International Labour Organization

Evaluation Office

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Resilient, Inclusive and Sustainable Supply Chains (RISSC) Independent Final Evaluation

QUICK FACTS

Countries: Indonesia, Japan, Philippines, Thailand

Evaluation date: 23 March 2026

Evaluation type: Project

Evaluation timing: Final

Administrative Office: Regional Office for Asia and the Pacific (ROAP)

Technical Office: Sectoral Policies Department (SECTOR)

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DC Symbol: RAS/22/10/JPN

Donor(s) & budget: Government of Japan, USD 3.1 million

Key Words: Business and Human Rights, Responsible Business Conduct, Decent Work in Supply Chains, Automobile Manufacturing, Electronic Sector, Aquaculture

BACKGROUND & CONTEXT	
Summary of the project purpose, logic and structure	Launched in 2023, RISSC sought to expand opportunities for decent work and responsible business conduct in key export sectors across three ASEAN countries and Japan. It supported stakeholders in understanding evolving supply chain due diligence requirements and in meeting national commitments related to business and human rights (BHR). The project focused on automotive manufacturing in Thailand, electronics manufacturing in Indonesia, and aquaculture production and processing in the Philippines. In Japan, RISSC supported implementation of the National Action Plan and Business and Human Rights. At approval, RISSC was expected to run for three years with a budget of USD 4 million. The implementation period was later extended by six months to March 2026, while the budget was reduced to approximately USD 3.1 million. RISSC adopted an integrated approach, aiming to generate impact at the enterprise, supply chain, and policy levels. Building on research as its foundation, RISSC used evidence-based insight to guide industry engagement and improvements, offering targeted tools, training, and guidance; strengthening industry platforms and dialogue mechanisms; and advancing policy advocacy to improve the enabling environment for responsible business. RISSC was technically backstopped by ILO SECTOR in Geneva and administered by the ILO Regional Office in Bangkok, working in close coordination with the ILO Country Offices in Indonesia, Thailand, and the Philippines, as well as the ILO Office for Japan. The project team consisted of one programme and one support staff member in each country, managed by a Bangkok-based project manager.
Present situation of the project	The RISSC project ended 31 March 2026.
Purpose, scope and clients of the evaluation	The scope of the evaluation covers all four partner countries and spans project implementation from its inception to early February 2026. Its purpose is to contribute to organizational learning and accountability. The evaluation is framed by six questions set out in the evaluation terms of reference, aligned with OECD DAC criteria (relevance, coherence, effectiveness, efficiency, sustainability and impact) as well as the project theory of change and logical

	framework, which sets out four intended outcomes and nine outputs. Evaluation users include the donor, the project management team, the country offices in Indonesia, Thailand and the Philippines, the ILO Japan Liaison Office, and relevant ILO technical departments involved in decent work and supply chain work.
Methodology of evaluation	The evaluation used a mixed-method design with predominantly qualitative data collection. Interviews and discussion groups engaged 179 stakeholders, while surveys gathered feedback from 100 participants across Thailand and the Philippines. In Thailand, 78 respondents participated in surveys related to RISSC's social dialogue training and mentorship programme, and in the Philippines, 22 respondents—including members of the PAC and the Industrial Tripartite Council—provided feedback.[1] Respondents reflected a broadly balanced gender distribution. The evaluators carried out the evaluation in accordance with United Nations Evaluation Group standards and ILO evaluation policies, under the supervision of a certified ILO evaluation manager.

MAIN FINDINGS & CONCLUSIONS	**Project design soundness and relevance** RISSC had an overall coherent intervention strategy, well aligned with trade agreement labour clauses, evolving supply chain human rights due diligence legislation, and broader sector resiliency concerns in its project countries. The choice of target sector was grounded in a generally clear and logical criteria. However, the project document did not adequately elaborate expected outcomes and pathways to achieve them, with mixed effects on its usefulness. Its open-ended design within a short project cycle increased the risk of weak strategic focus while at the same time allowed the project to be stakeholder-driven and responsive to country and sector needs, thus reinforcing stakeholder ownership and prospects for sustainable results.

[1] The survey was sent to members of the project advisory council in Indonesia and Thailand as well, but no responses were received. The survey was in English which most likely explains the lack of participation.

Overall, RISSC's focus on priority national industries, its dual emphasis on decent work and competitiveness, and the project's perceived neutrality and effective convening role enabled broad multistakeholder engagement across government, employers and workers. At the same time, ILO constituents and industry stakeholders pointed to project constraints: limited scale and geographic reach, difficulties engaging SMEs, particularly informal businesses and lower-tier supply chain actors; tensions in balancing industry priorities; and perceptions of insufficient collaboration with workers' organizations on worker training programmes and worker organization activities. These factors moderated how well the project met stakeholder expectations and addressed their priorities and needs.

Coherence

RISSC contributed meaningfully to the ILO's global strategic priorities on decent work in supply chains, resilient and productive enterprises, stronger tripartite labour-market institutions and social dialogue, and respect for fundamental principles and rights at work. Gender and inclusion received somewhat limited and uneven attention, shaped by structural and contextual factors—most notably the project's primary emphasis on responsible business conduct in broad terms rather than on gender equality specifically, as well as variations in gender composition across target sectors. Although the depth and scope of alignment varied across ILO priority areas, project contributions were appropriate given its mandate, duration, and resource levels. Project interventions also corresponded closely with national DWCP priorities in Indonesia, Thailand, and the Philippines.

RISSC effectively leveraged partnerships with national institutions to deliver outreach, disseminate research, and implement capacity building activities, enabling wider reach, better contextualization of tools, and cost efficiencies across all four countries (Indonesia, Japan, Thailand, the Philippines). RISSC collaboration with other UN agencies was modest but complementary and broke down institutional silos. This partnership driven approach strengthened alignment with institutional mandates and reinforced policy coherence, but it also introduced trade-offs. The benefits of greater inclusiveness and buy in came with coordination costs, delays, and the need for flexible planning to manage multi actor timelines.

Effectiveness
Outcome one was partially effective in strengthening ILO constituents' capacity to recognize and address decent work challenges in the target sectors through research studies and accompanying communication activities. RISSC completed the planned research in Indonesia, Thailand, and the Philippines, and its quality was generally well appreciated. While research findings informed training, dialogue, and tool development, delays and data gaps limited timeliness and coverage, particularly in Indonesia and the Philippines. Strategic communication and validation workshops enhanced visibility and awareness, though country coverage was uneven and knowledge management tools were reduced in scope due to budget constraints.

RISSC achieved its intended Outcome two outputs, including co-developed tools, tailored training, and technical guidance that supported responsible business and decent work initiatives across Thailand, Indonesia, and the Philippines. The mentoring programme in Thailand's automotive sector showed strong participant learning and was reported to spur early enterprise level efforts to apply social dialogue practices and improve workplace cooperation. In the Philippines, the strategic compliance planning workshop led to a follow-up plan for joint inspections, which had been initiated, but not yet fully implemented by February 2026. In Indonesia, the guidance toolkit for SMEs on Responsible Business Conduct, developed collaboratively with the Indonesian Employers Organization (APINDO), has been adopted by APINDO as a guide for its members and as a reference for the Ministry of Human Rights in formulating a new national strategy on BHR.

RISSC delivered planned inputs and made noteworthy contributions toward outcome three objectives on advancing policy reforms and strengthening industry social dialogue forums. Targeted technical inputs informed ongoing national policy revision processes on responsible business conduct and BHR in Indonesia and Thailand, while multistakeholder engagement, particularly through the creation of the Industry Tripartite Council for Aquaculture in the Philippines, helped translate research and dialogue into more coordinated action. Progress was constrained by limitations such as the slow pace of policy reform, contextual factors affecting national level buy in, and institutional constraints and absorptive capacity.

Outcome four activities made modest but useful contributions in enhancing the capacity of Japanese constituents to implement the National Action Plan on Business and Human Rights, with evidence of both tool adoption and strengthened enterprise level practices. Japanese stakeholders valued the practical, sector-focused tools and the ILO's neutral, trusted role. At the same time, they highlighted the need for more tailored, sector-informed analytical support and deeper supply-chain mapping that captures the dynamics of lead firms and their extended value chains, while remaining consistent with ILO's neutral, normative mandate and its system-level engagement approach. Importantly, RISSC fostered new and stronger linkages between several Japanese brands and supply chain actors as well as workers' organisations and ASEAN counterparts, contributing to more coherent and mutually reinforcing actions to promote responsible business practices.

RISSC's gender-related results were concentrated at the level of awareness, with more limited progress in responsiveness and participation quality. Evidence of outcome-level change in gender relations, decision-making roles, or working conditions remains limited, and such changes were not expected within the project's scope and timeframe.

Efficiency

RISSC employed a lean, experienced implementation team, enabling generally timely resource mobilization, collaborative management, and steady overall delivery, despite delayed staff onboarding in two countries and a reduced budget. Tripartite constituents and participants in project activities generally viewed execution as well-coordinated and technically sound, effectively supported by targeted inputs from ILO specialists.

RISSC's limited activity budget, further reduced by a 25 per cent budget cut, affected cost-efficiency in mixed ways. It encouraged cost sharing and lower-cost delivery modalities but reduced achievement depth and had mixed effects on visibility. Country-level allocations varied, with Thailand absorbing more activity funds, plausibly due to several factors, including Thailand's relatively faster start-up phase, comparably higher implementation costs, the strong 'absorptive capacity' of local partners, and variations in the strength and timeliness of ILO country office and other stakeholder engagement between countries. Cost-sharing, partner in-kind contributions, and lower cost online modalities enabled delivery of planned outputs despite constraints, but participants and ILO staff noted trade-offs in engagement depth, flexibility, and visibility.

Impact orientation

RISSC demonstrated emerging impact at the enterprise and institutional levels and contributed to ongoing policy reform efforts in Indonesia Thailand and the Philippines. Across all countries, stakeholders reported improvements in awareness, dialogue quality, institutional coordination, and alignment with responsible business and HRDD frameworks. In Thailand, enterprise-level mentoring strengthened confidence and practical application of social dialogue, while revisions to Section 4.12 of the Thai Labour Standard (TLS 8001–2020) reflected substantive normative strengthening aligned with ILO Conventions No. 87 and No. 98. In Indonesia, RISSC inputs strengthened the labour dimensions of human rights within national BHR strategy revision processes and supported enterprise preparedness for anticipated national due diligence requirements. In the Philippines, the formation and operationalisation of the Region XII Aquaculture Industry Tripartite Council created a platform for coordinated labour-market governance and compliance planning. However, systemic sector-wide impacts on working conditions, labour relations, or supply-chain practices remain emergent and uneven, reflecting the project's short implementation window, limited scale, and the influence of broader economic and regulatory factors beyond project control.

Sustainability

	The likelihood that RISSC's positive results will be sustained is moderately favourable, though contingent on certain conditions. RISSC strengthened institutional readiness, relational trust, and governance platforms among tripartite actors, which increases the likelihood that dialogue mechanisms, policy discussions, and capacity-building efforts will continue beyond the project period. Sustainability is strongest where project tools and approaches have been embedded within existing institutional structures, such as employer organisations, labour administration bodies, university networks (in Indonesia), or tripartite councils. External drivers—including evolving HRDD legislation, Environmental Social Governance disclosure expectations, and trade-linked labour standards—if they continue to strengthen-- further reinforce incentives for continued engagement. However, sustainability risks remain where interventions relied heavily on project-based facilitation, where uptake among Small and Medium Enterprises (SMEs) and lower-tier suppliers was limited, or where policy reforms have not yet been fully operationalised. The durability and scalability of results will therefore depend on continued institutional anchoring, regulatory consolidation, structured follow-up, and alignment with economic incentives at the enterprise and sector levels.

RECOMMENDATIONS, LESSONS LEARNED AND GOOD PRACTICES	
Recommendations	**Recommendation 1.** In future projects like RISSC, ILO should avoid overly open-ended project designs while taking steps (more in-depth consultations during the design phase, longer inception phase within longer project implementation periods, phased implementation designs, etc) to preserve RISSC's success in using data and constituent priorities to drive project design. **Recommendation 2.** Future programming should build on and deepen RISSC's contribution to bridging the gap between high level BHR commitments and the practical capacity required to implement them at the enterprise level. Examples of ways this might be achieved include the expansion of RISSC's Training of Trainers and mentoring models and further development of sector specific HRDD tools with guidance on the operationalization of grievance, response and remedy mechanisms

	Recommendation 3. Future projects should look more concrete ways to integrate competitiveness, productivity, and enterprise upgrading directly into BHR and HRDD interventions. This could include developing tools, business cases, and guidance that show how responsible labour practices, including compliance with international labour standards and national laws, practices that strengthen workers' voice and that address workplace discrimination and harassment, support market access, resilience to shocks, efficiency gains, and long-term business continuity. **Recommendation 4.** Future programming should strengthen the targeted integration of gender considerations. Practical options include integrating light-touch gender diagnostics into sector assessments, embedding gender considerations within existing tools and training, identifying enterprise-level entry points, leveraging dialogue platforms to introduce issues gradually, and applying a simple participation quality lens to complement quantitative data. **Recommendation 5.** Future project should build on and deepen its partnership model. This may be achieved through stronger engagement of workers' organisations in training design, more joint follow-up efforts such as Thailand's mentoring model, and improved monitoring and documentation of post-training results with partners—using tools like baseline/end surveys and business case studies to inform complementary actions. **Recommendation 6.** Given that RISSC's unplanned budget reduction affected the depth, visibility, and consolidation of results, donors facing similar situations should engage with the ILO at the earliest opportunity to formally recalibrate project scope, sequencing, and expected results so that ambitions remain proportionate to available resources. In addition, the ILO should build in financial resilience features—such as upfront contingency design—to safeguard intervention depth when funding conditions change. **Recommendation 7.** The ILO should look for additional resources to consolidate and scale its activities in support of enterprise upgrading and formalisation and improved compliance with production and labour standards in the aquaculture sector. Similar consolidation strategies should be considered in Thailand and Indonesia where demonstration effects have emerged but require

	sustained engagement for institutional embedding such as Thailand's social dialogue training and mentoring programme and the nascent University Network on BHR. **Recommendation 8.** ILO country offices and the regional Decent Work Team (DWT) as well as future projects should work toward consolidating and operationalising RISSC's contribution to policy-level reforms to ensure that normative improvements translate into practice. **Recommendation 9.** Considering the uneven uptake of project tools among SMEs and lower-tier suppliers, future projects should adopt more differentiated engagement models tailored to enterprise maturity levels and absorptive capacity. **Recommendation 10.** Considering its potential for replication, the ILO should invest more systematically in documentation, modularisation, and cross-country knowledge sharing to enhance the RISSC implementation model's scalability and coherence. **Recommendation 11.** Recognising that industrial relations reform typically extends beyond standard project timelines, future initiatives should calibrate objectives to what can realistically be achieved within funding cycles while positioning projects as catalysts within longer reform trajectories.
Main lessons learned and good practices	- Project designers need to strike a balance between the benefits of research- and consultation-led approaches that foster contextualization and ownership, and the importance of defining clear, measurable outcomes that ensure accountability.