International Labour Organization

Evaluation Office

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A Systemic Approach to Decent Work and Labour Rights in Southern Africa’s Construction Sector: Building a pathway to improved working conditions for youth and the working poor (DW and Labour Rights in Southern African Construction Sector Project)

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This evaluation has been carried out following the ILO evaluation policy and procedures. It has not been professionally edited, but has been subject to quality control by the ILO Evaluation Office

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List of Acronyms

BDS	Business Development Services
COSATU	Confederation of South African Trade Unions
CTA	Confederação das Associações Económicas de Moçambique / Confederation of Economic Associations of Mozambique
CO	Country Office
DCED	Donor Committee for Enterprise Development
DWCP	Decent Work Country Programme
DWT	Decent Work Team
ELS	Employment and Labour Sector
EM	Evaluation manager
EO	Employers' Organisations
EVAL	ILO's Evaluation Office
KII	Key Informant Interview
KPIs	Key Performance Indicators
IG	Implementation Guide
ILO	International Labour Organization
JTTP	Joint Tripartite Technical Committee
M&E	Monitoring and Evaluation
MRM	Monitoring and Results Measurement
MSA	Market System Analysis
MSD	Market Systems Development
MSMEs	Micro, Small and Medium-sized Enterprises
MTE	Mid-term Evaluation
NGO	Non-Governmental Organization
NPC	National project coordinator
NPO	National project officer
NTAC	National Tripartite Advisory Committee
OSH	Occupational Safety and Health
OTM	Organização dos Trabalhadores de Moçambique / Mozambique Workers' Organization
P&B	Project and budget

PSC	Project Steering Committee
RBM	Results Based Management
ROAF	Regional Office for Africa
SADC	Southern Africa Development Community
SADC ELS	SADC Employment and Labour Sector
SADC PSF	SADC Private Sector Forum
SATUCC	Southern African Trade Union Coordination Council (Confederation)
SDG	Sustainable Development Goal
Sida	Swedish International Development Cooperation Agency
SMEs	Small and Medium Enterprises
SP	Social Protection
SPSF	SADC Private Sector Forum
TA	Technical Assistance
TAC	Tripartite Advisory Committee
TOC	Theory of Change
TOR	Terms of Reference
TWG	Technical Working Group
UN	United Nations
UNCT	UN Country Team
UNDAF	United Nations Development Assistance Framework
UNSDCF	United Nations Sustainable Development Cooperation Framework
UNEG	United Nations Evaluation Group
USD	United States dollar
WO	Workers' Organizations
ZCTU	Zimbabwe Congress of Trade Unions

Executive Summary

Summary of project purpose, logic and structure

The project "A Systemic Approach to Decent Work and Labour Rights in Southern Africa's Construction Sector: Building a pathway to improved working conditions for youth and the working poor (*DW and Labour Rights in Southern Africa's Construction Sector)* is implemented in the framework of a partnership between the Government of Sweden—through the Swedish International Development Agency (Sida)—and the International Labour Organization (ILO) to advance the Decent Work Agenda in the Southern Africa region. The project is a sub-regional project to promote labour rights in the construction sector in collaboration with the Southern African Development Community (SADC). The project objective is to enhance compliance with labour rights and improve productivity in the construction sector by implementing interventions that benefit vulnerable workers and contribute to greater productivity for the micro, small, and medium enterprises (MSMEs) that employ them. In this context, the project is piloting interventions in Mozambique, Zimbabwe, and South Africa aimed at supporting and incentivizing MSMEs in the sector to provide better working conditions, adopt improved business processes, and ultimately increase their labour productivity. The best practices, tools, and approaches generated through the pilot interventions are shared and discussed in the SADC Employment and Labour Sector Technical Committee of Senior Officials as well as in the annual Meeting of Employment and Labour Ministers and Social Partners for decisions and follow-up actions to inform policies and programmes in all SADC member states. The mid-term evaluation encompasses the period from the start of project implementation in July 2022 to April 2025.

Project Outcomes

The project has three main outcomes, detailed below. Corresponding outputs and activities have been created for each outcome and adapted to the country context.

Outcome 0: Project is fully operational, with targeted project design that is based on comprehensive understanding of construction sector system and its key constraints and actors.

Outcome 1: Enhanced compliance with labour rights and regulatory requirements by workers and MSMEs and improved productivity in the construction market systems of Mozambique, South African, and Zimbabwe.

Outcome 2: SADC Member States adopts good practices from pilot interventions within the construction sector to promote decent work for women and youth.

Purpose, scope and methodology of the evaluation

Overall, as specified in the Terms of Reference (TOR), the objective of this mid-term evaluation is to review and assess the progress and achievements of the project against the planned outcomes and products, identify expected and unexpected results by examining the results chain, processes, contextual factors, and causality using OECD-DAC[1] criteria: relevance, coherence, effectiveness, efficiency, impact, and sustainability. The evaluation also provides actionable recommendations to the project, to the ILO, to the national tripartite constituents, and to the donor. The main findings, lessons learned, and identified best practices will contribute to organizational learning and the improvement of future project design and effectiveness.

The evaluation set out to answer a list of specific questions which were organized according to the thematic criteria as defined in the Terms of Reference (Annex 2). The evaluator addressed the evaluation questions using multiple sources of evidence, combining primary qualitative data with secondary quantitative data. Qualitative data were obtained using key informant interviews. Quantitative data were obtained from the performance reporting data presented by the ILO in the progress reports to Sida, as well as from other secondary sources. Data collection methods and stakeholder perspectives were triangulated to bolster the credibility and validity of the results.

Main findings and conclusions

Relevance and coherence

[1] The Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development's (OECD) Development Assistance Committee (DAC)

The "DW and Labour Rights in Southern African Construction Sector" is a highly relevant project that focuses on promoting decent work and labour rights, increasing social security participation, raising awareness of Occupational Safety and Health (OSH) standards, and supporting national development among tripartite stakeholders related to decent work. It aims to improve productivity and working conditions within SMEs, aligning with the strategies of governments in SADC pilot countries—namely Mozambique, South Africa, and Zimbabwe—as well as regional and sub-regional priorities centred on advancing workers' rights and labour productivity across all Southern African Development Community (SADC) Member States. These efforts align with global sustainable development goals and local and national priorities as outlined in 1) the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), 2) the sustainable development policies and national strategies of Mozambique, South Africa, and Zimbabwe, 3) the strategic priorities and objectives of the donor Swedish International Development Cooperation Agency (Sida), and 4) the mandate, policy, and strategic outcomes of the International Labour Organization (ILO). Overall, this initiative is highly relevant and significant. The project aligns and is coherent with ongoing initiatives and programs on Decent Work within the SADC community, collaborating effectively with other donors, partners, and stakeholders.

Effectiveness

Based on both primary and secondary evidence, the lead evaluator concluded that the DW and Labour Rights in Southern African Construction Sector project in Southern Africa's construction sector has significantly advanced the Decent Work and Labour Productivity agenda across Mozambique. South Africa, and Zimbabwe. The project-generated knowledge has also been disseminated throughout the SADC region. Its effectiveness is demonstrated through the development of strategies, capacity-development, and training activities aimed at enhancing awareness and engagement among tripartite stakeholders and Business Development Services (BDS) providers on topics such as decent work, Occupational Safety and Health (OSH) principles, labour rights, and social protection coverage. These capacity-development and training efforts are being shared with construction sector MSMEs and vulnerable workers, including vulnerable women and youth workers.

A total of 6,422 individuals were directly reached with messages concerning fundamental rights, workplace principles, and labour productivity, including 2,455 in Mozambique, 1,243 in South Africa, and 2,724 in Zimbabwe. Additionally, 189 small and medium-sized enterprises (with employees ranging from 10 to 100) received training, and 124 practitioners were capacitated through six capacity development events. Concerning strategies, tools, and manuals, seven strategies relating to decent work, labour productivity, and occupational safety and health (OSH) were collaboratively developed with partners, together with nine tools and manuals focusing on decent work and labour rights.

The only two outputs that will be difficult to achieve within the remaining time frame of the project are: 1. Contracting authorities include Decent Work (DW) criteria in small projects and employment contracts by updating them to include DW elements; and 2. Procurement authorities incorporate DW criteria into tendering by revising procedures for construction services. One of the reasons this is not feasible is the lengthy duration required to conclude partnerships with the respective authorities.

Efficiency

The project aimed to achieve efficient results during implementation. Project partner institutions, BDS providers, and MSMEs in all three countries: Mozambique, South Africa, and Zimbabwe, exceeded their delivery targets outlined in their TORs. The mid-term evaluation shows that project management and financial management were generally considered efficient and cost-effective. An effective and impactful monitoring and evaluation system has been established and implemented. However, the risk analysis could have been more effective in providing contingency strategies for the implementation inertia resulting from national elections in Mozambique and Zimbabwe. Due to tight budget planning, a lengthy inception phase, and implementation delays caused by force majeure related to the standstill of implementation activities due to national elections, a cost extension of up to two years is needed to complete all activities. According to the latest financial statement as of May 7, 2025, out of a total budget of USD 4,333,713.59, 82.3% (USD 3,568,725.24) has been spent, leaving USD 764,988.35 remaining until the original project implementation ends on December 31, 2025.

Impact and Sustainability

Assessing the impact and sustainability of a project is challenging at mid-term. However, due to the early initial results of the "DW and Labour Rights in Southern African Construction Sector" project, ILO's expected long-term results (impact focus) and its contribution to sustainably advancing the strategic priorities of the funding partner Sida are seen as likely. Policymakers and stakeholders are willing to participate in capacity-development activities to enhance labour rights and wellbeing for vulnerable workers, especially women and youth in all three project countries: Mozambique, South Africa, and Zimbabwe, as well as across the entire SADC region.

The project outcomes are designed to be achieved sustainably, allowing them to continue beyond the project's duration through the institutional integration of the objectives among the tripartite stakeholders in all three project countries. This is contingent upon a project cost extension of up to two years, enabling the ILO to complete all project activities and deliver all outputs to achieve the desired outcomes.

Cross-cutting Issues

The DW and Labour Rights in Southern African Construction Sector project thoroughly integrated considerations of gender equality, international labour standards, just transition and social dialogue relevant to all three countries throughout the entire project cycle. This included project design, implementation, and incorporation into all monitoring and evaluation (M&E) systems and reports. During the implementation in the three project countries, the project effectively addressed the specific needs of women, men, and vulnerable groups—including persons with disabilities in the construction sector—and provided training on their rights to decent work and social protection. The project also successfully built strong commitment and ownership and managed stakeholder relations incredibly well.

Lessons learned, good practices and recommendations

Lessons Learned

1. Importance of Building Trust to enable an Open Social Dialogue through Timely Open Communication to all Tripartite Constituents, including MSMEs and Workers: A key lesson from the DW and Labour Rights in Southern African Construction Sector project is that trust among Micro and Small Medium Enterprises (MSMEs) and workers encourages dialogue and realistic assessments of decent work, emphasizing current contracts, social security, and labour rights. Clear communication with all stakeholders is vital for building trust and sharing information about labour rights. Informing the public about Decent Work and Labour Rights campaigns (clarifying that this is not a labour inspection) alleviates fear and fosters a productive environment among workers and MSMEs.

2. Importance of Upfront Assessing a Baseline Situation: assessing a country's baseline situation for specific development objectives in a timely manner, before designing tailored interventions for the socio-economic and political contexts of each target country, is essential for effective and efficient project implementation.

3. Navigating Political Instability: political instability has a profound impact on project implementation, often resulting in major delays. This highlights the importance of identifying risks early during the design and implementation stages, as well as developing contingency plans and flexible designs to ensure progress and achieve realistic objectives.

Good Practices

1. Developing Policies and Institutionalizing Principles of Decent Work and Labour Rights to Ensure the Building of Sustainable Social Security Systems: A notable practice of the project is the ILO's role in developing policies and institutionalizing decent work and labour rights, which helps build sustainable social security systems. This creates a snowball effect from construction to other industries, transforming the country's decent work and social security landscape.

2. Working with BDS providers to Promote Decent Work, Labour Rights, and Productivity: This project utilized BDS providers to promote decent work, labour rights, and productivity. BDS aim to change MSMEs' perceptions of decent work and formal contracts by highlighting their importance and legal aspects. Partnering with public and private BDS providers is essential, as they help MSMEs adopt decent work practices by leveraging existing experience and trust with the respective MSMEs.

3. Strong Stakeholders Engagement and Network Building: Bringing together Ministries of Labour, Trade Unions, Employers, and service providers encouraged discussions on systemic change in decent work and labour rights in the construction sector. Early engagement secured broad support, eased implementation, strengthened partnerships, and aligned policies. Regular communication and stakeholder involvement fostered trust, transparency, and ownership, which are vital for sustaining activities. The rotation of steering committees between the three countries developed a national commitment in each country. The project effectively fostered strong commitment and ownership while adeptly managing stakeholder relations.

Recommendations

Recommendation 1: Cost Project Extension / Phase 2. It is recommended that the Swedish International Development Cooperation Agency (Sida) extend the project for at least one year, ideally for more sustainable results—preferably for two years—through a cost extension or through a second phase of the project. Strengthen and build upon current accomplishments to achieve greater systemic changes in the construction sector, especially in Zimbabwe and Mozambique.

Recommendation 2: Expand the project geographically through the cost extension or as a stand-alone project. It is recommended that the project be expanded geographically through the cost extension or as a stand-alone project. The Governments of Botswana, Seychelles, Tanzania, and Zambia, among others, have expressed interest in implementing the project in their countries through SADC and the relevant ILO Country Offices. Using the knowledge gathered through the project implementation in Mozambique, and the networking for the SADC lusophone countries, the project can be replicated/twinned between Mozambique and Angola. The new project should have a strong emphasis on communication campaigns on decent work and labour rights, gender inclusivity, capacity-development, and stakeholder engagement to ensure the programme's sustainability.

Recommendation 3: Expand the Project scope/objectives. It is recommended that the ILO, National Governments, and Tripartite Constituents, together with the donor community, continue to expand in Phase 2 of the project by expanding the project scope and objectives. Phase 2 can leverage the newly established entry points, opportunities, and private sector partnerships to include either of the following focus areas:

- New sectors (possibly mining, transport, and manufacturing)
- Enterprise development and employment creation (country priorities)
- Expand and Integrate Green Jobs and Just Transition Employment Initiatives
- Local economic development and environmental sustainability
- Labour migration and labour rights, especially recognition of training and certificates to comply with decent work and avoid hiring at minimum wage.

Recommendation 4: Strengthen the Communication Campaigns in Pilot Countries to Disseminate Knowledge of Decent Work and Labour Rights in the Construction Sector. The ILO and tripartite constituents should strengthen communication campaigns in pilot countries to disseminate knowledge of Decent Work and Labour Rights in the construction sector to workers at the grassroots level through diverse channels, including roadshows, TV, radio, and social media. Trade unions, the Ministry of Labour, the Employers' Organizations, and the Business Development Services are to be included. The ILO should develop a stronger project communication campaign through a dedicated project website. Project success stories should be timely shared with the donor, ILO, and SADC countries.

Recommendation 5: Support Women's Entrepreneurship and Broader Employment Strategies. The ILO and thev tripartite constituents should continue their collaboration with national partners to support women's entrepreneurship, particularly for women in vulnerable situations. In addition, they should enhance gender representation and build on inclusivity for gender and disabilities by construction SMEs, for example, by rewarding or subsidizing companies that employ more women and people with disabilities.

Recommendation 6: Initiate Twinning Collaboration Projects on Specific Topics between the Pilot Countries. It is recommended that the project initiate twinning projects on specific topics between the pilot countries. For instance, a twinning project between Mozambique, South Africa, and/or Zimbabwe on OSH regulations. Furthermore, the development of official OSH studies in Mozambique can be expedited.

Recommendation 7: Sharing knowledge between Business Service Providers within and outside the project pilot countries. It is recommended that the project initiate knowledge sharing between Business Service Providers (peer-to-peer exchange between countries) on how to best structure efficient and effective training on Decent Work and Labour Rights. Two levels of knowledge sharing can be recommended:

- Public and Private BDSs within the country; and / or
- Sharing knowledge between countries (starting with the collaboration of the three pilot countries).

Recommendation 8: Providing simple sample working contracts for constructive SMEs in the pilot countries. The ILO, supported by the ILO, Business Development Service providers, and Tripartite Constituents, should provide simple sample working contracts for constructive SMEs in Zimbabwe and Mozambique to ensure their widespread adoption, and enhance decent work, labour rights, and social protection among workers.

Project's background and description

The International Labour Organization (ILO) is implementing a sub-regional project to promote labour rights in the construction sector in collaboration with the Southern African Development Community (SADC). The project's objective is to enhance compliance with labour rights and improve productivity in the SADC construction sector by implementing interventions that benefit vulnerable workers and contribute to greater productivity for the micro, small, and medium enterprises (MSMEs) that employ them. In this context, the project is piloting interventions in Mozambique, South Africa, and Zimbabwe, aimed at supporting and incentivizing MSMEs in the sector to provide better working conditions, adopt improved business processes, and ultimately increase their labour productivity. The good practices, tools, and approaches generated through the pilot interventions are shared with the broader SADC community to inform policies and practices in SADC member states.

As outlined in the Terms of Reference (TOR) for the evaluation, the project operated at both national and regional levels. **The focus is on Mozambique, South Africa, and Zimbabwe, while the regional aspect pertains to the Southern African Development Community (SADC) Region.** As a distinctive project in the area, it holds a comparative advantage and is characterized by its efforts at the policy-making level to support evidence-based decisions across various aspects of the Decent Work and Labor Rights Agenda. The ILO had developed a comprehensive, rapidly expanding, and diverse portfolio of Market Systems Development (MSD) initiatives aimed at promoting decent work practices by 2021. This project has developed a Market Systems Analysis (MSA) of the construction sector to establish a pathway for improved working conditions for vulnerable workers in the SADC countries, including Mozambique, South Africa, and Zimbabwe.

The project's focus and key added value lie in collaboratively tackling issues related to job-rich economic growth and the implementation of International Labour Standards (ILS) and Decent Work, two essential aspects for the development of the SADC region that are critical for advancing toward the realization of the Sustainable Development Goals.

The following factors have been considered in developing the project's strategy: the demand for technical assistance and development cooperation from national stakeholders; the gaps in international funding; and the emphasis on decent work and employment within national development frameworks, especially in the rapidly growing construction sector in Africa.

The project is grounded in the reality that Southern Africa's rapidly growing population and urban development needs have heightened the demand for infrastructure, including schools, hospitals, housing, and spaces for businesses to operate. Consequently, this has sparked a construction boom across the region, generating business and job opportunities at all levels of the construction value chain. However, despite this construction boom and the resulting new jobs and business opportunities, working conditions for most workers in the sector are characterized by inadequate labour rights, unsafe and unhealthy workplaces, and widespread shortcomings in decent work. Young entrants into the labour market, women, and low-skilled workers often lack protections under national labour laws, encounter precarious contracts, have limited access to trade union representation, and suffer from inadequate social protection.

Overall, MSMEs in the sector lack basic business management skills, which limits their ability to negotiate proper contracts. Consequently, construction work is often underpriced by

MSMEs, leading to inadequate OSH conditions not being included in contracts, which subsequently undermines respect for fundamental principles and rights at work. Furthermore, there seems to be a limited understanding of the business advantages of providing safe and healthy working conditions, which is often overlooked in contract costing and bidding.

Decent Work in Construction Project for Southern Africa

The Decent Work in Construction Project, officially titled "A Systemic Approach to Decent Work and Labour Rights in Southern Africa's Construction Sector," is a 44-month initiative designed to ensure long-term, scalable benefits for target groups through a systemic approach. The project is funded by the Government of Sweden - the Swedish International Development Cooperation Agency (SIDA) with USD 4,567,055.[2] The project works in collaboration with the South African Development Community (SADC), along with relevant government ministries and their statutory bodies, private sector participants, employers' organizations, and trade unions, including regional bodies of employers' and workers' organizations.

Expected results

This section details the expected results for the project 36-month implementation phase. It outlines the proposed outcomes and outputs necessary for a successful start to the month's inception phase.

The following sections have been developed based on the findings from the rapid market assessment, the designed interventions, and consultative discussions with the SADC Secretariat and key stakeholders in Mozambique, South Africa, and Zimbabwe, as well as ILO's previous experience in implementing market systems development projects, including those focused on construction.

The reconstructed project's Theory of Change (TOC), presented in **Figure 4**, outlines the anticipated vision for change throughout the entire project implementation phase.

Impact

The Development Objective of the project is to contribute to improved compliance with labour rights and decent employment in the construction sector of the Southern African Development Community. This includes the right to be treated with dignity and respect, to be paid the agreed wage on the agreed date, the right to be provided with appropriate resources and equipment to enable the worker to do the job under safe working conditions.

Project Outcomes

Outcome 0: Project is fully operational, with targeted project design that is based on comprehensive understanding of construction sector system and its key constraints and actors.

Outcome 1: Enhanced compliance with labour rights and regulatory requirements by workers and MSMEs and improved productivity in the construction market systems of Mozambique, South Africa, and Zimbabwe.

[2] SEK 50 million / USD 4,567,055 (November 2022 UN exchange rate)

Outcome 2: SADC Member States adopts good practices from pilot interventions within the construction sector to promote decent work for women and youth.

More in detail **Outcome 0** included an eight-month Inception Phase that operationalized the project team and systems, developed a solid understanding of market system challenges in the construction sectors of the pilot countries, and provided inputs for refining the project design. **Outcome 1** is the technical pilot component, which was to be implemented in each of the three pilot countries. The pilot interventions are generating tangible examples of how to improve labour rights through systemic changes, allowing good practices to be presented and adopted at the sub-regional level. **Outcome 2** aims to influence sub-regional policy across member states and is coordinated by the SADC Secretariat, with technical support and capacity development provided by the ILO.

Evaluation background

ILO regards evaluation as a crucial element in executing technical cooperation activities that emphasize learning, project management, and accountability for all stakeholders. Evaluation provisions are incorporated into all projects following the ILO evaluation policy. These provisions are determined by the project's nature and specific requirements identified during project design and throughout implementation, in line with ILO procedures. Based on ILO evaluation guidelines, 4th edition, projects with a budget of up to 5 million USD require two evaluations, at least one of them independent. This report outlines the findings of the independent midterm evaluation.

In evaluations, ILO applies the evaluation criteria established by the OECD/DAC Evaluation Quality Standards and the UNEG Code of Conduct for Evaluation in the UN System. The evaluation serves the purposes of accountability, learning, planning, and knowledge building.

This evaluation adheres to the ILO policy guidelines for results-based evaluations, Principles, rationale, planning and managing for evaluations, 4th ed, and the ILO EVAL Policy Guidelines Checklist: "Preparing the inception report," Checklist 4.8 "Validating methodologies," and Checklist 4.2 "Preparing the evaluation report." The evaluation is also aligned with the OECD-DAC framework and principles for evaluation. For all practical purposes, these Terms of Reference (ToR) and International Labour Organization (ILO) Evaluation policies and guidelines define the overall scope of this evaluation.

Due to the extended duration of the Inception Phase and the unforeseen circumstances of national elections in Mozambique and Zimbabwe, which have delayed the implementation of project activities, the mid-term evaluation is being conducted 34 months after the implementation began (it was planned to take place 22 months into the project implementation).

Purpose and objectives of the evaluation

The overall purpose of the mid-term evaluation is to enhance accountability, assess progress, identify bottlenecks, and strengthen learning among the Project Team, Project partners, key stakeholders, and the ILO. It aimed to evaluate progress toward achieving the project's objectives and outcomes specified in the project document, while also identifying early signs o success or failure to implement necessary changes that keep the project on track to achieve its intended results. This evaluation has utilized the OECD/DAC criteria: relevance, coherence, effectiveness, efficiency, impact, and sustainability of the interventions, strategies, and approaches.

As specified in the Terms of Reference (ToR), the current mid-term independent evaluation serves multiple objectives:

a. Establish the relevance of the project design and implementation strategies in relation to the development frameworks. It is intended to contribute to the country's needs, the needs of targeted institutions, the policy framework, and the needs of targeted communities.
b. Identify the contributions of the project to the SDGs, the relevant national policies, strategies, the donor strategies, the DWCP, UNCDF, ILO's CPOs, and P&B, and its synergy with other projects and programs in the country.
c. Assess the extent to which the project is on track or not to achieve its stated objectives and expected results.
d. Identify the factors (both positive and negative) that affect the chosen project implementation modalities and explain why this is the case.
e. Assess overall implementation efficiency
f. Assess the impact and sustainability strategies adopted.
g. Provide recommendations to the Project Team, the ILO, the Project Partners, the Donor, and key stakeholders regarding steps to be taken to achieve the project outcomes successfully.
h. Document lessons learned and potential good practices.

Clients of the Mid-Term Evaluation

The clients of this mid-term evaluation are:

- The Project Steering Committee, the Joint Tripartite Technical Committee, and partner organizations in the evaluated countries, including the tripartite constituents: the Governments (Ministries and Departments of Labour Agencies'), Employers' Organizations, and Workers' Organizations.

- The Swedish International Development Cooperation Agency (Sida) of the Kingdom of Sweden;

- The ILO's DW and Labour Rights in Southern African Construction Sector project staff, along with the ILO Country Offices in Harare, Lusaka, and Pretoria, as well as ILO ENTERPRISES at HQ and the Regional Offices for Africa overseeing the implementation of the project, as well as relevant staff.

Scope of the Evaluation

The independent midterm evaluation spans from the start date of the evaluation to the evaluation date, covering interventions in Mozambique, South Africa, and Zimbabwe, and the SADC region. Therefore, the evaluation period, which extends from December 2022 to June 2025, assesses the implementation process, strategy, outputs, and key results achieved during this timeframe. The geographic scope aligns with the Project's geographical coverage and its engagement with the SADC Secretariat.

The evaluation has incorporated gender equality as a cross-cutting issue throughout its deliverables and processes. This aspect will be addressed in accordance with EVAL guidance note n° 4 and Guidance Note n° 7 on ensuring stakeholder participation. Furthermore, the evaluation addressed social dialogue, international labour standards, and just environmental transition.

For all practical purposes, the Terms of Reference for the evaluation, along with the ILO Evaluation policies and guidelines, delineate the overall scope of this evaluative process. The recommendations that emerge from the evaluation are closely linked to its findings and provide explicit guidance to stakeholders on how to effectively address these issues.

Evaluation criteria and questions

According to the Terms of Reference (ToR) presented in **Annex 2,** the evaluation encompasses the general areas of focus (evaluation criteria) and specific questions, as detailed in the **Table 1** below. The project's performance and conceptual framework were assessed in accordance with ILO's Results-Based Management (RBM) approach, with strict attention to the following six evaluation criteria aligned with OECD/DAC, UNEG guidelines, and the ILO evaluation policy guidelines: Relevance, Coherence, Effectiveness, Efficiency, Impact, and Sustainability. The detailed questions are presented in the Evaluation Matrix for this mid-term evaluation in **Annex 4.**

Table 1. Key strategic evaluation questions according to the six OECD/DAC evaluation criteria for the mid-term evaluation of ILO EVAL for the Decent Work in Construction for Southern Africa[3]

Evaluation criteria and questions	
Criteria	Questions
Relevance and Coherence	1. Has the project considered the needs and priorities of tripartite stakeholders and beneficiaries identified in the project document and during the project implementation? 2. How well does the Project complement and fit with other ongoing ILO projects in the region? 3. How well does the Project support regional national development commitments and relevant SDGs, the DWCP, UNCDF, ILO's CPOs and P&B? 4. To what extent are the project's objectives aligned with the needs and priorities of the target population? 5. How well does the project align with the local, regional, and national development plans and strategies? 6. Are the project's activities and outputs consistent with the intended outcomes and objectives? 7. Did the project adapt to changing circumstances or emerging needs during its implementation? 8. In hindsight, was the project design logical, realistic, and purposeful towards achieving its objectives? 9. How does the project complement other ongoing initiatives and programs in the same sector or geographic area? 10. How well are the interventions aligned to maximize systemic changes? 11. How effectively does the project collaborate with other donors, partners, and stakeholders?
Effectiveness	1. To what extent is the project likely to achieve its objectives by December 2025? 2. What are the key factors that contributed to or hindered the achievement of project outcomes?

[3] Source: Decent Work in Construction in Southern Africa Mid-term Evaluation Terms of Reference, January 2025

	3. Has the project followed its Theory of change? Was the development hypothesis underpinning the logical framework supported or unsupported based on project performance data? 4. Have the quantity and quality of the outputs to date produced been satisfactory? 5. What outputs have not been produced and why? 6. What unexpected results (at outputs and outcomes level) have taken place? 7. To what extent has the project's specific targets for intended beneficiaries (e.g women, youth,) been applied equitably? 8. Have the project results to date been similar by geographic area? 9. How effective was the backstopping support provided by DWT Pretoria and HQs?
Efficiency	1. How efficiently have resources (human resources, time, expertise, funds etc.) been allocated and used to achieve the project objectives? In general, did the results achieve justify the costs? Could the same results be attained with fewer resources? 2. Were funds and interventions delivered in a timely manner? If not, what were the bottlenecks encountered? 3. Did the project budget make adequate provisions for addressing gender and inclusion related specific objectives/activities? 4. Has an effective risk analysis and monitoring and evaluation system been established and implemented?
Impact and Sustainability	1. Is the project working towards achieving the proposed impacts? Is the project strategy and management steering towards impact? 2. How has the project contributed to long-term changes or improvements in the lives of the beneficiaries? 3. Is the project work at policy and practice levels (change in practices, perceptions, technical capacity, governance or enabling environment) significant to contribute to inclusion related concerns. 4. What evidence is there of the project's contribution to broader development goals or policy objectives? 5. How did the project affect local capacities, institutions, or systems? 6. What lessons can be learned about the project's impact that could inform future interventions? 7. Are project outcomes structured to be achieved in a sustainable manner that enables continuation beyond the project's lifespan? 8. How well did the project build local ownership, capacity, and commitment to continue the activities? 9. What are the risks to the sustainability of the project's outcomes, and how were they addressed? 10. To what extent does it seem that national institutions and implementing partners will be likely to continue the project results without Project funding or support?

	11. Has an effective and realistic exit strategy been developed and is it being implemented? Will project beneficiaries continue to experience improved conditions after the project closeout?
Cross-cutting themes: Tripartism, Social dialogue, Gender Equality[4] and non-discrimination, environmental sustainability, and International Labour Standards[5]	12. To what extent has the project brought lasting changes in line with the promotion of gender and non-discrimination, social dialogue and tripartism, international labour standards, and just transition to environmental sustainability?

Evaluation Schedule

The evaluation was conducted from May to July 2025. The lead evaluation expert reviewed project documents, developed data collection tools, and prepared for the data collection and evaluation field mission phase in May 2025. Preliminary meetings with the Evaluation Manager and the Project Management Team were also conducted during that month. Data collection and evaluation field missions took place in South Africa, Zimbabwe, and Mozambique between May 11 and May 29, 2025. The mid-term evaluation report was finalized in June 2025.

[4] https://www.ilo.org/sites/default/files/wcmsp5/groups/public/@ed_mas/@eval/documents/publication/wcms_746716.pdf

[5] https://www.ilo.org/sites/default/files/wcmsp5/groups/public/@ed_mas/@eval/documents/publication/wcms_746717.pdf

Evaluation methodology

This independent, evaluation has employed a participatory approach, ensuring that all key stakeholders associated with the project are kept informed and consulted regularly throughout the evaluation process. The evaluator coordinated with the evaluation and project managers on evaluation and methodological issues.

The evaluation employed a mixed methods approach that included triangulating data to enhance the validity and rigor of the findings. It engaged key project stakeholders as much as feasible at all levels during the design, data collection, and reporting stages. The analysis included review data from the project reports and from implementing partners of the project across the three countries. This approach not only allowed the evaluation to assess the project theory of change through quantitative and qualitative means but also provided insights into why certain results were achieved or not, thereby triangulating information for greater reliability of findings.

The evaluation was carried out using different data collection techniques in field missions to Mozambique, South Africa, and Zimbabwe, as an independent exercise with oversight from the Regional Evaluation Specialist in Abidjan, Côte d'Ivoire.

Evaluation phases

- <u>Inception phase</u>

During the inception phase, the lead evaluator reviewed the documents and pertinent materials obtained from secondary sources (e.g., project documents; technical progress reports; mid-term evaluation, etc.) necessary for the successful execution of the evaluation and identified the key informants to be interviewed. Furthermore, the principal evaluator conducted interviews through conference calls and communications via e-mail with the evaluation manager and the project team.

The lead evaluator prepared the inception report, which includes the methodological approach to the evaluation as well as the key aspects of operational planning for the evaluation. The inception report was approved by the evaluation manager before moving to the next phase.

- <u>Data collection phase (including field evaluation missions to the three pilot countries)</u>

During the data collection phase, the principal evaluator conducted interviews during the evaluation field missions to the three project pilot countries of Mozambique, South Africa, and Zimbabwe, with project and other International Labour Organization (ILO) staff, as well as national stakeholders. Additionally, the evaluator facilitated remote workshops for stakeholders toward the conclusion of this phase.

- <u>Report writing phase</u>

During the report writing phase, the lead evaluator conducted an analysis of the collected data, synthesized key findings, and developed conclusions and recommendations derived from the evidence. This phase encompassed the drafting of the evaluation report, which was subsequently circulated to stakeholders for their feedback. Following the incorporation of their input, the final evaluation report was finalized and prepared for dissemination.

Evaluation methods and techniques

The selection of evaluation methods and techniques ensured that data collection was relevant to the evidence required to adequately address the Evaluation Questions (EQs), utilizing analyses deemed most appropriate for generating meaningful findings and fulfilling the Evaluation Criteria.

In order to enhance the credibility and utility of evaluation results, ensure the accuracy of data, and facilitate their interpretation, the principal evaluator employed a diverse array of data collected through various methods and techniques. By utilizing "triangulation," the evaluator effectively eliminated potential biases that could arise from relying on singular information sources, methods, or observations.

The evaluation methods and techniques utilized both primary and secondary data. The primary data pertinent to this evaluation encompassed information observed by the evaluators or acquired directly from stakeholders, pertaining to their firsthand experiences with the project. Conversely, the secondary data for this evaluation comprised documentary evidence with direct relevance to the evaluation objectives, alongside materials generated by the ILO, individual stakeholders, or agencies for purposes other than those relevant to the evaluation. Some of the main secondary data used for this report were the Market systems analysis of the construction sector in Mozambique, South Africa, and Zimbabwe, as well as the results of the Construction Blitz report from the Department of Employment and Labour of South Africa. Furthermore, quantitative data were obtained from the performance reporting data presented by the ILO in the Technical Progress Reports (TPRs) submitted to Sida.

Gender was integrated into the evaluation process by analyzing gender-sensitive indicators where available, analyzing sex-disaggregated data, and considering how interventions impact different groups of women and men in the male-dominated construction sector. The evaluation ensured the inclusion of a diverse range of stakeholders in the evaluation process, including women, men, and marginalized groups, to ensure that their perspectives were considered.

Comprehensive document review

The lead evaluator conducted a thorough review of an array of documents pertinent to the project. This encompasses the project documentation, TPRs, and other essential documents generated by the project. Furthermore, the evaluator analyzed additional relevant documentary evidence, as outlined in **Annex 5.**

Key Project Informant Interviews and Focus Group Discussions

The lead evaluator conducted a series of individual interviews and focus-group discussions with 57 key informants (18 women and 39 men), as presented in **Table 2** below. The sampling considered representatives from all key stakeholders: ILO, Sida, Government agencies in Mozambique, South Africa, and Zimbabwe, and employers and workers´ organizations from the three countries of implementation. There were two focus-group discussions with the ILO Project Management Team in South Africa (4 participants, of whom 3 were female and 1 male) and with the Business Development Providers in South Africa: Property Point (8 participants, of whom 6 were female and 2 were male). A complete list of participants appears in **Annex 6.**

The evaluator employed qualitative data analysis methods to categorize, triangulate, synthesize, and summarize the raw data obtained from the interviews. The outcomes of the data analysis yielded substantial blocks of information, which the principal evaluator utilized to compose the evaluation report. The data analysis aligns with the evaluation questions outlined in the Terms of Reference.

Table 2. Categories of informants

Categories	Men	Women	Total
Swedish International Development Cooperation Agency (Sida)	2	--	2
International Labour Organization (ILO)	9	6	15
Government and Agencies (South Africa, Zimbabwe and Mozambique)	8	2	31
Business Development Services (BDSs)	10	5	15
Trade Unions and Workers' Organizations	4	3	7
Micro and Small and Medium Enterprises (MSMEs)	6	2	8
Total	**39**	**18**	**57**

Stakeholders' workshop for presenting results

The principal evaluation expert conducted virtual workshops for stakeholders on May 28, 2025, to present the evaluation findings to key stakeholders, including the donor.

Limitations of the evaluation

The findings presented in this evaluation are derived from information obtained from background documents and key informant interviews. The accuracy of these findings depends on the reliability of the information provided to the evaluator and her competency in effectively triangulating that data.

While the chosen methodology is considered appropriate for the evaluation's objectives, it also comes with inherent limitations. These limitations include the possibility of measurement inaccuracies and, in some cases, challenges in establishing causal relationships.

Notwithstanding these challenges, the evaluator is confident that the interviews conducted furnish a robust representation of the perspectives of key stakeholders and beneficiaries. Furthermore, a comprehensive array of documents was scrutinized, and retrospective methodologies were utilized to establish a solid analytical foundation for the evaluation.

Main Findings

Relevance and coherence

The "DW and Labour Rights in Southern African Construction Sector Project" is a highly relevant project that focuses on promoting decent work and labour rights, increasing social security participation, raising awareness of Occupational Safety and Health (OSH) standards, and supporting national development among tripartite stakeholders related to decent work.

It aims to improve productivity and working conditions within SMEs, aligning with the strategies of governments in SADC pilot countries—namely South Africa, Zimbabwe, and Mozambique—as well as regional and sub-regional priorities centered on advancing workers' rights and labour productivity across all Southern African Development Community (SADC) Member States. These efforts align with global sustainable development goals and local and national priorities as outlined in 1) the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), 2) the sustainable development policies and national strategies of South Africa, Zimbabwe, and Mozambique, 3) the strategic priorities and objectives of the donor Swedish International Development Cooperation Agency (Sida), and 4) the mandate, policy, and strategic outcomes of the International Labour Organization (ILO).

Overall, this initiative is highly relevant and significant. The project aligns and is coherent with ongoing initiatives and programs on Decent Work within the SADC community, collaborating effectively with other donors, partners, and stakeholders.

In this section, the lead evaluator addresses a series of evaluation questions to ascertain the relevance and coherence of the ILO's Decent Work in Construction for Southern Africa project. The evaluation reviewed whether the projects align with the strategic priorities and plans of the governments, the Decent Work Country Programmes, Sida's Regional Strategy, and other significant regional and global frameworks such as the United Nations Sustainable Development Cooperation Frameworks, Sustainable Development Goals, and the ILO's strategic objectives outlined in the Programme and Budget. Additionally, the mid-term evaluation assesses whether the project meets the expressed needs of national stakeholders as well as the final beneficiaries, and how they have contributed to the development of national capacities. Finally, the section has assessed the extent to which Decent Work in Construction for Southern Africa's activities complement the efforts of other project partners, additional ILO projects, and the initiatives of other UN or non-UN international development aid organizations at the local level in the countries of implementation.

Alignment with the strategic priorities and plans

The ILO project, is found to be highly relevant and well-aligned with various strategic frameworks and plans. These include the governments' strategies, the ILO's Programme and Budget (P&B) and Decent Work Country Programme (DWCP) for South Africa and Zimbabwe; Sida's MENA Regional Strategy priorities, the United Nations Sustainable Development Cooperation Frameworks (UNSDCF); and the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). This alignment ensures that the projects support broad, internationally recognized development objectives while catering to specific national needs.

Regarding the relevance of the project in developing national capacities (please refer to evaluation questions # 1 and #3), through document review and interviews with key stakeholders, the evaluators concluded that, overall, the project has proved relevant in developing national capacities. This relevance is evident in its comprehensive capacity-building initiatives, which aim to enhance the skills and knowledge of key stakeholders, promote evidence-based policymaking, and institutionalize new practices within national frameworks. For example, in all three countries, the BDSs, trade unions, and Ministries of Labour and their Agencies have trained MSMEs and their workers on decent work, labour productivity, and OSH standards.

Governments' strategies and plans

In **South Africa**, the government's national development strategy is primarily outlined in the National Development Plan (NDP) 2030, which aims to eliminate poverty and reduce inequality by creating an inclusive economy, building capabilities, and enhancing the capacity of the state. The DWC4SouthernAfrica project contributes to these goals through its emphasis on promotion of decent work, labour rights and productivity and OSH standards. Particularly the project is focusing on: Raising economic growth, promoting exports and making the economy more labour absorbing; Capabilities include skills, infrastructure, social security, strong institutions and partnerships both within the country and with key international partners.[6]

Zimbabwe's development strategy, particularly within the framework of the National Development Strategy 1 (NDS1), focuses on achieving economic growth, promoting decent work, and improving living standards. The NDS1, a five-year plan running from 2021 to 2025, aims to transform Zimbabwe into an upper-middle-income society by 2030. This project aligns well with these objectives, especially with two: III. Promoting new enterprise development, employment, and job creation, and IV. Strengthen Social Infrastructure and Social Safety nets[7]. To date, Zimbabwe lacks legislation on green building standards. However, the Green Building Council of Zimbabwe (GBCZ) has recently secured funding to support the development of legislation and a regulatory framework for green construction, providing an opportunity to promote a shift towards green standards and practices.[8]

Mozambique's National Development Strategy (2025-2044) focuses on structural transformation, social and demographic progress, infrastructure development, improved governance, and environmental sustainability. The strategy aims to achieve inclusive and sustainable growth, leading to improved living conditions and a more equitable distribution of national income. Key aspects include promoting employment-intensive investments, particularly for youth and women, and fostering a green economy. In Pillar I (Structural transformations of the economy, it reinforces the commitment to industrialization and seeks to exploit sectors with high potential to generate jobs, increase productivity and competitiveness, based on the development of the agricultural, mining, tourism and energy sectors.[9] High underemployment and inequality are significant barriers to economic inclusion, while the informal sector, which encompasses over 80% of the labor force, dominates the labor market, leaving many workers without social protection. Disempowerment among girls and women hinders growth through unfavorable fertility levels, high child and maternal mortality,

[6] https://www.nationalplanningcommission.org.za/National_Development_Plan

[7] https://zimembassydc.org/domestic-economy/#:~:text=National%20Development%20Strategy1:%202020%20%E2%80%93%202025,across%20the%20board%20stakeholder%20consultations.

[8] A market systems analysis of the construction sector in Zimbabwe, ILO – Decent Work in Construction, 2024, p. 5

[9] https://www.elibrary.imf.org/view/journals/002/2024/238/article-A001-en.xml

low levels of skills among women, and poor productivity of women in the labour market.[10] According to UN-Habitat, to build the housing that the country needs by 2050, the housing sector can generate more than 10,000 direct jobs per year, and at least twice as many indirect jobs. There is, therefore, an opportunity to create decent jobs and promote green building, thus contributing to a just transition.[11] According to the ILO, a just transition means greening the economy in a way that is as fair and inclusive as possible for everyone involved, creating decent work opportunities and leaving no one behind.

Alignment to SADC priorities

The project directly contributed to the priorities and decisions made during the latest SADC Ministers of Employment and Labour and Social Partners (ELS)[12] meeting, where SADC ministers and social partners[13] approved:

a. the SADC Employment and Labour Policy Framework (2020-2030);
b. the SADC Decent Work Programme (2021-2025); and
c. a SADC youth employment programme. These documents prioritize productive employment and labour rights at the heart of SADC's labour market objectives.

With reference to the SADC Employment and Labour Policy Framework, the proposed initiative will contribute directly to Strategic Objective 1, which seeks to generate decent employment opportunities and foster inclusive economic growth for both males and females within the SADC region. This objective will be accomplished by advocating for pro-employment policymaking that supports enhanced industrialization and formalization.

The Southern African Development Community (SADC) Decent Work Programme (DWP) also emphasizes the aforementioned priorities, and the project is significantly contributing to various initiatives aimed at mitigating unemployment, underemployment, and working poverty (4.1), fostering and generating youth employment (4.1.1), supporting informal and vulnerable employment (4.1.2), enhancing occupational safety and health (4.2.1), promoting social dialogue and reinforcing labour market institutions (4.4), advancing gender equality and preventing discrimination in the workplace (4.6), and potentially addressing climate change (4.9). The components of the DWP are all pertinent for the promotion and enhancement of labour rights within the construction sector, particularly for both young women and men.

In conclusion, the project significantly contributes to the implementation of the Southern African Development Community (SADC) Youth Employment Promotion Policy Framework, with the objective of enhancing the number of women and men engaged in decent and productive employment. Specifically, the project will facilitate Output 1.4, which focuses on participatory value chain analysis within the construction sector. This initiative aims to foster the development of sustainable enterprises capable of employing youth on a large scale, as well as to identify the obstacles to integrating youth into national and regional construction value chains.

[10] https://www.worldbank.org/en/country/mozambique/overview#:~:text=This%20will%20be%20achieved%20by,paying%20greater%20attention%20to%20implementation.

[11] A market systems analysis of the construction sector in Mozambique, ILO – Decent Work in Construction, 2024, p. 6

[12] SADC/ELS/MSP/2021/R meeting record, 28-30 April 2021

[13] The ILO's social partners are the employers' associations and trade unions.

Alignment with broader ILO policies and strategies: P&B and DWCP

- *ILO Programme and Budget (P&B)*

The Programme and Budget (P&B) of the International Labour Organization (ILO) outlines the strategic objectives and anticipated outcomes for the Organization's endeavours over the biennial period, receiving approval every two years from the International Labour Conference (depicted in **Table 3** below). In this context, the project directly contributes to Sustainable Development Goal 8 concerning decent work and economic growth, as well as to P&B Outcome 4, which focuses on the promotion of sustainable enterprises. The Decent Work in Construction for Southern Africa project is aligned with and contributes to the following P&B outcomes:

Table 3. Projects´ alignment with the ILO P&B[14]

Projects' alignment with the ILO P&B	
P&B for the biennium 2024–25	Outcome 3: Full and productive employment for just transitions. Outcome 4: Sustainable enterprises for inclusive growth and decent work.
P&B for the biennium 2022–23	Outcome 2: International labour standards and authoritative and effective supervision. Outcome 3: Economic, social and environmental transitions for full, productive and freely chosen employment and decent work for all. Outcome 4: Sustainable enterprises as generators of employment and promoters of innovation and decent work.

- *ILO Decent Work Country Programmes*

Across the globe, Decent Work Country Programmes (DWCPs) have been established as the primary instrument for facilitating ILO support to various countries. DWCPs delineate, in collaboration with national constituents, the priority areas for ILO technical assistance[15] within a given country.

Only two of the three countries included in the current evaluation, namely South Africa and Zimbabwe, possess a Decent Work Country Programme (DWCP). The project is closely aligned with the DWCPs of both nations, underscoring the promotion of job-rich growth, the implementation and enforcement of International Labour Standards (ILS), and the collaboration among the Ministries of Labour, the private sector, and trade unions to cultivate decent work environments. The DWCP for South Africa's initiatives resonates with the objectives of the DWCP to enhance employment opportunities, ensure adherence to labour laws, and improve workplace standards.

The project also aligns well with the current ILO Country Programme Outcomes (CPOs). In particular:

South Africa: ZAF101, which focuses on SME development and improving working conditions.

[14] Source: ILO : https://www.ilo.org/global/about-the-ilo/how-the-ilo-works/programme-and-budget/lang--en/index.htm

[15] Source ILO : https://www.ilo.org/global/about-the-ilo/how-the-ilo-works/organigramme/program/dwcp/lang--en/index.htm

Zimbabwe: ZWE103 focuses on entrepreneurship development programmes for youth and women[16].

Mozambique: MOZ126, which focuses on increased and improved job opportunities for youth and women; and MOZ105, focuses on the promoting sustainable enterprises. [17]

Alignment with Sida's regional development cooperation with Africa priorities

The project is highly relevant and well-aligned with *Sweden's regional development cooperation with Africa 2022–2026*[18], which prioritizes inclusive economic development, human rights, democracy, the rule of law, and gender equality. More precisely, it aligns well with the second Pillar of the Sweden strategy - human rights, democracy, the rule of law and gender equality through:

1. Strengthened democracy and increased respect for human rights and the rule of law, including reduced corruption; and
2. Increased gender equality and empowerment of women and girls

This project places significant emphasis on human rights, as well as decent work and labour rights. It incorporates gender equality as a key element of Sweden's strategic focus.

Moreover, a central principle of Sweden strategy is the promotion of human rights and decent working conditions. The project supports these goals by focusing on the enhancement and enforcement of decent work and labour rights in the construction sector, thereby promoting better labour practices and workplace-related rights.

The project is based on "a rights perspective" and "the perspective of poor people," which are the two overarching perspectives of Swedish development cooperation. Therefore, the project contributes to the overall objective of Swedish development cooperation, which is "to create preconditions for better living conditions for people living in poverty and under oppression."

At the project design phase, the project aligned with the "Strategy for Sweden's regional development cooperation in Sub-Saharan Africa 2016-2021." In particular, it contributes to the strategy's key objectives, which include the "enhanced capacity of regional actors to work towards strengthened democracy and the rule of law, gender equality, and increased respect for human rights, with a focus on the rights of women and children." Additionally, it aims to create "better opportunities and tools to enable poor and vulnerable people to improve their living conditions," and notably, to ensure "improved conditions, especially for women and young people, for productive employment with decent working conditions."

Sida has five key strategic perspectives to which the project aligns in the following ways:

- Rights: Labor rights and human rights in the world of work are integral to the ILO Decent Work (DW) Agenda. The main objective of this project is to enhance labour

[16] MAR826- Member States' capacities to ratify and implement international labour standards and to fulfil their reporting obligations are strengthened.

[17] TUN826- Member States' capacities to ratify and implement international labour standards and to fulfil their reporting obligations are strengthened.

[18] https://www.sida.se/en/sidas-international-work/countries-and-regions/regional-cooperation-in-africa; Strategy for Sweden's regional development cooperation with Africa 2022–2026. Appendix to Government Decision of 17/02/2022 UD2022/02564, p.3

rights for young workers; therefore, the project is specifically designed to strengthen those rights.

- Poverty: The project's primary target group is the working poor—men and women alike—who engage in formal or informal, wage or self-employment to make ends meet but still live in poverty. The project aims to improve their circumstances to promote a more equitable and sustainable development across these various dimensions of poverty and discrimination.
- Gender: The project has explicitly targeted women throughout its analysis and implementation to better understand and address the systemic constraints they face in construction. A gender lens was integrated into the Market Systems Analysis (MSA) across the three project countries to articulate the systemic barriers confronting women and young women in various roles throughout the construction value chain. This gender-specific analysis ensured that the project interventions are designed and executed to effectively target women, including efforts to enhance labor rights in construction trades and jobs where women are already present, or implementing strategies that can encourage women to pursue better, high-skilled construction positions, likely focused on skills development.
- Environment: The project has considered environmental and climate perspectives throughout the analysis, design, and implementation stages by recognizing the need for sustainable global resource use while striving to do no harm. This was achieved by mapping key environmental risks in the construction value chain during the inception phase. The project has also established an intervention risk assessment sheet that will include environmental safeguards to ensure that proposed interventions do no harm to the environment. Additionally, the project team completed training on environmental sustainability in construction so that staff understand the risks and are committed to ensuring that interventions do no harm, rather than merely completing a box-ticking exercise.
- Conflict: The project was aware of and managed the risk of conflict and did no harm through analysis, design, and implementation. The largest risk for conflict in the project is likely to be found in the labour market of the construction sector itself, for example, between employers and employees and their organizations, or between different groups within both categories. To understand these issues, employers and trade unions were consulted during the inception phase as part of the Market Systems Analyses (MSAs). Addressing working conditions and labour rights may contribute to existing tensions or fuel labour-market conflict, which requires careful and conscious management of relationships with and between partners. This kind of risk is familiar to the ILO, and its management is a daily practice for which the ILO has developed not only skills but also various mechanisms to reduce such risks, including social dialogue (which is also part of the Decent Work Agenda).

Alignment with the United Nations Sustainable Development Cooperation Frameworks (UNSDCF)

The project aligns well with the objectives of the United Nations Sustainable Development Cooperation Frameworks (UNSDCF) for South Africa (2020-2025), the United Nations Sustainable Development Cooperation Frameworks (UNSDCF) for Zimbabwe (2022-2026), and United Nations Sustainable Development Cooperation Frameworks (UNSDCF) for Mozambique (2022-2026).

The specific priorities of each country concerning economic growth, employment, and labour standards are well-supported by the activities and outcomes of the projects. All three cooperation frameworks – under the people and prosperity pillars - have a strong focus on addressing unemployment and vulnerability, and to ensure that, especially, the most vulnerable and marginalised benefit from more inclusive and sustainable economic growth with decent employment opportunities.

Alignment with the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs)

The project underscores the significance of economic development and employment, thereby providing direct support to Sustainable *Development Goal 8: Decent Work and Economic Growth.* These objectives play a pivotal role in advancing SDG 8 on Decent Work and Economic Growth, for which the International Labour Organization (ILO) has been designated as the lead agency across all three project nations. Furthermore, the initiatives aim to enhance the ratification and implementation of International Labour Standards (ILS), thereby ensuring improved working conditions and equitable employment practices, in alignment with *SDG 10: Reduced Inequalities*. The projects additionally contribute to other Sustainable Development Goals, including *SDG 1: End Poverty in All Its Forms Everywhere*, and *SDG 16: Promote Peaceful and Inclusive Societies*.

Relevance regarding the needs of national stakeholders and final beneficiaries

Based on document review and interviews with project stakeholders, the evaluator concluded that the project has demonstrated significant relevance to the needs of national stakeholders in Mozambique, South Africa, and Zimbabwe. This relevance is underscored by the alignment of the project's objectives and activities with the specific requirements and priorities of key stakeholders in these countries.

The following examples highlight how the project has addressed these needs:

In **Mozambique**, the construction sector has been growing for over 20 years, with an annual growth rate of 13%, outpacing the country's GDP growth. This boom is expected to continue in the foreseeable future, driven by a $60 billion investment in liquefied natural gas projects in the northern part of the country. This investment will not only create numerous direct construction jobs but also stimulate investments in supporting sectors such as goods, services, and accommodation in northern Mozambique. Although the economy experienced a setback due to the coronavirus pandemic, it is expected to rebound in 2022. However, working conditions remain poor, labour rights are weak, and productivity among MSMEs remains low. A planned collaboration between this project and another Sida-funded project, MozTrabalha, will help ensure synergies and scale in promoting decent work, labour rights, and improvements in MSME productivity in Mozambique's highly informal economy.

In **South Africa**, the construction sector was heavily affected by layoffs and the shutdown of mostly smaller companies during the coronavirus pandemic. It accounts for 7% of formal jobs in the country and plays a key role in overall employment growth; however, it suffers from high informality, with 36% of all industry employment being informal. It also accounts for 17% of the country's informal employment, revealing significant chances to improve formal job opportunities, working conditions, and labour rights. The sector is mainly organized through the Building, Construction & Allied Workers Union (BCAWU) and various smaller employer associations like the Green Building Council. However, informal firms, subcontractors, and informal workers are not included in these organizations, creating major gaps in decent work standards. Furthermore, there's an urgent need to formalize the certification process for informal workers, especially vulnerable migrant workers from the SADC region, particularly those from Zimbabwe, who are often hired as unskilled labor and struggle to improve their lives.

In **Zimbabwe**, persistent socio-economic problems and prolonged economic underperformance over many years have obstructed effective private sector growth and job creation. Consequently, most of the country's workforce has moved into the informal economy, where over 90 percent of employed Zimbabweans currently work. The construction industry has been particularly severely impacted, facing work stoppages and layoffs. Additionally, de-industrialization has driven many small contractors into informality and widened the gap in decent work opportunities for many sector workers. Despite ongoing economic difficulties, Zimbabwe is expected to recover from a recession with modest growth[19]. The construction sector is anticipated to play a key role in this revival.

Complementarities with other ongoing initiatives

The project has successfully established extensive collaborations with numerous ILO projects and departments, and other cooperation partners. Below, we provide some examples of these collaborative efforts.

- The ILO has regional experience using a systemic approach in the construction sector, including through Sida-funded projects as well as through the Green Jobs Zambia Project – funded by Finland – which included work on green housing and the construction sector. As a part of the work in Zambia, the project looked specifically at working conditions and sustainable ways of addressing these: "Good working conditions, good business? Assessing the construction value chain to support the advancement of working conditions in Zambia".[20]
- The ILO is currently implementing Sida-funded MozTrabalha[21] project in Mozambique, coherent with this project, which focus on the construction sector among other sectors, and brings market alternative and sustainable construction materials. Under this project a first market systems analysis of the construction sector was undertaken: "Building decent work for all. Digging in the construction value chain of Mozambique to build more green enterprises and empower women through job creation".

[19] https://www.afdb.org/en/countries/southern-africa/zimbabwe/zimbabwe-economic-outlook.

[20] https://www.ilo.org/publications/good-working-conditions-good-business

[21] https://moztrabalha.org/

Effectiveness

Based on the evaluation evidence, the lead evaluator concluded that the DW and Labour Rights in Southern African Construction Sector Project has significantly advanced the Decent Work and Labour Productivity agenda across South Africa, Zimbabwe, and Mozambique.

The project's knowledge has also been disseminated throughout the SADC region. Its effectiveness is demonstrated through the development of strategies, capacity-building, and training activities aimed at enhancing awareness and engagement among tripartite stakeholders and Business Development Services (BDSs) on topics such as decent work, Occupational Safety and Health (OSH) principles, labour rights, and social protection coverage. These capacity-building and training efforts are being shared with construction sector MSMEs and vulnerable workers, including women.

A total of 6,422 individuals were directly reached with messages concerning fundamental rights, workplace principles, and labour productivity, including 2,455 in Mozambique, 1,243 in South Africa, and 2,724 in Zimbabwe. Additionally, 189 small and medium-sized enterprises received training, and 124 practitioners were capacitated through six capacity development events.

Concerning strategies, tools, and manuals, seven strategies relating to decent work, labour productivity, and occupational safety and health (OSH) were collaboratively developed with partners, together with nine tools and manuals focusing on decent work and labour rights.

The only two outputs that will be very difficult to achieve by the end of the project are: 1. Contracting authorities include Decent Work (DW) criteria in small projects and employment contracts by updating them to include DW elements; and 2. Procurement authorities incorporate DW criteria into tendering by revising procedures for construction services.

In this section, the lead evaluator discusses the effectiveness of the project by focusing on several key evaluation questions. The evaluator has assessed how well the projects have achieved their intended results at both the outcome and output levels, with particular focus on meeting the projects' objectives. In the second section, the evaluator describes how positive and negative factors beyond the projects' control have affected results and how the projects have mitigated the impacts of these external factors. Additionally, the evaluation examines any unintended results of the projects that were identified or perceived. The section also analyzes the main contributing and challenging factors that influenced the projects' success in reaching their targets. Lastly, the mid-term evaluation evaluates the extent to which project partners, especially governments, parliaments, and judiciary partners, have fulfilled their roles as outlined in the project's strategy.

Key results achieved

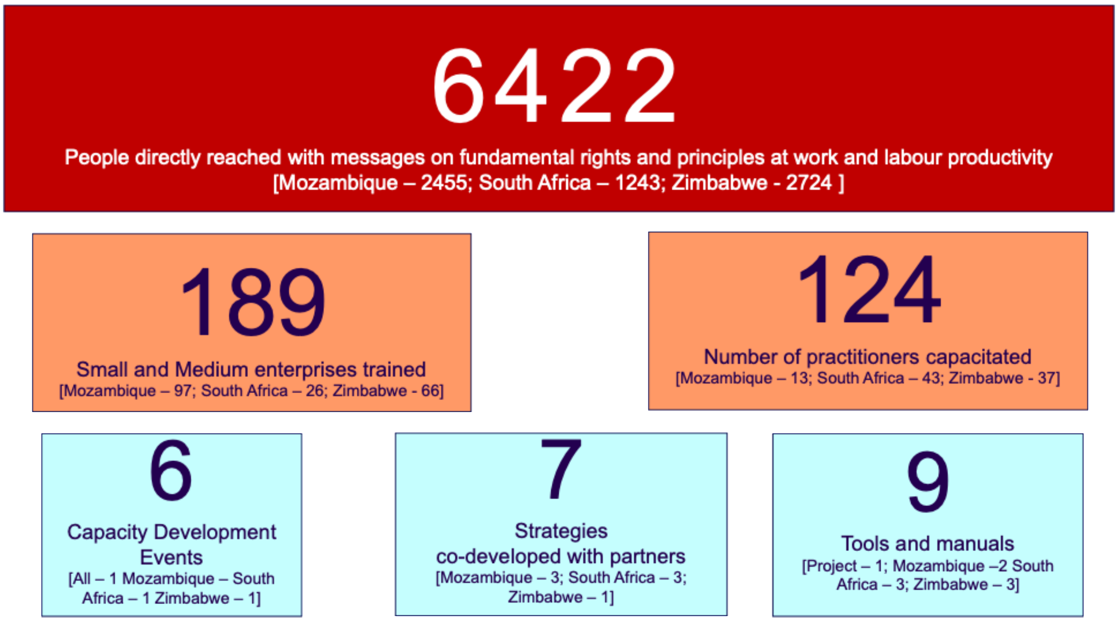
This section examines if and to what extent the key results were achieved under each of the seven outputs from the two outcomes of this report, and per country, providing the evaluator's analysis of the project's effectiveness in achieving its goals. Detailed information on the projects' achievements, categorized by outcomes and outputs, and including all the indicators from the results project logical framework, can be found in **Annex 1.**

Summary Project Results at mid-term evaluation

The final project results from the mid-term evaluation are presented in **Figure 2.** A total of 6,422 individuals were directly reached with messages concerning fundamental rights, principles at work, and labour productivity, including 2,455 in Mozambique, 1,243 in South Africa, and 2,724 in Zimbabwe. These individuals were reached through communication activities of the project using its tripartite structures: communication campaigns (including roadshows, TV and radio appearances) of the Ministry of Labour in each country together with ILO, Trade Unions through their manuals and roadshows, and the Business Development Service through the provided training.

Additionally, 189 small and medium-sized enterprises received an intensive training on decent work and labour rights from the Business Development Services in all three project countries, and 124 practitioners were capacitated through six capacity development events. Concerning strategies, tools, and manuals, seven strategies relating to decent work, labour productivity, and occupational safety and health (OSH) were collaboratively developed with partners, together with nine tools and manuals focusing on decent work and labour rights. Details are given in **Annex 3:** Details on Key Project Results.

Figure 1. Project results from the DWC4SouthernAfrica



Overall, based on primary and secondary evidence, the lead evaluator found that the DW and Labour Rights in Southern African Construction Sector Project has made notable progress in promoting the Decent Work and Labour Productivity agenda across all three project countries: South Africa, Zimbabwe, and Mozambique. The project's knowledge was subsequently shared throughout the SADC region. The project's effectiveness is demonstrated by the creation of strategies and capacity-building and training activities designed to increase representation and understanding among tripartite stakeholders and Business Development Services (BDSs) regarding decent work, Occupational Safety and Health (OSH) principles, labor rights, and social protection coverage. These capacity-building and training activities are being disseminated among construction sector MSMEs and vulnerable workers, including women.

An executive from the Department of Employment and Labour from South Africa stated: "*The strategic compliance model is preventative; the traditional model is reactive. By the time inspectors issue a notice, you have failed to prevent and educate people. The change at the Department is not just a shift in operations but a commitment to sustainable workplace safety, rights, and fairness*".

Outcome 0: A sound understanding of market system challenges in the construction sectors of the pilot countries developed, and inputs for refining project design provided.

The outcome-level results from outcome 0 included an eight-month Inception Phase which operationalised the project team and systems, developed a sound understanding of market system challenges in the construction sectors of the pilot Countries and provided the inputs for refining project design. This resulted in the revised new official project document.

The following were the deliverables produced by Outcome 0:[22]

Output 0.1: Project team recruited and trained on market systems development and results measurement, equipment procured, and project management unit established and operational.

Output 0.2: The first inaugural meeting held on 25 May 2023, where the Sub-regional and national consultations established the Project Steering Committee (PSC).

Output 0.3: Market Systems Analyses (MSAs) was undertaken and validated in each country: South Africa, Mozambique and Zimbabwe, identifying key sector constraints and opportunities for pathways to decent work and improved labour rights. Each assessment contains a gender dimension mainstreamed throughout and will also include an analysis of corruption risk in the sector. The MSA reports were developed, finalized, and validated by stakeholders during the inception phase. Only the official publication of the MSA report was done during the inception phase, the rest were published during the project implementation phase.

Output 0.4: Incentive-driven intervention models in each country (3 in total), which address key constraints, are designed. The incentive-driven intervention models, one with Trade Unions, one with Business Development Services Providers, and one with Labour Inspectorates, were developed for each of the three pilot countries and were the basis for the activities that the Project is currently implementing. Incentive-driven intervention models are strategies designed to encourage desired behaviours and outcomes related to decent work and social protection. These models leverage various incentives – financial, social, or regulatory – to motivate individuals, businesses, and governments to adopt practices that align with ILO principles.

Output 0.5: Capacity development needs of SADC member States senior officials and the SADC secretariat were identified, and a capacity development plan was developed. The capacity development needs involved interventions focused on the private sector, inspection, and capacity-development, with the goal that these initiatives provide practical guidance and tools that other SADC member states can adapt and replicate. Furthermore, the SADC Member States should strengthen their capacities by addressing systemic challenges in their construction sectors through regulatory and policy reforms. This strategy would help them understand the issues identified in the research and support the development of practical, actionable solutions. This was an enabler for the SADC members to build knowledge and awareness of the key constraints that limit labour rights in the construction sector throughout the project lifetime, such that they are better positioned to carry forward changes in their respective countries.[23]

Output 0.6: Project document, budget allocations and logical framework for the 36-month implementation phase were revised and finalised with separate country components and Key Performance Indicators (KPIs). This included project interventions, a strengthened concept that demonstrates the value-added of a sub-regional approach and the incorporation of measures to reduce project risks, particularly related to corruption. The result was the Revised Project

[22] Inception Phase Project Document: Development Cooperation Project Document: A Systemic Approach to Decent Work and Labour Rights in Southern Africa's Construction Sector: Building a pathway to improved working conditions for youth and the working poor, SME Unit, ENTERPRISES Department / DWT Pretoria, April 2022, p. 26

[23] Done in partnership with a Country Official in a meeting for the 16 SADSC Member States. Inaugural Project Steering Committee: Decent Work for Southern Africa, Project Minutes of the Meeting; Johannesburg, South Africa; May 25, 2023

Document, which was submitted to the donor together with the Inception Phase Report and was the basis for Implementation Phase funding.

Output 0.7: a) Monitoring and results measurement (MRM) system and b) project communication and c) gender mainstreaming strategies were finalised.

Outcome 1: Enterprises enhance working conditions and improve labour productivity in the construction market systems of Mozambique, South Africa, and Zimbabwe

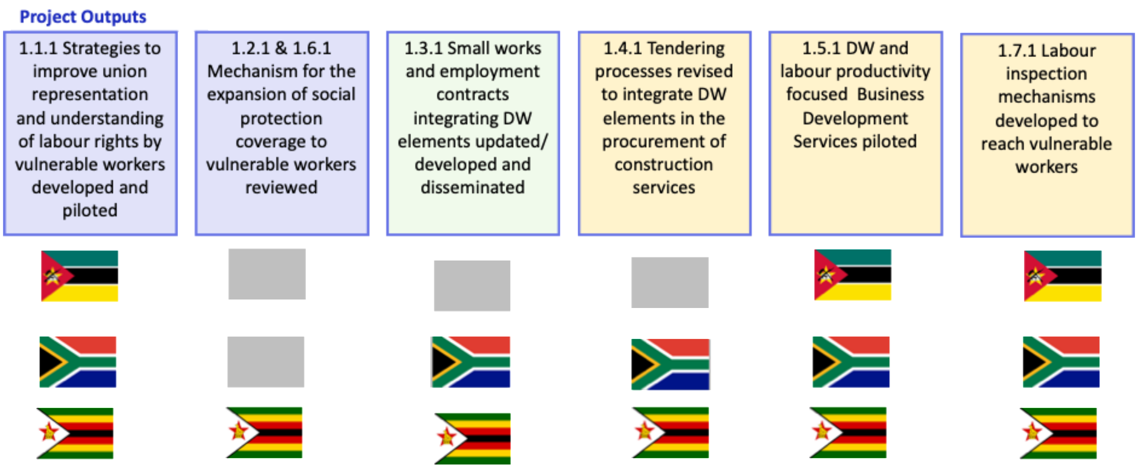
Thanks to the project's activities and outputs, enterprises, through various training sessions conducted by the three partners—Trade Unions, the Ministries of Labour, and the Business Development Services (BDSs) across the three countries—have increased their understanding of decent work and labour rights for their employees. This was reflected by the provision of employment contracts, even for short-term jobs, and an increased adherence to Occupational Health and Safety (OSH) principles by the targeted enterprises. The project's numerous training programs, capacity-building seminars, and roadshows have strengthened the ability of MSMEs to ensure decent working conditions for all employees.

Furthermore, the workers have demonstrated adherence to appropriate work standards, particularly concerning Occupational Safety and Health (OSH), by applying the knowledge acquired during training sessions, seminars, and roadshows, notably facilitated by the Trade Unions within the country.

This outcome had six project outputs, which were expected to generate six system change results. Here, the key results from the four outputs per country will be analysed. The remaining two will be discussed in the section on results that were not produced as expected, along with the reasons for this.

Figure 2 below displays the countries where all expected outputs were achieved. The results will be detailed: first, per country, and then by project partner: 1. Ministry of Labour, 2. Trade Unions, and 3. Business Development Services (BDSs).

Figure 2. Project countries and achievements of outputs



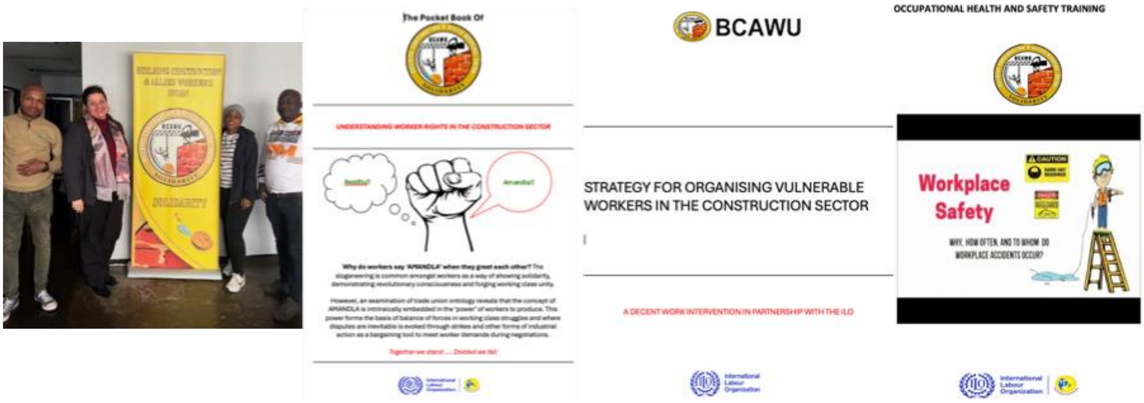
Through the output 1.1."Unions represent vulnerable workers and orient them on DW principles & OSH," the project has developed and piloted strategies to enhance union representation and workers' understanding of labour rights. Partnerships were established with four trade unions across three countries, and needs assessments were conducted. The following knowledge products and tools were produced: four evidence-informed advocacy strategies, two workers' rights booklets created in South Africa and Zimbabwe, and three OSH training manuals developed in all three countries.

The results from Output 1.1. per country are the following:

In **Mozambique**, the trade union organizations - the National Confederation of Independent and Free Trade Unions of Mozambique (CONSILMO) and the Mozambican Construction, Wood, and Miners Union (SINTICIM) - are still working on the Decent Work and Labour Rights Pocketbooks and Manuals.

In **South Africa**, the Building, Construction and Allied Workers' Union (BCAWU) piloted strategies to boost trade union representation and workers' understanding of labour rights. As shown in **Figure 3**, BCAWU organized workshops for 100 workers in each of the nine provinces, training 900 workers on Decent Work and Labour Rights using their Pocketbooks and Manuals.

Figure 3. BCAWU's Pocketbook of Understanding Worker's rights in the construction sector, BCAWU's Strategy for organizing vulnerable workers in the construction sector, and OSH training on Workplace safety



In **Zimbabwe**, the Zimbabwe Construction and Allied Trades Workers' Union (ZCATWU) collaborated with the NSSA Labour Inspector to improve Labour Inspections, increasing their quality and quantity. ZCATWU also produced Decent Work and Labour Rights Pocketbooks, Training Manuals, and Advocacy Documents.

In outputs 1.2. and 1.6.: "National social protection bodies provide social protection, including worker compensation, to vulnerable workers", the project was operating solely in Zimbabwe with the National Social Security Authority (NSSA) to develop a mechanism for expanding social protection coverage to vulnerable workers through drafting and passing the Zimbabwe Construction Bill. The following knowledge products and tools were produced: beneficiary needs assessment data collection and the report on social protection needs of vulnerable and short-term workers in Zimbabwe.

The Business Development Services (BDSs) pilot delineated Decent Work and labour productivity-focused training sessions for MSMEs in the construction industry through Output 1.5: "Business Development Services (BDS) providers implement DW and labour productivity-oriented services". Strategic partnerships were formed with five BDS providers across three countries, and comprehensive needs assessments were carried out. The resulting knowledge product, the Decent Work-oriented Business Development Manual, was subsequently developed.

The results from Output 1.5, broken down by country, are as follows:

In Mozambique, the BDSs were: the Public sector BDS GAPI and Private sector BDS Apricont. The public BDS provider GAPI trained 30 MSMEs with an average of 10 workers in the Northern provinces outside Maputo, training a total of 300 workers, whereas the private BDS provider, Apricont, trained 30 enterprises (WEBCad in Maputo shown in **Figure 4** was one of them).

Figure 4. SME WEBCAD – Construction SME Maputo, trained in Decent Work and Labour Productivity by Apricont in Mozambique

In South Africa, the BDS from the Private sector Property Point used a gender-disaggregated indicator for their activities and indicators measurement. Property Point trained 25 MSMEs with 264 employees (215 male, 50 female). One of the owners of the SMEs in South Africa expressed: "I always had a safety belt, but during the training, the trainer explained why it's essential to use it even when working at lower heights. I now realize its importance, not just for myself, but for my team as well. I now make sure to emphasize its use to every technician I work with".

In Zimbabwe, the BDS were presented through the Public sector BDS Small and Medium Enterprises Development Corporation (SMEDCO) and Private sector BDS Genesis Global Finance (Private) Limited ("GGF AFRICA"). SMEDCO trained 47 MSMEs. The evaluator visited one microenterprise and one medium enterprise trained by SMEDCO, as shown in **Figure 5:** MANAH Constructions, a medium enterprise with best practices in OSH (SHEQ ZIM). The private BDS provider, GGF, trained 50 Enterprises – 25 SMEs and 25 microenterprises.

Figure 5. MANAH Constructions, a medium enterprise with best in practice in OSH (SHEQ ZIM), trained in Decent Work and Labour Productivity by SMEDCO

A good practice in Zimbabwe is the existence of specific Occupational Safety and Health (OSH) Studies, which are called Safety, Health, Environment and Quality (SHEQ) in Zimbabwe.

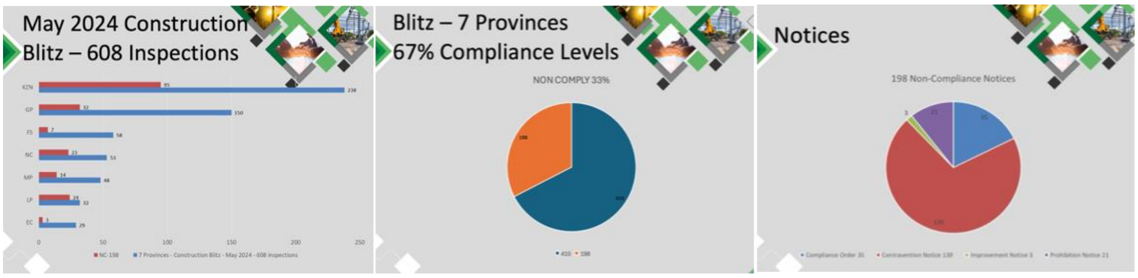
Labour inspection mechanisms were established to reach vulnerable workers through Output 1.7: "Public and private inspection bodies implement effective inspection and compliance mechanisms." Three strategic partnerships were formed with labour inspectorates in the three pilot countries. Additionally, three major events—roadshows—and various media campaigns across television, radio, and social media platforms focused on strategic compliance for labour inspection. The ILO conducted training sessions for 59 labour inspectors as part of its capacity-building initiatives. Furthermore, one strategic compliance intervention plan was developed, and a significant Decent Work in Construction Communication Campaign was conducted in South-Africa.

The results from Output 1.7, broken down by country, are as follows:

In Mozambique, the Ministry of Labour, Employment, and Social Security passed Labour Law No. 13/2023, but it remains unregulated. It still needs to include OSH standards in construction. Large contractors comply with Provision 167 from Labour Law 13.

In South Africa, the Ministry of Employment and Labour – specifically, the Department of Employment and Labour (DEL)- has adopted a best practice of using advocacy instead of punitive actions for labour inspections. DEL trained 200 MSMEs from the NPO Master Builder Association Members in 2024 and 2025 and conducted the Construction Blitz **(Figure 6)** inspections with 608 MSMEs in 2024, issuing 139 contravention notices and 21 prohibition notices, with plans to repeat this approach in April 2026. DEL aimed to influence strategic compliance by promoting change through advocacy rather than a punitive strategy in labour inspections. The Construction Blitz can be wholly ascribed to the project, considering that it was executed by the DEL as an initiative arising entirely from this project.

Figure 6. Construction Blitz performed by DEL in South Africa



A good practice is utilizing Advocacy instead of Punitive Actions regarding labour inspection. DEL targeted effects of training and shaping change on strategic compliance through advocacy instead of a punitive strategy regarding labour inspections: "*The strategic compliance model is preventative; the traditional model is reactive. By the time inspectors issue a notice, you have failed to prevent and educate people. The change at the Department is not just a shift in operations but a commitment to sustainable workplaces safety, rights, and fairness*." DEL representative.

In Zimbabwe, the Ministry of Public Service, Labour & Social Welfare conducted training on decent work and labour rights in late April 2025. NSSA conducted a needs assessment, data collection, and submitted a report on the social protection needs of vulnerable and short-term workers as part of reviewing mechanisms to expand social protection coverage, including workers' compensation for vulnerable workers. The Ministry of Public Works is currently drafting the Contractors Bill, which is expected to be presented to Parliament for approval in December 2025.

Good practice on internal coherence in Zimbabwe was noted in the collaboration between the Government Agency National Social Security Authority (NSSA) from the Ministry of Public Service, Labour & Social Welfare, and the Ministry of Public Works in preparing the first Construction (Contractors) Bill of Zimbabwe.

The project results were similar by geographic area, except for the not produced two outputs (they were partially produced only in South Africa) 1.3 (Contracting authorities integrate DW criteria into small works and basic employment contract through a small works and employment contracts integrating DW elements updated/ developed and disseminated); and 1.4 (Procurement Authorities integrate DW criteria into tendering processes through Tendering processes revised to integrate DW elements in the procurement of construction services).

Outcome 2: SADC adopts strategies to improve labour rights for women and youth in a systemic way, based on evidence-based solutions

For the second outcome, awareness was heightened, and knowledge and understanding were enhanced concerning challenges and opportunities related to decent work in the construction sector within the SADC countries. On various forums—including the SADC annual conventions, the PSC, and TWG meetings—discussions were held on strategies to address the constraints faced by women and youth in achieving decent work standards within the sector. This outcome is indeed aimed at creating systemic change at the SADC level, where interventions are crafted to tackle root causes, resulting in broader, more sustainable improvements that benefit the entire construction sector through the promotion of decent work and labour rights.

The capacity of SADC Member States to systematically address the decent work deficit and strengthen labour rights, especially for vulnerable workers, was improved.

Finally, the Member States of the Southern African Development Community (SADC) are actively implementing exemplary practices from pilot initiatives in the three nations within the construction industry to foster dignified employment, particularly for youth and women.

This outcome had one result: "SADC Enterprise and Labour Sector decisions to promote compliance with labour rights and decent work adopted," which was expected to bring about change by giving SADC Member States evidence-based methods to improve compliance with labour rights.

SADC Member States were equipped with evidence-based methods, like strengthening labour administration systems, promoting social dialogue, enhancing labour inspection, and providing targeted training. These methods aim to improve working conditions and protect workers' rights to improve compliance with labour rights. The project maintained active engagement with SADC decision-making bodies, including the Meeting of Ministers, social partners, and technical experts. The project developed the Maternity Protection Comparative Analysis and Best Practices in Labor Rights Compliance. The capacity built in the SADC countries resulted from the Employment Impact Assessment Training held in June 2025. A key indicator of the project's success is the Expression of Interest from SADC to replicate the project in four additional countries: the United Republic of Tanzania, Botswana, Zambia, and the Seychelles.

The Employment Impact Assessment Training for the SADC member states served as the primary capacity-building event aimed at promoting decent work and labour rights within the construction industry of the SADC countries. Furthermore, the project yielded three essential knowledge products: a comparative analysis of maternity protection, a practical guide on labour rights compliance, and a comprehensive guidance note.

Additionally, there was consistent engagement with the SADC countries and active participation in decision-making processes of SADC, including regular meetings of the Project Steering Committee (PSC), sessions of Technical Working Groups (TWGs), gatherings of ministers and social partners, as well as meetings involving technical experts.

In conclusion, the quantity and quality of the outputs produced so far are very satisfactory. The project followed its updated Theory of Change after the inception phase in May 2023 and after conducting the Market Systems Analysis studies for the three countries. The development hypothesis supporting the logical framework is validated by the project performance data.

Key factors that contributed to the achievement of project outcomes

The key factors that contributed to the achievement of project outcomes were:

- ❖ Building strong partnerships between five Business Development Service Providers established in the pilot Countries and SMEs;
- ❖ Developing A Resource Guide on decent work and labour productivity;
- ❖ Capacity-development of the first cohort of 28 BDS Providers that can replicate the project further;
- ❖ Training and mentorship of 189 SMEs on labour law compliance in the three pilot countries; and
- ❖ Institutionalization of decent work-focused training and mentorship packages for SMEs.

The main factors hindering the achievement of project outcomes were:

- ❖ Time constraints: Building trust and strong partnerships need a long time;
- ❖ The Market Systems Development Analysis took a long time;
- ❖ National elections in Mozambique and Zimbabwe hindered a functioning project implementation structure; and
- ❖ Inefficient transfer of payments from the ILO to the Trade unions in all three project countries.

Unexpected Results

The unexpected results due to the project implementation that have taken place include:

- ❖ Large companies are fully compliant with the labour and OSH standards (South Africa, Zimbabwe, Mozambique);
- ❖ Robust legislation has ratified all conventions concerning decent work and labour rights. However, Zimbabwe has not enacted the Construction Bill, and Mozambique does not meet OSH requirements.
- ❖ South Africa employs advocacy, training, and teaching decent work rather than punitive legislation for their SMEs. This approach is not yet in place in Zimbabwe and Mozambique, where a preventive approach should be replicated.;
- ❖ Construction Blitz from the South African Department of Employment and Labour is an exercise that was inspired by this project (it is explained in Annex 3);

- Strong Business Development Services (BDSs) with trusted relationships with SMEs; and
- BDSs provided SMEs with sample contracts (even for short-term workers); this is to be replicated in Zimbabwe and Mozambique.

Challenges and external factors

The implementation of the "DW and Labour Rights in Southern African Construction Sector Project" project encountered several challenges across different countries:

- Migrant workers accept minimum pay for unqualified work even if qualified because of fear of not having residence papers;
- Mainly in South Africa, there is a difficulty in the recognition of diplomas / TVET certificates from SADC countries, particularly from Zimbabwe. This increases the vulnerabilities of construction workers by placing them as an unskilled workforce, and thereby cheaper labour.;
- Devaluation of the ZIG currency in Zimbabwe;
- The Contractor (Construction) Bill in Zimbabwe has not yet been enacted as of the end of 2025. Nevertheless, there remains some uncertainty regarding this matter owing to political willingness.
- Mozambique is yet to reinforce the use of OSH standards and qualifications in OSH.;
- The ILO's 167 OSH Convention is yet to be ratified by all three countries: South Africa, Mozambique and Zimbabwe; and
- Changes in government and administrative structures in Zimbabwe and Mozambique.

The project had three main weak points:

- There is a delay in the tranches' payments from the partnership agreements with the Trade Unions in all three countries: South Africa, Mozambique, and Zimbabwe. Trade Unions are not accustomed to producing efficient reports (including explanations and providing them with the necessary templates at the project's outset) to prevent inefficient project implementation.
- In the risk analysis, the project did not provide contingency strategies for the implementation inertia resulting from national elections in Mozambique and Zimbabwe.

Currently, Zimbabwe is reviewing and standardizing small works and basic employment contracts for SMEs to include decent work elements. Once finalized, these will be accessible through the Ministry's website. However, the process has not been completed yet. An official from the National Social Security Authority in Zimbabwe stated: "Through the focus group discussions, we gathered valuable insights from the informal workers. This is helping us develop a responsive scheme that is accessible and better suited to people's realities within the construction sector. We also realized that we need to review the outreach and communication strategies as many are still unaware of the services that NSSA provides.".

There is an ongoing pilot project in Partnership with the South African Waterberg Municipality to support:

- Training of SMEs contracted by the Municipality on decent work and productivity.
- Certification of SMEs by the Bureau of Standard for handling and recycling solid waste materials, such as fly ash, for construction purposes.

- ❖ Integrating decent work elements into procurement, employment, and small works contracts.

However, it is very difficult to enforce decent work and labour rights on larger companies that subcontract MSMEs through public procurement. This is an outcome that is almost impossible to achieve. Additionally, the social security scheme was only implemented with the Contractors Bill in Zimbabwe.

There is room for improvement in clearly stipulating the provisions of the Labour Law in all three countries to ensure that formal workers benefit from labour rights and protections, especially regarding occupational health and safety (OHS). The ILO's Convention 167, also known as the Convention on Safety and Health in Construction (C167), establishes specific OHS standards for construction workers. Within the SADC region, only Lesotho has ratified this convention. To date, the remaining 15 countries, including South Africa, Zimbabwe, and Mozambique, have yet to ratify ILO's Convention 167.

Corrective Actions

To address these challenges, the project management team implemented several corrective measures:

- ❖ Engagement and regular consultations: The project team held regular consultations with concerned parties, including national stakeholders, relevant ILO CO, RO and HQ units, and Sida, to navigate through operational obstacles.
- ❖ Adaptive strategies: After the inception phase, the initial project documents were updated into new project documents in April 2023. The project activities were adjusted in an updated TOC and LogFrame, and funds were quickly reallocated in response to emerging needs while maintaining alignment with original project objectives.
- ❖ Improved coordination and communication: Establishing a strong project steering committee and formalizing partnerships through MoUs and protocols helped streamline processes and improve coordination among national partners.

ILO's Market Systems Development (MSD) Approach

Through its project, the Global Accelerator Lab (GALAB), the ILO has established itself as a global leader at the intersection of market-systems development and decent work. It has researched the use of a systemic approach, defined the approach, created guidance for its application, and conducted extensive research in key areas, including informality, the environment, gender, fostering regulatory and policy change, developing sustainable business models, and analyzing market systems. As a result, the ILO has been recognized as the only multilateral organization with MSD competency.[24] By 2021, the ILO had built a comprehensive, rapidly expanding, and diverse portfolio of Market Systems Development (MSD) initiatives aimed at promoting decent work.

Through this project, the International Labour Organization (ILO) uses a Market Systems Development (MSD) approach to promote inclusive, sustainable growth, decent work and labour rights, and just transition for vulnerable groups. It focuses on improving whole market systems, not just direct interventions. By understanding the market dynamics in the

[24] Final independent project evaluation of the Lab, November 2021

construction, ILO aims to create lasting change that benefits enterprises and workers, especially vulnerable workers in marginalized communities.

The ToR for this mid-term evaluation required the evaluator to prepare a Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities, and Threats (SWOT) analysis of the Market Systems Development Approach of ILO for the project (**Table 4**).

Table 4. SWOT analysis of the MSD approach for the project

STRENGTHS	OPPORTUNITIES
• Grassroots involvement of all stakeholders effectively maps the issue and the need to change social injustice and the workers' right to decent work. • An in-depth analysis of the factual issue that offers practical solutions.	• Causes permanent changes in society's thinking and behavior of all tripartite constituents regarding decent work and labour rights.
WEAKNESSES	**THREATS**
• Takes too much time, requiring a lengthy project inception phase. • Requires a higher budget due to more time consumption and lengthy analytics. • Societal change would take years, if not decades, to occur; therefore, large-scale impacts are rarely visible or measurable within a project cycle.	• Reluctance to alter the social system. • Employer's unwillingness to pay more for the worker's social insurance. • The worker's unwillingness to participate in the social insurance scheme due to a desire for immediate full cash payout because of the difficult economic situation. • Implementing partners capacities are not sufficiently developed.

The strength of the MSD approach is its grassroot involvement of all stakeholders, effectively addressing the issue and emphasizing the necessity of tackling social injustice and upholding workers' rights to decent work. This opportunity fosters enduring changes in societal perceptions and behaviors among all tripartite constituents concerning decent work and labour rights. On the other hand, the main weakness of the MSD approach is that it requires considerable time and financial resources to implement. Additionally, the threats include resistance to social system changes, the reluctance of MSMEs to incur higher costs, and workers' hesitance to participate in social insurance schemes.

The ILO's Market Systems Development (MSD) approach in construction focuses on fostering sustainable, inclusive growth by addressing systemic industry challenges. It aims to identify and remove barriers to market efficiency, rather than just supporting individual workers or firms. By building a stronger, more inclusive market, MSD seeks long-term impacts on employment and productivity.

The MSD approach in this project is addressing systemic Issues:

- **Beyond Direct Interventions:** Rather than solely concentrating on training individual workers, MSD evaluates the complete construction market system. This includes advocating for policymakers to implement regulations concerning decent work and labor rights, as well as encouraging employers and employees to adopt and adhere to these regulations.
- **Targeting systemic change:** Interventions seek to address these underlying causes, leading to more extensive and sustainable enhancements that benefit the entire construction industry through enterprises implementing decent work standards and labor rights, as well as workers gaining awareness of their rights.

The MSD approach is promoting inclusive growth by focusing on vulnerable groups, creating equal opportunities for decent work and applying labour rights in the MSMEs and informal business; and fostering decent work. ILO's MSD methodology aims to improve working conditions, productivity, and access to decent employment opportunities within the construction sector.

ILO's role in the MSD approach of this project is to provide technical expertise and guidance on implementing MSD approaches, particularly in the context of decent work and sustainable development. This project has utilized multiple platforms for knowledge sharing, and the ILO has facilitated knowledge sharing and learning among various stakeholders in the three pilot countries, promoting good practices in MSD. Moreover, ILO's focus on productivity ecosystems and producing inclusive productivity within the MSD framework helps to identify and strengthen key drivers of inclusive growth in the construction sector, using the credo that "Only happy worker is a productive worker.".

ILO, PSC and TWGs support to project implementation

Based on interviews with key stakeholders and a review of documents, the evaluator found that the project received extensive technical and policy support, especially from the ILO DWT Pretoria Office, where the core project team was based. The backstopping support provided by DWT Pretoria and HQs was highly effective. This assistance was vital for the successful implementation of the DWC4SouthernAfrica project. The ILO and its specialists played a crucial role in coordinating various activities and provided ongoing technical, policy, and institutional support, which helped carry out the project.

The management structure of the project was designed to ensure efficient implementation and supervision, with clearly defined roles and responsibilities. A Project Management Unit (PMU) has been established and is based in the ILO's sub-regional Decent Work Team (DWT) office in Pretoria, South Africa, with one staff member based at the SADC Secretariat in Gaborone, Botswana. The project is implemented based on ILO financial and administrative rules and regulations.

The project had a unique and broad governance structure with an expanded Project Steering Committee (PSC). This enabled effective governance and strong project ownership among all stakeholders. A fourteen-member regional Project Steering Committee (PSC) was established to provide strategic guidance, ensure sustainability, and create synergies with other SADC initiatives and initiatives in the three targeted countries. The committee includes representatives from the pilot countries and regional entities:

- At Country level (12 Members): Ministry of Labour (1 representative per country); Ministry of Public Works (1 representative per country); Apex Employer Organization (1 representative per country); and Apex Workers Organization (1 Representative per country).
- At Regional Level (2 Members): Southern Africa Private Sector Forum (SPSF – 1 representative); and Southern Africa Trade Union Coordinating Council (SATUCC – 1 representative)
- Ex Officious: SADC Secretariat, Sida and the ILO.

In addition, technical advisory / working Groups (TWGs) were established at country level to advise on country-level implementation and to foster ownership, advocacy, exchange, learning and collaboration.

The governance and management arrangements of the project have facilitated project results by establishing a comprehensive, collaborative, and transparent framework. The involvement of multiple stakeholders through a tripartite approach ensures that the projects are contextually relevant and inclusive. The centralized leadership by the project manager, supported by a robust team for financial, administrative, and operational tasks, ensures efficient project implementation and supervision. Regular engagement with the donor through the Advisory Committee and biannual meetings further enhanced accountability and strategic alignment. Overall, these arrangements have contributed to the effective delivery of project activities and the achievement of project outcomes.

Efficiency

The project aimed to achieve cost-effectiveness, meaning efficient results during implementation. Project partner institutions, Business Development Services (BDSs), and MSMEs in all three countries: South Africa, Zimbabwe and Mozambique, exceeded their delivery targets outlined in their ToRs.

The mid-term evaluation shows that project management and financial management were generally considered efficient and cost-effective.

An effective and impactful monitoring and evaluation system has been established and implemented. However, the risk analysis could have been more effective in providing contingency strategies for the implementation inertia resulting from national elections in Mozambique and Zimbabwe.

Due to tight budget planning, a lengthy inception phase, and implementation delays caused by force majeure related to the standstill of implementation activities due to national elections, a cost extension of one year is needed to complete all activities.

According to the latest financial statement as of May 7, 2025, out of a total budget of USD 4,333,713.59, 82.3% (USD 3,568,725.24) has been spent, leaving USD 764,988.35 remaining until the original project implementation ends on December 31, 2025.

In this section, the lead evaluator addresses the level of efficiency of the project. The analysis begins by examining the deployment of financial and human resources in the target countries to assess their effectiveness in achieving project outcomes. The section also analyzes disbursements and project expenditures to assess their alignment with expected budgetary plans and explains any variances in timing and delivery. The section analyses the extent to which the project budget makes adequate provisions for addressing gender and inclusion-related specific objectives/activities. Finally, the section further examines the relevance of the monitoring and evaluation system, including the collection and utilization of disaggregated data, such as by sex and other relevant characteristics. Moreover, it analyses whether the project has an effective risk analysis framework.

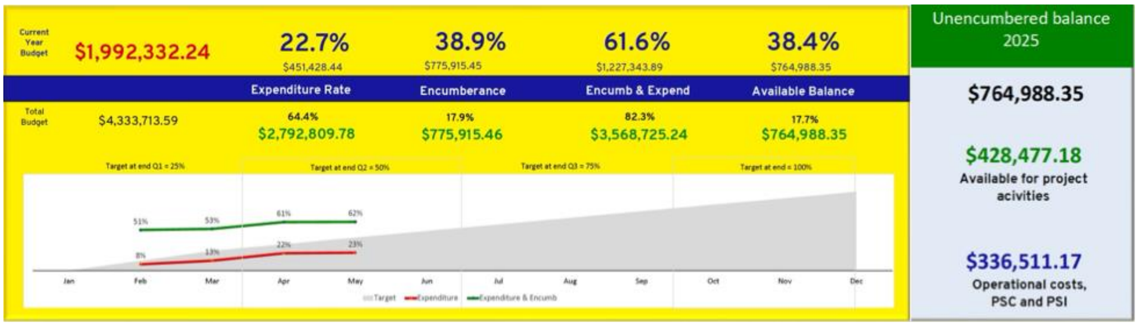
Allocation of resources

This subsection assesses the efficiency of resource allocation and utilization (including human resources, time, expertise, and funds) in achieving the project objectives. Additionally, it discusses whether the results justify the costs and if the same outcomes could be achieved with fewer resources.

The total budget of the project amounted to USD 4,333,713.59, as shown in **Figure 3**.[25] According to the latest financial statement as of May 7, 2025, 82.3% of the total budget, or USD 3,568,725.24, has been spent since the project commenced. The remaining project budget of USD 764,988.35 is to be used for project implementation activities until the project ends on December 31, 2025. From the remaining project budget until project end, USD 428,477.18 are available for implementation of project activities, whereas USD 336,511.17 will be spent for operational costs, PSC and PSI.

The project budget was planned too tightly. Due to the prolonged duration of the inception phase, a one-year cost extension of the project is necessary to complete all project activities. Based on interviews with stakeholders and their perceptions, the remaining budget of 18% is insufficient to complete the remaining activities and outputs by the end of the project.

Figure 7. DWC4 Southern Africa project budget and expenses[26]



Below on Figure 8 are presented the allocation of budgets across the outcomes and across the three countries in detail. It is to be noted that Outcome 1 in the ILO systems is allocated to activities under the SADC Secretariat, and Outcome 2 is allocated to activities in the three pilot countries.[27]

A key point to note is that funds between countries are not distributed equally as initially planned because South Africa moved faster (it has a more costly economy) than other countries, since it was not affected by elections. Zimbabwe's budget is also higher due to an intervention in Social Protection that was implemented in Zimbabwe only, and not in other countries. Additionally, translation and interpretation costs in Mozambique often make the costs per activity significantly higher than in other countries.

In the Inception Phase, the Budget was allocated to the process of establishing a working partnership with the SADC Secretariat and to determining how the Project would report to SADC decision-making organs. In addition, conducted a needs capacity assessment of the SADC member States. The allocated resources were utilized as budgeted. There is a 1% variance between the initially budgeted amount and the actual implementation cost, with USD 264,133 spent, instead of the planned USD 245,841.

[25] The ToR for the Mid-Term Evaluation states a project budget of SEK 50 million / USD 4,567,055 (November 2022 UN exchange rate). However, as the financial statements for the Efficiency section were prepared by the Financial Assistant with a project budget of USD 4,333,713.59, this figure will be used.

[26] ILO Financial statement from May 7, 2025

[27] In the Theory of Change and the Project Logical Framework, it is the other way around: Outcome 1 is allocated to activities in the three pilot countries, and Outcome 2 in the ILO systems is allocated to activities under the SADC Secretariat.

The Inception Phase Budget for the different pilot countries was used to conduct sector Market Systems Analyses and to establish the various country-level implementation systems and processes. Compared to the initially budgeted amount, it can be noted that Mozambique requested additional resources in the form of interpretation and translation services. At the end of the Inception phase, all the outputs agreed with the donor and upon which further funding was contingent were successfully delivered.

Outcome 1 involves work with the SADC Secretariat, including hosting a multi-country Project Steering Committee, which meets twice a year, and presenting project results to two SADC decision-making bodies: the meeting of Employment and Labour Technical Experts and the Meeting of Ministers of Labour and Social Partners. Under this output, the project also conducted research on good practices. Resources were utilized efficiently, as they fostered a close collaborative partnership with SADC, enabling the project to engage with higher-level SADC decision-making bodies. One activity that still needs to be completed under this output is to compile the results of intervention implementation at the pilot country level and translate these into a Guidance Note on how to achieve decent work and higher labour productivity in the construction sector. This will require more time and additional resources. To date, the allocation for Outcome 1 is slightly lower, at USD 439,561, compared to the planned USD 535,500 in the original project document.

Figure 8.DWC4 Southern Africa project budget and expenses[28]

[28] ILO Financial statement from August 20, 2025

	Planned Budget In Initial Project document		Actual Project Implementation Budget		
Outcome	Proposed Budget	% Allocation	Current Budget IRIS	% Allocation	Variance
Total Budget	5,109,621.79	100%	4,333,713.59	100%	0%
Inception Phase					
0: Project is fully operational, a sound understanding of construction sector systemic constraints has been generated, and market systems interventions designed for each country	*245,841.50*	*5%*	*264,133.44*	*6%*	*-1%*
Mozambique	81,947.17	2%	113,868.53	3%	-1%
South Africa	81,947.17	2%	75,890.59	2%	0%
Zimbabwe	81,947.17	2%	74,374.33	2%	0%
Implementation Phase					
01: SADC countries implement programmes to promote decent work and youth employment in their national construction sectors	*535,500.00*	*10%*	*439,561.13*	*10%*	*0%*
02: South African, Mozambique and Zimbabwean construction market systems improved to facilitate decent work and youth employment	*1,331,615.00*	*26%*	*1,106,392.30*	*26%*	*1%*
Mozambique	443,871.67	9%	294,037.58	7%	2%
South Africa	443,871.67	9%	447,129.59	10%	-2%
Zimbabwe	443,871.67	9%	365,225.13	8%	0%
10: Project Management & Oversight	*2,628,692.19*	*51%*	*2,374,702.74*	*55%*	*-3%*
10.03 Monitoring and Evaluation & Communication	*367,973.10*	*7%*	*148,923.98*	*3%*	*4%*

Under Outcome 2, the implementer has been effective in implementing the interventions in all three pilot countries as outlined in the initially designed theory of change. Implementation in Mozambique and Zimbabwe was affected (slowed down because of political situations arising from elections). Some funds were then used in South Africa. The project is now planning to catch up in Mozambique and Zimbabwe, and eventually, the funds will balance out. Under Outcome 2, there was a 1 percent decrease in spending, with USD 1,106,392 less than planned in the original project budget (USD 1,331,615).

The expenditure for Project Management and Oversight was slightly lower, totaling USD 2,374,703, compared to the original project document's estimate of USD 2,628,692. A variance of four percent less was observed for Monitoring, Evaluation, and Communication, with the current budget of USD 148,924 versus the planned budget of USD 367,973.

From document review and interviews with key stakeholders, the evaluator concluded that these amounts correspond to the actual execution of the activities and the confirmed achievement of the expected project outcomes and outputs (as detailed in the Effectiveness section). The key informants from BDSs and the Ministries of Labour in the three countries were highly satisfied with the ILO approach and the efficiency of their intervention. The same was valid for the trade unions, with the exception of the efficiency of transferring funds from the ILO to the trade unions.

Overall, the evaluation, based on primary and secondary information, concludes that all project activities provided good value for money, considering all the project products discussed in the effectiveness section. Additionally, considering the project's complexity, the numerous institutions involved, and the participation of three countries, the evaluators agree with several stakeholders that achieving the same results at a lower cost would not have been likely.

Funds and intervention delivery

This subsection examines whether funds and interventions were provided on time and if the project faced any delivery delays, and the nature of the bottlenecks encountered during project implementation.

Project partner institutions across South Africa, Mozambique, and Zimbabwe, including the Constituents (the Ministries of Labour, trade unions, Business Development Services (BDSs), and MSMEs), exceeded their delivery targets outlined in their ToRs. The mid-term evaluation indicates that project management and financial management were generally efficient and cost-effective.

The Ministries of Labour and Business Development Services (BDSs) from all three pilot countries reported timely disbursements of funds after fulfilling their obligations in the Partnership ToRs (reporting, etc.).

However, the main bottleneck in disbursing funds for all three countries was with the Trade Unions. They all expressed concerns about untimely fund disbursement, which caused delays in project activities, especially in organizing training sessions with the MSMEs and communication campaigns for their members—the workers. The primary reason given for payment delays was their incomplete reporting (including financial reports) to the ILO. It is advised that the ILO conduct training before signing the Partnership Agreement with the Trade Unions and provide clear instructions on how to prepare reports to prevent delays, bottlenecks, and project implementation issues in the future. It would also be helpful if the ILO offered the Trade Unions a proper reporting template and sample reports.

Adequate project budget for addressing gender and inclusion-related specific objectives/activities

The discussion of this subsection will focus on whether the project's budget adequately allocates resources to address objectives and activities related to gender and inclusion.

The project has allocated sufficient budget to address objectives and activities related to gender and inclusion. A detailed Gender Mainstreaming Strategy was prepared for the project.

Regarding gender-related budgeting, the project has allocated the funds listed below to gender-specific activities.

- Within the SADC Outcome, the study on Maternity Protection has a cost of USD 25,500; and
- The Gender Mainstreaming study had a cost of USD 13,920.

For the remaining activities, gender issues are incorporated into the nature of each activity. For example, the requirements for Service Providers include having a representative team that includes both men and women. Additionally, one of the project's main actions is to ensure that female workers have access to suitable facilities at the construction site. These promotional efforts are integrated into ILO’s work with Trade Unions and Business Development Services Providers.

Women are rarely represented as manual workers in the construction sector. They are mostly engaged in administrative roles within the construction MSMEs. According to project management staff, individuals with disabilities were never a specific target or focus group of the project, especially in the construction sector, which is very physically demanding.

Effective risk analysis

This subsection will encompass whether an effective risk analysis and Monitoring and Evaluation (M&E) system has been established and implemented.

Effective risk analysis

The project has implemented a strong risk analysis. It has identified three main risk factors:

- Short project duration for the uptake of systemic interventions and additional investment into scaling interventions;
- Project countries do not remain politically stable and safe; and
- The possibility of a change in government ruling parties incurs changes to government priorities and key personnel within ministries.

An implementation period of three years, including the initial phase dedicated to conducting the Market Systems Analyses (MSAs), is considered short for the absorption of systemic interventions and the additional investments necessary to expand these interventions. This limitation is associated with the Market Systems Analyses (MSAs), which demand considerable time for development and the delivery of results. Consequently, the project has demonstrated limited outcomes within its designated timeframe (as the project inception phase lasted longer as planned, not all project outcomes will be achieved until project end), even when progress has been satisfactory, particularly in relation to policy and regulatory initiatives. This risk has been mitigated through regular and informal communication channels between the project team and Sida to monitor progress and assess the feasibility of preliminary targets. Furthermore, the project has employed its Monitoring and Results Management (MRM) system to continuously evaluate and enhance the performance of interventions. Nevertheless, this remains one of the primary challenges, resulting in delays in project implementation and the necessity for a project cost extension.

The second risk factor, concerning the potential lack of political stability and safety in the project countries, was underestimated. Additionally, the possibility of governmental changes involving ruling parties was also underestimated, which could lead to shifts in government priorities and key personnel within ministries. The project was designed to operate across three countries and at the sub-regional level, with plans to reallocate resources to more stable environments should significant instability arise. Nevertheless, dealing with the escalating financial challenges in Zimbabwe proved to be impractical. Furthermore, national elections influenced policy and regulatory interventions at both the sub-regional and national levels, as personnel with whom the project had established trust or worked closely were no longer present. These risks materialized following the national elections and the change of government in Mozambique and Zimbabwe, resulting in a suspension of project activities in these countries for over a year. Fortunately, the new administrations in both countries did not diminish their interest in this particular project.

Monitoring and evaluation system

The terms of reference necessitate the evaluator to assess whether an effective Monitoring and Evaluation (M&E) system has been established for this project. The project's planning and implementation included a Monitoring and Evaluation (M&E) framework with outcomes indicators, baselines, and targets.

The project has a strong Monitoring and Evaluation (M&E) framework, and funds have been allocated for M&E activities, including a dedicated Monitoring and Results Measurement (MRM) officer position. A detailed Monitoring and Results Measurement Plan, along with practical guidelines, was created for the Decent Work in Construction for Southern Africa project. This plan includes comprehensive information on the Decent Work in Construction Project Theory of Change (TOC), the updated Results LogFrame following the implementation phase, the Results Measurement Plan, which outlines key milestones, and the project-level attribution strategy.

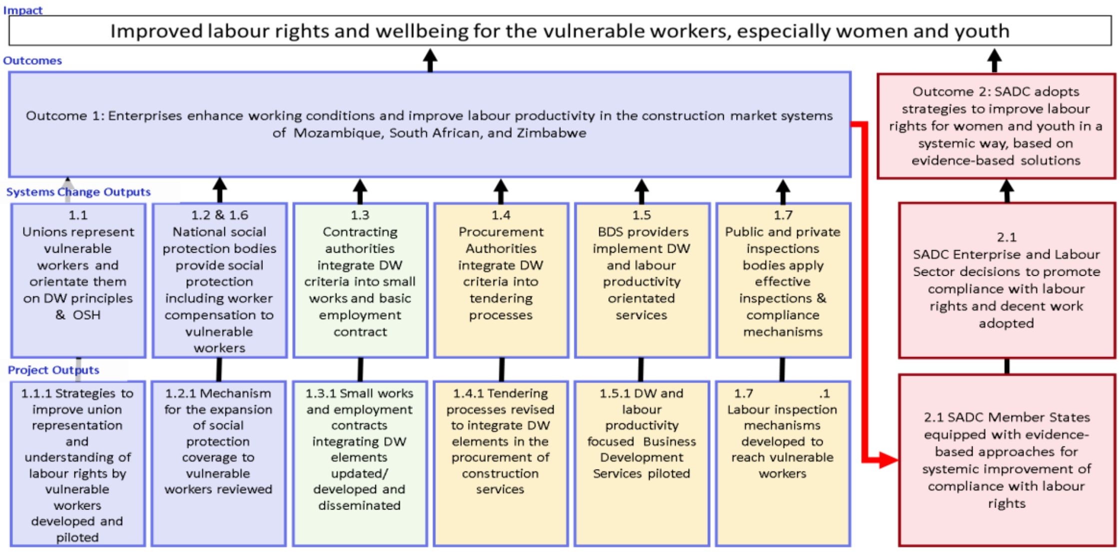
The Monitoring and Evaluation (M&E) strategy was effectively implemented, with project outputs and outcomes meticulously monitored and documented. There was an M&E tool called the Milestones Tracking table that was updated on a quarterly basis. The results of this M&E tool are presented more graphically and per output in Annex 1. An efficient feedback mechanism was established to inform adjustments to the M&E strategy through weekly management meetings, TWGs, the PSC, and SADC meetings, notably through the revised results LogFrame incorporating data from the Inception Phase. All M&E data, including the MRM manual, were made accessible to the evaluator, alongside Excel tables and numerous presentations of results. Additionally, Annex 3: Details on Key Project Results on Effectiveness presents supplementary results derived from data collected via the tripartite structures across all three countries, which are attributed to the project, as secondary data.

However, indicators in the Monitoring and Evaluation (M&E) framework were not disaggregated by sex, disability, or other disadvantaged categories. Nonetheless, the Business Development Services (BDS) reported the numbers of MSMEs trained disaggregated by sex, but not by disability.

In response to recommendations from the project Inception Phase and the Market Systems Analysis of the construction sector for all three pilot countries, the project's Theory of Change and logical framework were updated in May 2023. The revised project TOC is shown in **Figure 6.**

Figure 9. DWC4SouthernAfrica project revised Theory of Change (TOC) [29]

[29] Monitoring and Results Measurement Plan and practical guidelines for the project: Decent Work in Construction for South Africa, February 2025, p. 21



The M&E strategy for this project was well-developed and regularly updated. Project reporting, including annual reports and financial reporting for all donors, was satisfactory.

Impact and Sustainability

Assessing the impact and sustainability of a project is challenging at mid-term. However, due to the successes of the project, ILO's expected long-term results (impact focus), and its contribution to sustainably; advancing the strategic priorities of the funding partner Sida are seen as likely.

Policymakers and stakeholders are willing to participate in capacity-building activities to enhance labour rights and wellbeing for vulnerable workers, especially women and youth in all three project countries: Mozambique, South Africa, and Zimbabwe, as well as across the entire SADC region.

The project outcomes are designed to be achieved sustainably, allowing them to continue beyond the project's duration through the institutional integration of the objectives among the tripartite constituents in the three project countries. This is contingent upon the project's cost extension for up to two years, enabling the ILO to complete all project activities.

This section begins by examining the potential for positive impact of the Mid-Term Evaluation of the projec. Additionally, it explores whether the project has fostered national ownership and the effectiveness of the projects in generating interest and participation at the national level. Moreover, it examines the likelihood of the project' positive outcomes persisting beyond its conclusion. This analysis also identifies success factors as recognized by partner organizations, ILO personnel, and partners to enhance sustainability. The section further assesses the relevance and effectiveness of the projects' sustainability plans.

Potential for Positive Impacts of the DWC4S Southern Africa Project

The project has demonstrated potential for positive impacts across several dimensions in the target countries of Mozambique, South Africa, and Zimbabwe. These impacts can be categorized into several key areas, including capacity-development, social protection of workers, and economic development.

Significant efforts have been made to **build capacity** among various stakeholders, including government officials, social partners, MSMEs, and workers through training programs. Extensive training sessions were conducted to improve the skills and knowledge of government officials, trade unions, and BDSs on decent work, labour rights, productivity, social protection, OSH standards, as well as ILS and best practices in employment policies. This has the potential to lead to better policy formulation and implementation. This project has applied the organizational and institutional levels of capacity-development.[30] On the institutional level, it has built capacities of four trade unions in the three project pilot countries, as well as with Ministries of Labour and their Departments of Employment and Labour, capacitation more than 124 officials. On the organization level, four BDSs in all four countries have built the capacity of 189 MSMEs concerning decent work and labour rights.[31] As a result, institutional strengthening occurred in all three project countries initially. The second phase involved training and communication campaigns targeting construction MSMEs and workers regarding their duties, obligations, and rights related to decent work and labour rights.

Indirectly, the project has contributed and will continue to contribute to the **economic development** in the project countries, as only "Happy Workers are Productive Workers," which will boost the labour productivity of the respective MSMEs.

Furthermore, the project contributed to developing **Social Dialogue and Tripartism,** by ensuring that the voices of workers, employers, and governments are included in policy-making processes for:

- <u>Inclusive Policy Development</u>: Through the promotion of social dialogue, the projects have supported the development of inclusive policies that reflect the needs and perspectives of all social partners. This has the potential to lead to more effective and equitable employment policies.
- <u>Strengthening Tripartite Relationships</u>: By facilitating national dialogues and consultations, the projects have strengthened relationships between government bodies, employers' associations, and workers' organizations, fostering a collaborative approach to addressing decent work and labour rights challenges.

The project is working towards achieving the proposed impact to improve labour rights and wellbeing for the vulnerable workers, especially women and youth in all three project countries: South Africa, Zimbabwe and Mozambique, as well as in the whole SADC region.

The lives of the beneficiaries (construction MSMEs and workers) were improved by being capacitated with information on their rights to decent work, labour/working contracts, including social security, and improvement of their occupational safety and health, including their right to have Personal Protective Equipment (PPE).

The project worked at both the policy and practice levels, making significant contributions to addressing inclusion-related concerns. The positive change in practices, perceptions, building technical capacity, governance and enabling environment to decent work and labour productivity in the construction sector in Southern Africa, together with the evidence to the project's contribution to broader development goals or policy objectives can all be found in detail in the Effectiveness section of this report.

[30] https://www.ilo.org/resource/conference-paper/gb/335/ilo-wide-strategy-institutional-capacity-development

[31] Details on the project outcome and output level results is found in the Effectiveness section.

Institutional Embedding / Project's contribution to broader development goals or policy objectives

Changes are incorporated into and embedded within existing institutional frameworks, as well as in frameworks that are still being developed, such as the Contractors (Construction) Bill in Zimbabwe. The project has yet to lead the three countries to ratify the ILO's Convention 167 on OSH standards.

Sustainability of the DW and Labour Rights in Southern African Construction Sector Project

The project outcomes are designed to be achieved sustainably, allowing them to continue beyond the project's duration through the institutional integration of the objectives into the tripartite stakeholders in all three project countries. With its strong capacity-building initiative mentioned above, the DWC4SouthernAfrica project is fostering local ownership, capacity, and commitment to sustain the project activities after its conclusion. ILO's Market System Development (MSD) approach for this project has already started achieving scalable and sustainable impact by ensuring:

- Long-Term Sustainability: By addressing systemic issues like raising awareness and capacity-development on decent work and labour rights in the construction industry, these MSD interventions can lead to lasting changes that continue to benefit the sector even after the project ends.
- Building Replicable Models: The MSD approaches for this project can be adapted and reproduced in other contexts to maximize their impact and reach. The evidence is already there, with four SADC countries expressing their interest in a project replication. The project approach can also be further replicated in different sectors related to construction, such as the mining industry, building infrastructure, and more.
- Leveraging Private Sector: The MSD approach in this project encourages collaboration with the private sector by the BDSs providing training to MSMEs in the construction sector on decent work and labour rights to drive change, making interventions more efficient and sustainable.

The risk to the sustainability of the project's outcomes is the lack of time to complete project implementation if a cost project extension is not granted. The project team has addressed this issue in a timely manner by requesting the donor for a cost extension of up to two years to complete all project activities.

Once they are fully built and embedded, the national institutions and implementing partners are likely to continue the project results on decent work and labour productivity in the construction sector without project funding or support.

Due to numerous activities still pending, an effective and realistic project exit strategy has not yet been developed.

Integration of ILO's Cross-cutting issues

The project thoroughly integrated considerations of gender equality, international labour standards, and social dialogue relevant to all three countries throughout the entire project cycle. This included project design, implementation, and incorporation into all monitoring and evaluation (M&E) systems and reports.

During the implementation in the three project countries, the project effectively addressed the specific needs of women, men, and vulnerable groups—including persons with disabilities in the construction sector—and provided training on their rights to decent work and social protection.

To evaluate whether project has effectively considered the ILO cross-cutting issues of gender, tripartism, social dialogue, international labour standards, and a just transition to environmental sustainability in their design and implementation, the following assessment is based on document review and interviews with key stakeholders.

1. Gender Mainstreaming

The project has demonstrated various efforts and results, including gender mainstreaming and promoting equal participation of women and men.

Overall, this project has been proactive in mainstreaming gender and in promoting inclusive economic growth, although according to several stakeholders consulted, continued efforts and monitoring are necessary to maintain and build on these achievements.

The Project Gender Mainstreaming Strategy aimed to ensure that gender equality principles underpin the project's interventions. The project targeted systematically including of gender considerations in each element of the project cycle: design, implementation, monitoring, and learning. It sets out a pathway to achieve the following strategic objectives:[32]

1) Integrate gender considerations into all phases of the project to ensure that interventions are sensitive to the different needs, constraints, and opportunities of women and men.

2) Enhance women's access to decent work by supporting stakeholders in the construction sector to improve their practices in a way that contributes to gender equality.

3) Promote gender-responsive policies and practices within governmental and social partner institutions to advance structural change in the economy that benefits all genders.

4) Capacitate local stakeholders on gender issues to facilitate the sustainable development of gender-inclusive employment and enterprise opportunities.

The project is not considered a women's economic empowerment project, and as such, it does not have dedicated in-country gender equality and social inclusion (GESI) staff. However, the project has dedicated targeted gender resources in the following ways:[33]

- Allocate 15% of staff resources to implement the gender strategy, divided among the CTA, Monitoring and Results Measurement Officer, and Market Systems Development Officer, all experienced with women's economic empowerment programs at the ILO. The project will hire consultants for specific tasks like gender analyses. The team will oversee the rollout and develop a workplan with milestones.
- Allocate funds for project implementation, including gender-targeted and gender-aware interventions. Assign data collection and analysis to the MRM Officer and include it in the MRM plan.

[32] Gender Mainstreaming Strategy for the Decent Work in Construction Project (2022-2025), p. 9

[33] Gender Mainstreaming Strategy for the Decent Work in Construction Project (2022-2025), p. 14

- Dedicate resources for advisory services from ILO Decent Work Team and Headquarters. The project will use gender-related support from gender experts within ILO CO-Pretoria Decent Work Team and ILO Headquarters to implement the strategy.
- Capacity development for project staff, including training and workshops on gender equality.

The project aimed to apply specific targets for intended beneficiaries (e.g., women, youth) equitably. However, due to the unequal opportunities for women in the construction sector, it was impossible to achieve all goals. Young people are more often employed in the construction sector, especially where physical strength is needed.

The ToR also asks the evaluators to assess whether there are enough gender-sensitive monitoring structures in place. As discussed earlier, the M&E framework did not include gender-disaggregated indicators. However, this gap was effectively addressed by the BDSs (especially Property Point in South Africa) through the incorporation and collection of gender-disaggregated data. This improvement ensured a more comprehensive and inclusive assessment of the project's results, particularly regarding gender-related outcomes. Efforts were made to support women in the construction industry, especially green construction, ensuring that the transition to a green economy is inclusive and equitable.

2. Tripartism

Tripartism, which involves the collaboration between governments, employers, and workers' representatives, is a core principle of the ILO. This project has made significant efforts to include tripartite stakeholders in the initiatives in all three countries by facilitating national dialogues involving government agencies (Ministries of Labour), employers (MSMEs) and workers, and workers' organizations (Trade Unions).

3. Social Dialogue

Social dialogue, involving negotiations, consultations, and exchanges of information between representatives of governments, employers, and workers on issues of common interest, has been integral to the project:

- Capacity-development: Training programs for social partners were implemented to enhance their capacity to engage in effective social dialogue on decent work, labour rights and productivity and social security coverage.
- Policy Development: The projects supported the development of policies through inclusive consultations, ensuring that the perspectives of all social partners were considered.
- Legal Frameworks: the projects worked with various stakeholders to align national laws with international standards, fostering an environment conducive to social dialogue.

4. International Labour Standards

The project has prioritized the promotion and application of International Labour Standards (ILS). Moreover, ILS is a core component of the projects.

- Training and Awareness: Extensive training sessions were conducted for construction workers, MSWEs, policymakers, and social partners on decent work, labour productivity and OSH standards, ensuring a thorough understanding and effective application.

- Legislative Alignment: The projects undertook gap analyses to identify discrepancies between national laws and ILS, advocating for legislative changes to align with international conventions, especially to ratify ILO's Convention 167 on OSH.

5. Just Transition to Environmental Sustainability

The projects have integrated environmental sustainability into their objectives, focusing on a fair transition that includes all stakeholders:

- Green Jobs: Initiatives were launched to promote green jobs and sustainable economic practices, with a particular emphasis on gender equality and inclusivity, especially as an integral part of the Market System Analysis (MSAs) reports for the construction sector for South Africa, Zimbabwe and Mozambique.

Conclusions

Based on the findings of this mid-term evaluation, the conclusions are organized under the evaluation criteria of relevance and coherence, effectiveness, efficiency, sustainability and impact, and cross-cutting Issues.

Relevance and Coherence

The "DW and Labour Rights in Southern African Construction Sector Project" is a highly relevant project that focuses on promoting decent work and labour rights, increasing social security participation, raising awareness of Occupational Safety and Health (OSH) standards, and supporting national development among tripartite stakeholders related to decent work. It aims to improve productivity and working conditions within SMEs, aligning with the strategies of governments in SADC pilot countries—namely Mozambique, South Africa, and Zimbabwe—as well as regional and sub-regional priorities centred on advancing workers' rights and labour productivity across all Southern African Development Community (SADC) Member States. These efforts align with global sustainable development goals and local and national priorities as outlined in 1) the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), 2) the sustainable development policies and national strategies of South Africa, Zimbabwe, and Mozambique, 3) the strategic priorities and objectives of the donor Swedish International Development Cooperation Agency (Sida), and 4) the mandate, policy, and strategic outcomes of the International Labour Organization (ILO). Overall, this initiative is highly relevant and significant. The project aligns and is coherent with ongoing initiatives and programs on Decent Work within the SADC community, collaborating effectively with other donors, partners, and stakeholders.

Effectiveness

Based on both primary and secondary evidence, the lead evaluator concluded that the project in Southern Africa's construction sector has significantly advanced the Decent Work and Labour Productivity agenda across Mozambique, South Africa, and Zimbabwe. The project's knowledge has also been disseminated throughout the SADC region. Its effectiveness is demonstrated through the development of strategies, capacity-building, and training activities aimed at enhancing awareness and engagement among tripartite stakeholders and Business Development Services (BDSs) on topics such as decent work, Occupational Safety and Health (OSH) principles, labour rights, and social protection coverage. These capacity-building and training efforts are being shared with construction sector MSMEs and vulnerable workers, including women.

A total of 6,422 individuals were directly reached with messages concerning fundamental rights, workplace principles, and labour productivity, including 2,455 in Mozambique, 1,243 in South Africa, and 2,724 in Zimbabwe. Additionally, 189 small and medium-sized enterprises (with employees ranging from 10 to 100) received training, and 124 practitioners were capacitated through six capacity development events. Concerning strategies, tools, and manuals, seven strategies relating to decent work, labour productivity, and occupational safety and health (OSH) were collaboratively developed with partners, together with nine tools and manuals focusing on decent work and labour rights.

The only two outputs that will be very difficult to achieve are: 1. Contracting authorities include Decent Work (DW) criteria in small projects and employment contracts by updating them to include DW elements; and 2. Procurement authorities incorporate DW criteria into tendering by revising procedures for construction services. One of the reasons this is not feasible is the lengthy duration required to conclude partnerships with the respective authorities.

Efficiency

The project aimed to achieve cost-effectiveness, meaning efficient results during implementation. Project partner institutions, Business Development Services (BDSs), and MSMEs in all three countries: Mozambique, South Africa, and Zimbabwe, exceeded their delivery targets outlined in their ToRs.

The mid-term evaluation shows that project management and financial management were generally considered efficient and cost-effective.

An effective and impactful monitoring and evaluation system has been established and implemented. However, the risk analysis could have been more effective in providing contingency strategies for the implementation inertia resulting from national elections in Mozambique and Zimbabwe.

Due to tight budget planning, a lengthy inception phase, and implementation delays caused by force majeure related to the standstill of implementation activities due to national elections, a cost extension of up to two years is needed to complete all activities. According to the latest financial statement as of May 7, 2025, out of a total budget of USD 4,333,713.59, 82.3% (USD 3,568,725.24) has been spent, leaving USD 764,988.35 remaining until the original project implementation ends on December 31, 2025.

Impact and Sustainability

Assessing the impact and sustainability of a project is challenging at mid-term. However, due to the early initial results of the project, ILO’s expected long-term results (impact focus) and its contribution to sustainably advancing the strategic priorities of the funding partner, Sida, are seen as likely. Policymakers and stakeholders are willing to participate in capacity-building activities to enhance labour rights and wellbeing for vulnerable workers, especially women and youth in all three project countries: Mozambique, South Africa, and Zimbabwe, as well as across the entire SADC region.

The project outcomes are designed to be achieved sustainably, allowing them to continue beyond the project's duration through the institutional integration of the objectives among the tripartite stakeholders in all three project countries. This is contingent upon the project’s cost extension for up to two years, enabling the ILO to complete all project activities.

Cross-cutting Issues

The project thoroughly integrated considerations of gender equality, international labour standards, and social dialogue relevant to all three countries throughout the entire project cycle. This included project design, implementation, and incorporation into all monitoring and evaluation (M&E) systems and reports. During the implementation in the three project countries, the project effectively addressed the specific needs of women, men, and vulnerable groups—including persons with disabilities in the construction sector—and provided training on their rights to decent work and social protection. The project also successfully built strong commitment and ownership and managed stakeholder relations incredibly well.

Lessons learned

1. Importance of building trust to enable an open social dialogue through timely open communication to all tripartite constituents, including MSMES and workers

One of the key lessons learned from the project is that building trust among MSMEs and workers first enables open social dialogue and the performance of realistic analyses of the decent work situation in the enterprise, especially regarding existing contracts and social security protection for workers, as well as practicing their labour rights. Regular, transparent, and prompt communication with all tripartite constituents, including MSMEs and workers, is essential for establishing trust and nurturing an open social dialogue while disseminating information regarding decent work and labour rights. Educating the public about the nature of communication campaigns related to Decent Work and Labor Rights (clarifying that this does not constitute a labour inspection) mitigates fear and fosters a conducive and productive environment among workers and Micro, Small, and Medium Enterprises (MSMEs).

2. Importance of upfront assessing a baseline situation

Effectiveness and efficiency in a project depend on assessing a country's baseline situation for specific development objectives before the design phase. Projects must be tailored to each country's socio-economic and political contexts. For instance, stakeholder engagement and policy approaches in Mozambique, South Africa, and Zimbabwe, and required customization. This experience highlighted the importance of thorough contextual analysis and flexibility in methodologies through meaningful engagement with national stakeholders prior to project design. Regular meetings with key partners are essential for aligning project activities with national priorities, ensuring stakeholder buy-in, and fostering ownership. Early stakeholder engagement helps align activities with national priorities and build strong support.

3. Navigating political instability

The project has discovered that political and economic instability considerably affects and delays project implementation and outcomes. Various challenges have emerged from fluctuating political landscapes, including national elections and government restructuring in the target countries, thereby emphasizing the necessity of having contingency plans and adaptable project designs. By anticipating potential disruptions and formulating strategies to mitigate their impact, projects are better positioned to sustain progress and achieve their objectives despite unfavourable conditions.

Emerging Good Practices

1. Developing policies and institutionalizing principles of decent work and labour rights to ensure the building of sustainable social security systems

A notable good practice of the project is ILO's involvement in creating policies and institutionalizing decent work and labour rights principles to ensure building sustainable social security systems. Concrete examples are the Contractors Bill in Zimbabwe and Policies on Decent Work and Labour Rights (such as introducing Occupational Safety and Health (OSH) regulations in Mozambique, or initiation of ratifying the ILO's convention C155 - Occupational Safety and Health Convention, 1981 (No. 155); and C187 - Promotional Framework for Occupational Safety and Health Convention, 2006 (No. 187)). This is triggering a snowball effect from construction to other industries, altering the country's landscape in terms of decent work and social security systems.

2. Working with Business Development Services (BDSs) to promote decent work and labour rights and productivity

This project's good practice involves utilizing Business Development Services (BDSs) providers to promote decent work, labour rights, and productivity. The BDSs were employed to instil a change in mindset among MSMEs regarding decent work, labour rights, and the initiation of formal contracting for informal workers within MSMEs by highlighting the importance of decent work and the legal implications of not practicing it. Collaborating with BDSs (both public and private) is crucial for several reasons. BDSs play a pivotal role in building the capacity of MSMEs concerning the application of decent work and labour rights in their daily operations, leveraging their previous involvement and the trust built with MSMEs to emphasize the necessity of applying decent work principles. Similarly, BDSs in South Africa, such as Property Point, provided MSMEs with sample contracts even for short-duration jobs. This will help develop robust national legislation regarding the provision of proper working contracts.

3. Strong stakeholders' engagement and network building

Gathering the tripartite constituents (Ministries of Labour, Construction Trade Unions, Employers' Organization, and executing bodies like public and private Business Development Service Providers) at a single negotiating table to openly discuss the prerequisites, enablers, and pathways towards achieving permanent systemic change in the field of decent work and labour rights in the construction sector. Engaging these stakeholders early in the planning process ensured that work plans were relevant, realistic, and had broad support. This approach facilitated smooth implementation and strong commitment from partners, creating synergies among the policies (labour inspections) of the relevant Ministries, inspections conducted by the Construction Trade Unions, and private sector business development service providers. Additionally, maintaining open lines of communication between project management and staff, as well as with stakeholders, through regular consultations and updates fostered ongoing trust and transparency. This ensured that stakeholders were informed and remained engaged throughout the project. Moreover, by involving stakeholders in decision-making processes, the project promoted a sense of ownership and responsibility among partners. This practice was crucial for sustaining project activities and outcomes. The project effectively fostered strong commitment and ownership while adeptly managing stakeholder relations.

Recommendations

Recommendation 1: Cost Project extension

It is recommended that the Swedish International Development Cooperation Agency (Sida) extend the project for at least one year, ideally for more sustainable results—preferably for two years—through a cost extension. Strengthen and build upon current accomplishments to achieve greater systemic changes in the construction sector, especially in Zimbabwe and Mozambique.

Addressed to	Priority	Implementation	Level of resources	Related conclusion, LL or GP
Sida, ILO, the donor community	High	Immediate	High	Effectiveness Impact Sustainability

Recommendation 2: Expand the project geographically through the cost extension or as a stand-alone project

It is recommended that the project be expanded geographically through the cost extension or as a stand-alone project. The National Governments of Botswana, Seychelles, Tanzania, and Zambia, among others, have expressed interest in implementing the project in their countries through SADC and the ILO Country Directors. Using the knowledge gathered through the project implementation in Mozambique, and the networking for the SADC lusophone countries, the project can be replicated/twinned between Mozambique and Angola. The new project should have a strong emphasis on communication campaigns on decent work and labour rights, gender inclusivity, capacity-building, and stakeholder engagement to ensure the programme's sustainability.

Addressed to	Priority	Implementation	Level of resources	Related conclusion, LL or GP
ILO, Sida, national governments, social partners; the donor community	Medium	Mid-term	High	Relevance Coherence Effectiveness Efficiency Impact Sustainability

Recommendation 3: Expand the Project scope/objectives

It is recommended that the ILO, national Governments, and Tripartite Constituents, together with the donor community, continue to expand in Phase 2 of the project by expanding the project scope and objectives. Phase 2 can leverage from newly established entry points, opportunities, and private sector partnerships to include either of the following focus areas:

- New sectors (possibly mining, transport, and manufacturing)
- Enterprise development and employment creation (country priorities)

- Expand and Integrate Green Jobs and Just Transition Employment Initiatives
- Local economic development and environmental sustainability
- Labour migration and labour rights, especially recognition of training and certificates to comply with decent work and avoid hiring at minimum wage.

Addressed to	Priority	Implementation	Level of resources	Related conclusion, LL or GP
ILO, Sida, national governments, social partners; and the donor community	Medium	Mid-term	High	Relevance Effectiveness Impact Sustainability

Recommendation 4: Strengthen the communication campaigns in pilot countries to disseminate knowledge of decent work and labour rights in the construction sector

The ILO, the National Governments, and social partners should strengthen communication campaigns in pilot countries to disseminate knowledge of Decent Work and Labour Rights in the construction sector to workers at the grassroots level through diverse channels, including roadshows, TV, radio, and social media. Trade unions, the Ministry of Labour, the Employers' Organizations, and the Business Development Services are to be included. The ILO should develop a stronger project communication campaign through a dedicated project website. Project success stories should be timely shared with the donor, ILO, and SADC countries.

Addressed to	Priority	Implementation	Level of resources	Related conclusion, LL or GP
ILO, national governments and social partners	Medium	Immediately	High	Effectiveness Impact Sustainability

Recommendation 5: Support women's entrepreneurship and broader employment strategies

The ILO, the National Governments and social partners should continue its collaboration with national partners to support women's entrepreneurship, particularly for women in vulnerable situations. In addition, they should enhance Gender Representation and Build on inclusivity for gender and disabilities by construction SMEs, for example, by rewarding or subsidizing companies that employ more women and people with disabilities.

Addressed to	Priority	Implementation	Level of resources	Related conclusion, LL or GP
ILO, national governments and social partners	Medium	Mid-term	High	Effectiveness Sustainability

Recommendation 6: initiate twinning projects on specific topics between the pilot countries

It is recommended that the project initiate twinning projects on specific topics between the pilot countries. For instance, a twinning project between Mozambique, South Africa, and/or Zimbabwe on OSH regulations, and the development of official OSH studies in Mozambique can be expedited.

Addressed to	Priority	Implementation	Level of resources	Related conclusion, LL or GP
ILO, national governments and social partners; and the donor community	Medium	Mid-term	High	Relevance Coherence Effectiveness Efficiency Impact Sustainability

Recommendation 7: Share knowledge between Business Service Providers within and outside the project pilot countries

It is recommended that the project initiate knowledge sharing between Business Service Providers (peer-to-peer exchange between countries) on how to best structure efficient and effective training on Decent Work and Labour Rights. Two levels of knowledge sharing can be recommended:

- Public and Private BDSs within the country; and / or
- Sharing knowledge between countries (starting with the collaboration of the three pilot countries).

Addressed to	Priority	Implementation	Level of resources	Related conclusion, LL or GP
ILO, Business Service Providers (BDSs)	Medium	Mid-term	High	Relevance Coherence Effectiveness Efficiency Impact Sustainability

Recommendation 8: Provide simple sample working contracts for constructive SMES in the pilot countries

The ILO, supported by the ILO, Business Service Providers (BDSs), national governments and social partners should provide simple Sample Working Contracts for Constructive SMEs in Mozambique and Zimbabwe to ensure their widespread adoption, and enhance decent work, labour rights, and social protection among workers.

Addressed to	Priority	Implementation	Level of resources	Related conclusion, LL or GP
ILO, Business Service Providers (BDSs), national governments and social partners	Medium	Immediately	High	Effectiveness Efficiency Impact Sustainability

Annexes

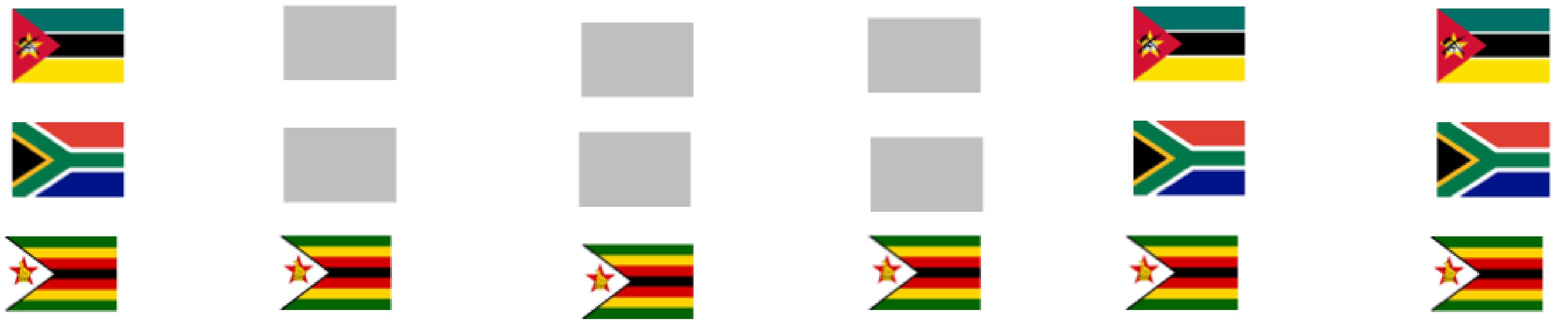
Annex 1. Summary of key results achieved by project outcomes and outputs

Decent Work and Labour Productivity in Southern Africa's Construction Sector
KEY RESULTS achieved by outcome
(as reported by the project in the TPRs)

Outcome 1: Enterprises enhance working conditions and improve labour productivity in the construction market systems of Mozambique, South African, and Zimbabwe

Project Outputs

1.1.1 Strategies to improve union representation and understanding of labour rights by vulnerable workers developed and piloted	1.2.1 & 1.6.1 Mechanism for the expansion of social protection coverage to vulnerable workers reviewed	1.3.1 Small works and employment contracts integrating DW elements updated/ developed and disseminated	1.4.1 Tendering processes revised to integrate DW elements in the procurement of construction services	1.5.1 DW and labour productivity focused Business Development Services piloted	1.7.1 Labour inspection mechanisms developed to reach vulnerable workers



Key Completed On-track Additional Time

1.1.1 **Strategies to improve union representation** and understanding of labour rights by vulnerable workers developed and piloted				
Intervention steps	**Milestone**	**Result**	**Target**	**Progress**
Partnership Structuring	Partnerships Established	4	3	
Beneficiary Needs Assessment	Informal and vulnerable workers needs assessment	4	4	
Intervention design, tools & knowledge products	Evidence informed advocacy strategies developed	4	4	
	Workers' rights booklet produced	1	2	
	OSH training manuals developed	3	4	
Partners Capacity Development	Training of trainers for OSH interventions	-	4	
Intervention delivery to Beneficiaries	Recruitment campaigns for informal / short-term contract workers	-	4	
	Advocacy engagements conducted	-	4	
	Construction Sector Charter on Decent Work (South Africa)	-	1	

1.2.1 & 1.6.1 Mechanism for the **expansion of social protection** coverage including workers compensation for vulnerable workers reviewed (Zimbabwe)				
Intervention steps	**Milestones**	**Result**	**Target**	**Progress**
Partnership Structuring	Partnership established	1	1	
Beneficiary Needs Assessment	Needs assessment data collection	1	1	
Intervention design, tools & knowledge products	Report on Social protection needs of vulnerable and short-term workers	-	1	
Developing Capacity of Partners	Social Protection knowledge sharing event	-	1	
Intervention delivery to Beneficiaries	Contribution to final design of Zimbabwe informal sectors social protection scheme	-	1	

1.3.1 **Small works and employment contracts** integrating Decent Work elements updated/ developed and disseminated &
1.4.1 **Tendering processes** revised to integrate DW elements

Intervention steps	Milestones	Result	Target	Progress
Partnership Structuring	Partnerships established	3	3	⌛
Intervention design, tools & knowledge products	Decent Work oriented small works contract	-	2	⚠
	Decent Work oriented employment contract	-	2	⚠
	Contract categorization framework	-	4	⚠
	Construction Bill (Zimbabwe)	-	1	⚠
Developing Capacity of Partners	Learning visit for Ministries of Public Works (host South Africa)	-	1	⌛
Intervention delivery to Beneficiaries	Employment and small works contracts hosted on partner website accessible to MSMEs	-	1	⚠

1.5.1 Decent Work and labour productivity focused **Business Development Services** piloted

Intervention steps	Milestones	Result	Target	Progress
Partnership Structuring	Partnership established	5	6	
Beneficiary Needs Assessment	Needs assessments	6	6	
Intervention design, tools & knowledge products	Decent Work oriented Business Development Manual	1	1	
Developing Capacity of Partners	Business Development Practitioners in trained	28	30	
Intervention delivery to Beneficiaries	Enterprises trained and mentored	93	600	
Adoption	BDS providers incorporating Decent Work and labour productivity piloted	2	6	

1.7.1 **Labour inspection** mechanisms developed to reach vulnerable workers				
Intervention steps	**Milestone**	**Result**	**Target**	**Progress**
Partnership Structuring	Partnership established	3	3	
Developing Capacity of Partners	Capacity building on strategic compliance for labour inspection (events)	2	4	
	Labour inspectors capacitated	57	60	
Intervention delivery to Beneficiaries	Strategic compliance intervention plans developed (underdevelopment South Africa)	1	3	
	Extension of labour inspection services to workers in semi-formal workspaces (beyond piloting)	-	3	
	Decent Work in Construction Communication Campaigns	1	3	
Adoption	Multi-stakeholder Decent Work in Construction Pledge	1	0	

Outcome 2: SADC adopts strategies to improve labour rights for women and youth in a systemic way, based on evidence-based solutions

2.1 SADC Member States equipped with evidence-based approaches for systemic improvement of compliance with labour rights

Intervention steps	**Milestone**	**Result**	**Target**	**Progress**
Partnership Structuring and due diligence	Engagement channels with SADC decision making organs	2	2	
Tools & knowledge products	Maternity protection comparative analysis	-	1	
	Good Practice in labour rights compliance	-	1	
	Guidance note	-	1	
Intervention delivery to Beneficiaries	Regional trade union dialogue	-	1	
	Technical meeting	-	1	

Annex 2. Terms of Reference of the evaluation

The Evaluation Office of the International Labour Organisation (ILO/EVAL) is seeking expressions of interest from qualified consultant to conduct the independent midterm evaluation of the project **Decent Work and Labour Rights for Southern Africa (Decent Work in Construction)**.

Application deadline: 4 February 2025

Type of contract: External Collaboration Contracts

Expected duration: from February to April 2025.

For further details about the evaluation, please see the ToR or click **here**

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

A CV including the description of how the candidate's skills, qualifications and experience are relevant to the required qualifications of this assignment (maximum 2 pages).

A list of previous evaluations that are relevant to the context and subject matter of this assignment, indicating the role played

A statement confirming their availability to conduct this assignment and the daily professional fee expressed in US dollars, without travel or field visit costs (indicating also fees received for similar assignments in the last 2 years as a reference: project/function/daily honorarium rate paid).

A statement confirming that the candidates have no previous involvement in the implementation and delivery of the project to be evaluated or a personal relationship with any ILO Officials who are engaged in the project.

Two reports in which the evaluator team leader has been the sole evaluator or the team leader.

The names of two referees (including phone and email) who can be contacted.

The deadline to submit expression of interest for undertaking the evaluation is by 4 February 2025. Please send an e-mail with the subject header "**Independent Midterm Evaluation of the project Decent Work and Labour Rights for Southern Africa"** to Pacome Dessero (dessero@ilo.org) keeping in copy EL Moulat, Abderrahim elmoulat@ilo.org

Terms of Reference for the independent midterm evaluation of the project Decent Work and Labour Rights for Southern Africa (Decent Work in Construction)

Title of project to be evaluated	**Decent Work and Labour Rights for Southern Africa (Decent Work in Construction)**
TC Code	**RAF /21/14/SWE**
Administrative Unit responsible for administrating the project	**Country Office Pretoria**
Technical Unit(s) responsible for backstopping the project	**Decent Work Team Pretoria** **MSME Branch, Enterprises Department, Geneva**
Type of evaluation	**Mid-Term Evaluation**
Evaluation Manager	**Pacome DESSERO**
Geographical coverage	**Mozambique, South Africa, Zimbabwe, and SADC**
Project duration	**July 2022 – December 2025**
Evaluation period	**February to April 2025**
Funder	**Government of Sweden**
Budget	**SEK 50 million / USD 4,567,055 (November 2022 UN exchange rate)**

List of Acronyms

BDS	Business Development Services
DWT	Decent Work Team
EO	Employment's Organisation
EVAL	ILO Evaluation Office
ILO	International Labour Organization
JTTC	Joint Tripartite Technical Committee
PSC	Project Steering Committee
ROAF	Regional Office for Africa
SADC	Southern African Development Community SADC Employment and Labour Sector SADC Private Sector Forum
SADC ELS SPSF	
SMEs	Small and Medium-size Enterprises
SATTUC	Southern Africa Trade Union Confederation
TWG	Technical Working Group
TOC	Theory of Change

Background

The International Labour Organization (ILO) is implementing a sub-regional project on promoting labour rights in the construction sector in collaboration with the Southern African Development Community (SADC). The objective of the project is to contribute to improved compliance with labour rights and improved productivity in the SADC construction sector by implementing interventions that benefit vulnerable workers, and contribute towards improved productivity for the micro, small and medium enterprises (MSMEs) that employ them. In this regard, the Project is piloting interventions in Mozambique, Zimbabwe, and South Africa targeted at supporting and incentivising MSMEs in the sector to provide better working conditions, adopt better business processes, and ultimately increase their labour productivity. The good practices, tools and approaches generated through the pilot interventions will be shared with the wider SADC community to inform policies and practices in SADC member states.

The Project is premised on the fact that Southern Africa's rapidly growing population and urban development needs has increased demand for infrastructure including schools, hospitals, housing, and business operating places. This has in turn created a boom in construction across the region along with business and job opportunities at all levels of the construction value chain.

Despite this construction boom and the resulting new job and business opportunities, working conditions for the majority of workers in the sector are characterised by poor labour rights, lack of safe and healthy workplaces, and in general decent work deficits. Young labour market entrants, women, and low-skilled workers often lack protections under national labour laws, and experience precarious contracts, limited access to trade union representation lack of social protection.

In general, MSMEs in the sector also lack basic business management skills, which in turn limits their ability to negotiate proper contracts and construction works are often underpriced by MSMEs resulting in basic OSH conditions not being part of contracts to the detriment of the respect for fundamental principles and rights at work.   In general, there seems to be limited understanding of the business benefits of providing safe and healthy working conditions wherefore this is often left out of contract costing and bidding.

The Decent Work in Construction Project

The Decent Work in Construction Project, officially titled "A Systemic Approach to Decent Work and Labour Rights in Southern Africa's Construction Sector," is a 44-month intervention aimed at ensuring long-term, scalable benefits for target groups through a systemic approach. The project collaborates with the South African Development Community (SADC), along with relevant government ministries and their statutory bodies, private sector players, employers' organizations, and trade unions, including regional bodies of employers' and workers' organisations.

Expected results

This section articulates the expected results for the project inception phase in detail and at a high-level for the 36-month implementation phase. This includes an overview of the proposed outcomes and outputs to be delivered for the months inception phase to be started successfully.

The following sections have been articulated based on the findings from the rapid market assessment, the designed interventions, and consultative discussions with the SADC Secretariat and with key actors in Mozambique, South Africa, and Zimbabwe, and on ILO's previous experience implementing market systems development projects, including those with a construction focus.

The project theory of change in Annex A shows the expected vision for change over the full course of the project implementation phase.

Impact

The Development Objective of the project is to contribute to improved compliance with labour rights and decency of employment in construction sector in the Southern Africa Development Community. This includes the right to be treated with dignity and respect, to be paid the agreed wage on the agreed date, the right to be provided with appropriate resources and equipment to enable the worker to do the job under safe working conditions.

Project Outcomes and Outputs

The project will deliver three concrete outcomes. Outcome 0 an eight-month Inception Phase which operationalised the project team and systems, developed a sound understanding of market system challenges in the construction sectors of the pilot Countries and provided the inputs for refining project design. Outcome 1 is the technical pilot country component, with implementation in each of the three pilot countries, The pilot interventions will generate concrete examples on how to improve labour rights through systemic interventions such that good practice can be presented and taken on-board at the sub- regional level. Outcome 2 seeks to influence sub-regional policy across member States and will be coordinated by the SADC Secretariat with technical support and capacity development provided by the ILO.

Outcome 0: Project is fully operational, with targeted project design that is based on comprehensive understanding of construction sector system and its key constraints and actors

Outcome 1: Enhanced compliance with labour rights and regulatory requirements by workers and MSMEs and improved productivity in the construction market systems of Mozambique, South Africa, and Zimbabwe

Outcome 2: SADC Member States adopts good practices from pilot interventions within the construction sector to promote decent work for women and youth

Project Implementation strategy

The project strategy is broadly guided by the ILO's Systemic Approach to Decent Work, a framework that helps projects contribute to improved compliance with labour rights, through markets systems and enterprise development. The Project does this by creating systemic change in a sustainable way and at scale. To achieve this, the Project has a multi-prolonged approach:

Developing member States' capacity on the systemic constraints in national construction sectors and how to address these constraints through regulatory and policy changes. This will support SADC members to develop deeper understanding of the systemic challenges identified in the project's research as well as bring about ideas that they can practically action.

Supporting interested member countries with research and/or technical assistance to carry-out systemic regulatory or policy changes approach, which can address the key issues at hand. This will ensure that the project goes beyond building member capacity but rather provides support to ensure that those changes c In-country implementation will include the implementation of several systemic interventions at different levels of each country's system to address the root causes of key decent work deficits for the target groups. These levels will include: the core construction value chain, the supporting services and the rules and regulations.

Interventions are being implemented in a way that puts local actors in the lead to drive inclusive, sustainable, and scalable change at the country level. This includes working with key partners, such as the trade unions and employers' organisations at both sectoral and national levels, ministries of labour, other government agencies and private sector companies.an be carried out

The Project intervenes at both country and sub-regional levels as follows:

At country level: In Mozambique, South Africa, and Zimbabwe, the project is working to address key

“systemic failures” in the construction sector which result in most workers experiencing inadequate

labour rights: including low wages, unsafe and precarious working conditions, and poor contract stability. Here, the project trials a portfolio of pilot interventions which engage with government, the private sector and the trade unions and employer’s organisations. The pilot interventions seek to, a) demonstrate the impact of catalytic actions and to generate lessons and good practice that can be shared with the wider SADC member states; and b) highlight the labour rights compliance and low labour productivity challenge in the Southern African construction sector.

The Project is working actively with local construction sector actors and key stakeholders using a Market Systems Development (MSD) approach to pilot innovative approaches that are sustainable over time, that are replicable, and can create large-scale, systemic change in the way the sector operates. Using this development framework, the Project is supporting partners to implement various interventions aimed at addressing specific decent work and labour productivity related sector constraints.

At regional level: The project leverages the knowledge, experience, lessons, and good practice generated through pilot country level interventions to support upscaling and replication of workable solutions and to advocate for SADC-wide policy changes that support improvements in labour rights compliance and improvements in labour productivity across the SADC region and beyond.

Project Management Arrangements

The Project team is based in the ILO Pretoria office, South Africa with one staff member being based at the SADC Secretariat in Gaborone, Botswana.

The project is comprised of the following staff members.

Project Manager: The project is led by an internationally recruited Project Manager who is responsible for the overall technical and operational delivery of the project,

MSD Officer: An internationally recruited Market Systems Development Officer coordinates in- country implementation and supports development of intervention models and strategies,

MRM Officer: A nationally recruited Monitoring and Results Measurement (MRM) Officer manages

the Project’s MRM system,

Policy Officer: An internationally recruited policy expert based at the SADC Secretariat and responsible for documenting and communicating findings and project results,

Finance and Administration Assistant: A nationally recruited Finance and Administrative Assistant (FAA) responsible for providing financial, administrative

Evaluation Background

The ILO considers evaluation as an integral part of the implementation of development cooperation activities. The evaluation in the ILO is for the purpose of accountability, learning and planning and building knowledge. It should be conducted in the context of criteria and approaches for international development assistance as established by the OECD/DAC Evaluation Quality Standard; and the UNEG Code of Conduct for Evaluation in the UN System.

The Project Document stipulates that the Project should be evaluated in line with ILO policy for results-based project evaluations and that this should include two independent evaluations that should seek to establish the project effectiveness, impact, sustainability, based on to the OECD DAC criteria for evaluation.

A mid-term independent evaluation to support project recalibration (if needed) and reinforce implementation after 22 months of implementation phase); and

A final external independent evaluation after 36 months of implementation phase.

This evaluation will follow the ILO policy guidelines for results-based evaluations Principles, rationale, planning and managing for evaluations 4th ed; and the ILO EVAL Policy Guidelines Checklist "Preparing the inception report"; Checklist 4.8 "Validating methodologies"; and Checklist 4.2 "Preparing the evaluation report". The evaluation will also follow the OECD-DAC framework and principles for evaluation. For all practical purposes, this ToR and ILO Evaluation policies and guidelines define the overall scope of this evaluation.

Evaluation purpose, scope, and clients

The overall purpose of the mid-term evaluation is to promote accountability, assess progresses and bottlenecks and strengthen learning by the Project Team, the Project partners and key stakeholders and the ILO. To assess the progress towards the achievement of the project objectives/outcomes as specified in the project document and assess early signs of success or failure with a view of identifying the necessary changes to be made in order to set the project on -track to achieve its intended results using OEDC/DAC criteria coherence, relevance, effectiveness, efficiency, impact and sustainability of the interventions, strategies, and approaches. The specific objectives of the evaluation are to:

Establish the relevance of the project design and implementation strategies in relation to the development frameworks it is supposed to contribute to the needs of the country, targeted institutions, policy frame works and targeted communities.

Identify the contributions of the project to, the SDGs, the relevant national policies, strategies, the donor strategies, the DWCP, UNCDF, ILO's CPOs and P&B and its synergy with other projects and programs in the country.

Assess the extent to which the project is on track or not to achieve its stated objectives and expected results.

Identify the factors (positive and negative) affecting Project implementation modalities chosen and identify reason why this is so.

Assess overall implementation efficiency

Assess impact and sustainability strategies adopted.

Provide recommendations to the Project Team, the ILO, the Project Partners, the Donor, and key stakeholders regarding steps to be taken for the successful achievement the project outcomes.

Provide recommendations to the Project Team, the ILO, the Project Partners, the Donor, and key stakeholders regarding steps to be taken for the successful achievement the project outcomes.

Document lessons learned and potential good practices.

Scope of the Mid-term Evaluation

The evaluation will cover the period December 2022 to December 2024 and will assess implementation process, implementation strategy, outputs and key results produced in this period. The geographical scope of the will be in line with the geographical coverage of the Project as well as engagement with the SADC Secretariat.

The evaluation will integrate gender equality as a cross-cutting concern throughout its deliverables and process. Which will be addressed in line with EVAL guidance note n° 4 and Guidance Note n° 7 on ensuring stakeholder participation.

Clients of the Mid-term Evaluation

The primary users of this mid-term evaluation are the ILO and its key implementing partners, SADC Secretariat as the main Project Partner, the Project Steering Committee (and within it the Tripartite Constituents) as the project oversight structure, the ILO Technical Unit, Country Office Pretoria as the Project Administrative Office, the Eastern and Southern Africa DWT, the Regional Office for Africa (ROAF), and Sida, the Project donor.

Evaluation Criteria

The evaluation will cover the OECD evaluation criteria, the UNEG guidelines and the ILO evaluation policy guidelines focusing on the following:

Relevance

Coherence

Effectiveness

Efficiency

Impact

Sustainability

The evaluation should also consider key evaluations dimensions including Human rights, the SDGs (relevant SDGs and indicators and the principle of “no one left behind”) and ILO policy outcomes and enables.

For the evaluation:

The HR perspective in the evaluation means (i) linking the process to people, (ii) setting tools and approaches appropriate for collecting data; (iii) setting-up processes of broader involvement of stakeholders, and (iv) enhancing access of the evaluation results and process to all stakeholders.

A gender equality perspective implies (i) applying gender analysis by involving both men and women in consultation and evaluation’s analysis, (ii) inclusion of data disaggregated by sex and gender in the analysis and justification of project documents; (iii) the formulation of gender-sensitive strategies and objectives and gender-specific indicators; (iv) inclusion of qualitative methods and use of mix of methodologies, (v) forming a gender-balanced team, and (vi) assessing outcomes to improve lives of women and men. Thus, analysis of gender-related concerns will be based on the ILO-EVAL Guidelines on Considering Gender in Monitoring and Evaluation of Projects (September 2007).

The evaluation process will be conducted following UN evaluation standards and norms and the Glossary of key terms in evaluation and results-based management developed by the OECD’s Development Assistance Committee (DAC).

In line with the results-based approach applied by the ILO, the evaluation will focus on identifying and analysing results through addressing key questions related to the evaluation criteria and the achievement of the outcomes/ objectives of the project using the mainly, but not only, indicators in the logical framework of the project.

The recommended list of questions presented below should be reviewed and adjusted during the preparation of the Inception report. Adjustments to the questions will need to be approved as part of the approval of the inception report by the ILO appointed Evaluation manger.

Key Evaluation Questions

The evaluator shall examine the following key issues:

Relevance

Has the project considered the needs and priorities of tripartite stakeholders and beneficiaries identified in the project document and during the project implementation?

How well does the Project complement and fit with other ongoing ILO programmes in the region?

How well does the Project support regional national development commitments and relevant SDGs, the DWCP, UNCDF, ILO's CPOs and P&B?

To what extent are the project's objectives aligned with the needs and priorities of the target population?

How well does the project align with the local, regional, and national development plans and strategies?

Are the project's activities and outputs consistent with the intended outcomes and objectives?

Did the project adapt to changing circumstances or emerging needs during its implementation?

In hindsight, was the project design logical, realistic, and purposeful towards achieving its objectives?

Coherence

How does the project complement other ongoing initiatives and programs in the same sector or geographic area?

How well are the interventions aligned to maximise systemic changes?

How effectively does the project collaborate with other donors, partners, and stakeholders?

Effectiveness

To what extent is the project likely to achieve its objectives by December 2025?

What are the key factors that contributed to or hindered the achievement of project outcomes?

Has the project followed its Theory of change? Was the development hypothesis underpinning the logical framework supported or unsupported based on project performance data?

Have the quantity and quality of the outputs to date produced been satisfactory?

What outputs have not been produced and why?

What unexpected results (at outputs and outcomes level) have taken place?

To what extent has the project's specific targets for intended beneficiaries (e.g women, youth,) been applied equitably?

Have the project results to date been similar by geographic area?

How effective was the backstopping support provided by DWT Pretoria and HQs?

Efficiency

How efficiently have resources (human resources, time, expertise, funds etc.) been allocated and used to achieve the project objectives? In general, did the results achieve justify the costs? Could the same results be attained with fewer resources?

Were funds and interventions delivered in a timely manner? If not, what were the bottlenecks encountered?

Did the project budget make adequate provisions for addressing gender and inclusion related specific objectives/activities?

Has an effective risk analysis and monitoring and evaluation system been established and implemented?

Impact

Is the project working towards achieving the proposed impacts? Is the project strategy and management steering towards impact?

How has the project contributed to long-term changes or improvements in the lives of the beneficiaries?

Is the project work at policy and practice levels (change in practices, perceptions, technical capacity, governance or enabling environment) significant to contribute to inclusion related concerns.

What evidence is there of the project's contribution to broader development goals or policy objectives?

How did the project affect local capacities, institutions, or systems?

What lessons can be learned about the project's impact that could inform future interventions?

Sustainability

Are project outcomes structured to be achieved in a sustainable manner that enables continuation beyond the project's lifespan?

How well did the project build local ownership, capacity, and commitment to continue the activities?

What are the risks to the sustainability of the project's outcomes, and how were they addressed?

To what extent does it seem that national institutions and implementing partners will be likely to continue the project results without Project funding or support?

Has an effective and realistic exit strategy been developed and is it being implemented? Will project beneficiaries continue to experience improved conditions after the project closeout?

Cross cutting themes: Tripartism, social dialogue, Gender equality and non-discrimination, environmental sustainability

To what extent has the project brought lasting changes in line with the promotion of gender and non-discrimination, social dialogue and tripartism, international labour standards, and just transition to environmental sustainability?

Evaluation Methodology

The midterm evaluation should comply with evaluation norms and standards, ethical safeguards, specified in ILO's evaluation procedures. The ILO adheres to the United Nations Evaluation Group (UNEG) evaluation norms and standards as well as to the OECD/DAC Evaluation Quality Standards. This is an independent evaluation is an independent evaluation and as such, the final methodology and evaluation questions will be determined by the consultant in consultation with the Evaluation Manager.

The evaluation is expected to apply a mix methods approach, including triangulation of data to increase the validity and rigor of the evaluation findings, engaging with key stakeholders of the project, as much as feasible, at all levels during the design, data collection and reporting stages.

The evaluation should include but be not restricted to the following methods:

Inception phase: Preliminary interviews and Desk review:

The evaluation team will have a first methodological briefing with the evaluation manager, and after that, another two meetings. A preliminary meeting with the project team to plan the data collection and. understand project expectations, and another one with the donor for learning and managing the expectations too.

The desk review will include review of the following information sources:

Project documents (Project Document, Market System Assessment Reports, Theory of Change, logframe, Implémentation plan and budget, Intervention plan/guides, MRM Manual, etc.)

Progress reports and related documents

Research and studies conducted by the Project.

Project finance documents and records

Mission reports and related documents

All other relevant documents linked to the project

This will be reflected in the Inception report that will translate the TORs in an operational work plan. The Inception report will be reviewed and approved by the evaluation manager prior to the field work phase.

Data collection phase

Telephone and virtual interviews will be conducted with project staff, project partners and key stakeholders, using pre-designed questionnaires which will be used as the source of primary information gathering.

The Consultant will be expected to travel to the three project Countries (Mozambique, South Africa, and Zimbabwe) to hold interviews with key project partners and beneficiaries and to review project implementation progress. Telephone and virtual interviews will be conducted with project key stakeholders, using pre-designed questionnaires which will be used as the source of primary information gathering.

An indicative list of persons to be interviewed will be prepared by the Project in consultation with the Evaluation Manager. The project will support the logistics related to the organization of these interviews. This list of persons to be interviewed will include among others:

Representative from the SADC Secretariat

Country level Project stakeholders from Mozambique, South Africa, and Zimbabwe

Representatives from ILO Enterprise unit and from DWT Pretoria

Representatives of the donor (Sida)

Project team,

Project Country consultants

Representatives from SATTUCC and from SPSF

Other relevant stakeholders

Stakeholder validation workshop:

A virtual stakeholder workshop will be organized at the end of field data collection activities to facilitate validation preliminary findings of the midterm evaluation. The Evaluator will present the preliminary findings at the validation workshop and receive final stakeholder feedback needed to close any possible data gaps and to finalize the report for final submission.

After the stakeholder's workshop, the evaluator will be expected to develop a draft evaluation report (see below deliverables for details). The draft report will be subject to a methodological review by the ILO evaluation manager and will after the necessary adjustments the draft report will be circulated among the key stakeholders by the ILO Evaluation Manager. The evaluation manager will consolidate the stakeholders' comments and will send them to evaluator for development of the final draft of the evaluation report.

Expected Deliverables

Inception report

The inception report should include a detailed work plan and data collection instrument, following ILO EVAL Checklist 4.8. The report must include:

Description of the evaluation methodology and instruments to be used in sampling, data collection and analysis and the data collection plan mentioned above.

Guide questions for questionnaires and focus group discussions.

Detailed fieldwork plan for the three regions should be developed in consultation with the Evaluation Manager and project team.

The proposed report outline.

Draft and final versions of evaluation report

The draft and report will be presented in English (maximum 30 pages plus annexes) as per the following proposed structure:

Cover page with key project and evaluation data

Executive Summary

Acronyms

Description of the project

Purpose, scope and clients of the evaluation

Methodology and limitations

Clearly identified findings for each criterion or per objective

Conclusions

Recommendations (i.e. for the different key stakeholders)

Lessons learned and good practices Annexes:

TOR

List of people interviewed

Schedule of the field work

Documents reviewed

Data Table on Project targets as per Project logical framework targets -ILO EVAL templates for each lessons learned, and good practice identified

Final Report

The evaluator will finalize and submit the final report to the evaluation manager in line with EVAL Checklist

4.2. The report should address all comments and/or provide explanations why comments were not considered. The quality of the report will be assessed against ILO/EVAL's Checklist 6.

The evaluation manager will review the final version and submit to the RSMEO and EVAL for final review. The evaluation report will be distributed to the key stakeholders to ensure enhance learning and uploaded in the ILO-EVAL e-discovery website for public use to provide easy access to all development partners, to reach target audiences and to maximise the benefits of the evaluation.

ILO template for the Executive Summary

All reports, including drafts, will be written in English. Ownership of data from the evaluation rests jointly with the ILO and the evaluator. The copyright of the evaluation report will rest exclusively with the ILO. Use of the data for publication and other presentations can only be made with the written agreement of the ILO.

Contract Management Arrangements, Level of Effort (LoE) & Time frame

Management

The Evaluation Consultant will report to an ILO appointed Evaluation Manager, with whom he/she will discuss any technical and methodological matters. The Evaluation Manager will supervise the Evaluation Consultant. The evaluation exercise will be carried out with the logistical and administrative support of the Project.

All draft and final outputs, including supporting documents, analytical reports and raw data shall be submitted to the evaluation manager in electronic version compatible with Word for Windows.

The first draft of the report will be circulated to stakeholders for a two-week review. Comments and feedback from stakeholders will be presented to the Evaluation Consultant by the Evaluation Manager for integration into the final reports as appropriate or to document why a comment has not been included.

Agenda

Phases	Tasks	Responsible Person	No of days team leader	Dates
Development of ToR	Draft the ToR	Evaluation Manager	0	December 24
	Comments by stakeholders	Evaluation Manager	0	January 25
Call for EoI	Evaluation Manager	Evaluation Manager	0	January 25
Selection and contracting of the consultants	Evaluation Manager and the project team for contracting	Evaluation Manager/project team	0	February 25
Briefing	Initial meeting and methodological briefing	Evaluation Manager/REO	0.25	24 February 25
Inception phase	Desk Review Preliminary interviews with the project CTA and the donor Inception report	Team leader	5.75	24 February to 1 March 25
	Review and Approval of inception report	Evaluation Manager	0	3 - 7 March 25
Field data collection	In-country and virtual consultations Field visits Interviews with projects staff, partners, and beneficiaries	Team leader	12	10 - 25 March 25
	Stakeholders workshop for sharing of preliminary findings	Team leader	1	26 March 25
	Review by Evaluation Manager	Evaluation Manager	0	2 to 4 April 25
	Circulate draft report to stakeholders for comments	Evaluation Manager	0	7 - 20 April 25
	Consolidate comments of stakeholders and send to the evaluator	Evaluation Manager	0	21 April 25

Phases	Tasks	Responsible Person	No of days team leader	Dates
	Integration of comments	Team leader	1	22 April 25
Draft reporting	Draft report writing	Team leader	5	27 March to 1 April 25
Final report	Review of final report and approval by EVAL	Senior Regional M&E	0	22 -30 April 25
TOTAL			**25**	

Budget

A budget for this Mid-term evaluation has been allocated to cover the evaluator's fees, cost of international and domestic travels and the organization of workshops and consultative meetings with stakeholders. The evaluation budget includes:

Fees for the evaluator for 25 non-consecutive workdays.

Cost of international travel from evaluator' home to Harare. In accordance with the relevant ILO rules, the ILO will provide pre-paid return air tickets in economy class and by the most direct route.

Daily Subsistence Allowance (DSA) during the mission, if applicable. The ILO will pay DSA at the standard UN rate for the dates of the trips to cover lodging, meals and incidentals while on travel, as per ILO policy, Local transportation in the project areas.

Cost of meetings, workshops

Required Experience and Qualifications

The independent evaluator will be selected based on proven evaluation experience and meeting the following independence criteria:

A master's degree in any of the following, social sciences, development studies, economics, or other related graduate qualifications

A minimum of 5-7 years of professional experience specifically in evaluating international multi- country development initiatives, including UN projects, and with policy level work and institutional building related work

Demonstrates high knowledge and experience with the application in Market Systems Development and decent work in construction

Experience in qualitative and quantitative data collection and analysis, including survey design,

A good understanding of ILO mandate and tripartite structure

Experience in facilitating workshops for evaluation findings.

Have no previous or current involvement – or offers of prospective employment – with the ILO project or programme being evaluated.

Have no personal links to the project.

Knowledge and previous work experience in the country/region will be an asset.

Fluent in spoken and written English. Basic knowledge of Portuguese will be an added advantage.

Annexes

1- Code of conduct form (To be signed by the evaluators)

Microsoft Word - Evaluators_code%20of%20conduct_Final_EVAL_7.11.18.doc (ilo.org)

CHECKLIST 4.8 WRITING THE INCEPTION REPORT Date: Feb 2021, v. 3 (v.1 -2012)wcms_746817.pdf (ilo.org)

Checklist 4.2: Preparing the evaluation report (wcms_746808.pdf (ilo.org)

Template for evaluation title page http://www.ilo.org/eval/Evaluationguidance/WCMS_166357/lang--en/index.htm

Checklist 4.4: Preparing the Evaluation Report Summary X Date: April 2021, v.2 (v.1 2012) wcms_746811.pdf (ilo.org)

Template 4.1: Lessons learned X DATE: MARCH 2021 (wcms_746730.pdf (ilo.org)

Template 4.2: Emerging good practices X DATE: MARCH 2021 wcms_746821.pdf (ilo.org)

Template for evaluation title page http://www.ilo.org/eval/Evaluationguidance/WCMS_166357/lang--en/index.htm

Template for evaluation summary http://www.ilo.org/legacy/english/edmas/eval/template- summary-en.doc

8- EVAL's Protocol on collecting evaluative evidence on the ILO's COVID-19 response measures through decentralized evaluation https://login.ilo.org/adfs/ls/wia?wa=wsignin1.0&wtrealm=urn%3ailo%3aintranet%3asharepoint& wctx=https%3a%2f%2fintranet.ilo.org%2fcollaborate%2fevalksp%2f_layouts%2f15%2fAuthenticate

.aspx%3fSource%3d%252Fcollaborate%252Fevalksp%252FPublishingImages%252FPages%252Fdefault%252FProtocol%2520for%2520decentralized%2520evaluations%2520%252D%2520Draft%2520%252D%2520Operating%2520procedures%2520%252D%2520No%252E2%252Epdf&client-request- id=f8975b84-20e7-470b-100c-0080010000d7

9.- Guidance Note 3.1: Integrating gender equality in monitoring and evaluation, Date: June 2020 v.3 (v.1 - 2013)wcms_746716.pdf (ilo.org)

10.- Guidance Note 3.2: Adapting evaluation methods to the ILO's normative and tripartite mandate Date: June 2020 (v.1 wcms_746717.pdf (ilo.org)

11.- CHECKLIST 4.8 WRITING THE INCEPTION REPORT X Date: Feb 2021, v. 3 (v.1 -2012)

Guidance note 3.2 ; integrating social dialogue and international labour standards into monitoring and evaluation (https://www.ilo.org/wcmsp5/groups/public/---ed_mas/---eval/documents/publication/wcms_746717.pdf)

13.- SDG related reference materials (Evaluation & SDGs (Evaluation Office) (ilo.ch)

14.- Rating the quality of evaluation report

http://www.ilo.org/eval/Evaluationguidance/WCMS_165968/lang--en/index.htm 14- Guidance note 7: Stakeholders participation in the ILO evaluation

https://www.ilo.org/global/docs/WCMS_165982/lang--en/index.htm

15- UNEG Ethical Guidelines for Evaluation http://www.unevaluation.org/document/download/548

Annex 3 Details on Key Project Results on Effectiveness

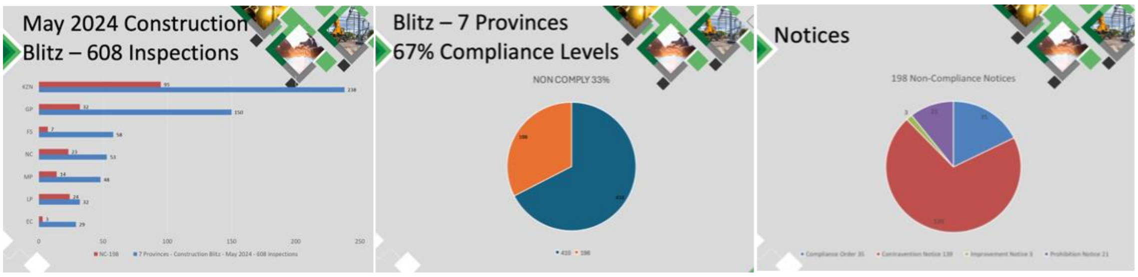
Key results in South Africa

Ministry of Employment and Labour – Department of Employment and Labour (DEL)

- Best practice of utilizing Advocacy instead of Punitive Actions regarding labour inspection:

DEL has trained 200 MSMEs from the NPO Master Builder Association Members in 2024 and 2025, and has conducted the Construction Blitz **(Figure 1)** Inspections with 608 MSMEs in 2024 (139 contravention notice, 21 prohibition notice), with plans to repeat this approach in April 2026. DEL targeted effects of training and shaping change on strategic compliance through advocacy instead of a punitive strategy regarding labour inspections.

Figure 1. Construction Blitz performed by DEL in South Africa



Trade Unions - Building, Construction and Allied Workers' Union (BCAWU)

BCAWU has developed and piloted strategies to enhance construction trade union representation and the understanding of labour rights among vulnerable workers. As seen in **Figure 2**, the result of BCAWU's work were workshops conducted with 100 workers per province in all 9 provinces, with a total of 900 workers trained on Decent Work and Labour Rights using the Pocketbooks and Manuals they produced.

Figure 2. BCAWU's Pocketbook of Understanding Worker's rights in the construction sector, BCAWU's Strategy for organizing vulnerable workers in the construction sector, and OSH training on Workplace safety

Business Development Services (BDS) – Private sector Property Point

- Property Point used a gender-disaggregated indicator for their activities and indicators measurement:

Business Development Service Provider Property Point trained 25 MSMEs with 264 employees

(215 male, 50 female). The evaluator has visited two MSMEs trained by Property Point, as shown in **Figure 3:** PMEK – a female-owned metal works and construction SME, and **Figure 4**: IHLANGA Projects – an MSME in the construction sector of oil and gas.

One of the owners of the SMEs in South Africa expressed: "I always had a safety belt, but during the training, the trainer explained why it's essential to use it even when working at lower heights. I now realize its importance, not just for myself, but for my team as well. I now make sure to emphasize its use to every technician I work with".

Figure 3. Female-owned metal works and construction MSME PMEK, trained in Decent Work and Labour Productivity by Property Point

Figure 4. MSME in construction in oil and gas sector IHLANGA Project, trained in Decent Work and Labour Productivity by Property Point

Key results in Zimbabwe

Ministry of Public Service, Labour & Social Welfare and its Agency, National Social Security Authority (NSSA) and the Ministry of Public Works

- Best practice of internal coherence in Zimbabwe was noted between the Government Agency National Social Security Authority (NSSA) from the Ministry of Public Service, Labour & Social Welfare, and the Ministry of Public Works in preparing the first Construction (Contractors) Bill of Zimbabwe.

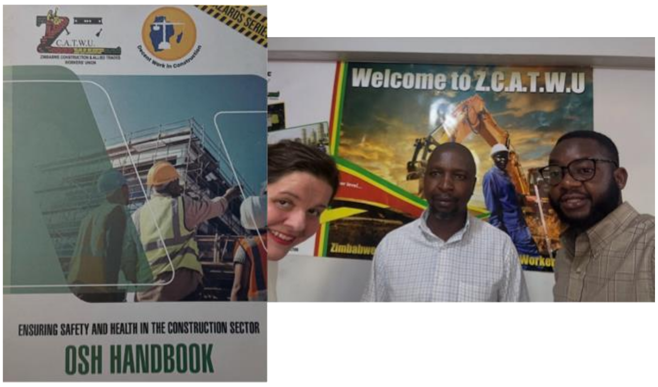
The Ministry of Public Service, Labour & Social Welfare conducted training on decent work and labour rights in Zimbabwe at the end of April 2025.
NSSA performed a needs assessment, data collection, and report on the Social protection needs of vulnerable and short-term workers when reviewing the Mechanism for the expansion of social protection coverage, including workers' compensation for vulnerable workers.
Ministry of Public Works is drafting the Contractors Bill (expected to be passed by Parliament in December 2025).

Trade Unions - The Zimbabwe Construction and Allied Trades Workers' Union (ZCATWU)

- Best practices in internal coherence in Zimbabwe were noted between ZCATWU and the Labour Inspector from NSSA, concerning the creation of synergies when performing Labour Inspections to increase the number and quality of inspections.

ZCATWU produced Decent Work and Labour Rights Pocketbooks, Training Manuals and Advocacy Documents as shown in **Figure 5**. ZCATWU is collaborating with NSSA on labour inspections to increase the number and quality of inspections.

Figure 5. ZCATWU's OSH Handbook for ensuring safety and health in the construction sector



Business Development Services (BDS) – through the Public sector BDS Small and Medium Enterprises Development Corporation (SMEDCO) and Private sector BDS Genesis Global Finance (Private) Limited ("GGF AFRICA")

Public sector BDS provider SMEDCO

- The best practice in Zimbabwe is the existence of specific Occupational Safety and Health (OSH) Studies, which are called Safety, Health, Environment and Quality (SHEQ) in Zimbabwe

The public BDS provider SMEDCO trained 47 MSMEs (The microenterprises had from 1 to 10 employees, whereas the small and medium enterprises had from 10 to 100 employees). The evaluator visited one microenterprise and one medium enterprise trained by SMEDCO, as shown in **Figure 6**: MANAH Constructions, a medium enterprise with best practices in OSH (SHEQ ZIM), and **Figure 7**: Lonestar Construction – a microenterprise that was not compliant with OSH work standards regarding wearing Personal Protective Equipment (PPE).

Figure 6. MANAH Constructions, a medium enterprise with best in practice in OSH (SHEQ ZIM), trained in Decent Work and Labour Productivity by SMEDCO

Figure 7. Lonestar Construction – a micro enterprise that was not compliant with OSH work standards concerning wearing Personal Protective Equipment (PPE), trained in Decent Work and Labour Productivity by SMEDCO

Private sector BDS provider GGF

The private BDS provider, GGF, trained 50 Enterprises – 25 SMEs (SME had from 10 to 100 employees) and 25 microenterprises (The microenterprises had from 1 to 10 employees).. The evaluator visited one microenterprise Vaka Nati, specialized in producing building blocks presented in **Figure 8,** and one SME Heritage Constructions presented in **Figure 9,** trained by GGF.

Figure 8. Microenterprise Vaka Nati, specialized in producing building blocks, trained in Decent Work and Labour Productivity by GGF

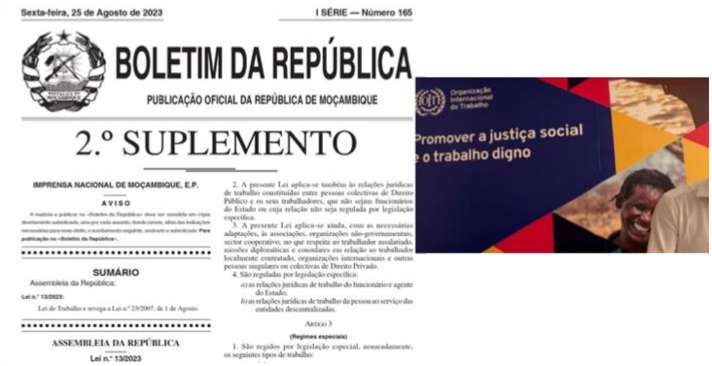
Figure 9. SME Heritage Constructions, trained in Decent Work and Labour Productivity by GGF

Key results in Mozambique

Ministry of Labour, Employment and Social Security

The Ministry of Labour, Employment, and Social Security in Mozambique passed Labour Law No. 13/2023, but it remains unregulated. It still needs to include OSH standards in construction. Large contractors comply with Provision 167 from Labour Law 13 presented in **Figure 10**, but SMEs have not yet done so. Reasons include financial constraints and lack of knowledge.

Figure 10. Labour Law No. 13/2023 in Mozambique



Trade Unions - National Confederation of Independent and Free Trade Unions of Mozambique (CONSILMO) and Mozambican Construction, Wood and Miners Union (SINTICIM)

CONSILMO and specifically SINTICIM (**Figure 11**) are still working on the Decent Work and Labour Rights Pocketbooks and Manuals. Mozambique has yet to ratify the ILO Convention 167, Safety and Health in Construction Convention, 1988 (No. 167).

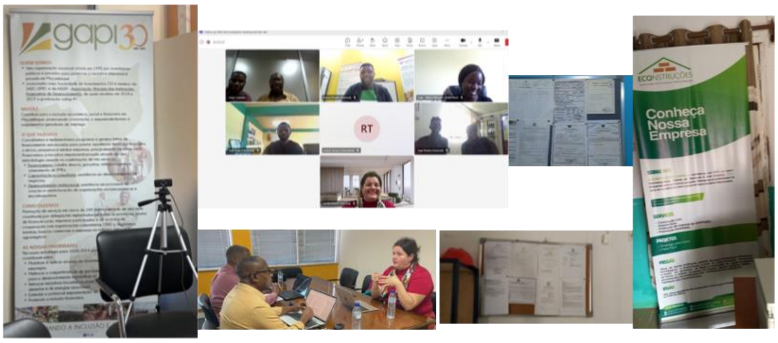
Figure 11. CONSILMO's office in Maputo, Mozambique

Business Development Services (BDS) – through the Public sector BDS GAPI and Private sector BDS Apricont

Public sector BDS provider GAPI

The public BDS Provider GAPI trained 30 MSMEs with an average of 10 workers in the Northern provinces outside Maputo, training a total of 300 workers, as shown in **Figure 12**: MSME ECOCONTRUÇÔES.

Figure 12. ECOCONTRUÇÔES MSME, trained in Decent Work and Labour Productivity by the public BDS provider GAPI



Private sector BDS provider GGF

The private BDS provider, Apricont, trained 30 Enterprises. The evaluator visited one SME JEV Construçoes in Maputo presented in **Figure 13,** and one SME WEBCAD – Construction SME Maputo presented in **Figure 14,** trained by Apricont.

Figure 13. SME JEV Construçoes, trained in Decent Work and Labour Productivity by Apricont in Mozambique

Figure 14. SME WEBCAD – Construction SME Maputo, trained in Decent Work and Labour Productivity by Apricont in Mozambique

Annex 4 Evaluation Matrix

Evaluation Criteria and Questions	Indicators	Data Sources	Data Collection Methods	Key informants	Analysis and Assessment
Relevance and Coherence					
1. Is the project relevant to the achievements of the governments' strategy, policy and plan, the DWCPs, the Labour Rights in Construction Industry, SIDA's Southern Africa's Regional Strategy priorities as well as other relevant regional and global commitments?	Alignment of project objectives with government strategies, DWCPs, SIDA's Southern Africa priorities, UNDAFs, SDGs, ILOs objectives	Project documents, policy documents, strategy papers	Document analysis, interviews	Project staff, ILO staff, SIDA staff, government officials and constituents	Assess alignment and gaps between project goals and governmental strategies and other policy frameworks
2. Has the project considered the needs and priorities of tripartite stakeholders and beneficiaries identified in the project document and during the project implementation?	Considerations of needs and priorities of tripartite constituents and beneficiaries identified in the project document relevant to the project context in the project design and implementation phase of the DWC for SA project in South Africa, Zimbabwe and Mozambique	Project documents, stakeholders feedback	Document analysis, interviews	Project staff, ILO staff, SIDA staff, tripartite constituents, other project stakeholders and beneficiaries	Evaluate consideration of needs and priorities, and perceptions of relevance and satisfaction among beneficiaries and stakeholders
3. How well does the Project complement and fit with other ongoing ILO projects in the region?	Alignment of the DWC for SA project objectives its complementarity to with the ILO's priorities and interventions in Southern Africa	Project documents, ILO country strategies and papers for the SADC region	Review of project reports, data analysis	Project staff, ILO staff	Analyze ILO's priorities and interventions in Southern Africa in relation to the DWC for SA project
4. How well does the Project support regional and national development commitments and relevant SDGs, the DWCP, UNCDF, ILO's CPOs and P&B?	Alignment of DWC for Southern Africa with UNDAF (UNCDF, DWCP, P&B, ILO's CPOs, and SDGs) at country level (South Africa, Zimbabwe and Mozambique) and on SADC level	Project document, policy documents, strategy papers	Document review and analysis, interviews	Project managers, ILO staff, other UN and non-UN organizations	Assess alignment and gaps between DWC in SA with national and regional development commitment and UN and ILO policy frameworks
5. To what extent are the project's objectives aligned with the needs and priorities of the target population?	Level of alignment of the DWC for SA project with the needs and priorities of the target population in South Africa, Zimbabwe and Mozambique	Project document, policy documents, national and regional strategy papers	Document analysis, interviews	Project staff, ILO staff, tripartite constituents, project partners, beneficiaries	Analyze alignment of project objectives with the needs and priorities of targeted beneficiaries

Evaluation Criteria and Questions	Indicators	Data Sources	Data Collection Methods	Key informants	Analysis and Assessment
6. How well does the project align with the local, regional, and national development plans and strategies?	Alignment of the DWC for Southern Africa project's objectives, interventions and modules with local, regional, and national development plans and strategies in South Africa, Zimbabwe and Mozambique	Project document, policy documents, national and regional strategy papers	Document review and analysis, interviews	Project managers, ILO staff, tripartite constituents, project partners, beneficiaries	Assess project objectives alignment with local, regional and national development plans of three pilot countries
7. Are the project's activities and outputs consistent with the intended outcomes and objectives?	Level of alignment of the DWC for SA project's activities and outputs with the intended project outcomes and objectives	Progress reports, M&E reports, stakeholders feedback	Review of project reports, data analysis	Project staff, ILO staff, M&E Expert	Analyze alignment of project activities and outputs with its outcomes and objectives
8. Did the project adapt to changing circumstances or emerging needs during its implementation?	Application of the principles of Monitoring and Results Measurement and updating of Theory of Change and Project logical framework during implementation.	Progress reports, M&E reports, stakeholders feedback	Review of project reports, data analysis	Project manager, ILO staff, M&E Expert	Assess application of the MRM principles, TOC and Project LogFrame during project implementation.
9. In hindsight, was the project design logical, realistic, and purposeful towards achieving its objectives?	Level of consideration of all stakeholders' needs and priorities during its design phase in a consultative manner	Project document, other documents, stakeholders feedback	Document analysis, interviews	Project staff, ILO staff, tripartite constituents, project partners, beneficiaries	Analyze the consultative manner with all stakeholders' needs and priorities during project design phase
10. How does the project complement other ongoing initiatives and programs in the same sector or geographic area?	Alignment of DWC for SA with other similar ongoing initiatives and programs in the same sector of decent work in construction are there in the Southern African region	Project documents, donor's project documents in the SADC region, stakeholders feedback	Document analysis, interviews	Project staff, ILO staff, SIDA staff, Donor's staff, government officials and constituents	1. How does the project complement other ongoing initiatives and programs in the same sector or geographic area?
11. How well are the interventions aligned to maximise systemic changes?	Existence and examples of systemic changes caused by the aligned interventions in South Africa, Zimbabwe and Mozambique	Project documents, policy documents, strategy papers, stakeholders feedback	Document analysis, interviews	Project staff, ILO staff, SIDA staff, tripartite constituents, other project stakeholders and beneficiaries	2. How well are the interventions aligned to maximise systemic changes?
12. How effectively does the project collaborate with other donors, partners, and stakeholders?	Level of collaboration of DWC for SA projects with the donor community, partners and government and private sector stakeholders in the SADC	Capacity-building reports, policy documents, strategy papers, stakeholders feedback, Contextual	Review of project reports, data analysis	Project staff, ILO staff, SIDA staff, constituents, other project stakeholders and beneficiaries	3. How effectively does the project collaborate with other donors, partners, and stakeholders?

Evaluation Criteria and Questions	Indicators	Data Sources	Data Collection Methods	Key informants	Analysis and Assessment
	region and in South Africa, Zimbabwe and Mozambique	documents (SADC regional & in country)			
Effectiveness					
1. To what extent is the project DWC for Southern Africa likely to achieve its objectives by December 2025 in South Africa, Zimbabwe and Mozambique?	Likelihood of achievement of project objectives by December 2025 in South Africa, Zimbabwe, and Mozambique, and if not, setting a realistic time frame for end of project implementation	Progress reports, M&E reports, stakeholders feedback	Review of project reports, data analysis	Project staff, ILO staff, SIDA staff, tripartite constituents, other project stakeholders and beneficiaries	Assess likelihood of achievement of project objectives by December 2025 in pilot countries
2. What are the key factors that contributed to or hindered the achievement of project outcomes?	Types of external factors identified; adaptive measures taken	TPRs, other documents, stakeholders feedback	Document analysis, interviews	Project staff, ILO staff, SIDA staff, tripartit3e constituents, other project stakeholders and beneficiaries	Identify external influences and adaptive strategies used
3. Has the project followed its Theory of change? Was the development hypothesis underpinning the logical framework supported or unsupported based on project performance data?	Level of application of TOC and using project performance data to support hypothesis of Project LogFrame	Project staff, ILO staff, M&E Expert, Project evaluation reports, stakeholders feedback	Review of project reports, Document analysis, interviews	Project staff, ILO staff, M&E expert	Investigate the level of application of TOC and using project performance data to support hypothesis of Project LogFrame
4. Have the quantity and quality of the outputs to date produced been satisfactory?	Extent of outputs' quantity and quality of the outputs produced to date	Project reports, stakeholder feedback	Document analysis, interviews	Project staff, ILO staff, SIDA staff, tripartite constituents, other project stakeholders and beneficiaries	Determine key drivers and barriers to successfully produced project outputs
5. What outputs have not been produced and why?	Contributing and challenging factors to not produced outputs identified	Project and partners performance reports, stakeholder surveys	Review of project and partners reports, data analysis	Project staff, ILO staff, SIDA staff, tripartite constituents, Government officials, parliament members, judiciary partners	Identify the reason why certain outputs not been produced
6. What unexpected results (at outputs and outcomes level) have taken place?	Identification of unintended outputs and outcomes	Project evaluation reports, stakeholders feedback	Document analysis, interviews	Project staff, ILO staff, SIDA staff, tripartite constituents, other	Investigate any unexpected outputs, outcomes or impacts of the project

Evaluation Criteria and Questions	Indicators	Data Sources	Data Collection Methods	Key informants	Analysis and Assessment
				project stakeholders and beneficiaries	
7. To what extent has the project's specific targets for intended beneficiaries (e.g women, youth,) been applied equitably?	Examples of how the project's specific targets for intended beneficiaries (e.g women, youth,) been applied equitably	Project performance reports, stakeholder surveys	Review of project and partners reports, data analysis	Project staff, ILO staff, SIDA staff, tripartite constituents, Government officials, parliament members, judiciary partners	Evaluate effectiveness with which project's specific targets for intended beneficiaries (e.g women, youth,) been applied equitably
8. Have the project results to date been similar by geographic area?	Attribution of project results to date per geographic area, split by country: South Africa, Zimbabwe and Mozambique; If gaps observed, why this happened	Project performance reports, M&E databases, stakeholder feedback	Review of project and partners reports, data analysis	Project staff, ILO staff, M&E expert, tripartite constituents, other project stakeholders and beneficiaries	Determine the similarity of project results per geographical, examine existing gaps
9. How effective was the backstopping support provided by DWT Pretoria and HQs?	Level of support by ILO DWT Pretoria and HQs received, satisfaction with support	Feedback from project team, COs and other ILO offices/staff	Document analysis, interviews	Project team, ILO officials	Measure adequacy and impact of support from ILO
Efficiency					
1. How efficiently have resources (human resources, time, expertise, funds etc.) been allocated and used to achieve the project objectives? In general, did the results achieve justify the costs? Could the same results be attained with fewer resources?	Cost per output, resource utilization rates, including human resources, expertise, and value for money	Financial reports, stakeholder feedback	Data analysis, document review	Project staff, ILO staff, SIDA staff, tripartite constituents	Analyze cost efficiency and resource allocation
2. Were funds and interventions delivered in a timely manner? If not, what were the bottlenecks encountered?	Adherence to budget, timing of disbursements	Budget reports, financial statements	Document review, Interviews with partners, financial analysis	Project staff, ILO staff, SIDA staff, Partners, financial officers	Evaluate financial management effectiveness, and identify bottlenecks in disbursement of funds
3. Did the project budget make adequate provisions for addressing gender and inclusion related specific objectives/activities?	Resources used to address gender and inclusion related specific objectives/activities	Partnership agreements, financial records	Document review, interviews	Project staff, ILO staff, Partners, financial officers	Review extent of resources used to address gender and inclusion related specific objectives/activities

Evaluation Criteria and Questions	Indicators	Data Sources	Data Collection Methods	Key informants	Analysis and Assessment
4. Has an effective risk analysis and monitoring and evaluation system been established and implemented?	Relevance and effectiveness of the M&E system, inclusivity in data collection	Project reports, staff interviews, M&E system	Interviews, observation	Project staff, ILO staff, M&E expert, tripartite constituents and other project partners	Assess management's role in facilitating outcomes
Impact and Sustainability					
1. Is the project working towards achieving the proposed impacts? Is the project strategy and management steering towards impact?	Level of project strategy and management working towards impacts	Project reports, stakeholder feedback	Interviews, document analysis	Project staff, ILO staff, M&E Expert, SIDA staff, tripartite constituents and other project partners	Assess level of project strategy and management working towards impacts
2. How has the project contributed to long-term changes or improvements in the lives of the beneficiaries?	Level and means of project contribution to long-term changes or improvements in the lives of the beneficiaries: better working conditions, including decent work and employment of labour right of the beneficiaries	Stakeholder feedback, TPRs	Interviews, observation	Project staff, ILO staff, SIDA staff, tripartite constituents and other project partners	Evaluate the level and means of project contribution to long-term changes or improvements in the lives of the beneficiaries: better working conditions, including decent work and employment of labour right of the beneficiaries
3. Is the project working at policy and practice levels (change in practices, perceptions, technical capacity, governance or enabling environment) significant to contribute to inclusion related concern?	Alignment of project work and degree of ownership of project results by national tri-partite partners in South Africa, Zimbabwe and Mozambique and by key actors (in all countries); and the participant engagement levels, frequency and quality of interactions	Stakeholder feedback, TPRs	Interviews, document review, observation	Project staff, ILO staff, SIDA staff, tripartite constituents and other project partners	Evaluate the degree of ownership of project results by national tri-partite partners in pilot countries; and the participant engagement levels, frequency and quality of interactions
4. What evidence is there of the project's contribution to broader development goals or policy objectives?	Identified evidence of the project's contribution to broader development goals or policy objectives	Best practice reports, internal reviews	Document analysis, interviews	Project staff, ILO staff, SIDA staff, tripartite constituents and other project partners	Highlight and disseminate evidence of the project's contribution to broader development goals or policy objectives
5. How did the project affect local capacities, institutions, or systems?	Participant engagement levels, frequency and quality of interactions,	Stakeholder feedback, TPRs	Interviews with partners, observation	Project staff, ILO staff, SIDA staff, constituents	Evaluate engagement and active participation levels, and how the project affect

Evaluation Criteria and Questions	Indicators	Data Sources	Data Collection Methods	Key informants	Analysis and Assessment
	and the way the project affect local capacities, institutions, or systems			and other project partners	local capacities, institutions, or systems
6. What lessons can be learned about the project's impact that could inform future interventions?	Identification and integration of evaluation lessons learned on the project impact to improve future interventions	M&E databases, Progress and project evaluation reports, project updates	Review of project and partners reports, data analysis	Project staff, ILO staff, M&E expert	Assess the identification and integration of evaluation lessons learned on the project impact to improve future interventions
7. Are project outcomes structured to be achieved in a sustainable manner that enables continuation beyond the project's lifespan?	Sustainability of project outcomes structured to enable continuation of project outcomes beyond project's lifespan	Stakeholder feedback, TPRs, M&E databases	Interviews, document review, observation	Project staff, ILO staff, M&E expert, tripartite constituents and other project partners	Identify the sustainability of project outcomes structured to enable continuation of project outcomes beyond project's lifespan
8. How well did the project build local ownership, capacity, and commitment to continue the activities?	Level of project's building local ownership, capacity, and commitment to continue the activities	Project reports, stakeholder feedback	Interviews, document analysis	Project staff, ILO staff, SIDA staff, tripartite constituents and other project partners	Assess level of project's building local ownership, capacity, and commitment to continue the activities
9. What are the risks to the sustainability of the project's outcomes, and how were they addressed?	Existence of risks and their addressing by the PMT for DWC for SA to the sustainability of the project's outcomes	Stakeholder feedback, TPRs	Interviews, document review, observation	Project staff, ILO staff, SIDA staff, tripartite constituents and other project partners	Identify the existence of risks and their addressing by the PMT for DWC for SA to the sustainability of the project's outcomes
10. To what extent does it seem that national institutions and implementing partners will be likely to continue the project results without Project funding or support?	Sustainability of project outcomes, continuity of socio-economic and institutional changes	Stakeholder feedback, TPRs	Interviews, document review, observation	Project staff, ILO staff, SIDA staff, constituents and other project partners	Predict longevity and permanence of project impacts
11. Has an effective and realistic exit strategy been developed and is it being implemented? Will project beneficiaries continue to experience improved conditions after the project closeout?	Existence and implementation of an effective and realistic exit strategy that will help project beneficiaries to experience improved working conditions after project end	Project documentation, sustainability assessments or plans	Document review, stakeholder feedback	Project staff, ILO staff, SIDA staff, constituents and other project partners	Evaluate the existence, practicality and foresight of the exit strategy

Evaluation Criteria and Questions	Indicators	Data Sources	Data Collection Methods	Key informants	Analysis and Assessment
Cross-cutting: Gender Equality and non-discrimination, Tripartism, Social dialogue, Environmental Sustainability, and International Labour Standards					
1. To what extent has the project brought lasting changes in line with the promotion of gender and non-discrimination, social dialogue and tripartism, international labour standards, and just transition to environmental sustainability?	Inclusion of tripartism and social dialogue principles, adherence to international labour standards, incorporation of environmental sustainability measures; Gender inclusion metrics, participation rates by gender	Project design documents, stakeholder meeting minutes, sustainability reports, project data, monitoring reports	Documents and data analysis, stakeholder interviews, gender-focused reviews	Project staff, ILO staff, SIDA staff, constituents and other project partners	Evaluate incorporation of tripartism and dialogue principles and effectiveness of gender mainstreaming strategies
2. What is the project's positive and negative effects on women, from the beneficiaries of the Decent Work in Construction for Southern Africa project in South Africa, Zimbabwe and Mozambique?	Existence and effectiveness of gender-sensitive monitoring structures, adequacy of gender-disaggregated data	Monitoring frameworks, project reports	Document review, interviews	Project staff, ILO staff, SIDA staff, Monitoring and Evaluation officers, Gender advisors	Assess adequacy of gender-focused monitoring systems and project’s positive and negative effects on women

Annex 5 Documents reviewed

1. Terms of Reference for the Mid-term independent evaluation of ILO Decent Work and Labour Rights for Southern Africa (Focus on Construction Sector) from January 2025

2. Project document for the ILO project: "Decent Work and Labour Rights for Southern Africa (Focus on Construction Sector)" - Building a pathway to improved productivity for MSMEs and working conditions for vulnerable workers from April 2023, SME Unit, ENTERPRISES Department / DWT Pretoria

3. Inception Phase Project Document: Development Cooperation Project Document: A Systemic Approach to Decent Work and Labour Rights in Southern Africa's Construction Sector: Building a pathway to improved working conditions for youth and the working poor, SME Unit, ENTERPRISES Department / DWT Pretoria, April 2022

4. ILO EVAL Evaluation Tools/Guidelines

5. Financial documents (Budget and Expenditures) for Decent Work and Labour Rights for Southern Africa (Focus on Construction Sector)

6. Project Reports for Decent Work and Labour Rights for Southern Africa (Focus on Construction Sector

7. A market systems analysis of the construction sector in Mozambique - Building a pathway to improved working conditions for vulnerable workers, ILO Decent Work in Construction, 2024

8. A market systems analysis of the construction sector in Zimbabwe - Building a pathway to improved working conditions for vulnerable workers, ILO Decent Work in Construction, 2024

9. A market systems analysis of the construction sector in South Africa - Building a pathway to improved working conditions for vulnerable workers, ILO Decent Work in Construction, 2024

10. Guidelines on writing an Inception Report from International Labour Organization (ILO) wcms 746817 from Feb 2021, v. 3 (v.1 -2012)

11. Monitoring and Results Measurement Plan and practical guidelines for the project: Decent Work in Construction for Southern Africa, February 2025

12. Communication Strategy for the project Decent Work and Labour Rights for Southern Africa (Focus on Construction Sector)

13. Gender Mainstreaming Strategy for the project Decent Work in Construction Project in Southern Africa (2022-2025)

14. Milestones Report for the project Decent Work in Construction Project in Southern Africa (2022-2025) from 1 May 2025

15. Brand Manual, Decent Work in Construction, ILO Publication

16. Decent Work for Southern Africa: Monitoring and Results Measurement Plan, Darryl Crossman, June 2023

17. Intermediate Inception Report: Decent Work and Labour Rights in Southern Africa (DW4Southern Africa), Project Code (RAF/21/14/SWE), May 2022- April 2023

18. Inaugural Project Steering Committee: Decent Work for Southern Africa, Project Minutes of the Meeting; Johannesburg, South Africa; May 25, 2023

Annex 6 List of Stakeholders Interviewed

Full Name	Institution	Position
Naomy Lintini	ILO	Project Manager for the ILO Project Decent Work in Construction for Southern Africa
Darryl Crossman	ILO	Monitoring Results Management Officer for the ILO Project Decent Work in Construction for Southern Africa
Grace Rwomushana	ILO	Marketing Officer for DWC in SA
Tarisai Kudzuruna	ILO	Finance and Administrative Assistant in Pretoria
Alexio Musindo	ILO	Director
Jens Dyring Christensen	ILO	Senior Specialist, Enterprise Development & Job Creation
Sindile Moitse	ILO	Senior Programme Officer - South Africa
Jasmina Papa Stubbs	ILO	Social Protection Specialist
David Dorkenoo	ILO	Workers' Activities Specialist
Maxwell Parakokwa	SADC	Senior Programme Officer – Employment, Labour and Youth
Sipho Ndlovu	ILO	Senior Programme Officer - DWT/CO Pretoria
Olof Atterfors	SIda	Regional Programme Officer
Hassan Guyo	SIda	Programme Officer Mozambique
Nontyatyambo Manyisane	Department of Public Work and Build Environment	Department of Public Works and Infrastructure
Thulani Khumalo Mpho Lephalala	Building Construction & Allied Workers Union	BCAWU Project Manager, and BCAWU National Coordinator
Sanelisiwe Jantjies	Business Unity South Afica (BUSA)	Acting Director: Social Policy
Hilton Ganesen. Phumudzo Maphaha	Department of Employment and Labour	Senior Specialist: Occupational Health and Safety; Director : Construction, Explosives and MHI Department of Employment and Labour
Desigan Chetty Carmine Fritz Letlhogonolo Ntsodololwana	Property Point	Chief Operations Officer Enterprise and Supplier Development Strategist and Implementer Monitoring and Evaluation Analyst
Lindelwa Siwisa	PMEK - Property Point	CEO of PMEK
Lucas Dube	IHLANGA Projects - Property Point	CEO
Tebatso Mokoena	National Union of Mine Workers	Construction Sector Coodinator
Adolphus Chinomwe Tafadzwa Murungu	ILO	Sr Programme Officer and Programme Assistant

Full Name	Institution	Position
Grace Kanyayi	Ministry of Public Service, Labour, and Social Welfare	Director of Labour Rights
Nicholas Mutengu Norman Sianjeme	Ministry Of Local Government, Public Works And National Housing	Director
Archford Gandidzanwa Dr Betty Nyereyegona	NSSA	Program Manager
Rose Mazo Tafi Razemba Bernice Moyo Collins Kanondo Alouis Mukuni Freeman Mhunduru	Smedco	Operation Director Operations Manager Training and Development Specialist Business Analyst (Harare) Business Analyst (Bindura) Finance Manager
Last Tarabuku Morgan Mazarura Garikai Njenge -	ZCTU & ZCATWU	ZCTU Information & Communication Officer (ZCTU representative for the ILO Decent Work in Construction Project) ZCATWU Regional Organiser & OHS Officer (Project Coordinator for the ILO Decent Work in Construction Project) ZCATWU Programmes & Membership Officer (Assistant Project Coordinator for the ILO Decent Work in Construction Project)
Arthar Mafya	Manah Buildings Constructions - SMEDCO	CEO
CW Robinson	LoneStar Constructions Zimbabwe - SMEDCO	CEO
Felix Kumirai Carlton Simbarashe Takawira	GGF	Directors of Opertations

Annex 7 Evaluation schedule - 2025

Phase	Tasks	Dates
Desk review and Inception Report	- Desk review. - Initial briefing and consultation with the project team. - Elaboration of the Inception report (i.e. evaluation methodology, questions, instruments, etc.) - Finalization of inception report incorporating the ILO´s comments	May 15
Data collection South Africa, Zimbabwe, Mozambique	- Interviews with key stakeholders + Preliminary findings briefing	May 11-to May 28
First draft	- Development and submission of draft evaluation report with all annexures	June 28
Stakeholders' Feedback	- Circulate draft report to key stakeholders - Consolidate comments of stakeholders and send to team leader	July 1
Final report	- Finalize the report after receiving comments	July 7
Stakeholders´ workshops	- Workshops with South African, Zimbabwean and Mozambican stakeholders	July 12

Annex 8 Lessons Learned and Good Practice Template

"Decent Work and Labour Productivity in Southern Africa's Construction Sector"– Mid-Term Evaluation

Project code: RAF/21/14/SWE
Evaluator Name: Iva Bernhardt
Date:23 June 2025

The following lesson learned has been identified in the evaluation process. More explanatory text of the lesson is included in the full evaluation report.

ELEMENT OF LESSON LEARNED 1	TEXT
Brief description of the lesson learned (relation to a specific action or task)	One of the key lessons learned from the Decent Work in Construction for Southern Africa project is that building trust among MSMEs and workers first enables open social dialogue and the performance of realistic analyses of the decent work situation in the enterprise, especially regarding existing contracts and social security protection for workers, as well as practicing their labour rights. Regular, transparent, and prompt communication with all tripartite constituents, including MSMEs and workers, is essential for establishing trust and nurturing an open social dialogue while disseminating information regarding decent work and labour rights. Educating the public about the nature of communication campaigns related to Decent Work and Labor Rights (clarifying that this does not constitute a labour inspection) mitigates fear and fosters a conducive and productive environment among workers and Micro, Small, and Medium Enterprises (MSMEs).
Context and any related preconditions	This learning occurred during project implementation, which aimed to enhance open social dialogue and learned among project constituents. The precondition was the need to build trust to enable an open social dialogue through timely open communication to all tripartite constituents, including MSMEs and workers from the outset of the planned action.
Users / Beneficiaries addressed	The targeted users and beneficiaries of this lesson are the project teams, ILO departments, national governments, trade unions, Business Development Services (BDS), MSMEs, workers and other cooperation partners involved in similar initiatives.
Negative challenges/lessons – Causal factors	A challenge identified was low participation rates in communication campaigns and not open social dialogue due to fear that the communication campaign presents a labour inspection. Additionally, without timely communication and early buy-in, there was a risk of reduced stakeholder support and ownership, which could impede the project's success.
Achievements / Positive aspects - Causal factors	The successful outcome was the strong communication effort through all media outlets, achieved through early informing the stakeholders of the nature of the communication campaign. This approach facilitated stakeholder buy-in and open social dialogue, contributing significantly to the effectiveness and efficiency of the Decent work and labour productivity initiatives in the Southern African construction sector.
Administrative aspects of the ILO (personnel, resources, design, implementation)	For future projects, it is essential to allocate adequate staff resources and time for early and ongoing engagement to foster trust, thereby facilitating an open social dialogue through timely and transparent communication with all tripartite constituents, including MSMEs and workers, from the very beginning of the planned action. This encompasses planning for regular, comprehensive communication campaigns that leverage all media outlets, including social media, throughout the project design and implementation phases.

ELEMENT OF LESSON LEARNED 2	**TEXT**
Brief description of the lesson learned (relation to a specific action or task)	Effectiveness and efficiency in a project depend on assessing a country's baseline situation for specific development objectives before the design phase. Projects must be tailored to each country's socio-economic and political contexts. For instance, stakeholder engagement and policy approaches in South Africa, Zimbabwe, and Mozambique required customization. This experience highlighted the importance of thorough contextual analysis and flexibility in methodologies through meaningful engagement with national stakeholders prior to project design. Regular meetings with key partners are essential for aligning project activities with national priorities, ensuring stakeholder buy-in, and fostering ownership. Early stakeholder engagement helps align activities with national priorities and build strong support.
Context and any related preconditions	This learning occurred within the context of the project implementation, which aimed to enhance the importance of upfront assessing a baseline situation for diverse project activities in different country contexts. The precondition was the recognition of the unique socio-economic and political landscapes in each country, necessitating tailored interventions to ensure relevance, effectiveness and efficiency of project implementation.
Users / Beneficiaries addressed	This lesson is aimed at project teams, ILO departments, UN agencies, national governments, and other cooperation partners engaged in similar initiatives. In particular, stakeholders from countries with diverse socio-economic and political environments will gain from this customized approach.
Negative challenges/lessons – Causal factors	A major challenge recognized was the risk of untimely assessment of the baseline situation in a country and misaligning project activities with local needs if a generic approach were used. Without customizing to specific contexts, project effectiveness and stakeholder engagement might decline, threatening overall project success.
Achievements / Positive aspects - Causal factors	The successful outcome resulted from the timely recognition and flexible adjustment of the project's logical framework, allowing effective alignment of project activities with the specific needs of each country through tailored interventions. This approach improved stakeholder engagement and policy implementation, significantly contributing to the success of the project initiatives.
Administrative aspects of the ILO (personnel, resources, design, implementation)	For future projects, it is crucial to allocate sufficient staff resources and time for conducting thorough baseline situation before or during a project design phase, including contextual analyses and developing flexible M&E methodologies. This includes planning for baseline appraisals and tailored stakeholder engagement strategies and adapting policy implementation approaches to fit the unique circumstances of each country.

ELEMENT OF LESSON LEARNED 3	**TEXT**
Brief description of the lesson learned (relation to a specific action or task)	The Decent Work in Construction for Southern Africa project learned that political instability considerably affects and delays project implementation and outcomes. Various challenges have emerged from fluctuating political landscapes, including national elections and government restructuring in the target countries. This lesson is linked to the action of developing contingency plans and flexible project designs to mitigate their impact. By anticipating potential disruptions and formulating strategies to mitigate their impact, projects are better positioned to sustain progress and achieve their objectives despite unfavourable conditions.
Context and any related preconditions	This learning occurred within the context of the Decent Work in Construction for Southern Africa project, which operated in environments characterized by political instability. The precondition was the recognition of the inherent uncertainties and risks associated with such environments, necessitating proactive planning and flexible approaches to ensure continuity and effectiveness.
Users / Beneficiaries addressed	The targeted users and beneficiaries of this lesson are project teams, ILO departments, UN agencies, national governments, and other cooperation partners involved in similar initiatives, particularly those working in regions prone to political instability.
Negative challenges/lessons – Causal factors	A major challenge recognized was the interruption of project activities and the possible hindrances in meeting objectives due to political instability. In the absence of contingency plans and adaptable designs, projects encountered the risk of halted progress, diminished results, and considerable delays in project implementation.
Achievements / Positive aspects - Causal factors	The delayed, however successful, project outcomes were maintaining project momentum and achieving objectives despite adverse conditions, supported by the development of contingency plans and adaptable project designs. This proactive approach allowed for adjustments and the mitigation of potential disruptions.
Administrative aspects of the ILO (personnel, resources, design, implementation)	It is crucial to ensure sufficient staffing and time are dedicated to developing and implementing contingency plans in future projects. This involves creating adaptable project frameworks that can respond to shifting political climates and changes in government and implementation partners. Consistent monitoring and established strategies for potential disruptions will enable projects to respond effectively to instability.

Annex 9 Emerging Good Practices Template

“Decent Work and Labour Productivity in Southern Africa’s Construction Sector”– Mid-Term Evaluation

Project code: RAF/21/14/SWE

Name of evaluator: Iva Bernhardt

Date: 23 June 2025

The following emerging good practice has been identified in the evaluation process. More content can be found in the full evaluation report.

COMPONENT OF GOOD PRACTICE 1	CONTENT
Brief description of the good practice (relation to the project objective or specific result, background, purpose, etc.)	A notable good practice of the “Decent Work and Labour Productivity in Southern Africa’s Construction Sector” project is ILO’s involvement in creating policies and institutionalizing decent work and labour rights principles to ensure building sustainable social security systems. This is triggering a snowball effect from construction to other industries, altering the country's landscape in terms of decent work and social security systems
Relevant conditions and context: limitations or recommendations in terms of applicability and replicability	This practice is broadly applicable and replicable in various contexts. However, its success is contingent on several factors, including the commitment of national governments to creating policies and institutionalizing decent work and labour rights principles to ensure building sustainable social security systems. The practice is most effective in environments where there is a strong commitment to create policies on decent work and labour productivity.
Establish a clear cause-effect relationship	Implementing this practice led to concrete examples of passing of Contractors Bills (for the construction industry) where they did not exist. It also led to strengthening the absolute necessary Occupational Safety and Health (OSH) regulations in Mozambique and prospective ratification of ILO’s OSH conventions.
Indicate measurable impact and intended beneficiaries	Concrete examples are the Contractors Bill in Zimbabwe and Policies on Decent Work and Labour Rights (such as introducing Occupational Safety and Health (OSH) regulations in Mozambique, or initiation of ratifying the ILO’s convention C155 - Occupational Safety and Health Convention, 1981 (No. 155); and C187 - Promotional Framework for Occupational Safety and Health Convention, 2006 (No. 187)).
Replication potential and by whom	This practice has a high potential for replication by other ILO projects, UN agencies, national governments, and cooperation partners involved in similar involvement in creating policies and institutionalizing decent work and labour rights principles to ensure building sustainable social security systems.
Upward linkage with ILO global objectives (DWCPs, Country Program Results or ILO Strategic Program Framework)	Direct linkage with the DWCPs in Zimbabwe and South Africa.
Other relevant documents or comments	

COMPONENT OF GOOD PRACTICE 2	CONTENT
Brief description of the good practice (relation to the project objective or specific result, background, purpose, etc.)	This project's best practice involves utilizing Business Development Services (BDSs) providers to promote decent work, labour rights, and productivity. The BDSs were employed to inspire a change in mindset among MSMEs regarding decent work, labour rights, and the initiation of formal contracting for informal workers within MSMEs by highlighting the importance of decent work and the legal implications of not practicing it. Collaborating with BDSs (both public and private) is crucial for several reasons. BDSs are essential in supporting MSMEs to adopt decent work and labour rights in their routine operations, leveraging their experience and established trust with MSMEs to emphasize the significance of implementing decent work principles.
Relevant conditions and context: limitations or recommendations in terms of applicability and replicability	This practice is widely applicable and replicable in different national contexts either using private or public BDSs. Its success, however, depends on several factors including the MSMEs will of applying fair contracting of their workers, including social protection. It also depends on the country's readiness to invest in the capacity-development and awareness of the MSMEs to apply decent work practices and labour rights using BDSs. The practice is most effective in environments where there is a strong commitment to upholding international labour standards.
Establish a clear cause-effect relationship	BDSs play a pivotal role in building the capacity of MSMEs to apply decent work and labour rights in their daily operations, leveraging their previous involvement and the trust built with MSMEs to emphasize the necessity of applying decent work principles. Similarly, BDSs in South Africa, such as Property Point, provided MSMEs with sample contracts even for short-duration jobs. This will help develop robust national legislation regarding the provision of proper working contracts. This proactive engagement fosters an environment where labour laws are not only well-crafted but also effectively implemented and enforced by the MSMEs.
Indicate measurable impact and intended beneficiaries	The measurable impact includes improved consistency of using working contract and applying social security coverage, with the end goal to develop robust labour legislation. The primary beneficiaries are MSMEs who are compliant before the law, and particularly the workers who gain better protection under the law, as well as employers who benefit from clearer and more consistent legal frameworks.
Replication potential and by whom	This practice has high replication potential and can be adopted by other ILO projects, UN agencies, national governments, and cooperation partners working to improve labour standards and enforcement. It is particularly beneficial for countries where the country's legislation should include decent work, labour rights and social protection of workers.
Upward linkage with ILO global objectives (DWCPs, Country Program Results or ILO Strategic Program Framework)	Direct linkage with the DWCPs in Zimbabwe and South Africa.
Other relevant documents or comments	

Template 4.2: Energing Good Practices

COMPONENT OF GOOD PRACTICE 3	CONTENT
Brief description of the good practice (relation to the project objective or specific result, background, purpose, etc.)	Gathering all tripartite stakeholders (Ministries of Labour, Construction Trade Unions, Employers' Organizations, and executing bodies like public and private Business Development Service Providers) at a single negotiating table to openly discuss the prerequisites, enablers, and pathways toward achieving lasting systemic change in the field of decent work and labour rights in the construction sector. Engaging these stakeholders early in the planning process ensured that work plans were relevant, realistic, and had broad support. This approach facilitated smooth implementation and strong commitment from partners, creating synergies among the policies (labour inspections) of the relevant Ministries, inspections conducted by the Construction Trade Unions, and private sector business development service providers. Additionally, maintaining open lines of communication between project management and staff, as well as with stakeholders, through regular consultations and updates fostered ongoing trust and transparency. This ensured that stakeholders remained informed and engaged throughout the project. Moreover, by involving stakeholders in decision-making processes, the project promoted a sense of ownership and responsibility among partners. This practice was crucial for sustaining project activities and outcomes. The project effectively fostered strong commitment and ownership while adeptly managing stakeholder relations.
Relevant conditions and context: limitations or recommendations in terms of applicability and replicability	This approach can be applied repeatedly in different projects and environments. Its success relies on how effectively engagement strategies are customized to the project's unique details, the available resources, and the ability to involve key stakeholders. These strategies should be adapted according to the project's size, scope, and cultural, sectoral and country context.
Establish a clear cause-effect relationship	This practice directly enhanced project management and results. Consistent stakeholder engagement aligned efforts with national priorities, facilitating easier implementation and boosting partner commitment. This proactive strategy built a sense of ownership among stakeholders, essential for maintaining project activities and outcomes. It enabled smooth execution and strong partner collaboration, creating synergies among policies like labour inspections by relevant Ministries, inspections by Construction Trade Unions, and services from private sector business development providers.
Indicate measurable impact and intended beneficiaries	The potential impact involves enhanced project effectiveness, greater stakeholder ownership and support, the creation of robust stakeholder networks, and the encouragement of long-term benefits. The primary beneficiaries are project partners and target populations, including stakeholders from diverse sectors such as the Ministries of Labour, Construction Trade Unions, Employers' Organizations, and implementing agencies like public and private Business Development Service Providers within the country.
Replication potential and by whom	High replication potential. This practice can be adopted by other ILO projects, UN agencies, and cooperation partners working in similar fields.
Upward linkage with ILO global objectives (DWCPs , Country Program Results or ILO Strategic Program Framework)	Strong stakeholders' engagement and network building have an upward linkage with numerous ILO global objective across many flagship programmes.
Other relevant documents or comments	