for the next biennium 2020–21 were significantly reduced by 67 per cent (15 vs. 46 targets). This is likely to be the reason for over-achievement of targets by 160 per cent.

However, despite this, the targets for the P&B 2022–23 remained the same as the previous biennium; 15 Member States.

TABLE 12. P&B TARGETS AGAINST INDICATORS (DWRE), 2016-21

P&B YEAR	TARGETED NO. OF MEMBER STATES	PERCENTAGE CHANGE FROM PREVIOUS P&B (IN TARGETED NO. OF MEMBER STATES)	PERCENTAGE ACHIEVEMENT AGAINST TOTAL NO. OF TARGETS
2016–17 (Outcome 5)	27	n/a	96%
2018–19 (Outcome 5)	46	+70%	63%
2020–21 (Output 3.2)	15	-67%	160%
2022–23 (Output 3.2)	15	0%	-

n/a = not applicable. -= Results will be available at the end of 2023.

Source: Programme Implementation Reports 2016–17; 2018–19; 2020–21; and P&B 2022–23.

At the level of the indicator, the HLE found that the ILO's progress for indicators pertaining to promoting DWRE has been mixed. In the 2016–17 biennium, while the ILO overachieved results for Indicator 5.1 (180 per cent), targets for the other two indicators, 5.2 and 5.3 were achieved at 80 per cent and 75 per cent, respectively.

In the subsequent biennium (2018–19), none of the targets for the three indicators were met. In fact, with only 36 per cent of the target result met for indicator 5.3 – mechanisms for consultation and social dialogue in the rural economy, achievement was significantly limited. Furthermore, only 75 per cent of the targets for indicator 5.2 and 70 per cent for indicator 5.3 were met.

Under the new results framework operationalized in 2020, where only one indicator pertaining to the promotion of DWRE was set, against a target of 15 measures for decent work in rural areas, the ILO achieved a total of 24 results (160 per cent) in the 2020–21 biennium, despite project-level progress observed to have declined due to COVID-19. As mentioned above, this high achievement was likely to be a result of low target setting.

TABLE 13. PROGRESS ON P&B INDICATORS

YEAR	INDICATOR	TARGET (MS)	ACHIEVED	% ACHIEVEMENT
2016-17	5.1: Member States that have taken concrete steps to integrate decent work into rural development policies and strategies	5	9	180%
	5.2: Member States in which constituents have set up targeted programmes that contribute to decent work and productive employment in rural areas	10	8	80%
	5.3: Member States that have enhanced their knowledge base, analytical capacity and statistics on decent work in the rural economy	12	9	75%
2018-19	5.1: Strategies for employment and decent work in rural areas	12	9	75%
	5.2: Concrete steps to promote employment and decent work in rural areas	23	16	70%
	5.3: Mechanisms for consultation and social dialogue in the rural economy	11	4	36%
2020-21	3.2.1: Number of Member States with measures for decent work in rural areas.	15	24	160%

Source: Programme Implementation Reports 2016–17; 2018–19; 2020–21.

The following table provides a regional breakdown of the results (DW Results thereafter) achieved against Outcome 5 (2016–19 biennia) and Output 3.2 (2020–21 biennium) as reported on the ILO DW Results Dashboard between 2016 and 2021. Overall, Africa represented the largest share of DW Results over the three biennia, with 34 per cent, followed by the Americas (29 per cent) and closely followed by the Asia and the Pacific Region (28 per cent). The regional breakdown over the three biennia revealed a decreasing trend in the share of DW Results achieved in the Asia and Pacific region per biennium, from 31 per cent in 2016–17 and 2018–19 biennia to 21 per cent in 2020–21 biennium. In comparison, the share of DW Results achieved in Africa peaked in the 2018–19 biennium (38 per cent) before decreasing to 33 per cent in the 2020–21 biennium. The share of DW Results achieved in the Americas also declined since the 2016–17 biennium. The Arab States have seen consistent but marginal increases in their share of total DW Results over the three biennia.

TABLE 14. REGIONAL DISTRIBUTION OF DW RESULTS, 2016–2021

REGION	2016-17	PERCENT	2018-19	PERCENT	2020-21	PERCENT	TOTAL	PERCENT
Africa	8	31%	11	38%	8	33%	27	34%
Americas	9	35%	7	24%	7	29%	23	29%
Arab States	1	04%	2	07%	2	08%	5	6%
Asia and the Pacific	8	31%	9	31%	5	21%	22	28%
Europe and Central Asia	n/a				2	08%	2	3%
Grand total	26	_	29	_	24	-	79	100%

n/a = not applicable. – = nil. Source: DW Results Dashboard 2016–21.

It is likely that the Americas region has been significantly utilizing funding sources other than XBDC, since despite the fact that only 6 per cent of the total DC projects (figure 3) have been implemented in the Americas region and that the region has represented just 5 per cent of the overall share of expenditure since 2016 (table 9), they represent the second largest share of total DW Results achieved during the evaluation period (29 per cent).

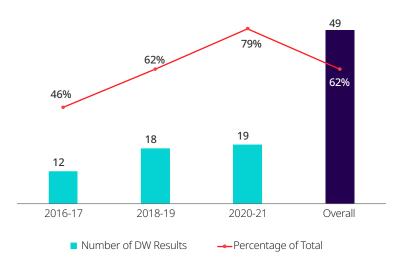
The following subsections provide an in-depth assessment of the major areas of work and means of actions employed by the ILO, as identified in the P&B indicators, to promote DWRE.

Achievement on normative mandate and cross-cutting issues

As mentioned earlier, ILO's comparative advantage lies in its normative mandate and tripartite structure, and technical knowledge to influence policy and build capacities to promote the Decent Work Agenda, including Employment Promotion, Social Dialogue and Tripartism, Social Protection, and ILS.

The HLE found that virtually every DW Result achieved between 2016 and 2021 involved the provision of TA, such as support to policy development and social dialogue, etc., in one form or another. Capacity building also featured prominently in the ILO's actions and interventions on promoting DWRE. Furthermore, of the 79 DW Results, capacity building in various forms was found in 49 Results (62 per cent). The analysis of DW Results showed that the use of capacity-building actions has increased over time, with 12 Results (46 per cent) in 2016–17, 18 Results (62 per cent) in 2018–19, and 19 Results (79 per cent) involving capacity-building work in 2020–21 as shown in the figure below.

FIGURE 9. PREVALENCE OF CAPACITY BUILDING IN DW RESULTS ACHIEVED ACROSS THE BIENNIA



Source: DW Results Dashboard 2016–21.

TA work and capacity building were provided by the implementation of specific components of ILO-led projects and programmes to support programmes and projects led by constituents and development sector partners. Inputs were made into the development of national and subnational strategies, policies, action plans, projects, knowledge generation and advocacy, and social dialogue, although Social Protection factored only marginally in DWRE programming. A further review of the 79 DW Results achieved during the evaluation period revealed that the majority of TA promoting DWRE concerned projects involving interlinked

areas, including OSH, labour inspection, child labour, EIIPs, Skills and TVET, and enterprise and value chain development predominantly in agriculture and tourism. Nevertheless, the ILO has produced some interesting DWRE contributions, such as an <u>e-learning module on social protection and a joint paper with FAO on this topic.</u>

SUPPORT TO GOVERNMENTS

Support to governments was provided in the context of strategy development (National Rural Employment Strategy in the Lao People's Democratic Republic,⁷⁸ national strategy for vocational training in the Central African Republic⁷⁹), policy implementation and programme development (rural community tourism in Bolivia,⁸⁰ national employment programme in Nepal,⁸¹ digital rural extension model in Mexico⁸², extending public sector Decent Work services to rural areas in Paraguay⁸³ and integrated programme proposal for palm oil sector in Ghana⁸⁴), improved working conditions (Cote d'Ivoire⁸⁵), labour inspection (Indonesia,⁸⁶ Jordan,⁸⁷ Malawi⁸⁸), hazardous child labour (Mali⁸⁹), among others.



The HLE noted that in some instances, ILO's support towards the development and design of programmes also led to their subsequent implementation.

For instance, in Paraguay, ⁹⁰ the ILO prepared a detailed technical proposal for the operation of the Rural Office for the General Directorate of Employment of the Ministry of Labour, Employment and Social Security, which subsequently led to the establishment of the rural employment office in the San Pedro Department. ⁹¹ Crucially, in Cameroon, the ILO provided significant contribution to the development of a pilot project proposal for moral rearmament and socio-professional integration of young people through the creation of decent jobs via the development of rice value chains and the maintenance of rural infrastructure, which was adopted by the Ministry of Youth and Civic Education (MINJEC) as part of projects slated for implementation to operationalize Recovery and the Consolidation of Peace strategy. ⁹² Similarly, the ILO supported the design and formulation of four projects on the development of agribusiness and logistics clusters and other initiatives related to tourism development in Costa Rica, which were subsequently approved by the Rural Development Institute (INDER) and the Board of Port Administration and Economic Development of the Atlantic Coast of Costa Rica (JAPDEVA). ⁹³

⁷⁸ LAO176 in the 2018–19 biennium

⁷⁹ CAO904 in the 2018–19 biennium

⁸⁰ BOL109 in the 2018–19 biennium

⁸¹ NPL 128 in the 2018–19 biennium

⁸² MEX107 in the 2021–22 biennium

⁸³ PRY132 in the 2017–17 biennium

⁸⁴ GHA107 in the 2016–17 biennium

⁸⁵ CIV904 in the 2018–19 biennium

⁸⁶ IDN127 in the 2020–21 biennium 87 IOR130 in the 2020–21 biennium

⁸⁸ MWI178 in the 2018–19 biennium

⁸⁹ MLI827 in the 2018–19 biennium

⁹⁰ PRY132 in the 2017–17 biennium

⁹¹ ILO, <u>Preparing the future of work we want in the Americas through social dialogue. Report of the Director-General</u>, 19th American Regional Meeting, Panama, 2–5 October 2018.

⁹² CMR111 in the 2018–19 biennium

⁹³ CRI136 in the 2020-21 biennium

The ILO has also leveraged its comparative advantage on labour statistics to provide TA and capacity building to government agencies to support the National Labour Force Surveys (LFSs) in the Lao People's Democratic Republic,94 Nepal,95 and Pakistan.96 These were found to have led to instances of evidence-based design of employment-focused policies and programmes. In the Lao People's Democratic Republic, the LFS also informed the development of the National Rural Employment Strategy 2021. Whereas, in Nepal, LFS data were used as a basis for the development of the Prime Minister's National Employment Programme (PMEP), 2019-2023. At global level, the ILO statistical database, ILOSTAT, was expanded to include indicators disaggregated by rural and urban areas. As much as 97 per cent of the over 8,500 labour force survey micro-datasets processed by the ILO now include disaggregation by rural/urban areas. Furthermore, a document on rural-urban labour statistics was presented to the 20th International Conference of Labour Statisticians.



The capacity of government staff was built through TA, training and awareness raising. This capacity building mostly focused on labour programme development and implementation in agriculture, tourism, and employment-intensive infrastructure support, focusing on integrating OSH and labour inspection.

Major examples were seen in Cote d'Ivoire,⁹⁷ India,⁹⁸ Indonesia,⁹⁹ Jordan,¹⁰⁰ Malawi,¹⁰¹ Mali,¹⁰² Nepal,¹⁰³ Pakistan,¹⁰⁴ South Africa,¹⁰⁵ Zimbabwe.¹⁰⁶ In India, the ILO supported the development of an OSH visual flipbook for the State Labour Department of Rajasthan for raising awareness on good practices among representatives of employers' and workers' organizations. In Indonesia, ILO built the capacity of 25 national and provincial labour inspectors on strategic compliance planning. This led to 131 inspections conducted based on provincial plans developed in the workshop. In South Africa, to support the Government-developed and adopted infrastructure-led Economic Reconstruction and Recovery Plan aimed at reducing the socio-economic impact of the COVID-19 pandemic, the ILO helped develop an online platform for technical, managerial, and business training related to employment-intensive infrastructure works, incorporating social safeguards including OSH measures and COVID-19 prevention. In some projects, government staff were also trained in extension services and community outreach, for example, in providing production and marketing support to coffee and passion fruit producers in the Lao People's Democratic Republic.¹⁰⁷ In Mali, the Ministry of Agriculture integrated the manuals on hazardous child labour in agriculture into the curricula of the Agricultural Learning Centres (CAA).

⁹⁴ LAO900 in the 2016–17 biennium

⁹⁵ NPL 128 in the 2018–19 biennium

⁹⁶ PAK151 in the 2018–19 biennium

⁹⁷ CIV904 in the 2018-19 biennium

⁹⁸ IND101 in the 2020-2021 biennium

⁹⁹ IDN127 in the 2018–19 biennium 100 JOR130 in the 2020-21 biennium

¹⁰¹ MWI178 in the 2018-19 biennium 102 MLI827 in the 2018-19 biennium

¹⁰³ NPL128 in the 2016-17 biennium

¹⁰⁴ PAK900 in the 2018-19 biennium

¹⁰⁵ ZAF103 in the 2020-21 biennium

¹⁰⁶ ZWE101 in the 2020-21 biennium

¹⁰⁷ LAO/16/01/CHE

In addition, in promoting DWRE, the ILO supported Employment Intensive Infrastructure Projects (EIIPs), which were found to have been implemented on a larger scale than other key intervention areas, namely policy support and agriculture, and tourism development. For instance, in India, ¹⁰⁸ the ILO supported the Government of India's flagship Mahatma Gandhi National Rural Employment Guarantee Scheme (MGNREGS) in training 773 master trainers from all 29 States and 5,446 young rural men and women in basic concepts of civil engineering to involve them in planning, layouts, measurements, and supervision of MGNREGS works across rural areas in India. 109 In Nepal, 110 the ILO implemented the Strengthening the National Rural Transport Program (SNRTP), aimed at enhancing the availability and reliability of transport connectivity in 37 districts, which provided decent employment to 2,679 rural workers (64 per cent of them women) and increased their skills and capacities on maintenance activities, work methods, inspection and payment arrangements, safety, health on site, and financial literacy through collaboration with banks and cooperatives.¹¹¹ The analysis of Decent Work Results achieved also revealed that ILO's reported contribution to rural employment creation was limited and indirect, as most of the activities under the Programme and Budget Output 3.2 on EIIP projects revolved around TA to government agencies on infrastructure development with the integration of OSH and skills development. Furthermore, several EIIP projects, for example, Green Works in Jordan focusing on labour-intensive employment which, while effective at improving basic infrastructure and income, are less effective at increasing sensitization to and promotion of DWRE. Hence, in a number of cases EIIPs were used as a tool for crisis recovery such as during COVID-19 (design of cash for work programme in Uganda¹¹² and quidelines for rural roads development in Timor-Leste¹¹³) and natural disasters (construction of markets after Cyclone Winston in Fiji¹¹⁴).

Similarly, ILO support to tourism development, mostly undertaken in Latin and South America, was also predominantly ad hoc, demand-driven, TA and capacity development of government organizations. For instance, in Bolivia, 115 a tourism training resource "Programme of Virtual Learning Rural Community Tourism and Decent Work" was developed with ILO support. While with support from ILO, the Ministry of Tourism (MINTUR) of Ecuador¹¹⁶ began the formation and operationalization of the "Executive Table for the Reactivation and Sustainable Development of the Tourism Sector". Nevertheless, an example of more comprehensive support was found in Costa Rica, 117 where TA was provided to the government and employers' organizations for the promotion of decent work in tourism.

Finally, support was provided to government-led employment programmes (Uganda¹¹⁸, Jordan¹¹⁹, and Turkey¹²⁰). In some instances (for example, Lebanon¹²¹), refugees and displaced populations were provided career counselling and trained in job-related skills. It is worth mentioning that most of the activities undertaken by ILO in support of tourism as well as refugees under DWRE initiatives were concentrated in the 2020-21 biennium.

¹⁰⁸ IND104 in the 2016–17 biennium

¹⁰⁹ ILO, "'Barefoot engineering': How to boost rural development and local youth employment", 2017.

¹¹⁰ NFP/14/01/IDA

¹¹¹ ILO, "Strengthening the National Rural Transport Program (SNRTP) Nepal: Decent Employment through Maintenance – First Approach for Better Road Connectivity", ILO Brief, 2021.

¹¹² UGA 128 in the 2020–21 biennium

¹¹³ TLS 176 in the 2020-21 biennium

¹¹⁴ FJI 903 in the 2016-17 biennium

¹¹⁵ BOL 109 in the 2020-21 biennium

¹¹⁶ ECU 153 in the 2020-21 biennium

¹¹⁷ CRI 136 in the 2018–19 biennium 118 UGA 128 in the 2020-21 biennium

¹¹⁹ JOR 902 in the 2018–19 biennium

¹²⁰ TOUR 160 in the 2020-21 biennium

¹²¹ LBN 101 in the 2020-21 biennium

▶ Box 3. Comprehensive ILO support to the Tourism Sector – Costa Rica

As part of the Government of Costa Rica-led efforts to foster the development of the Caribbean region, the ILO has been providing multi-pronged and integrated support to the Government, and employers' and workers' organizations in Costa Rica in its capacity as the Technical Secretariat of the Caribbean Roundtable since February 2019. This support has included TA in the design and formulation of four projects approved by the INDER for the development and strengthening of agribusiness and logistics clusters for tourism development for more than US\$1.1 million and the approval of eight territorial development projects for more than US\$9 million by the JAPDEVA.

Furthermore, the ILO also provided capacity building to the Costa Rican Tourism Institute (ICT) and the business chambers associated with the Federation of Caribbean Chambers (Fedecaribe) on corporate governance models and also supported the design and installation of the Board of Tourism in the Caribbean, which led to its creation in May 2021.

ILO capacity-building support was also extended to the main employers' organization in the Caribbean, Fedecaribe, when it facilitated the participation of five of its representatives in the Latin American Program for Management of Business Organizations (ILGO). Fedecaribe has been able to institute a partnership with the Banco Nacional de Costa Rica to establish a microcredit programme.

Lastly, with funding from a Joint UN Programme "Strengthening the Bridge to Development Strategy to break the cycle of poverty at the local level, with a gender and environmental perspective", the ILO provided TA for women's entrepreneurship in the canton of Limón through which 15 women's enterprises dedicated to making handicrafts, natural ethnic cosmetics, and organic coconut oil obtained seed capital for a total of US\$65,000 which benefited more than 100 vulnerable women in Limón.

SUPPORT TO WORKERS' ORGANIZATIONS

A major part of ILO's programming on promotion of DWRE included TA and capacity building to rural workers and workers' organizations. These included workers primarily engaged in agriculture (smallholders and plantation workers) and, to some extent, workers engaged in employment intensive infrastructure programmes.

Capacities of plantation workers were built through training and TA in unionization, collective bargaining, social dialogue and workplace safety. These primarily included workers in tea plantations (Sri Lanka¹²² and Malawi¹²³), palm oil (Indonesia¹²⁴ and Colombia), and coffee plantations (Colombia). In Indonesia, the recommendations of a study by ILO on freedom of association and collective bargaining in the palm oil sector were adopted in the workplan of the Palm Oil Trade Union Network. Furthermore, the ILO conducted capacity-building trainings for the Network's trade union federation members, including on collective bargaining, OSH, gender issues, and preventing workplace violence and harassment, reportedly resulting in 15 new collective bargaining agreements (CBAs) drafted and one signed. In Malawi, ILO's work on Decent Work gap assessment, and training in labour inspection and OSH using the WIND tool resulted in the TAML for the first time in June 2019 launching OSH programmes targeting about 250 plantation workers in the tea sector focusing on training, and management, the disposal of chemical containers, the promotion of personal protective equipment use, and the distribution of protective equipment to seven plantations.

Furthermore, an agreement signed between ILO and the TAML in May 2019 reportedly improved the relationship between plantation workers' and employers' organizations in the plantations. In Sri Lanka, training and awareness- raising workshops were conducted for 205 youth working in tea plantations on entrepreneurial skills and awareness raising on international and national labour laws related to the plantation sector. Similarly, the capacity of 157 estate committee leaders in collective bargaining processes and agreements, social dialogue and ILO conventions was enhanced. However, there are no data available to assess the effectiveness of the activities undertaken in Sri Lanka.

In Malawi, 125 Pakistan, 126 and Zambia 127, workers' organizations were also supported in activities on the elimination of child labour and forced labour in cotton, tea, and tobacco, respectively. This included awareness raising, capacity development, community monitoring, and normative advice on proposed legislation and policy documents, through the application of Supporting Children Rights through Education, the Arts and the Media (ILO's SCREAM tool). In Pakistan, this support resulted in the establishment of two new cotton sector farmers' organizations in Sindh province, 14 District Vigilance Committees (DVCs), 32 local-level Decent Work Cotton Resource Centres (DCRC), culminating in the withdrawal of 1,055 working children (5–14 years) from cotton fields; and prevented 245 children (5-14 years) from entering child labour. In Malawi, the TAML developed strategies to address child labour in the tea growing communities. In Zambia, communities were engaged in awareness and social dialogue. However, the outcome of these activities is not available.

Smallholders were assisted through social mobilization and dialogue, technical knowledge, market linkages, and enterprise development. Major examples of this were seen in Egypt,¹²⁸ Haiti,¹²⁹ Indonesia,¹³⁰ Jordan and Lebanon,¹³¹ the Lao People's Democratic Republic.¹³² In Egypt, for instance, members of a dairy cooperative and pastoralists were trained in improving milk quality and productivity, following which market linkages were developed, including a label to distinguish the brand. However, the enterprise proved to be unsustainable due to breakdown in relationship between sellers and buyers. Conversely, in the Lao People's Democratic Republic, traditional coffee farmers were trained in improved production and processing techniques to appeal to higher paying export markets resulting in US\$102,900 in total revenue generation.

In other instances, where ILO supported smallholders, results about the outcome were not available. For instance, support to the mango chain development in Haiti included the development of a traceability system and development of market linkages. The traceability system was launched by the Association des Producteurs-Vendeurs de Fruits du Sud (ASPVEFS), collecting georeferenced information from 3,650 mango producers in 13 communes. In Lebanon, the ILO provided trainings to farmers and cooperatives on good agricultural practices related to potato and leafy greens, allowing them to improve their knowledge and business management practices and form links with suppliers and processors. In Indonesia, the ILO and the Ministry of Villages collaborated to build the capacity of 30 representatives of village-owned enterprises through trainings on management and digital marketing.

Similarly, the development and integration of sector-specific **OSH guidelines** as well as the provision of capacity building to constituents and beneficiaries took place in the context of EIIPs and Value Chain Development. OSH guidelines were also integrated into projects through the use of ILO-developed tools and methodologies, such as the use of the WIND tool to train 35 trainers from tea plantations, Tea Association, Association of Smallholders, trade unions, and employers' organizations in Malawi.133

¹²⁵ MWI178 in the 2018-19 biennium

¹²⁶ PAK151 in the 2020–2021 biennium

¹²⁷ ZMB177 in the 2018–19 biennium

¹²⁸ EGY102 in the 2018-19 biennium

¹²⁹ HTI129 in the 2018–19 biennium

¹³⁰ IDN 127 in the 2020-21 biennium

¹³¹ LEB/14/02/ITA and LBN/12/02/RBS

¹³² LAO/16/01/CHE

¹³³ MWI178 in the 2018-19 biennium

SUPPORT TO EMPLOYERS' ORGANIZATIONS

The ILO was also seen to undertake capacity building work aimed at **employers' organizations**, though at a less frequent rate than its government and worker constituents. For instance, in Costa Rica, the ILO supported the Chamber of Industry and Tourism of Limon (CCITUL) in training small- and medium-sized enterprises on public procurement models.¹³⁴ Also, in Costa Rica, the Costa Rican¹³⁵ Tourism Institute (ICT) and the business chambers associated with the Federation of Caribbean Chambers were trained on the model of the Executive Boards and direct support was provided in the design and installation of the Board of Tourism in the Caribbean. In Jordan, the ILO trained 18 farmers, representing employers, on the Agricultural Workers Bylaw No. 19 (2021) in order to improve their understanding and implementation of decent work.¹³⁶

▶ Box 4. Capacity building and social dialogue to achieve Decent Work in the palm oil sector – Indonesia

Indonesia serves as a crucial example of country where the ILO carried out a range of extensive capacity-building activities involving tripartite constituents, including members of the Palm Oil Trade Union Network (JAPBUSI) and sectoral employers' association, the Indonesian Palm Oil Association (GAPKI), on various issues such as social dialogue and collective bargaining, OSH, gender issues and prevention of violence and harassment, elimination of child and forced labour, non-discrimination, social protection, and labour law compliance. The ILO approach was centred on social dialogue, which fundamentally changed attitudes evolving from confrontation to a negotiation approach in the sector. Positive impacts on trade unions were observed, with an increase in both membership numbers and union fees. Strengthened workers' organizations led to more effective bipartite dialogue and collective bargaining. FSB-KAMIPARHO union, for instance, signed a MOU with KPN CORP, a palm oil company corporation, and achieved the implementation of the first Collective Bargaining Agreement of the sector at the field level. Four others followed. The lessons learned in the palm oil sector and the development of effective approaches on social dialogue, OSH and bipartite cooperation have allowed ILO to subsequently expand its work to other rural sectors in the country, such as fishing and seafood processing, and more recently to dairy farming, seaweed production and rural tourism.

In some instances, ILO-developed **tools and methodologies** were found to have been utilized for capacity building of constituents. For instance, in Jordan, ILO built the capacity of agricultural cooperatives through THINKCOOP and STARTCOOP tools covering the basics of cooperatives in a participatory manner.¹³⁷ Similarly, various ILO tools and methodologies were used to provide entrepreneurship trainings as well as skills development related to agricultural value chains, through the use of Start and Improve Your Business (SIYB) in Fijii¹³⁸ and the Training for Rural Economic Empowerment (TREE) methodology in Zimbabwe.¹³⁹ The Sustaining Competitive and Responsible Enterprises (SCORE) Hospitality Coaching (HoCo) tool was used to provide trainings on productivity improvement and OSH in tourist accommodation for businesses and enterprises in Ecuador's tourism sector.¹⁴⁰ However, the frequency and intensity of the use of these tools was not uniform across the board.

¹³⁴ CRI902 in the 2018–19 biennium 135 CRI136 in the 2020–21 biennium 136 JOR130 in the 2018–19 biennium 137 JOR903 in the 2020–21 biennium 138 FJI903 in the 2020–21 biennium 139 ZWE101 in the 2020–21 biennium 140 ECU153 in the 2020–21 biennium

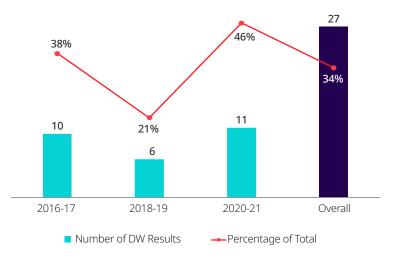
The ITCILO was also occasionally engaged for capacity building of constituents on the design of rural development policies, strategies and programmes, particularly on Green Jobs in Colombia,¹⁴¹ the development of training modules for the use of rural outreach centres on hazardous child labour in Mali,¹⁴² and the development of training modules on rural community tourism and decent work in Bolivia,¹⁴³ and the development of a training programme for a value chain development in Peru.¹⁴⁴

However, compared to the extent of the Decent Work gaps in the rural economy, ILO initiatives to bridge them is abysmally insufficient. For example, in Madagascar, the ILO undertook technical agricultural and entrepreneurial trainings between November 2018 and February 2019 (3 months) to build the capacities of 200 young men and women in agriculture. ¹⁴⁵ In Zambia, the ILO training workshops for various farmers' organizations to strengthen their capacities to organize and recruit members and provide business development services for their members was undertaken between October and December 2019. In the case of Indonesia, the ILO, in collaboration with the Ministry of Villages, managed to build the capacities of 30 representatives of village-owned enterprises on management and digital marketing. ¹⁴⁶

KNOWLEDGE AND RESEARCH

Assistance to constituents often involved the development of knowledge tools, research, and advocacy at multiple levels. In fact, in just over one third of the Decent Work Results (reported between 2016 and 2021, the ILO undertook knowledge generation and dissemination activities as part of its actions on promoting DWRE. The ILO's knowledge generation and dissemination activities were seen to vary across the three biennia, with 10 DW Results in 2016–17 (38 per cent), 6 DW Results in 2018–19 biennia (21 per cent), and 11 DW Results in 2020–21 (46 per cent) incorporating knowledge generation. Broadly, the ILO was found to rely on its vast expertise and knowledge in various thematic and sectoral areas to generate knowledge in the forms of research studies, publications, diagnostic assessments on sector-specific decent work deficits, and best practices guides/compendiums, etc.

FIGURE 10. PREVALENCE OF KNOWLEDGE GENERATION AND DISSEMINATION IN DW RESULTS ACHIEVED ACROSS THE BIENNIA



Source: DW Results Dashboard 2016–21.

146 IDN127 in the 2020–21 biennium

¹⁴¹ COL901 in the 2016–17 biennium 142 MLI/16/01/RBS

¹⁴³ BOL109 in the 2020–21 biennium 144 PER153 in the 2020–21 biennium 145 MFG103 in the 2018–19 biennium

Globally, ILO has produced many products, technical papers and reports in consultation with other UN agencies. Recent examples relevant to rural employment are Policy Guidelines for the Promotion of Decent Work in the Agri-food Sector, adopted in May 2023 by the ILO-convened Meeting of Experts on Decent Work in the Agri-food Sector. During the development of these quidelines, FAO and IFAD participated as observers. Other examples are the Report of the Global Solutions Forum: Acting together to end child labour in agriculture. Concrete experiences and successful practices;¹⁴⁷ the aforementioned joint ILO/FAO report Extending social protection to rural populations: Perspectives for a common FAO and ILO approach;148 and the ILO/FAO/UN report Occupational safety and health in the future of forestry work.¹⁴⁹ Furthermore, the ILO engaged in global advocacy work on employment and decent work in the agri-food sector within the framework of the G20, the Global Donor Platform for Rural Development, the World Banana Forum and the UN Food Systems Summit, where the ILO joined forces with IFAD on a Coalition of Action on Decent Work and Living Incomes and Wages for All Food System Workers. 150

The HLE found that research studies have been conducted on a range of topics, particularly on specific value chains, such as coffee in Bolivia¹⁵¹ and Mexico,¹⁵² grape/wine in Chile,¹⁵³ banana in Ecuador,¹⁵⁴ forestry in Uruguay,¹⁵⁵ rice in Cameroon,¹⁵⁶ mango in Haiti,¹⁵⁷ tea in Malawi,¹⁵⁸ apple, cherries and trout in Pakistan,¹⁵⁹ cocoa and gypsum in Brazil,¹⁶⁰ FPRW and collective bargaining in the palm oil sector in Indonesia, 161 natural stone mining in India, 162 floriculture in Jordan, 163 and horticulture in Lebanon.¹⁶⁴ In a number of instances, the multifaceted and integrated actions on promoting DWRE were found to have utilized evidence-based TA by undertaking sectorspecific diagnostic studies and legislative gaps assessments on decent work deficits to inform subsequent actions, such as social dialogue, strategy/policy development, and capacity building activities, as noted in the case of Lesotho for the development of the National Strategy on formulation and improved working conditions in the rural economy.¹⁶⁵ In contrast though, six of the 27 DW Results incorporating knowledge generation (22 per cent) involved only the preparation of standalone value chain or diagnostic studies without other means of actions, thereby precluding the achievement of tangible outcomes. Another major shortcoming reported during interviews has been the limited dissemination of research and knowledge products produced by the ILO.

CROSS-CUTTING ISSUES RELEVANT TO PROMOTING DWRE

This sub-section provides an assessment of the implementation of ILO's cross-cutting policy drivers of ILS, social dialogue, gender equality and non-discrimination (including youth, and vulnerable groups), and environmental sustainability under programming to promote DWRE during the evaluation period.

¹⁴⁷ FAO, Report of the Global Solutions Forum: Acting together to end child labour in agriculture. Concrete experiences and successful practices shared on 2-3 November 2021. Rome, 2022.

¹⁴⁸ ILO and FAO, Extending Social Protection to Rural Populations. Geneva, 2021.

¹⁴⁹ FAO, ILO and UN, Occupational safety and health in the future of forestry work. (Forestry Working Paper, No. 37). Rome, 2023.

¹⁵⁰ ILO, Programme Implementation Report 2020–21, p. 40.

¹⁵¹ BOL109 in the 2016–17 biennium

¹⁵² MEX107 in the 2020-21 biennium

¹⁵³ CHL160 in the 2016–17 biennium

¹⁵⁴ ECUD153 in the 2016-17 biennium

¹⁵⁵ URY156 in the 2016-17 biennium

¹⁵⁶ CMR111 in the 2018-19 biennium

¹⁵⁷ HTI129 in the 2018–19 biennium

¹⁵⁸ MWI178 in the 2018-19 biennium.

¹⁵⁹ PAK900 in the 2018-19 biennium

¹⁶⁰ BRA101 in the 2020-21 biennium

¹⁶¹ IDN127 in the 2020–21 biennium 162 IND101 in the 2020-21 biennium

¹⁶³ JOR130 in the 2020-21 biennium

¹⁶⁴ LBN101 in the 2020-21 biennium

¹⁶⁵ LSO105 in the 2016-17 biennium

A. INTERNATIONAL LABOUR STANDARDS (ILS)

The HLE found that the state of ratification of the Technical Conventions relevant to DWRE offers a scattered picture, and many workers in the rural economy are not covered by these instruments. Accordingly, the relevance of the fundamental and priority Conventions to promote DWRE is high, as their wider ratification offers more opportunities to raise DWRE concerns under the various supervisory mechanisms and processes in the ILO system.

The CEACR refers to rural and agricultural questions in a considerable portion of its Direct Requests and Observations in examining regular reports under Article 22 of the ILO Constitution. However, the HLE found that because most Conventions are general in nature, rural issues typically only come up if reported under article 22 by governments or the social partners. Having said that, there has been a modestly growing trend on Committee of Expert's comments, with the proportion of comments containing references to the rural sector growing from 15 per cent in 2016 to 23 per cent in 2022, as shown in figure 11.

23% 20% 23% 19% 23% 15% 16% 274 243 341 370 331 406 2016 2017 2018 2019 2020 2021 2022 Comments referring to rural questions --- % of total comments

FIGURE 11. CEACR COMMENTS REFERRING TO RURAL QUESTIONS

Source: NORMLEX Database

Moreover, in respect of rural-specific conventions, the Committee has employed a consolidated approach with commentary covering both the general and the specific standards in one comment (for example, general conventions on OSH and rural-specific OSH conventions). Encouragingly though, the Committee often requests data disaggregated by urban and rural areas.

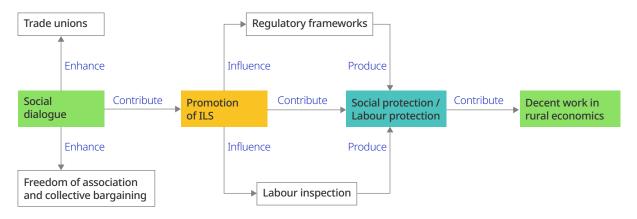
The Committee has also maintained attention to DWRE under the reporting procedures of Article 19 of the Constitution. Following the 2015 General Survey concerning the right of association and rural workers' organizations instruments, the Committee in particular took the rural context into account in the four most recent General Surveys on the Social Protection Floors Recommendation (2019), Promoting employment and decent work in a changing landscape (2021), Securing decent work for nursing personnel and domestic workers, key actors in the care economy (2022), and Achieving gender equality at work (2023).

B. SOCIAL DIALOGUE

ILO's capacity for social dialogue, especially among its tripartite constituents, was seen by its stakeholders to be one of its key comparative advantages. The HLE found that **social dialogue** was often used as a means to an end for the delivery of a wide range of results, inter alia, the development of policies based on tripartite and stakeholder consultations, facilitating negotiations between workers and employers at sector and enterprise levels, support to the development of market linkages between farmers and market agents, and dialogue within

communities on the identification of needs, provision of land and cooperation for employment investment infrastructure, and the promotion of Decent Work for rural women, etc. Social dialogue also supported the rights-based development approach, helping to mainstream ILS and enhance social and labour protection in rural areas (figure 12).

FIGURE 12. PRINCIPAL PATTERN OF RIGHTS-BASED TRANSFORMATION OF RURAL ECONOMIES AS EVIDENCED IN ASSESSED INTERVENTIONS



Source: Synthesis Review

Social dialogue's "facilitating" role could, for instance, be seen in Mexico166 where ILO provided TA to the design of the new digital rural extension model. The Government of Mexico, through the National Institute of Social Economy (INAES) launched an initiative in 2021 to promote decent work and productivity by developing a new innovative model of "Rural Extension through mobile phones in the coffee value chain in Chiapas". This initiative was developed within the framework of a social innovation platform where the social interlocutors participated including the Confederation of Industrial Chambers (CONCAMIN); Employers' Confederation of the Mexican Republic (COPARMEX); Mexican Association of the Coffee Productive Chain (AMECAFE); Confederation of Workers of Mexico (CTM); the Ministry of Agriculture and Rural Development (SADER); the Coffee Institute of Chiapas (INCAFECH); and the Coordinator of Small Coffee Producers in Chiapas (COOPCAFE). Another example is from Jordan, 167 where social dialogue was fostered through Labour Management Committees at the General Federation of Jordanian Trade Unions (GF|TU), and cooperation with the Ministry of Labour, the Ministry of Agriculture, the Vocational Training Corporation, and the Jordanian Association for Cut Flowers & Ornamental Plants (JCFA).¹⁶⁸ In Brazil, 169 the ILO coordinated with the United Nations Global Compact to conduct social dialogue roundtables with tripartite constituents (five sessions), several bilateral meetings and multi-stakeholders consultations (focal groups, interviews, high-level meetings), including the organization of the Cocoa 2030 Workshop to build and validate the adopted guidelines.

In some instances, facilitating social dialogue was found to contribute directly to the rights-based thematic pillars. The Synthesis Review also found that in Azerbaijan, under the project "Increased progress in attaining SDGs though the promotion of Decent Work and inclusive economic growth in rural and urban areas in Azerbaijan", the capacity of workers' and employers' organizations was improved to effectively engage in tripartite social dialogue with the government to promote and advocate for decent work.¹⁷⁰ In Colombia, compliance with labour standards was improved for rural workers in the peacebuilding process. In Fiji, Palau, Tonga and Vanuatu,¹⁷¹ the

¹⁶⁶ MEX 107 in the 2020-21 biennium

¹⁶⁷ JOR/19/02/AUS

¹⁶⁸ Synthesis report

¹⁶⁹ BRA 101 in the 2020–21 biennium

¹⁷⁰ AZE/16/02/RBS, Synthesis report

¹⁷¹ RAS/20/53/UND

fostering of social dialogue with national governments facilitated the advances towards the social protection of workers of the informal economy. In Argentina, the OFFSIDE project benefited from the close participation of the tripartite partners in tackling child labour in agriculture.¹⁷²

C. SOCIAL PROTECTION

Given that poverty and vulnerability often characterize the living conditions of rural populations, social protection can be a highly relevant policy tool.¹⁷³ In terms of global policy guidance and support, **ILO recognizes the critical importance of extending social protection to the rural economy**, as recently evidenced by the Joint ILO-FAO publications Extending social protection to rural populations: Perspectives for a common FAO and ILO approach.¹⁷⁴ A further promising partnership opportunity with UNICEF that could include a strong DWRE component is the Global Accelerator on Jobs and Social Protection for Just Transitions, launched by the UN in 2021 and led by ILO, UNDP and UNICEF. The Accelerator is currently identifying the first five countries to benefit from this programme.



Despite this, the HLE found that attention to social protection has thus far been rather limited in interventions promoting DWRE.

As indicated above, social protection did not feature highly in programme interventions on DWRE. A review of the results registered under the CPOs linked to P&B Outcome 5 and later Output 3.2 indicates that in only 36 per cent of the CPOs, was a result recorded on social protection, compared to 83 per cent on social dialogue and 65 per cent on ILS. **Overall, while ILO has been laying important groundwork for a social protection approach for the rural sector, programmatic interventions still needs to be fully operationalized.** For example, in the case of Colombia, where expanding social protection has been a relevant topic within social dialogue in the coffee sector, concrete responses are still to be agreed and implemented. In Morocco and Madagascar, social protection in the rural economy was also found to be uncovered by ILO's current interventions, although some important work on social protection reform should soon be initiated in Madagascar.

Nevertheless, social protection featured in several programme activities. In Colombia, an intervention¹⁷⁵ to strengthen unions in post-conflict rural areas was coherently aligned with the 2016 Peace Agreement that proposes labour and social protection for rural workers after the demobilization of armed groups. In Azerbaijan,¹⁷⁶ the ILO assisted the government in identifying discrepancies between national policies and international standards to expand the country's social protection system. In Fiji, Palau, Tonga and Vanuatu,¹⁷⁷ the fostering of social dialogue with national governments facilitated advances towards the social protection of workers of the informal economy. In Uzbekistan, a recent project on strengthening youth employment¹⁷⁸ assisted a pilot programme in 28 districts to design an integrated package of social protection and active labour market measures. The pilot was tailored for specific groups of disadvantaged groups of jobseekers and workers emphasizing women and persons with disabilities. In Uzbekistan, ILO contributed research for the development of the draft National Strategy for Social Protection 2022–30 and a three-year costed action plan.

¹⁷² Offside Project: Marking the field! Improving the Capacity of Labour and Agriculture (ARG/18/01/USA)

¹⁷³ ILO, "Extending Social Protection to the Rural Economy - Decent Work in the Rural Economy", Policy Guidance Notes, 2019.

¹⁷⁴ ILO and FAO, Extending social protection to rural populations, Geneva, 2021.

¹⁷⁵ COL/17/01/NOR

¹⁷⁶ AZE/16/02/RBS

¹⁷⁷ RAS/20/53/UND

D. GENDER AND NON-DISCRIMINATION

By including women as key stakeholders, incorporating gender-sensitive and gender-responsive issues into the development of policies and strategies, and meeting the assigned targets for women beneficiaries for the provision of trainings and skills development, ILO was seen to have incorporated gender mainstreaming effectively into its projects focusing on promotion of DWRE. Gender was also sometimes integrated into specialized project activities. For instance, ILO provided support to the Government of Jordan during the adoption of the Agricultural Workers Bylaw No. 19 of 2021 clarifying the labour rights and entitlements of agriculture workers and improving working conditions in the agriculture sector. Among other improvements, the bylaw includes provisions for maternity leave for women agricultural workers.¹⁷⁹ However, the HLE noted that interventions have tended to be conventional in nature and not always effective in promoting gender equality in rural areas. For instance, although the "AFERE Project: Support for Rural Women for Entrepreneurship" undertook capacity building and skills development for women entrepreneurs, the project was unable to create a conducive entrepreneurial ecosystem promoting rural women entrepreneurs.¹⁸⁰



Furthermore, a large proportion of DWRE projects only implicitly focused on youth, mostly in the areas of training, skills development, and job placement in the context of EIIPs and Value Chain Development.

A notable example of well-integrated approaches that specifically target rural women and youth were found under LAO176 in the 2020–21 biennium, where skills development and vocational training provided by ILO through mobile employment services enabled the recruitment of young rural women into the economic zones. However, this elaborate activity resulted in the placement of only five beneficiaries. Similarly, in Zimbabwe, the ILO supported the Government of Zimbabwe in undertaking trainings and skills development programmes at local levels for youth and women, with only 280 beneficiaries trained using the TREE methodology. As noted in the earlier subsection on capacity building, virtually all of the skills development, vocational training activities have been small-scale and through a project-driven approach.

Moreover, the HLE found that **disability inclusion was mainstreamed in a just a handful of projects and was not completely effective**. For instance, despite ILO efforts to mainstream disability inclusion In the Government of Timor-Leste's Roads for Development (R4D) programme, only 33 people with disabilities (PWDs), comprising 0.6 per cent of the beneficiaries, were successful in gaining employment through the programme. Similarly, under the project LAO/16/03/AGF, ILO's GET Ahead tool was translated into Laotian in 2018 for training organizations linked to women and disability. Based on this, Training of Trainers (TOTs) conducted by international trainers were held for 23 trainers at the national level; followed by trainings delivered by the trainees for six provincial-level trainers and 10 district-level trainers. The organizations trained, among others, included the Lao Women's Union (LWU) and the Association of People with Disabilities. However, the HLE found no evidence of the effectiveness of these trainings. In fact, a number of project documents reviewed mention PWDs as potential beneficiaries, but indicators related to this group were virtually absent from project logical frameworks/results frameworks. A major reason for overlooking this demographic group was cited as the limited organizational capacities and resources to accommodate the unique needs of PWDs that require adjustments in activity design.

Moreover, in terms of **non-discrimination**, EIIP projects are likely to attract the poorest of the poor, especially if the wages are aligned with prevailing market rates. There is some evidence that ILO projects were implemented with marginalized communities, such as ethnic groups and refugees, etc. Nevertheless, projects focusing on value chain development by design exclude the poorest of the poor. Instead, community members with production resources (land, labour and inputs, etc.) were actively sought to participate in these projects.

E. JUST TRANSITION AND ENVIRONMENTAL SUSTAINABILITY

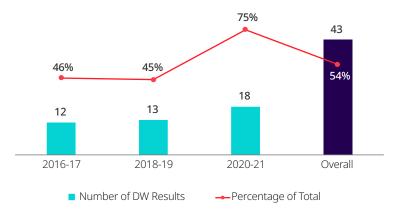
The HLE found limited evidence of the integration of environmental sustainability, climate adaptation and mitigation, and just transition. While some awareness-raising activities and social dialogue activities were found to have focused on environmental sustainability in the context of Green Jobs and Just Transition, there are limited local implementation activities in the promotion of the DWRE portfolio on these areas of work. However, the HLE found that the most recently completed biennia showed an increase in the DW Results incorporating or involving environmental sustainability, climate change and just transition, indicating that these are emerging areas of interest for the ILO. For instance, the ILO implemented the "Training Program for the Development of Value Chains for Productivity and Decent Work" in Peru in 2021, which provided constituents with modules, tools, and methodologies for promoting DWRE and included just transition towards environmental sustainability.183 Moreover, in support to the Government of Türkiye's efforts to operationalize the European Green Deal Action Plan, the ILO provided technical support to promote green job opportunities in the agriculture and rural services (such as recycling services).¹⁸⁴ Nevertheless, the integration of environmental sustainability, just transition and climate change in ILO efforts to promote DWRE is in its nascence and the survey of ILO staff, constituents and partners revealed the need for greater efforts by ILO to address these areas of its work on promoting DWRE. Just 19 per cent of ILO staff and 43 per cent of constituents rated the effectiveness of environmental sustainability into ILO's programming on promoting DWRE as satisfactory or highly satisfactory. To complement its awareness raising efforts, ILO-ITC has designed an e-learning module on The Future of Work in the Rural Economy which addresses among other topics, through a specific module (3) the issue of a just transition towards a resilient and sustainable rural economy.

Globally, the ILO has also partnered with UNICEF and UNDP on the Global Accelerator on Jobs and Social Protection for Just Transitions launched in 2021. The Accelerator aims to increase the level and coordination of the multilateral system's efforts to help countries create at least 400 million decent jobs, including in the green, digital and care economies, and to extend social protection coverage to the 4 billion people currently excluded.

Effect of ILO's work in advancing employment policies in the rural sector

Of the 79 Decent Work Results reported on promoting DWRE between 2016 and 2021, the HLE found that 43 results (54 per cent) involved policy-related work. The analysis of DW Results showed that the **ILO's policy-related work has been trending upwards, with 12 results (46 per cent) in 2016–17, 13 results (45 per cent) in 2018–19, and 18 results (75 per cent) in 2020–2021.**

FIGURE 13. PREVALENCE OF POLICY-RELATED ACTIONS IN DW RESULTS ACHIEVED ACROSS THE BIENNIA



Source: DW Results Dashboard 2016-21

ILO's policy-related work was found at various levels and scales. However, in the absence of follow up and evaluation reviews, the outcomes of these initiatives are not known. Globally, a key initiative for policy support is the recently established Decent Work for Equitable Food Systems Coalition, co-hosted by IFAD, ILO and CARE International. The Coalition offers policy advice to support policies and interventions targeting food systems that integrate employment and labour issues and technical support for the generation of quality employment and entrepreneurship opportunities, and the promotion of workers' rights. The Coalition pursues a systems approach by bringing together ministries of labour, agriculture, and other relevant government institutions, including local governments, employers' and workers' organizations, and non-state actors to advance decent work in food systems. However, as the coalition was formulated in 2023, the HLE was not able to assess its contributions.

Nationally, in some instances, the ILO supported the development of National Rural Employment Strategies (Lao People's Democratic Republic),¹⁸⁵ Rural Development Strategies (South Africa),¹⁸⁶ and a policy proposal for development of cooperatives (Peru),¹⁸⁷ while in others, it focused its efforts on mainstreaming DWRE into National Employment Strategies (Madagascar).¹⁸⁸ Apart from national-level work, the ILO also undertook policy-related work supporting the development of subnational and local-level development plans and action plans (Fiji,¹⁸⁹ Indonesia,¹⁹⁰ Nepal,¹⁹¹ Pakistan¹⁹² and Tunisia¹⁹³). The ILO's policy-related work also extended to other sectors/focal areas, such as skills (Central African Republic¹⁹⁴ and India¹⁹⁵), tourism (Bolivia¹⁹⁶ and Sri Lanka¹⁹⁷), labour migration

¹⁸⁵ LAO176 in the 2016–17 and 2018–19 biennia

¹⁸⁶ ZAF156 in the 2016-17 biennium

¹⁸⁷ PER153 in the 2018–19 biennium

¹⁸⁸ MDG103 in the 2016-17 biennium

¹⁸⁹ FJI903 in the 2016–17 biennium

¹⁹⁰ IDN127 in the 2018–19 biennium

¹⁹¹ NPL128 in the 2018–19 biennium

¹⁹² PAK151 in the 2020-21 biennium

¹⁹³ TUN104 in the 2020–21 biennium

¹⁹⁴ CAF904 in the 2018–19 biennium 195 IND104 in the 2016–17 biennium

¹⁹⁶ BOL109 in the 2018–19 biennium

¹⁹⁷ LKA107 in the 2016–17 biennium

(Uganda¹⁹⁸), enterprises (Zambia¹⁹⁹), child labour (Mali²⁰⁰ and Zambia²⁰¹), and value chains such as palm oil (Ghana²⁰²), and avocado (Peru²⁰³).

In response to a request from the Government of the Lao People's Democratic Republic, the ILO provided capacity building and technical support for the development of the country's first ever National Rural Employment Strategy (NRES) in 2021. The Strategy was endorsed officially in 2021 and is based on lessons learned from the implementation of Decent Work initiatives in two provinces of the country.

Interviewed representatives of constituents in Indonesia, the Lao People's Democratic Republic and Madagascar expressed high appreciation of the important role played by the ILO in providing capacity building and TA for the formulation of fundamental texts such as policies and strategies, while ensuring tripartite consultative inputs. However, as these documents have generally not been evaluated, there is limited evidence available of their effectiveness. However, the HLE noted that the implementation of these documents faces some common challenges, including limited financial resources and technical capacities among constituents, limited inter-sectoral cooperation, and high levels of informality in rural areas, etc.

In at least one case (Lao People's Democratic Republic), the HLE also found that the NRES was not accompanied by an Action Plan or Resource Mobilization Strategy. Therefore, the Strategy has still not been implemented nearly two years after its official endorsement. In fact, interviews with representatives of the Ministry of Labour and Social Welfare (MOLSW) revealed that the Government has yet to assign financial resources for its implementation. Furthermore, it was noted that while the NRES was developed with inputs from all three constituents, it lacked active contributions at the local level, for example, district-level government staff. Hence, some key lessons based on the implementation of ILO pilot initiatives in the field to inform strategy development were not taken onboard.

Similarly, in Madagascar, the National Action Plan for DWRE (2017–19) developed with ILO support identified four policy priorities after tripartite dialogue with constituents. However, the monitoring and evaluation arrangements planned in the original document, with a national coordination committee and mid-term and final evaluations, were not implemented. This was reportedly due to the overstretching of limited human resources in participating technical ministries. Subsequently, the national action plan remained a reference framework on DWRE-related initiatives, but it did not play its intended role of enabling the Government and its partners to ensure that the DWRE issue was being comprehensively addressed, with experiences shared, and success stories utilized and scaled up. In addition, the HLE noted that the timeframe of the National Action Plan for DWRE ended in 2019, but the Plan has not been revived.

The HLE also found that the ILO's policy work has not been limited to national-level strategies and plans but has also included **policy support at the organizational level**. For instance, under the "Support for the implementation of the Decent Work Country Programme in Uzbekistan" project,²⁰⁴ the ILO provided policy advice to the Federations of Trade Unions (FTUU) and its affiliated leaders on informal economy and irregular self-employment issues which led to the adjustment of union structures and services and made them more inclusive and effective. Similarly, the ILO has also extended **policy support to Member States on the formulation and implementation of legislation.** For instance, the ILO supported the Government of Jordan in operationalizing the Agricultural Workers Bylaw No. 19 aimed at clarifying labour rights and entitlements of agricultural

workers and improving working conditions in the agricultural sector, by improving working conditions of rural women in floriculture. ILO's support through a joint ILO-Institute for Labour and Social Research (FAFO)-UNDP study on the impact of COVID-19 on enterprises in Jordan informed the bylaw and self-inspection checklists for farmers. In addition, ILO conducted preliminary assessments on decent work deficits in agriculture and facilitated dialogue with agriculture workers, representatives of employers' organizations and cooperatives, the Ministry of Labour and the Ministry of Agriculture to provide recommendations on addressing decent work deficits in the sector and review proposed legislation for the sector.

The country case studies conducted as part of the HLE revealed existing gaps in countries' legislation which present opportunities for the ILO's to support Member States and make critical impacts towards filling gaps. For instance, the HLE found that existing legislation in Uzbekistan falls short of upholding equality of opportunity and treatment, particularly in areas such as guaranteeing equal pay for work of equal value, protection of women against discrimination, and protection of workers from violence and harassment in the workplace. Similarly, in Indonesia, the absence of a clear national employment policy for the rural sector, and the opportunities offered by the important financial resources flowing to the rural sector under the Village Fund²⁰⁵ offer opportunities of ILO to increase policy support to the Government and activities to promote job creation in the rural sector.

Actions to mitigate the effects of COVID-19 on DWRE

Overall, the HLE found that the COVID-19 pandemic and resultant disruptions in the world of work, supply chains, and socio-economic conditions negatively affected the achievement of results. As mentioned in earlier sections, the advent of the COVID-19 pandemic presented new and unique challenges that disrupted the ILO's work through delays due to travel and gathering restrictions, reduced availability, and capacity and resources of constituents due to increased demands, etc., resulting in time lags for numerous projects across the portfolio.

ILO's operations generally slowed down during COVID-19. In some countries, for example, the Lao People's Democratic Republic and Indonesia, projects faced significant setbacks. For instance, according to the evaluation of LAO/16/01/CHE, the project lost one of its three year planned implementation period to COVID-19. Whereas, in other countries, such as Madagascar and Morocco, DWRE initiatives were reported to not suffer considerable issues. Also, due to limited internet connectivity and web literacy in rural areas, online activities were not always effectively delivered in rural areas. For example, while the ILO's Project Office in Colombia employed a virtual communication strategy which, together with the use of other audio-visual means (for example, the use of short videos or telenovelas in the coffee sector), enabled work to continue, limited internet access hindered outreach to rural coffee growing areas. Similarly, the COVID-19 pandemic hampered, for instance, the delivery of activities in Fiji, Palau, Tonga and Vanuatu due to slow internet connection in different islands (RAS/20/53/UND). In several cases, these issues resulted in projects being awarded no cost extensions.

Furthermore, due to travel restrictions during the pandemic, the regional office staff/specialists were not able to visit non-resident offices, such as those in Colombia, Jordan, the Lao People's Democratic Republic, etc., and had instead to rely on their colleagues in the country. As a result, the already stretched staffing resources had to be even more involved in programme management and coordination.

²⁰⁵ In 2015, the Government launched the Village Fund programme for an initial amount of US\$19,14 billion to empower and encourage residents to develop their local community. The Ministry of Villages, Development of Disadvantaged Regions, and Transmigration recorded that as of December 2022, some US\$3.97 billion or equivalent to 91.35 per cent of the Village Fund budget in 2022, had been disbursed to 74,938 villages, or more than 99 per cent of all villages in Indonesia.

Nevertheless, the ILO was generally found to have adapted well to the rapidly changing and challenging conditions by redirecting efforts towards no-contact activities, such as research and online trainings, etc. During this time, the HLE found that the ILO implemented or supported a range of activities in different areas of work, including: skills development and vocational training; EIIPs; the integration of OSH guidelines; incorporating COVID-19 preventions measures into public work projects; incorporating COVID-19 pandemic responsive measures into the development of National Guidelines and legislation; and undertaking knowledge generation and dissemination activities on the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic on DWRE.

As mentioned earlier, support to **EIIP activities** was one of the key employment promotion strategies used by the ILO. For example, the ILO developed a National Guide on **Occupational Safety and Health** in HIMO construction sites in the context of the COVID-19 pandemic for a EIIP programme implemented by the Ministry of Public Works (MINTP) in Cameroon. In addition, the ILO updated the Guide for the integration of Decent Work in the rural rice-growing areas in the context of the COVID-19 pandemic, which was subsequently adopted by the Ministry of Agriculture and Rural Development and MINTP.²⁰⁶ With regards to **skills development and vocational trainings**, the Unemployment Protection in Indonesia²⁰⁷ project, as one of several examples, provided soft skills training for youth, including those who recently lost jobs due to labour adjustments and COVID-19. A notable example of a well-integrated approach towards mitigating the effects of the pandemic was found in Jordan, where the ILO, in partnership with Fafo and UNDP, conducted a study on the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic on enterprises in Jordan which informed the TA provided by ILO on the operationalization of the agricultural bylaw and self-inspection checklist for rural farmers to ensure its relevance and effectiveness in light of the pandemic.²⁰⁸

Similarly, the ILO also supported an **innovative intervention** aimed at mitigating the challenges posed by the pandemic by supporting the Government of Mexico's initiative to promote decent work productivity by designing an innovative digital rural extension model in the coffee value chain. This model enabled the provision of rural extension services, capacity-building trainings, and technical advice to coffee producers and producers' groups, associations and cooperatives via mobile phones through digital extension platform to mitigate the access challenges as a result of travel and congregation restrictions.199F209 While an online system of labour inspection in Indonesia was also developed based on a blended data collection model, enabling outreach to rural areas that were difficult to access even before the pandemic.

In addition, several **knowledge products** were also generated, including the ILO Briefing Note "COVID-19 and the impact on agriculture and food security", which was among the top 10 downloaded ILO knowledge products developed in response to the pandemic. As of 2022, the publication had approximately 40,000 downloads.²¹⁰ In addition, several OSH guides and protocols for the agriculture sector and rural workers were also developed for use by the constituents.

Effect on ILO programming as a result of DWRE's transition from P&B Outcome 5 to P&B Output 3.2

From the perspective of effectiveness of ILO actions and interventions, the HLE found that there was no impact (positive or negative) as a result of the transition of Promoting DWRE from Outcome 5 to Output 3.2 in the ILO's monitoring framework elucidated in the P&B documents. A number of factors were found to be associated with the lack of impact. For instance, the management and implementation structure arrangements as expanded in the Efficiency section saw no discernible change as a result of the transition: ILO projects continued to be led by country offices/teams with support from subject-matter specialists (Decent Work Teams - DWTs) based in regional offices (ROs). Similarly, at HQ, the transition was not accompanied by either an increase or decrease in financial or human resources or any restructurings, which could have had the potential to impact effectiveness through a change in the volume, quality or degree of technical support and advice on DWRE-related projects and interventions. In fact, with the exception of one member of staff who was interviewed, ILO staff based at the country- and regional-levels were unanimous that the transition from Outcome 5 to Output 3.2 had no implications in terms of the implementation of activities in the field. The transition was found to have implications, but from the perspective of Coherence and Efficiency (particularly, monitoring and reporting), which are addressed in their relevant sections.

Among the ILO staff surveyed, the impact on ILO's programming on promoting DWRE as a result of the transition has been perceived with ambivalence.



While 27 per cent of staff rated the impact of the transition as satisfactory or highly satisfactory, a sizeable minority (17 per cent) rated the impact as unsatisfactory or highly unsatisfactory. Notably, 24 per cent of the surveyed staff reported that they did not know what impact the transition has had on ILO's programming.

However, as mentioned earlier, a review of CPOs revealed that ILO's focus has broadened to new areas since 2020–2021, with multiple projects implemented supporting tourism, refugees and just transition. Although, this timeline coincides with the transition of DWRE from an outcome to an output in the P&B framework, it is more likely that these changes were a result of other factors, such as the ILO Centenary Declaration of 2019 and a shift in donor interest to emerging global issues.

EFFICIENCY

KEY FINDING 8

The staffing structure at headquarters appeared adequate, while in regional and country offices it was sparse. The Sectoral Policies Department (SECTOR) lacks an explicit mandate and means for promoting DWRE systemically.

KEY FINDING 9

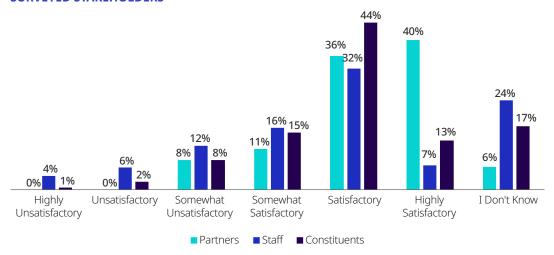
The availability of financial resources for DWRE has gradually increased, due to constituent demand and donor interest, with 90 per cent of the financing donor-based. However, the absence of a cohesive resource mobilization strategy resulted in fragmented programme delivery and little control over medium-to-long-term planning. The total expenditure on promoting DWRE in 2016–22 amounted to US\$87 million, with an average annual delivery rate of 62 per cent.

KEY FINDING 10

The ILO has engaged in partnerships with other UN agencies through non-binding agreements. Country-level collaboration resulted in 53 joint interventions, for a total of approximately US\$41 million during 2016–23.

The survey of ILO staff, constituents and partners revealed that overall, **57 per cent of all respondents found the efficiency of ILO actions on promoting DWRE to be satisfactory or highly satisfactory.** Similar to other criteria, the lower rating is driven primarily by responses from the ILO staff, only 39 per cent of whom rated the efficiency of ILO's actions on promoting DWRE to be highly satisfactory or satisfactory. Compared to ILO staff, a significantly higher proportion of partners (76 per cent) followed by constituents (57 per cent) found the efficiency of ILO's actions on promoting DWRE to be satisfactory or highly satisfactory. The HLE also noted that a significant proportion of the ILO staff (24 per cent) indicated that they did not know the extent to which the ILO's actions on promoting DWRE were efficient. The following figure provides a breakdown of the overall ratings on efficiency by the three different respondent types.

FIGURE 14. RATINGS ON THE EFFICIENCY OF ILO ACTIONS ON PROMOTING DWRE ACROSS SURVEYED STAKEHOLDERS



Source: Survey of ILO staff (N=62), constituents (N=61), and partners (N=36) conducted as part of the HLE.

Management structure and implementation arrangements

As elaborated earlier, SECTOR is tasked with leading the coordination of Outcome 5 (2016)/ Output 3.2. (2020 onwards). Interviews with key ILO staff at SECTOR revealed the presence of an Outcome Coordinating Team (OCT) which meets two to three times per year to have OBW planning discussions. However, the scope of these meetings is limited to ILO actions linked to Outputs under Outcome 3 (employment), and broader discussions between SECTOR and other units working on other outcomes are not instituted. Consequently, while the coordination with programme areas falling within Outcome 3 (including EMPLAB, DEVINVEST, etc.) has improved since the transition of DWRE from an Outcome 5 to an Output 3.2, links with the remaining programme outcome areas remain weak.

The HLE determined that the lack of a formal Organization-wide planning and coordination mechanism significantly diminishes the chances for collaboration and joint programming between programme units and departments at HQ. For instance, despite the fact that Labour Statistics and ILS were cited among ILO's areas of comparative advantage, interviews with HQ staff revealed the lack of strategic collaboration between, for example, STATISTICS and NORMES departments. Instead, such cooperation has remained limited to scattered activities, such as a training organized in Pakistan on decent work indicators through ILO statistics specialists and local resources for constituents, including on the rural economy.²¹¹ Also, ACTEMP reported that SECTOR occasionally seeks their feedback on programming issues, although this is not a well-coordinated process. In fact, collaboration between different technical departments was found to be mostly dependant on personal relationships between staff.

The HLE also found the absence of a coherent DWRE policy drive from the HQ to support regional- and country-level DWRE work. With the exception of global-level projects, DWRE projects and interventions were found to have a limited relationship with HQ, as they are generally managed by the regional and country offices. The survey of ILO staff found that only 33 per cent of the respondents rated the coordination between country initiatives and technical units at HQ to be satisfactory or highly satisfactory. In fact, some country office staff indicated that policy support from HQ on DWRE had declined over time, which may be linked to under-resourced teams at HQ and regional levels as expanded in the subsequent sub-section. Some notable exceptions to this were found in Indonesia and Zimbabwe. In Indonesia, SECTOR's work on decent work deficits in the Indonesian palm oil sector in 2015 acted as a catalyst for subsequent work in this sector and ultimately expanded to additional rural sectors. Similarly, in 2019, SECTOR provided technical backstopping to the assessments for identification of high potential sectors under the AFDB-funded programme Youth and Women's Economic Empowerment (YWEP) in Zimbabwe.

Similarly, despite common themes and similarities in programming across the DWRE portfolio, no structured approach exists for cross-country / cross-regional collaboration. This has further led to a fragmented organizational approach to the promotion of DWRE. For instance, despite country-level work to support tourism in several countries (Bolivia, Costa Rica, Ecuador, Lao People's Democratic Republic and Sri Lanka), ILO lacks a standardized approach or common programme to addressing decent work deficits in this sub-sector. While collaboration in coffee, a sector supported by the DWRE portfolio in several countries, has only led to a global webinar. A notable exception was found in the case of aquaculture, where coordinated approaches to programming were reported across Latin America and the Caribbean, Namibia and the Philippines.

Compared to coordination between country initiatives and HQ (33 per cent), a slightly higher proportion of ILO staff (38 per cent) rated internal coordination among country, DWT and regional-level specialists as satisfactory or highly satisfactory. In addition, country-level projects for the promotion of DWRE receive technical backstopping from the DWTs comprising experts in multiple programme areas and having a higher level of understanding of the country and regional portfolios. This common experience facilitates a somewhat coherent approach. However, in the absence of identified linkages between multiple related CPOs, project-based initiatives, and the lack of incentives for joint/collaborative programming, in practice coherence between CPOs and projects has been less than ideal. For instance, while two major OSH-focused projects were implemented in the Lao People's Democratic Republic, delivering services in the rural economy to coffee and tea value chains, the HLE found no linkages between these and ongoing DWRE initiatives in the country.



The HLE also found that the relationship of DWRE projects with ROs that also host a DWT was found to be stronger, particularly in the case of non-resident offices such as Jordan, Cambodia, Colombia, the Lao People's Democratic Republic, Morocco and Mozambique.

These DWTs, comprising of subject-matter specialists in areas such as social protection, skills, etc, provide technical support and backstopping to country and field offices. In addition, these regional offices are found to manage high-level relationships in some case, such as in Colombia (through the Andean Office). However, remote management of the non-resident offices by the RO also comes with challenges, such as limited strategic support for collaboration with the United Nations Country Team (UNCT), partnership development with other stakeholders, and lengthy financial procedures, etc. For instance, the ILO Project Office in the Lao People's Democratic Republic had to forego the offer of a more active role from UNICEF, it's co-lead on the coordination of a priority area of the UNSDCF. Similarly, due to the absence of a "cash advance fund" in the country, financial management processes are lengthier than standard, sometimes resulting in delays in fund transfers.

The evaluation found that governments of some countries undergoing transformational changes where ILO does not have resident offices have higher than average expectations from the ILO to help them with the emerging decent work challenges. For instance, representatives of the Government of Morocco expressed their reservations about the limited capacities of the ILO which they find to be insufficient to support the Government's modernization drive, which also includes the transformation of the rural economy. The presence of a stronger ILO office in the country is also likely to have an impact on other countries in the region due to Morocco's emphasis on South-South cooperation.

At the project level, implementation has also been aided by strategic partners, such as UN agencies, ²¹³ and local partners among the three constituents as well as civil society organizations, such as NGOs. In several cases, this has involved the establishment of consultative dialogue mechanisms, such as project advisory committees, project management committees, and technical working groups. An in-depth assessment of the efficiency of strategic partnerships formed under DWRE projects revealed that coordination with the two key partners, FAO and IFAD, was considered to be close and efficient. However, there were also some instances where delays and procedural arrangements from a partner's end affected project efficiency.

For instance, the final evaluation of a project implemented with FAO, Decent Work for Food Security and Sustainable Rural Development in Nusa Tenggara (NTT), Indonesia (INS/13/50/LUX), noted that the start of the joint programme was delayed by FAO.

Local constituent partners expressed their additional need for active participation in day-to-day project planning beyond inclusion in these institutional structures. Furthermore, as activities in the rural economy characteristically require extensive outreach to the grassroots levels, ILO staff in some HLE interviews reported that due to ILO's conventional focus on policy development and work with institutional/organizational-level stakeholders, the Organization generally lacks the capacity for such outreach. The situation is further compounded by the weak decent work capacities of local constituents, stakeholders and implementing partners.

Human resources

As regards programming, Outcome 3 of the P&B falls under the EMPLOYMENT department, while SECTOR at HQ is responsible for leading the coordination of Output 3.2 pertaining to DWRE. This role within SECTOR is carried out by the Forestry, Agriculture, Construction, and Tourism (FACT) Unit. Accordingly, the head of the FACT Unit has been the coordinator of Outcome 5 (2016–2019) and Output 3.2 (2020 onwards). Two Specialists and two Technical Officers constitute the team, as shown in table 15 below. In addition, DWRE programming benefits from support of the Outcome Coordination Team (OCT) for Outcome 3: Economic, social and environmental transitions for full, productive and freely chosen employment and decent work for all.²¹⁴

TABLE 15. STAFFING ASSIGNED TO DWRE (FORESTRY, AGRICULTURE, CONSTRUCTION, AND TOURISM UNIT) – SECTOR

POSITION TITLE	LEVEL	ROLE/RESPONSIBILITIES
Outcome/output coordinator	P5	Unit Head
Specialist No. 1	P4	Rural economy and related sectors, agriculture, plantations, tobacco
Specialist No. 2	P4	Rural economy and related sectors, construction
Technical Officer No. 1	P3	Rural economy and related sectors, forestry
Technical Officer No. 2	P3	Hotels, catering, tourism
Technical Specialist DWRE	P4	RO Latin America and the Caribbean
Focal Points (one per regional office)		Africa, Arab States, Asia and Pacific, Europe and Central Asia

Source: ILO Human Resources Department data.

However, despite the availability of a dedicated team at HQ, as explained earlier, SECTOR's coordination with the rest of the departments and units outside of Outcome 3 is weak. Sector's outreach to the field is also very limited.

At the regional level, SECTOR only has one Specialist dedicated to Rural Economy, who is based in the Latin America and Caribbean region. Whereas, in each of the remaining four ROs, the DWRE portfolio is led by a Focal Point. Therefore, while DWRE programming receives support from relevant specialists, such as those supporting Employment, Skills, Enterprises, and Gender, etc., there is no exclusive support available on DWRE. The reliance on these other specialists also results in the lack of focused support as well as a lack of a cohesive programme planning approach to DWRE at regional and country levels. Moreover, the DWTs are responsible for managing an entire region and are significantly overstretched and sometimes find themselves unable to provide assistance at the project level.

²¹⁴ There are eight Global Technical Teams (GTTs), one for each Policy Department and one each for Statistics and Research https://www.itcilo.org/events/ilo-global-technical-team-meeting#:~:text=The%20ILO%20brings%20together%20 specialists,form%20the%20Global%20Technical%20Team

At the country level, projects are managed by project managers with support from project coordinators and project teams. In addition, some projects are assigned a Chief Technical Advisor (CTA). However, the absence of M&E positions in staffing structure was found to be a common occurrence across most projects, a major omission that has led to challenges, as detailed in the section on Monitoring.

Overall, projects and offices were found to work with a lean staffing structure. While, ostensibly, this can be considered by some as economically efficient, staff frequently reported being stretched beyond their capacity. This has usually resulted in limited coordination between different project teams within the same office. Evidently, coordination between teams has also been subject to the availability of strong leadership in the office. However, it is pertinent to note that nearly all staff in non-resident country offices are project-based, which reportedly leads to discontinuity of approaches due to staff turnover and reassignment of staff to alternative projects.

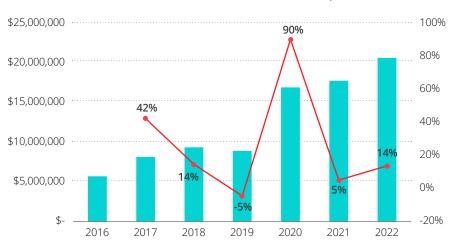
Moreover, the lack of succession planning and lengthy recruitment processes were reported to be major challenges across the board, with implications for programming. The effects were more obvious in instances where departing staff had to be replaced or when initiating a new project. For instance, the departure of a project coordinator in the Lao People's Democratic Republic came at a crucial juncture in the project when long-awaited government permissions for implementation had just been obtained. Whe recruitment of a replacement took at least six months, significantly affecting project performance. Similarly, despite the critical importance of OSH in DWRE programming and more so since the COVID-19 pandemic, no technical support was available to countries the East and South-East Asia and the Pacific, as the OSH Specialist position remained vacant after 2019. Similarly, the Local Economy Specialist in this office who was instrumental in supporting the DWRE portfolio was transferred to another office in South Asia, thereby leaving this position vacant. The Social Protection Specialist position in Europe and Central Asia Regional Office remained vacant from the end of 2016 to March 2018 due to staff changes.

In addition, consultants and short-term experts are often recruited at country level to bridge gaps in technical services in the ILO teams. While this expertise has been indispensable in many instances, HLE interviews with constituents in some countries revealed that instead of using incountry support available through the public and private sectors, ILO tends to over rely on the costlier option of recruiting consultants. In at least one instance, this issue was also highlighted by an evaluation. Similarly, representatives of the MOLSW reported in their HLE interviews that ILO's over-reliance on consultants overlooks the existing capacity within the Ministry. As such roles require close collaboration and learning from the ILO they could provide capacity-building for the Ministry staff.

Staff departures can also lead to gaps in organizational knowledge. For example, the departure of a Programme Officer in 2022 from the Indonesia Country Office who also doubled as a DWRE Focal Point and was instrumental in the progress on ILO's work in the country on palm oil, has left a vacuum in the institutional memory and coordination.

Financial management

As elaborated in the section 2.6, financial resource availability for DWRE has been gradually increasing, and 90 per cent of the financing comprises donor-based XBCD resources. An analysis of the financial expenditures revealed that ILO's expenditure on promoting DWRE has increased at a Compound Annual Growth Rate (CAGR) of 19.7 per cent between 2016 and 2022. Notably, the average annual total expenditure on promoting DWRE between 2016 and 2019 was an estimated US\$8 million, which more than doubled from 2020 to 2022 for an average annual expenditure of US\$18.3 million (representing an increase of 128 per cent).



■ Total Expenditure (in USD)

FIGURE 15. TOTAL EXPENDITURE ON PROMOTING DWRE, 2016-2022

Source: FINANCE Department data – 2016–2022 XBDC expenditure figures; 2016–2022 RBDC expenditure details; 2016–2022 RBSA expenditure.

Annual Growth Rate (in %)

However, this spike in expenditure in 2020 was found to be a result of the migration of new CPOs from other Outcomes/Outputs to Output 3.2. An in-depth analysis of the financial expenditure for XBDC revealed that at the time of transition in 2020, seven CPOs were found to have migrated from non-DWRE outcomes to Output 3.2 (accounting for 69 per cent of the total expenditure on Output 3.2 that year). In addition, eight new CPOs were initiated with a total expenditure of US\$2.754 million (18 per cent of the total expenditure for Output 3.2 in 2020), while US\$1.99 million (13 per cent) was spent on projects continuing from 2019 or before. It is also important to note that 10 CPOs pertaining to Outcome 5 (DWRE) were re-assigned to other P&B outputs rather than Output 3.2. The total expenditure recorded for these CPOs in 2019 was US\$4.078 million (57 per cent of the total expenditure against Outcome 5).

Furthermore, as such, SECTOR lacks a strategic resource mobilization strategy for funding DWRE initiatives at any level. Instead, resources are generally mobilized independently at countryl evel, with some support from ROs. In the absence of a cohesive fundraising strategy, programming is subject to fragmented planning and delivery. As a point of reference, figure 16 shows the number of new DWRE projects launched per year between 2016 and 2023. The erratic changes in the number of new projects signed per year should be matter of concern from a planning perspective, especially as only three DWRE projects were signed in 2018 down from 14 in the prior year.

Prior to 2016

2016

2017

14

2018

3

2019

10

2020

6

2021

8

2022

11

2023

5

FIGURE 16. NUMBER OF PROJECTS LAUNCHED BY YEAR, 2016–2023

Source: DC Dashboard 2016-2023

A major risk posed by **project-based funding** is that financing has only been available intermittently, with average project duration being approximately three years; and 11 per cent of projects planned to be implemented over just 12 months or less, while only 42 per cent of projects were planned for three years or more.

The programming focus can change from one project to another, especially if the subsequent funding is obtained from a different donor, which often results in loss of momentum and the opportunity for meaningful impact. High reliance on project-based strategy also means that ILO is not in complete control of the programming direction, as some sectors or work areas attract more donor funding than others. For example, while OSH and labour inspection are funded more frequently, social protection in the rural economy does not garner similar interest among donors.

Due to limited funding availability per project, ILO is unable to leverage its optimal potential in DWRE, with the average project value since 2016 being approximately US\$2 million, and 51 per cent of projects in the portfolio being under US\$500,000. A key example of limited project availability was observed in the ILO's Andean Office, where the office holds a budget of US\$500,000 allocated to six topics across five countries (Bolivia, Costa Rica, Colombia, Ecuador and Peru). The HLE found that current financial resources and resource mobilization appear to be insufficient to achieve real impact at scale in DWRE. All representatives of the constituents and other partners emphasized that ILO's current means for DWRE are too limited. This results in vastly limited size, scope, geographical coverage and timeframe of ILO's interventions in the rural sector that are inconsistent with the extent of DW challenges in the rural economy. The survey with staff also reflected these findings as only 26 per cent rated the ILO's resource mobilization approaches for the promotion of DWRE to be satisfactory or highly satisfactory.

In some countries, significant reliance was found on single or just a handful of donors. For instance, 80 per cent of the funds managed by the ILO's Project Office Colombia (POC) come from the Colombian Government. Whereas, in the Lao People's Democratic Republic, between 2016 and 2021, 61 per cent of DWRE funding was provided by the Swiss Agency for Development and Cooperation (SDC), while the remaining 39 per cent came from a variety of sources, including RBSA and XBCD. In fact, a new project from U.S. Agency for International Development (USAID) was partially sought in 2022, once it was realized that SDC funds would not continue for some time.

The HLE observed major anomalies in the **financial management processes.** While finances are managed in line with the guidelines of ILO and respective project donor(s), projects were repeatedly seen to suffer from bureaucratic financial management procedures, including internally at ILO as well as between ILO and counterpart government ministries and departments.

For instance, in Jordan, all four reviewed projects faced financial delays. In one project, late payments to workers and farmers resulted in threats of strike action, worry about ILO reputation, and debt. Furthermore, workers were without income for up to three months causing undue financial stress.206F216 In Colombia, according to an HLE interviewee, justifying that rural producers should each receive US\$2 transport allocation to attend training events, was a "nightmarish" process. Whereas in the Lao People's Democratic Republic, evaluation of the Rural Employment Strategy207F217 project identified delays in fund transfer as a key issue owing to the long financial processes involved due to project finances being managed at RO Bangkok. Similar challenges were also reported by other non-resident offices, such as Jordan. Overall, these delays in funding availability posed a major implementation challenges and also affected project timeliness.

Furthermore, the HLE observed that the average annual delivery rate of the available resources during the evaluation period was 62 per cent, which is alarmingly low. As illustrated in figure 17, delivery was above 80 per cent in 2016.

≥ 140.00 83% 80% 120.00 66% 66% 70% 100.00 60% 62% 61% 80.00 50% 48% 40% 60.00 30% 20% 20.00 10% 0% 2019 2018 2020 2021 2022 Total 2016 2017 ■ Total Allocations Actual --- % delivery

FIGURE 17. DWRE ANNUAL DELIVERY RATE OF XBDC RESOURCES, 2016–2022

Source: FINANCE Department data – 2016–2022 XBDC expenditure figures.

However, results of financial efficiency varied from project to project. In particular, a significant proportion of projects were found to be extended beyond their planned closing date, due to operational challenges, staffing, and other factors detailed above. As these extensions have been "no cost extensions", they would have resulted in higher than planned operational costs. Also, in some projects, underspending (Indonesia project) or overspending (Lao People's Democratic Republic – LAO/16/01/CHE) was also flagged as of significant concern. While the project Addressing the Worst Forms of Child Labour in Jordan – The Jordanian Agriculture Sector,208F218 was able to utilize savings from the engagement of a Chief Technical Adviser (CTA), which did not materialize. However, their absence increased demand for technical backstopping from Geneva, and delays in administrative support from the Regional Office for Arab States (ROAS) further limited effectiveness.

Nevertheless, at the project level, it was also observed that some low-cost measures were found to result in comparatively higher financial returns. Among these, integrating infrastructure activities with other support, especially value chain development, was foremost. For instance, in the Lao People's Democratic Republic, the construction of an irrigation channel had positive

implications for food security (lowland rice production), marketable surpluses (passion fruit production), and community cohesion through social dialogue. In addition, although market linkages proved to require higher investment from all stakeholders, including programme resources, the private sector, and local communities, they also resulted in higher returns, with positive impacts on the local economy.

Monitoring, evaluation, and reporting

The HLE observed that progress on the implementation of the ILO 2011 strategy for promotion of DWRE 2011 has not been monitored or evaluated. Also, despite significant resources dedicated to DWRE, ILO was found to be missing a ToC for this programming area. Instead, from the global strategic perspective, the P&B framework is used by the Organization as the guiding document for programming across biennia. However, interviews with PROGRAM staff revealed that the primary purpose of the P&B document being a high-level monitoring tool for the ILO's GB and the ILC make the framework unsuitable as a programme-level monitoring tool. For instance, the indicators for Outcome 5/Output 3.2 were found to be very broad and does not provide comprehensive coverage of the range of activities undertaken by ILO under its promotion of DWRE portfolio. This issue was further compounded by the fact that Output 3.2 only measures one vague indicator - "Number of member States with measures for decent work in rural areas", whereas the previous biennia measured progress towards promoting DWRE through three distinct indicators as shown in the table below.

TABLE 16. DWRE IN THE PLANNING AND BUDGET RESULTS FRAMEWORK, 2016-2023

OUTCOME 5 IN P&B 2016-17	OUTCOME 5 IN P&B 2018-19	OUTPUT 3.2 IN P&B 2020-21 AND 2022-23
Indicator 5.1: Member States that have taken concrete steps to integrate decent work into rural development policies and strategies	Indicator 5.1: Number of member States that formulate or adopt strategies or policies that target employment and decent work in rural areas	Indicator 3.2.1: Number of member States with measures for decent work in the rural areas
Indicator 5.2: Member States in which constituents have set up targeted programmes that contribute to decent work and productive employment in rural areas	Indicator 5.2: Number of member States that have taken concrete steps to promote employment and decent work in rural areas	
Indicator 5.3: Member States that have enhanced their knowledge base, analytical capacity and statistics on decent work in the rural economy	Indicator 5.3: Number of member States that have established or strengthened mechanisms for consultation and social dialogue in the rural economy	

In fact, the HLE revealed that while each output could be linked to as many as three indicators, for example, Output 3.1 pertains to three indicators, only one indicator has been assigned to Output 3.2. This was also found to limit the type of results that could be reported for DWRE.

Alternatively, CPO-level progress can be tracked through the IRIS (as the internal monitoring system) and the Decent Work Results dashboard (which is publicly accessible). However, in the absence of regular and systematic analysis of these data, the available monitoring information is not being proactively used for making planning decisions. In addition, in a number of instances, the HLE found challenges with data integrity and presentation when analysing data from the Decent Work Results dashboard, for example, discrepancies in project end dates, lack of apparent linkages of "ILO's Contributions" with "Results Achieved", and incomplete project activities details. The lack of linkages between the OBW planning dashboard made it highly cumbersome to align information between the two dashboards. In the absence of a section on challenges and progress against targets, information in the dashboard only tells half the project story.

Most crucially, data in the DW Results Dashboard are mostly qualitative and not available in a readily analytical format. Also, since progress for each CPO is updated once every two years, in accordance with the ILO's P&Bs, progress data are not available in real time.

The HLE also observed that due to its transversal characteristics, promotion of DWRE is reflected across various policy outcomes, for example, all eight policy outcomes of the P&B (2020–2023).



Hence, due to the assignment of DWRE specifically to Outcome 5/ Output 3.2, reporting against the P&B monitoring and results framework does not cover ILO's effort to promote DWRE in their entirety.

For instance, the HLE noted that at least nine CPOs linked to various indicators associated with Outcome 4 (Sustainable Enterprises) in the 2016–17 biennia reported actions with significant rural economy components.²¹⁹

However, the HLE found that, as a result of changes in the reporting system instituted in 2020, ²²⁰ a CPO can now be linked to multiple P&B outcomes and outputs. ²²¹ Consequently, the HLE noted the presence of several CPOs which were linked to other outputs in addition to Output 3.2 in the biennia from 2020 onwards. Given the transversal nature of rural economy in ILO's programming, this approach should facilitate the expansion of the number of interventions and CPOs under Output 3.2 which could not previously be linked to it due to restrictions on the number of outcomes/outputs that could be linked to a CPO or intervention. Nevertheless, interviews with ILO staff revealed that linking CPOs to particular outcomes or indicators is often subject to the respective programming/project staff's decision. Therefore, the chances of making such multiple linkages are high for projects which are implemented in collaboration between different ILO units or departments. Thus, in the absence of regular collaboration on DWRE programming by SECTOR as well as the dearth of DWRE Specialists/Focal Points to push the DWRE agenda, it is anticipated that CPOs will continue to be underreported against Output 3.2, despite the change in the reporting system.

Additionally, the HLE noted that, given their very limited size and geographical coverage, the DWRE-related projects are implemented as pilots meant to be replicated and taken to scale if successful, the limited support to the M&E function prevents this from happening. For instance, the targets or deliverables related to overall monitoring and reporting, result dissemination and scaling-up were found to be missing from results frameworks at all levels, including P&Bs, DWCPs and projects. In addition, project-level results frameworks often lack reliable baseline values and Specific, Measurable, Achievable, Relevant, and Time-bound (SMART) indicators. For instance, RAS/20/53/UND missed out key indicators of socio-economic empowerment that would have facilitated data gathering for decision-making processes, whereas a needs assessment had to be undertaken during the inception phase of JOR/19/02/AUS to compensate for its weak design. Similarly, the evaluation of the Education for All project in Madagascar²²² recommended the implementation of a results-based management approach with monitoring, evaluation, logical framework, ToC, risk management and exit strategy. At the country level, a number of DWCPs have undergone final evaluation and project-level progress and evaluation reports are also submitted to donors.

222 MAG/15/03/CEF

²¹⁹ Namely, TUN103, DZA103, PER153, CMR904, MMR127, MLI103, ZMB133, SLV126 and PSE901.

²²⁰ An analysis of the changes and the opportunities and challenges associated with the ILO's reporting system are elaborated upon in the Efficiency section.

²²¹ ILO, Implementation planning for 2022–23: Guidance note on SM/IP-22, 2021.

LIKELIHOOD OF IMPACT AND SUSTAINABILITY

KEY FINDING 11

The ILO's actions had a positive impact on the capacities of governments and workers' organizations at the local level. Advocacy support was provided to employers' organizations to promote DWRE. However, sustainability and long-term changes remained limited, notably for job creation.

KEY FINDING 12

While training and capacity-building, policy influence, social dialogue, market systems development and partnerships with constituents promoted sustainability, the lack of clear strategies for upscaling, limited financial resources and technical capacity persisted as major threats.

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KEY FINDING 13

The ILO's actions on policy improvements yielded results of varying levels, from achieving structural and transformative impacts, improvements in regulatory frameworks and adoption of strategic quidelines, to the development and approval of strategies/policies only.

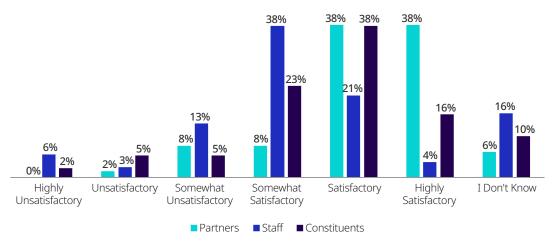
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KEY FINDING 14

Small project size, limited resources, unclear theory of change and absence of synergies were identified as internal constraints to impact. Persistent limited constituent capacities and buy-in, lack of infrastructure, political instability, and COVID-19 featured as external impact constraints.

The survey with ILO staff, constituents and partners revealed that overall, **51 per cent of all respondents found the sustainability of ILO actions on promoting DWRE to be satisfactory or highly satisfactory.** Partners (72 per cent) followed by constituents (54 per cent) who responded to the survey found the sustainability of ILO's actions on promoting DWRE to be satisfactory or highly satisfactory. The highest proportion of ILO Staff considered the likelihood of sustainability of ILO actions on promoting DWRE to be somewhat satisfactory; whereas a sizeable minority of ILO staff (22 per cent) leaned towards dissatisfaction. The following figure provides a breakdown of the overall ratings on sustainability by the three different respondent types.

FIGURE 18. RATINGS ON THE SUSTAINABILITY OF ILO ACTIONS ON PROMOTING DWRE ACROSS SURVEYED STAKEHOLDERS



Source: Survey of ILO staff (N=62), constituents (N=61), and partners (N=36) conducted as part of the HLE.

Amongst ILO staff, sustainability in terms of the availability of financial resources to sustain or scale-up initiatives was rated least favourably, as only 8 per cent of staff rated it as satisfactory or highly satisfactory. In comparison, the likelihood of sustainability in terms of increased knowledge of the ILO's agenda amongst constituents was rated as satisfactory or highly satisfactory by a significantly higher proportion of ILO staff (36 per cent).

The HLE found the near virtual absence of impact data and assessments to be a major shortcoming of ILO's programming across the board. In particular, the lack of baseline and endline assessments and tracer studies results in limited assessment of impact. In the absence of these data, information from previous evaluation reports and interviews was used to make an assessment of the likelihood of impact and sustainability of ILO's efforts towards promoting DWRE.

Impact of ILO's actions on policy improvements and other enabling tools

The HLE found that the impact of ILO's actions on policy improvements and other enabling tools can vary depending on the context and the engagement of Member States.

A key example of far-reaching policy implications was observed in Uzbekistan, where the ILO's engagement and support contributed to the elimination of both systemic child labour and forced labour from the annual cotton harvest and improved wages. Through monitoring and reforms, Uzbekistan has an estimated 2 million children and 500,000 adults removed from exploitative labour practices. During the same period, working conditions also improved, and the average price paid to a worker for a kilo of cotton increased six-fold. This improvement in working conditions and eradication of forced labour has led to international recognition, lifting bans on Uzbek cotton, including the removal of Uzbek cotton from the list of goods made with child labour and forced labour in 2019 by the Government of the United States of America; the EU decision to grant Uzbekistan GSP+ status; as well as the Cotton Campaign's decision to lift the ban on Uzbek cotton in 2022.²²³ However, based on the available impact data, the HLE could not assess the extent to which organizations other than ILO contributed to these results.

In Jordan, the establishment of Labour Management Committees in the floriculture sector paved the way for improving the regulatory framework in a sector with a high proportion of informal economy and laid the foundation for promoting decent work among vulnerable groups, particularly Syrian refugees. This initiative has enhanced the policy environment and provided a platform for dialogue and collaboration between workers' and employers' organizations.²²⁴

In Brazil, ILO's Strategic Guidelines for the Promotion of Decent Work in the Cocoa Productive Chain (Cocoa 2030) were adopted and launched by tripartite constituents. This initiative, in partnership with the World Cocoa Foundation (WCF), has reportedly mobilized efforts to guarantee the rights of cocoa producers and promote strong trade unions. The adoption of these quidelines has led to concrete actions, such as the Project Cocoa 2030 (a US\$1 million project financed by the private sector), financed by the private sector, to implement the directives and improve working conditions in the cocoa sector.²²⁵

In Malawi, ILO's work in the tobacco sector was based on the ILO's integrated strategy to address decent work deficits in the tobacco sector.²²⁶ Within the framework of this programme, the ILO has been providing technical support to its constituents as follows: a. Transition away from the tenancy system, which was often associated with forced labour and child labour and which was recently abolished; b. Strengthen the organization of workers in the sector, including the reinvigoration of a union of tobacco workers; and c. Strengthen the capacity of enterprises to comply with relevant national laws and regulations.

Conversely, in as many instances, support to policy did not yield tangible results beyond the initial development and/or approval of the policy. For instance, in Madagascar the Decent Work Action Plan developed with ILO's assistance has not been implemented or monitored; while in the Lao People's Democratic Republic, the painstakingly developed National Rural Employment Strategy (NRES) 2021 remains unutilized due to the lack of an accompanying action plan and resource mobilization strategy. In Colombia, although ILO supported the development of regional government policies for 2022–2032, there has been no follow up by the ILO to assess their implementation status.

Impact of ILO's actions on strengthened capacities of constituents

Overall, the projects had varying degrees of **impact on building the capacity of constituents**. They positively influenced rural economies, facilitated short-term employment and relief, fostered changes in mindsets and social links, and enhanced employability in specific sectors. However, sustainability, long-term changes, and the systemic issue of unemployment remained challenges in some cases.

ILO's support to constituents led to demonstratable impact in some instances. Strengthening of workers' organizations (unions, cooperatives, and farmer organizations) led to further bipartite dialogues and collective bargaining. For instance, in Uzbekistan, support led to the establishment of the first independent employers' organization (Confederation of Employers) and the Federation of Trade Unions of Uzbekistan was able to join the International Trade Union Confederation (ITUC) as an associate member.

While in Indonesia, a SECTOR study of DW deficits in the palm oil sector²²⁷ led to subsequent sizable interventions funded by the Netherlands and the United States in the sector.²²⁸ These projects are credited with fundamentally changing the labour relations in the sector from adversarial to more collaborative and constructive, and improving bipartite cooperation between workers and enterprises. While much remains to be done in the sector, the impact of ILO's interventions has brought lasting change and improved prospects for promoting DW in the sector. Moreover, ILO's experience in the sector was later also applied to the fishing and seafood sector, and more recently to other rural sectors.



The Palm Oil Trade Union Network drafted 15 new CBAs and one was signed.

Similarly, an agreement was signed between ILO and the TAML in 2019 that improved the relationship between plantation workers and employers' organizations in the tea plantations.

Support to workers and workers' organizations also resulted in income gains in some instances. For example, ILO projects on DWRE in the Lao People's Democratic Republic directly benefited 561 households by increasing incomes at least by 30 per cent. In total, the target villages received nearly US\$100,000 in revenue from new activities or higher production volume.²²⁹

On the other hand, the HLE found that in a number of instances, activities were implemented without clarity on linkages between planned actions and intended outcomes. For instance, although the EIIP project in Jordan included training provisions for both government officials and contractors, it was unclear how the training would lead to better practices for contractors, improved institutional systems, and better policy and regulatory frameworks. Similarly, approximately 10 per cent of the reviewed CPOs, revealed that some form of research or assessment was undertaken without a plan for building on the resultant findings.

²²⁷ Decent Work on Oil Palm Plantations in Indonesia – ILO Diagnostic Process Report, 2015 (unpublished).
228 Promoting Decent Work in Oil Palm Plantations in Indonesia (IDN/16/02/NLD); Advancing workers' rights in Indonesia's palm oil sector (RAS/18/10/USA).

Internal and external factors constraining impact

With few exceptions where ILO's work has resulted in system-wide changes, for example, palm oil sector (Indonesia) and child labour (Uzbekistan), several internal factors were found to have constrained medium to longer term impact, including small project size, scope, and duration, limited financial and human resources, unclear ToC, inadequate synergy development with other programme units and partners; and local buy in. For instance, in the LAO People's Democratic Republic, capacities of remote rural producers were built in passion fruit farming and market linkages. However, the agreement with buyers being a one-time event, interviewees expressed serious doubts about the continuation of that activity beyond the project life. Whereas in Lebanon, career counselling and soft skills were provided to just 181 Syrian refugees, of whom 30 were placed in Work-Based Learning (WBL) opportunities and 47 were referred to employment opportunities.²³⁰

External factors limiting impact varied across countries, but most frequently encountered challenges were security situation, political stability, partner and constituent capacities, accessibility of rural areas, enabling environment, cultural norms and resistance to change, political will and ownership by constituents, and COVID-19. For instance, ILO's actions in Jordan reportedly resulted in advances in labour inspection, OSH services, safe corridors for migrant workers, child labour, and inclusive social protection. However, worsening economic conditions during the COVID-19 pandemic weakened employer compliance with decent work/OSH regulations. The synthesis review also noted that some overall factors on impact are that subsistence families work in seclusion and are reluctant to join collective movements, which hinders unionization and creates challenges at the social dialogue level.

Projects were often seen suffering from a combination of these internal and external challenges simultaneously. For instance, the evaluation report of the Green Works project in Jordan identified the lack of a robust design process, including a comprehensive sector assessment, clear ToC, and reliable exit strategy, were major internal factors limiting effectiveness and impact. While, due to limited budgets, government departments had to revert to their original method of working despite recognizing the importance of employment intensive approaches.

ILO'S approach to ensuring sustainability

The key sustainability strategies utilized by the ILO were: training and capacity building; policy influence; social dialogue and tripartism; market systems development approach; and partnerships with constituents. Interventions were sustainable in cases where an enabling environment was created in the country over a long time, strong market linkages developed, and constituent ownership ensured.

In particular, ILO has been able to gain **recognition for and trust of national governments and donors** as an agency with technical resources to influence the Decent Work Agenda. Also, as stated in the section on Effectiveness, capacity building has been increasingly recognized by the ILO as an effective implementation strategy, with 79 per cent of CPOs involved in capacity-building work in 2020–21 up from just 46 per cent in 2016–17.

Partnerships with local constituents, including government authorities, employers' organizations, workers' organizations, and local communities also resulted in the replication or integration of activities in local programming to varying degrees. For instance, in Colombia, National Federation of Coffee Producers (FENACA)" for Colombian Coffee Growers Federation (FNC) replicated OSH information for its affiliates using communication channels like WhatsApp and video programmes. While skill certification and training resources were integrated into the curricula of the National TVET institutes in Colombia (coffee bean collectors' certificate) and Bolivia²³¹ (Program of Virtual Learning Rural Community Tourism and Decent Work).

In some instances, where initiatives are not sustained due to political buy-in or capacities, the ILO staff rightly pointed to the Government's sovereign role. For instance, the decision to implement the DWRE Plan in Madagascar or National Rural Employment Strategy in the Lao People's Democratic Republic. However, the HLE observed that considering the close relationship ILO enjoys with these governments, there was **little indication of ILO promoting the use of these strategic inputs**.

Opportunities and challenges to sustainability

Major factors ensuring sustainability included holistic approaches driven by market forces and constituent buy-in. On the other hand, the lack of sound exit strategies and clear strategies for scaling up limited results monitoring and dissemination. The absence of post-project technical and financial support, and political will, were also found to be the key obstacles to sustainability.

Holistic support provided in cases such as Uzbekistan (cotton), Indonesia (palm oil), and Jordan (floriculture) leading to an enabling environment and system-wide changes were also factors governing sustainability. For instance, in Uzbekistan, the ILO promoted holistic change by working both at the system level (policies, legal frameworks, and national-level institutional capacity-building) and local levels (piloting models with field-level stakeholders and conducting social mobilization and advocacy campaigns in collaboration with tripartite constituents and civil society organizations). This approach enabled complementary changes at different levels, strengthening positive outcomes overall. However, it is important to note that this transformation was also made possible by market forces in the form of economic pressure from international buyers of cotton and the political will and resources of the Government of Uzbekistan to overcome this challenge. For example, in the Lao People's Democratic Republic where, despite ILO using similar approaches since 2012, has not been able to bring about sustainable change due to the absence of such driving forces.



The synthesis review also found that embedding interventions within existing government programmes and using simple, maintainable technologies maximizes local and national ownership.

This was seen in Jordan in the Green Works project, which included the building of water cisterns which were "out of all the components of the project the outputs are most likely to remain and be used in the future" as they were simple and easily maintainable. While the Addressing Child Labour project in Jordan promoted DWRE by working within the national framework, updating Standard Operating Procedures (SOPs) in the national case management system. In addition, the uptake depended on the degree of representativity of local groups in targeted communities and on the strength of social dialogue mechanisms to foster social participation and engagement.

The HLE further ascertained that major challenges to sustainability at the policy and institutional level are financial resources and technical capacities. Whereas, at the community-level, activities are susceptible to discontinuation in the absence of support, difficult access to markets, and a lack of technical know-how. Furthermore, climate change and the availability of natural resources (for example, water availability in agriculture) can also pose a risk to sustainability.

Projects generally lacked sound exit strategies to deal with key challenges to sustainability, including the continuation of financial and technical support as well as political will and overcoming resistance to change. The HLE observed that sustainability challenges were more pronounced when working with government and workers' organizations. The lack of sound exit strategies was also a challenge for upscaling of initiatives yielding positive results. This has been a key factor preventing ILO actions from leading to transformative change. For instance, constituent capacities were built in Colombia, the Lao People's Democratic Republic and Madagascar, but for these very localized initiatives scaling up was not an option due to the lack of a plan. Similarly, the evaluation of the IFAD-ILO INSURED project found that the lack of a solid exit strategy and of anchoring the project in country programmes or local partners' models were perceived as issues undermining sustainability. One of the main challenges in the project remained the scaling-up process.

The thematic case study on mainstreaming DWRE in employment policies also reported that while successful in creating short-term jobs, employment-intensive investments in the rural sector (for example, infrastructure works) often produce low-quality work opportunities, and do not lead to sustainable job creation.

Box 5. Comprehensive and integrated support to the Floriculture Sector – Jordan

The floriculture project in Jordan was highly successful in promoting and increasing sensitization to DWRE. The project included the formation of a Tripartite Working Group to discuss, create and approve bylaws for agriculture workers under the labour code. The project also advanced labour rights through fostering social dialogue with the establishment of Labour Management Committees at the GFJTU and cooperated with the Ministry of Labour, Ministry of Agriculture, the VTC and JCFA to improve the regulatory framework in the floriculture sector at policy, institutional and individual levels. In addition, the programme included training of labour inspectors in the agriculture sectors which was a major result contributing to decent work in the floriculture sector. The strengthening of the regulatory framework in the agriculture sector to sustain the achieved results was reinforced through the Ministry of Labour in cooperation with the Labour Inspections Department. In order to achieve the desired change in the social level, the project engaged local communities to change the social norms through cooperation with the Institute for Family Health - Noor Al Hussein Foundation (IFH-NHF). Lastly, the project contributed to knowledge building and sharing at country and national levels through the creation of knowledge products. However, the project faced issues related to the short-term nature and design of the project. For example, it was noted that there was insufficient training duration to allow workers to be fully skilled as the technical-on-the-job training lasted only 18 days when the nature of the work requires a longer training period (2–3 months) to be adequately skilled. Another issue was that farmers struggle to meet the salary expectations of the workers after training, leading to worker dissatisfaction and turnover. In addition, after the project ended, not all farmers were willing to provide transportation or compensate workers for transportation making it difficult for workers who lived far from the farms to afford to continue to go to work. When it came to including PWDs, a major issue was that the farms were not accessible to PWDs and the farmers lacked knowledge on how to create suitable workplaces.



CONCLUSIONS, LESSONS LEARNED AND EMERGING GOOD PRACTICES

CONCLUSIONS, LESSONS LEARNED AND EMERGING GOOD PRACTICES

CONCLUSIONS

While funding for DWRE-related outcome/output has steadily increased, 62 per cent of average annual delivery rate demonstrates that ILO is not well equipped to fully utilize these resources. Also, ILO programming is neither adequately leveraging areas of comparative advantage in the promotion of DWRE, including ILS and social protection, nor sufficiently integrating just transition or disability, to further its DWRE agenda.

The assignment of transversal topics, such as the rural economy, to a particular outcome or output does not adequately present the Organization-wide contribution towards achievements in such areas of work. Sustained programming using multifaceted and well-integrated approaches can result in the most positive impact towards promoting DWRE.

Relatively more formalized sectors, such as plantations, present a key avenue where the ILO has higher chances of applying its normative mandate by strengthening FPRW, incorporating OSH, and strengthening bipartite social dialogue between workers' and employers' organizations.

In the context of limited resources and capacities, partnerships with other international agencies can facilitate in the filling of crucial gaps. Furthermore, the involvement of government agencies beyond ministries of labour can also improve effectiveness of projects by facilitating buy-in and establishing inter-governmental linkages and coordination.

Sustainability is a major concern across the board, mostly owing to ineffective or absent exit strategies.

Relevance

The High-Level Evaluation of ILO's strategies and actions for promoting DWRE with a focus on rural employment revealed that while programming has been relevant to the Sustainable Development Agenda 2030 and the UNSDCF and also aligned with ILO's 2019 Centenary Declaration, the ILO's strategy on DWRE, formulated in 2011, although broad in scope, remained a static document and has not been reviewed despite considerable changes and emerging trends globally. In fact, implementation of the 2011 strategy has not been monitored or evaluated since its formulation. While DWRE also lacks an organizational-level ToC.

The ILO's programming to promote DWRE is narrowly focused on agriculture and infrastructure; whereas support to tourism also picked up since 2020. The HLE found that programming aligned well with country priorities and was highly relevant to the needs of all constituents. Governments had the most profound influence on programming followed by employers' organizations. Due to limited representation of rural workers and micro and small enterprises, their priorities were incorporated into ILO programming indirectly through alignment with government policies.

Absence of in-depth and systematic documentation of lessons learned posed challenges in formulating effective subsequent programming at country levels. While responses to new and emerging trends were not systematically integrated into ILO programming on promoting DWRE. Countries with rapidly evolving rural economies expressed the need for more sophisticated ILO support.

Coherence

The promotion of DWRE was found to be a transversal topic being addressed by 10 outcomes of the 2016–2019 P&B document and all eight programme outcomes of the 2020–2023 P&B document. In fact, corresponding to the 2020–23 P&Bs, an almost equal proportion (33 per cent) of CPOs associated with rural economy were linked to Outcome 4 – Sustainable Enterprises compared to 32 per cent to Outcome 3 – Employment and Decent Work, while the remaining DWRE-related CPOs are spread across the rest of outcomes. The absence of implementing the institutional mechanisms prescribed by the 2011 Strategy, and the lack of an effective Organization-wide collaboration mechanism, including non-existent identified linkages between multiple related CPOs or among project-based initiatives as well as the dearth of incentives for joint/collaborative programming have prevented explicit systemic integration. Furthermore, relegating DWRE to a standalone Outcome 5 (P&B 2016–2019) and later Output 3.2 (2020–2023) have obscured the collective gains made in rural economy by the ILO.

Although ILO's comparative advantage lies in its normative mandate and technical capacity to influence Decent Work, DWRE programmes focused primarily on Employment promotion facilitated by Social Dialogue. While programming also somewhat contributed to support the ratification of key Conventions, International Labour Standards (ILS) and Social Protection were only reflected marginally in planning and implementation. Just transition was also absent despite its critical importance to rural employment, as highlighted in the 2019 Centenary Declaration.

Effectiveness

Programme achievement against P&B targets was found to oscillate between over and under achievement due to setting of unrealistic targets, while project-level targets were often met. Capacity building, knowledge generation, social dialogue, and other forms of specific TA, such as support to policy development and enterprise-level bipartite cooperation, were predominant means of action, with governments and workers' organizations as the primary beneficiaries; while support to employers' organizations was relatively modest.

Initiatives yielded significant results when multi-pronged and integrated support was provided, especially if these focused on the creation of an enabling environment, coupled with developments driven by market forces and the involvement of constituents. However, the overwhelming proportion of initiatives to promote DWRE were implemented in isolation from projects under other programming outcomes, and at a localized and pilot scale without consciously instituting the means for further replication and upscaling. Despite significant support to policy, effectiveness is not clear due to the absence of follow up and evaluation reviews. Further, of the 27 CPOs incorporating knowledge generation, 22 per cent involved only preparation of documents without linkages to any other means of action. Limited dissemination also prevented adoption by constituents.

Actions reoriented in response to COVID-19 entailed a shift to no contact delivery, knowledge and research, OSH support, and job recovery through EIIPs.

The overwhelming proportion of ILO's initiatives to promote DWRE were found to be uncoordinated and implemented at a localized and pilot scale without consciously instituting the means for further replication and upscaling, thereby missing the opportunity for prompting transformative change. COVID-19 also slowed down the pace of progress.

Gender was consistently integrated into programming, but interventions were not always effective in promoting equality. Youth were implicitly or directly supported through capacity building and linkages to job markets, but disability inclusion was mostly overlooked. Depending on the country context, other marginal groups, such as indigenous communities and refugees also benefited. Nevertheless, by design, market-oriented projects risked "elite capture".

102

Efficiency

SECTOR which has been the department entrusted to lead the coordination of ILO's action on promoting DWRE lacks the mandate and capacity for leading the coordination of outcomes/outputs pertaining to the promotion of DWRE, as the department is primarily responsible for developing global policy and guidance tools and knowledge products, and for organizing sectoral tripartite meetings. While staffing at HQ is somewhat in line with the requirements of DWRE promotion, staffing structures in regional and country offices are inefficiently lean, and the lack of dedicated Rural Economy Specialists in four out of the five regional offices is a concern. Non-resident country offices managed remotely rely on DWTs or regional offices to the detriment of partnership development and responsiveness to constituent needs. Staff turnover has been high with no succession planning, and long recruitment processes have caused implementation delays and coordination challenges.

The absence of a coherent DWRE policy drive from HQ to support regional and country-level DWRE work results in ad-hoc cross-country / cross-regional collaboration. About 30 per cent of surveyed ILO staff rated coordination between country initiatives and HQ, and country and regional levels as unsatisfactory.

Financial resource availability for DWRE has been gradually increasing, an indication of constituent demand and donor interest, as 90 per cent of the financing has been donor-based. The total expenditure on promoting DWRE during the evaluation period amounted to US\$86.7 million; and estimated average annual expenditure was US\$8 million between 2016 and 2019 and US\$18.3 million for the years from 2020 to 2022. However, the average annual delivery rate during the evaluation period was alarmingly low at 62 per cent, and as low as 48 per cent for the year 2022. The absence of a cohesive resource mobilization strategy was found to result in fragmented programme delivery and little ILO control over medium- to long-term planning. Only 26 per-cent of surveyed ILO staff rated the ILO's resource mobilization towards promoting DWRE as highly satisfactory or satisfactory.

Being high-level documents that do not cover the breadth of activities undertaken by ILO under its DWRE programming, the P&B framework as a primary programme planning and progress monitoring tool had significant shortcomings. Targets or deliverables related to overall monitoring and reporting, results dissemination and scaling-up were also found to be missing from results frameworks at all levels, including P&Bs, DWCPs, and projects which hinder the scaling up and replication of pilot projects.

Global partnerships, building upon ILO's comparative advantages centred on knowledge and advocacy with strategic development partners, including UN agencies were established, with FAO and IFAD being prominent partners. Some examples of these include: International Partnership for Cooperation on Child Labour in Agriculture, Global Accelerator on Jobs and Social Protection for Just Transitions, and the CLEAR Cotton Project. At the country level, partnerships resulted in 53 joint interventions of about US\$41 million in total during 2016–23.

Likelihood of impact and sustainability

The HLE found that the impact of ILO's actions on policy improvements and other enabling tools varied across countries. Examples of positive impact include the elimination of child and forced labour in Uzbekistan's cotton sector, improvements in regulatory framework in Jordan's floriculture sector, and the adoption of strategic guidelines for the cocoa supply chain in Brazil. However, in other instances, support to policy did not yield tangible results beyond the initial development and approval, as was seen in the Lao People's Democratic Republic and Madagascar.

ILO positively impacted constituent capacities, often in the form of support to governments on DWRE planning and programme development (Madagascar, Peru, South Africa, etc.) establishment and/or strengthening workers' organizations (Uzbekistan), including guidance and advocacy in collective bargaining and on the Fundamental Principles of Rights at Work (FPRW); and advocacy to employers' organizations for promotion of Decent Work principles and OSH and improvements in employer-worker relations (Indonesia). However, in the absence of follow up and evaluation reviews, the outcomes of most of the policy support initiatives is not known.

Internal factors constraining impact were commonly found to be project size, limited resources, unclear ToC, and absence of synergies; while external factors accounting for limited impact included constituent capacities and buy-in, remoteness of rural areas and lack of infrastructure, security situation and political instability, and COVID-19.

To ensure sustainability, ILO used multiple strategies, including training and capacity building, policy influence, social dialogue, market systems development, and partnerships with constituents. However, with a few exceptions, sustainability has been a major concern with major influencing factors being the lack of clear exit strategies for continuation and upscaling, limited results monitoring, reporting, and dissemination, insufficient post project follow-up and support, and political will. Limited financial resources and technical capacities were also major impediments, with only 8 per cent of surveyed staff providing satisfactory ratings to this aspect. Climate change also presents significant uncertainties.

LESSONS LEARNED

- ▶ **Lesson learned 1.** The assignment of transversal topics, such as the rural economy, to a particular outcome or output does not adequately present the Organization-wide contribution made towards achievements in such areas of work.
- **Lesson learned 2.** Sustained programming using multifaceted and well-integrated approaches can result in the most positive impact towards promoting DWRE.
- Lesson learned 3. In the context of limited resources and capacities, partnerships with other international agencies can facilitate in the filling of crucial gaps. Furthermore, the involvement of government agencies beyond ministries of labour can also improve effectiveness of projects by facilitating buy-in and establishing inter-governmental linkages and coordination.
- Lesson learned 4. Relatively more formalized sectors, such as plantations, present a key avenue where the ILO has higher chances of applying its normative mandate by strengthening FPRW, incorporating OSH, and strengthening bipartite social dialogue between workers' and employers' organizations.

EMERGING GOOD PRACTICES

The HLE of the ILO's actions on promoting DWRE over the 2016–2023 period identified and highlighted the following emerging good practices:

Good practice 1. Trend towards incorporating digitalization

The HLE noted a steady trend by ILO to incorporate digitalization into DWRE programming in recent years which offers unique opportunities for innovation and impact. In Mexico, the ILO supported the Government in the design of an innovative digital rural extension model in the coffee value chain which allowed the provision of rural extension services, capacity-building trainings, and technical advice to coffee producers and producer groups, associations and cooperatives via mobile phones through a digital extension platform. Similarly, in Haiti, the ILO provided support to the Association des Producteurs-Vendeurs de Fruits du Sud (ASPVEFS) in the development and launch of a digital traceability system for the mango value chain. It collects geo-referenced information from 3,650 mango producers in 13 communes in Southern Haiti, in an effort to improve producers' strategic competitiveness by enabling them to meet traceability as an essential requirement of international buyers. While in Indonesia, an online system of labour inspection was developed based on a blended data collection model, enabling outreach to rural areas that were difficult to access even before the pandemic.

Good practice 2. Leveraging market forces to support the achievement of systemic changes

Uzbekistan stood out as an example where the ILO was successful in leveraging the synergies from the provision of extensive and holistic support in combination with exogenous market forces in the form of economic pressures from international cotton buyers to majorly contribute towards the elimination of both systemic child labour and forced labour in the cotton value chain, while also contributing towards improved wages and working conditions. The ILO was seen to provide multi-faceted support both at the systems level (policies, legal frameworks, and national-level institutional capacity-building) and local levels (piloting models with field-level stakeholders and conducting social mobilization and advocacy campaigns in collaboration with tripartite constituents and civil society organizations). This resulted in significant positive outcomes including, the removal of Uzbek cotton from the list of goods made with child labour and forced labour in 2019 by the United States Government, the EU decision to grant Uzbekistan GSP+ status, and the Cotton Campaign's decision to lift the ban on Uzbek cotton in 2022.

Good practice 3. Leveraging synergies from the confluence of multiple ILO technical areas of work

Although undertaken on a small-scale, the integration of EIIP with activities pertaining to food security and livelihoods generation in the Lao People's Democratic Republic demonstrated how the combined implementation of projects involving multiple technical areas can synergize to create positive impacts. Under LAO/16/01/CHE, the construction of a small-scale irrigation system in Sekong improved rice production for food security and was also instrumental in establishing passion fruit farming in the region that generated an estimated production value of US\$33,800 for 143 households.

Good practice 4. Strengthened partnership modalities

As detailed in other sections of the report, most of the ILO's partnerships with other international development partners are laid down in cooperation agreements that typically take the form of MOUs or similar other non-binding agreements. However, the anticipated new Supplementary Arrangement being finalized between the ILO and FAO serves as a clear example of a potentially highly substantive and detailed collaboration arrangement which clearly sets out the complementarity of the two agencies and elaborates on the thematic areas of collaboration, related modalities and resource mobilization. While it is not yet possible to assess the effectiveness of the new Supplementary Arrangement with the FAO, the HLE identifies this as a good practice with significant potential to facilitate strategic engagement of the two agencies at the global level, jointly develop effective tools, and to develop more country-level activities on promoting DWRE.

Good practice 5. Expansion of DWRE to the Tourism sector

The HLE observed an increased effort towards expansion of ILO actions on promoting DWRE in the Tourism sector since 2020, concentrated in Latin America and the Caribbean. Such expansion to new sectors presents opportunities for the ILO to utilize its comparative advantages and technical expertise to generate impacts in rapidly developing and emerging sectors. Moreover, ILO's foothold in the tourism sector in the Latin America and Caribbean region presents opportunities for the development of regional-level programming and the use of cluster approaches in implementation.

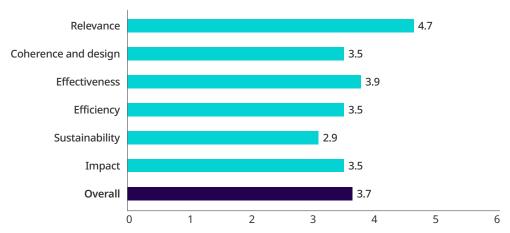


► OVERALL ASSESSMENT

OVERALL ASSESSMENT

The scores attributed to the relevance, coherence, effectiveness, efficiency, impact and sustainability of the ILO's work on promoting DWRE comprise the survey results, scores from the Synthesis Report, and the assessment of the evaluation team. The evaluation used a six-point scale (also used in the survey) to express these scores, with 1 being the lowest score, indicating highly unsatisfactory, and 6 being the highest, indicating highly satisfactory.

FIGURE 19. EVALUATION OF THE ILO'S STRATEGIES AND ACTIONS FOR PROMOTING DW IN THE RURAL ECONOMY – RATINGS BY CRITERION



Overall Assessment Ratings. Relevance: 4.7; Coherence and Design: 3.5; Effectiveness: 3.9; Efficiency: 3.5; Sustainability: 2.9; Impact: 3.5; Overall: 3.7



► RECOMMENDATIONS

RECOMMENDATIONS

RECOMMENDATION 1

The ILO should review and update the 2011 strategy document in view of the emerging global trends and existing ILO strategies. The strategy should be further expanded by means of a well-articulated theory of change to promote systemic integration of DWRE across the ILO and to ensure sufficient emphasis on all four pillars of decent work and the cross-cutting areas so as to accommodate evolving realities of the world of work.

The strategy should be complemented by a comprehensive results framework, time bound plan of action, a monitoring and reporting framework, an intra-organizational coordination framework that provides clear roles and responsibilities, and a fundraising strategy to overcome the issues of fragmented programming.

Responsible units	Priority	Time implication	Resource implication
ADG/Jobs and Social Protection (JSP): EMPLOYMENT (through a participatory approach involving all relevant departments and units from all clusters)	(H)	Short-term	Low

RECOMMENDATION 2

The ILO should strengthen coordination and stewardship of DWRE programming. A review is needed to identify a leading entity (for example, department, unit or mechanism) within the ILO with the mandate and technical capacity suitably aligned with promoting DWRE, and to provide strong stewardship to DWRE programming as a cross-cutting topic.

An Organization-wide strategy should be developed and implemented by this entity following the "3D" principle of Direction, Dialogue and Dissemination. For example, a well-functioning coordination mechanism is needed to provide cohesive direction across the ILO for DWRE programming. It should also facilitate dialogue between headquarters and regional and country offices, and disseminate monitoring results.

Responsible units	Priority	Time implication	Resource implication
ADG/JSP: EMPLOYMENT (through a participatory approach involving ENTERPRISES, SOCPRO, SECTOR, FUNDAMENTALS, DIALOGUE, LABADMIN/OSH, GEDI, INWORK, NORMES, ACTEMP, ACTRAV, regional directors (DWTs, regional offices, country offices))	(B)	Short-term	Low

RECOMMENDATION 3

The ILO should focus on programming of DWRE-related actions for sustained impact. Project designs should rely on integrated approaches and focused efforts to be implemented over extended periods to address systemic DWRE-related issues, while also integrating international labour standards and social protection, and explicitly mainstreaming gender equality, youth and persons with disabilities.

For meaningful impact and scaling-up, it is important for the ILO to identify key subsectors where work has yielded significantly positive results, such as work with palm oil and coffee plantation workers, followed by the development of ILO-specific approaches and tools to support rural workers.

Focusing on emerging trends can help the ILO find a niche in areas such as the use of digitization as a means of action and climate change adaptation strategies for rural workers, which can also help expand its scope to other growing rural industries with decent work deficits, such as renewable energy and light engineering.

To overcome the pervasive challenge of unsustainability, it is critical that sustainability strategies be incorporated in project design for durable impact, ranging from simple measures, such as local capacity-building, to more complicated measures, such as linkages with markets.

Responsible units	Priority	Time implication	Resource implication
ADG/JSP: EMPLOYMENT (through a participatory approach involving ENTERPRISES, SOCPRO, SECTOR, FUNDAMENTALS, DIALOGUE, LABADMIN/OSH, GEDI, INWORK, NORMES, RESEARCH, STATISTICS, PARTNERSHIPS, ACTEMP, ACTRAV, regional directors (DWTs, regional offices, country offices))	(8)	Short- to medium-term	Low

RECOMMENDATION 4

The ILO should revamp monitoring and reporting processes of its actions on promoting DWRE. In addition to the Programme and Budget results framework, progress on the updated DWRE strategy must be monitored and reviewed regularly, in accordance with its own complementary results framework to inform programming work.

Consolidated, reliable and up-to-date DWRE monitoring data must also be available in a readily analysable format to generate lessons learned and identify emerging trends to inform programming decisions.

Responsible units	Priority	Time implication	Resource implication
ADG/JSP: EMPLOYMENT		Short-term	Low
ADG/GRD: SECTOR	⊕►		
ADG/CS: PROGRAM			
EVAL			

RECOMMENDATION 5

The ILO should adopt transformative means of action.

For optimal use of limited resources at the country level, the ILO should strengthen support for policy development as a transformative means of action for promoting DWRE, and advocate for the implementation of policies and strategies through capacity-building, social dialogue, advocacy and market systems development. Strategies to include rural workers in programme planning must be proactively adopted, such as focus on cooperative development.

Responsible units	Priority	Time implication	Resource implication
ADG/JSP: EMPLOYMENT (through a participatory approach involving ENTERPRISES, SOCPRO, SECTOR, FUNDAMENTALS, DIALOGUE, LABADMIN/OSH, GEDI, INWORK, NORMES, PARTNERSHIPS, ACTEMP, ACTRAV, regional directors (DWTs, regional offices, country offices))	(8)	Ongoing	Low

RECOMMENDATION 6

The ILO should continue to extend and strengthen the scope of partnerships to promote DWRE.

Developing and maintaining partnerships requires extensive advocacy and outreach efforts across the UN system and other strategic partners of choice, such as IFIs, to familiarize them with the ILO's DWRE mandate and achievement of results. The ILO should develop a partnership strategy addressing global, regional and country-level partnerships for DWRE programming. The strategy should be supported by a time bound implementation plan, as well as adequate human and financial resources, and clear political commitment.

Responsible units	Priority	Time implication	Resource implication
ADG/JSP: EMPLOYMENT		Medium-term	Low
ADG/GRD: SECTOR	⊕►		
ADG/ECR: PARTNERSHIPS			



► OFFICE RESPONSE

OFFICE RESPONSE

On **Recommendation 1**, the Office will review and update the 2011 strategy. This update will be anchored in the ILO's normative and tripartite mandate, and be guided by high-level policy documents adopted by the Governing Body and the International Labour Conference. It will focus on leveraging the potential of rural areas to promote social justice, decent work and food security. It will consider the transformations in the world of work and their impact in rural areas, including (a) ensuring a just transition towards environmentally sustainable rural economies; (b) harnessing the potential of technological progress; (c) achieving gender equality; and (d) the need to react to the impact of demographic shifts. The update will be underpinned by a theory of change based on constituents' needs and priorities, and country realities. The Office will strengthen the results framework and coordination across the administrative structure, considering the outputs and indicators of the Programme and Budget and the role of the outcome coordination teams and the priority action programmes. It will also develop a coordinated approach to resource mobilization.

On **Recommendation 2**, the ILO will expand efforts to support and build constituents' capacity. A strengthened output coordination team will leverage the expertise to implement the revised strategy and serve as a catalyst for upscaling interventions and expanding outreach. The Office will enhance technical capacity in field offices, including by tapping into the expertise of employment specialists, to improve the scaling-up and sustainability of interventions. An effective coordination team encompassing field and headquarters colleagues will improve inter-cluster coordination, including with ITC-ILO, ACTRAV and ACTEMP.

On **Recommendation 3**, the ILO will build on lessons learned from integrated country level interventions, with a focus on scaling-up and ensuring their sustainability. Emerging trends and transformative changes in the world of work – driven by technological innovations, demographic shifts, climate change and globalization – will underpin DWRE interventions. In addition to scaling up interventions to promote gender equality, the ILO will strengthen its efforts to integrate persons with disabilities into its programming, so as to further a more inclusive DWRE agenda.

The ILO will act upon **Recommendation 4** in the context of ongoing efforts to strengthen the Organization's monitoring and reporting systems. The output coordination team, in consultation with field specialists, will be responsible for monitoring implementation, at the country level and globally, reporting on progress and suggesting adjustments when needed.

On **Recommendation 5**, the Office will prioritize support for policy development, with a focus on integrating DWRE principles and objectives into national development policies and frameworks. Policy areas of intervention will be determined by constituents' priorities and needs. Strategies to include rural workers in ILO programmes will be promoted, and the Office will build on lessons learned from current interventions.

On **Recommendation 6**, the Office will strengthen partnerships to advance policy coherence for DWRE and in sustainable food systems. The ILO will leverage the new partnership with IFAD and CARE on decent work for equitable food systems, as well as with the FAO and other partners involved in the implementation of the Global Accelerator on Jobs and Social Protection for Just Transitions, to achieve greater impact. The Office will continue to participate in advocacy and knowledge networks, such as the Global Donor Platform for Rural Development.



Annexes

Annex 1: List of documents reviewed

- 1. Anandan Menon. "Improving the Garment Sector in Lao PDR: Compliance through Inspection and Dialogue." International Labour Organisation, June 2017.
- 2. Borhan Uddin. "Supporting the Establishment of the National Health Insurance Scheme in Lao PDR and the Extension of Coverage." International Labor Organization, April 2016.
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Annex 2: List of stakeholders interviewed

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Case Stud	ly Lao		
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3	Ms. Soubin Taenbouapha	Deputy Head of Labour Safety Division	
4	Mr. Bong	Technical Staff, Labour Management Division	
5	Ms. Loveleen DE	Programme Manager	ILO Office
6	Mr. Viengprasith Thiphasouda	National Programme Coordinator	
7	Mr. Thongleck Xiong	National Programme Coordinator	
8	Mr. Bounthavy Bounmy	National Project Coordinator	
9	Mr. Sayphet Phuangmachanh	Community Facilitator	
10	Mr. Bounloh Khothong	Head of the Department	Ministry of Education and Culture
11	Mr. Anousone Khamsingsavath	Director General	Department of Employment
12	Mr. Vanhny Keoxayyavong	Deputy Director General	
13	Mr. Kanthala Luanglath	Head of Freelance Promotion Division	
14	Ms. Phetchinda Sysomvang	Deputy Head of Freelance Promotion Division	
15	Mr. Singthong Singhalath	Technical Staff, Freelance Promotion Division	
16	Mr. Sysouphan Ngamvongsa	Deputy Head of SVK Labour and Social Welfare Department	SVK Labour and Social Welfare Department
17	Mr. Boudsaba Taixayyavong	Head of Labour Division	
18	Mr. Phouthanaem Chanthasyda	Deputy Head of Labour Division	
19	Mr. Anousone Phimmasane	Deputy Head of SVK Planning and Investment	SVK Planning and Investment
20	Mr. Phady Phliyavong	Head of International Cooperation Division, SVK Planning and Investment	
21	Mr. Chansamone Sengthavong	Technical Staff	
22	Mr. Pativet Lathvilayvong	Technical Staff	
23	Mr. Ladda Lasaphon	Technical Staff	
24	Mr. Phonepaseuth Soulinthone	Technical Staff	
25	Mr. Valiya Sichan Thongthip	Director General	

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27	Mr. Keooudone Souliya	Head of Planning and Finance Division	_
28	Mr. Somboun Lengsavath	Deputy Director General	
29	Mr. Phouthone Kettavong	Head of Fisheries Division	_
30	Mr. Boun Kyung Chanwan Ng		_
31	Mr. Khamma Boudthichak	Deputy Head of Consulting Division	SVK Women's Union
32	Mr. Kinnalone Sengsombath	Head of Women and Children Development Promotion Division	_
33	Mr. Chanthanome Chanthavilay	Deputy Head of Promotion and Training Division	_
34	Mr. Viengsamone Phaphithak	Provincial Women's Union	_
35	Mr. Viengxay Sysoudta	Deputy Head of SVK LFTU	SVK LFTU
36	Mr. Dalavone Nhunhaboud	Deputy Head of Labour Protection Division	_
37	Mr. Chanphen Maniseng	Head of Division	_
38	Mr. Samansy Chansengthip	Technical Staff, Labour Protection Division	_
39	Mr. Chittasone Vonglakone	Technical Staff, Labour Protection Division	_
40	Mr. Koppiti Sengdalavong	Technical Staff, Labour Protection Division	_
41	Mr. Phomma Thongpheng	Provincial committee member	_
42	Mr. Bangon Phimmasane	Acting Secretary of SVK Youth Union Board of Management	SVK Youth Union
43	Mr. Somphone Keomahavong	Deputy Head of Youth Professional Development Division	_
44	Mr. Khamtoun Sonsanith	Provincial Youth Office	
45	Mr. Phonsam Chansina	Provincial commercial industry	Industry and Commerce Sector
46	Ms. Sonenaly Phetsiriseng	Program Officer	SDC
47	Mr. Khamphan	Head of District Planning Office	District Planning Office
48	Mr. Daovading Phirasayphithak	Deputy Secretary General	LNCCI
49	Mr. Vanny Keosayavong	Deputy Director General	
50	Mr. Nouthong Hompanya	Technical staff, Child Protection Division	_
51	Mr. Khairul	СТА	USAID
52	Mr. Viladeth Souksavatdm	Project Manager	_

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56	Mr. Doue Lachkham	Director de'I'Emploi	
57	Mr. Souad Bouhamidi	Regional Director RSK	ANAPEC
58	Mr. Adil Berbich	Chef Service Ressources	_
59	Mr. Achraf L fath	Chef Agence Direction Regionale RSK	
60	Ms. Siham Chatri	Beneficiaire de formation de formateur (GERME, COOP)	-
61	Mr. M. El Fatihi	Direction Reginale Tanger T etouan Al Hocienna	-
62	Ms. Lamiae Cheraoui	Direction Reginale Tanger T etouan Al Hocienna	-
63	Mr. Rachid Lahboubi	Directeur	Ecole d'Agriculture de Temara
64	Mr. Idamine Malika	Beneficiaire de formation de formateur (GERME, COOP, GET AHEAD)	
65	Mr. Mohamed El Khiri	Beneficiaire de formation de formateur (GERME, COOP)	
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67	Ms. Ouassila Belkase	Responsible Skhirat Temara	INDH
68	Mr. Moud Boulaich	Gerant Hydroponic Farming SYZ	Beneficiary
69	Mr. Rachid Filali-Meknassi	Director	Conseils.org
70	Mr. Fatiha El Harti	Cheffe de cooperative - Formation formateurs Get Ahead	Beneficiary
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73	Mr. Houcine Nejjari	Conseiller Technique	GIZ
74	Mr. Mahdi Halmi	Social Policy Specialist	UNICEF
75	Ms. Maryam Onyinoyi Abdu	Chief of Social Policy Monitoring and Evaluation	UNICEF Lao
76	Mr. Jean Senahoun	FAO Representative Morocco	FAO
77	Mr. Badia Arab	Chargee de project	FNSA (UMT)
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79	Mr. Hind Moutou	Member Bureau Executive of Syndicate	UGTM
80	Mr. Ali Serhani	Member CGEM	CGEM

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87	Mr. Samia Ouzgane	Coordinatrice Nationale ADWA	•
88	Mr. Rahim Amraoui	Coordinateur National/Point Focal Migration de main d'oeuvre	
89	Mr. Gilles Cols	Chief Technical Advisor - ProAgro Maroc	
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115	Mr. Tomas Sugiono	National Project Officer, Promise II Impact	
116	Mr. Yunirwan Gah	National Project Coordinator, Palm Oil Project	
117	Mr. Albert Bonasahat	National Project Coordinator, Ship to Shore Rights	
118	Mr. Dyah Retno Suharto	National Project Coordinator, Promotion of C190 ratification and prevention of violence and harassment at work	
119	Mr. Muhamad Nour	National Project Coordinator, Alliance 8.7 Accelerator Lab to Combat Modern Slavery	
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124	Mr. John Ritchotte	Spec, Social Dialogue and Labour Administration	
125	Mr. Markus Ruck	Social Protection Specialist	
126	Mr. Yuli Adiratna	Dir. Of Labour Norms, Inspection, Development	Ministry of Manpower
127	Ms. Mefy Puji Wartianh	Labour Inspection	
128	Mr. Subhan	Labour Inspection	
129	Mr. Faried Nur Yuliono	Coordinator, Labour Legislation and Cooperation	
130	Mr. Prasetyo	Sub-Coordinator, Labour Legislation	
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135	Mr. Nursanna Marpaung	HUKATAN (Forestry and Plantation Workers Federation)	
136	Mr. Irham Ali Saifuddin	President, K-Sarmbumisi Confederation of Indonesian Moslem Trade Unions	-
137	Mr. Sumarjono Saragin	Board Member, Deputy Chairman, GAPKI (employers' association in palm oil sector)	Employers
138	Mr. Thomas Darmawan	APINDO (Indonesian Employers Organization), Fromr Secretary-General, current Head of Fisheries Committee	
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159	Ms. Volatiana RAZAFINDRATOANINA	Directeur Régional de l'Agriculture et de METFP (Ministère de l'enseignement l'Elevage – Analamanga			
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161	Ms. Solotiana RAMANDIMBIMANANA	Chef de service - Gestion des risques et catastrope	(Ministère de l'Education Nationale)MEN		
162	Ms. Tantely RANDRIAMANAMPISOA	Chef de service Infrastructures DREN - Fitovinany	_		
163	Mr. Philippe Henrion RAZAFIMANDIMBY	Chef CISCO Vohipeno	_		
164	Mr.RAKOTOARISOA, Hery, Lanto	Président	FIVMPAMA		
165	Ms. Rocquie RABEMANANTSOA	Présidente Commission Sociale	СТМ		
166	Ms.Tina ANDRIAMANANA	Sendika TM	APIPA (Autorité pour la protéction contre les inondations de la plaine d'Antananarivo)		
167	Mr. Tojoandry RAFIDIMANANTSOA	Directeur general			
168	Mr. GI RAZAFITSOTRA Lucien	Gouverneur de la Région Fitovinany	REGION		
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170	Mr. Daniel	Membre de la Fédération des agriculteurs Tana	_		
171	Ms. Lullana RAVELOHARISOA	Directeur du CFP Beravina Flanarantsoa			
172	Mr. Christian	Bénéficiaire ProAgro YOUTH	_		
173	Mr. Andry	Bénéficiaire ProAgro YOUTH			
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174	Ms. Jovce Patricia Bheeka	Chef de Section Education	UNICEF		
175	Mr. Joseph Rostand OLINGA BIWOLE	Directeur du BP-Tanä	FIDA		
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177	Mr. Pierrot RANDRIANARITIANA	Coordonnateur National	FIDA/ Programme DEFIS		

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181	Ms. Clara RAMAROMANANA	Chargée de Programme	_
182	Ms. Sylviane VOLOLONIAINA	Coordonnatrice Nationale du Projet	_
183	Ms. Holiarivony RAMIARINTSOA	Coordonnatrice Nationale du Projet	_
184	Mr. Yves Etienne RAKOTOARISON	Coordonnateur National du Projet JCRM	
185	Mr. Fortuny Mariangels	Unit Head, Forestry, Agriculture, Construction and Tourism	ILO- SECTOR Geneva
186	Mr. Claude YAO KOUAME	Tech Specialist, EIIP DEVINVEST	ILO- DEVINVEST Geneva
187	Mr. Susana Puerto	Sr Youth Employment Specialist - – global initiative with FAO	EMPLAB
188	Mr. Yadong WANG	Sr Spec, Labour Market Policies	
189	Mr. Elvis Beytullayev	Specialist, Rural Economy & related sectors	Sector
190	Mr. Waltteri KATAJAMAKI	Technical Officer, Rural Economy and Related Sectors	
191	Ms. Linda Deelen	Programme Manager Sustainable Enterprises and Economies	ITCILO
192	Mr. Thomas WISSING	Deputy DWT/CO Director	ILO Country Office for Mexico and Cuba
193	Mr. Graeme Buckley	DWT – Director	Lao
194	Ms. Makiko Matsumoto	Spec, Employment	_
195	Ms. Jittima SRISUKNAM	Programme Officer	
Interview	ed stakeholders During Incep	tion Phase	
196	Ms. Mariangels Fortuny	Unit Head, Forestry, Agriculture, Construction, and Tourism	SECTOR -
197	Ms. Elisenda Estruch Puertas	Specialist, Rural Economy & related sectors	
198	Ms. Lucie Servoz	Technical Officer, Hotels, Catering and Tourism	_
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203	Ms Eesha Moitra	Youth rural employment specialist	
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209	Mr Michael Watt	Departmental Evaluation Focal Point	
210	Ms Silva Rosinda	Legal Standards Specialist	NORMES (APPL)
211	Mr Pierre-François Recoing	Legal/Labour Law Specialist	_
212	Ms Aikaterini Charara	Legal Officer – Social Protection	
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214	Ms Florence Bonnet	Labour Market Specialist	
215	Ms Vera Paquete-Perdigao	Department Director	Governance
216	Mr Joaquim Pintado Nunes	Branch Chief, LABADMIN/OSH	_
217	Ms Laetitia Dumas	Sr Administrator, LABADMIN/OSH	
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219	Mr Martin Hahn	Head, Advocacy and Partnerships Unit	FUNDAMENTALS
220	Ms Sophie De Coninck	Senior Specialist, Fundamental Principles and Rights at Work	_
221	Mr Jean-Marie Kagabo	Programme and Operations Specialist	
222	Mr Ritash Sarna	Head, Dept Management and Support Unit, Departmental Evaluation Focal point	STATISTICS
223	Mr Kieran Walsh	Senior Statistician	_
224	Mr Yves Perardel	Senior Econometrician	
225	Ms Christina Behrendt	Head, Social Policy Unit	SOCPRO
226	Mr Srinivas Reddy	Branch Chief	SKILLS
227	Ms Christine Hofmann	Specialist, Skills and Employability	_

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229	Ms Simel Esim	Unit Head, Cooperatives	•
230	Ms Nadja Nutz	Technical Officer, Entrepreneurship & SME Management Training	-
231	Ms Mito Tsukamoto	Branch Chief	DEVINVEST
232	Mr Christoph Ernst	Senior Specialist, Informal Economy	_
233	Ms Martha Mildred Espano	Technical Officer, Employment Intensive Investment	
234	Mr Chris Donnges	Senior Economist	_
235	Ms Maria Teresa Gutierrez	Technical Specialist	
236	Ms Emanuela Pozzan	Senior Spec, Gender Equality and Non-discrimination	GEDI
237	Mr Moustapha Kamal Gueye	Director, AP/Just Transitions	Action Programme on Just Transitions
238	Mr. Vincensini	Senior Adviser	IOE
239	Mr Sako	Adviser and Project Officer for Africa	•
240	Mr BEIRNAERT	Director, ITUC Geneva Office	ITUC

Annex 3: List of technical conventions relevant to the rural economy

I. Core Conventions

- Forced Labour Convention, 1930 (No. 29)
- Freedom of Association and Protection of the Right to Organize, Convention, 1948 (No. 87)
- ▶ Right to Organize and Collective Bargaining Convention, 1949 (No. 98)
- ► Equal Remuneration Convention, 1951 (No. 100)
- ▶ Abolition of Forced Labour Convention, 1957 (No. 105)
- Discrimination (Employment and Occupation) Convention, 1958, (No. 111)
- Minimum Age Convention, 1973 (No. 138)
- ▶ Worst Forms of Child Labour Convention, 1999 (No. 182)

II. Priority Conventions

- ► Labour Inspection Convention, 1947 (No. 81)
- Employment Policy Convention, 1964 (No. 122)
- Labour Inspection (Agriculture) Convention, 1969 (No. 129)
- ▶ Tripartite Consultation (International Labour Standards) Convention, 1976, (No. 144)

III. Other relevant instruments

A. Conventions

- Workmen's Compensation (Agriculture), 1921 (No. 12)
- Sickness Insurance (Agriculture) Convention, 1927 (No. 25)
- ► Labour Clauses (Public Contracts) Convention, 1949 (No. 94)
- ▶ Protection of Wages Convention, 1949 (No. 95)
- ▶ Migration for Employment Convention (Revised), 1949 (No. 97)
- ► Holidays with Pay (Agriculture) Convention, 1952 (No. 101)
- ▶ Social Security (Minimum Standards) Convention, 1952 (No. 102)
- ▶ Plantations Convention, 1958 (No. 110)
- Minimum Age (Fishermen) Convention, 1959 (No. 112)
- ▶ Medical Examination (Fishermen) Convention, 1959 (No. 113)
- Fishermen's Articles of Agreement Convention, 1959 (No. 114)
- Equality of Treatment (Social Security) Convention, 1962 (No. 118)
- ► Employment Injury Benefits Convention, 1964 (No. 121)
- Fishermen's Competency Certificates Convention, 1966 (No. 125)
- Accommodation of Crews (Fishermen) Convention, 1966 (No. 126)

- Invalidity, Old-Age and Survivors' Benefits Convention, 1967 (No. 128)
- ▶ Medical Care and Sickness Benefits Convention, 1969 (No. 130)
- Minimum Wage Fixing Convention, 1970 (No. 131)
- ▶ Rural Workers' Organisations Convention, 1975 (No. 141)
- ► Human Resources Development Convention, 1975 (No. 142)
- ▶ Migrant Workers (Supplementary Provisions) Convention, 1975 (No. 143)
- Nursing Personnel Convention, 1977 (No. 149)
- Labour Administration Convention, 1978 (No. 150)
- ► Collective Bargaining Convention, 1981 (No. 154)
- Occupational Safety and Health Convention, 1981 (No. 155)
- Promotional Framework for Occupational Safety and Health Convention, 2006 (No. 187)
- ▶ Workers with Family Responsibilities Convention, 1981 (No. 156)
- Vocational Rehabilitation and Employment (Disabled Persons) Convention, 1983 (No. 159)
- Occupational Health Services Convention, 1985 (No. 161)
- ▶ Employment Promotion and Protection against
- ► Unemployment Convention, 1988 (No. 168)
- ▶ Indigenous and Tribal Peoples Convention, 1989 (No. 169)
- ▶ Working Conditions (Hotels and Restaurants) Convention, 1991 (No. 172)
- ► Safety and Health in Mines Convention, 1995 (No. 176)
- ► Home Work Convention, 1996 (No. 177)
- ► Maternity Protection Convention, 2000 (No. 183)
- ► Safety and Health in Agriculture Convention, 2001 (No. 184)
- Promotional Framework for Occupational Safety and
- ► Health Convention, 2006 (No. 187)
- ▶ Work in Fishing Convention, 2007 (No. 188)

B. Recommendations

- ▶ Transition from the Informal to the Formal Economy Recommendation, 2015 (No. 204)
- ▶ Employment and Decent Work for Peace and Resilience Recommendation, 2017 (No. 205)
- ▶ Violence and Harassment Recommendation, 2019 (No. 206)
- ► Medical Care Recommendation, 1944 (No. 69)
- Labour Clauses (Public Contracts) Recommendation, 1949 (No. 84)
- ▶ Migration for Employment Recommendation (Revised), 1949 (No. 86)
- ► Equal Remuneration Recommendation, 1951 (No. 90)
- ▶ Indigenous and Tribal Populations Recommendation, 1957 (No. 104)

- Plantations Recommendation, 1958 (No. 110)
- ▶ Discrimination (Employment and Occupation) Recommendation, 1958 (No. 111)
- Hygiene (Commerce and Offices) Recommendation, 1964 (No. 120)
- Employment Policy Recommendation, 1964 (No. 122)
- ▶ Vocational Training (Fishermen) Recommendation, 1966 (No. 126)
- Tenants and Share-croppers Recommendation, 1968 (No. 132)
- Labour Inspection (Agriculture) Recommendation, 1969 (No. 133)
- ▶ Rural Workers' Organisations Recommendation, 1975 (No. 149)
- Migrant Workers Recommendation, 1975 (No. 151)
- ► Tripartite Consultation (Activities of the International
- Labour Organisation) Recommendation, 1976 (No. 152)
- Nursing Personnel Recommendation, 1977 (No. 157)
- Workers with Family Responsibilities Recommendation, 1981 (No. 165)
- ▶ Vocational Rehabilitation and Employment (Disabled
- Persons) Recommendation, 1983 (No. 168)
- Employment Policy (Supplementary Provisions) Recommendation, 1984 (No. 169)
- ▶ Working Conditions (Hotels and Restaurants) Recommendation, 1991 (No. 179)
- Safety and Health in Mines Recommendation, 1995 (No. 183)
- ► Home Work Recommendation, 1996 (No. 184)
- ▶ Job Creation in Small and Medium-Sized Enterprises Recommendation, 1998 (No. 189)
- Worst Forms of Child Labour Recommendation, 1999 (No. 190)
- ▶ Maternity Protection Recommendation, 2000 (No. 191)
- Safety and Health in Agriculture Recommendation, 2001 (No. 192)
- Promotion of Cooperatives Recommendation, 2002 (No. 193)
- ► Human Resources Development Recommendation, 2004 (No. 195)
- Promotional Framework for Occupational Safety and Health Recommendation, 2006 (No. 197)
- Work in Fishing Recommendation, 2007 (No. 199)
- ► Social Protection Floors Recommendation, 2012 (No. 202)

Recommendations with interim status

- Social Insurance (Agriculture) Recommendation, 1921 (No. 17)
- Minimum Wage-Fixing Machinery (Agriculture) Recommendation, 1951 (No. 89)

Annex 4: HLE Terms of Reference

Introduction

High-level evaluations in the ILO

High-level Evaluations (HLE) are governance level evaluations that aim at generating insights into organizational level performance within the context of the results-based management system. The High-level evaluations in the ILO refer to evaluation of policy outcomes, institutional issues as well as selected Decent Work Country Programmes. Findings from HLEs contribute to learning and decision-making on policies and strategies, and accountability.

Senior management and the Governing Body (GB) are involved in identifying priorities for HLEs, determining the timing and intended uses of each evaluation are ILO Evaluation Office (EVAL), as an office with structural independence, is the custodian of the independence and transparency of the evaluation process. EVAL conducts a minimum of three high-level evaluations every year, based on a 3 yearly rolling work plan of upcoming evaluations, endorsed by the GB.

In November 2022, the Governing Body approved EVAL's rolling workplan which included an HLE on the ILO's strategies and actions to promote decent work in the rural economy (with a focus on rural employment and decent work) to be conducted in 2023. The evaluation will cover the period 2016 – 2023 (partly). The evaluation report, together with the Office's response to its findings and recommendations, will be discussed in the GB session of October-November 2023 with a follow-up plan prepared by the Office and monitored during implementation.

EVAL is currently undertaking the inception phase of the evaluation.

Strategic directions of the ILO in promoting decent work in the rural economy

Rural development, through the promotion of rural employment and decent work, has been on the ILO's agenda since its establishment in 1919. The International Labour Conference (ILC) in 1921 set the ILO's mandate to engage in increasing employment and economic growth in the rural areas. Since then, the ILO has adopted over 30 international labour standards that are of direct relevance to agriculture and rural development, covering employment, rights at work, social protection and social dialogue (see Annex 1).

The International Labour Conference at its 97th Session (2008) adopted the *Conclusions on promoting rural employment for poverty reduction*, identifying decent work deficits²³³ in rural areas as many, diverse and inter-related. It set a mandate for greater ILO involvement in rural development, leading to the adoption of a plan of action that emphasized the employment dimension of rural development alongside labour standards²³⁴, social protection, and social dialogue, pointing to their mutually reinforcing nature.

²³² To this end a process of informal consultations including governments, through regional coordinators, and the secretariats of the Employers' and Workers' groups on the topics for high-level strategic evaluations and their terms of reference is organized annually.

²³³ Common constraints include: a lack of decent jobs and reliable incomes; low productivity; informality; weak enforcement of the rule of law; ineffective organization and participation; and limited or no access to social protection. Climate change, conflict and natural resource exhaustion constitute additional pressures to the rural economy.

²³⁴The paper pointed to important gaps in coverage and barriers to ratification and implementation of international labour standards in such areas as freedom of association, collective bargaining, forced labour, child labour, equality of opportunity and treatment, employment policy promotion, labour inspection, wages, occupational safety and health, social security, indigenous and tribal peoples, plantations and fisheries.

As a follow up to these conclusions, in March 2011, the Governing Body adopted a *Strategy on promoting decent work for rural development*²³⁵. Pillars of that strategy were: making rural work and development an ILO priority; advocating for the diversification and up-grading of rural economies through multidisciplinary and integrated approaches; an emphasis on capacity building for rural work; the empowerment of rural youth and women; and the need to establish external partnerships.²³⁶ The proposed strategy called for action on the following thematic clusters:

- ► Enabling legal and regulatory frameworks for employment creation and promotion; employmentintensive works and appropriate skills development.
- Rural entrepreneurship and enterprises (essential for jobs and wealth creation), including cooperatives.
- Social protection floors, promoting basic social security transfers and services and income security.
- Occupational safety and health.
- ▶ *Promotion and realization of labour standards*, including monitoring and addressing ratification and implementation gaps.
- ▶ Organization and empowerment of rural employers and workers and strengthened social dialogue, including of small farmers and informal economy actors.

Tourism in rural areas and food security were identified as two additional thematic clusters to prompt ILO's work and stimulate synergies. Work on tourism in rural areas would particularly focus on the least developed rural areas, building on the ILO's experience in tourism among Latin American indigenous populations and elsewhere, and conducted in collaboration with the World Tourism Organization and the United Nations Conference on Trade and Development (UNCTAD). Work of food security was envisaged to build the social partners' capacity to play an active role and to dialogue with government on food security, employment and decent work.

Against this background, the promotion of decent work in the rural economy was embedded in several indicators of the Programme and Budget of the ILO for 2012-13. In the period 2014 – 15, promoting decent work in the rural economy was carried out under the *Area of Critical Importance*²³⁷ *5 (ACI-5)*, being one of the eight ACIs approved by the ILC in the framework of the P&B for this biennium. Taking a rights-based rural development approach, work under the ACI-5 sought to consolidate the ILO's portfolio of work in rural areas with a view to defining a strategic focus for future biennia. Work also sought to generate knowledge and develop innovative tools to support constituents in addressing decent work challenges in rural areas through three interrelated areas of work: (a) decent work for disadvantaged, marginalized and vulnerable rural populations; (b) decent work for rural workers in supply chains; and (c) decent work for rural workers on plantations.

Moving forward, promoting decent work in the rural economy was further embedded in the Organization's work as one of ten *Programme and Budget Outcomes in the period 2016-19*, and a specific output in the *Programme and Budget documents for the period 2020 – 23*.

At its 329th session in March 2017, the Governing Body of the International Labour Office concluded that poverty in emerging and developing countries was predominantly a rural phenomenon. High levels of poverty in rural areas, decent work deficits, informality and vulnerability to climate change persist today, and continue to threaten social justice. The *ILO Centenary Declaration for the Future of Work* (2019) set out to advance decent work in the rural

²³⁵ Unleashing rural development through productive employment and decent work, GB.310/ESP/1, 2011
236 In 2011 the United Nations High-level Task Force on the Global Food Security Crisis (HLTF) gave the ILO an enhanced role in the HLTF's efforts to coordinate a response to the challenge of achieving food security. In November 2011, the Governing Body endorsed a strategic approach to promote food security through decent work in critical economic sectors across the global food supply chain. See: https://www.ilo.org/gb/GBSessions/WCMS_163704/lang--en/index.htm

²³⁷ ACIs combine work from across several of the 19 outcomes of the ILO strategic framework, and each ACI is linked to these outcomes through their indicators, by which results will be measured.

economy by calling on the ILO to focus, inter alia, on "promoting the transition from the informal to the formal economy, while giving due attention to rural areas".238 More concretely, the Centenary Declaration underscores the need to strengthen the capacities of constituents to address decent work deficits in the rural economy through sectoral policies and investments in strategic sectors, as well as promoting the ratification and implementation of relevant international labour standards. At regional level, the Abidjan Declaration adopted in 2019 underscored the importance of "transforming Africa's informal and rural economy for decent work" as well as the need to "facilitate the promotion of structural transformation with emphasis on agriculture and rural economies and food security".

Rural employment for development has also been subject of recommendations emanating from several ILC discussions, as in the case of the third ICL recurrent discussion on employment; inequalities and the world of work; skills and lifelong learning, and social and solidarity economy.

As stated in the draft *Programme and Budget document for 2024 - 25*, the ILO will continue to promote decent work and enhance productivity in rural areas through actions to increase the capacities of the ILO constituents to respect, promote and realize fundamental principles and rights at work239 and an effective social dialogue240; and the strengthening of legal frameworks, policies and strategies for creating decent work in rural areas241. This is supported by community-based skills and lifelong learning, rural entrepreneurship, formalization, promoting agricultural productivity and enabling business environment, and extending social protection to rural populations.

ILO actions to promote decent work in the rural economy have encompassed strengthening synergies and joint work with other UN agencies and multilateral bodies, who are essential to the effectiveness and success to its work on rural development. These include, among others, the Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO), the United Nations Economic Commission for Europe (UNECE), the International Fund for Agricultural Development (IFAD), the United Nations World Food Programme (WFP), the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), the United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP), the UNFCCC secretariat, the World Bank Group, and the OECD.

The ILO's work on promoting decent work in the rural economy is guided by the conclusions on promoting rural employment for poverty reduction adopted by the International Labour Conference at its 97th Session (2008). A list of relevant international labour standards is included in annex 1.

Actions for the promotion of decent work in the rural economy are linked to the Sustainable Development Goals 1, 2, and 8, and related targets 1.2, 2.3, 6.b and 8.2.

The ILO's framework and results in the period 2016 - 23

Rural labour markets continue to gather about eight out of ten of the world's working poor, holding significant potential to contribute to reduce poverty through job creation and decent work.

Since 2016 the ILO's work in this area focusses on a rights-based rural development approach, and local resources-based approaches and seeks to strengthen the capacity of its constituents to develop and implement policies and programmes for the promotion of productive employment, decent work and inclusive productive transformation of rural areas. Work towards promoting rural employment and decent work was undertaken through a specific outcome of the P&B (outcome 5) from 2016 – 19. Since 2020 to date the core work of the ILO in this area was implemented under Outcome 3, Output 3.2. In addition, the P&B documents for this period recognized the interrelated

²³⁸ See the ILO Centenary Declaration for the Future of Work, para. II(A)(xiv).

²³⁹ These actions fall under outcome 1, with a particular focus on strengthening capacities for the realization of freedom of association and collective bargaining and other fundamental principles and rights at work (OSH, non-discrimination). 240 Outcome 2, output 2.2

²⁴¹ Outcome 3, output 3.3

nature and necessary synergies between the actions to promote employment in rural areas and other related policy outcomes of the ILO, such as social protection, sustainable enterprises, formalization of the informal economy, standard-related action and protection of workers.

The rest of this section provides an overview of the concrete actions carried out by the ILO under each biennium. A preliminary identification of the main areas of work, thematic subclusters and typology of action prioritized by the ILO since 2016 is provided in Figure 1 below.242

FIGURE 1. AREAS AND TYPOLOGY OF WORK TO PROMOTE DECENT WORK IN RURAL ECONOMIES, 2016 - 2023²⁴³

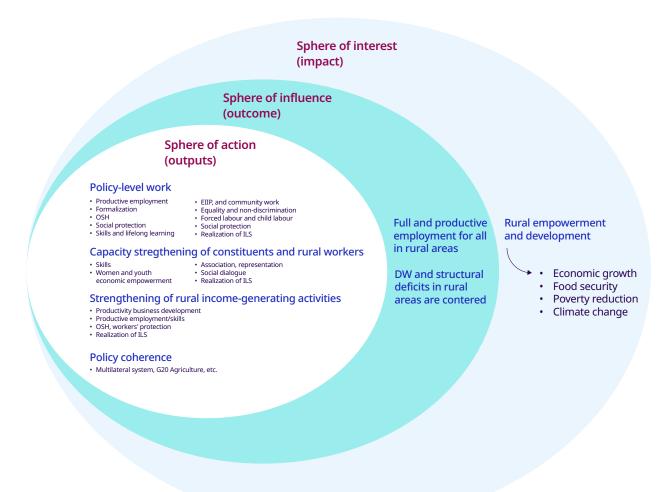
Areas of work Thematic clusters Typology of work **Economic sectors** Employment-related action Policy and legislative work Agriculture International labour standards rural coverage Forestry Standards-related action Capacity development Rural employment strategies **Fisheries** Social protection-related action Knowledge sharing and and plans generation Aquaculture Social dialogue-related action Labour intensive works (employment intensive Tourism DC and technical programmes investment in rural areas) Construction Partnerships Career guidance and development and relevant skills acquisition, recognition and upskilling in rural contexts Business development and ruralfriendly agribusiness value chains Occupational safety and health Protection of workers, including women, youth and other vulnerable groups Social protection floor Reaching and giving a voice to rural employers and workers Food security

²⁴² The process of mapping ILO's work during the period under review is still underway, based on which the content of Figure 1 will be further updated and revised.

²⁴³ Source: Programme and Budget, and Programme Implementation Reports, ILO, 2016 - 2023

An overview of ILO's work on rural employment is presented below, (Figure 2) which will serve as input to re-construct the TOC at the evaluation inception phase.

FIGURE 2. OVERVIEW OF ILO'S WORK ON RURAL EMPLOYMENT, 2016 – 2023²⁴⁴: A THEORY OF ACTION

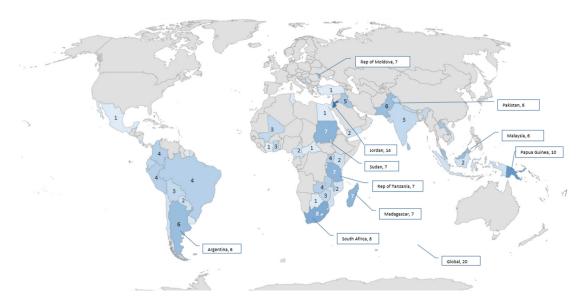


In the biennium 2016 - 17, the focus of ILO's work was placed on supporting the tripartite constituents to be better equipped to promote decent work for sustainable rural livelihoods with a focus on protecting and empowering vulnerable people. ILO's work focussed on targeted programmes for productive employment largely, followed by policy and legislative action, and the enhancement of capacities for data generation. The ILO reported the achievement of the largest share of results in Latin America and the Caribbean (9), Africa and Asia and the Pacific (8 each), followed by the Arab States (1). No action was taken in Europe and Central Asia under this outcome in 2016–17.

Work on promoting decent work in the rural economy continued under the P&B outcome 5 in the biennium 2018 - 19. The focus this time was on supporting the tripartite constituents through targeted action for productive employment, and the development of policies and strategies for increased productive employment opportunities and decent work in the rural economy. Furthermore, efforts during this period were place on reinforcing social dialogue and representation in rural areas. The majority of reported achieved results were in Africa (11), Asia and the Pacific (8), Latin America and the Caribbean (7) and Arab States (3). As was the case in 2016 - 17, no action was taken in Europe and Central Asia under this outcome in 2018-19.

The ILO's work on promoting decent work in the rural economy was not structured around a particular P&B outcome in the biennium 2020 - 21 and 2022 - 2023 but spread across several outputs. The main angle of action was through output 3.2 (outcome 3 - employment), aimed at formulating and implementing policies and strategies for creating decent work in the rural economy. Reported achieved results in 2020 - 21 were mainly in Africa (8), Latin America and the Caribbean (7), and Asia and the Pacific (5). For the first time in the period under evaluation, action was taken in Europe and Central Asia in 2020 - 21. In 2022 - 2023, progress had been made in delivering work towards creating decent work in the rural economy linked to 28 CPOs (Africa - 13, Latin America and the Caribbean - 4, Arab States - 3, Asia and the Pacific - 5, Europe and Central Asia – 3).

FIGURE 3. MAP OF MOST CONCENTRATED ILO ACTIONS PROMOTING RURAL **EMPLOYMENT SINCE 2016**



Promoting decent work in the rural economy was also foreseen in the Programme and Budget documents for 2020 – 21 and 2022 - 23 as part of the following outputs²⁴⁵.

- Outcome 4 (Sustainable enterprises):
 - ▶ (2020 21) Output 4.2 enhanced capacities of enterprises for productivity and sustainability
 - ▶ (2020 23) Output 4.3 developed policies and legislation for the transition of enterprises to formality
- (2022 23) Outcome 5 (Skills) Output 5.3 inclusive learning options, including apprenticeships

²⁴⁵ This is based on PROGRAM's mapping of output correspondence for the biennium 2018 - 2019 and 2020 - 21, and indepth review of the P&B narrative for 2022 - 23.

- ➤ (2020 23) Outcome 6 (equal opportunities for all) output 6.2 policies for equal opportunities
- ▶ (2020 21) Outcome 1 (strong tripartite constituents and social dialogue) output 1.4 strengthened institutions and frameworks.

The preliminary review of CPOs conducted by EVAL has identified rural employment-related work across outputs of all the Programme and Budget Outcomes for the period 2020 – 23.

2. Evaluation approach and conceptual framework

Purpose of the evaluation and main clients

The HLEs in the ILO take a summative as well as formative approach. They provide insights into the relevance, coherence, effectiveness and efficiency of the ILO's strategy, programme approach, and interventions (summative). They are also forward looking and provide findings and lessons learned and emerging good practices for improved decision-making within the context of the next strategic framework (formative).

The main purpose of this evaluation is to:

- Provide an account to the Governing Body regarding performance of the strategy and key results.
- ▶ Provide an opportunity to learn what works well and what less well in the implementation of ILO's strategy for promoting decent work in the rural economy, with a focus on rural employment with a view to changing priorities in the ILO.
- Explore the efficiency gains in the external and internal coherence, including synergies with strategic partners and between different ministries at the country level.
- Explore the implications of the changes in the results framework during the period under review.
- Support the Office and the constituents in making informed decisions about the future directions on this area of work, in light of changing ILO priorities.

The evaluation will take into account the findings and recommendations of previous high-level and decentralized evaluations relevant to promoting decent work in rural areas, including DWCP evaluations and the High-level Evaluations on the ILO's strategies and actions towards the 'Formalization of the Informal Economy' (2014-18); the ILO's strategies and actions for improved youth employment prospects (2012-17); the ILO's capacity development efforts (2012-17); and the ILO's strategy and action for promoting sustainable enterprises (2014–19).

The main client for the evaluation is the Governing Body, which is responsible for governance-level decisions on the findings and recommendations of the evaluation. Other key stakeholders include the Director-General and members of the Senior Management Team at Headquarters, the Evaluation Advisory Committee composed of senior management overseeing follow-up to evaluations and the departments, regional and country offices involved in promoting decent work in the rural economy. It should also serve as a source of information for ILO donors, partners and policy makers.

Scope

The evaluation will cover all ILO's programme activities and actions between 2016 to 2023 (three full biennia 2016 – 17; 2018 – 19; 2020 – 21), and 2022 – 23 (partial), with a particular focus on the work carried out by the ILO to promote productive employment and decent work in rural areas.

For the biennium 2016 – 19 the scope of the assessment will be the actions that fell under outcome 5. For the period 2020 - 23, the evaluation scope will cover actions carried out within output 3.2. The evaluation, at its inception phase 246 , will identify the synergies across other P&B outcomes of the ILO for the period 2020 - 23 that have addressed decent work deficits in the rural economy.

The first step of the scoping process will entail the analysis of primary and secondary qualitative data to determine:

- ▶ The typology of work (e.g., policy, capacity development, normative/standards setting, targeted interventions (e.g., rural/community infrastructure development as a non-agriculture employment opportunity), and partnerships) that has been most predominant in the implementation of ILO's strategies and actions to promote rural employment since 2016, alongside the main tools / means of actions used.
- ▶ The identification of the main areas of work and thematic clusters (e.g., employment and economic growth, standards, social protection and social dialogue) that have been the focus of ILO interventions.
- ▶ The economic sectors in which the core work of the ILO has focused on promoting decent work in the rural economy.
- ▶ The regions and countries where ILO efforts (in terms of resources and results) have concentrated the most.

Interviews with selected key stakeholders and qualitative analysis of secondary data from the ILO internal dashboards will serve as basis to further delimit the scope of the evaluation and to inform the selection of the case studies, in consultation with key stakeholders.

An overview of the main dimensions that will be included in the HLE will be presented through a ToC and corresponding evaluation framework, showcasing ILO's existing means of action and models of intervention to promote decent work in rural areas.

The HLE will look into the ILO's role in maximizing external synergies and involvement in interagency networks/other relevant global networks and partnerships at national, regional and global levels based on ILO's comparative advantage. The evaluation will cover internal synergies between departments and units (both at the HQ level and at the level of field offices). The scope, in the course of evaluation, can also evolve to include any other particular area of ILO contribution that might be critical to highlight in the wake of future directions.

The efforts made to promote the normative framework that apply to this theme should be covered and emerging lessons in this regard should be documented. At the same time, the evaluation should include in its spectrum, the SDG dimension. The ILO Centenary Declaration for the Future of Work should also be considered especially with regards to the focus and future direction of this policy outcome/output.

The evaluation will include the traditional ILO constituents, as well as other key stakeholders such as workers and employers in rural areas, indigenous and tribal people, women and youth in the rural economy²⁴⁷, and other vulnerable groups.

²⁴⁶ Determining the scope of the HLE will entail an analysis of ILO's results framework and programme set-up. This will cover Policy Outcomes (POs); Country Programme Outcomes (CPOs), global products, programmes and projects that contribute to promoting decent work in the rural economy. An analysis of resource portfolio (Development cooperation and other funding modalities), as well as the data sets provided by the FINANCE and PROGRAM Departments will be an integral part of the scoping exercise too.

²⁴⁷ Youth in the rural economy is one of the eight thematic priorities of the Global Initiative on Decent Jobs for Youth (DJY) launched in 2016, with the endorsement of the executive heads of the United Nations. Under ILO and FAO's lead, a thematic plan was developed or rural youth employment

3. Proposed evaluation questions

The following areas of enquiry are suggested for the high-level evaluation, to be finalized during the inception phase:

- ▶ The role/mandate /comparative advantage and relevance of the ILO's work in creating an enabling environment for decent work in the rural economy, as a key element of global and national development strategies.
- Evidence on how the Office has increased the coherence, and effectiveness (with respect to achieving results) of its support to its constituents, and partners through various forms of direct services and support.
- ▶ Evidence on the overall sustainability and contribution to legislative, behavioral and institutional changes of ILO's work in fostering decent work in rural areas since 2016, including results and impact of capacity building related initiatives to maximize the support to constituents in the rural economy, fostering a favorable environment for decent work.
- ▶ The Office's capacities and performance regarding the implementation of the P&B priorities from headquarters, regional offices, field offices (in selected countries), and the ITCILO, including management arrangements, coordination, and global and national partnerships involving constituents and other key international organizations and in particular Rome based agencies.
- ▶ The results-based framework, the choice and the use of indicators, and the reviewing and reporting of progress with the Programme and Budget (P&B) frameworks

The overarching proposed evaluation questions are presented below²⁴⁸:

Context and Strategy

- ► How well does the ILO's strategy to promote decent work in the rural economy (P&B, DWCP, CPOs) fit the needs and concerns of ILO constituents in the rural economy? Is the strategy responsive to emerging concerns as expressed in GB/ILC discussions? How well has the ILO strategy addressed the priorities for ILO action set out in the 2019 ILO Centenary Declaration? How well do past interventions fit into the new priorities of the ILO?
- ► How well does the ILO's strategy align itself and complements (with a focus on comparative advantage) other relevant national institutions and international agencies working on promoting decent work in the rural economy, including at the level of the UNSDCF?
- ► How well does the ILO's strategy address the need of synergies and complementarities with other P&B outcomes as well as global outcomes such as SDGs?
- ► To what extent does the strategy integrate ILO's normative and social dialogue mandate, ILO's commitment to gender equality, non-discrimination and inclusion and just transitions?
- ▶ Has the transition from P&B Outcome 5 (2016-2019) to an output in the P&Bs for 2020-23 strengthened or weakened the work on promoting decent work in the rural economy in the ILO?
- ▶ What has been the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic on the ILO's strategy and operations to promote decent work in the rural economy?

²⁴⁸ The list is based on identified areas of work and concern for the ILO on the subject matter, as per reading of the minutes of the ILC and GB meetings, Programme and Budget documents, Programme implementation reports, and information contained in the DW results and OBW dashboards. This list is aimed at initiating the consultation process with key internal stakeholders of the ILO to validate them and gather inputs on additional information needs.

Implementation and partnerships

- ► To what extent has the ILO been effective and timely in providing support and guidance to constituents and partners through interventions?
- ▶ Are there adequate resources to implement the strategy as intended?
- ▶ Do the strategy and actions integrate gender equality, non-discrimination, and disability inclusion concerns across its key intervention areas? How well do they consider ILO's mandate on just transition?
- ▶ How are contributing outcomes being integrated in the strategy implementation to match the multifaceted nature of rural decent work deficits and rural development needs? Is the organizational/management structure for delivering the outcome/output compatible to the strategy/actions?
- ► To what extent do partners and stakeholders (internal and external) understand and execute their role in delivering ILO commitment to promoting decent work in rural areas? How is ILO's comparative advantage being effectively mainstreamed?
- ► To what extent are the ILO actions designed and implemented in ways that maximizes ownership and be mainstreamed at national policy level?
- ➤ To what extent has the ILO been able to apply innovative approaches for an effective and timely action to mitigate the immediate effects of the pandemic on workers and employers in the rural economy?
- Does the current monitoring and reporting (Outcome and indicators) allow for tracking the progress and informing the strategy?
- ► To what extent have ILO interventions reacted to new trends (including demographic changes, digitalization, climate change and globalization)?

Results

- ► Has the ILO been successful in promoting decent jobs in rural areas? Are there areas where strengthened efforts and attention are needed?
- ▶ To what extent has the ILO progressed on its committed outcomes and indicators?
- ➤ To what extent has the ILO contributed to strengthening capacities of governments, workers and employers' organizations' representatives so they can better serve the needs of their members? To what extent is the strategy and action benefiting other intended beneficiaries, notably vulnerable groups?
- ► To what extent has the ILO impacted the national policies in favor of creating enabling environment for decent work in the rural economy?
- ▶ To what extent has the ILO contributed to place human-centred rural development at the core of national and international development strategies, as a core pillar of the economic growth and development architecture?

Lessons learned and way forward

- ▶ What are the areas of success for the ILO? Are there lost opportunities?
- ▶ What are the emerging lessons and good practices for future specifically in the post pandemic context?
- ▶ What are the emerging recommendations for future strategy and action on the theme of promoting decent work in the rural economy?

Once inputs from key stakeholders are gathered, the evaluation team will structure the questions around the OECD-DAC evaluation criteria of relevance, coherence, effectiveness, efficiency, sustainability and impact. When designing the questions, the evaluation team will consider availability and reliability of data, how the answers will be used and if the data are regarded as credible. Further evaluation questions will be proposed and refined by the evaluation team during the inception report phase.

4. Evaluation approach

The evaluation will be conducted in accordance with EVAL Protocol No 2.1: Policy Outcomes and Institutional Evaluations (High-level Evaluations), Version 3, March 2021. EVAL proposes a combination of Theory of Change and outcome-based evaluation approaches, which will determine whether an initiative has achieved the intended outcome based on a relevant and coherent approach and using effective and efficient ways to achieve or contribute to changes that can be sustained. The theory of Change will be (re)constructed at the inception phase based on existing Theory of Changes in ILO results framework and within policy areas and will serve as the analytical framework against which operations and results will be measured.

The evaluation will be undertaken with primary data collection by a group of evaluation experts through case studies, interviews and surveys with key information. The purpose of case studies is to conduct in-depth analysis of the ILO's work in promoting decent work in the rural economy. The case studies will seek to determine the result of ILO's interventions on ground, and determine if these interventions had any observable immediate impacts, and to the extent possible determine the links between the observed impacts and the ILO interventions. The case studies may also highlight any specific achievements, good practices or emerging lessons with reference to key intervention models being used. The case-studies might also focus on a cross cutting theme or specific dimension identified through the scoping phase and presented in the inception report.

The thematic and country case studies will be identified at inception phase based on the results from the scoping phase, including in-depth desk review, and interviews with the reference group and other relevant stakeholders. Overall, the case studies will consist of a combination of interviews, field studies, focus group discussions, and desk reviews to synthesize and aggregate information such as technical studies, and DWCP reviews from the selected countries and projects/programmes. This will allow greater triangulation while minimizing cost and time being expended on new, possibly repetitive studies.

5. Proposed methodology for the evaluation

The methodology will be based upon the ILO's evaluation policy and procedures, which adhere to international standards and best practices, articulated in the OECD/DAC Principles and the UNEG Norms and Standards for Evaluation (UNEG) in April 2016.

The evaluation will be participatory. Consultations with member States, international and national representatives of trade union and employers' organizations, ILO staff at headquarters and in the field, United Nations partners, and other stakeholders (including national target groups other than the constituents) will be done through interviews, meetings, focus groups, and electronic communication.

The evaluation should pay specific attention to respond to the ILO's normative and tripartite mandate, women's empowerment and gender equality, just transition and contribution of the ILO to the relevant targets set in the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development. In this regard, normative work, social dialogue, the gender and inclusion dimension, and environmental issues

will be considered as a cross-cutting concern throughout the methodology, deliverables and final report of the evaluation. In terms of this evaluation, mainstreaming gender equality implies involving both men and women in the consultation, evaluation analysis and evaluation team as possible. Moreover, the evaluators should review data and information that is disaggregated by sex and assess the relevance and effectiveness of gender and disability inclusion related strategies and outcomes. Specific measures to reflect gender and inclusion concerns should be elaborated in the inception report, in line with the UN GEEW-SWAP guidance in this regard.

It is expected that the evaluation team will apply mixed methods, which draw on multiple lines of evidence (both quantitative and qualitative) and apply multiple means of analysis. EVAL welcomes the use of diverse and innovative evaluation methods, including strengthened participatory methods, to demonstrate results and this will be a considered in the selection of evaluation proposals.

The overall methodological approach and data collection tools of the evaluation will include, among others, the following:

- Desk review of relevant documentation, such as:
 - Normative frameworks including relevant GB/ILC discussions, relevant conventions, protocols and recommendations.
 - ► Strategic Framework(s); and progress reports; and P&B strategies covering the period 2016-23.
 - ▶ Development Cooperation (DC) portfolio and related reviews.
 - ▶ Implementation planning, management and reporting related documents.
 - Existing meta studies, synthesis reviews and project and programme evaluations notably DC and RBSA funded interventions, including other HLES in the period.
 - ▶ Decent Work Country Programmes (DWCP) and country programme reviews, as relevant.
 - ▶ Review of Policy Outcome, CPOs and Global Products directly and indirectly linked to promoting decent work in the rural economy.
 - ▶ Review of financial (all sources and all modalities) and human resource portfolio that could inform efficiency related analysis within the scope of the evaluation.
 - ▶ Review of alignment to UN response plans, and SDG targets and indicators
- Case-studies on a thematic, geographical, and sectoral (not more than 10).
- ▶ Structured and semi-structured interviews (for the most part through virtual means) that reflects diversity and representation within the Office (relevant sector, technical unit, regions and country situations) as well as of the constituents and relevant partners and institutions.
- ► Field visits if local health regulations will allow at the time (5-6 countries, covering regions with coverage of each region as appropriate).
- Online surveys to obtain feedback and/or information from a wider set of constituents and other key stakeholders such as multilateral partners.
- ▶ Participatory workshop to discuss preliminary findings, lessons learned and recommendations prior to the finalization of the evaluation report.

The details of the methodology will be elaborated in the inception report by the team of evaluators on the basis of the Terms of Reference (TORs) and initial desk review and interactions. The inception report will include a detailed evaluation framework with the methodological approach identified.

Evaluation data collection process

The data collection to inform the evaluation will encompass:

Inception phase: a detailed scoping will be undertaken based on desk research, synthesis review of DC projects from the period 2016-2023, individual and group interviews with the reference group, ILO staff, ITUC, IOE and other key stakeholders as necessary. Inputs gathered during this phase will already serve as primary data to inform the evaluation analysis, as well as to inform the case study selection, based on which the evaluation team will design the interview guidelines and survey questionnaire.

Main data collection process: the evaluation team will implement the interview programme and launch the survey to gather statistical information from a wide range of stakeholders from different thematic and geographic backgrounds. The latter will help validate results from interviews with a wider group of stakeholders. All the sources will be triangulated during data analysis.

Reporting: data analysis will be undertaken to serve as basis to draft the evaluation report and summary documents.

Synthesis study of project evaluations, 2016 - 23

A synthesis review of project evaluation reports (nearly 30-35) on rural employment related projects will be undertaken by EVAL (as a separate assignment) to synthesize findings on the effectiveness, efficiency, relevance and sustainability/impact of ILOs work through development cooperation projects. The synthesis review will examine the types of recommendations and lessons learned reported by evaluators in the evaluation reports and whether there are any trends or recurring themes among them. Good practices will also be identified and can be used for further examination/validation, as required.

The findings of the synthesis study will feed directly into the high-level evaluation and will be a source of input for the overall rating on the DAC criteria (see section 4.6).

Summary ratings

A summary rating shall be expressed by the independent evaluation team at the end of the six evaluation criteria and the respective questions outlined in the ToR and the ensuing inception report. The evaluation shall use a six-point scale ranging from "highly satisfactory," "satisfactory," "somewhat satisfactory," "somewhat unsatisfactory," "unsatisfactory," and "highly unsatisfactory."

- ▶ Highly satisfactory: when the findings related to the evaluation criterion show that ILO performance related to criterion has produced outcomes which go beyond expectation, expressed specific comparative advantages and added value, produced best practices.
- ▶ Satisfactory: when the findings related to the evaluation criterion show that the objectives have been mostly attained and the expected level of performance can be considered coherent with the expectations of the national tripartite constituents, beneficiaries and of the ILO itself.
- ▶ Somewhat satisfactory: when the findings related to the evaluation criterion show that the objectives have been partially attained and there that expected level of performance could be for the most part considered coherent with the expectations of the national tripartite constituents, beneficiaries and of the ILO itself.
- ▶ Somewhat unsatisfactory: when the findings related to the evaluation criterion show that the objectives have been partially attained and the level of performance show minor shortcoming and are not fully considered acceptable in the view of the ILO national tripartite constituents, partners and beneficiaries.

- ▶ Unsatisfactory: when the findings related to the evaluation criterion show that the objectives have not been attained and the level of performance show major shortcoming and are not fully considered acceptable in the view of the ILO national tripartite constituents, partners and beneficiaries.
- ▶ Highly unsatisfactory: when the findings related to the evaluation criterion show that expected results have not been attained, and there have been important shortcomings, and the resources have not been utilized effectively and/or efficiently.

The ratings will be decided together with the external evaluators and the ILO Senior Evaluation Officer (SEO) based on inputs from the synthesis review, data collection phase, achievement of the P&B targets, and results of the surveys of constituents, ILO staff and other multilateral partners (if conducted).

6. Deliverables

The following deliverables will be submitted to the ILO Evaluation Office:

Deliverable 1: Inception report with methodology

The inception report should detail the evaluators' understanding of what is being evaluated and why, including an agreed scope and set of questions and showing how each evaluation question will be answered by way of an evaluation matrix that describes: proposed methods (both data collection and analysis); proposed sources of data; data collection procedures (including interview protocols, focus group protocols, survey template, etc.). The inception report should also include the reconstruction of the intervention logic including the theory of change and limitations, the rationale behind the selection of the country and thematic case studies for in-depth analysis and country visits (including the selection criteria), proposed schedule of tasks, activities and deliverables.

Deliverable 2: Intermediate products presenting draft findings – at the request of EVAL's task manager

A standard template or outline can be agreed at the inception phase. Intermediate products are meant to get early feedback from the task manager in EVAL and ensure the evaluation is proceeding on the right track. It can also be used for interaction with the reference group.

Deliverable 3: Draft reports

- Executive Summary for the Governing Body (GB)
- B. Draft evaluation report

Both documents should reflect the summary and the details presentation of the main findings, conclusions and recommendations. For each of the thematic and country case studies, short reports should be produced with detailed findings, conclusions and recommendations and be presented as an annex of the main report or in a separate document.

Deliverable 4: Final reports

- A. Executive Summary for the GB
- B. Final evaluation report with executive summary

The report and the annex(es) should be submitted in English. The quality of the report should meet the OECD/DAC's Quality Standards for Development Evaluation and consider UNEG evaluation checklists and quality assurance guidelines. The report will be considered final once it is formally approved by ILO Evaluation Office.

Deliverable 5:

PowerPoint presentation (and any other targeted inputs to feed into communication products upon request)

7. Management arrangements

Timeframe of the evaluation and evaluation work plan

The timeframe of the high-level evaluation is November 2022 to September 2023, with the presentation of the evaluation findings and recommendations to the Governing Body in November 2023. An overview of the schedule is provided below. The overall level of effort is expected to be between a total of 80-100 workdays spread over a team of minimum two persons, with a dedicated team leader.

TASKS	DATES	RESPONSIBLE
Evaluation team hired	January – Feb 23	EVAL
Preliminary scoping by EVAL and evaluation team	Jan – Feb 23	Team leader in cooperation with EVAL
Scoping mission by the team and #inception report finalized (first draft due by 15 March)	Feb/April 23	EVAL and Evaluation team with Reference group, and ILO staff
Evaluation mission and case studies conducted with case-study notes/reports prepared by team members as required	April / May 23	Evaluation team to interview ILO, Constituents and partners
Draft GB summary First draft of main report and presentation of preliminary findings and recommendations to reference group	16 June 23 23 June 23	Evaluation team and EVAL. Reference group and ILO stakeholders to provide comments .
Final GB summary incorporating suggestions	21 July 23	Evaluation team
Final Report, addressing the feedback on draft. The final report should have the executive summary and required annexures	4 August 23	Evaluation team
Inputs into communication products and participation in the dissemination of results: Participation in workshop / presentation of the evaluation results	September 23	Evaluation team with inputs from Reference Group, ILO responsible Units, and EVAL
Discussion of the evaluation report by the ILO Governing Body	October – November 2023	EVAL

Implementation arrangements

Management of the evaluation

The Evaluation Office is mandated to manage the evaluation function and ensure proper implementation of the evaluation policy. The evaluation team will be composed of Senior Evaluation Officers in EVAL who will work as a team member along with the external team composed of international consultants with expertise in evaluating ILO's work, and evaluation team members/national consultants to support the case studies. The Director of EVAL will provide inputs and guidance throughout the evaluation process.

A Senior Evaluation Officer within EVAL appointed as the task manager of the evaluation will play a critical coordination role and, together with other EVAL colleagues, be responsible for the evaluation implementation and contribute to desk review and case studies. The Senior Evaluation Officer with support of other EVAL colleagues will facilitate access to all information from ILO sources, as required by the evaluation team and also provide supervision support and substantive inputs during the drafting and finalization of the report.

Reference Group and stakeholder consultation

While it is important that the HLE is conducted independently as required by the ILO's Evaluation policy, it is equally important that the evaluation process and the evaluation report provide for a good learning experience. In view of the multidisciplinary and transversal nature of the ILO's work on rural employment and decent work, the Evaluation Office would like to suggest establishing a reference group for the evaluation.

The reference group will be established to contribute to the relevance, credibility, and utility of the independent evaluation by offering inputs and suggestions in an advisory capacity at various intervals of the process. The creation of this group will contribute to ensure understanding and ownership of the evaluation to enhance follow-up and use of its results. Separate TORs for the reference group will be prepared.

The group will comprise mid to senior level representatives from various departments of the ILO who are familiar with the work carried out in promoting decent work in the rural economy. The group may be expanded within reasonable limits with additional members as required.

As part of the evaluation process consultations will take place with the reference group to keep key stakeholders at HQ and regions informed about the major steps of the evaluation process. Key outputs will be circulated for comments. Other stakeholders will be identified and involved in the process as required as part of the normal evaluation process.

Proposed evaluation team composition and related tasks

EVAL will be responsible for overall coordination and be a member of the evaluation team. This evaluation will be inclusive in nature and will seek to involve all key stakeholders. The evaluation team composition will take into account gender diversity. Each of the "dimension evaluators" will be supported by a team of national consultants, as relevant, in the identified case study countries.

The following team composition and effort of work has been established:

- A. A lead team member and a co-evaluator with very solid experience in global institutional evaluations programme and activities, preferable at the corporate/organisational level combined level of effort 64 days.
- **B.** Team member with evaluation experience of ILS, social dialogue, tripartism and social protection, with level of effort of 18 days.
- **C.** Team member with evaluation experience of rural development– with level of effort up to 18 days.

While each of the team members represent specific experience, the intention is for the evaluation team, which will include EVAL, to serve as one team, ensuring one approach in line with required independence and quality standards and per agreed evaluation framework presented in the inception. The lead team member will provide the technical leadership of the evaluation team, and in coordination with EVAL, identify distribution of work and any adjustments to this if required and possible.

The international evaluator(s) will be required to ensure the quality of data (validity, reliability, consistency and accuracy) throughout the analytical and reporting phases. It is expected that the report shall be written in an analytical and evidence-based manner such that all observations, conclusions, recommendations, etc., are supported by evidence and analysis. The ILO senior evaluation officer will provide overall quality assurance on all key outputs.

The evaluation team leader, part of the company outfit receiving the service contract, will provide technical leadership and be responsible for:

- ▶ Managing the evaluation team related to the evaluation process, ensuring the evaluation is conducted as per TORs, including following ILO EVAL guidelines, methodology and formatting requirements. This will include managing the work of the co-evaluator, and the evaluation experts in view to complete the evaluation effectively and efficiently. The team leader will coordinate this process with EVAL and provide regular updates on the status of work.
- Participating in the scoping of the evaluation; drafting the inception report, producing the draft reports, executive summaries, and drafting and presenting a final report. The team leader is responsible for final quality of deliverables and timely delivery.
- ▶ Providing any technical and methodological advice and leadership necessary for this evaluation within the team.
- Leading and coordinating the work of the team members in the overall evaluation data collection, both remotely and on-site as part of field missions.
- ► Conducting and coordinating the work of the team members in the undertake of the case studies, both thematic and in-country, to ensure these are completed efficiently and serve as inputs into the data analysis and triangulation in a timely manner.
- ▶ Performing data analyses and triangulation to produce reliable, triangulated findings that are linked to the evaluation questions and presenting useful and insightful conclusions and recommendations according to international standards. Overall drafting of quality evaluation products.
- ► Ensuring the quality of data (validity, reliability, consistency and accuracy) throughout the analytical and reporting phases.
- ▶ Producing a selected suite of communication products and participate in the presentation to ILO staff on the findings of the report once the report has been finalized.

The co-evaluator will be responsible for:

- ▶ Supporting the team lead in the overall management of the evaluation team related to the evaluation process, ensuring the evaluation is conducted as per TORs, including following ILO EVAL guidelines, methodology and formatting requirements.
- Participating in the scoping of the evaluation; and contributing to the drafting of the inception report, draft and final reports, and executive summaries.
- ▶ Providing any technical and methodological advice necessary for this evaluation within the team.

- ▶ Leading and supporting the team lead in the coordination of the work of the team members in the overall evaluation data collection, both remotely and on-site as part of field missions.
- ➤ Conducting and supporting the team lead in the coordination of the work of the team members in the undertake of the case studies, both thematic and in-country, to ensure these are completed efficiently and serve as inputs into the data analysis and triangulation in a timely manner.
- ▶ Performing data analyses and triangulation to produce reliable, triangulated findings that are linked to the evaluation questions and presenting useful and insightful conclusions and recommendations according to international standards. Overall drafting of quality evaluation products.
- Ensuring the quality of data (validity, reliability, consistency and accuracy) throughout the analytical and reporting phases.
- ▶ Supporting the team lead in producing a selected suite of communication products and participate in the presentation to ILO staff on the findings of the report once the report has been finalized.

The team member as expert on ILS, social dialogue, tripartism and social protection will be responsible for:

- Participating in the scoping of the evaluation; contributing to the drafting of the inception report and providing feedback to the inception report, particularly within their responsible.
- ▶ Participating in the overall evaluation data collection both remotely and on-site as part of field missions, including in their designated case study areas and dimensions based on evaluation work plan.
- ▶ Performing data analyses and triangulation to produce reliable, triangulated findings that are linked to the evaluation questions, preparing required notes as identified and drafting sections of the draft report presenting useful and insightful conclusions and recommendations according to international standards.
- Providing feedback and factual corrections to the final report.
- ► Ensuring the quality of data (validity, reliability, consistency and accuracy within their responsible areas.

The team member expert on rural development will be responsible for:

- Participating in the scoping of the evaluation; contributing to the drafting of the inception report and providing feedback to the inception report, particularly within their responsible.
- ▶ Participating in the overall evaluation data collection both remotely and on-site as part of field missions, including in their designated case study areas and dimensions based on evaluation work plan.
- ▶ Performing data analyses and triangulation to produce reliable, triangulated findings that are linked to the evaluation questions, preparing required notes as identified and drafting sections of the draft report presenting useful and insightful conclusions and recommendations according to international standards.
- ▶ Providing feedback and factual corrections to the final report.
- ► Ensuring the quality of data (validity, reliability, consistency and accuracy within their responsible areas.

The ILO Code of Conduct for independent evaluators applies to all evaluation team members. The principles behind the Code of Conduct are fully consistent with the Standards of Conduct for the International Civil Service to which all UN staff is bound. UN staff is also subject to any UNEG member specific staff rules and procedures for the procurement of services. The selected team members shall sign and return a copy of the code of conduct with their contract.

8. Use of evaluation

Findings of the evaluation and the office response to the evaluation recommendations will be discussed at the Governing Body session in October / November 2023. Furthermore, EVAL will oversee the follow up actions to the evaluation recommendations as part of the regular meetings with the Evaluation Advisory Committee.

The following products are expected to enhance the use of the evaluation findings and conclusions by developing different products for different audiences:

- ▶ GB executive summary document for the GB 2023 (Oct-Nov) discussion
- ▶ The full evaluation report available on the EVAL website
- ► Knowledge event in the ILO on the evaluation findings and recommendations and communication of progress and results of the evaluation via EVALs social media. For that, the following products will be prepared:
 - An article in the EVAL newsletter on the findings of the report and dissemination of the report through EVALs social media accounts on LinkedIn, Twitter, Facebook and Instagram
 - ► InfoStory on ILO's website
 - ▶ A PowerPoint presentation or visual summary of the report will be prepared for EVAL's website and for presentations on the evaluation.
 - ▶ A 2-page 'quickfacts' summarising the HLE findings will be prepared by EVAL.
- ▶ Presentation to the UN/external audience on the evaluation
- Other communication tools as identified

