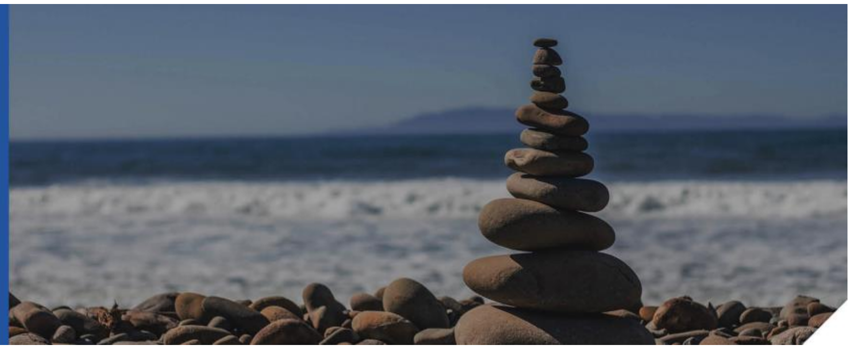
International Labour Organization

Evaluation Office

i-eval Discovery



Evaluation title:	**Final Independent Clustered Evaluation of Skills Development and Responsible Business Conduct for Transition**
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This evaluation has been conducted according to ILO's evaluation policies and procedures. It has not been professionally edited, but it has undergone quality control by the ILO Evaluation Office.

Contents

Abbreviations

AHRDA	Thai Automotive Human Resource Development Academy
AP	Action Programme (ILO)
APINDO	Indonesian Employers Association
ASEAN	Association of Southeast Asian Nations
BBPVP	Vocational Training Centre Bekasi
CSR	Corporate Social Responsibility
DSD	Thai Department of Skills Development
DWCP	Decent Work Country Programme
DWT	Decent Work Technical Support Team
E&E	Electrical and Electronic
EBMO	Employer and Business Membership Organization
ECOT	Employers’ Confederation of Thailand
ESG	Environment, Social, Governance
EV	Electric Vehicle
FSPPG	Indonesia - Federasi Serikat Pekerja Panasonic Gobel (Enterprise Union)
ILO	International Labour Organization
ILS	International Labour Standards
ITCILO	International Training Centre of the ILO (Turin)
JAPIA	Japan Automotive Parts Industry Association
JFTC	Japanese Foreign Trade Council
KADIN	Indonesian Chamber of Commerce and Industry
KSBSI	Confederation of All Indonesian Trade Union
LCT	Labour Congress of Thailand
M&E	Monitoring and Evaluation
METI	Japanese Ministry of Economy, Trade and Industry
MHLW	Japanese Ministry of Health, Labour and Welfare
MNE	Multinational Enterprise
MSME	Micro, Small and Medium Enterprises
MULTI	Multinational Enterprises and Responsible Business Conduct Unit (ILO)
NESDC	Thai Office of the National Economic and Social Development Council
OECD/DAC	Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development/Development Assistance Committee
OVEC	Thai Office of the Vocational Education Commission
P&B	Programme and Budget
PAC	Project Advisory Committee
PLC	Programmable Logic Controllers
PMK	Indonesian Coordinating Ministry of Human Development and Culture
PRI	Principles for Responsible Investment
RBC	Responsible Business Conduct
RBTC	Regular Budget Technical Cooperation (ILO)
RENGO	Japanese Trade Union Congress
RISSC	Resilient Inclusive and Sustainable Supply Chains Aisa Project
ROAP	Regional Office for Asia and The Pacific (ILO)
RSCA	Responsible Supply Chains Asia Project (ILO)
SCADA	Supervisory Control and Data Acquisition

SDG	Sustainable Development Goal
SEWRC	State Enterprises Workers' Relations Confederation
SKILLS	Skills and Employability Branch (ILO)
SME	Small and Medium Enterprise
SSC	Sectoral Skills Council
STED	Skills for Trade and Economic Diversification (ILO)
STEM	Science Technology Engineering and Mathematics
TAPMA	Thai Automotive Parts Manufacturers Association
ToC	Theory of Change
ToR	Terms of Reference
ToT	Training of Trainers
TTUC	Thai Trade Union Congress
TVET	Technical and Vocational Education and Training
UN	United Nations
UNEG	United Nations Evaluation Group
UNEP	United Nations Environment Programme
YKK	Yayasa Kemitraan Kerja (Better Work Indonesia)
YMG	Matsushita Gobel Foundation (Panasonic) Indonesia

Executive Summary

Project Background

1. "Skills Development and Responsible Business Conduct (RBC) for Transition" was a two-year project funded by the Japanese Ministry of Economy, Trade and Industry (METI) with interventions delivered in Japan, Thailand and Indonesia. In Japan, the project focused on raising the awareness of institutional investors, trading companies and Multinational Enterprises (MNEs) of business and human rights issues as they affect their investment decisions and operations. In Thailand and Indonesia, the project worked a sectoral level (Automotive, and Electrical and Electronic sectors) embedding the principles of responsible business conduct into skills development initiatives designed to support the transitions faced by these sectors and their workforces.

2. The project was structured around three outcomes: (1) Skills Development to strengthen constituent capacity to grow jobs in high-value industries, to contribute to worker productivity and structural transformation, and to foster human rights; (2) Stronger institutional and tripartite collaboration to promote the labour dimension of RBC and adherence to international labour standards); and (3) an improved enabling environment to encourage a supportive policy environment that promotes resilient, sustainable and inclusive trade and investment. Outcomes (1) and (2) focus on Indonesia and Thailand while Outcome (3) focuses on Japan.

3. The project was managed by the ILO Regional Office for Asia and the Pacific (ROAP), in coordination with ILO Country Offices for Indonesia, Thailand, and the ILO Office for Japan (ILO-Tokyo). In terms of the project's operational management, the project had two project managers – one based in Jakarta who covered operations in Thailand and Indonesia and one based in Tokyo who covered operations in Japan. Technical backstopping was provided by the Skills and Employability Specialist and the Enterprise Development Specialist in the Decent Work Team in ILO Bangkok.

About the Evaluation

4. The **purpose** of this final evaluation is to assess the relevance of this cluster of interrelated projects and the validity of design, to document and assess its achievements and effectiveness in terms of the intended outcomes, and to evaluate its impact or likely impact. It seeks to ensure accountability to stakeholders and to contribute to organizational learning.

5. The evaluation **scope** covers all three countries from April 2023 to March 2025. It addresses gender equality and non-discrimination as a cross-cutting concern and considers how well the programme advanced tripartism, social dialogue and international labour standards. The main **clients** of the evaluation are the ILO, the project teams, the funding partner, and national and local partners/constituents.

6. Data collection **methods** included:

    - A review of documents/reports related to the programme's context, design, ongoing development and modification, technical and financial progress, monitoring and evaluation systems, and programme outputs.
    - Field visits to each country.
    - Personal, group and remote interviews with 92 programme stakeholders/beneficiaries including 38 women (41%).
    - Case studies to highlight noteworthy aspects of project implementation and results in each country.

7. The evaluation was conducted in line with United Nations Evaluation Group (UNEG) standards and ILO evaluation policies and applied the OECD/DAC Evaluation Quality Criteria.

Summary of Findings

Relevance

8. **Design:** The project design was weak in several important respects, hindering the efforts of project staff to achieve the intended outcomes. The design greatly overestimated what could be achieved in such a short project timeframe. Project staff had to build relationships with stakeholders from scratch, research their needs, develop and test new tools, training modules and information products, and had very little time to fully implement and institutionalise these in national systems and policies. The results framework they were given was poorly conceived, lacked meaningful indicators of success or means of verification, and collected limited evidence for the evaluation's assessment of effectiveness, impact and sustainability. At the design stage, the ILO should have developed with the funding partner a shared understanding of "what success would look like" by the end of the project and how to report on progress towards this outcome. Instead, the design reinforced a focus on activities, not outcomes.

9. **Linking skills development with Responsible Business Conduct (RBC)**: A valid rationale underpinned the project's novel approach of combining these two project elements and supporting SMEs in supply chains to both up-grade their skills and to comply with RBC principles. In practice, project staff had to pioneer this new approach with little guidance from the project document, instead "learning by doing". In Thailand and Indonesia, their work was further complicated by operational overlaps with another ILO project (RISSC), requiring them to focus more on skills and less on the broader business and human rights activities that were originally planned. In Japan, the project focused exclusively on business and human rights.

10. **Relevance to national stakeholders**: Project activities were relevant to the needs and priorities of national and sectoral stakeholders and ILO constituents. Over time, as awareness grew and project tools and resources were completed, stakeholders in all three countries expressed a strong desire for continued support in the areas targeted by the project.

11. **Gender and disability inclusion**: These areas seem to have been given only cursory attention in the project design and in its monitoring framework and were not a major focus of implementation. The project's focus on business and human rights necessarily included these issues along with other aspects of the ILO's normative mandate but they were not given special emphasis in project delivery.

Coherence

12. **ILO priorities**: The project cohered well with the ILO's priority action programme to address decent work in supply chains (AP/Supply Chains) and included activities that aligned with outputs set out in the strategy endorsed by the Governing Body in March 2023.

13. **METI priorities**: The project also cohered well with the Japanese Government's policies relating to business and human rights and its efforts to raise awareness and to build the capability of Japanese companies to address issues in their supply chains. The project opened a new communication channel to promote business and human rights issues to hard-to-reach SMEs in supply chains in Thailand and Indonesia.

14. **Other ILO projects**: The level of coherence with other ILO projects addressing RBC or skills development varied. In some cases, building on the work of these projects in a more deliberate way might have enhanced results. Coherence with the closely related RISSC project was generally good, though overlaps posed some operational challenges for project staff that could have been minimised with better project design.

Effectiveness

15. **Overview:** The project's short timeframe and poorly conceived results framework limited the evaluation's ability to assess its effectiveness beyond the output level. Lack of time was a major limiting factor for the project – with so many activities related to training, institutional capacity

building, policy development and awareness raising, a much longer lead-time is required for any behavioural changes to be observed in individuals, institutions and enterprises. Stakeholders were somewhat frustrated that the project's support was ending too soon. While they indicated that some early progress had been made toward the intended outcomes, concrete evidence of the outcomes envisaged in the project document remains scarce.

16. Under **Outcome 1**:

- The project enhanced social dialogue, but a sustainable mechanism is needed to continue discussion on key issues, such as up-skilling workers and developing a strategic sectoral response to transitions.
- While knowledge and awareness have been increased about the need for workforce re-skilling/up-skilling and while some project partners signalled an intention to continue to use resources and approaches in their work, mechanisms and policies still need to be developed to expand access to these opportunities in Indonesia and Thailand. The primary challenge is funding, and although some stakeholders proposed developing a funding mechanism or incentive arrangements, no clear path had emerged at the time of the evaluation.
- Focusing on apprentices and their in-house instructors in enterprises is important and may establish good practices for other in-house programmes in enterprises. Similarly, the work in Thailand developing an "occupational mapping" tool was welcomed by sectoral stakeholders as a way of improving human resources planning. This work was quite different to what was originally envisaged in the project document, which sought to engage with Japanese MNEs who would strengthen HR practices and planning in SMEs (including career progression and organisational design) and would act as mentors to local companies on these issues. For a variety of reasons, this did not happen, so the project took a different path.

17. Under **Outcome 2**:

- The project's work under Outcome 2 encouraging constituent collaboration tended not to be in the form of discrete activities but as part of its skills development work (Outcome 1). In this respect, engagement with constituents, sectoral bodies and training providers was strong, and their shared interest in the need for re-skilling and up-skilling provided a platform for also cultivating a shared commitment to RBC. In terms of the specific activities set out in the project under Outcome 2, results were often not clearly documented .
- The project successfully supported social dialogue during its implementation. What is unclear is whether its focus on skills development and RBC for transitions will continue without the project. In this respect too, constituents and other stakeholders signalled a strong desire for the project to continue.

18. Under **Outcome 3**:

- With business and human rights now a priority in Japan, many large investors and trading companies are actively building their knowledge and capacity to respond. However, there remains a significant unmet demand for information and practical guidance on addressing human rights issues within operations and supply chains. While stakeholders recognize the project's valuable contribution in Japan, mechanisms need to be put in place to measure its impact, analyse its effects on different beneficiary groups, or define the next steps and responsible parties.
- In terms of Output 3.2, which related to "policy commitment [from governments and social partners] for future home-host dialogues on skills development and investment promotion", no evidence was found by the evaluation of any results relating to this. An envisaged "policy input note" for governments did not proceed – instead, a "summary note" was prepared, and little information on its nature, purpose and target audience was communicated to the evaluation.

Efficiency

19. The project was adequately resourced financially. Budgets allocated to specific outcomes were revised to meet shifts in project strategy at the output level. The budget for staff-related costs was revised down in absolute terms and as a proportion of the total allowing for more external technical expertise to be sourced for some project elements.

20. The project's management structure was not fit for purpose. The project needed a manager with operational oversight of project activities in all three countries and who could act as a single point of contact with the funding partner. Instead, there were barriers that made it difficult for the project in Thailand and Indonesia to efficiently communicate with METI on operational issues and to respond to their requests. Both project staff and METI were clearly frustrated by these barriers.

Impact orientation and sustainability

21. There is a lack of reliable measures to assess the potential impact of the project at this early stage. The work done to strengthen the capacity of stakeholders in Thailand and Indonesia to adapt to industry transformations through skills development and a focus on Responsible Business Conduct demonstrated a new approach, but, despite some broad commitments by implementation partners to continue this work, its broader application and institutionalization is uncertain. In Japan, the guidelines and awareness raising activities found a receptive audience, but much more work needs to be done and the mechanisms to do this are also uncertain.

Conclusions

22. In practice the project **operated as two separate interventions** sharing only a mutual commitment to advancing decent work. The project's theme in Thailand and Indonesia could best be described as "skills for transition", working with a sector in each country that was facing the challenges of structural change and seeking to increase the knowledge and capacity of constituents and other stakeholders to respond to this change through vocational training which also promoted the principles of "responsible business conduct". Because RISSC was already operating in the RBC space, the project focused more on skills than was originally envisaged in the project document.

23. In Japan, the project **focused on raising awareness of business and human rights** among Japanese institutional investors, trading companies and MNEs, developing a guide and running workshops and events. The focus there was at a quite different point on the continuum of responsible business conduct, emphasising the business case for addressing basic human rights in making investment decisions and in working with supply chains.

24. The project's work in these countries responded to real needs and constituents and implementation partners highly valued the ILO's contribution, both in its technical assistance and in the authority its involvement gave to the project as an international institution promoting standards. However, the **short duration of the project and the lack of a satisfactory framework to analyse progress** towards outcomes and impacts made it difficult to adequately measure the value added by the project. The project logic and theory of change were poorly articulated and there were no mechanisms in place to measure progress towards outcomes other than those related to completing activities.

25. Looking forward, there is potential to do more to connect skills development with responsible business conduct, **working with both MNEs and the SMEs in their supply chains**. The project now has strong links with sectoral bodies that can help the ILO and its partners to reach the huge number of SME suppliers where business and human rights risks are great. At the other end of the supply chain, engaging MNEs to work with national constituents in developing structural adjustment policies and strategies that include skills development programmes would be an appropriate area to explore, given the technological changes and the threat of job losses faced by their suppliers. In line with RBC or ESG principles, local MNE subsidiaries could be engaged to support tripartite initiatives that contribute to a smoother transition for the affected workers and business owners.

Lessons and Good Practices

Lessons

26. Clarity in describing "what success looks like" is essential in defining a theory of change and in creating a meaningful results framework. This needs to be done in conjunction with the funding partner and with constituents so that they have a shared understanding of the outcomes beyond the completion of activities.

27. A more systematic approach is needed to collect "stories of significant change". Given the long lead-time required, the scope for this is much less in short projects, but having mechanisms in place to describe what has changed or is beginning to change is still important.

28. Short, six-monthly updates may have helped identify the need for adjustments in approach and to provide the funding partner with the information it needed for accountability purposes. This would depend on having a better results framework in place.

29. Having a Project Manager with oversight of all three countries would also have helped strategic and operational decision making and communication with the funding partner.

30. Past projects delivered in related policy areas needed to have been more carefully considered in planning and implementing projects.

31. A clearer vision of the role to be played by constituents was needed in the awareness raising activities of the project in Japan. In particular, the role of employers' representatives could have been better recognised in advancing the business and human rights agenda within their membership. While capacity development for other partners representing investors and trading companies was important, more needed to be done for constituents.

Good practices

32. In Thailand, the project's success in gaining the commitment of ECOT and AHRDA to adopt and disseminate the skills and RBC modules developed through the project, of TAPMA to use and promote the occupational map with its many members, and of OVEC to adopt the in-company training manual revised through the project all demonstrate how project staff have independently identified important mechanisms for pursuing sustainable outcomes, even when such approaches are not clearly set out in project documents.

33. In Indonesia, engaging with Matsushita Gobel Foundation (YMG), a foundation linked to the MNE Panasonic was a highly effective way of engaging with a major company to work with its supply chains. It acted as an intermediary with Panasonic's local subsidiary on RBC-related matters and to elicit their cooperation and support. It also helped set up new collaborative arrangements with a key Ministry of Manpower vocational training centre, greatly enhancing their links with and responsiveness to suppliers in the E&E sector.

34. The project built new partnerships that could expand the reach of the ILO and METI, such as with PRI and the Japan Foreign Trade Council. While this was a good approach, it could have perhaps been done in a way that continued to build the capacity of ILO employer constituent capacity to a greater degree.

Recommendations

Recommendation 1:	***In all future project, ensure that the monitoring and reporting system set out in the project document is fit for purpose and can measure progress towards outcomes and impact.***
Responsibility:	Project design team
Time implications:	Moderate
Resource implications:	Low
Recommendation 2:	***Ensure that the management and governance structure of future projects is similarly fit for purpose and can effectively coordinate activities and streamline communication.***
Responsibility:	Project design team, Country/Regional offices
Time implications:	Low
Resource implications:	Moderate
Recommendation 3:	***Enhance the focus on gender and disability inclusion in project design and implementation.***
Responsibility:	Project design team, Country/Regional offices
Time implications:	Low
Resource implications:	Low
Recommendation 4:	***Explore models for structural adjustment policies strategies that involve MNEs to support workers and enterprises affected by structural change***
Responsibility:	Resource mobilization specialists, ENTERPRISE, SKILLS
Time implications:	Moderate
Resource implications:	Moderate-High

Introduction

Project Background

35. "Skills Development and Responsible Business Conduct (RBC) for Transition" was a two-year project funded by the Japanese Ministry of Economy, Trade and Industry (METI) with interventions delivered in Japan, Thailand and Indonesia. In Japan, the project focused on raising the awareness of institutional investors, trading companies and Multinational Enterprises (MNEs) of business and human rights issues as they affect their investment decisions and operations. In Thailand and Indonesia, the project worked a sectoral level (Automotive, and Electrical and Electronic sectors) embedding the principles of responsible business conduct into skills development initiatives designed to support the transitions faced by these sectors and their workforces.

36. The project was structured around three outcomes: (1) Skills Development to strengthen constituent capacity to grow jobs in high-value industries, to contribute to worker productivity and structural transformation, and to foster human rights; (2) Stronger institutional and tripartite collaboration to promote the labour dimension of RBC and adherence to international labour standards); and (3) an improved enabling environment to encourage a supportive policy environment that promotes resilient, sustainable and inclusive trade and investment. Outcomes (1) and (2) focus on Indonesia and Thailand while Outcome (3) focuses on Japan.

37. The project was managed by the ILO Regional Office for Asia and the Pacific (ROAP) and the ILO Office for Japan (ILO-Tokyo), in coordination with ILO Country Offices for Indonesia, and Thailand. In terms of the project's operational management, the project had two project managers – one based in Jakarta who covered operations in Thailand and Indonesia and one based in Tokyo who covered operations in Japan. Technical backstopping was provided by the Skills and Employability Specialist and the Enterprise Development Specialist in the Decent Work Team in ILO Bangkok.

38. In terms of the policy context of the project, the **MNE Declaration** asserts that MNEs have a responsibility to contribute to skills development in host countries to support national development policies and plans, to promote career opportunities and lifelong learning, and to contribute to training programmes organized by governments. All these matters are presented in the context of MNEs' own workforce rather than SMEs and other enterprises in their supply chains[1]. Referencing the MNE Declaration and **ILO Human Resources Development Recommendation 195**, the **OECD Guidelines for Multinational Enterprises on Responsible Business Conduct** also encourage MNEs to invest in training and lifelong learning, including for women and vulnerable groups. The wording of the guidelines again suggests a focus on action within the Multinational Enterprises operating in host countries[2].

39. The Skills Development and Responsible Business Conduct (RBC) for Transition project is clearly working in this policy space, engaging directly with enterprises in the automotive and Electrical and Electronics supply chains to promote skills development aimed at improving productivity, adaptability to change, and labour due diligence. At the same time, the project gave the ILO the opportunity to apply its unique capacity as both a normative body, promoting international labour standards, and as a provider of technical assistance on the ground to implement these standards.

40. While there were some expectations that the project's activities in Japan would intersect with its work in Thailand and Indonesia, in practice this connection was minimal. In Japan, the project was

[1] https://www.ilo.org/sites/default/files/wcmsp5/groups/public/%40ed_emp/%40emp_ent/%40multi/documents/publication/wcms_094386.pdf - See paragraphs 38-40

[2] https://www.oecd.org/content/dam/oecd/en/publications/reports/2023/06/oecd-guidelines-for-multinational-enterprises-on-responsible-business-conduct_a0b49990/81f92357-en.pdf - See paragraph 64. However, the OECD Guidelines do make more explicit the scope for MNE engagement with suppliers, including SMEs. They highlight the need to contribute to their skills development in a way that improves their productivity and compliance with RBC principles.

focused on raising awareness of business and human rights among Japanese institutional investors, trading companies and MNEs.

Evaluation background

Purpose, scope and clients of the evaluation

41. The **purpose** of this final evaluation is to assess the relevance of this cluster of interrelated project, including the validity of its design, to document and assess its achievements and effectiveness in terms of the stated outcomes, and to evaluate its impact or likely impact. It seeks to ensure accountability to stakeholders and to contribute to organizational learning.

42. The evaluation **scope** covers all activities in the three countries of the two projects from April 2023 to March 2025. It addresses gender equality and non-discrimination as a cross-cutting concern and considers how well the programme advanced tripartism, social dialogue and international labour standards.

43. The main **clients** of the evaluation are the ILO, the project teams, the donor, and national and local partners/constituents.

44. The Terms of Reference (ToR) for the evaluation are included at **Annex A**.

Dates, events and operation sequence of the evaluation

45. Key dates and activities of the evaluation were as follows:

- Project commencement (contract signed) – 16 January 2025
- Country visit and interviews (Thailand) – 27-31 January 2025
- Country visit and interviews (Indonesia) – 3-7 February 2025
- Country visit and interviews (Japan) – 10-14 February 2025
- Submission of preliminary draft report – 15 March 2025
- Validation workshops (remote) reviewing draft report findings – 17-26 March 2025
- Feedback received on preliminary draft – 26 March 2025
- Submission of final report – 31 March 2025

Methodology

Approach

46. The evaluation applied a mix of methods (see below) and analysed both quantitative and qualitative data. A participatory approach was used, involving ILO's tripartite constituents, and seeking inputs from programme stakeholders, implementation partners, beneficiary organisations, and representatives of national and local government.

47. The evaluation considered gender equality and disability inclusion data and followed ILO evaluation guidance note 3.1 on integrating gender. This included assessing the extent project documents addressed gender and inclusion; whether implementation gave attention to this and collected relevant performance data; ensuring women were included in evaluation interviews; assessing programme results and impact for women and vulnerable groups; and seeking feedback from key stakeholders and partners on gender and inclusion related aspects.

48. The evaluation took a broad view of the programme's achievements including any results that were not anticipated at the design stage or included in the programme's reporting framework. Key informants were invited to share their perceptions of how the programme's activities have made a difference, to highlight evidence that could be examined by the evaluation (including, for example, "stories of significant change"), and to suggest other informants and representatives who might

provide additional perspectives on other outcomes. In the case of the latter, several additional interviews were organised based on these suggestions.

49. The evaluation closely examined the project's Theory of Change including the clarity of its objectives and outcomes, the impact it was seeking to have (on whom and how), the interconnectedness and synergy of elements implemented across the three countries, and the nexus formed or encouraged by the project between skills development and RBC. The adequacy of the project's monitoring and reporting framework to track the achievement of project outcomes and impact was assessed within the context of the Theory of Change.

50. The evaluation was led by an international consultant, Mr Tony Powers, supported by National Consultants in Thailand (Ms Raviprapa Srisartsnarat) and Indonesia (Ms Maria Epik). National staff provided important contextual and cultural support to the evaluation and addressed language barriers. In Japan, a commercial interpreter service was engaged by the ILO to support stakeholder interviews.

Data collection methods

51. A **document review** included documents/reports related to the programme's context, design, ongoing development and modification, technical and financial progress, monitoring and evaluation systems, and programme outputs. These included documents related to programme context and rationale (e.g., situation analyses and research, DWCPs, country development plans and strategies, relevant country TVET regulations, sectoral reports, donor-related plans); programme design (e.g., the original Project Document, funding agreements and amendments); monitoring and evaluation instruments, tools and participant surveys; the first year progress report (covering mainly the 2023 inception period); and research reports, awareness raising tools and guides developed through the project. Note that some project outputs were still in being finalised at the time of the evaluation and were not available for review. Similarly, the 2024 project report was still being prepared at the time of the evaluation. See LIMITATIONS below for more details.

52. **Field visits** to each country included interviews with the funding partner (METI), ILO constituents, key stakeholders, implementation partners and targeted beneficiaries. To assess the extent to which workplaces have adopted any new skills and RBC practices in line with the project's aims and objectives, a small number of site inspections were included of participating enterprises where staff and managers had participated in project training or awareness raising activities and assess the extent to which workplaces have adopted any new skills and RBC practices in line with the project's aims and objectives.

53. Most **interviews** were conducted face-to-face, supplemented by some remote interviews via MS Teams. In total 92 people were interviewed including 38 women (41%) - see **Annex B**. People interviewed included:

- ILO constituents – Workers' and Employers' representatives and Ministries of Labour
- Representatives of relevant Ministries involved directly in the programme as well as others with a role in sectoral development and investment attraction
- Representatives of the project's target sectors in the three countries, including participating enterprises, peak sectoral bodies, representatives of Multinational Enterprises and Institutional Investors
- Beneficiaries of training provided through the project (including skills training and HR/other management in participating enterprises)
- Representatives of national TVET institutions delivering training developed/upgraded through the project
- People and organizations involved in developing project tools, resources and awareness-raising materials

- ILO staff including senior management in Country Offices, DW Team specialists in Regional Office (including Skills and Enterprise), project staff (including the current and the previous project coordinator), and staff of other closely related ILO projects such as RISSC.
- Representatives of METI who have had a close involvement in the project's implementation

54. The evaluation's data management processes were continuously reviewed against checklists to ensure that:

- Only data that were necessary for the evaluation and created were collected.
- All forms of personal data were protected and privacy protected.
- Data governance arrangements were in place to clarify data roles, responsibilities, standards and protocols and to ensure accountability for data assets, insights and actions.
- Management of data and analytical products was transparent by ensuring that evaluation outputs were comprehensible and traceable.
- Data collection, storage and use were safe and secure, with processes in place to manage any data leakage or breaches of confidentiality.
- Data usage was responsible and impartial, respecting, protecting and promoting human rights and, as appropriate, international standards. This includes eliminating bias and not discriminating based on gender, race, religion or any other factor.
- Other aspects of data management were observed, as applicable, with reference to the Personal Data Protection and Privacy Principles adopted by the United Nations High-Level Committee on Management.

Evaluation norms, standards and ethical safeguards

55. In line with the United Nations Evaluation Group (UNEG) standards[3], the evaluation applies the key criteria of **relevance, coherence, effectiveness, efficiency, sustainability and impact** as per the OECD/DAC Evaluation Quality Criteria for international development assistance. Specifically, to review relevance, the evaluation assesses how well the project researched and responded to the national, sectoral and stakeholder needs and the rationale for project adjustments made during implementation. It considers the effectiveness of programme activities implemented in the three countries, including unexpected positive or negative results, and the efficiency of their delivery in terms of available time, funding, and personnel. It assesses the impact the programme has had (or is positioned to have) and the sustainability of these impacts.

56. In line with ILO evaluation policy, the evaluation addresses gender equality and non-discrimination as a cross-cutting concern, considers if and how tripartism, social dialogue and international labour standards have been advanced, and coherence with ILO, UN and national plans.

57. The evaluation adhered to confidentiality and other ethical considerations throughout, following the United Nations Evaluation Group (UNEG) Ethical Guidelines and Norms and Standards in the UN System – all stakeholder groups were treated with integrity and respect and their confidentiality preserved regarding sensitive information and feedback elicited during the interviews (e.g., quotes in the report have been anonymized). To mitigate bias during the data collection process and ensure maximum freedom of expression of the implementing partners, beneficiaries and other stakeholders, project staff were not present during interviews.

58. Key stakeholders will have the opportunity to review this draft report and to participate in a stakeholders' validation workshop.

[3] https://www.unevaluation.org/document/download/3625

Criteria and Questions

59. Evaluation questions, grouped under the OECD/DAC are set out below. A table setting out data sources used by the evaluation in answering these questions is included in **Annex C**. This also sets out sub-questions that reflect some specific issues set out in the ToR.

60. Relevance

- To what extent and how well did the project respond to the needs and priorities of the national and sectoral stakeholders, donor and ILO constituents as well as diverse groups of beneficiaries?
- Is the project well designed (i.e. are the project activities aligned to outcomes) and realistic (in terms of its strategy, expected outputs, outcome and impact) given its timeframe and resources?
- To what extent has the project integrated gender and disability inclusion, tripartism and the ILO's normative mandate into its strategy, plans and actions?

61. Coherence

- How well did the programme work with other relevant ILO interventions and create synergies with constituents and other partners to enhance the project's efficiency, effectiveness and impact?

62. Effectiveness

- To what extent have the envisaged programme results been achieved?
- What are major factors influencing the achievement or non-achievement of the objectives?
- Have the project's knowledge sharing, communication and private sector engagement strategies been effective in raising the profile of the project within each country and among the cooperating partners? Has this contributed to the promotion of skills development in the context of RBC?
- Did the project's interventions contribute to strengthening social dialogue among social partners and international stakeholders, including Japanese buyers and public institutions in the targeted countries?

63. Efficiency

- Have resources (financial, human, technical support, etc.) been allocated strategically and realistically to achieve the project outputs and outcomes in the given timeframe?
- To what extent has the project management and governance structure put in place worked strategically with tripartite constituents, stakeholders and partners in the project, ILO and the donor - to achieve project goals and objectives?

64. Impact and sustainability

- To what extent are the project and its results likely to have long term effects including on enterprises, workers, institutional capacity, policies at national/sub-national/sectoral levels and in meeting the needs of women and vulnerable groups?
- In what ways has the programme advanced the donor's international development policy objectives in the programme countries?

Methodological limitations and constraints

65. Prior to the field visits, the evaluation received **little or no documentation on project implementation beyond its inception phase**. While some documents were collected during the evaluation that summarised activities, these were generally descriptive and did not provide enough

detail for a more comprehensive analysis. The 2024 project Annual Report will not be completed until 30 April 2025. The project therefore relied on qualitative data gathered from the interviews.

66. At the time of the evaluation, the project was **still finalising some key outputs in all three countries**. Some were not expected to be delivered until the very end of the project and were therefore not available for review by the evaluation.

67. The **short timeframe of the project** (two years, but in effect, 18 months inclusive of the inception phase) and a **lack of baseline data** inhibited the identification of project impacts – including, for example, behavioural changes within enterprises in respect of RBC after their participation in awareness raising activities, and benefits flowing to individuals who undertook skills training.

68. Some follow up work by implementation partners with project beneficiaries was **not planned to occur until *after* the project was completed** (e.g., in Japan, some workshop participants were to report back at a workshop on what they RBC initiatives had been introduced in their enterprises following workshop activity). This would have provided the evaluation with a valuable insight into project impact but may still be of value to the ILO and METI once it becomes available.

69. The evaluation relied to some extent on the project teams to compile lists of stakeholders to be interviewed and there was therefore a risk of "cherry picking" informants with a more positive perspective of the programme. To mitigate this risk, the evaluation reviewed programme documents and reports and to ensure that all stakeholder groups were included in these lists, that all perspectives were captured and were gender balanced. Some additional interviews were requested to fill identified gaps but there **may still have been some groups who were not represented**.

70. The report includes **quotations from the interviews**, which were often derived from interpreters' real-time English paraphrasing of the informants' statements. As a result, while these quotations convey the essence of what was said, they should not be regarded as verbatim transcripts.

Findings

Relevance

Design: The project design was weak in several important respects, hindering the efforts of project staff to achieve the intended outcomes. The project's monitoring framework was weak, lacked meaningful indicators of success or means of verification, and provided limited evidence for the evaluation's assessment of effectiveness, impact and sustainability. At the design stage, the ILO should have developed with the funding partner a shared understanding of "what success would look like" by the end of the project and how to report on progress towards this outcome.

71. Considering it effectively ran for only 18 months (after a six-month inception period), the project set out to deliver an ambitious and diverse programme of activities. Under the three project outcomes, the design included 8 outputs and 15 activities. Activities often included multiple sub-activities, some of which faced unexpected implementation obstacles which needed to be navigated. There were also delays and staffing disruptions which complicated delivery. In this short period of time, project staff had to build relationships with stakeholders from scratch, research their needs, develop and test new tools, training modules and information products, and had very little time to fully implement and institutionalise these in national systems and policies.

72. The wording of the outcomes and outputs included in the logframe was often difficult to understand. An effort seems to have been made to pack as many references to ILO policy considerations as possible into each. While this may have enabled the project design to have passed approval checklists, clarity in describing envisaged results is more important. Instead, some outcomes bordered on the unintelligible[4].

73. The main project activity types included:

- **Stakeholder consultation and research** on sectoral skills needs (1.1.1, 1.1.2)
- **Training/Seminars/workshops** - including on
    - Sector needs (1.1.3)
    - Institution and enterprise-based training on identified topics (1.2.1)
    - Implementing/supporting quality apprenticeships (1.3.1)
    - HR planning (delivered by MNEs) (1.3.2)
    - Use of FPRW and RBC tools by HR/compliance/procurement staff in enterprises (2.1.2) and government staff (2.2.2)
    - Human rights, due diligence and social dialogue for social partners (2.3.1)
- **Reviewing and upgrading the existing competency standards/curriculum** (1.2.2)
- **Facilitating mentorships by MNEs** of local companies (1.3.3)
- **Localising/reconfiguring existing tools** promoting FPRW and RBC (2.1.1) and ILO lessons learned in RBC (2.2.1)
- **Developing and disseminating awareness raising materials** for investors, training companies and MNEs (3.1.1., 3.1.2) including G7 and Japan-ASEAN meetings (3.2.1)
- **Providing policy input for governments** (3.2.2)

74. At the time of the evaluation, some key activities were still being finalised – for example, the delivery of technical and RBC training to SME staff in the E&E sector in Indonesia and in the Automotive sector in Thailand (1.2.1), an occupational mapping activity in Thailand (1.1.1), and providing a

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[4] Output 3.1 provides an example of this: "Awareness is raised among investors, trading companies and multinational enterprises in terms of international investment opportunities for women and men worker's skills and enterprises' efforts towards sustainable and resilient value chains among ESG investment".

"summary note for constituents" (originally, a "policy note" for government) in Japan. While all these will probably be delivered "just in time", having a frantic rush to complete key project deliverables is not ideal. It provides limited or no opportunity to share and promote these things within the project itself, and no opportunity at all to evaluate their application and actual impact. High-level evaluations of the ILO's development cooperation work have suggested that the timeliness of delivery has been a continuing challenge for the organisation[5]. This is partly because of its commitment to working closely with its constituents and focusing on longer-term institutional capacity building and support for policy makers. The sort of results the ILO aims to achieve take time. In this case, project design may have been too ambitious, involving too many activities, and spreading the project's quite limited staff resources too thinly.

75. The project's logical framework included only broad indicators to measure the success of these activities in achieving the project's objectives. They included such things as simple counts of participants engaged in project activities, numbers of events held, numbers of tools or documents produced, and some reaction-level satisfaction surveys. None of these provide a strong basis for measuring what difference the project has made.

76. For example, under "Impact 1" the indicator was listed as "*increased capacity to advance decent work through promoting RBC in the global supply chains of E&E and Automotive sectors in Indonesia and Thailand*". The means of verification was "*list of participants of the RBC training*". This verifies nothing but attendance. Similarly weak measures are listed throughout. Even if one accepts these measures as somehow providing evidence of outcomes, little attention appears to have been given to gathering this information, compiling it, analysing it and sharing it with stakeholders. Lack of time to do this was certainly an issue – results of this type cannot be instantaneous – but more could have been done to gather "stories of significant change". Stakeholders noted the lack of attention given to such analysis. While understanding the differing perspectives and motivations of the ILO and METI in the implementation of the project, more information was needed on the difference the project was making through its many events, workshops, products and training. As one representative said:

> *"The ILO has its own view of 'why' they are implementing the activities, and we have our 'why'. We need more communication on what effectiveness means for both. We need analytical information that helps us – but there has been none."*

Another said:

> *"We find it difficult to evaluate the effectiveness of the project overall. There is a lack of information to do so. We've received some very good feedback on some elements – for example, with the seminar [in Japan] for trading companies, we have received a good response anecdotally. But such data needed to be collected more methodically and more analytically."*

77. This was a deficiency in project design. A common weakness of some development cooperation projects is a tendency to focus on elements which lie within the implementing institution's own control, rather than to monitor the contribution these results are making to broader processes at country, regional and sectoral level. Attention is instead focused on activities, inputs, and outputs, which tend to be all internal to the institution. Progress from outputs towards outcomes is often weakly reported and monitoring of actual or potential movement from outcomes towards impacts can be non-existent. This was clearly also the case with this project.

78. Given that project staff had their hands full with implementing all the activities listed above, they had little scope or authority to correct this deficiency in project design and to develop a more meaningful and regular reporting framework. They followed the script set down for them in the project document. Future projects need to give more attention to the design of a meaningful project monitoring and reporting systems, ensuring that these are not administratively onerous, but at least

[5] https://www.ilo.org/publications/high-level-independent-evaluation-ilo%E2%80%99s-development-cooperation-strategy

provide for a level of analysis that meets the requirements of key stakeholders - especially the funding partner, which needs such data to meet its own accountability requirements. In the case of funding partners that are "new ILO customers" where a relationship of understanding and trust needs to be cultivated. See RECOMMENDATIONS.

Linking skills development with RBC: A valid rationale underpinned the project's novel approach of combining skills development with the promotion and advancement of Responsible Business Conduct. In practice, project staff had to pioneer this new approach with little guidance from the project document, instead "learning by doing". In Thailand and Indonesia, their work was further complicated by operational overlaps with another ILO project (RISSC), requiring them to focus more on skills and less on the broader business and human rights activities that were originally planned. In Japan, the project focused exclusively on business and human rights.

79. The concepts of "skills development" and "Responsible Business Conduct" are both broad in scope. From an ILO perspective, its work in skills helps its constituents to integrate skills development into national and sectoral development policies and supports them to identify current and future skills needs, improve industry engagement with national skills development systems, and enhance work-based learning, including through Quality Apprenticeship systems. More broadly, its work in supporting enterprises can also be seen through the lens of "skills development", with actions aimed at building the capacity and sustainability of enterprises including SMEs. This includes supporting them to understand and adapt to changes in their operating environment, including changes related to technological and structural change and to the changing needs and priorities of buyers and investors.

80. Similarly, work in promoting "Responsible Business Conduct" spans a broad continuum of issues – from promoting adherence to the ILO Declaration of Fundamental Principles and Rights at Work (1998), the ILO Multinational Enterprises Declaration, and the UN Guiding Principle of Business and Human Rights to a broader range of good ethical practices by MNEs while engaging with suppliers and contractors[6]. RBC principles are also reflected in the growing attention given to ESG (Environment, Social and Governance) investment principles, which grew from UN efforts to promote "corporate social responsibility" or CSR.

81. While the ILO has many examples of development cooperation projects that address these issues separately, the current project represents a novel combination of the two. So, what exactly is the nexus of skills development and RBC and how well did the project inhabit this space to exploit connections between the two?

Outcome 1

82. In its "Problem Analysis" the Project Document outlines the skills development challenges it aimed to address in the participating countries. These included the need for national skills systems to "address imminent structural and technological changes", to "reduce the mismatch between skills and jobs", to respond to the "greening and digitalization of the economy", and to ensure that workers affected by these changes had "access to reskilling and upskilling opportunities". This is all familiar territory for the ILO and in many ways represented a continuation of the skills system development work it had been leading in Thailand and Indonesia in recent years.

83. The Project Document was less clear about where this skills work would be uniquely linked to or supportive of RBC. It highlighted the need for SMEs in supply chains to better understand and plan for current and future skills needs, including enhancing skills development aimed at "responding to transitions" – namely, green transition, digital transformation, and the importance increasingly placed on business and human rights. It also highlighted the need for "supply chain/sector-wide

[6] An example of this was the ILO's work with constituents, MNEs and brands in the garment sector to protect workers and enterprises in supply chains affected by the COVID-19 pandemic - the Call to Action: https://www.ilo.org/resource/questions-and-answers-action-global-garment-industry

dialogue" on these issues. This element of the project design slightly adjusts the rationale of the ILO's skills-related work in Indonesia and Thailand to emphasise issues related to RBC, but it does not really lead it into new territory. For example, in Indonesia, work on the development of Sectoral Skills Councils had been continuing for some years and these can provide a means to navigate such sectoral challenges, perhaps in a more sustainable way.

84. In this sense, the relevance of activities under Outcome 1 can best be considered as adding a novel RBC flavour or supplement to an established ILO skills project recipe. While questions could be legitimately asked about how much the project can be considered to be an "RBC project", this approach does offer some advantages compared with a more didactic project strategy that focused more on "telling SMEs what they should do to better comply with RBC principles". Project staff and constituents told the evaluation that stakeholders were generally more willing to come to the table to discuss the skill-related needs of their enterprise or sector. Businesses prioritise productivity and survival in a competitive market and understand how skills support these. Workers' representatives are similarly invested in skills development and understand its role in improving worker employability and wages and in safeguarding their jobs in the face of structural change.

85. The idea was to embed RBC concepts wherever feasible into the development and delivery of Outcome 1 skills development activities in the two countries. The extent to which this was achieved in practice will be explored below under EFFECTIVENESS, but in broad terms the approach made sense in the context of the two countries. As one senior ILO manager put it:

> *"Rather than directly confronting companies with compliance requirements, the project approached them through their skills development needs - an area where companies are typically more receptive to engagement. This also showed sensitivity to local culture - rather than coming down hard on Fundamental Principles and Rights at Work as the first message."*

86. From the perspective of the ILO's skills work in the two countries, the project recognizes that improving business competitiveness through skills development can create conditions where companies are in a better position to prioritize responsible business practices. Taking the low-skill, low-productivity, low-cost path means businesses operate under extreme cost pressures in a "race to the bottom". This typically leads to a situation where they compromise on labour standards and risk violating human rights. Conversely, the logic follows that, by helping companies become more competitive and productive through skills development, they "take the high road" and are better positioned to implement responsible business practices. As a DWT specialist explained to the evaluation:

> *"The idea was to create a virtuous circle, using skills as the catalyst: the more competitive a business becomes the more they can focus on profitability linked to better working conditions and a happier workforce."*

87. This approach was also one that the funding partner was reported to have seen as relevant and appropriate. An ILO official who engaged with METI in the development phase indicated that Japan was attracted to an approach that reached out to supply chains, including SMEs without being too "top-down" and heavy-handed. The approach of the EU and the USA was seen as being somewhat too forceful in this respect when what was needed was a more nuanced approach. As the ILO official recalled:

> *"By embedding business and human rights into TVET curriculum we open opportunities to share good practice and sensitize people to the issues. Also, it can set an example for other regions/countries to follow."*

88. As will be discussed later, to do this, some flexibility in implementation was needed in the process. The project did not stick rigidly to the project plan. It abandoned or modified some activities and added others after new relationships were built and the situation of some key stakeholders was better understood. This was especially the case in understanding the role that could be expected of

Japanese MNEs in reinforcing the project's efforts to build the capacity of supply chains and their workers, including SMEs .

Outcome 2

89. While the Project Document stressed the need for countries and supply chains "to adopt human rights due diligence" and to improve "knowledge and capability to comply with national laws and respect human rights", the primary mechanism to do this through the project was through "well-structured technical training". As discussed above, having RBC embedded in technical training is a worthwhile strategy to reinforce the message and to bring stakeholders together to engage in social dialogue, but the sort of institutional and tripartite collaboration to promote RBC across supply chains that was envisaged through Outcome 2 suggests the need for broader action.

90. In both Thailand and Indonesia, the project seems to have struggled to carve out a niche for its activities under Outcome 2. To an extent, it may have been "boxed in" by the ILO's RISSC project, which was working in this space too (see COHERENCE). This had the effect of reinforcing the project's orientation towards skills work (Outcome 1), rather than the labour dimension of business and human rights, an area that was of perhaps most interest and relevance to METI.

91. Planned activities included in the Project Document were, on the face of things, relevant, but for a variety of reasons which will be discussed later under EFFECTIVENESS, some were either not implemented as envisaged or were incorporated into other activities. These included "localisation and reconfiguration of existing tools and materials on fundamental principles and rights at work and the MNE Declaration" (2.1.1), workshops targeting "staff in charge of human resources, and compliance or procurement managers" (2.1.2), and "summarise ILO's knowledge, information, good practices and lessons learned in the area of RBC" (2.2.1).

92. Some joint activities with RISSC helped present a united position on issues related to Outcome 2, but the relevance of the project's contribution to this outcome – its unique value add – was not as clear and instead seems to have looped back to its work in Outcome 1.

Outcome 3

93. The project's work in Japan was all about reaching out to and supporting private actors, MNEs, investors and trading companies in Japan to improve the "enabling environment for sustainable value chains". The project document proposed that this could be achieved both through "skills development responding to transition in the world of work" and "responsible business conduct to address decent work challenges".

94. The idea was to leverage the influence of institutional investors to drive RBC and the promotion of business and human rights through supply chains. Trading companies and MNEs would be the catalysts for change at the supplier level. The logic of this element of the project is sound and relevant to national and sectoral needs and priorities and was seen by stakeholders as such. As one offering the worker perspective put it, it elevated the "S" (Social) element of the ESG agenda, at a time when the "E" (Environmental) element had received more attention.

95. Planned activities focused on developing and disseminating awareness raising material in Japan (3.1.1 and 3.1.2) and a regional awareness raising event linked (3.2.1). These will be discussed in detail under EFFECTIVENESS but in terms of the relevance of project design, stakeholders saw these elements of the project as filling an important gap.

96. Another planned activity clearly did *not* match the needs of its intended beneficiary. Activity 3.2.2 was intended to produce "**policy input notes provided for the governments** with a view to building a knowledge base and common understanding of transition and to making a policy commitment towards decent work through RBC and respect for the principles of ILS". After discussions with the ILO and METI, it was agreed that a "summary note" would be prepared for the benefit of ILO

constituents and a “much broader audience”. This was still being written at the time of the evaluation and no details provided on its content and purpose.

Project activities were relevant to the needs and priorities of national and sectoral stakeholders and ILO constituents. Over time, as awareness grew and project tools and resources were completed, stakeholders in all three countries expressed a strong desire for continued support in the areas targeted by the project.

Relevance to national stakeholders in Thailand and Indonesia

97. At a country level, the relevance of the project can be assessed from multiple perspectives, including that of ILO constituents, the target sectors in each country, government officials charged with reforming national skills systems, and the needs of project beneficiaries. There were many activities linked to Outcomes 1 and 2 in Thailand and Indonesia and these reflected the diverse needs and priorities of national stakeholders in different ways. In some cases, stakeholders found it difficult to disentangle the unique contribution of the project from other ILO work and projects.

Thailand

98. **Constituents** in Thailand generally saw the project’s focus on **skills development** as being a vital mechanism to meet the challenges presented by structural change in the country’s manufacturing sector and for SMEs working in supply chains. **Employer representatives** highlighted the changes faced by the automotive sector – a sector that until recently was cast as the “rising star” of Thai manufacturing but is now facing technological and competitive challenges from Chinese Electric Vehicle (EV) companies. An example was given of a Thai automotive component manufacturer that had downsized from a peak employment level of 1,600 employees three years ago to around 200 now. Similar stories of downsizing and sometimes overnight closures of suppliers in the automotive supply chain were shared by **workers’ representatives**. In the face of these challenges, the project’s facilitation of social dialogue was seen as especially relevant. As one workers’ representative said:

> *“The project is relevant in that it has brought the tripartite partners together to address the issues the automotive sector is now facing so we can face the challenges of the future together. High level Ministry of Labor executives (including the Permanent Secretary) have attended along with ECOT and the four workers' organizations.”*

99. In this context, the project’s work in supporting the re-skilling and up-skilling of automotive sector workers – especially, the more vulnerable, lower skilled workers who have had limited access to technical training – was identified as being of critical importance. This was echoed by automotive **SMEs** whose workers participated in the training. One stressed that suppliers needed to adapt to changes in market demand (e.g., more than half of components for cars with internal combustion engines are not required in EVs) and increasing competition meant that workforce up-skilling and re-skilling were vital.

100. While the project has demonstrated a model to extend such upskilling to existing workers who might otherwise not have had this opportunity (specifically, offering training in SCADA and PLC[7]), questions remain about the sustainability of this model, who pays for it, and how it can increase the application of RBC principles within automotive supply chains. This will be discussed in more detail under IMPACT AND SUSTAINABILITY but, in terms of relevance, the project in Thailand highlighted a **possible unmet need** for a labour market adjustment strategy or programme to support workers and enterprises in supply chains that are affected by technological change and industry restructuring. Constituents consulted in the evaluation highlighted the need to work together to

[7] Supervisory Control and Data Acquisition (SCADA) is a control system that uses computers, networked data communications, and graphical Human Machine Interfaces (HMIs) to manage and control industrial processes. A Programmable Logic Controller (PLC) is an industrial computer that has been designed to remotely control manufacturing operations, machines, production lines, robotic devices, or processes that requires high reliability, programming and fault detection.

respond to these challenges and agreed that the project proved its relevance – albeit on a small scale - by facilitating such dialogue. More specifically, the question was raised of how MNEs can or should contribute to an adjustment strategy or programme as part of their commitment to RBC – or under the social pillar of ESG. As one worker's representative said:

> *"Without upskilling, workers are vulnerable to the structural changes that are affecting the industry. I am aware of three recent, sudden factory closures - suppliers to Toyota, Isuzu and Honda. What role could MNEs have played in preparing workers? It's not their job alone, but should they play a role? Workers were taken by surprise, but the closures followed a longer, more gradual change. What could have been done?"*

Without such a collaborative approach to labour market adjustment, communities may suffer, and the burden will fall on the shoulders of government. As one ILO staff member familiar with the project observed:

> *"Production modes are changing and the skills needed are changing. Who is going to respond to these changes? It is a shared responsibility. From a rights-based perspective, as these tech changes change the landscape, there will be a human impact. If the existing workforce is just discarded and not reskilled, these lost people will end up costing the government."*

101. Future ILO projects that work in the nexus between skills development and RBC, particularly in sectors and supply chains that are exposed to significant structural change, might explore models that respond to this need, bringing together MNEs, governments, and employers' and workers' representatives to contribute to such labour market adjustment programmes. Such contributions to training are not covered explicitly in the MNE Declaration (which only mentions training of MNE employees) though the OECD Guidelines for Multinational Enterprises on Responsible Business Conduct go further, linking the training of suppliers with RBC[8]. The ILO needs to consider how it can facilitate planning for labour market transitions in a way that actively involves MNEs and the tripartite constituents. See RECOMMENDATIONS.

102. In terms of the relevance of specific Outcome 1 project activities undertaken in Thailand, the project's **research on current and future skill needs in the automotive sector** provided a basis for its work **updating skills development programs** and for an **occupational mapping exercise** that linked skills acquisition to specific jobs and career paths. Stakeholders and constituents saw this work as being highly relevant and providing a level of analysis that was deeper than current practices used to assess industry skill needs.

103. The project's development of three new four-hour training modules in **green transitions**, **digital transformation** and **Fundamental Principles and Rights at Work** for both Thailand and Indonesia, responded to the need to strengthen the link between the provision of technical training and the promotion of RBC topics. Awareness of these issues in Thailand within SMEs in supply chains was seen by project staff to be generally low. SMEs saw RBC as "being for the benefit of workers" rather than being a potential contributor to improvements in productivity. There is clearly a need to change this mindset and training of the type developed by the project can play a part. Supporting this, the project trained trainers from public TVET institutions, and staff of employers' and workers' institutions. It also produced a trainers' manual for the modules. The evaluation reviewed this manual, which showed how the training was designed both to enhance participant awareness of the issues and to get them thinking about how they might apply what they learn in their workplaces. The training covers a broad range of relevant content. It should be noted that some questions

[8] Paragraph 26 states: *"Enterprises may also engage with suppliers and other entities with which they have business relationships **to improve their performance**, in co-operation with other stakeholders, **including through personnel training and other forms of capacity building**, and support the **integration of principles of responsible business conduct** compatible with the Guidelines **into their business practices**. Engaging with and supporting **small- and medium-sized enterprises** with which they have business relationships is particularly important in this respect."*

remain about how this training will be delivered in the future and to whom (see IMPACT AND SUSTAINABILITY).

104. The project originally planned a far more **active involvement of Japanese automotive companies** in Thailand in directly engaging with SMEs in their supply chains through the project. The idea was to get them to **conduct workshops** on HR planning and to **form mentoring relationships** that involved **mutual visits** and **ongoing advice** on "selected topics of concern". This would have been a highly relevant project component, demonstrating RBC on the part of participating MNEs and providing a voice from the top of the supply chain to reinforce the need for SMEs in their supply chains to give attention to RBC issues. Some MNE representatives consulted in the evaluation expressed support for the concept, but it appears that agreement from senior management (and possibly HQ in Japan) would have needed to be negotiated first. It was not clear if any preliminary negotiations to implement this project component were conducted in the design and inception phase of the project, but it appears there were not.

105. On the other hand, one project activity that was not originally planned was added in Thailand – providing support to the Thai government in revising legislation and regulations related to its "**dual vocational education and training**" system. The reform and expansion of this mode of delivery is a high priority for Thailand and its Office of the Vocational Education Commission (OVEC) which approached the ILO to help it align its system with the ILO Recommendation 208 on Quality Apprenticeships and later to implement the legislation. While this work extends beyond the project's automotive sector focus and covers all sectors of the Thai economy, the evaluation noted that the primary automotive sector public training institution, the Automotive Human Resources Development Academy (AHRDA) indicated that it planned to incorporate the three RBC training modules developed by the project into its curriculum for Dual System students. The scope exists to promote their inclusion in other sectors' curricula – making this addition to the project highly relevant in that the RBC message could be spread to over 200,000 students and their host enterprises every year.

106. **Awareness raising activities and workshops** in Thailand covered a range of content under Outcomes 1 and 2 with all broadly relevant to stakeholder needs. These included validation workshops and an automotive sectoral forum (e.g., related to sectoral skills needs identification and mainstreaming RBC content in training), constituent and partner workshops (e.g. discussing both skills issues and the labour dimension of human rights due diligence), consultations related to the reform of the dual TVET system. Participating organizations consulted during the evaluation broadly saw these events as being relevant to their needs but did not elaborate. Any more detailed reports on participant perceptions of their relevance were not shared with the evaluation.

Indonesia

107. In terms of relevance to **government stakeholders**, the project's work in **skills development** in Indonesia represented a continuation of the ILO's technical assistance and capacity building supporting the country's efforts to reform its training system[9]. These reforms include strengthening industry leadership in training development to improve its relevance and responsiveness to change (e.g., by establishing Sectoral Skills Councils), improving opportunities for re-skilling and up-skilling in response to technological change, and improving the quality of the apprenticeship system. In different ways, all the project's work in skills (under Outcome 1) aligned with the government's TVET reform agenda and its relevance was therefore high.

108. As was the case in Thailand, the project conducted **research into the re-skilling and up-skilling needs** within the target sector (Electrical and Electronics) in response to rapid technological change. The report was published quite late in the project (September 2024) but included a highly relevant

[9] As set out in Presidential Decree No. 68 of 2022, concerning Revitalization of Vocational Education and Training, Decree No. 6 of 2022 on a National Strategy on TVET Revitalisation and Decree No. 10 of 2021 on the Ministry of Manpower's National Strategy, 2020-24.

analysis of the state of the sector, current and emerging skill needs, and specific recommendations relevant to policy makers (including on apprenticeship programmes), companies, educational institutions, trade unions and employer organizations (including lobbying government for support to bolster re-skilling and up-skilling).

109. The project in Indonesia initiated several other publications and associated training designed to support skills system reforms including on the implementation of **Quality Apprenticeships in the E&E sector**, **Guidelines on Quality Internships (for school students)**, and **Grievance Mechanisms for Apprentices**. Again, these products were all relevant to the skills reform agenda in Indonesia. Links to the project's RBC goals may not initially appear to be strong, though an argument could be made that aligning Indonesia's apprenticeship system with the ILO's Recommendation of Quality Apprenticeships can improve apprentices skills and adaptability to change, inform them of their rights, and eliminate abuses of apprenticeship arrangements (e.g., using them just to underpay workers, unjustifiably extending them, firing workers only to re-hire them as cheaper "apprentices", and lack of quality training on the job).

110. Constituents in Indonesia saw the project's focus on RBC as being timely and appropriate and that its efforts to promote the concept to SMEs in supply chains as being challenging but relevant. **Employer representatives** indicated that RBC is not a new concept with larger, "Tier 1" contractors and they are accustomed to some international buyers sending in assessment teams before they enter contracts. It is in the lower tiers of the supply chain where awareness levels of RBC and Business and Human Rights issues are lower and where there are risks. A **workers' representative** shared similar views, pointing out that within the project's target sector of Electrical and Electronic (E&E) manufacturing, there were many very small suppliers engaged in low level assembly and cabling work. He saw the project's advocacy of social dialogue on RBC issues across the sector as being an important and relevant part of addressing the challenges, but the scale of these was huge. As another employer representative said:

> *"There are between 5,500 and 6,000 large companies in Indonesia, but below them are some two million SMEs and perhaps 65 million micro-enterprises."*

111. In contrast to Thailand, the project in Indonesia enjoyed more success in involving MNEs in its work with SMEs in the E&E supply chain – or more accurately with Matsushita Gobel Foundation (YMG), a non-profit entity linked to an MNE, Panasonic. The project's goals and approach were highly relevant to YMG's philosophy focuses on giving back to the communities where Panasonic has a presence. As will be discussed under EFFECTIVENESS, they were able to greatly assist the project's engagement with suppliers in Panasonic's supply chain and, working closely with the Indonesian Ministry of Manpower's Vocational Training Centre specialising in E&E (BBPVP), maximised the relevance of the **technical training delivered to workers**, supported the **Training of Trainers**, and championed the project's **RBC** focus and its promotion of **social dialogue**.

112. In terms of the relevance of activities planned and delivered under Outcome 2, at the **Indonesian government** level, in September 2023, the Indonesian government released its National Strategy on Business and Human Rights and an accompanying Presidential Regulation (No. 60 of 2023). This framework does not specify a minimum size for a business to be covered by these regulations (as is the case, for example, with the EU's Corporate Sustainability Due Diligence Directive[10]) and in this sense has a scope similar to Japan's Guidelines on Respecting Human Rights in Responsible Supply Chains published by the Japanese government[11]. The Strategy includes as one of its three policy priorities "enhancement of understanding and capacity building in relation to business and human rights" – a priority that highlights the relevance of the ILO/METI Skills Development and RBC project to government stakeholders.

[10] Available in English here: https://eur-lex.europa.eu/eli/dir/2024/1760/oj
[11] Available in English here: https://www.meti.go.jp/english/press/2022/pdf/0913_001a.pdf

113. Further strengthening this relevance, the project co-organised a **national seminar in August 2024** with the RISSC project, the **Ministry of Manpower,** and the **Ministry of Law and Human Rights** to strengthen the implementation of the National Strategy as it related to Decent Work. ILO constituents, relevant government ministries and other stakeholders contributed. Advancing the strategy involves several Indonesian line ministries and bringing them together in this way was relevant to ensuring coordination[12]. It also was relevant in that it sought to position skills development as a means of driving change in supply chains in the context of RBC. As an ILO specialist said at the seminar:

> *"By ensuring respect to human rights and decent work, including workers' skills development, companies can drive large-scale positive changes in their operations and their supply chains.*

114. Linked to both Outcome 1 and Outcome 2, the project's work with **Panasonic's enterprise-based union (FSPPG)** was relevant to both skills and RBC, building its capacity to understand and to promote Quality Apprenticeships, including the grievance mechanisms developed through the project. A knowledge sharing workshop (jointly run with RISSC) targeting union confederations in 2023 was also relevant.

115. In terms of relevance to **Indonesian employers**, the project worked very closely with the RISSC project in its engagement with the peak employer's group, APINDO. This included participating in monthly webinars on business and human rights, high level meetings and a national seminar. The evaluation did not review the content of these seminars to determine the nature of the contribution, but it is understood the focus was on "the skills development and RBC nexus" rather than due diligence and the broader business and human rights agenda promulgated by RISSC.

Japan

116. Japan set out to implement a narrower range of activities than Thailand and Indonesia, restricting itself to the development of "A Guide to Business and Human Rights for Institutional Investors" and the delivery of a series of workshops, in conjunction with relevant partners, that targeted institutional investors, trading companies, and MNEs.

117. The evaluation interviewed several organisations that had participated in the workshops and who were familiar with the Guide, and they all saw the work as being relevant to their specific needs and to the "hot topic" of business and human rights in Japan's global supply chains. Some reported changes introduced in their operations because of the project's awareness raising activity. As a **representative of the Japanese trading companies** explained:

> *There is a need to continue to raise awareness of business and human rights - Japan has been criticised in the past but awareness is still low.*

118. The involvement of both METI, as the main government ministry overseeing trade policy and business and human rights issues, and the ILO, as an international body promoting decent work and RBC in supply chains, were highly valued by participating companies and seen as enhancing the relevance of the project. Some emphasised the need for continued collaboration to jointly address the challenges Japanese businesses face in driving change in supply chains. **As one MNE said**:

> *"We have limited scope to extend our support down through the many levels of this chain as we are a profit-making company. But a partnership approach working with government and the ILO is entirely appropriate - and having the ILO involved as an international standards-setting organisation sends an important message and carries weight."*

[12] For example, the Ministry of Law and Human Rights promotes a Human Rights and Business Risk Assessment tool (PRISMA in Indonesian) to facilitate due diligence, while the Ministry of Manpower, the ILO's constituent, covers some similar ground in its work in maintaining International Labour Standards and also has a tool (NORMA 100)

119. Some concerns were expressed by the **employers' representatives** about the relevance of the project to the core ILO role of building the capacity of its constituents – in this case, to advance the business and human rights agenda within their membership. Instead, other partners representing investors and trading companies were the focus of this development. To maximise relevance for constituents, capacity building could have been better shared (See LESSONS):

> *"We don't want to say that we need to be involved in everything, but our role, if any, in advancing the project's goals was unclear, other than distributing the guide that was produced. What about building our capacity to support this?"*

The integration of gender and disability inclusion seems to have been given only cursory attention in the project design and in its monitoring framework and was not a major focus of implementation. The project's focus on business and human rights necessarily included these issues along with other aspects of the ILO's normative mandate but they were not given special emphasis in project delivery.

120. Section 5 of the project inception report discusses a range of issues related to the importance of gender and disability inclusion, including its centrality in the 2030 Agenda, the benefits it offers, and a checklist that would be applied to research activities and subsequent interventions. Based on the project materials reviewed by the evaluation, research commissioned by the project did include relevant gender information (e.g., gender distribution by sector and subsector) although some findings seemed to betray some worryingly antiquated views[13] with no recommendations made for improving gender inclusivity.

121. Section 5 also mentions that the project's Monitoring and Evaluation (M&E) plan would be structured to gather "data disaggregated by gender and disability". The actual plan sets out no details of this – certainly nothing that would collect data that could be, in its words, "meticulously analysed to derive insights that drive actionable strategies, enhancing the project's overall impact and fostering greater inclusivity". The evaluation reviewed some data from Thailand and Japan that segmented participation in training/workshops by gender, but that was as far as this analysis went. No data were provided on disability.

122. More broadly, as the core objective of the project was advancing the business and human rights agenda, it necessarily set out to promote key aspects of the ILO's normative mandate, including the gender and disability inclusion and the importance of tripartism and social dialogue. As will be discussed under EFFECTIVENESS, in Thailand and Indonesia, there was some evidence that by bringing stakeholders and constituents together to discuss skills development the project contributed to improved social dialogue at a sectoral level. In Japan, the Guide and the workshops covered Fundamental Principles and Rights at Work and International Labour Standards. Within these activities, gender and disability were not given special emphasis – no doubt because the range of issues being covered were so broad and all were equally important.

[13] For example, the research into "The skills development and employment situation in Indonesia's electronic sector" included the observation "that certain occupations may be more conducive to female workers, such as those with repetitive tasks" (p.10)

Coherence

The project cohered well with the ILO's priority action programme to address decent work in supply chains (AP/Supply Chains) and included activities that aligned with outputs set out in the strategy endorsed by the Governing Body in March 2023.

123. The project's work in promoting RBC in supply chains came soon after the establishment of a new ILO "priority action programme" on decent work in supply chains (AP/Supply Chains), one of four introduced as part of its Programme and Budget (P&B) for 2024-25[14]. These were designed to encourage more collaboration across ILO's policy areas and departments. The project's novel combination of skills development work with RBC can be seen as reflecting this operational approach by bringing together the work of the ILO's SKILLS and ENTERPRISES departments.

124. In March 2023, the ILO's Governing Body endorsed a strategy on decent work in supply chains which would guide the AP/Supply Chains. It aimed to position the ILO to take a leading role in ensuring decent work in supply chains by providing guidance and support to Member States and constituents. This would involve actively promoting social dialogue and fundamental principles and rights at work. The project cohered with this strategy in several respects:

- **National dialogues for constituents to address decent work deficits in supply chains** (Strategy Output 6) – in Thailand and Indonesia, bringing constituents together to address skills needs provided the opportunity to embed RBC issues in social dialogue. This was reinforced by the project's collaboration with the RISSC project (see below) through which various seminars and webinars on business and human rights involving constituents were organised. Constituents in Japan played a less prominent role, with the project working with other intermediaries to raise awareness directly with MNEs and investors.
- **Establishment of a robust evidence base** (Strategy Output 10) – the project's sectoral research in Thailand and Indonesia, and its development of a business and human rights guide for institutional investors cohered well with this output, filling some important knowledge gaps.
- **Materials developed to promote international labour standards as the basis of human rights due diligence processes** (Strategy Output 18) – these were reflected in project materials, especially the business and human rights guide mentioned above.
- **New evidence and analysis on decent work in supply chains** (Strategy Output 11) – the project analysed opportunities and challenges for enterprises, including small and medium-sized enterprises because of changes and challenges within supply chains and, in Thailand and Indonesia, developed with sectoral input new training modules related to technological change, digitalization and environmental sustainability.
- **Development cooperation approach** (Strategy Output 14) – blending skills development and RBC in a development cooperation project also aligned with the Strategy's intent to strengthen synergies in ILO development cooperation projects by using their focus on the specific needs of constituents (in this case, skills). As set out in Paragraph 28:

> *"Country and sector-level interventions will be determined by national context and the specific needs and priorities of tripartite constituents in achieving decent work in supply chains. Interventions will use supply chains as an entry point to address constituent needs, including those specified in Decent Work Country Programmes and with respect to priority sectors."*

125. As discussed under relevance, the project gave relatively little attention to **gender,** but its research did broadly cover "gender and other intersecting vulnerability factors" in line with Output 11 of the Strategy. However, the evaluation found no evidence that the project was advocating a "gender-transformative approach" as required by Output 15 of the Strategy – for example, in the research on the E&E sector in Indonesia, inequalities were described and analysed from a statistical perspective, but no recommendations were made to address these inequalities.

[14] The other three priority areas being transitions from the informal to the formal economy, just transitions towards environmentally sustainable economies and societies, and decent work for crisis response.

The project's work in Japan cohered well with the Japanese Government's policies relating to business and human rights and its efforts to raise awareness and to build the capability of Japanese companies to address issues in their supply chains.

126. Since October 2020, the Japanese government has had in place a National Action Plan (NAP) on Business and Human Rights (2020-2025). Its purpose is to encourage Japanese companies to take further action in response to public expectations regarding corporate activities and human rights. As the METI website stresses:

> *"Respect for human rights in corporate activities is not only a natural responsibility required by society, but also contributes to addressing business risks, enhances trust from the international community, and leads to high evaluations by investors from around the globe."*[15]

127. To this end, METI has established a Business and Human Rights Policy Office within its Trade Policy Bureau. This office is the primary contact point for the project.

128. In Japan, the project closely aligns with the NAP's fundamental principles:

- **NAP Fundamental Principle 2: Promoting understanding and awareness of business and human rights–** as well as its own efforts, the NAP recognises "that tools and resources provide by international organizations… could also contribute". The project's development of the Guide for Institutional Investors is clearly example of this contribution, hence METI's support.
- **NAP Fundamental Principle 4: A focus that includes domestic and global supply chains –** the NAP highlights the need to work not just within Japanese companies but to respect human rights across supply chains. The project's awareness raising activities in Japan covered this dimension and sought to encourage investors and trading companies to assess risks and address any deficits. Work in Thailand and Indonesia on RBC, also aligned with this principle, working directly with suppliers and to a lesser degree Japanese multinational buyers.

129. Specifically related to the labour dimensions of human rights[16], the NAP references the government's commitment to promoting labour policies to respect, promote and realize the **fundamental principles and rights at work** embodied in the ILO Declaration. These all underpin the project's activities in the three countries.

130. It also references implementation in Japanese legislation relating to the **protection of interns** (Technical Intern Training Act No.89 of 2016). While this relates to the specific situation of foreign workers employed in Japan under these arrangements, these efforts align with the project's work in both Thailand and Indonesia to improve the working conditions and training quality of interns and apprentices through the ILO's Recommendation 208 on Quality Apprenticeships.

The level of coherence with other ILO projects addressing RBC or skills development varied. In some cases, building on the work of these projects in a more deliberate way might have enhanced results. Coherence with the closely related RISSC project was generally good, though it posed some operational challenges that could have been minimised with better project design.

131. There have been other recent projects addressing RBC and skills development in some of the same countries as the current project, although not in a way that explicitly brings these two policy areas together. These are detailed below together with an assessment of if and how the current project built on these in terms of efficiency, effectiveness, and impact and whether any opportunities to do so were missed:

- **Responsible Supply Chains in Asia (RSCA)** – Running for four years and four months from December 2017 to April 2022, this EUR 9 million project was implemented in six Asian countries (including Japan and Thailand) by the ILO and the OECD and funded by the European Union. **In**

[15] https://www.meti.go.jp/english/policy/economy/biz_human_rights/index.html

[16] Action Plan Chapter 2, Cross-Cutting Areas, Labour (Promotion of Decent Work), p10

Thailand, like the current project, there was a focus on the automotive sector. It established in 2019 a "multi-stakeholder dialogue platform… to promote socially responsible and sustainable business using the MNE Declaration as a benchmark"[17]. It also completed a study to provide "information and analysis on responsible business for stakeholders", including many of the same stakeholders who participated in the current project (e.g. ECOT, TAPMA, TEAM, TTUC, LCT). **In Japan**, the RSCA included partnerships with the Japan Auto Parts Industries Association (JAPIA) and the Institute of Developing Economies Japan External Trade Organization, both of which would seem to offer some potential synergies with the current project.

Assessment of coherence: The evaluation found no evidence of a link between this project and the current project. Research completed in the earlier project was not mentioned in the current project's Project Document, and there is no reference to the "multi-stakeholder dialogue platform" in Thailand or to the partnerships formed in Japan, both of which would seem to offer some benefits to the current project. Despite only ending three years ago, no stakeholders interviewed as part of the evaluation mentioned the RSCA project. The project was backstopped by a different ILO technical unit in Geneva (ILO Multinational Enterprises and Enterprise Engagement Unit, MULTI) as opposed to SKILLS, but it seems surprising that more attention was not given to at least exploring what synergies could be exploited between the two. See LESSONS.

- **Building Responsible Value Chains in Asia through the Promotion of Decent Work in Business Operations** – Running for just over two years from April 2022 to June 2024 in Bangladesh, Cambodia, Vietnam and Japan, this USD 6.8 million project was the first ILO project to be funded by the current project's funding partner, METI. This project harnessed the ILO's well established Better Work programme, using its service structure and approach to address decent work issues in the garment and footwear sectors. The different country focus of this project restricted potential synergy to Japan, but different target audiences and partners were involved in implementation. Unlike the current project, this project worked more closely with ILO constituents and sectoral associations in Japan. It raised awareness of RBC primarily through these relationships and through their networks – for example, through the Japanese Business Federation (Keidanren) it exploited a relationship with the Social Security Attorney's Association, a group that has good links with business and provide advisory services on compliance with regulations, including those related to RBC and business and human rights.

  Assessment of coherence – During the evaluation, representatives from Keidanren referred to this project and were somewhat perplexed as to why the current project was not better linked to Keidanren in its role as an ILO constituent and why its capacity building needs were not emphasised more. While it made sense to build new partnerships that could expand the reach of the ILO and METI, including for example through PRI and the Japan Foreign Trade Council, this could have been done in a way that continued to build Keidanran capacity and thereby contribute to improving the sustainability of project outcomes. See LESSONS. On the positive side, the two projects did cohere in at least one important respect – in September 2023, there was a "Responsible Business, Human Rights, and Decent Work" event jointly organised by METI and the ILO (Tokyo Office, Better Work and MULTI) in Jakarta which involved 223 tripartite constituents from Asian countries and G7 government representatives. The current project was only in a very early stage of implementation at this point, but a session was run for constituents on the topic of "Skills Development as a Contribution to the Synergies between Human Rights, Decent Work and Inclusive Growth"[18]. (See also EFFECTIVENESS)

- **Resilient, Inclusive and Sustainable Supply Chains Asia (RISSC) –** Funded by Japan, but through the ILO's counterpart agency, the Japanese Ministry of Health, Labour and Welfare (MHLW), this three-year USD 4 million project has many thematic and operational links with the current project. The two projects both work in the same countries and focus on the same sectors. Both involve supply chain research and analysis aimed at identifying gaps and opportunities for

[17] https://webapps.ilo.org/ievaldiscovery/files/file/226592

[18] https://www.ilo.org/meetings-and-events/responsible-business-human-rights-and-decent-work-asia

improving RBC, both aspire to improving the enabling policy and environment for business and human rights, and both seek to work with Japanese MNEs. The problem for the project under evaluation is that these similarities required it to further emphasise the skills development dimension of the project so as not to overlap with RISSC. In Thailand, they went as far in public communications to present the two projects as different aspects of the one "automotive supply chain programme", providing "integrated support both for human capital development and supply chain resilience"[19].

In both countries, the two projects were overseen by the same constituent steering committees which helped ensure coherence at the governance and planning levels. The project staff met regularly to coordinate workplans, "compare notes" and identify opportunities for coordinated action. A representative of the RISSC project said that although joint activities were presented as part of a single programme, care was taken to highlight which project and which funding partner was taking the lead on specific elements.

Assessment of coherence – In the early stages of the project, project staff needed to overcome a certain amount of confusion over which project should do what. To maximise synergies, more was needed to harmonise the two projects. As one person explained:

> *"The project logframe included some elements which seemed to duplicate those of RISSC… Both projects included the development of training modules related to RBC in their log-frames. In the interests of clarity, our project should have developed all these skills-related outputs, but the problem was that each project had its own implementation timeframes and internal dependencies."*

From the perspective of some stakeholders consulted in the evaluation, the demarcation between the two does seem to have been blurred - some spoke of one when they probably meant the other.

Ultimately, the projects found a way to co-exist, to share the stage in workshops and events and to communicate their respective points of view and policy agenda related to RBC and business and human rights. Sharing a Project Advisory Committee (PAC) provided a mechanism to resolve any overlaps, but ultimately the METI project found itself focusing even more on the skills development side of the project than was originally envisaged. A more comprehensive re-design of the two projects was probably needed for an optimal delivery approach, but this would have been challenging given both time constraints and the need to gain agreement from the two funding partners.

- **Skills projects** – From the perspective of the ILO's work in skills, there have been several relevant projects that have touched on issues relevant to those being promoted by the METI project. In some cases, these projects showed the ILO working to advance similar policy goals and to a certain extent the METI project has provided some continuity of effort. The **UK Skills for Prosperity Project** and the Japan-funded Industry **Skill for Inclusive Growth Project**, for example, both included elements designed to support the Indonesian government to develop Sectoral Skills Councils (SSCs), and some government representatives interviewed saw the METI project as providing valuable experience and confidence to engage with sectoral stakeholders (though it should be noted that little progress in establishing SSCs appears to have been made). The **Women in STEM** project funded by the J.P. Morgan Foundation aimed to increase the number of women in STEM-related employment in Thailand including by reviewing the up-skilling and re-skilling needed to respond to structural change. Given the lack of attention given to gender in the METI project design and implementation, there may have been some lessons learned from this project to promote transformational change.

  Assessment of coherence – These and perhaps other skills-related projects in the region, while not in themselves demonstrating a high level of coherence with the current project, do serve to illustrate the challenge the ILO has to provide the level of support required by constituents to

[19] https://www.ilo.org/projects-and-partnerships/projects/automotive-supply-chain-programme-thailand

implement reforms and to build capacity. It of course offers a certain amount of support through its Regular Budget which provides expertise from country-level and region-level specialists, as well as a small amount or development cooperation under its Regular Budget Technical Cooperation (RBTC) Budget, but to provide the level of support required it needs to do its best to find common ground with funding partners in the delivery of development cooperation projects. Sometimes the synergy is strong but sometimes it is weak. As one constituent told the evaluation:

> *"We sometimes feel sorry for the ILO. They start off with a project concept that is more closely aligned with our priorities, but donors have their own priorities, and these sometimes lead them in a different direction."*

Effectiveness

The project's short timeframe and poorly conceived results framework limited the evaluation's ability to assess its effectiveness beyond the output level. Lack of time was a major limiting factor for the project – with so many activities related to training, institutional capacity building, policy development and awareness raising, a much longer lead-time is required for any behavioural changes to be observed in individuals, institutions and enterprises. Stakeholders were somewhat frustrated that the project's support was ending too soon. While they indicated that some early progress had been made toward the intended outcomes, concrete evidence of the outcomes envisaged in the project document remains scarce.

Overview

132. As discussed in the evaluation's review of project design (see RELEVANCE), the results framework for the project was unclear and focused on measures related to completion of tasks. Envisaged outcomes were often also unclear or unmeasurable or so broad in their intent as to make any assessment of progress towards an end goal problematic (e.g., "Enhanced capabilities", "Stronger…collaboration", "Enabling environment").

133. While staff maintained a strong sense of the difference that could be made through the project and looked for opportunities to use it to get meaningful decent work results in line with constituent needs, the short time frame of the project reinforced a focus on activity completion rather than the finding evidence of the project's higher-level results. To be fair, promoting behavioural change in supply chains through awareness raising cannot be achieved overnight, but more attention could have been given to collecting "stories of significant change". See LESSONS and RECOMMENDATIONS.

134. The short time frame of the project also meant that some important project activities and information products were still being finalised in the final weeks of the project. The ILO and other partners might take up these and use them to make progress towards the envisaged project outcome, but from a project evaluation perspective their contribution is unknown.

135. Lastly, questions can be asked about the sustainability of some results. For example, while the project may have enhanced social dialogue during its implementation by bringing sectoral stakeholders together to address structural transformation through skills and RBC, mechanisms to continue this dialogue seem to be lacking. This is discussed in more detail under IMPACT AND SUSTAINABILITY.

136. An analysis of project effectiveness by outcome is set out below. Note that the evaluation had access to only preliminary reports covering the period beyond the inception phase. In the case of Thailand and Japan, these were not presented in a way that aligned activities to the project's results framework, so the evaluation has attempted to do this itself. Note also that the wording of outcomes and outputs has been simplified in this analysis to improve their clarity.

Outcome 1:	*"Enhanced **constituent capacity** to increase jobs by skills development to enhance workers' responsiveness in/productivity for structural transformation, including respect for human rights."*

Output 1.1: Constituents strengthen social dialogue towards better working environment in which workers' skills are harnessed for increased productivity/responsiveness to transitions (inc. women, marginalized, vulnerable)

Indonesia

137. ***Activity level results:*** Project activities reported under this output included **initial consultations** on project scope and on the conduct of sectoral research; **steering committee meetings** that involved constituents and where **preliminary results were shared**; a 2-day ILO Skills for Trade and Economic Diversification (**STED**) workshop to identify skills issues in the E&E sector; a **national seminar** on the sectoral research covering re-skilling/up-skilling and RBC; a **joint national dialogue** (with RISSC) to examine the implementation of the MNE Declaration in the E&E sector.

138. ***Contribution towards envisaged outcome***: Through Output 1.1, the project completed research that contribute to an improved understanding of current sectoral skill needs. It brought constituents and sectoral stakeholders together to consider the challenges faced in improving productivity and responsiveness to transitions. Messages related to RBC and respect for human rights in supply chains were embedded in delivery.

Thailand

139. ***Activity level results:*** In the 2023 Annual Report, Thailand reported under this output its initial consultations on project scoping and formation of a steering committee, the commencement of skills research for the automotive sector, and the conduct of a Qualifications and Occupational Mapping workshop with sectoral stakeholders. A 2024 report was not available for Thailand in a format that outlined activities by output, but the activities that appear to be related to Output 1.1 comprise various forums with constituents and sectoral stakeholders including those validating and developing project elements relating to skills and RBC and to rolling out training modules (February, June, September and November 2024).

140. ***Contribution towards envisaged outcome:*** Like Indonesia, the project's focus on research, occupational mapping, developing training modules and the validation of this work, served to bring constituents and sectoral stakeholders together to consider the challenges faced in improving productivity and responsiveness to transitions.

Overall finding – Output 1.1

141. For progress to be made towards Outcome 1 a sustainable mechanism is needed to continue social dialogue on these issues – in Indonesia, for example, this might take the form of Sectoral Skills Councils that are empowered to drive necessary reforms and to implement a productivity/transition strategy[20]*. Specific sectoral strategies are needed to address the needs of women and marginalized/vulnerable groups – an area where more attention is needed to sustain results. Constituents in Indonesia reported an enhanced capacity to promote RBC as a result of the project – see Case Study 2. In Thailand, constituents stressed the need for continued support for the automotive sector as it experiences a major transition.*

[20] Unfortunately, it seems that the establishment of such a body for the E&E sector is unlikely to occur soon meaning that there is a risk that any momentum established by the project will be lost.

Output 1.2: Vocational training systems increase capability to re-skill/up-skill in view of structural transformation, just transition and responsible business conduct

Indonesia

142. ***Activity level results:*** The project worked with YMG to support a Vocational Training Centre (BBPVP) of the Ministry of Manpower to up-skill/re-skill 45 workers from suppliers to Panasonic. This was preceded by "Training of Trainers" (ToT) for 25 BBPVP instructors. A "Skills Development and RBC Training Manual" was also developed (for both Indonesia and Thailand).

143. ***Contribution towards envisaged outcome:*** Through Output 1.2, the project has supported BBPVP to deliver training in such things as PLC, KAIZEN and 5S to a group of existing workers that might not otherwise have had this opportunity. The training was delivered in the final few weeks of the project making it too soon to evaluate whether the training has had any demonstrable benefits for the trainees or their enterprises in the supply chain.

Thailand

144. ***Activity level results:*** Applying the same approach as Indonesia, the project worked with the Automotive Human Resources Development Academy (AHRDA) at the Department of Skills Development within the Ministry of Labour to up-skill/re-skill 100 workers (3 female) in digital skills relevant to structural transformation in the automotive sector (SCADA and PLC). "Training of Trainers" was delivered for 25 selected trainers from public TVET institutions under the Ministry of Labour's Department of Skills Development and employers' and workers' organizations on three skills development and RBC-related areas.

145. ***Contribution towards envisaged outcome:*** Like Indonesia, the AHRDA training was offered to existing workers that might not otherwise have had access to this opportunity. Unlike Indonesia, the training was delivered earlier (in February and March 2024) but no data appears to have been systematically collected on the effect this training has had for the trainees – perhaps a missed opportunity.

Overall finding – Output 1.2

146. In terms of effects on vocational training systems, knowledge and awareness have been increased about the need for workforce re-skilling/up-skilling and some project partners have signalled an intention to continue to use the resources it created and the approaches it introduced. However, mechanisms and policies still need to be developed to expand access to re-skilling opportunities in Indonesia and Thailand. The primary challenge is funding, and although some stakeholders suggested that a funding mechanism or incentive arrangements could be developed, there was no clear path to this at the time of the evaluation. In Thailand, AHRDA valued the project's work developing curriculum aligned with industry needs and mentioned the inclusion of RBC modules in training for new starters and apprentices as a way of addressing immediate labour market gaps while building long-term capacity. It indicated that it would promote training in the RBC modules, including to SME managers, but market demand has not yet been tested. Current employer priorities were said to be focused on training seen to relate more directly to cost reduction and productivity. DSD indicated that it saw scope to incorporate two of the project's modules (Fundamental Principles and Rights at Work, and Environmental Sustainability) into central curriculum, but this was unlikely to occur in the current financial year. Lack of alignment of curricula with the education sector was also an issue – its processes were less responsive to changing industry needs.

Output 1.3: Enterprises increase capacity through in-house programmes so that workers and managers are equipped for productivity/decent work/environmental improvements

Indonesia

147. ***Activity level results:*** The project focused on enhancing different dimensions of the country's **apprenticeship and internship arrangements** to bring them in line with ILO Recommendation 208 on Quality Apprenticeships and to ensure they maximise productivity and comply with decent work and environmental standards. This involved developing new guidelines to support their delivery (on grievance mechanisms, student internships) as well as associated consultations, validation workshops, and training. Better Work Indonesia (YKK) conducted some mentoring of enterprises as a follow up to training. There was also a national dialogue with enterprises on RBC and Quality Apprenticeships.

148. ***Contribution towards envisaged outcome:*** Through Output 1.3, the project took steps to enhance enterprise-based training as it applies to apprentices and interns to improve the quality of training and adherence to decent work and RBC principles. The contributions were of value but limited in scope. The path to replication or upscaling within Indonesia is unclear.

Thailand

149. ***Activity level results:*** Two activities were reported that bear some alignment with Output 1.3. First, in November 2024 the project consulted with members of the SME Association of Thailand and public TVET institutions in the Eastern Economic Corridor to plan for the roll-out of skills development and RBC modules as well as building SME capacities in occupational safety and health. The status of this plan was not reported. Second, the project took the opportunity to provide support to the Office of the Vocational Education Commission (OVEC) to support them to reform the country's dual vocational education and training system to align with ILO Recommendation 208. This was mainly in the form of providing feedback on new legislation but OVEC is now also planning to collaborate with the ILO more broadly, including by funding a Train the Trainer programme for workplace instructors.

150. ***Contribution towards envisaged outcome:*** Outcomes linked to the work in the Eastern Economic Corridor are unclear. Work supporting OVEC was more at the training system level (rather than directly with enterprises) and so may better be aligned with Output 1.2 but the aim is to enhance training in the workplace and has potential for broader results, given its systems focus.

Overall finding – Output 1.3

151. Focusing on apprentices and their in-house instructors in enterprises is important and may establish good practices for other in-house programmes in enterprises. Indonesian stakeholders saw apprenticeships as a "pillar of Thailand's vocational training system" and a way to show how digital transformation through training can be implemented more broadly. Similarly, the work in Thailand developing an "occupational mapping" tool was welcomed by sectoral stakeholders as a way of improving human resources planning and the DSD indicated that is now using it as a foundation for developing a "technology training roadmap" for specific automotive sub-sectors. Employers' representatives saw it as being comprehensive but needed more work for practical application. This work was quite different to what was originally envisaged in the project document, which sought to engage with Japanese MNEs who would strengthen HR practices and planning in SMEs (including career progression and organisational design) and would act as mentors to local companies on these issues. For a variety of reasons, this did not happen, so the project took a different path.

CASE STUDY 1 – THAILAND

Up-skilling workers in an SME in the automotive supply chain

The evaluation did not have access to a large sample of enterprises that participated in the project's training in SCADA and PLC (automation related up-skilling) and data on project effectiveness with such enterprises has not been systematically collected, but one firm visited by the evaluation – GIF Engineering – serves at least to demonstrate the type of the difference that could be generated.

Established in 1992, GIF Engineering is an SME located in Bangkok's Charoenrat area. The company specializes in metal stamping and plastic injection, employing 280 people and manufacturing automotive parts, electrical parts, construction tools, packaging, etc. It is a Thai-owned company with three affiliate companies producing items like cosmetic packaging and various plastic components. The company is certified by ISO 9001, ISO 14001, and IATF 16949, guaranteeing production quality to international standards and assisting in the expansion of its market share in the industry.

GIF Engineering became involved with the project through an advertisement by the AHRDA office in Samut Prakan Province about the availability of PLC and SCADA training courses. Initially, the company participated in PLC automation training courses, sending four staff members, including the factory manager. The company saw this as an opportunity to enhance their existing automation capabilities and gain structured knowledge beyond what they could learn from self-study through YouTube and other sources.

The company is facing significant industry changes, particularly the transition from traditional vehicles to electric vehicles (EVs). In this shift, many traditional auto parts are becoming obsolete, with many other components facing increased competition and downward cost pressures. In this context, technological adaptation and workforce up-skilling are essential for survival. The company gave several examples illustrating how the training delivered through the project had had a measurable effect on factory operations, including building new in-house inspection machines using image processing technology, automating their oil coating system to reduce manual labour, building their own machinery that incorporated the learned technologies, and significantly reducing implementation time for new automation projects.

In terms of the training's effect on their human resource management practices, they expanded their PLC-capable workforce from 2 or 3 to 5, implemented internal knowledge-sharing systems, increased wages for the workers who were trained, and created new career advancement opportunities for workers who master automation technologies.

GIF Engineering is clearly a forward-looking company and has been recognised for its innovation – its walls are covered with various awards. It clearly had an appetite for the training offered by the project and has comprehensively applied what it has learned. Other SMEs may not currently have its level of sophistication, but regardless, its experience shows that the type of opportunities offered by the project can have an effect. Moving forward, GIF would be an excellent role model and champion for SMEs to invest in skills development in response to the challenges faced by the sector.

CASE STUDY 2 – INDONESIA

Working with constituents and partners

The project made good use of strategic partnerships and relationships with constituents to advance project implementation. These included partnerships with a foundation linked closely with Panasonic, an MNE, ongoing cooperation with employers' and workers' representatives and an internal partnership with an ILO flagship programme, Better Work.

While the project had some difficulties engaging directly with the local subsidiaries of MNEs in project implementation to the extent originally envisaged in the project document, in Indonesia it was able to engage with a philanthropic arm of Panasonic in a way that greatly enhanced implementation and acted as a bridge to the company's commercial arm and its suppliers. Matsushita Gobel Foundation (YMG) had a pre-existing relationship with SMEs in Panasonic's supply chain in Indonesia and has offered a variety of training and community services. Its philosophy specifically supports the type of work promoted by the project, including technology transfer, "initiating and nurturing supporting industry" and developing human resources for Panasonic's manufacturing division and for the nation.

From the perspective of workers' organizations, representatives of the FSPPG (the union covering workers within Panasonic), were actively involved in the project and believed it had a powerful effect in raising awareness of RBC in the supply chain. They believed the project had given it the capacity needed by the union to "reach the grass roots" as well as with Panasonic on these issues and planned to continue awareness raising within companies in the supply chain as much as it can.

When some administrative barriers prevented the project from dealing directly with a Ministry of Manpower's Vocational Training Centre to allow funding of up-skilling/re-skilling training for vulnerable workers, YMG acted as an intermediary and the project entered an MOU with it instead. They then contracted the Training Centre to deliver, while also providing inputs into design, reaching out to suppliers, and providing venues and facilities for training of trainers.

The project also built on its strong relationships with constituents. In Indonesia APINDO (the Indonesian Employers Association) and KADIN (the Indonesian Chamber of Commerce and Industry) used the project as an opportunity to add impetus to efforts to reform apprenticeships in the country which they see as an integral part of up-skilling the workforce while reinforcing business and human rights. They also said that given some historical resistance to apprenticeships from workers' representatives (based on some past abuses of the system) the project has brought the parties together in social dialogue to reach agreement on a path forward towards a Quality Apprenticeship model.

A specific project output that was seen as contributing to this was the Quality Apprenticeship Grievance Mechanism drafted with the support of Better Work Indonesia (Yayasa Kemitraan Kerja). Building on its experience in establishing factory level grievance mechanisms as part of its work, Better Work engaged with employers' and workers' representatives and individual factories to analyse needs, including the specific needs of young people in apprenticeships who lack workplace experience and power, to develop guidelines. They then worked with KADIN a co-presenter and involved both the Ministries of Manpower and of Education, to train apprentice supervisors in implementing the mechanism in the workplace. More work is needed to scale up this important contribution to Quality Apprenticeships, but the products produced have attracted attention of ILO HQ and might be replicated for global application.

Outcome 2:	*Stronger **institution and tripartite collaboration** to promote responsible business conduct and respect for the principles of international labour standards.*

Output 2.1: Stronger institution and tripartite collaboration to promote responsible business conduct and respect for the principles of international labour standards[21].

Indonesia

152. ***Activity level results:*** The project reported an executive breakfast meeting conducted jointly with RISSC for the peak employer bodies (APINDO and KADIN) which highlighted the need for an RBC toolkit/guideline. Reporting on this output probably understates the actual work done in enhancing tripartite collaboration on promoting RBC. Other work, including work on skills development, contributed but did not fit discretely in a single reporting "box".

153. ***Contribution towards envisaged outcome:*** Through Output 2.1, this reported activity set in train the development of a guide on RBC and Decent Work for SMEs (see 2.3 below).

Thailand

154. ***Activity level results:*** No specific activities related to this output were reported though, as described above for Indonesia, other activities probably contributed but were reported elsewhere.

Regional

155. ***Activity level results:*** A three-and-a-half-day tripartite regional workshop was conducted in Bangkok involving 24 ILO constituents and partners (11 women) from 9 countries including Thailand and Indonesia. It facilitated discussions around the labour dimensions of RBC, the place of skills development, advancing decent work, and promoting business and human rights due diligence.

156. ***Contribution towards envisaged outcome:*** This activity was added to the project and extended the project's awareness raising and tripartite collaboration efforts to an additional 8 countries in the region. The workshop covered the key themes of the project.

Overall finding – Output 2.1

157. The project's work under Outcome 2 encouraging constituent collaboration tended not to be in the form of discrete activities but as part of its skills development work (Outcome 1). In this respect, engagement with constituents, sectoral bodies and training providers was strong, and their shared interest in the need for re-skilling and up-skilling provided a platform for also cultivating a shared commitment to RBC. In terms of the specific activities set out in the project document under Outcome 2, results were often not clearly reported. Some stakeholders suggested that a second phase of the project was needed to deepen the adoption of RBC principles in global supply chains.

Output 2.2: Government agencies in charge of trade and investment as well as labour and employment understand responsible business conduct and ILS principles as they apply to sustainable value chains

Indonesia

158. ***Activity level results:*** In conjunction with RISSC and organised by APINDO, the project reported that it presented the skills development element of a series of 7 webinars on business and human rights (reaching between 40 and 170 participants each).

159. ***Contribution towards envisaged outcome:*** These webinars seem to have targeted employers (APINDO members) and so can be seen more as promotion of RBC to businesses in supply chains

[21] Output was the same as the outcome in the project document.

rather than to the government agencies identified in the output (though some may have participated). Content of the webinars was not reviewed by the evaluation.

Thailand

160. ***Activity level results:*** As mentioned, the project in Thailand did not link its reporting of activities to outputs and outcomes. The evaluation found no specific reference to activities raising awareness of Thai government agencies in charge of trade and investment, but they may have participated in broader awareness raising events.

Overall finding – Output 2.2

161. Given their apparent employer focus, it is unclear how the webinars in Indonesia would have specifically improved the understanding of RBC and ILS principles of government agencies in charge of trade and investment and of labour and employment. Their contribution to Outcome 2 might be better considered under Output 2.1. In both Indonesia and Thailand, labour and employment ministries were very active in the project and so it is reasonable to assume their awareness of responsible business conduct and ILS principles as they apply to sustainable value chains was enhanced by the project in this way. References to inclusion and gender-responsiveness were included in the project document's wording of this output, but nothing specific was reported on these issues.

Output 2.3: Workers' and employers' organizations engage in ongoing social dialogue to promote responsible business conduct, including respect for human rights, and to address sector specific decent work challenges

Indonesia

162. ***Activity level results:*** In conjunction with RISSC, the project conducted a **joint national seminar** on the national policy framework on business and human rights, the national strategy, and the supporting tools (PRISMA and NORMA 100) administered by different ministries. This led to an **action declaration** signed by employer and government representatives. **RBC workshops in two regional areas** were conducted targeting E&E employers and encouraging RBC and skills development. With workers' representatives, the project followed up the Quality Apprenticeship training, **collaborating with Panasonic's enterprise union** (FSPPG) to engage in social dialogue with management to improve the application of QA principles. Lastly, in conjunction with RISSC and APINDO, a **guide on RBC and Decent Work for SMEs** is being prepared.

163. ***Contribution towards envisaged outcome:*** These activities were bundled together in project reporting under Output 2.3 and broadly align with the outcome of stronger collaboration on RBC.

Thailand

164. ***Activity level results:*** No specific activities were reported by Thailand against this output, but the project's activities in promoting social dialogue via its skills system work also embraced responsible business conduct and business and human rights. Examples include the national validation seminar in June 2024 where, in addition to skills issues, the participants shared good practices and lessons learned for the effective formulation and implementation of RBC approaches.

165. ***Contribution towards envisaged outcome:*** As mentioned above, the project kept constituents engaged in its planning, delivery and validation of results and these activities involved ongoing social dialogue over both skills development and RBC issues, including sector-specific decent work challenges (e.g., strategies to cope with sudden factory closures within automotive supply chains was mentioned). Constituents in Thailand supported the development of tools to support their existing work in promoting RBC but were yet to see the tools mentioned at the project's closing presentation.

Overall finding – Output 2.3

166. *The project successfully supported social dialogue during its implementation. What is unclear is whether its focus on skills development and RBC for transitions will continue without the project. In this respect too, constituents and other stakeholders signalled a strong desire for the project to continue. More broadly, social dialogue was also supported by RISSC leading some stakeholders to see the ILO/METI project as playing a lesser role in making progress towards this outcome.*

Outcome 3: *An **enabling environment** is fostered in policy and practice that supports a transition to resilient value chains from the perspective of sustainable and inclusive trade and investment*

Output 3.1: Awareness is raised among investors, trading companies and multinational enterprises

Japan

167. ***Activity level results:*** The project's awareness raising activities had two dimensions – the development of "**A Guide to Business and Human Rights for Institutional Investors**" and the delivery of (or participation in) a range of **awareness raising events**. The project worked very closely with partner organisations such as the Japan Foreign Trade Council (JFTC) and Principles for Responsible Investment (PRI) which had strong links with the key target audiences in Japan (i.e., MNEs, trading companies and institutional investors). Total attendance at workshops was reported to have been around 400 individuals. They included:

- 5 sessions for trading companies run in collaboration with JFTC (125 participants)
- Events targeting specific investor groups such as life insurance (asset owners), real estate, investment trusts, and public procurement (around 245 participants in six workshops)
- A webinar with PRI on "Business and Human Rights in Practice" (154 participants)
- A webinar conducted jointly with Global Compact Network Japan
- A "dialogue event" with Japan Centre for Engagement and Remedy on Business and Human Rights (30 participants)
- Participating in other relevant forums (such as a conference run by Responsible Investment Japan and providing a speaker for a workshop organised by Sumitomo Life Insurance Co.)

168. ***Contribution towards envisaged outcome:*** The Guide is a comprehensive introduction to the key business and human rights issues for investors, highlights the risks of reputational damage they face, and how they can act. In terms of distribution of the Guide, no data was provided by the project to the evaluation other than it being available online for download[22] and that the 13 project steering committee members would distribute it through their networks and memberships. However, PRI shared with evaluation the results of a survey of its signatories which showed some positive effects – 35 per cent of 75 respondents indicated that they were familiar with the guide and, of these, 89.3 per cent said that it had helped them in their work to address business and human rights.

The workshops were relatively short (around an hour and a half) but went beyond presenting information – they challenged participants to identify concrete actions in their firms. JFTC indicated that trading companies participating in their workshops would be reporting progress in implementing these plans after the project ends. A document that includes case examples was also prepared which may also offer evidence of improved awareness leading to behavioural change in investment companies.

Participants in the workshops had varying levels of awareness of the issues. Some came from organisations with dedicated sustainability departments and with a quite sophisticated understanding of the issues. Some were reportedly strong on the environment (E) and governance

[22] One person interviewed mentioned that the Guide had been downloaded 4000 times but the source of this was unclear.

(G) side of ESG, but weak on social (S). Some came with virtually no awareness at all. No information was systematically collected by the project to measure the difference it had made in raising awareness for these different groups. As one investment company participant told the evaluation:

> *"When gathering investors, you end up with a broad range of interest and knowledge levels. There is a need to balance the breadth of distribution with an appropriate depth of detail based on individual needs. Having specialised 'sustainability divisions' in investment companies is not the norm - more usually, decisions relating to these matters are left to mainstream investment analysts. The depth of their understanding of the business and human rights issues can be quite weak. But its these companies that need to do more."*

Overall finding – Output 3.1

169. Business and human rights is now a priority issue in Japan and although many large investors and trading companies are building their knowledge and capacity to act, there is still a great unmet demand for information and for practical advice for investors and trading companies to address human rights issues in their operations and supply chains. Stakeholders agree that the project has made a contribution, but no attention was given to measuring this contribution, analysing its effects on different beneficiary groups, and determining what next steps should be taken and by whom.

Output 3.2: Governments and social partners increase their evidence base and policy commitment for future home-host dialogues and national social dialogues on skills development and investment promotion with a view to create more decent work through responsible business conduct and respect for the principles of ILS. (Wording unclear but as per Project Document)

Japan

170. ***Activity level results:*** The wording of Output 3.2 is somewhat unclear, but the project document refers to two activities under this output – an awareness raising event at a forthcoming regional meeting (G7 and/or ASEAN) and a "policy input note". The first was reported to have taken place in Jakarta in September 2023, with 223 people participating either in person or online at the Responsible Business, Human Rights and Decent Work in Asia. This event linked to the earlier ILO/METI Building Responsible Value Chains in Asia project, and included relevant sessions on RBC, skills development and business and human rights. The "policy input note" for governments did not proceed. Instead, a "summary note" is being prepared, but is not yet complete and little information on its nature, purpose and target audience was communicated to the evaluation.

171. ***Contribution towards envisaged outcome:*** The evaluation was unable to assess how the September 2023 event contributed to Outcome 3 other than as another form of awareness raising. As far as the evaluation could determine, it did not increase the available "evidence base" or lead to any commitments for "home-host" dialogues or "national social dialogues on skills development and investment promotion". Any contribution of the "summary note" to this output is similarly unclear.

Overall finding – Output 3.2

172. No evidence was found by the evaluation of any specific contribution made by these activities to results envisaged under Output 3.2 though they may have reinforced the awareness raising activities described under Output 3.1.

CASE STUDY 3 – JAPAN

Working with a less familiar target audience via a strategic partner

While the ILO has a Social Finance Programme within its ENTERPRISES Department in Geneva that includes specialists focusing on "sustainable investing", in the field its expertise and links with the investment community are more limited. For this reason, in Japan, the project partnered with Principles for Responsible Investment (PRI). PRI has its origins in work initiated by former UN Secretary-General Kofi Annan who, in 2005, invited a group of the world's largest institutional investors to join a process to develop the Principles for Responsible Investment. The UN has been supporting the initiative ever since, with PRI creating an international network of investor signatories committed to adhering to these principles in their investment and ownership decisions. PRI's two main UN partners are the UN Environment Programme (UNEP) Finance Initiative and the UN Global Compact.

PRI has over 5000 signatories with 540 in Japan. It is a membership network that relies on membership fees for its operation.

As it seemed an ideal way to reach out to a target audience where the ILO did not have many established links (other than institutional investors who were also member of the KEIDANREN, the Japanese Business Federation), the ILO's Japan Office approached PRI to be an implementation partner for the project. It convened a 13-member working group to oversee the development of the Guide. An international expert was engaged to facilitate their meetings (more than 10, according to project staff), to draft the guide and deliver workshops to investors (and to trading companies and MNEs). The Guide was also technically reviewed by METI, KEIDANREN, RENGO (Japanese Trade Union Confederation) and various ILO departments and units including Multinational Enterprises and Responsible Business Conduct (MULTI), Social Finance, and SKILLS.

Over 400 participants attended the project's workshops and events to learn more about business and human rights. PRI acknowledged that most of their member organisations have some kind of institutional department overseeing ESG matters and so many of these are quite familiar with the issues – especially environmental issues, and perhaps less in the case of social issues, which include business and human rights. Smaller investors without specialist departments are far less aware and they represent a challenge for the future – as a PRI representative said:

"Most of those interested and committed we have already reached and so the challenge is to expand. The ILO/METI project has been a great way to introduce this material to this important audience."

While an effective and relevant partnership, from the ILO perspective, there is a sustainability issue. PRI now has the guide and has experience in running workshops, using an expert facilitator. The extent to which they can continue these awareness raising activities at the same rate and to target the less well positioned smaller investors in the process is unclear. They would like to continue their relationships with the ILO and METI and see this partnership as having important practical and symbolic benefits.

Efficiency

The project was adequately resourced financially. Budgets allocated to specific outcomes were revised to meet shifts in project strategy at the output level. The budget for staff-related costs was revised down in absolute terms and as a proportion of the total allowing for more external technical expertise to be sourced for some project elements.

173. The project was slow to build momentum and a six-month inception for a two-year project was too long. Project staff were not in place until the last two months of the inception phase. The ILO is not known for its speed in project start-up.[23] As discussed earlier, this meant that there were some project activities that were still being finalised in the final weeks of the project, leaving no time to adequately and sustainably institutionalise project outputs in local systems and policies.

174. The overall project budget of USD 2.13 million (inclusive of interest) was enough for the project to deliver most of the planned outcomes over the two years. Project staff reported that revisions were often made. METI reviewed proposed budget changes in detail, but were flexible, focusing more on how best to achieve outcomes rather than sticking rigidly to initial plans for activities.

175. Under the terms of the project Funding Arrangement, smaller revisions of less than 20 per cent did not require METI's approval, but there was a misunderstanding about how this rule applied – the project made a series of smaller adjustments to the budget, but when it was noticed that these cumulatively exceeded the 20 per cent limit and that METI's approval had not been sought, this needed to be corrected.

176. Based on a budget spreadsheet provided to the evaluation and comparing the original budget with the most recent budget revision, the most significant increases were for Outcome 1 (from 10.6 per cent of the total budget to 17.4 per cent) and Outcome 3 (from 7.6 per cent to 13.4 per cent). The most significant decreases were in "project management and oversight" which cover staff and associated operational costs – these decreased from 62.3 of the total budget to 47.8 per cent. A summary of these budget changes is set out in Table 1 below.

Table 1: Budget Comparison – Original (corrected) v Final

	Original	% Total	Final[24]	% Total	Change %
Outcome 1	220,579	10.6%	371,076	17.4%	6.8%
Output 1.1	76,164	3.7%	140,149	6.6%	2.9%
Output 1.2	58,000	2.8%	125,377	5.9%	3.1%
Output 1.3	86,415	4.2%	105,550	5.0%	0.8%
Outcome 2	90,000	4.3%	108,009	5.1%	0.7%
Output 2.1	45,000	2.2%	30,931	1.5%	-0.7%
Output 2.2	30,000	1.4%	33,466	1.6%	0.1%
Output 2.3	15,000	0.7%	43,612	2.0%	1.3%
Outcome 3	157,000	7.6%	284,596	13.4%	5.8%
Output 3.1	100,000	4.8%	177,247	8.3%	3.5%
Output 3.2	57,000	2.7%	107,349	5.0%	2.3%
Project Management/staff	1,294,083	62.3%	1,017,829	47.8%	-14.5%
Other	316,518	15.2%	349,013	16.4%	1.2%
Total	2,078,180		2,130,523		

[23] https://www.ilo.org/publications/high-level-independent-evaluation-ilo%E2%80%99s-development-cooperation-strategy

[24] Final budget includes the original total budget plus interest earned

177. The evaluation was not given detailed information on the strategic or operational issues that were behind these changes, but they may reflect the changes in project emphasis that were discussed earlier in this evaluation, such as the focus on Outcome 1 in both Indonesia and Thailand. The budget increase in Outcome 3 may be the result of an increased investment in awareness raising activities – namely a 75 per cent increase in Output 3.1 awareness raising activities (though the percentage increase in the budget for Output 3.2 is less easily explained as there seemed to be few activities reported under this output).[25]

178. Some reallocations across the budget may also relate to cost efficiencies that were created by the close collaboration with the RISSC project in Indonesia and Thailand, especially in respect of joint awareness-raising events. The evaluation was not given financial data to allow this to be quantified.

179. As at the time of the evaluation, the ILO expects to expend around 95 per cent of the budget allocated to Thailand and Indonesia – a figure considered to be within the normal range for ILO projects. Expenditure figures for Japan were not provided to the evaluation.

180. In terms of human resources, full-time project officers were engaged in Indonesia and Japan. In Indonesia, a national project coordinator experienced in skills development work was employed who had strong existing relationships with key stakeholders and understood well the country's policy priorities in the skills development area. In Japan, the project officer managed project delivery but did not have a background in business and human rights and relied instead on external consultants to develop content suitable for the target audiences (institutional investors, trading companies, MNEs). ILO technical expertise was also used to check the project materials that were produced (including relevant specialists in ILO HQ in Geneva) but, according to the consultant, did not make a direct contribution to development.

181. In Thailand, the project officer was engaged part-time and spent about half her time on another project and as a regional coordinator of the ILO skills work. Overall, from the perspective of ILO senior management in Bangkok, the project was seen to be a relative lean operation in terms of human resources. While the project officer in Thailand brought perhaps a higher level of expertise and productivity to the role, having attention divided across multiple responsibilities may not have been ideal.

182. At a country level, some unexpected delays and complications affected the timely delivery of some activities. For example, in Indonesia, the original intention was to directly fund a government Vocational Training Centre to deliver the up-skilling/re-skilling of workers in the E&E supply chain but ran into regulatory issues both within the Ministry and the ILO that prevented this. Ultimately, the agreement was entered into with a third party (Matsushita Gobel Foundation, linked to Panasonic). This delayed delivery until near the end of the project and was incomplete at the time of the evaluation.

[25] Though it must be noted that a detailed report was not provided to the evaluation.

The project's management structure was not fit for purpose. The project needed a manager with operational oversight of project activities in all three countries and who could act as a single point of contact with the funding partner. Instead, there were barriers that made it difficult for the project in Thailand and Indonesia to efficiently communicate with METI on operational issues and to respond to their requests.

183. While from METI's perspective, the project was a single intervention, in practice within the ILO the project was split, with no overarching project manager in place to draw the different threads together under a single span of control and to coordinate communication. The comparison was made by ILO staff with the arrangements for the RISSC project which had an overall project manager in place at the Professional Officer 4 level (P4). In contrast, the Skills and RBC Project had P3s in place with no clarity about who takes the overall strategic and operational lead on issues – if at all. This was particularly important when decisions needed to be made about whether to stick closely to the original project plan or whether to alter course to take advantage of opportunities as they arose. A new coordinator was appointed in October 2024 who took on some of these responsibilities (for Thailand and Indonesia), but this was very late in the implementation.

184. The project document assumed a closer link between the Japan component (Outcome 3) and work in Thailand and Indonesia (Outcomes 1 and 2), but in effect they operated separately. The rationale of having supply chains in Thailand and Indonesia encouraged and supported by MNEs in Japan to address RBC issues proved to be faulty. No real connections were made that would advance this from MNEs' headquarters in Japan. Some broad support was offered by their subsidiaries in the two countries (especially from Panasonic in Indonesia, but also from Mitsubishi in Thailand), but this required relationships to be built from the ground up without any support from the project in Japan. Perhaps the whole assumption that this would happen was flawed and this reinforced the separation of the project components.

185. Without an overarching contact point, both project staff and METI faced challenges in communication. The project was working in a novel policy space and, when contacted for information by METI, it was sometimes difficult for project staff to explain how their activities related to METI's specific interests and priorities. Having a true project manager in place may have helped to resolve this. As one representative said:

> *The process of getting information about the project often had us being referred from person to person and this was very time consuming.*

Impact and sustainability

There is a lack of reliable measures to assess the potential impact of the project. The work done to strengthen the capacity of stakeholders in Thailand and Indonesia to adapt to industry transformations through skills development and a focus on Responsible Business Conduct demonstrated a new approach, but its broader application and institutionalization is uncertain. In Japan, the guidelines and awareness raising activities found a receptive audience, but much more work needs to be done and the mechanisms to do this are also uncertain.

Overview

186. The lack of concrete evidence of results at the outcome level makes the assessment of the project's long-term impact and sustainability somewhat speculative. In Indonesia and Thailand, various new training modules, resource materials and guides have been produced and local institutional capacity to deliver these has been developed, but there is yet no convincing evidence that these will be delivered on a scale that will have an impact farther down the track. Similarly, the project has enhanced social dialogue in these countries and developed understanding of the challenges faced, but the mechanisms to continue this dialogue, address the issues that have been identified, and to coordinate action on a sectoral or supply chain level do not seem to exist. How re-skilling and up-skilling of workers will be funded – especially those most vulnerable to structural change – is unclear.

187. Similarly, in Japan, the project has developed a guide to business and human rights for institutional investors which establishes a strong business case for giving more attention to this issue and for driving reforms through investees and their supply chains. Continued effort to raise awareness and build capacity in this area is needed and the project has only scratched the surface. Whether the actions taken through the project itself will have an impact is unclear. If it has "started the ball rolling" and efforts are made to continue to reach and influence an audience that was not previously committed to business and human rights, then maybe it has. If these efforts now diminish or if they "preach to the converted" and focus mainly on an audience that is already committed to action, impact will be much less.

Views on impact and sustainability from the interviews

188. Stakeholders interviewed in the evaluation were asked for their views on the project's likely long-term impact and sustainability. Many highlighted that a project of such a short duration cannot be expected to achieve the type of transformational changes envisaged. A senior sectoral representative in Thailand noted that a more systems-level approach was needed rather than a short project-based approach. This required the commitment from government, but this was hard to obtain given the frequency of government personnel changes:

> *"We need stronger institutional frameworks that can persist despite staffing changes. The development of sustainable support systems that can continue beyond the project's timeline is crucial, including establishing lasting partnerships between educational institutions, industry leaders, and government bodies."*

189. Senior ILO management in Thailand, noted that while the project succeeded in training larger numbers of targeted workers that would typically be possible through government funding, they acknowledged that questions remain about the sustainability of this work once the project ends. The project has however built relationships with key sectoral bodies and training institutions through which the ILO may be able to influence delivery in the future:

> *"It is important to maintain a broader strategic vision beyond individual project activities. While the project may not achieve full sustainability in its current form, it has helped reestablish important relationships and created frameworks that could be built upon in future initiatives."*

190. These partners expressed a strong desire to work with the ILO and METI on such future initiatives. One saw opportunity for collaboration to update existing training materials to incorporate RBC and

to reflect technologies that are transforming the sector. Another saw a need for a more comprehensive approach to supporting structural change including:

> *"… assistance with industry transformation strategies, support for workforce adaptation programs, helping enterprises including SMEs to restructure or to diversify into other sectors, facilitating industry-education partnerships, and enhanced integration of RBC into production."*

191. Funding the required re-training and upskilling of workers to meet the challenges of structural transformation remains unclear, but some ideas were shared about what could be done to generate wider impact from the models tested in the project and to sustain these. As a representative of an employers' organization in Indonesia said:

> *"There is a scheme designed to incentivize companies to invest in training via a tax deduction. This is underutilized but one participating E&E company is now using it we are promoting this company's approach as an example for others. Big companies could also be eligible if they extended training to their supply chains. This is a possible sustainability strategy. There are some restrictions in terms of the sectors eligible, but E&E is included."*

192. Apprenticeships are an important mechanism for skills development and can also be a vehicle for raising awareness of RBC issues through both the apprentices and their host employers. In Indonesia, the project's work developing a grievance mechanism for Quality Apprenticeships has significant impact potential as there is some resistance to apprenticeships from workers' organisations which see unregulated apprenticeship models as being open to rights violations. Steps taken towards Quality Apprenticeships, including the grievance mechanisms, can overcome such concerns and allow improvements in entry level training and RBC. Efforts in Thailand supporting reforms to that country's dual vocational education system may also have an impact.

193. At the enterprise level, training was delivered too late in some locations to yield any evidence of significant change, but one of the enterprises visited in Thailand reported some encouraging evidence of the sort of results that can be achieved from the type of up-skilling and re-skilling efforts piloted by the project. These included providing career paths and higher wages for workers who had been up-skilled and investing in new production technology that harnessed their workers' new skills. Had the project been able to gather more examples like this, a more comprehensive and clearer assessment of project impact would have been possible.

194. In Japan, investors and MNEs involved in awareness raising activities were generally positive about the project's potential impact, but those interviewed in the evaluation tended to be already strongly committed to the principles of business and human rights and had specialised units or departments dedicated to its promotion. One said:

> *"I believe the project has reinforced a slowly changing mindset among institutional investors. They may have stopped taking human rights for granted and realised they need to take proactive steps - not assume there are no problems, assume the opposite!"*

195. A representative of PRI, a key project partner in its efforts to reach institutional investors, saw that while its members and signatories might understand the issues and are taking action, the challenge was to set a broader agenda, engage with a wider audience, and prepare for escalation. As they pointed out:

> *"Awareness is still not high, but this was always going to be a long-term project. As much as we understand the ILO and METI wanting to see signs of impact, we just need to keep the ball rolling. We need to follow up what we've done and capture and showcase case studies. Investors want practical tips in addressing the issues they face - How to we engage with investees? What do we ask? How do we have a conversation that asks the right questions? The Japanese always try to be perfect! So, to admit there might be hidden problems is difficult for them. Ask and they'll often say that they have no problem."*

196. While the views above suggest that there is potential for impact, the project's failure to do more to identify early signs of significant change has been a missed opportunity. METI, as the project's funding partner, has a reasonable expectation that the project will seek to understand as much as

possible what difference it is making and whether it has advanced its own objectives. As it told the evaluation:

> *"We understand that behavioural change takes time. But the mindset of the ILO needs to be more clearly focused on the project outcomes and impact. Were there indications of a connection between the activities and changes? If so, tell us!"*

Impact in terms of the Sustainable Development Goals?

197. The uncertainty about the project's impact also applies to any consideration of its contribution to the Sustainable Development Goals. The project worked in areas that might potentially contribute to targets under SDG 8, "Promote sustained, inclusive and sustainable economic growth, full and productive employment and decent work for all", including 8.2, 8.3, 8.4, 8.6, 8.7, and 8.8[26]. Activities delivered through the project are all relevant to these targets and may ultimately contribute, but no evidence was identified at this stage to confirm this.

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[26] For details see: https://www.globalgoals.org/goals/8-decent-work-and-economic-growth/

Conclusions, lessons, and recommendations

Conclusions

198. In practice the project **operated as two separate interventions** sharing only a mutual commitment to advancing decent work. The project's theme in Thailand and Indonesia could best be described as "skills for transition", working with a sector in each country that was facing the challenges of structural change and seeking to increase the knowledge and capacity of constituents and other stakeholders to respond to this change through vocational training which also promoted the principles of "responsible business conduct". Because RISSC was already operating in the RBC space, the project focused more on skills than was originally envisaged in the project document.

199. In Japan, the project **focused on raising awareness of business and human rights** among Japanese institutional investors, trading companies and MNEs, developing a guide and running workshops and events. The focus there was at a quite different point on the continuum of responsible business conduct emphasising the business case for addressing basic human rights in making investment decisions and in working with supply chains.

200. The project's work in these countries responded to real needs and constituents and implementation partners highly valued the ILO's contribution, both in its technical assistance and in the authority its involvement gave to the project as an international institution promoting standards. However, the **short duration of the project and the lack of a satisfactory framework to analyse progress** towards outcomes and impacts made it difficult to adequately measure the value added by the project. The project logic and theory of change were poorly articulated and there were no mechanisms in place to measure progress towards outcomes other than those related to completing activities.

201. Looking forward, there is potential to do more to connect skills development with responsible business conduct, **working with both MNEs and the SMEs in their supply chains**. The project now has strong links with sectoral bodies that can help the ILO and its partners to reach the huge number of SME suppliers where business and human rights risks are great. At the other end of the supply chain, engaging MNEs to work with national constituents in developing structural adjustment policies and strategies that include skills development programmes would be an appropriate area to explore, given the technological changes and the threat of job losses faced by their suppliers. In line with RBC or ESG principles, local MNE subsidiaries could be engaged to support tripartite initiatives that contribute to a smoother transition for the affected workers and business owners.

202. Local subsidiaries of MNEs might need to be persuaded to get involved in such initiatives, but as whole communities can be affected by changes in their supply chains, there is a **strong argument that they have a social responsibility to contribute**. This can be reinforced by their Japanese headquarters and potentially by institutional investors[27]. Importantly, the commercial realities of MNEs should not be forgotten – partnerships are needed. As one Japanese MNE old the evaluation:

> *"We have limited scope to extend our support down through the many levels of the supply chain as we are a profit-making company. But a partnership approach working with government and the ILO is entirely appropriate."*

Summary Assessments of ILO Cross-Cutting Issues

203. Many of the **ILO's cross-cutting policy priorities** were embedded in the project through its broad focus on decent work, responsible business conduct and the promotion of Fundamental Principles and Rights at Work (FPRW). For example, the project developed training modules and trainer guides and delivered Training of Trainer programmes related to green transitions and FPRW. In Japan, the project developed a guide and delivered workshops to investors and businesses to promote human rights, FPRW, and International Labour Standards.

[27] An example of such an initiative was included as a Case Study on page 17 of the Guide for Institutional Investors.

204. The above content included policies that promoted **gender equality and inclusion**, but no special emphasis was given to these. Project research provided some data about women in the target sectors but offered no insights into how transformational change might be achieved. No attention was given to the situation of people with disabilities in this research. Some references to gender-specific actions were included in the Japan component's Guide for Institutional Investors, but these were not given special prominence.

Lessons and good practices

Lessons

205. Clarity in describing "what success looks like" is essential in defining a theory of change and in creating a meaningful results framework. This needs to be done in conjunction with the funding partner and with constituents so that they have a shared understanding of the outcomes beyond the completion of activities.

206. Collecting evidence of behavioural change attributable to project activities is difficult for a project of such a short duration, but the evaluation did hear some "stories of significant change" in the three countries. A more systematic approach to collecting these stories was needed.

207. Having no project reports produced beyond the annual report completed at the end of the inception phase was not ideal. Even shorter, six-monthly updates may have helped identify the need for adjustments in approach and to provide the funding partner with the information it needed for accountability purposes. This would depend on having a better results framework.

208. Having a Project Manager with oversight of all three countries would also have helped strategic and operational decision making and communication with the funding partner.

209. Past projects delivered in related policy areas needed to have been more carefully considered in planning and implementing projects. The Project Document made no reference to lessons learned from projects like the Responsible Supply Chains in Asia (RSCA) Project or even other skills projects to find synergies that could have been exploited or what lessons were learned.

210. A clearer vision of the role to be played by constituents was needed in the awareness raising activities of the project in Japan. In particular, the role of **employers' representatives** could have been better recognised in advancing the business and human rights agenda within their membership. While capacity development for other partners representing investors and trading companies was important, more needed to be done for constituents.

Good practices

211. In Thailand, the project's success in gaining the commitment of ECOT and AHRDA to adopt and disseminate the skills and RBC modules developed through the project, of TAPMA to use and promote the occupational map with its many members, and of OVEC to adopt the in-company training manual revised through the project all demonstrate how project staff have independently identified important mechanisms for pursuing sustainable outcomes, even when such approaches are not clearly set out in project documents.

212. In Indonesia, engaging with Matsushita Gobel Foundation (YMG), a foundation linked to the MNE Panasonic was a highly effective way of engaging with a major company to work with its supply chains. It acted as an intermediary with Panasonic's local subsidiary on RBC-related matters and to elicit their cooperation and support. It also helped set up new collaborative arrangements with a key Ministry of Manpower vocational training centre, greatly enhancing their links with and responsiveness to suppliers in the E&E sector.

213. The project built new partnerships that could expand the reach of the ILO and METI, such as with PRI and the Japan Foreign Trade Council. While this was a good approach, it could have perhaps been done in a way that continued to build the capacity of ILO employer constituent capacity to a greater degree.

Recommendations

Recommendation 1	
In all future project, ensure that the monitoring and reporting system set out in the project document is fit for purpose and can measure progress towards outcomes and impact.	
Project design needs to be thoroughly checked to ensure that there is a coherent Theory of Change and that mechanisms are in place to collect meaningful performance data. The ILO's Evaluation Office can provide some advice on these matters or an "evaluability assessment" can be made. In all cases, the expectations and data requirements of the funding partner need to be understood and agreed on.	
Responsibility:	Project design team
Time implications:	Moderate
Resource implications:	Low
Recommendation 2	
Ensure that the management and governance structure of future projects is similarly fit for purpose and can effectively coordinate activities and streamline communication.	
The lack of a project manager with oversight of project activities across the three countries was a weakness that affected the project's capacity to effectively and efficiently adjust project strategy and operation when required and to act as a single point of contact for the funding partner and other stakeholders.	
Responsibility:	Project design team, Country/Regional offices
Time implications:	Low
Resource implications:	Moderate
Recommendation 3	
Enhance the focus on gender and disability inclusion in project design and implementation.	
The project gave only minimal attention to gender inclusion and none to disability inclusion. The Project Document described a broad approach, but this was never operationalised or monitored.	
Responsibility:	Project design team, Country/Regional offices
Time implications:	Low
Resource implications:	Low

Recommendation 4	
Explore models for structural adjustment policies strategies that involve MNEs to support workers and enterprises affected by structural change	
The project highlighted a possible area for future work within supply chains that are threatened by structural change that could bring together MNEs, employers' representatives, workers' representatives and governments to develop and implement sectoral policies and strategies to ensure workers and enterprises can make transitions. The project demonstrated some elements of such an approach related to training, but a more sustainable mechanism is needed based on social dialogue and tripartism for sectors affected by such challenges to come together and navigate these. In the short term, ILO Country Offices in Thailand and Indonesia, need to work with constituents and national stakeholders to continue and expand the up-skilling and re-skilling of existing workers, including by exploring new funding options and enterprise incentives. Opportunities to continue to raise awareness of SME managers of RBC/business and human rights issues should also be explored	
Responsibility:	Country Office Directors, Thailand and Indonesia; DWT ENTERPRISE AND SKILLS Specialists; Resource mobilization specialists
Time implications:	Moderate
Resource implications:	Moderate-High

Annex A – Terms of reference

Final Independent Clustered Evaluation of the Skills Development and Responsible Business Conduct for Transition Project

Key facts

Title of project being evaluated	Skills Development and Responsible Business Conduct for Transition
Project DC Code	RAS/23/52/JPN JPN/23/51/JPN
Type of evaluation (e.g. independent, internal)	Clustered
Timing of evaluation (e.g. midterm, final)	Final
Donor	Japan - Ministry of Economy, Trade and Industry (METI)
Administrative Unit in the ILO responsible for administrating the project	RAS/23/52/JPN: RO-Asia and the Pacific in coordination with CO-Jakarta and CO-Bangkok JPN/23/51/JPN: ILO-Tokyo
Technical Unit(s) in the ILO responsible for backstopping the project	SKILLS and ENTERPRISES
P&B outcome (s) under evaluation	Outcomes 3, 4, 5, 7 of P&B 2022-2023
SDG(s) under evaluation	Goal 8
Budget	USD 2,078,180.20
Project Duration	April 2023- March 2025 (24 Months)

Background information on the Skills Development & Responsible Business Conduct for Transition Project

Supply chains, including domestic, regional and global supply chains, are a key feature of today's globalised economy, with about half of world trade being related to them and with 80% of global GDP consisting of domestic supply chains. Integration into global supply chains provides significant opportunities for developing countries to attract investment, increase value added, diversify exports, become more competitive, and access and upgrade new technologies, which in turn helps to increase incomes, create jobs and alleviate poverty.

Japan is the home country of many Japanese multinational enterprises in various sectors with business operations (both fully owned subsidiaries and supply chains) across the Asia region. Japan is also a member of the G7 and the G20 within which it has made commitments to foster sustainable supply chains and promote decent work, responsible business conduct and human rights. In October 2020, the Japanese government launched its National Action Plan on Business and Human Rights (2020-2025) (NAP) to declare the further commitment to raise awareness on human rights due diligence and the ILO Tripartite Declaration of Principles concerning Multinational Enterprises and Social Policy (MNE Declaration) among Japanese businesses and their suppliers, both multinational and domestic.

The Japanese Ministry of Economy, Trade and Industry (METI) assumes global leadership over promoting sustainable and inclusive enterprises through policy measures in economy, trade and industry. Through the "Skills Development and Responsible Business Conduct (RBC) for Transition" project METI aims to achieve improved working conditions and worker well-being by supporting an enabling environment for sustainable enterprises in Japan and in the partner countries, and to support institutional level as well as enterprise level interventions so that business can fulfil its responsibility to respect human rights and labour rights and promote decent work. In addition, the project aims to develop a policy environment throughout supply chains for more investment on skills development to improve and expand the access to technical/vocational skills (re-skilling and upskilling).

A skilled workforce is central in responding to environmental and technological challenges faced by the automotive and electronics sectors supply chains, and in promoting innovation, investment and competitiveness of the sector, which in turn contribute to social development and justice. Skills development is also essential in supporting workers career advancement and transitions, and in providing enterprises in the supply chain with a skilled workforce, improving its productivity and making businesses more inclusive and environmentally sustainable. Therefore, the project aims to support the development of skills so that improve workers' employability and productivity, facilitating their labour market transitions and contributing to increased productivity and competitiveness of enterprises in the automotive and electronics supply chains.

Additionally, the project promotes public-private collaboration and partnerships in identifying the demand of skills and adapting skills development and training in response, and in aligning training provision with responsible business conduct principles and practices. For this, METI expects this project to develop a policy environment throughout supply chains for more investment on skills development to improve and expand the access to technical/vocational skills (re-skilling and upskilling).

The project focus on supply chains in the machinery sector, particularly the automotive manufacturing industry in Thailand and electrical & electronics (E&E) in Indonesia and has following three outcomes which are interrelated and should be pursued effectively and cooperatively. For this, the following three interrelated outcomes were established:

> **Outcome 1:** Enhanced capabilities of ILO constituents to increase job opportunities in higher value-added industry by skills development to enhance workers' responsiveness and productivity for structural transformation to a sustainable economy, including respect for human rights, which is consistent with the country's development priorities.
>
> **Outcome 2:** Stronger institution and tripartite collaboration to promote responsible business conduct and respect for the principles of international labour standards, and corporate activities in harmony with the country's development priorities.
>
> **Outcome 3:** Enabling environment in policy and practice towards a transition to resilient value chains from the perspective of sustainable and inclusive trade and investment.

As the Project is ending on 31 March 2025, there is a need to conduct a final independent evaluation. The evaluation will be in line with EVAL's policy guidelines and United Nations good evaluation practices. This will enable the ILO, donor, partners and key stakeholders to take stock of achievements, ensure accountability, identify lessons learned and good practices generated by the project. The evaluation will also provide valuable insight and recommendation to inform design of the possible next phase of the Project.

Theory of Change

The proposed intervention builds on key impacts and lessons learned from previous ILO interventions in the field. This project has foreseen three pathways to change; (i) skills development; (ii) labour dimension of responsible business conduct; and (iii) enabling environment in policy and practice.

1) provide skills development to enhance workers' responsiveness and productivity for structural transformation to a sustainable economy, including respect for human rights, which is consistent with the country's development priorities.
2) promote responsible business conduct including corporate activities in harmony with the country's development priorities and respect for the principles of international labour standards; and
3) promote an environment to contribute towards a transition to resilient supply chains from the perspectives of trade and investment.

These three pathways are interconnected with each other to create more high-quality jobs that can respond to and enable preparedness for the transition in the world of work. First, the project will enhance skills development aimed at responding to transitions, including green transition, digital transformation, changing business environment towards respect for human rights and other transitions in the world of work. Secondly, the project will promote the labour dimension of responsible business conduct by helping enterprises to introduce due diligence processes to identify, prevent and mitigate adverse impact to workers. Thirdly, skills development and promotion of responsible business conduct alone will not automatically lead to an industry-wide decent work impact. Driving a longer-term and bigger scale impact requires the power of trade and investment which can create labour demand for more value-added jobs and more resilient supply chains.

Management Structure

The project has been managed by the ILO Regional Office for Asia and the Pacific (ROAP), in coordination with ILO Country Offices for Indonesia, Thailand, and the ILO Office for Japan (ILO-Tokyo). It has been technically backstopped by the Skills and Employability Specialist and the Enterprise Development Specialist in DWT-Bangkok.

The Project Coordinator based in ROAP reports to the ILO Japan partnership programme CTA and Deputy Regional Director at the Regional Office. The Project was assisted by relevant specialists in the Skills Branch (SKILLS) and the Enterprise Department (ENTERPRISE) in the ILO Decent Work Team Technical Support Team for East and South-East Asia and the Pacific in Bangkok and Headquarters.

The project fostered synergies and sought close collaboration with other ILO projects financed by the Government of Japan, such as the Building Responsible Value Chains in Asia through the Promotion of Decent Work in Business Operations (RAS/22/01/JPN) and the Resilient, Inclusive and Sustainable Supply Chains (RAS/22/10/JPN).

Directors and staff in the ILO Country Offices for Indonesia and Thailand oversee activities under Outcomes 1-2 and the project recruited National Project Coordinators and National Finance and Administrative Assistants to implement project activities.

Purpose and objectives

The final independent clustered evaluation of the Skills Development and Responsible Business Conduct for Transition Project aims to ensure accountability and promote organizational learning within ILO and among key stakeholders. The evaluation will analyse the relevance, effectiveness, efficiency, sustainability and impact of this cluster of interrelated projects, and identify lessons learned, and provide recommendations to inform decision-making for future initiatives.

In ensuring accountability and transparency, the evaluation will provide an unbiased review of the project's outcomes, ensuring that results are presented objectively without internal biases. Transparency in the evaluation process will build trust among stakeholders, including donors, partners, beneficiaries, and the public ensuring confidence that the project's design and delivery is being accurately assessed.

The specific objectives of the evaluation include

- To assess the relevance of the project to the need of the stakeholders and the social partners, including project strategies and approaches considering any changes in the context (e.g., political change, COVID 19, economic crisis, etc.).
- To assess the validity of the intervention strategies and inform the ILO whether the strategies are valid to achieve project goals and long-term impacts.
- To document and assess the achievements of the project against the stated outcomes and objective in the target countries to identify future needs, or areas of improvements or for further elaboration to effectively meet constituents' needs in the future.
- To assess complementarity and the effectiveness of the collaboration between the different programmes and projects in the target sectors in the countries of interventions and provide recommendations on what could be improved and how.
- To assess how the programmatic interventions and achieved outcomes have generated impact or might generate impact in the future.
- To document changes within the tripartite constituents as well as other key stakeholders that this programme aims to influence (if any), and to assess the likelihood that the results of the project are durable and can be maintained or even scaled up and replicated by project partners after major assistance has been completed.
- To document whether and if so to what extent the social dialogue and public-private collaboration facilitated by the project has contributed to advancing decent work, and project objectives.
- To identify good practices and lessons learned to inform key national and sectoral stakeholders for future and similar interventions.
- To assess whether gender has been mainstreamed during the design and implementation

The findings from the evaluation will also provide valuable insights that can inform the strategic planning and design of future projects by the ILO. This ensures that resources are allocated efficiently and effectively and offer evidence-based recommendations that can guide policy development related to skills development and responsible business conduct. This is particularly important for creating sustainable and impactful programmes within future ILO projects.

The evaluation will also serve to comply with donor requirements as needed and ensure the possibility of securing ongoing support through its compliance to donor requirements. It will also contribute to the broader knowledge base on skills development and responsible business conduct. Sharing findings with other ILO Units, UN Agencies and stakeholders can foster collaboration and innovation in these areas.

Scope

The evaluation will cover the project interventions that started from April 2023 to March 2025 in all the three countries including Japan, Thailand and Indonesia. It will cover two related projects i.e. RAS/23/52/JPN and JPN/23/51/JPN funded by METI.

In Thailand and Indonesia, the evaluation will be conducted respectively in the areas and sectors of the project implementation focusing on the beneficiaries of the intervention and the tripartite constituents and project partners. Interviews will also be conducted with constituents and partners in the host country, Japan, to ensure results of the intervention are adequately captured and reflected.

The evaluation will also determine the impact of the interventions on SDG 8 (i.e. 8.2, 8.3 ,8.5 and 8.8) and assess the Project contribution to national developments plans, UNSDCF, P&B, DWCP and relevant CPOs. The evaluation will also determine the impact of the project on cross cutting issues addressed by the project as per ILO requirements including normative mandate and tripartism, gender equality and non-discrimination and the UN principles of leaving no one behind.

Given the project timelines, the evaluation is expected to commence in January 2025 and be completed by 31 March 2025.

Evaluation criteria and questions (including Cross-cutting issues/ issues of special interest to the ILO)

The evaluation should address the overall standard evaluation criteria: Relevance, effectiveness, efficiency, sustainability and impact in line with EVAL's policy guidelines and United Nations good evaluation practices and as defined in the ILO Policy Guidelines for results-based evaluation, 2020 which can be accessed here. These include:

- Relevance, coherence and strategic fit of the project.
- Project effectiveness.
- Efficiency of resource use.
- Sustainability of project outcomes.
- Impact orientation; and
- Cross-cutting issues (gender equality, non-discrimination and ILO's normative mandate

Key Evaluation Questions

The evaluator shall examine the key issues highlighted below but may also adapt the evaluation criteria and questions, however any fundamental changes should be discussed and agreed between the evaluation manager and the evaluator and reflected in the inception report.

a) Relevance and strategic fit,

- To what extent and how well had the project responded to the needs and priorities of the national stakeholders, donor and ILO constituents as well as diverse groups of beneficiaries?
- To what extent is the programme consistent and relevant to needs of the automotive and E&E sectors and stakeholders in the countries?
- To what extent had the project strategies and approaches considered any changes in the context (e.g., political change, COVID 19, economic crisis, etc.).
- Is the project well designed (i.e. are the project activities aligned to outcomes)? Is the project realistic (in terms of its strategy, expected outputs, outcome and impact) given the time given for implementation and resources available?
- To what extent has the project integrated the cross-cutting themes (gender and disability inclusion, tripartism and normative mandate) in the design?
- Is the project´s Theory of Change (ToC) comprehensive, integrating external factors, and is it based on a systemic analysis?

b) Coherence

- To what extent had the programme leveraged synergies and partnerships (with other ILO interventions/programmes/projects, constituents, other donors, governments, social partners, national institutions, and other UN/development agencies, as well as women and youth groups) to enhance the projects' efficiency, effectiveness and impact? What are the ways to maximize synergies and improve collaboration with these new actors?
- Have there been new intervening factors/actors (e.g. other donor-assisted programmes, or new policies/strategies, policy changes, or other government interventions) that have emerged, which may have impaired or enhanced the programme performance or future ILO development assistance in these strategic areas?

c) Effectiveness:

- To what extent has the project been successful in achieving the outcomes and the overall objective for beneficiaries of different groups and genders?
- Which have been the main contributing and challenging factors towards project's success in attaining its targeted results and what have been the unintended results of the project? Have any unexpected positive and negative results taken place?

- Has the knowledge sharing, communication and private sector engagement strategies been effective in raising the profile of the project within each country and among the cooperating partners?
- To what extent had the project promoted and achieved collaboration and support from stakeholders and partners? To what extent has the project identified and integrated into its plans and actions the operational and strategic needs and priorities for men, women, and vulnerable groups?
- Did the project's interventions contribute to strengthening social dialogue among social partners and international stakeholders, including Japanese buyers and public institutions in the targeted countries? Has (if so, how) the social dialogue contributed to advancing decent work, addressing human and labour right risks, and building forward better from recent global disruptions, including COVID-19 pandemic?

d) Efficiency of resource use

- Have resources (financial, human, technical support, etc.) been allocated strategically to achieve the project outputs and specially outcomes? If not, why and which measures taken to work towards achievement of project outcomes and impact?
- Were the project resources, management structure, technical capacity and time sufficient to achieve the project outputs and outcomes within the given timeframe?
- To what extent has the project management and governance structure put in place worked strategically with tripartite constituents, stakeholders and partners in the project, ILO and the donor - to achieve project goals and objectives?

e) Impact orientation

- Is there evidence of positive, long-term changes in the direct beneficiaries, institutional capacity and policies at national/sub-national/sectoral levels? To what extent is the achieved progress likely to have long term effects?
- How has the project directly or indirectly contributed to create a more enabling environment for responsible business practices and decent work, as well as better alignment of policies and practices with ILS through enhancing constituents' capacities, social dialogue, collaboration and by increasing an evidence base?
- To what extent has the project been able to meet the specific and strategic needs of men, women and vulnerable groups?

f) Sustainability

- Are project outcomes likely to be sustained?
- To what extent are the results of the project durable and can be maintained or even scaled up and replicated by project partners after the assistance has been completed?
- To what extent had the project supported the capacity development, long-term buy-in, leadership, commitment, and national ownership by the partner country governments, social partners, and other relevant stakeholders to achieving the project outcomes? What were the challenges? What need to be done (or to be done more) to achieve a long-term change and the project objectives?

Methodology

The specific elaboration of the evaluation method will be defined in consultation between the evaluation team and the evaluation manager and will be described in detail in the inception report to be submitted by the evaluation team (see below).

For required quality control of the whole process, the evaluator will follow the EVAL evaluation policy guidelines and the ILO/EVAL checklists which will be provided to the evaluator.

The evaluation methodology will include:

- Desk review: desk review of all relevant documents: project document and its logical framework, theory of change, funding agreement, relevant minute sheets, implementation plan, performance evaluation plan, progress reports, and other relevant documents and studies.
- Meetings with the ILO project staff: the evaluator will meet the project staff to reach a common understanding for the evaluation process and requirements.
- Meetings with backstopping units and the donor: the evaluator will meet with the technical backstopping teams in ROAP, and country offices virtually as needed to reach a common understanding in relation of the technical and financial status of the project.
- Field visits, collection of data, and interview with stakeholders: the evaluator will meet in person (and virtually when in person meetings are not feasible) with the national key partners of the project. The evaluator will also meet with a number of project beneficiaries (including women, youth and vulnerable groups) employers and workers and organize focus group discussions with them.
- Debriefing phase: at the end of the fieldwork the evaluator may organize a debriefing meeting for the key national partners and relevant stakeholders, ILO and the donor to present and discuss the preliminary findings and the lessons learned.
- Submission of the first draft of the report: the evaluator will submit the first draft of the report to the evaluation manager, who will circulate it to the project team, backstopping units, the donor, the key national partners, and relevant stakeholders for comments.
- Collection of feedback on the first draft: the evaluation manager will collect the feedback on the first draft, consolidate and submit it to the evaluator.
- Submission of the final report: the evaluator will incorporate the feedback as appropriate and send the final report to the evaluation manager.
- Quality of the report: the evaluation manager and ILO Evaluation Unit will conduct quality assurance of the draft evaluation report.
- Dissemination: the evaluation report will be submitted to the key stakeholders by the Country Office and uploaded in the EVAL public repository of evaluation reports (e-discovery)

The evaluation team will develop the final evaluation methodology in consultation with the evaluation manager. The methods should be selected for their rigor and their ability to produce empirical evidence to meet the evaluation criteria, answer the evaluation questions and meet the objectives of the evaluation. The methodology may be adapted however any fundamental changes should be agreed between the evaluation manager and the evaluator and reflected in the inception report.

The methodology should include examining the intervention's Theory of Change with particular attention to the identification of assumptions, risk and mitigation strategies, and the logical connect between levels of results and their alignment with ILO's strategic objectives and outcomes at the global and national levels, as well as with the relevant SDGs and related targets.

During the data collection process, the evaluation team will compare and cross-validate data from different sources (project staff, project partners and beneficiaries) to verify their accuracy, and different methodologies (review documentary, field visits and interviews) that will complement each other. This should include analysis of both quantitative and qualitative data and should be able to capture intervention's contributions to the achievement of expected and unexpected outcomes.

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

The methodology should clearly state the limitations of the chosen evaluation methods, including those related to representation of specific group of stakeholders. A detailed methodology, including the workplan should be part of the inception report and should ensure involvement of key stakeholders in the implementation as well as in the dissemination processes (e.g. stakeholder workshop, debriefing of project manager, etc.).

An indicative list of persons to be interviewed in each country will be prepared by the project in consultation with the Evaluation Manager.

Main deliverables

The evaluation will be undertaken over 3 months January – March 2025. A detailed timetable will be included in the inception report developed by the evaluator. The following deliverables are required by the evaluator:

Deliverable	No. of working days	Timeline
Virtual consultations and interviews with the relevant ILO officials/specialists	3 days	Weeks 2 of January 2025
Inception report (incl. methodological note) (a guide on how to write the inception report can be found here)	7 days	Week 3 of January 2025
Conduct interviews and focus groups discussions in person in each of the three countries (namely Indonesia, Thailand and Japan). When in person meetings would not be possible virtual meetings are expected. **Debriefings with national stakeholders at country level** **Stakeholders' Validation Workshop**	20 days	Week 1-4 of February 2025 Week 2 March 2025
A first draft of the evaluation report written in English, answering the questions related to the evaluation criteria, including the recommendations, lessons learned, good practices, technical recommendations for the key stakeholders. (A guide to writing the report can be found here)	10 days	Week 1 March 2025
The final evaluation report, which must be written in English, must be approximately 30-40 pages maximum (excluding annexes and executive summary) and follow the structure as provided here. Appendices should include the questions matrix, the interview and focus groups guides, field work	5	Weeks 4 March 2025 Submission of the final evaluation report: 31 March 2025

schedule, a list of interviewees, and a list of documents analysed as well as a PowerPoint summary in English. The quality of the report will be assessed based on the ILO checklist 6 (see above). The draft of the final report will be shared with the Evaluation Office for comments and will only be considered final once it is approved by the Evaluation Office.		
A summary of the final evaluation report (ILO/EVAL template) will be sent, together with the final report, in English to the evaluation manager based on the executive summary of the evaluation report.		
Lessons learnt and good practices (template for lessons learned can be found here and good practices templates can be found here)		

Management arrangements and work plan

The organization and coordination of the evaluation will be provided by the designated Evaluation Manager at ILO level. The evaluation team will discuss with the evaluation manager all technical and methodological issues when needed. The evaluation manager will be able to coordinate with the project team to provide the main documents and all necessary information to the evaluation team to satisfactorily complete the evaluation as needed. The project team will facilitate contacts with the different partners, and organise meetings with the authorities, partners and beneficiaries concerned by the project. The evaluation team will also receive technical, logistical, and administrative support from the project team.

The Evaluation is intended to be completed over a 4-month period (January – March 2025) and the evaluation team is expected to provide a detailed workplan in this regard.

Profile of the evaluation team

The evaluation will be conducted by an experienced evaluation team of 3 consultants, 1 international team leader and 2 national consultants for Indonesia and Thailand supporting the team leader during data collection. The required qualifications and duties of the consultants are highlighted below:

Main qualifications of the international evaluator:

- Advanced university degree preferably in economics, business management, social science or related qualifications.
- A minimum of 7 years of professional experience in evaluating similar programmes and projects.
- Recent experience with result-based management monitoring and evaluation methodologies.
- Understanding of the development context in the Asia-Pacific region with relevant work in the area of skills development.
- Previous involvement and understanding of ILO procedures is an advantage and extensive international experience in the fields of project formulation, execution, and evaluation is required.
- Work experience in the Asia-Pacific region will be an asset.
- Excellent communication and interview skills.
- Excellent report writing skills.
- Demonstrated ability to work in group and deliver quality results within strict deadlines.
- Excellent knowledge and excellent drafting skills in English.

- Excellent communication and interview skills.

Main duties:

- Responsible for conducting the evaluation.
- Coordinate with evaluation manager, project team and stakeholders to conduct the entire evaluation process.
- Proceed to a desk review of all relevant documents and conduct a field mission to meet main stakeholders.
- Elaborate the inception report (incl. methodological elaborations), the first version and final report in deadlines and in conformity with ILO and international standards.
- Conduct the field work and stakeholders' workshop at the end of the mission.
- Participate to debriefings with main stakeholders on the main results and recommendations of the evaluation.

Legal and ethical matters

All data and information received from the ILO or other stakeholders for the purposes of this assignment shall be treated as confidential and shall be used only for the purpose of executing this mandate. All intellectual property rights arising from the execution of this mandate are attributed to the ILO. The contents of the written documents obtained and used in connection with this assignment may not be disclosed to third parties without the prior written consent of the ILO or the relevant stakeholders.

The evaluation and the evaluator must comply with UN Norms and Standards and must also follow the UNEG ethical guidelines.

The evaluator will also abide by the EVAL's Code of Conduct for carrying out the evaluation which can be found here. The evaluator should not have any links to project management, or any other conflict of interest that would interfere with the independence of the evaluation and where applicable must declare this immediately to the evaluation manager should this arise.

All relevant ILO evaluation guidelines and standard templates

1. Checklist 4.8 Writing the inception report
2. Checklist 4.2 Preparing the evaluation report
3. Checklist 4.9 Rating the quality of evaluation report
4. Protocol on collecting evaluative evidence on the ILO's Covid-19 response measures through project and programme evaluations
5. Guidance note 4.5 Stakeholders participation in the ILO evaluation
6. Guidance note 3.1. Integrating gender equality in M&E
7. Guidance Note 3.2: Adapting evaluation methods to the ILO's normative and tripartite mandate
8. Code of conduct form (To be signed by the evaluator)
9. UNEG integrating Human Rights and Gender Equality in evaluations
10. United Nations Evaluation Group. 2008. *Ethical Guidelines for Evaluation in the UN System*
11. United Nations Evaluation Group. 2014. *Integrating Human Rights and Gender Equality in Evaluations*
12. United Nations Evaluation Group. 2016. *Norms and Standards for Evaluation*
13. United Nations Evaluation Group. 2018. *UN-SWAP Evaluation Performance Indicator - Technical Note and Scorecard*
14. ILO policy guidelines for results-based evaluation: Principles, rationale, planning and managing for evaluations, 4th ed., (Nov 2020)

Annex B – List of persons interviewed

Name	M/F	Organization	Designation	Mode of interview
THAILAND				
Mr Teerasak Yupetch	M	AHRDA	Director	Face-to face
Mr Ampol Hompleum	M	DENSO Thailand	Executive General Manager	Face-to face
Mr Noppanat Kongjitngam	M	DSD	Head of Skills	Face-to face
Mr Prasarn Kiddee	M	DSD	Director of International Cooperation	Face-to face
Mr Ukrish Kanchanaket	M	ECOT	Advisor	Face-to face
Mr Sakda Hwankaew	M	ECOT	Advisor	Face-to face
Mr Suriya Jachaiyapoom	M	GIF Engineering	Factory Manager	Face-to face
Ms Marie Thomas	F	ILO	Snr Programme Officer	Face-to face
Ms Xiao Yan Qian	F	ILO	Country Office Director	Face-to face
Ms Jittima Srisuknam	F	ILO	Senior Programme Officer	Face-to face
Ms Akiko Sakamoto	F	ILO	ILO Skills and Employability Specialist, DWT, ROAP	Face-to face
Mr Jordi Prac Tuca	M	ILO	Project Coordinator	Face-to face
Mr Yasua Ariga	M	ILO	CTA, ILO/Japan Programme	Face-to face
Mr Kelvin Sergeant	M	ILO	ILO Enterprise Specialist, DWT, ROAP	Face-to face
Mr David Williams	M	ILO	Manager of RISSC Project	MS Teams
Mr Sanit Kampa	M	LCT	Deputy Secretary	Face-to face
Ms Pattraporn Panraska	F	Mitsubishi Motors	HR Manager	MS Teams
Ms Nuchanart Tangdamrongkul	F	Mitsubishi Motors	Employee Training Manager	MS Teams
Ms Bunnalin Thongpim	F	NESDC	Planning and Policy Analyst	Face-to face
Mr Ongart Rukkhawattanakul	M	NESDC	Planning and Policy Analyst	Face-to face
Mr Lanasak Yansaman	M	OVEC	Policy and Planning Analyst	Face-to face
Ms Neeranuch Jittsom	F	SEWRC	Vice President	MS Teams
Mr Suphot Sukphisarn	M	TAPMA	Deputy Secretary General	Face-to face
Mr Tavee Tachateeravat	M	TTUC	President	Face-to face
INDONESIA				
Mr Darwoto	M	APINDO	Head of Employment Unit	Face-to face
Ms Simrin Singh	F	ILO	Country Office Director	Face-to face
Mr Diego Rei	M	ILO	Employment Specialist	Group
Ms Lusiani Julia	F	ILO	Programme Officer - Gender	Group
Ms Dina Novita	F	ILO	Programme Officer Green Jobs – Just Transition	Group
Mr Abdul Hakim	M	ILO	Programme Officer – Trade Union	Group
Mr Tauvik Muhamad	M	ILO	Programme Coordinator, RISSC	Face-to face
Ms Dede Sudono	F	ILO	Project Coordinator METI	Face-to face
Mr Abraham Jonatan	M	YKK	Enterprise Advisor	MS Teams
Ms Shelly Woyla	F	YKK	Team Leader Training	MS Teams
Ms Devky Zanna	F	YKK	Enterprise Advisor	MS Teams
Mr Anung	M	YMG	Project Manager	GROUP
Mr Ibnu	M	YMG	Coordinator Vocational Empowerment	GROUP
Mr Hasrul	M	BBPVP	Instructor Electronics	GROUP
Mr Fahrizal	M	BBPVP	Coordinator Training Implementation	GROUP
Mr Mantofani	M	BBPVP	Instructor Productivity	GROUP
Mr Adelin	M	BBPVP	PJ Training Development for Instructure & Trainer	GROUP
Mr Anwar	M	BBPVP	Vocational Empowerment	GROUP
Ms Nisa	F	BBPVP	Instructor Productivity	GROUP
Ms Emil	F	BBPVP	Sub Coordinator Cooperation and Consultancy	GROUP
Ms Samsia	F	BBPVP	Social Media Division	GROUP
Ms Wita	F	BBPVP	Social Media Division	GROUP
Mr Fadil	M	BBPVP	Social Media Division	GROUP
Mr Edi Syamsuddin	M	YMG	Deputy Managing Director	GROUP
Mr Ahmad Saufi	M	PMK	Director Youth Achievement & Nation	GROUP
Mr Hikma	M	PMK	Staff for Youth Achievement & Nation Unit	GROUP
Mr Ayat	M	PMK	Staff for Youth Achievement & Nation Unit	GROUP
Mr Maman	M	PMK	Assistant Deputy Middle and Higher Education	GROUP
Ms Mariska	F	PMK	Staff for Vocational Department	GROUP

Name	M/F	Organization	Designation	Mode of interview
Ms Raisa	F	PMK	Staff for Vocational Department	GROUP
Mr Heri	M	PMK	Staff for Vocational Department	GROUP
Mr Gunawan	M	PMK	Staff for Youth Achievement and Nation Unit	GROUP
Mr Wisnu Wardana	M	KADIN	Head of Permanent Committee for Vocational Training Unit	Face-to face
Mr Asep	M	KADIN	Member of Vocational Unit	Face-to face
Mr Dedi	M	KADIN	Member of Vocational Unit	Face-to face
Mr Dedi Hermawan	M	Diamond Electronics	HR Manager	Face-to face*
Ms Yayu	F	Diamond Electronics	HR Staff	Face-to face*
Ms Umi	F	Diamond Electronics	HR Staff	Face-to face*
Mr Djoko Wahyudi	M	FSPPG	President	Face-to face*
Mr Thamrin	M	FSPPG	Secretary General	Face-to face*
Mr Fadli	M	FSPPG	Chair	Face-to face*
Ms Lis	F	APINDO	Vice Chairman of the Indonesian Training Institute Accreditation Board	Face-to face*
Ms Myra	F	APINDO	Head of Regulation and Institution Relation Committee	Face-to face*
Mr Bukhori	M	MOM	Vocational Directorate	Face-to face*
Ms Niken	F	MOM	Vocational Directorate – Implementation	Face-to face*
Ms Habib Daud	F	MOM	Vocational Directorate - Evaluation	Face-to face*
Mr Chairul	M	Coordinating Ministry of Economics	Assistant Deputy for Productivity improvement and labour ecosystem development	Group*
Ms Ika	F	Coordinating Ministry of Economics	Staff of Productivity Improvement and Labour Ecosystem Development Unit	Group*
Mr Ristandi	M	Coordinating Ministry of Economics	Staff of Productivity Improvement and Labour Ecosystem Development Unit	Group*
Mr Kresna	M	Coordinating Ministry of Economics	Staff of Productivity Improvement and Labour Ecosystem Development Unit	Group*
Mr Edo Lomanik	M	KSBSI	Secretary General for FSP LOMENIK	Face-to face
JAPAN				
Ms Arisa Kishigami	F	Consultant	Independent Consultant to project	MS Teams
Ms Makkiko Mukaono	F	ILO	Project Support	Face-to face
Mr Michi Tanabe	M	ILO	Project Coordinator	Face-to face
Mr Ryusuka Tanaka	M	ILO	Programme Officer	MS Teams
Ms Megumi Inomata	F	JFTC	General Manager of Public Relations Group	Face-to face
Ms Erika Endo	F	JFTC	Manager, Sustainability Group	Face-to face
Ms Akie Nakamura	F	JTUC Research Institute	Principal Researcher	Face-to face
Ms Emiko Nagasawa	F	KEIDANREN	Snr Advisor – Labour Legislation Bureau	Face-to face
Mr Kazumi Sakashita	M	KEIDANREN	Dep Director – Labour Legislation Bureau	Face-to face
Ms Masayo Ogawa	F	METI	Deputy Director, Trade Policy Bureau	Face-to face
Ms Mami Irie	F	METI	Business and Human Rights Policy Office	Face-to face
Mr Takashi Munehiro	M	Mitsubishi Corp.	Manager, Natural Capital and Human Rights Team	Face-to face
Ms Yuri Kurosawa	F	Mitsui & Co	Deputy General Manager, Global Social Dept.	Face-to face
Ms Minako Yoneyama	F	PRI	Snr Responsible Investment Manager	Face-to face
Mr Tatsuro Yuzawa	M	PRI	Head of Japan	Face-to face
Mr Mamoru Matsubara	M	RISONA Asset Mgt	Chief Sustainability Officer, Responsible Business Div.	Face-to face
OTHER				
Ms Gizem Karsli	F	ILO	Former Project Officer, ROAP	MS Teams
TOTAL				
Number of Interviews:	**92**			
Female (Number):	**38**			
Female (%):	**41%**			

** Conducted by the National Evaluator - due to illness, the International Evaluator was unable to attend this interview.*

Annex C – Data Collection Plan

Data sources referenced in the Data Collection Plan set out below are:

Documents

A1: Programme context and rationale documents (e.g., situation analyses and research, DWCPs, country development plans and strategies, relevant policies, sectoral reports, donor-related plans)

A2: Programme design documents

A3: Monitoring and evaluation instruments and tools

A4: Programme reports and activity implementation reports

A5: Research reports, knowledge products, curricula outlines, guidelines and tools developed through the project

Interviews

B1: ILO constituents – Workers' and Employers' representatives and Ministries of Labour

B2: Representatives of relevant Ministries involved directly in the programme as well as others with a role in sectoral development and investment attraction

B3: Representatives of the project's target sectors in the three countries, including participating enterprises, peak sectoral bodies

B4: Beneficiaries of training provided through the project (including skills training and HR/other management in participating enterprises)

B5: Representatives of national TVET institutions delivering training developed/upgraded through the project

B6: Representatives of other donors, UN/development agencies, and agencies/groups representing women and vulnerable groups

B7: People and organizations involved in developing project tools, resources and awareness-raising materials

B8: ILO staff including senior management in Country Offices, DW Team specialists in Regional Office (including Skills and Enterprise), project staff (including the current and previous project coordinator based), and staff of other closely related ILO projects such as RISSC.

B9: Representatives of METI who have had a close involvement in the project's implementation

Case studies

C1: Thailand

C2: Indonesia

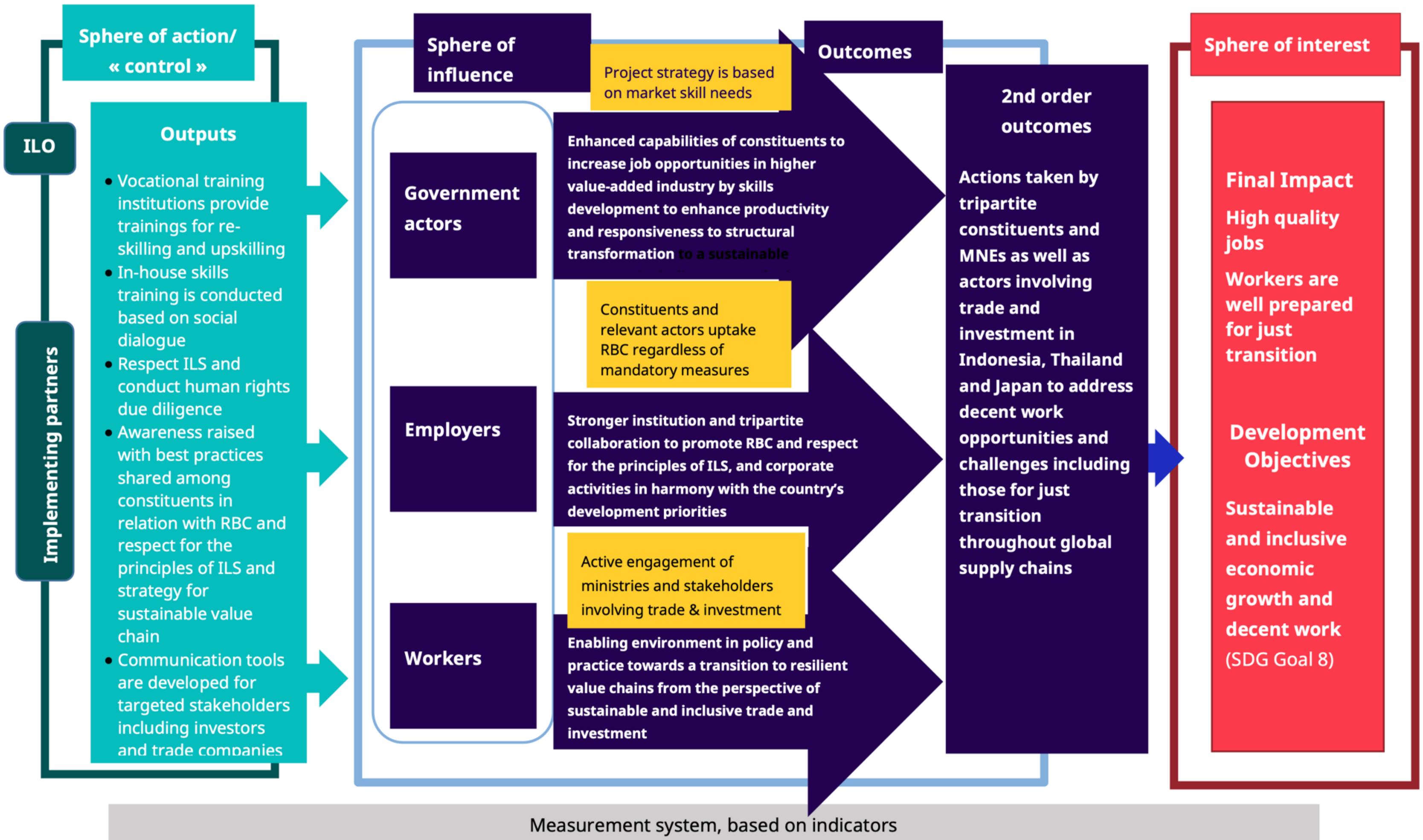
C3: Japan

Evaluation questions	Indicators/evidence	Sources of data (see 3.2)
RELEVANCE – "Did interventions do the right things?"		
1. To what extent and how well did the project respond to the needs and priorities of the national and sectoral stakeholders, donor and ILO constituents as well as diverse groups of beneficiaries? ▪ *Sub-question 1.1: To what extent did the project's strategy and approach adapt to changes in its context (e.g. political, COVID-19, economic crises etc.)* ▪ *Sub-question 1.2: Is the project´s Theory of Change (ToC) comprehensive, integrating external factors, and is it based on a systemic analysis and consultation with key stakeholders?*	▪ Extent to which the needs and priorities were explored in the design phase and the relevance of planned actions in meeting these needs. ▪ Mapping of programme results to DWCPs, SDGs, UNSDCFs, other relevant global, regional and national development frameworks and to ILO and other normative instruments ▪ Stakeholder views on alignment of project with their needs and of any significant gaps. ▪ Project staff experience in promoting the project to constituents and other stakeholders – e.g. how quickly stakeholders embraced the project as relevant to their needs. ▪ Documented changes in programme plans, activities and approach in response to contextual changes and the effect of these on the chain of results in the ToC.	A1-A5 B1-B9 C1-C3
2. Is the project well designed (i.e. are the project activities aligned to outcomes) and realistic (in terms of its strategy, expected outputs, outcome and impact) given its timeframe and resources?	▪ Assessed validity and logical coherence of the project including how it defines inputs, outputs and outcomes and the clarity of the end-of-project results being sought. ▪ Project staff and stakeholder perceptions of what could realistically be achieved given the time resources available (outputs, outcomes and impact) ▪ Timeliness of delivery and factors affecting this (link to EFFICIENCY)	A1-A4 B1-B3, B7-B9
3. To what extent has the project integrated gender and disability inclusion, tripartism and the ILO's normative mandate into its strategy, plans and actions?	▪ Extent to which the project sought to engage with and benefit women, people with disabilities and vulnerable groups and promote their participation. ▪ Extent tripartism drove project design and implementation and was promoted more broadly by the project. ▪ Evidence that the project promoted adherence to International Labour Standards	A1-A5 B1, B4, B6, B7, B8 C1-C3
COHERENCE – "How well did interventions fit?"		
4. How well did the programme work with other relevant ILO interventions and create synergies with constituents and other partners to enhance the project's efficiency, effectiveness and impact? ▪ *Sub-question 4.1: What scope exists to improve such synergies and collaboration to maximise results (including responding to new factors and working with new actors)?*	▪ Strategic and operational coherence of project with other skills-related initiatives (of the ILO, programme partners and other development actors) including those related to skills development, RBC, MNEs, and the project's target sectors. ▪ Examples of synergies between interventions (including joint activities) that have enhanced programme efficiency, effectiveness or impact or overlaps or duplications of effort which were inefficient. (link to EFFICIENCY) ▪ Planned and actual contributions to project implementation by partners and extent these made optimal use of the specific capabilities of each. ▪ Connections facilitated by the programme (e.g., with MNEs, other enterprises, TVET institutions, national and international sectoral bodies),	A3-A5 B1-B3, B6-B8 C1-C3

Evaluation questions	Indicators/evidence	Sources of data (see 3.2)
	examples of how these have added value to the project, and any opportunities created for future partnerships that can advance project goals.	
EFFECTIVENESS – "Did interventions achieve their objectives?"		
5. To what extent have the envisaged programme results been achieved? ▪ *Sub-question 5.1: Were there any unexpected positive or negative results.* ▪ *Sub-question 5.2: Do results (effects of activities and outputs) affect different groups and genders differently?*	▪ Reported performance against targets (output and outcome level) disaggregated by gender. ▪ Stakeholder perceptions of key outcomes of the programme at country and global levels (including stakeholders representing different groups/genders) and of any unexpected positive or negative results. ▪ Assessment of quality of outputs based on reports, stakeholder interviews and critique of tools/resources produced.	A3-A5 B1-B11 C1-C3
6. What major factors have influenced the achievement or non-achievement of the objectives?	▪ Stakeholder perceptions and documented reports of factors that helped or hindered implementation of activities and achievement of results.	A3-A5 B1-B11 C1-C3
7. Have the project's knowledge sharing, communication and private sector engagement strategies been effective in raising the profile of the project within each country and among the cooperating partners? Has this contributed to the promotion of skills development in the context of RBC?	▪ Evidence collected by the project related to effectiveness of awareness-raising activities including participation in events/training, media coverage, feedback from participants demonstrating adoption of new procedures, policies and approaches related to skills development and RBC. ▪ Donor perceptions of the effectiveness of the project in raising the awareness of the private sector on its priority concerns.	A4, A5 B1-B11 C1-C3
8. Did the project's interventions contribute to strengthening social dialogue among social partners and international stakeholders, including Japanese buyers and public institutions in the targeted countries? ▪ *Sub-question 8.1: How has the social dialogue contributed to advancing decent work and addressing human and labour rights?*	▪ Examples of social dialogue enhancements introduced or strengthened as a results of project interventions. ▪ Examples of the contributions made as a result of these to Decent Work and to addressing human and labour rights. ▪ Mapping of programme results to ILO cross-cutting policy objectives.	A3-A5 B1, B3, B8 C1-C3
EFFICIENCY – "How well were resources used?"		
9. Have resources (financial, human, technical support, etc.) been allocated strategically and realistically to achieve the project outputs and outcomes in the given timeframe?	▪ Reported resource sufficiency, timeliness and completeness of delivery against plan, any use of supplementary funds/resources from ILO to fill resource gaps. ▪ Flexibility in use of resources in response to changing circumstances and needs.	A4, A5 B1, B3, B8, B9 C1-C3
10. To what extent has the project management and governance structure put in place worked strategically	▪ Stakeholder accounts of how well the roles and responsibilities were defined and how well they contributed to programme management,	A4, A5 B1-B11

Evaluation questions	Indicators/evidence	Sources of data (see 3.2)
with tripartite constituents, stakeholders and partners in the project, ILO and the donor - to achieve project goals and objectives?	implementation, and the achievement of results, given the complexity and challenges faced. ▪ Any project inefficiencies related to disconnects between the roles played by constituents, project partners, ILO departments/units and the donor.	C1-C3
IMPACT AND SUSTAINABILITY – "What lasting difference did the interventions make?"		
11. To what extent are the project and its results likely to have long term effects including on enterprises, workers, institutional capacity, policies at national/sub-national/sectoral levels and in meeting the needs of women and vulnerable groups ▪ *Sub-question 11.1: How has the project directly or indirectly contributed to create a more enabling environment for responsible business practices and decent work?* ▪ *Sub-question 11.2: What impact has the project had in aligning national/sub-national/sectoral policies and practices with International Labour Standards, in enhancing constituents' capacities, social dialogue, collaboration and in accessing a greater evidence base?* ▪ *Sub-question 11.3: Are project outcomes likely to be sustained, replicated and scaled up by project partners after the project is completed?* ▪ *Sub-question 11.4: What need to be done (or to be done more) to achieve a long-term change and the project objectives?*	▪ Evidence that results of the programme – in skills development, RBC, Decent Work, social dialogue and collaboration - are well positioned to endure beyond the project and be mainstreamed (in policies and practices) by constituents, governments and enterprises. ▪ Evidence that there is ownership by stakeholders of project outcomes and a commitment to building on its work (or of barriers to this) ▪ Likely long-term benefits accruing to specific groups and if and how these differ (women, men, people with disability, other) ▪ Stakeholder views on what needs to be done to expand results to build on the project	A3-A5 B1-B11 C-3
12. In what ways has the programme advanced the donor's international development policy objectives in the programme countries?	▪ Evidence of programme impact and sustainability in terms of METI's specific international development policy objectives.	B11

Annex D – Theory of Change (as per original ProDoc)



Annex E – Lessons Learned

ILO Lesson Learned Template

Project Title: Skills Development and Responsible Business Conduct for Transition
Project TC/SYMBOL: RAS/23/52/JPN; JPN/23/51/JPN
Name of Evaluator: Tony Powers
Date: 31 March, 2025

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

LL Element	Text
Brief description of lesson learned (link to specific action or task)	Clarity in describing "what success looks like" is essential in defining a theory of change and in creating a meaningful results framework. This needs to be done in conjunction with the funding partner and with constituents so that they have a shared understanding of the outcomes beyond the completion of activities.
Context and any related preconditions	By combining skills development with the promotion of responsible business conduct, the project represented a novel approach. The project was also funded by a relatively new funding partner. Both these factors meant that there was a need for a clear and shared understanding of the outcomes expected at the end of the project. These were lacking in this case.
Targeted users / Beneficiaries	Project designers and managers.
Challenges /negative lessons - Causal factors	Poor results framework led to differing expectations.
Success / Positive Issues - Causal factors	
ILO Administrative Issues (staff, resources, design, implementation)	Closer scrutiny of design is required and action taken by project designers to incorporate feedback.

ILO Lesson Learned Template

Project Title: Skills Development and Responsible Business Conduct for Transition
Project TC/SYMBOL: RAS/23/52/JPN; JPN/23/51/JPN
Name of Evaluator: Tony Powers
Date: 31 March, 2025

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

LL Element	Text
Brief description of lesson learned (link to specific action or task)	Collecting evidence of behavioural change attributable to project activities is difficult for a project of such a short duration, but the evaluation did hear some "stories of significant change" in the three countries. A more systematic approach to collecting these stories was needed.
Context and any related preconditions	Insufficient attention given to systematically collecting data on the effects of project activities..
Targeted users / Beneficiaries	Project designers and managers.
Challenges /negative lessons - Causal factors	This was a quite short project with only a small team of staff involved. Capacity to collect data of this type was limited. Mechanisms could have been identified in the design phase and given more attention in implementation.
Success / Positive Issues - Causal factors	
ILO Administrative Issues (staff, resources, design, implementation)	Possible need for an evaluability assessment to be conducted with recommendations for data collection that are realistic given limited staff resources. Possible outsourcing of data collection in line with these recommendations.

ILO Lesson Learned Template

Project Title: Skills Development and Responsible Business Conduct for Transition
Project TC/SYMBOL: RAS/23/52/JPN; JPN/23/51/JPN
Name of Evaluator: Tony Powers
Date: 31 March, 2025

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

LL Element	Text
Brief description of lesson learned (link to specific action or task)	Having no project reports produced beyond the annual report completed at the end of the inception phase was not ideal. Even shorter, six-monthly updates may have helped identify the need for adjustments in approach and to provide the funding partner with the information it needed for accountability purposes. This would depend on having a better results framework.
Context and any related preconditions	Only Annual Reports were prepared. As the first year report (2023) only covered the inception phase, there were few data available during the main implementation phase (January 2024 to March 2025) to inform the funding partner, ILO management or the evaluation.
Targeted users / Beneficiaries	Project designers and managers.
Challenges /negative lessons - Causal factors	Lack of reporting.
Success / Positive Issues - Causal factors	
ILO Administrative Issues (staff, resources, design, implementation)	Developing a short-form report (quarterly or six monthly) that sets out key performance data and narrative of issues being faced. Given the small scale of the project, this would need to be not administratively onerous.

ILO Lesson Learned Template

Project Title: Skills Development and Responsible Business Conduct for Transition
Project TC/SYMBOL: RAS/23/52/JPN; JPN/23/51/JPN
Name of Evaluator: Tony Powers
Date: 31 March, 2025

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

LL Element	Text
Brief description of lesson learned (link to specific action or task)	Having a Project Manager with oversight of all three countries would also have helped strategic and operational decision making and communication with the funding partner. .
Context and any related preconditions	No overall project manager for the project responsible for strategic decision making and communication across the three countries.
Targeted users / Beneficiaries	Project designers.
Challenges /negative lessons - Causal factors	Envisaged synergies between project implementation in Thailand, Indonesia and Japan were not achieved.
Success / Positive Issues - Causal factors	
ILO Administrative Issues (staff, resources, design, implementation)	Appointment of a project manager at a higher level (e.g. P4).

ILO Lesson Learned Template

Project Title: Skills Development and Responsible Business Conduct for Transition
Project TC/SYMBOL: RAS/23/52/JPN; JPN/23/51/JPN
Name of Evaluator: Tony Powers
Date: 31 March, 2025

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

LL Element	Text
Brief description of lesson learned (link to specific action or task)	Past projects delivered in related policy areas needed to have been more carefully considered in planning and implementing projects. The Project Document made no reference to lessons learned from projects like the Responsible Supply Chains in Asia (RSCA) Project or even other skills projects to find synergies that could have been exploited or what lessons were learned.
Context and any related preconditions	Previous projects in both skills and responsible business conduct did not seem to influence project design.
Targeted users / Beneficiaries	Project designers.
Challenges /negative lessons - Causal factors	Some opportunities to build on past project successes may have been lost.
Success / Positive Issues - Causal factors	
ILO Administrative Issues (staff, resources, design, implementation)	Careful consideration of past project evaluations and consultation with constituents involved in these in the design phase..

ILO Lesson Learned Template

Project Title: Skills Development and Responsible Business Conduct for Transition
Project TC/SYMBOL: RAS/23/52/JPN; JPN/23/51/JPN
Name of Evaluator: Tony Powers
Date: 31 March, 2025

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

LL Element	Text
Brief description of lesson learned (link to specific action or task)	A clearer vision of the role to be played by constituents was needed in the awareness raising activities of the project in Japan. In particular, , the role of employers' representatives could have been better recognised in advancing the business and human rights agenda within their membership. While capacity development for other partners representing investors and trading companies was important, more needed to be done for constituents.
Context and any related preconditions	Seeking to access a new audience (institutional investors) the project concentrated its capacity building on partners with strong links with these groups.
Targeted users / Beneficiaries	Project managers.
Challenges /negative lessons - Causal factors	Without more capacity building support for ILO constituents, especially employers' representatives, sustainability of project was weakened.
Success / Positive Issues - Causal factors	
ILO Administrative Issues (staff, resources, design, implementation)	Stronger involvement of constituents in capacity building related to the project..