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Acronyms

| | |
|----------|---|
| AQAP | Al Qaida in the Arabic Peninsula |
| BDS | Business Development Services |
| CAAFAG | Children Associated with Armed Forces and Armed Groups |
| CAR | Children At Risk |
| CBO | Community Based Organisation |
| CCA | Common Country Assessment by the joint UN teams in Yemen |
| CFS | Child Friendly Spaces |
| CRUCSY | Protecting Children and Youth in Yemen from Recruitment and Use in Armed Conflict |
| CTA | Chief Technical Advisor |
| DDR | Disarmament, Demobilisation and Reintegration |
| E&E | Efficiency and Effectiveness |
| EQM | Evaluation Question Matrix |
| ERRY | Enhanced Rural Resilience in Yemen |
| HDP | Humanitarian-Development-Peace nexus |
| IASC | Inter-Agency Standing Committee (of the UN) |
| ILO | International Labour Organisation |
| IPs | Implementing Partners |
| IPEC | International Programme on the Elimination of Child Labour |
| KIIs | Key Informant Interviews |
| M&E | Monitoring and Evaluation |
| MoSAL | Ministry of Social Affairs and Labour |
| MoPIC | Ministry of Planning and International Cooperation |
| MRM | Monitoring and Reporting Mechanism |
| NGO | Non-Governmental Organisation |
| OECD-DAC | Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development-Development Assistance Committee |
| OHCHR | Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights |
| PwDs | People with Disabilities |

| | |
|--------|---|
| ROAS | Regional Office of the Arab States (of the ILO) |
| SCREAM | Supporting Children's Rights through Education, the Arts, and the Media |
| SDCF | Sustainable Development Co-operation Framework (of the UN) |
| SDF | Sustainable Development Foundation |
| SDG | Sustainable Development Goals |
| TA | Technical Assistance |
| TBE | Theory Based Evaluation |
| ToC | Theory of Change |
| ToR | Terms of Reference |
| UN | United Nations |
| UNCT | UN Country Team (in Yemen) |
| UNEG | United Nations Evaluation Group |
| UNDAF | United Nations Development Assistance Framework |
| UNHCR | UN High Commissioner for Refugees (The UN Refugees Agency) |
| USDL | <i>US Department of State (Bureau for Democracy, Human Rights and Labour)</i> |
| UNICEF | United Nations Children Fund |
| YLDF | Youth Leadership Development Foundation |

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Executive Summary

Project design

The ongoing protracted crisis in Yemen has had devastating effects on all Yemenis, especially on the most vulnerable groups including children. In response to this, the International Labour Organisation (ILO) in partnership with US Department of State - Bureau for Democracy, Human Rights and Labour (USDHRL) designed and implemented a project called 'Protecting Children and Youth in Yemen from Recruitment and Use in Armed Conflict (CRUCSY)'. The project was implemented during September 2018 to July 2021. The project had the following twin aims:

- **Prevent** the recruitment of children and youth as child soldiers
- Sustainably **re-integrate** children formally associated with the conflict in Hajjah, Sanaa and Lahj governorates in Yemen

To achieve the twin aims as above, the project worked on nine different activities carried out through two local implementing partners (SDF and Ghadaq) in Yemen. In addition, the project worked with a range of social partners, including the Ministry of Social Affairs and Labour (MoSAL) in Sana'a and Aden.

Evaluation design

The ILO commissioned a final evaluation of the project, conducted by a team of two evaluators (Ravinder Kumar and Ali Al-Azaki). The evaluation was guided by the OECD-DAC parameters and the elements of the ToR. The evaluation team summarised and articulated a project Theory of Change (ToC) based on the project documents. The project ToC sought to both prevent recruitment of children in armed conflict and achieve socio-economic integration of Children Associated with Armed Forces and Armed Groups (CAAFAG) and Children at Risk (CARs). The evaluation assessed the achievements of results, identified the main difficulties/constraints, assessed the impact of the programme for the targeted populations, and formulated lessons learned and practical recommendations to improve similar programmes in the future. The evaluation gathered evidence to assess the relevance, design, efficiency, effectiveness, impact, sustainability, and management arrangement of the project. While doing so, the evaluation integrated gender equality and inclusion of people with disabilities as a cross-cutting concern throughout the analysis. A detailed set of evaluation questions and assessment methods used is described in the Evaluation Question Matrix (EQM) at Annex 1. The evaluation was conducted through a consultative and participatory process, engaging with key stakeholders remotely and on the ground by the national consultant (Ali Al-Azaki). The evaluation reviewed the project documents and conducted more than 30 key informant interviews and focus group discussions with a range of stakeholders such as the donor (USDHRL), ILO HQ and ROSA team, ILO country and project team, implementing partners, social partners, including government officials and the beneficiaries of the project.

The evaluation followed a utilisation focussed methodology that responds to both accountability and learning concerns of the ILO project stakeholders. It has generated lessons and insights on project performance as well as on how to design future interventions in the Yemenis context. The evaluation was scope and time-bound and its limitations are highlighted in the section 2.4. The evaluation was conducted and completed during July to September 2021. The evaluative assessments were done with stakeholders in all the four governorates, where project interventions were implemented.

Evaluation findings

Relevance:

The ILO CRUCSY project is unique as no other agency is currently implementing projects in Yemen with twin outcomes of 'prevention' and 're-integration' of CAR and CAAFAG. The project interventions were highly relevant with the situation, needs and priorities of CAR and CAAFAG. The project directly responded to the country's needs and humanitarian actions plans. At the same time, the project is complementing local and international humanitarian and development interventions in Sana'a, Hajjah, Lahj and Aden, the four governorates where the project worked. However, accounting for the difficulty of operating context in the conflict zone and the delays that happened in initiation of the project, the intervention design and timeframe (less than 3 years) of the project were not realistic and sufficient to comprehensively address the issues of 'prevention' and 'reintegration' faced by CAR and CAAFAG.

Design:

The project theory of change around four pillars of actions (education, employment, protection, enabling institutional structure) leading to two envisaged outcomes (prevention and re-integration) looks plausible and coherent. The design was feasible if certain assumptions remained valid. The key logical underpinning was to assess the needs and priorities of the target group and accordingly design and deliver the four pillars of support for each member of the target group. If the target groups are well-identified and if the process of change is implemented well, the project had a high likelihood of achieving its stated outcomes. However, this was possible if the local authorities provided approval to the project implementation, which was one of the main assumptions. These assumptions did not work in favour of the project, delaying project implementation. Difficulties of operating context made the project team to simplify implementation steps to ensure that the nine activities of the project get implemented. The logic and linkages of the activities to the outcomes got diluted in the process. The project brought out a training guide which rightly pointed out the processes of community dialogue, family engagement, and tailored messaging needed for appropriate selection of target groups. However, given the complexity of on-ground situation and beset with delays in implementation, the project did not follow the steps proposed in the training guide.

Efficiency:

The project had a slow start and ramp up happened from the fourth quarter onwards. This pace of implementation of the project reduced the time-window (40% of total project duration) that could be provided to the implementing partners to complete their deliverables. Overall, the project allocated ~47% of the resources towards sub-contracts and ~40% directly to the implementing partners. This is a reasonably good allocation for international development projects working in humanitarian /conflict situation where overheads of operations and cost of 'management' are higher. However, across different components of the project, more strategic allocation would have been beneficial e.g., 're-integration' related activities such as mental health referral and psycho-social support received lower attention and budgets. Similarly, the beneficiary number that was possible to support as part of apprenticeship was quite small (100 to 200). This was one of the most effective components of the programme addressing both 'prevention' and 're-integration' outcomes. The feedback from all key stakeholders has been that the project should have allocated more resources towards providing 'working kits' to the beneficiaries who received vocational training. Only 20% of the trainees were provided with kits. The project mandated 20% targets for women inclusion in different activities (as per the IPs), while it achieved more than that (~34%).

Effectiveness:

An analysis of plan vs. actual (see annex 3) indicates that the project delivered all the 9 main activities. However, most of the activities were completed with delay. This impacted on the correct sequence of activities as that would have guided the better design and delivery of the project. Some of the project strategies were implemented well, such as CFS, apprenticeship training. The approaches of providing recreational, psychosocial, life-skill education and vocational skills using the adapted ILO-IPEC SCREAM methodology worked well in Yemen, however targeting of the CAR and CAAFAG could have been better.

While the governorates in Sana'a and Aden acknowledged project support, the Aden authorities were relatively more supportive or positive about the project interventions and initiatives. The authorities in Sana'a felt that the project did not have effective communication and could not go beyond awareness generation.

Impact:

The beneficiaries met (by the evaluator) in Sana'a and Hajjah were traumatized by the war which affected them and their families, so they benefited from the psychosocial support that was provided by the project specially in Hajjah. The conflict is continuing and escalating in some territories in the country. This is reportedly leading to increased recruitment of child soldiers, as stated by several stakeholders interviewed. The project targeted a small set of beneficiaries. Given that the project activities have stopped now, the impact experienced by a small group of beneficiaries could be transitory in nature, as it would require periodic follow up and support to the beneficiaries to reduce the deeper impact of ongoing conflict on CAR and CAAFAG. The beneficiaries (both SDF and Ghadaq) stated that the project created support mechanisms which are not active now. Though envisaged, the project could not successfully collaborate with UNICEF on a case management system for CAAFAG. There are no other specific projects working with CAAFAG in the country, while several agencies are delivering humanitarian support to other target groups.

The project conducted capacity building for MoSAL at Aden. The project also engaged with 70 local actors and community leaders from Lahj and Aden on the subject of how to prevent the use of children in armed conflict and their reintegration. However, as the project realised, 'awareness to actions' is a difficult territory to navigate. Project stakeholders also expressed that the workshops should focus on how to create an integrated mechanism of all local actors and community leaders to report on children recruited and to contribute to their integration.

Sustainability:

Security and instability are a major risk to continuing the benefits and infrastructure created by the project. While it is known that the SDF is continuing to operate some of the CFSs through their other funding, still CFSs face the risk of being attacked and looted, even in the South. It is difficult to be optimistic that CFS will continue to operate given the instability situation. Also, the local councils and parent associations, who are expected to operate these facilities, do not have necessary wherewithal or will to do so. The project could not work on the continuity of intervention due to lack of clear signals from the donor. At the same time, the project did not work out the exit strategy.

'Re-integration' of child soldiers into the mainstream poses several risks and challenges. Most of the child soldiers suffer from physical harm and mental trauma. Recovering from physical harm is possible but it takes considerable time and efforts to make erstwhile child soldiers to recover from mental trauma. Then there is a political and diplomatic challenge of making armed forces accept the principle of non-recruitment of children on the frontline. There are several 'release' approaches that can be adopted for facilitating child soldiers to come out from the armed forces /armed groups. Simultaneously, the family level food basket (short-term support) and livelihoods provisions would need to be created for 're-integration' process to start.

Effectiveness of management arrangement:

Operating with several staffing challenges, the project relied on credibility and wide presence of the IPs in the country to implement the activities. The project has a small core team based in Yemen. The project was expected to be supported by a CTA, budgeted through another project in Yemen. However, the CTA could not be deployed in Yemen in the project timeframe. Effective project management could happen due to the availability of experienced and credible implementing organisations in Yemen. The project was managed with clear role division between the ILO team and implementing partners.

The project M&E system, both at partner and ILO Yemen level, was found to be 'activity' oriented, focussing on tracking the activities and number of beneficiaries being covered. The project M&E plans had a few outcome level indicators. A 'tracking study' mechanism was planned for tracking outcome level indicators, but it was not implemented. Donor reporting required only two indicators, called standard F indicator - Number of child soldiers identified and Number of youths at risk of violence trained in social or leadership skills through USG assisted programs. Overall, the project M&E system was less 'result' oriented and collected little evidence on programme outcomes. However, the project M&E system established a good external monitoring mechanisms through two M&E consultants deployed to periodically conduct field-based assessment of quality and quantity of different activities.

The complex political dynamics directly affected the project implementation as the regulatory environment for obtaining permits and authorizations is constantly in flux often to the detriment of the project. It might have been possible to learn from and collaborate with other UN agencies (e.g., with UNICEF on case management system, UNDP /WFP on systems of managing such risks) and work with other social partners and implementing partners who have had experiences dealing with these risks.

The Project displayed adaptiveness to the disruptions imposed due to Covid-19. The project experienced delays due to Covid-19 by at least 6-months. The project received no cost extension for 10 months and both the IPs receive no cost extension for 5 months. The IP adapted well to the Covid requirements. The trainings continued during covid and were subject to precautionary measures i.e., social distancing (maintaining one-meter distance), using sanitisers, masks and gloves provided by the project. The trainings were relocated to bigger training halls.

Conclusions

The project interventions were highly relevant with the situation, needs and priorities of CAR and CAAFAG in Yemen. The project directly responded to country's needs and humanitarian actions plans. However, in a conflict zone, the project intervention design was not realistic enough to guarantee achievement of the stated project outcomes within its limited timeframe. Further, the project experienced delays which shortened the project duration even with a 10-months no cost extension. Overall, the implementation of the project by the implementing partners could happen for over 12 months, i.e., about 40% of the total project duration of 34 months.

Despite the challenges of the operating context, the project managed to achieve all its activity targets, aligned with the project outputs and outcomes. However, with delays, the correct sequence of activities was compromised. The project did well in mandating and ensuring girls inclusion (~34% girls of total beneficiaries) in the project interventions. The project succeeded in creating an outlet for beneficiaries to express their feelings and receive needed support. However, this impact could be transitory in nature without case management system in practice and without follow up on support as needed. While the awareness among a select group of social partners on the issues of CAR and CAAFAG was created, but for 'actions' to take place post-awareness, it would need mechanisms for all local actors and community leaders to work in cohesion for preventing and re-integrating CAAFAG. It is difficult for a short-term project to generate such integration and sustained benefits for the beneficiaries and for the social partners. This would require follow up actions.

Lessons learned and emerging good practice

- CRUCSY has demonstrated that a project focusing on both 'livelihoods' and 'protection' is both unique and urgent in Yemen and that it should be continued and expanded.
- The project predominantly focussed on 'prevention', and 're-integration' would require a different set of working modalities. It would need to be designed based on the experiences

of the first phase, using some of the approaches¹ highlighted in the training module on the subject.

- In a conflict zone, basing the project interventions on the local support is even more essential, even though seeking and getting it is all the more difficult.
- The project did exemplary work in adaptation of the ILO-IPEC-SCREAM methodology to the country context and to the specific situation of CAR and CAAFAG. The apprenticeship was effective as it was systematically designed and implemented.
- The training guide /handbook was developed to provide operational guidance to the key programmatic areas of prevention of recruitment; preparedness of response; negotiation of release; interim/transitory care following release; identification/verification; family tracing; reunification; reintegration; monitoring of recruitment and re-recruitment; follow-up and advocacy.

Recommendations

ROAS /UN HQ:

While the ERRY² project can continue to focus on the ‘prevention’ part, a new distinct project should be designed, focussing on the ‘re-integration’ related outcomes: Any ‘re-integration’ project would need to be designed consisting of three phases. The first phase could be ‘identification’ phase, wherein data and procedures are followed to track the locations of vulnerable families from where children are joining armed forces or armed groups. This phase would involve stakeholder engagement, community dialogue, parental engagement, tailored messaging as is recommended by the training guide. In the second ‘release’ phase, several categories of CAAFAGs would need to be identified, and their release would need to be secured. This will involve ‘returnees’ as well as those who are still part of armed forces /armed groups. The selected group would then be recruited /inducted to receive the project support. In the third ‘rehabilitation’ phase, a case management approach would need to be appropriately designed to provide support as per each individual case. This support could entail a combination of alternative livelihoods, psycho-social counselling, CFS participation, continuing education, skill development and vocational training. *(High priority, medium to high resource requirement, to be implemented with at least three years’ timeframe)*

Review donor communication protocols: The donor communication protocol can be reviewed especially where the donor desires to have direct communication links with the resident entity (in this case the ILO Yemen team) implementing the project. *(Low priority, low resource requirement, long-term vision)*

Improve knowledge management function: The knowledge management function within the ILO project could be improved with regular sharing of thematic experiences across different contexts which are similar to Yemen, e.g., the ILO interventions in Syria are following a comprehensive model working with CAAFAG. Sharing of these models and experiences could potentially provide requisite ‘good practice’ to the project team to respond to operational challenges and risks. *(Medium priority, low resource requirement, long-term vision)*

ILO Country team:

Improve the CRUCSY theory of change, with clear identification of strategies for

¹ Training module on ‘reintegration’ lays stress on several approaches needed, such as stakeholder engagement and tailored communication, community-based approach, parental support to foster children retention, gender-sensitive outreach.

² The ILO is currently implementing the phase 2 of ERRY - ‘Enhanced Rural Resilience in Yemen’ project. Implemented by the UNDP, ILO, WFP, and FAO. The programme is supporting crisis-affected communities to better cope with risks and increase their resilience and self-reliance. The programme interventions are similar to the interventions undertaken by the CRUCSY project, though the target group is different, which in this case are women and unemployed youth, internally displaced, and host community members.

ensuring result-transitions, and for risk management: Based on the project experiences and the lessons learned from the first phase, 'The CRUCSY model' can become a high-impact model with an improved theory of change. The improvements in the theory of change required are, a) better conceptualisation of needs assessment (with engagement of families) of CAAFAGs, better targeting, b) clear description of how implementation of activities would lead to a hierarchy of results and the results-transition (from output to outcomes) over the project period, c) clear design of follow up strategies till the beneficiaries can overcome some of their present constraints and root causes that condemn them to be CAR and CAAFAG. Further, ensuring result-transitions would require more intense and longer engagement (at least three years) and an effective process of risk management. The project implementation modality in conflict zones would need to consider all possible risks and plan for delays to happen. A longer timeframe for the project implementing partners to properly plan and implement their activities, with follow ups as necessary should be ensured. (*High priority, low resource requirement, long-term vision*)

Improve effectiveness of vocational training by providing post-training finance and market linkage support to the trainees: It is learned from the project experiences that the financial and market linkages can enhance the effectiveness of vocational training. This support can be designed in the form of a 'business mentorship' or BDS support to the trainees who start their business. (*Medium priority, low resource requirement, long-term vision*)

Develop result-oriented M&E systems that capture beneficiary feedback systematically: The project of this nature can regularly trace the beneficiaries and capture their feedback and progress. It can conduct follow ups tracer studies to understand how the beneficiaries can be better supported. Further, the external monitoring mechanism should be designed to provide supportive supervision to the implementing partners teams, with actions agreed after each visit. An improved recording template should be followed to capture incremental improvement over time. Overall, the M&E system in the project would need to be result-oriented in addition to providing progress on the activities. This can be achieved by designing the M&E system on the improved theory of change of the project. (*Medium priority, low resource requirement, long-term vision*)

1. Project background

1.1 About the context and the CRUCSY project

The ongoing protracted crisis in Yemen has had devastating effects on all Yemenis, especially on the most vulnerable groups including children in terms of:

- Death and injury;
- Psychological trauma due to loss of a family member, property and /or the relative;
- Several forms of exploitation and considerable lack of protection services;
- Becoming part of armed groups;
- Destruction of schools and therefore education related disruptions.

Further several other factors are contributing to high rate of unemployment and widespread poverty, lack of access to education and basic services, and forceful recruitment and indoctrination of vulnerable children. In response to this, the International Labour Organisation (ILO), in partnership with the funder of the project (US Department of State - Bureau for Democracy, Human Rights and Labour - USDL), designed and implemented a project called 'Protecting Children and Youth in Yemen from Recruitment and Use in Armed Conflict (CRUCSY)'. The project was implemented during September 2018 to July 2021. The project had the following twin aims:

- **Prevent** the recruitment of children and youth as child soldiers
- Sustainably **re-integrate** children formally associated with the conflict in Hajjah, Sanaa, Lahj and Aden governorates in Yemen

The project believed that socio-economic integration of Children Associated with Armed Forces and Armed Groups (CAAFAG), vulnerable youth and marginalized groups will contribute to stabilization and security of the targeted governorates – Sana'a, Hajjah, Lahj and Aden. The project worked on nine different activities (see section 1.2) carried out through two local implementing partners in Yemen:

- Sustainable Development Foundation (SDF) - focused on social reinsertion, protection within the communities and support to reintegrate education
- Ghadaq for Development – focused on the skills and entrepreneurship development components of the project and for interventions related to women at risk

To achieve the twin aims as stated above, the project worked with a range of social partners, including the Ministry of Social Affair and Labour (MoSAL) in Sana'a and Aden.

1.2 Project Description

The project sought to achieve the following two outcomes:

- Outcome 1 - Children and youths have better access to services and facilities for their social and economic integration
- Outcome 2 - Former CAAFAG and other children at risk of recruitment in conflict above the minimum working age are reintegrated through access to employable skills to achieve decent work and sustainable income

The project sought to achieve these outcomes through the implementation of the nine main activities, through two main Implementing Partners (IP):

Table 1. Activities of the project

| Activity | Stakeholder /target group | IP /ILO | Target |
|---|--|---------|-----------------------------|
| Outcome 1 - Children and youths have better access to services and facilities for their social and economic integration | | | |
| Activity 1.1 Develop training guide on social and economic reintegration of CAAFAG and prevention of the use of children by armed forces and armed groups Activity 1.2 Train Ministry of Social Affairs and Labour (MoSAL) Child Labour Unit, relevant government officials, youth groups, community leaders, CSOs and law enforcement agencies on prevention of children's in armed conflict and their reintegration. | Ministry of Social Affairs and Labour, local councils, members of Social Committees, members of the Higher Council for Childhood and Motherhood, staff of NGOs, and community leader | ILO | 100 |
| Activity 1.3 Recreational, psychosocial, and life-skill education services in the child/adolescent-friendly spaces, including Leadership skills training for youth at risk of violence (50) | Children and Youth | SDF | 1,000; |
| Activity 1.4 Coordination and referral mechanisms for specialized mental health care support, including provision of case referral registers (SDF) | CAAFAG and CAR | SDF | 100 |
| Activity 1.5 Establish three youth clubs and engage CAAFAG, children formally associated with the conflict and children at risk in recreational activities using ILO-IPEC SCREAM Methodology ³ | CAAFAG and CAR | SDF | 200; 20 in running the club |
| Outcome 2 - Former CAAFAG and other children at risk of recruitment in conflict above the minimum working age are reintegrated through access to employable skills to achieve decent work and sustainable income | | | |
| Activity 2.1 Market-driven skills training through identifying marketable skills relevant to the needs of the beneficiaries and market labour assessment, including validation of five competency-based curricula in consultation with employers and training providers | CAAFAG and CAR | Ghadaq | 300 |
| Activity 2.2 Vocational skill training through ILO upgraded informal apprenticeship system, consisting of on-the-job training in firms and workshops and theoretical training, | CAAFAG and CAR | Ghadaq | 200 |

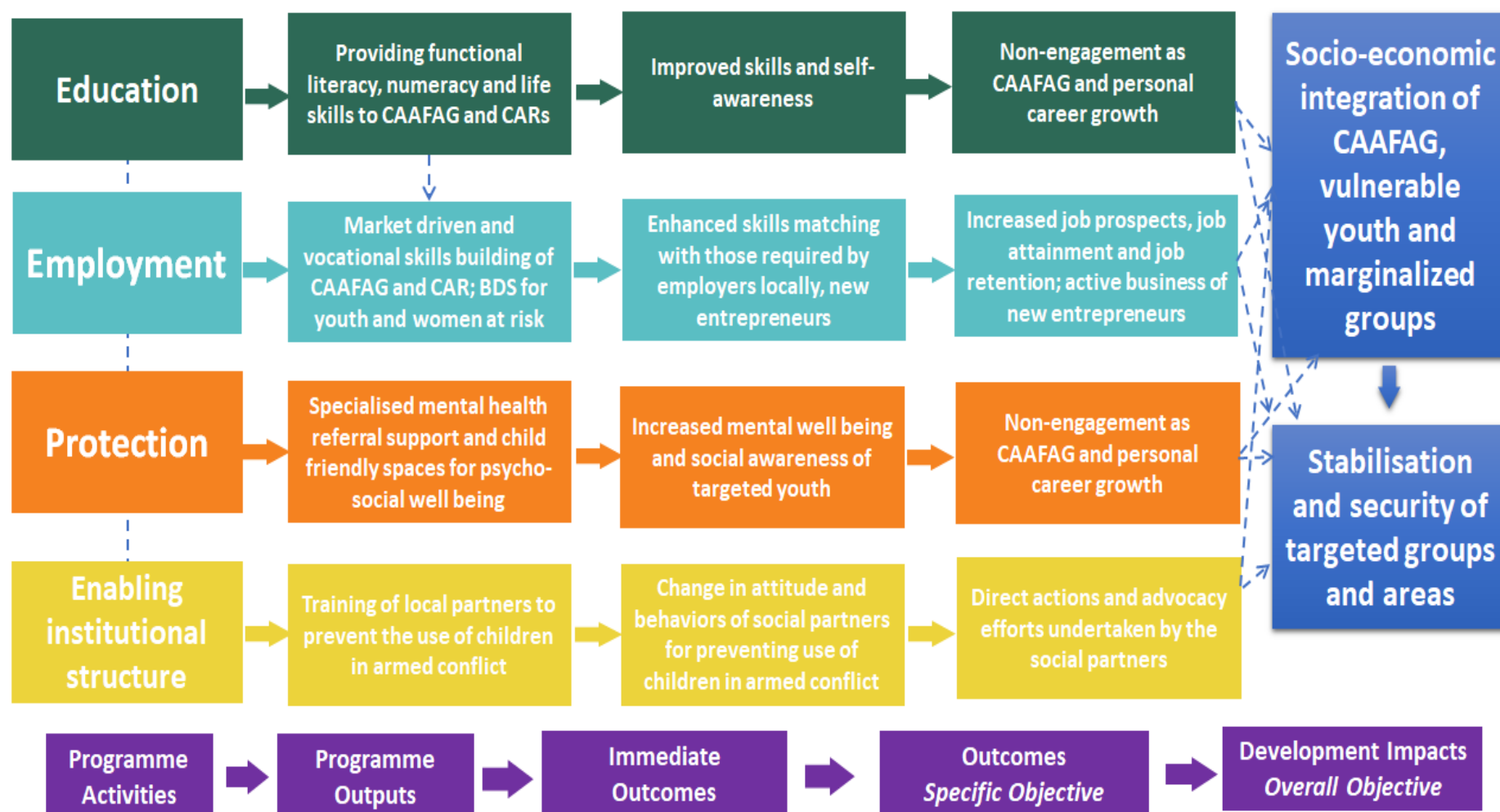
³ Supporting Children's Rights through Education, the Arts, and the Media (SCREAM) methodology was developed by the ILO under its flagship International Programme on Elimination of Child Labour (IPEC). SCREAM special module on child labour in armed conflicts contributes to sensitisation of young people about one of the gravest violation of children's rights. More on this are here - [SCREAM: A special module on child labour and armed conflict \(ilo.org\)](https://www.ilo.org/scram)

| Activity | Stakeholder /target group | IP /ILO | Target |
|--|--|----------------------------------|--------|
| including master craftsmen (70) providing apprenticeship training to 200 youth for at least 300 hours per youth | | | |
| Activity 2.3 Functional literacy and numeracy skills and will be equipped with essential life skills for personal and community development, including training providers (3) give complementary theoretical training, life skills and financial literacy for at least 100 hours; test and certify 200 youth | CAAFAG and CAR | Ghadaq; literacy training by SDF | 200 |
| Activity 2.4 Business Development Services (BDS) for youth with potential for entrepreneurship, including women business owner training programme | Youth with potential of being entrepreneurs, women at risk | Ghadaq | 50 |

1.3 The project theory of change

The project activities, as stated above, are based on project Theory of Change (ToC) that seek to both prevent recruitment of children in armed conflict and achieve socio-economic integration of CAAFAG and CARs. This ToC (figure 1) is developed and articulated based on several project documents by the evaluation team. The evaluation analysed the conceptual clarity, logic, and plausibility of the project ToC in the Yemenis context. The analysis of project performance should be seen in conjunction with the findings on the validity of the project ToC.

Figure 1. CRUCSY project theory of change



2. Project Evaluation Design

2.1 Evaluation Objectives

The purpose of the internal final evaluation was to assess the overall achievements of the project against its planned outcomes and outputs to generate lessons learned and best practices. The evaluation objectives were:

- Review the **overall achievements** of the projects in terms of outputs and outcomes
- Examine **relevance, efficiency, effectiveness, impact, and sustainability** of the project
- Identify the main **difficulties, constraints and distil best practices, lessons**, and insights from implementing the project in the Yemenis' context
- Provide **practical recommendations** that can inform future programming

The evaluation complied with the [ILO evaluation policy](#), which is based on the [United Nations Evaluation Norms and Standards](#) and the [UNEG ethical guidelines](#). The evaluation followed the following requirements as per ILO reporting guidance will be adhered to:

- Formulating and presenting recommendations.
- Identifying and presenting lessons learned, and filling in the appropriate templates; and
- Identifying and presenting emerging good practices and filling in the relevant templates.

The primary users of this evaluation are ILO ROAS, ILO constituents in Yemen, MOSAL, partner organizations (Ghadaq for Development, Sustainable Development Foundation) and the donor (USDL). Secondary users include other project stakeholders and units that may indirectly benefit from the knowledge generated by the evaluation.

The evaluation was focussed on the project interventions areas (Sana'a, Hajjah, Lahj and Aden governorate) in Yemen. The evaluation was carried out during July to September 2021.

2.2 Project Evaluation Framework

The evaluation is guided by the OECD-DAC parameters and the elements of the ToR. The evaluation has gathered evidence to assess the following parameters as well as the project ToC:

1. **Relevance:** assessing context alignment, strategic alignment, and complementarity of the project
2. **Design:** assessing logic and coherence of the project theory of change, project strategies and structures, including gender equality strategy, adaptations in design if any, engagement with 'fit for purpose' social partners.
3. **Efficiency and Effectiveness:** assessing efficiency of resource allocations, cost-benefits of gender integration, effectiveness of project performance (target vs. achievements), effectiveness of stakeholders' participation and contribution, effective execution of project strategies and Unintended outcomes (positive or negative).
4. **Impact:** assessing benefits derived by direct beneficiaries of the project- CAAFAG and CAR, youth including young women at risk; also assessing capacity building and other effects of partnership with the social partners – CSOs, Government and private sector entities
5. **Sustainability:** assessing continuity of commitments by donors and social partners for continuing to invest in the project interventions; also assessing continuity of benefits.
6. **Management arrangement:** assessing management and governance of the project on several associated issues (see the figure 2).

The evaluation integrated covid-19 related disruptions and adaptiveness of the project, gender equality and inclusion of people with disabilities as a cross-cutting concern throughout its methodology and all deliverables, including in this evaluation report. A detailed set of evaluation questions and assessment methods is described in the Evaluation Question Matrix

(EQM) at Annex 1.

2.3 Evaluation methodology and approach

The evaluation was guided by the following principles:

- Evaluation design was vetted against the **OECD-DAC criteria**, reflecting upon the relevance of the interventions, responsiveness to changing contexts, outcome and impact, sustainability, and impact.
- The evaluation considered the **application of mixed methods (qualitative and quantitative) for data collection and analysis**, to the extent possible within the scope of this evaluation. The evaluation enquiry was mostly qualitative through key informant interviews.
- A **participatory and consultative process** was used to generate insights and perspectives from the project stakeholders and social partners.
- **Flexibility and rigour** were built into the evaluation processes to take account of the uncertainties and challenges due to the project implemented within the context of war and conflict in Yemen.

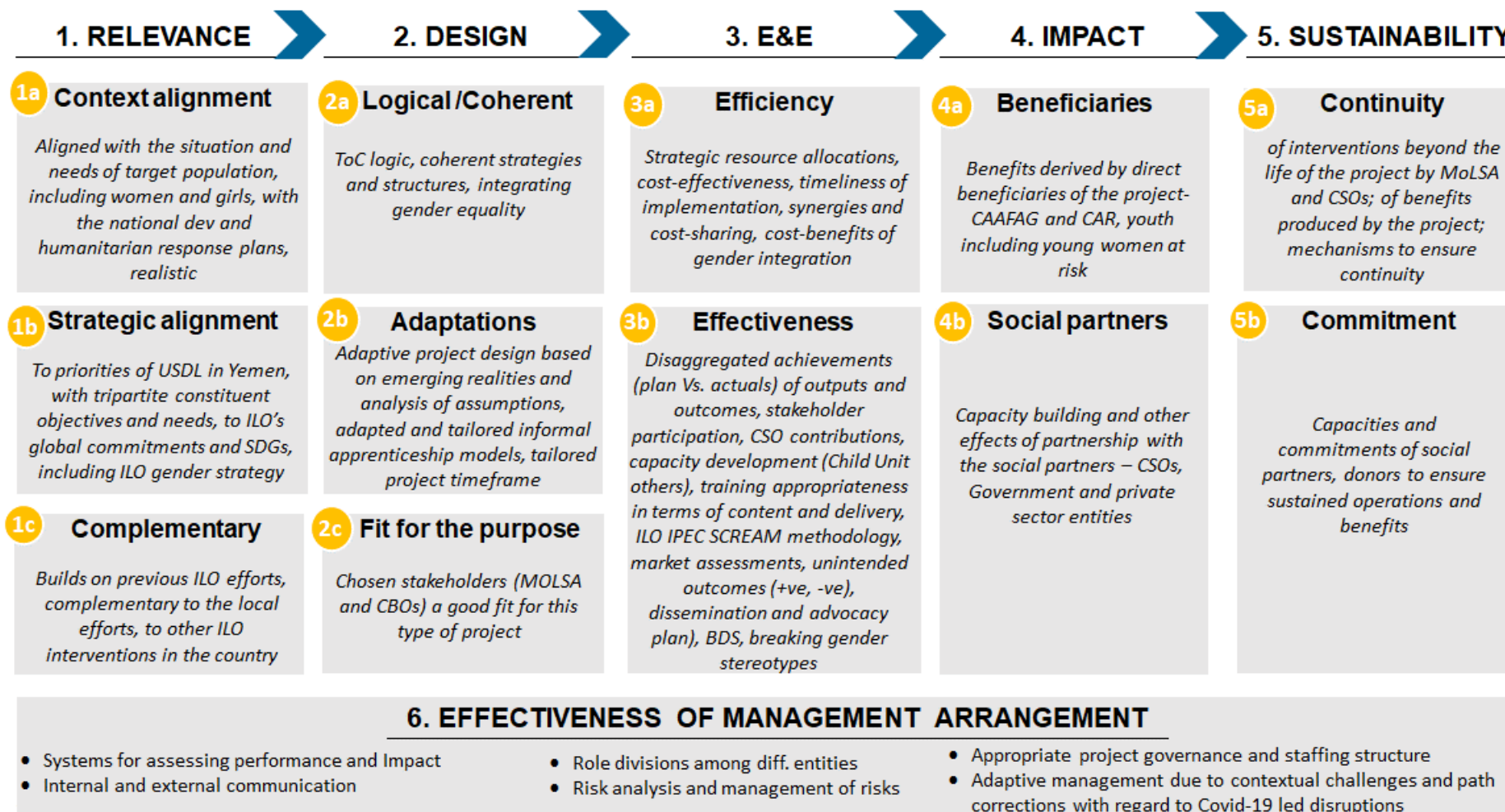
Apart from the primary users (highlighted above), the secondary users of the evaluation are the other stakeholders and units that may indirectly benefit from the knowledge generated by the evaluation.

The evaluation was conducted through a consultative and participatory process, engaging with key stakeholders remotely and on the ground through the national consultant. The evaluation methodology ensures assessment of gender equality and inclusive development (non-discriminatory) approaches followed by the project. Gender and non-discrimination are analysed as cross-cutting issues across several project activities and outcomes.

The evaluation has used the following methods:

- **Review of documents:** Secondary literature related to Yemenis context, programmes, and policies, ILO strategy documents, USDL strategy documents, Project documents, including progress reports
- **Key informant interviews:** The evaluation team had detailed conversations with 30+ key informants sampled from a cross-section of stakeholders representing the project team in Yemen, IPs, trainers, Government. The evaluation team leader conducted ILO, ROAS, ILO-HQ level discussions, including with other UN agencies (UNDP). The national stakeholders were interviewed by the national consultant.
- **Focus group discussions:** The evaluation also conducted focus group with a select group of beneficiaries (*CAAFG and CAR, youth including young women at risk*). These interviews and focus group discussions, including with the beneficiaries, were conducted in person in the country by the national consultant.
- **Contribution analysis** on the evaluation questions /sub questions as well as on the project ToC, based on several sources of data and evidence generated by the evaluation
- **Periodic briefing and debriefing** were conducted with the project team, validating the assessments carried out.

Figure 2. CRUCSY project evaluation framework



2.4 Limitations of the methodology

The proposed evaluation methodology for the project is utilisation focussed and responds to both accountability and learning concerns of the ILO project stakeholders. It has generated lessons and insights on project performance as well as on how to design suitable interventions in the Yemenis context. However, the proposed methodology is not able to assign causality and attribution of the project to the results achieved. The evaluation design has largely focussed on understanding the project 'contribution' to various results achieved, if any. While the evaluation gathered wide range of perceptions regarding the outcomes of the project, it was not able to robustly quantify and statistically signify the outcomes.

In the Covid-19 restricted environment, the evaluation has followed covid-safe procedures and have restricted face to face meetings. The national consultants carried out a few face-to-face interviews with the selected key informants, rest of the stakeholders' discussions used online platforms.

Within the scope of this evaluation, it was not possible to assess a few parameters in detail, e.g., 'complementarity' and 'sustainability' parameters were assessed partially as it was not possible to conduct detailed interviews with the different (de facto and IRG) governmental authorities in Yemen. Similarly, the impact level evidence is only partially collected from a very small group of beneficiaries. It was not possible to cover a wider sample of beneficiaries within the scope of this evaluation.

The theory of change of the project is constructed by the evaluation team based on the narrative conceptualisation in the project document. The ILO ROAS and project team have reviewed and validated this ToC. It is well-understood, by the evaluation team, that a succinct theory of change was not the basis for either designing or implementing the interventions. The ToC-based analysis conducted by the evaluation team, therefore, is more of a programmatic assessment in terms of what worked and what did not, on a potentially relevant conceptualisation of a ToC in the Yemenis context.

Conducting efficiency and cost-benefit analysis was not possible due to non-availability of granular activity-wise financial data. The scope of the evaluation did not include collecting granular outcome (benefit-related) data through the field surveys. No tracer studies were done by the project, from where the outcome data could have been utilised. Similarly, more in-depth cost-benefit analysis of gender integration was not possible within the scope of the evaluation and due to non-availability of cost and benefit data.

3. Evaluation Findings

3.1 Relevance

Context alignment

The project interventions were highly relevant with the situation, needs and priorities of CAR and CAAFAG: Many young men are joining armed groups to secure a source of income⁴ in the absence of employment. Therefore, in the context of on-going conflict in Yemen, the project interventions are highly relevant and well-aligned with the situation, needs and priorities of the targeted groups – CAAFAG and CAR. The Children and women represent up to 79 per cent of over 4 million Internally Displaced People (IDP) in Yemen⁵. 80% of the Yemenis are estimated to be living below poverty line⁶. The social protection system in Yemen has collapsed, worsening the vulnerabilities of Yemeni and their coping capacities. Young adults and children are disproportionately affected by the crisis. As per key stakeholders interviewed, mostly boys are recruited in the armed groups, however girls are also engaged in non-frontline roles in the armed groups and the girls are also disproportionately, though indirectly, affected when boys joins the armed groups. It is pertinent therefore that the project focussed on engaging both girls and boys.

The project directly responded to the country's needs and humanitarian actions plans: As per the Yemen Common Country Assessment prepared by the UN Country Team in Yemen (UNCT), the Yemen Government's Strategic Vision 2025 reflects the official government priorities for inclusion of marginalized youth and gender equality. The CCA further states that the marginalised youth have limited social and economic opportunities which are deemed essential to prevent their recruitment in armed conflicts and violence. The CCA captures the Government priorities to target women's economic empowerment and the development of their skills in relation to the market. The CRUCSY project responded to these expressed humanitarian action plans, as captured by the CCA. The project was aligned with the UN Yemen approach related to operationalizing the humanitarian, development, peace nexus and enabling human development in a complex crisis country environment. The project was in line with the UN's guiding principles, most particularly those that allow for the application of human rights-based approaches, gender equality and women's empowerment; and the principles of leave no one behind, sustainability and resilience.

In a conflict zone, the project intervention design was not realistic enough to guarantee achievement of the stated project outcomes within its limited timeframe: With ongoing conflict since 2015, the situation has only become much worse as confirmed by [UN General Assembly Security Council Report](#), dated 6 May 2021. As per this report, in 2020, The United Nations verified 4,418 grave violations in Yemen, against 1,287 children (944 boys, 343 girls). Overall, the UNSC (2021) report, recommended proper implementation of the 2014 action plan and the 2018 road map to end and prevent child recruitment and use, as per the presidential directive of 12 February 2020 and the military directive of 3 March 2020, including plans to establish child protection units. The report recommended to adopt a handover protocol on the release of children and to implement measures to prevent violations against children, such as reinforced training of its Armed Forces in the prevention of violations, including the recruitment and use of children. In the conflict zone, the project had limited leverage to identify, secure the 'release' and rehabilitate the child soldiers. The project, as designed, had limited abilities to achieve its stated outcomes within its timeframe. Accounting for the difficulty of operating context in the conflict zone, the intervention design and timeframe

⁴ From the Ground Up: Gender and conflict analysis in Yemen as reported in the Common Country Assessment of the UN Country Team in Yemen. The assessment was conducted by CARE International, Oxfam Great Britain, or the Gender Standby Capacity Project (GenCap) of the Inter-Agency Standing Committee (IASC) in October 2016

⁵ Source: [Yemen Operational Update-15 September 2021.pdf \(unhcr.org\)](#)

⁶ Source: [UNHCR](#)

(less than 3 years) of the project was not realistic and sufficient to comprehensively address the issues of 'prevention' and 'reintegration' faced by CAR and CAAFAG.

Strategic alignment

The project is strategically aligned with the focus of the UN Yemen as contained in the visioning exercise⁷: The UN Sustainable Development Co-operation Framework (UNSDCF) 2022-2024, states that the UN will “consider the upcoming peace agreement and the possibility of revising the outcomes to reflect not only on durable solutions but on building resilience, peace, reconciliation and recovery”. The project was designed to achieve ‘targeted and localized opportunities to build resilience and sustainable livelihoods’, which is stated as one element of the UN vision for Yemen. The ILO work in this project is also well-aligned with the two relevant SDGs (8.7 and 16.2)⁸. The ILO Convention No. 182 on the Prohibition and Immediate Action for the Elimination of the Worst Forms of Child Labour prohibits, inter alia, forced, or compulsory recruitment of children for use in armed conflict. The project confirms with the Principles and Guidelines on CAAFAG as adopted at the International Conference on Children involved in Armed Forces and Armed Groups: Free Children from War, held in Paris in February 2007. The “Paris Principles” reflect the strong commitment of States to end recruitment of children and their use in hostilities by both armed forces and armed groups, including girls. The project is founded on Concluding Observations of the of the Optional Protocol to the Convention on the Rights of the Child on the involvement of children in armed conflict in 2014, which stated⁹ the following:

“The Committee urges the State party to comply with its declaration made upon ratification of the Optional Protocol, by which the State party declared “its commitment to retaining 18 years as the minimum age for voluntary recruitment into the Yemeni armed forces, as well as to retaining the ban on the compulsory or voluntary recruitment of any person under 18 years of age”, by expediting the adoption of the amendments proposed to its legislation on military matters, in conformity with international standards, and by taking all the necessary measures for the full and effective application of the Optional Protocol”

Yemen has signed the Optional Protocol¹⁰ on the Convention on the Rights of the Child on the involvement of children in armed conflict in 2007 with a declaration¹¹. As per OHCHR¹², Yemen has signed and ratified 10 out of 18 international treaties on human rights.

Complementary

The ILO has the requisite mandate and models for improving the situation of CAR and CAAFAG: As per the CRUCSY project documents, the ILO has been supporting post-conflict recovery through socio-economic reintegration of ex-combatants, including former child-soldiers. The ILO is a member of the Inter-Agency Group on Disarmament, Demobilization and Reintegration (IAWG-DDR), which was formerly established in 2005. The project document says that along with other 14 UN organizations, the ILO has engaged in developing knowledge and tools for an integrated, and effective DDR. For example, the ILO contributed

⁷ Visioning exercise document of the UN Yemen, July 2021

⁸ [Relevant SDG Targets related to Child Labour \(ilo.org\)](#)

SDG 8.7: Take immediate and effective measures to eradicate forced labour, end modern slavery and human trafficking and secure the prohibition and elimination of the worst forms of child labour, including recruitment and use of child soldiers, and by 2025 end child labour in all its forms

SDG 16.2: End abuse, exploitation, trafficking and all forms of violence and torture against children

⁹ [Treaty bodies Download \(ohchr.org\)](#)

¹⁰ [OHCHR | Optional Protocol to the Convention on the Rights of the Child](#)

¹¹ In accordance with article 3, paragraph 2, of the Optional Protocol to the Convention on the Rights of the Child on the involvement of children in armed conflict, the Government of the Republic of Yemen declares its commitment to retaining 18 years as the minimum age for voluntary recruitment into the Yemeni armed forces, as well as to retaining the ban on the compulsory or voluntary recruitment of any person under 18 years of age.

¹² - [OHCHR Dashboard](#)

with a module on socio-economic reintegration to the Integrated Disarmament, Demobilization and Reintegration Standard (IDDRS).

The CRUCSY project is complementary to other ILO interventions in the country: The ILO is currently implementing the phase 2 of ‘Enhanced Rural Resilience in Yemen’ (ERRY¹³). Implemented by UNDP, ILO, WFP and FAO, the programme is supporting crisis-affected communities to better cope with risks and increase their resilience and self-reliance. The programme interventions are similar to the interventions undertaken by the CRUCSY project, though the target group is different, which in this case women and unemployed youth, internally displaced, and host community members. Through this collaboration, the ILO is working to improve community livelihoods and productive assets to enhance resilience. The CCA reports that in programs such as the ERRY, support for business has been provided in the form of seed funding and access to micro-finance and skills – conditioned upon job creation and gender inclusion.

The ILO CRUCSY project is unique in Yemen and complementing several ongoing interventions by other agencies: No other agency is currently implementing projects in Yemen with twin outcomes of ‘prevention’ and ‘re-integration’ of CAR and CAAFAG (KII). The ILO project in that sense is uniquely placed in the country. With the worsening situation of engagement of children in the conflict in Yemen (UNSC), demand for interventions that can address the serious plight of the CAAFAG is very high, but this is a challenging and sensitive area of work as all warring parties denies involvement of children on the battlefield. The ILO is commended for designing and implementing this much-needed project on a highly sensitive issue in a very difficult operating context. As per the CCA, development donors are involved in a very broad range of sectors and in a multitude of projects. An examination of programmes reveals a special concentration on social protection with some effort in livelihoods, health, education, infrastructure, and agriculture. The project is complementing these local and international humanitarian and development interventions in Sana’a, Hajjah, Lahj and Aden (KII).

¹³ [Yemen \(ilo.org\)](http://yemen.iilo.org)

3.2 Project design

Logical and coherent design

The project conceptualised an intervention design that is plausible, coherent, and potentially feasible to bring change in the lives of CAR and CAAFAG: The project theory of change (see figure 1) around four pillars of actions (education, employment, protection, enabling institutional structure) leading to two envisaged outcomes (prevention and re-integration) looks plausible and coherent. The design was feasible if certain assumptions remained valid. Implementing this comprehensive design would have required for the project to work with the community, identify and engage with the vulnerable families and seek and get co-operation from the local authorities. The key logical underpinning was to assess the needs and priorities of the target group and accordingly design and deliver the four pillars of support for each member of the target group. If the target group are well-identified and if the process of change is implemented well, the project had a high likelihood of achieving its stated outcomes, even after accounting for the difficulties of the operating context. This was possible if the local authorities provided approval to the project implementation, which was one of the main assumptions.

The assumptions did not work in favour of the project, delaying project implementation: The project started with consultations with key stakeholders including the local authorities in Sana'a, Hajjah and Lahj governorates. The authorities in the North did not provide the requisite approval. The project decided to keep the low profile and changed the project communication to as working for 'worst form of child labour' rather than for 'CAAFAG'. This is likely to have compromised the process of appropriate selection of target groups. Implementing partner in the North (SDF) presumably used the mechanism of child protection committees to identify the right target groups (KII). Implementing partner in the South (Ghadaq) was supported by authorities in Aden (MoSAL child unit) to provide details about the vulnerable locations and communities (KII). These selection procedures are not mentioned in any of the project progress reports. It is not clear whether communities and families were engaged in the process of identification and selection /recruitment for the project support. So, while the design in theory was logical and coherent, its translation on the ground suffered many setbacks. The fact that there was turnover in the project team and the CTA could not be recruited to provide the design directions, also contributed to the drift in the first year of project implementation.

With initial setbacks, the project design got compromised to what is 'implementable' in the Yemenis context: Difficulties of operating context made the project team to simplify implementation steps to ensure the nine activities of the project get implemented. The logic and linkages of the activities to the outcomes got diluted in the process. The project brought out a training guide which rightly pointed out the processes of community dialogue, family engagement, and tailored messaging needed for appropriate selection of target groups. The CCA report says that successful projects that rely on collaboration with communities, can be scalable, allowing for bottom-up planning and actions for an integrated preparedness, resilience, conflict resolution and humanitarian response to the needs of vulnerable people. However, given the complexity of on-ground situation and beset with delays in implementation, the project did not follow the steps proposed in the training guide or align itself with the CCA recommendation. The project engaged two implementing partners to complete the project activities in a shorter time window (initially 6 to 8 months, later extended by 5 more months for each partner). A comprehensive project design was not 'implementable' in such a shorter time window. Implementing partners implemented the activities with requisite number of beneficiaries involved. It is not clear to what extent these beneficiaries were CAR and especially CAAFAG. Overall project experienced a considerable challenge in translating the project vision to actual implementation on the ground within the ongoing conflict situation.

Project design adaptations

The project implementation focussed mainly on skill building, employment, and job

creation: While the ToC as articulated by this evaluation (based on the conceptualisation in the project design documents), talks about four pillars of actions (education, employment, protection, enabling institutional structure), most of the emphasis was placed on employment pillar, providing market-driven and vocational skills to CAR (not necessarily CAAFAG). While the design in theory was to address root causes (poverty, conflict-induced trauma, lack of alternative livelihoods, social acceptance of children participating in conflict) to children becoming CAAFAG, in practice the project tended to overlook the family, the social and the broader institutional and policy structure that is facilitating children to become CAAFAG. Operating within the constraints of the ongoing conflict, more intense work was needed in changing attitudes and behaviours at family, community, policy, and local authorities level to usher practical change that can address both 'prevention' and 'reintegration' aspects. The project, as designed, was primarily addressing most of the 'prevention' elements but only some 'reintegration' issues. While doing so, the project ensured at least one-third inclusion of girls, with activities designed specifically targeted at girls.

Fit for the purpose

The selection of project partners and national stakeholders was fit for the purpose of implementing this challenging project: The capacities of non-governmental actors in Yemen have been strengthened over the years due to increased inflow of funding and opportunities for interventions in humanitarian and development fields (KII). This helped the project in selection and working with the implementing partners with capacities to deliver the project activities within a shorter window of time that was given to them. Both the implementing partners have long-standing experience and outreach in most of the governorates of Yemen. This ensured quick mobilisation of project team and in building on the existing work and infrastructure of both the partners. The partners have relationships with the local authorities (MoSAL child units), which also supported in tacit understanding among the parties to go ahead with the implementation (KII).

The project did well in mandating and ensuring girls inclusion in the project interventions: The project was implemented for youth (girls and boys) between 14-18 years. The project provided them with life-skills trainings according to their interests. The psycho-social support was found to be very useful for several project beneficiaries considering the hard times youth were witnessing in the conflict-affected Yemen. The project mandated 20% targets for women inclusion in different activities (as per the IPs), while it achieved more than that (~34%). This analysis is based on the proportion of participation of girls in different project activities. The IP teams also made sure that both male and female trainers are used appropriately to deliver trainings, which has added benefits of incentives also flowing to the female trainers.

3.3 Efficiency

Timeliness of implementation

The project had a slow start and ramp up happened from the fourth quarter onwards: The project took three quarters to set itself up for implementation of activities on the ground. The actions picked up pace during the fourth quarter (July to Sep 2019) with several project activities happening across the governorates (Sana'a, Hajjah and Lahj). This was one of the most productive quarter of the project even though only one IP (SDF) was active as the other IP was changed (the originally selected IP – YLDF – was not approved by the authorities in the South) and new IP (Ghadaq) was commissioned only in 2020. This pace of implementation of the project reduced the time-window that could be provided to the implementing partners to complete their deliverables. Originally, 6 to 8 months of time was provided to SDF and Ghadaq respectively. This was later extended by five months each, when the overall project itself received about 10-months no-cost extension from the USDL. Overall, the actions on the ground, through the implementing partners, were less than 40% of the total duration (34 months) of the project. This, likely, compromised the extent to which a comprehensive vision

of the project design and project outcomes could be achieved. The table 2 provides a detailed quarter-wise pace of implementation of the project.

Table 2. Pace of project implementation over 11 quarters (Oct 2018 to July 2021)

| Quarter | Accomplishments | Evaluation |
|-----------------------------------|--|---|
| First (Oct to Dec 2018) | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • M&E plan approved • Induction workshop with project partners (SDF, YLDF) • Recruitment planning • Consultative meetings with project stakeholders (MoSAL, UNICEF, Save the Children, and local authorities) | Q1 was used for setting up the project |
| Second (Jan to Mar 2019) | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • National project co-ordinator identified (to start from May 2019) • Consultative meetings with the project stakeholders continued • A detailed TOR developed for the Project Steering Committee | Q2 work continued with project set up activities |
| Third (Apr to June 2019) | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Consultative meetings continued, with MoSAL, MoPIC, trade unions, chamber of commerce etc. • MoSAL in the South expressed reservation about YLDF • Induction workshop with SDF • Designed TOR for consultant to prepare training guide, and for national M&E consultant • Training material developed and reviewed for 13 different approaches of ILO-IPEC-SCREAM methodology | Q3 work continued with the project set up activities |
| Fourth quarter (July to Sep 2019) | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Consultative meeting continued • RFP issued for selection of new implementing partner • Labour market assessment tools designed (by the international consultant) • Training to local actors (50 participants) on how to prevent the use of children in armed conflicts • Implementation partner – SDF commissioned for a project to be implemented over 6 months in Sana'a, Hajjah, and Lahj • Several project activities implemented by SDF, including CFSSs, referral mechanism on mental health, case management working group and linkages with UNICEF | The actions picked up pace during this quarter with several project activities happening across the governorates. This was one of the most productive quarter of the project even though only one IP (SDF) was active as the other IP was changed and new IP was commissioned only in 2020. |
| Fifth quarter (Oct to Dec 2019) | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • New IP (Ghadaq) was identified through a selection process • Finalisation of labour market assessment in Sana'a, Hajjah and Lahj • A beneficiary feedback system started operating • Numeracy and literacy skills, referral mechanism, child friendly spaces, leadership training continued | The project continued the tempo built in the last quarter with several activities, including a beneficiary feedback system |
| Sixth quarter (Jan to Mar 2020) | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A new IP (Ghadaq) was commissioned with induction meetings | The project activities received further acceleration with |

| Quarter | Accomplishments | Evaluation |
|--|--|---|
| 2020) | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A no-cost extension for five months to SDF activities • Two M&E consultants engaged • Youth club activities continued • Numeracy and literacy skills, referral mechanism, child friendly spaces, leadership training continued | Ghadaq team on board. It is not clear though how two M&E consultants contributed to the project. |
| Seventh quarter (Apr to June 2020) | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The project received no cost extension • USDRL decision not to operate in Houthi controlled areas • Covid-19 related closures and restrictions started hindering the project progress | The project experienced roadblocks in this quarter. USDRL policy decision and Covid-19 severely hampered the project activities. SDF mandate was completed. |
| Eighth quarter (July to Sep 2020) | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Twenty-nine contracts were signed with 29 craftsperson and 29 workshops to host the trainings. The identification of four occupations was completed Lahj authorities approved the plan. | The project activities were carried out in a slow mode due to covid-19 restrictions. |
| Ninth quarter (Oct to Dec 2020) | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Aden was selected to finalize the project activates along with Lahj • Ghadaq trained 200 young men and women (120 in Aden and 80 in Lahj) that were affected by armed conflict and build the capacities of 28 craftsmen in business sectors • Aden activities initiated - Forty-two contracts were signed with 42 craftsperson and 42 workshops to host the trainings; 120 apprentices of children and youth was successfully done | Most of the project actions shifted to the South, with Ghadaq operating in Aden and Lahj. |
| Tenth quarter (Jan to Mar 2021) | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • In Lahj - 80 children and youth trained in four occupations in 28 workshops • No cost extension to IP – Ghadaq • BDS service provision developed | The project continued operations in Aden and Lahj |
| Eleventh and final quarter of the project (Apr to July 2021) | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Apprentices trained on BDS and ILO my first business training package • Toolkits provided to apprentices • Linking the apprentices with employer and workshops | The project completed remaining actions in Aden and Lahj |

Strategic resource allocations

Overall, the project managed to allocate reasonably well though allocations could have been more strategic across components: Overall, the project allocated ~47% of the resources towards sub-contracts and ~40% directly to the implementing partners. This is a reasonably good allocation for international development projects working in humanitarian /conflict situation where overheads of operations and cost of ‘management’ are higher. However, across different components of the project, more strategic allocation would have been beneficial e.g., ‘re-integration’ related activities such as mental health referral and psycho-social support received lower attention and budgets. The M&E consultants (engaged by the project to oversee the implementation process) also recommended more resources to be allocated to ‘re-integration’ elements. Similarly, the beneficiary number that was possible to support as part of apprenticeship was quite small (100 to 200). This was one of the most

effective components of the programme addressing both ‘prevention’ and ‘re-integration’ outcomes. It could have been more strategic to allocate more to this component. The feedback from all key stakeholders has been that the project should have allocated more resources towards providing ‘working kits’ to the beneficiaries who received vocational training. Only 20% of the trainees were provided with kits. This is a very low proportion and is unfair to several other trainees who were eligible but did not receive this support and consequently could not start their business. The M&E budget allocated to the project and to the IPs was also limited. The project engaged two M&E consultants (to oversee operations in the North and the South), but their engagement was limited to a 3-months duration. IPs also have limited M&E budgets to carry out beneficiary follow up surveys which would have helped in understanding beneficiaries’ feedback and the impact being achieved.

A planned mechanism of project steering committee could have guided the project in design, implementation, and strategic resource allocation: A Project Steering Committee (PSC) was planned in Q2 (Jan to Mar 2019) of the project, but it never materialised. The project documents envisaged that the ILO in collaboration with the MoSAL and MoPIC will constitute a PSC with the task to provide strategic orientation to the project. The PSC was to comprise representatives from the ILO, MoSAL, MoPIC, IPs, and possibly the donor (USDL). The PSC was designed to meet at least four times per year, coinciding with the project milestones. It is acknowledged that constituting a PSC was operationally difficult in the Yemenis context, especially to fulfil the requirement to have the representatives from the government authorities. The absence of the PSC mechanism was felt as the project could not also get the technical guidance and support from a CTA. This affected the technical robustness of the project implementation and possibly the stakeholder collaboration and co-operation were less than optimum.

The project applied several strategies to improve efficiency and maximize the value for money: The project used different strategies to improve efficiency. The team relied on existing training institutes and existing infrastructure of Child Friendly Spaces (CFS). The team relied on existing trained staff to deliver the training programs and did not create a parallel system. The trainers were selected from the same target communities. The team applied Covid-19 related precautionary measures during trainings in Aden and Lahj.

Cost-benefit of gender integration

In the absence of sex-disaggregated financial data for analysing gender integration within the project, it has been difficult for this evaluation to conduct a cost-benefit analysis of gender integration.

3.4 Effectiveness

Disaggregated achievements of outputs and outcomes

The project managed to achieve all its activity targets, aligned with the project outputs and outcomes: An analysis of plan vs. actual (see annex 3) indicate that the project delivered all the 9 main activities. As indicated earlier, the project experienced delays. Therefore, most of the activities were completed with delay. This impacted on the correct sequence of activities as that would have guided the better design and delivery of the project e.g., a training guide was originally planned to be developed in Q2 (Jan to Mar 2019) of the project. The activity was transferred from quarter to quarter and finally was delivered in Q10 (Jan to Mar 2021) of the project. The training guide was a high-potential activity as it could have influenced the project strategies and approaches for identifying and supporting the target groups (CAR and CAAFAG). With delay of about two years, the training guide has had very limited opportunity and timeframe for influencing the approaches of social and implementing partners in working with CAR and CAAFAG.

Effective execution of project strategies

Some of the project strategies were implemented well, such as CFS, apprenticeship training: The CFSs were originally conceived and established for the refugees. The project built on this infrastructure very well. The CFS has positively impacted the participants' knowledge, practices, and behaviours. The activities, such as SCREAM, psycho-social support, carried out as part of the CFS mechanism, have been bringing forth many CAR cases of either worst forms of child labour or mental trauma cases. These cases were managed, referred, and treated successfully during the five months of CFS operation in Sana'a, Hajjah and Lahj. Similarly, the apprenticeship was effective as it was systematically designed and implemented. It started with a market assessment and need assessment of youth (18- 25 years) and identified priorities. In Lahj, four occupations¹⁴ were selected and 29 master craftsmen were recruited to deliver 29 workshops with selected CAAFAG and CAR. The stakeholders of the projects (the local authorities, vocational education) were consulted at this stage. There were other areas that were prioritized as a result of the assessment but were not included as part of the programs, like aluminium works, electric extensions, veterinary training (in Lahj). Then the project team implemented an assessment to select the implementation partners (workshops and training institutes). The local government was on-board in these activities as it was the case with Technical Education Office and the Local Authority in Lahj Governorate. Finally, selection of trainees was completed, which was difficult considering that a large number of applicants applied for the training, for instance in solar training, only 50% of applicants were selected. Overall, the approaches of providing recreational, psychosocial, life-skill education and vocational skills using the adapted ILO-IPEC SCREAM methodology has worked well in Yemen.

Even within the challenges of the operating context, targeting of the CAR and CAAFAG could have been better: The SDF respondent stated that they targeted out of schoolboys and girls affected by the ongoing war. They have established local protection committees in all the three target governorates that helped the project team identify the affected children. The children lists' (endorsed by MoSAL – Lahj only) included 'returnee' boys who have been to the war front. The project team also targeted girls that were affected by the war (their homes damaged, or they incurred the loss of their head of the household or anyone from their family as result of the war). The SDF respondent stated that parents were resistant at the beginning of the project, but the local protection committees and the project team managed to convince them and as a result the project team received call from families to come and include their children in the project. Ghadaq respondents stated that local authorities in both Aden and Lahj helped them in identifying trainees lists (boys and girls) who were part of the armed groups or were vulnerable to join the armed groups. It is not clear how children were selected for various support as part of CFS. The progress reports and interactions with the stakeholders are unable to clearly establish the link between those who received support to those who are 'prevented' or 'reintegrated' from joining the armed forces /armed conflict. The training guide /handbook (N Singh et al, 2020) was developed to provide operational guidance to the key programmatic areas of: prevention of recruitment; preparedness of response; negotiation of release; interim/transitory care following release; identification/verification; family tracing; reunification; reintegration; monitoring of recruitment and re-recruitment; follow-up and advocacy. The training guide proposes a sequence of steps for effective planning and implementation of project interventions. These steps are a) context /gap analysis, b) community-based approach for prevention of recruitment, c) parental support, d) profiling of CAAFAGs, e) social and economic re-integration of CAAFAGs. In addition, the training guide provides suggestions on

¹⁴ Beauty therapy, embroidery, cloth design and dressmaking, solar panel installation, repair and maintenance, mobile maintenance

‘what to do’ and ‘how to do’. Some of recommended approaches are community dialogue, tailored and gender-sensitive messaging, engagement of local authorities and family engagement etc. Furthermore, the training guide acknowledged that *Yemen is an environment overwhelmed by humanitarian and economic emergency including the presence of large number of domestic IDPs and returnees with no means of subsistence*¹⁵. Therefore, it is hard to identify who is not affected by the conflict among children. However, and given the limited resources available for CAAFAGS reintegration programs in the current conflict situation in Yemen, there is a need to set a clear criterion for who is more vulnerable for recruitment by armed groups among the children. The training guide proposed five criteria for children who are conflict-affected, and who should be considered for re-integration programs. Actual implementation of the project found limited use of procedures and recommendations laid out in the training guide. In the North, targeting of beneficiaries could not be effectively done due to non-cooperation from the local authorities and due to considered position of the ILO and project team to maintain a ‘low profile’. In such a situation, community dialogue, engagement with local authorities and family engagements were perceptible not feasible and if done could have invited the ire of the authorities. In the South, project partner (Ghaddaq) engaged with the local authorities and their cooperation was available, despite that the procedures laid out in the training guide were only partially followed for identification of CAAFAG. Limited project duration and ongoing conflict situation might have compelled the project partners to take a ‘short-cut’ approach.

Inadequate allocation of training kits was one of the main sticking points for all main stakeholders: Implementing partner (Ghaddaq), trainers, craftsperson, government, and the beneficiaries complained about the limited number of training kits distributed after the apprenticeship training. The budget allocation on kits did not even cover 20% of the trainees per program as the training packages were expensive in some programs like sewing and mobile maintenance. There were different numbers of trainees in different programs in both Aden and Lahj and the decisions on how many to be given per program were subject to resource allocation by the project team, which seemed to be unclear to all. As per a quarterly progress report (Jan to Mar 2021), all apprentices were evaluated and 40% of beneficiaries (80 in number) were selected. These were the ones who showed interests in opening their own business. Among these, 50% (40 in number; 20 girls and 20 boys) of those with the highest assessment scores were finally selected to receive the tool kit to start their own business. The trainers and the craftsperson had concerns that those who did not get the kit will lose interest in starting their business. The government official in Lahj stated that other INGOs and local NGOs distribute training kits to all participants. The official further added that there is a high likelihood that those who were not provided with the kits and those could not secure their own kits from other sources will forget what they have learned and therefore it is counter-productive for the project.

Stakeholder participation and contribution

Stakeholder engagement experienced North-South divide as is the characteristic of the ongoing conflict in Yemen: While the governorates in Sana'a and Aden acknowledged project support. However, the Aden authorities were relatively more supportive or positive about the project interventions and initiatives. The authorities in Sana'a felt that they do not have effective communication about the project and were expected for the project to go beyond awareness generation. As per one KI in Sana'a, the project did only one awareness session on child recruitment (15 years and more) from the international and local laws' perspectives and after that the Sana'a governorate team helped them implement 200 surveys with randomly targeted youth to see what their capabilities, skills and occupational interests were. But it is not clear what happened post the surveys. Low level of communication from the

¹⁵ IOM Displacement Tracking Matrix, Yemen Area Assessment, round 37, March 2019, as quoted in the ILO training guide

project could be explained by the fact that the project has to adopt a low profile (with authorities in the North not providing approval to the project initiatives). Further, the project was represented as the one working for mitigating 'worst form of child labour'. In the South, the project could manage to build working relationships which was clearly not the case in the North. The conflict and complications in the Northern governorates made it difficult to implement the project. The project had to shift focus to Aden and Lahj and in the process activities in Hajjah and Sana'a received less attention.

Unintended outcomes

The project interventions, especially in the South, created a large interest and demand from the potential beneficiaries as the project teams is continuing to receive frequent calls.

3.5 Project impact

Impact on the beneficiaries

The project succeeded in creating an outlet for beneficiaries to express their feelings and receive needed support: The beneficiaries met (by the evaluator) in Sana'a and Hajjah were traumatized by the war which affected them and their families, so they benefited from the psychosocial support that was provided by the project specially in Hajjah, which they think helped them and respected their privacy. The beneficiaries met in Sana'a and Hajjah think that the project provided them with a space in which they could express themselves and practice hobbies in the areas of singing, drawing, sewing, computer training, barber profession techniques, English language, Arabic, music, and cooking. In the focus group in Sana'a, a beneficiary group acknowledged the support received.

"The project engaged us in activities that we liked very much, e.g., computer training, shaving techniques, drawing, English, music, and cooking. We have also received counselling which was helpful to us" (a beneficiary in Sana'a)

Further, the project teams ensured that beneficiaries interests and needs are addressed through various support. Their priority need that was expressed by all the interviewed beneficiaries was to have livelihood support to their families. The SDF beneficiaries met in Sana'a and Hajjah reported that all of them enjoyed the activities at the CFS. Some of them reported improvement after receiving psychosocial support. Some of them reported improvement in Arabic reading and writing. The Ghadaq beneficiaries met in Aden and Lahj expressed their satisfaction with the training programs as it was based on their interests. Those received training kits reported that they started working on their own and have improved incomes now which they contribute to their families. A few of the trainees who did not receive training kits reported that they are working as part-timers with other workshops in the market.

"We were asked on what we are interested in, when were selected. Females attended sewing and coiffure and the boy attended mobile maintenance training. The trainings programs started with theory trainings and then practice in relevant workshops. After completion of apprenticeship training, we have started working as self-employed" (a beneficiary in Lahj)

The implementing partner narrated the story of a boy who came back from the war. He had a psychological problem as a result of watching people die. His mother approached the project team by saying "My son came from the war zone, he is not listening to me, and he threatens me all the time that he will kill someone, please come and take him as part of your project". The project team visited the family and convinced the boy to come to the CFS which he did,

he received psychosocial support and attended other trainings and his family was happy and they reported that he has now an improved behaviour at home.

As per the project progress report (Oct to Dec 2020), the impact of supported cases was visible in the change of their attitude and behaviour. Many of the beneficiaries have either re-joined school or enrolled in the literacy classes.

A trainer interviewed by the evaluation reported the following: transitory impact

"I provided psych-social support sessions for 30 girls and boys. They were all drop-out students suffering depression, schizophrenia, anxiety, and post-traumatic stress disorder as a result of difficult living conditions at home and due to the ongoing conflict. They were also referred to specialised psychiatrist for the right treatment and medication free of charge. I had regular sessions with them and their families and was able to establish understanding to share their concerns. Over time, these boys and girls reported improvement" (a trainer in Sana'a)

A few beneficiaries speaking about the impact of vocational training

"I live with my grandmother because my father and mother are separated. With the help of the training and training kit, received from the project, I have my own Salon at grandma home which helped me generate money to pay for our expenses..."

A Coiffure training graduate

"After I completed the mobile maintenance course, I started working with a mobile shop in fixing damaged mobile devices. I gave the income received to my father. I think our family life is now much better than before..."

A mobile maintenance training graduate

"Thanks to the project and to our trainer, I feel confident now and I have started sewing for my relatives and other women and girls are coming to me for sewing work. I think they liked what I do..."

A sewing training graduates

An implementing partner speaking about the impact of CFS in Hajjah

The CFS was called Community Centre for Adolescents' rehabilitation in Mabyan District in Hajjah. There were six facilitators and two specialists. We worked with 90 Adolescents (13-17 years), 72 children (9-13 years) and 26 kids (5-6 years). The CFS started on 1st September 2019 and operated till 21st January 2020. We implemented several activities such as ice-cream program, self-presentation, interviews, role-play, photography, prose writing, community integration and literary competition, psycho-social support, literacy program. We co-ordinated with an INGO and managed to provide food baskets for the most vulnerable group who were participants in the CFS.

The CFS activities and psycho-social support helped the admitted adolescents to be better prepared for future challenges. The workshop activities i.e., electricity, sculpture, carpeting, and photographing were helpful to the children by giving them a career path and equipping them with employability skills.

Key informant interview in Sana'a

This impact could be transitory in nature without case management system in practice and without follow on support as needed: As per the project progress reports, Yemen continues to be classified a level 5 security state (highest rate) as per the UN's Department of Safety and Security. The conflict is continuing and escalating in some territories in the country. This is reportedly leading to increased recruitment of child soldiers, as stated by several stakeholders interviewed. The project targeted a small set of beneficiaries. Given that the project activities have stopped now, the impact experienced by a small group of beneficiaries could be transitory in nature, as it would require periodic follow up and support to the beneficiaries to reduce the deeper impact of ongoing conflict on CAR and CAAFAG. The

beneficiaries (both SDF and Ghadaq) stated that the project created support mechanisms are not active now. Though envisaged, the project could not successfully collaborate with UNICEF on a case management system for CAAFAG. There are no other specific projects working with CAAFAG in the country, while several agencies are delivering humanitarian support to other target groups.

"We spend good time and we had fun but that was long time ago we hope the CFS will be active again and other project support will continue to be available" (a beneficiary in Sana'a)

Impact on the social partners /project stakeholders

Operating amidst warring parties in a conflict situation, the project experienced several challenges in influencing the social partners for taking actions related to CAAFAG: The project conducted capacity building for MoSAL at Aden. The project also engaged with 70 local actors and community leaders from Lahj and Aden on the subject of how to prevent the use of children in armed conflict and their reintegration in Aden city. Post-training, 90% of the participants expressed their satisfaction of the training (post-test data as reported by the project). However, as the project realised, from awareness to actions is a difficult territory to navigate as stakeholders also expressed that the workshops should focus on how to create an integrated mechanism of all local actors and community leaders especially in education

A social partner speaking about the project on their training institute

"The trainings implemented in the institute helped us in providing incentives for the institute trainers involved. The rental fees that the project provided was helpful for buying materials and operational cost for the institute. The training programs has a high demand, but the institute do not have the budgets for the training kits and providing trainings without external support. Also, there is a need for additional programs to be added according to the market needs. The CRUCSY project, nonetheless, helped in establishing a link between the institute and the market..."

Management staff of Aden Technical Education and Vocational Training institute

sector to report on children recruited and to contribute to their integration. Case referrals mechanisms are needed as well. It may be that the engagement of the project with the governmental authorities (MoSAL child units and other relevant ministries) was inadequate. Though it is also well-understood that the engagement with govt. bodies in such contexts is very challenging.

3.6 Sustainability

Continuity

It is not clear how a short-term project support delivered over a few months would lead to sustained benefits for the beneficiaries without the needed follow up actions: A project progress report (Jan to March 2020) says that as planned, the CFS and youth clubs activities ended in Sana'a on 31st January 2020; while in Hajjah and Lahj, these were ended on 29th February 2020. There is no indication of continuation of the CFS infrastructure, and the mechanism of youth clubs created. Child protection committee and local authorities were expected to carry these initiatives forward but without resources, commitments, and planning, this is unlikely to happen. As per a M&E consultant report, after 5 months of coordination, SAMCHA has rejected the CFS activities and hence the CFS has stopped. It is learned by the

evaluation team that the children continued to come to CFSs and demand the administration to open the space. Security and instability are a major risk to continuing the infrastructure created by the project. While it is known that the SDF is continuing to operate some of the CFSs through their other funding, still CFSs face the risk of being attacked and looted, even in the South. It is difficult to be optimistic that CFS will continue to operate given the instability situation. Also, the local councils and parent associations, who are expected to operate these facilities, do not have necessary wherewithal or will to do so. The project could not work on the continuity of intervention due to lack of clear signals from the donor. At the same time, the project did not work out the exit strategy.

The ongoing conflict and security situation could undermine the gains that the project has achieved: There are restrictions specially on the North on implementing protection programs by delaying / suspending approvals or sub-agreement of projects i.e., child protection response remains severely constrained, mostly due to funding gaps and restricted humanitarian access¹⁶. An enabling institutional structure is a key lever for sustaining the project created infrastructure, capacities, tools, and benefits. In Sana'a and Hajjah and in the North in general, the demand is high for the project however, the de-facto authority is not in favour of such projects. Unless there is an agreement from the authorities' similar projects cannot be implemented. In case there is an approval a livelihood component can go along

'Re-integration' of child soldiers into the mainstream poses several risks and challenges

Achieving 're-integration' is very challenging. For one, the child soldiers get used to a diet of chewing 'qat'. It is very difficult to replace 'qat' with school bags. Most of the child soldiers suffers from physical harm and mental trauma. Recovering from physical harm is possible but it takes considerable time and efforts to make erstwhile child soldiers to recover from mental trauma. Then there is a political and diplomatic challenge of making armed forces accept the principle of non-recruitment of children on the frontline. There are several 'release' approaches to be adopted for child soldiers to come out from the armed forces /armed groups. Simultaneously, the family level food basket (short-term support) and livelihoods provisions would need to be created for 're-integration' process to start.

Based on key informant interviews

with the project. In Aden and Lahj and the southern governorate the demand for the trainings is high and the government (IRG) respondent from Lahj encouraged the project to target beyond the current district of Tuban to other districts in the governorate. In Aden, the beneficiaries and the project staff reported high demand and calls to the project from other potential beneficiaries within the governorate.

The incentives of being a child soldiers, though reduced over the years, are still strong:

At the beginning of the war 2015-18, the child soldiers used to receive monthly salary of 1000¹⁷ Saudi Rial (267 \$ US) which was a strong economic incentive for many families to send their children to the frontlines. Things have changed now as armed forces paying are not coming regularly or the payment have reduced to around US\$ 100. The last prescribed /official minimum wage was in 2010 in the 2nd Strategy of the Ministry of Civil service as 28,000 Yemeni Rial which was almost 111 \$ USD¹⁸. So, the child soldiers receive comparable minimum wages. Child soldiers transfer the monthly salary to their families. They also receive rations and green plant called 'qat', which is a stimulant /steroid and chewing it makes one feel strong

¹⁶ <https://reliefweb.int/sites/reliefweb.int/files/resources/Yemen%20Protection%20Brief%20-%20January%202021.pdf>

¹⁷ As per the key informants interviewed by the evaluation

¹⁸ Feedback of a staff from Ministry of Planning, Studies Department 13th Sept. 2021.

and energetic, giving a false sense of power. These continuing incentives are still strong acting against the sustainability of the gains ushered by the project.

Commitment

The UN and other international agencies, including the ILO have continuing commitments to provide support on the HDP nexus, which is likely to keep the hope alive: As quoted in the CCA report by the UNCT, the human rights situation on the ground in Yemen needs serious improvement. The Group of Eminent International and Regional Experts on Yemen released a scathing report¹⁹ in September 2020 that details scores of serious violations of international human rights law and international humanitarian law. The CCA says that the fragility of the political structure and conflict, the collapsed economy, increased food, and fuel prices, import restrictions, and COVID-19 have had a devastating impact on food security in Yemen. The ILO in Yemen has several other ongoing projects and initiatives, such as ERRY, CAAC Taskforce²⁰, which can continue to demand commitment from MOLSA Child Labour Units, relevant government officials, youth groups, community leaders, CSOs and law enforcement agencies on prevention of children in armed conflict and their reintegration. The ILO, being an active member of the Consultative Committee on Social Protection chaired by MoSAL, can continue to use its influence to engage with the national institutions and actors in developing and implementing time-bound activities aimed at ending and preventing grave violations against children and improving the protection of boys and girls living in situation of armed conflict as articulated in the United Nation Security Council Resolution 2225.

3.7 Effectiveness of management arrangement

Governance, staffing structure and role divisions

Operating with several staffing challenges, the project relied on credibility and wide presence of the IPs in the country to implement the activities: The project has a small core team based in Yemen. The project was expected to be supported by a CTA, budgeted under a different project in Yemen. However, the CTA could not be deployed in Yemen in the project timeframe. This, as per the stakeholders interviewed, severely restricted the technical and diplomatic steering that was required to manage the project in a difficult operating context. The project felt the absence of a CTA when 'negotiating' with the local authorities in the Northern governorates (Sana'a and Hajjah). Off-site CTA support was provided from the ILO Beirut office by the ILO crisis response specialist much later in the project timeframe. But off-site CTA support can only be effective to a limited extent. It is difficult to deploy international experts as CTAs in the country given visa and other restrictions imposed by both the de-facto and Internationally Recognised Government (IRG). Though envisaged in the project design, a project steering committee could not be established due to several other staffing challenges faced by the project. The steering mechanism, with a donor representation, could have been helpful in better management of the project, possibly reducing the constraints and delays it was facing. Despite these many constraints, the project was managed and completed reasonably well, with a no-cost extension of about 10-months. Effective project management could happen due to the availability of experienced and credible implementing organisations in Yemen. The project was managed with clear role division between the ILO team and implementing partners. IPs appreciated the flexibility and openness of the ILO team to revise strategies in an ever-changing context. The management of the project was consultative involving of IPs and local authorities to the extent possible. The project team kept low profile to not attract undue attention from the warring parties.

¹⁹ [OHCHR | UN Group of Eminent International and Regional Experts on Yemen presents their third report to the Human Rights Council: A Pandemic of Impunity in a Tortured Land](#) urging an end to impunity, in a conflict with no clean hands, and the referral by the UN Security Council of the situation in Yemen to the International Criminal Court.

²⁰ A country level UN-mandated taskforce tracking the grave violations to the Children and Armed Conflicts (CAAC)

Systems for project monitoring and impact assessment

The project M&E plan was 'activity' oriented though external supervision brought in some 'result' orientation: The IP grant agreements says that monitoring and evaluation would not be limited to monitoring the numbers of beneficiaries covered but also in terms of short, medium, and long-term results /benefits that the project is contributing to. However, in reality the project M&E system, both at partner and ILO Yemen level, was found to be 'activity' oriented, focussing on tracking the activities and number of beneficiaries being covered. In the first quarter of the project, M&E plan with indicators was developed which largely focussed on tracking numbers across different activities. The project M&E plans had a few outcome level indicators. A 'tracking study' mechanism was planned for tracking outcome level indicators, but it was not implemented. Donor reporting required only two indicators, called standard F indicator - Number of child soldiers identified and Number of youths at risk of violence trained in social or leadership skills through USG assisted programs. Overall, the project M&E system was less 'result' oriented and collected little evidence on programme outcomes. However, the project M&E system established good external monitoring mechanisms through two M&E consultants deployed to periodically conduct field-based assessment of quality and quantity of different activities. This is a good concurrent mechanism for supportive supervision. Template of field monitoring report was also well designed. The 'M&E consultant' mechanism captured both activity level progress and produced insights on the project contributions to different results, including barriers to progress. Given the limited mandate, external monitors could not capture ongoing changes in the lives of beneficiaries. It could not assess how the project could have improved targeting and impact. External monitoring reports were of variable quality, with Lahj reports to be relatively much better than the ones in Hajjah. Additionally, the M&E consultants mechanism continued for a 3-months period only in the beginning of 2020.

Risk management

Obtaining permits and authorisation was a persistent risk, managed less optimally: The project progress report (July to Sep 2020) stated that the complex political dynamics also directly affected the project implementation as the regulatory environment for obtaining permits and authorizations is constantly in flux often to the detriment of the project. Given the complication of obtaining approvals from the local authorities (especially in the North), could the project have circumvented this by adopting any other approach? Were there any missed opportunities in terms of strategies not being used? Or was the intention of keeping 'low profile' essentially ensured a 'closed loop' of interactions and it was not feasible to undertake family engagement and involve larger community in a social dialogue on CAAFAG? There are no easy answers, but it is felt by the stakeholders interviewed that the project could have done better in managing risks on this front. It might have been possible to learn from and collaborate with other UN agencies (e.g., with UNICEF on case management system, UNDP /WFP on systems of managing such risks) and work with other social partners and implementing partners who have had experiences dealing with these risks.

Adaptive management, including response to Covid-19 disruptions

Project displayed adaptiveness to the disruptions imposed due to Covid-19: The project experienced delays due to Covid-19 by at least 6-months. The project received no cost extension for 10 months and both the IPs receive no cost extension for 5 months. The project team adapted to the COVID-19 precautionary measures i.e., there were no trainings and contact in the first two months (June-July 2020) of the outbreak. These two months were used to prepare for after COVID-19 scenario, in terms of preparedness of Personal Protective Equipment (PPEs such as masks, sensitizers, detergents, promotional materials and sending awareness messages). The operational cost of the program increased by almost 40%, which was covered by the ILO. The project also started digitalising curricula and developing interactive training materials. Fortunately for the project, majority of SDF activities were completed before Covid-19. Ghadaq activities were impacted due to restrictions imposed by

Covid. However, the IP adapted well to the Covid requirements. The trainings continued during covid and were subject to precautionary measures i.e., social distancing (maintaining one-meter distance), using sanitisers, masks and gloves provided by the project. The trainings were relocated to bigger training halls.

Shifting of the project geographical scope led to communication challenges among the key stakeholders: The project progress report (July to Sep 2020) says that it was a donor policy decision not to operate in Houthi-controlled areas taken on 30 April 2020. After this date, all activities in the North were stopped. The donor representative maintains it was communication misunderstanding. Nonetheless, it was agreed (by the ILO and the donor) that the project's geographical scope should be shifted to non-Houthi controlled areas, with the same scope of work and targets. As this entailed programmatic and budgetary changes, it took time, and the donor approval was received only around September 2020. Aden was selected as additional governorate to complete the project activities along with Lahj. Ghadaq (IP) was given the responsibilities to start the activities in Aden and to continue the training in Lahj. Overall, if these communication challenges among key stakeholders were handled more adroitly, it might have been possible to avoid the confusions among key stakeholders (especially the implementing partners who did not hear anything for several months) and would have allowed to not leave the existing project areas in the North abruptly. Leaving the project in the North at a quick notice is likely to have compromised both the completion as well as follow-on work needed in the North.

Internal and external communication

Nuanced external communication of the project allowed the project to make connections: The term 'child soldier' or CAAFAG is a highly sensitive term in Yemen, therefore the project adopted a nuanced communication approach. The project was communicated externally as the one working for children engaged in 'worst form of child labour'. This approach allowed the project to make connections with its constituencies for developing collaboration.

The ILO and the donor communication could have been better: The USDL and the ILO communication was not smooth. There were instances of communication from one party and response from the other being delayed. This affected project level decision-making and accounted for delay in project implementation. The donor did not have direct access to the ILO team in Yemen implementing the project. By design, communication flows were through the ILO HQ.

While internal communication was well-designed, the project could have learned better from other approaches of working with child soldiers in other countries: Internal communication within the project teams was well designed to convey the work related to rehabilitate and remove children from conflict in Yemen. The project team also explored unearthing examples of good practice in this area through the work of other agencies such as the approaches of Norwegian Development Cooperation. The ILO and other agencies have built up a sizable repository of experiences working on the issue of child soldiers. Regular periodic sharing of these experiences could have helped the project in improving its thinking and on-ground response to ongoing challenges being faced. This improved knowledge management was more required in the absence of an active CTA support.

4. Conclusions

The project interventions were highly relevant with the situation, needs and priorities of CAR and CAAFAG in Yemen. The project directly responded to country's needs and humanitarian actions plans. However, in a conflict zone, the project intervention design was not realistic enough to guarantee achievement of the stated project outcomes within its limited timeframe. Further, the project experienced delays which shortened the project duration even with a 10-months no cost extension. Overall, the implementation on the ground could happen for about 12 months, i.e., about 40% of the total project duration.

In terms of budgets, the project managed to allocate reasonably well though allocations could have been more strategic across components. e.g., 're-integration' related activities such as mental health referral and psycho-social support received lower attention and budgets. Similarly, the beneficiary number that was possible to support as part of apprenticeship was quite small (100 to 200). Inadequate allocation of training kits was one of the main sticking points for all main stakeholders as only 20% of the apprenticeship trainees were supported with kits for supporting them to start their business.

The project did well in mandating and ensuring girls inclusion in the project interventions. The project was implemented for youth (girls and boys) between 14-18 years. The project mandated 20% targets for women inclusion in different activities (as per the IPs), while it achieved more than that (~34%). The project provided them with life-skills trainings according to their interests. The psycho-social support was found to be very useful by several project beneficiaries considering the hard times they were witnessing.

Despite the challenges of the operating context, the project managed to achieve all its activity targets, aligned with the project outputs and outcomes. However, with delays, the correct sequence of activities was compromised e.g., a training guide was originally planned to be developed in Q2 (Jan to Mar 2019) of the project. The activity was delivered in Q10 (Jan to Mar 2021) of the project. The training guide was a high-potential activity as it could have influenced the project strategies and approaches for identifying and supporting the target groups (CAR and CAAFAG).

Some of the project strategies were implemented well, such as CFS, apprenticeship training. However, targeting of the CAR and CAAFAG could have been better. Limited project duration and ongoing conflict situation might have compelled the project partners to take a 'short-cut' approach.

The project succeeded in creating an outlet for beneficiaries to express their feelings and receive needed support. However, this impact could be transitory in nature without case management system in practice and without follow up on support as needed. While the awareness among a select group of social partners on the issues of CAR and CAAFAG was created, but for 'actions' to take place post-awareness, it would have mechanisms for all local actors and community leaders to work in cohesion for preventing and re-integrating CAAFAG. It is difficult for a short-term project to generate such integration and sustained benefits for the beneficiaries and for the social partners. This would require follow up actions.

5. Lessons Learned and Emerging Good Practice

Lessons learned

CRUCSY has demonstrated that a project focussing on both 'livelihoods' and 'protection' is both unique and urgent in Yemen and that it should be continued and expanded: The CRUCSY project has amply demonstrated that the ILO work in Yemen is unique, important and significant. The evaluation could not find out any other similarly designed holistic intervention in Yemen. The CRUCSY programming is crucially needed to

address both CAR and CAAFAG as part of interventions on the HDP nexus in the conflict zones. The ILO, therefore, has unique opportunity to share lessons from this project and to build up a consortium of UN and other agencies working on the ground interested in continuing and expanding the CRUCSY project in Yemen. Collaborating with all agencies with the similar mandate, also continually exploring windows of opportunities for working with de facto and IRG authorities is a key to move forward. This evaluation study provides evidence-based insights and a way forward for developing a comprehensive model of programming in the next phase.

The project predominantly focussed on ‘prevention’, and ‘re-integration’ would require a different set of working modalities: The beneficiaries of the project were those who are vulnerable and at risk of ‘recruitment’ to armed forces. Several beneficiaries with mental trauma were those who were directly and indirectly affected due to the impact of the war on themselves and their families. This impact was related to experiences of physical harm, loss of social capital and financial assets and severe reduction in livelihoods due to the ongoing conflict. A very few of the beneficiaries of the first phase of CRUCSY project were those who were ‘returnees’ as is acknowledged by several stakeholders interviewed. The project reached out successfully to vulnerable groups to potentially ‘prevent’ some of them joining the armed forces. Therefore, the project model worked well for ‘prevention’. ‘Re-integration’ is a distinct agenda requiring different strategies and approaches. Given that a proportion of front-line soldiers in the ongoing conflict are children, ‘re-integration’ is vastly important to be focussed on for the planned second phase of the CRUCSY project. It would need to be designed based on the experiences of the first phase, using some of the approaches²¹ highlighted in the training module on the subject.

Effective co-ordination and collaboration with the local authorities is a key to success in a conflict zone as the project experience shows: In a conflict zone, basing the project interventions on the local support is even more essential, even though seeking and getting it is all the more difficult. Local authorities can and do play important role in tracking and identifying CAAFAGs as it happened in Aden. The MoSAL functionaries in Aden provided the project details of the boys and girls with previous and potential military recruitment records. This was very helpful for the project in accessing locations of CAAFAGs including military training camps to meet the potential beneficiaries. Converse is also true as without the necessary support of local authorities in the Northern governorates, the project efforts could not go very far in terms of targeting the CAAFAG. The project team kept a low profile in the North to not attract undue attention from the warring parties.

Emerging good practice

Exemplary apprenticeship model implemented by the project: The project did exemplary work in adaptation of the ILO-IPEC-SCREAM methodology to the country context and to the specific situation of CAR and CAAFAG. The apprenticeship was effective as it was systematically designed and implemented. It started with a market assessment and need assessment of youth (18- 25 years) and identified priorities. In Lahj, four occupations²² were selected and 29 master craftsmen were recruited to deliver 29 workshops with selected CAAFAG and CAR. The stakeholders of the projects (the local authorities, vocational education) were consulted at this stage. The apprenticeship implementation was monitored technically by IP supervisors recommended by the Ministry of Technical Education and vocational Training, and by IP project coordinator. The trainer used the twin methodology of theory and practical. Trainees were provided with theoretical underpinnings and then taken to related workshops or businesses. The apprenticeship component was also supported by the

²¹ Training module on ‘reintegration’ lays stress on several approaches needed, such as stakeholder engagement and tailored communication, community-based approach, parental support to foster children retention, gender-sensitive outreach.

²² Beauty therapy, embroidery, cloth design and dressmaking, solar panel installation, repair and maintenance, mobile maintenance

Chamber of Commerce in Aden. Then the project team implemented an assessment to select the implementation partners (workshops and training institutes). The local government was on-board in these activities as was the case with Technical Education Office and the Local Authority in Lahj Governorate. As per the stakeholders interviewed (IP team), the government in Aden represented by Ministry of Technical Education and Vocational training and the private sector were actively participating in the review and development of the curriculum and implementation of the trainings. Al-Kuraimi Microfinance Bank, Al-Amal Microfinance Bank and Al-Tadhamaon Microfinance Program were brought to the project and delivered presentations on financial inclusion and access to credit requirement to those of the trainees who think of starting their own business, so they know the guarantees' requirements for start-up loans. The local authorities in both Aden and Lahj and the informal private workshop owners were key to the project success in achieving the trainees lists and the private sector in equipping the trainees with practical skills. Overall, the approaches of vocational skills using the adapted ILO-IPEC SCREAM methodology were well adapted in Yemen.

Training guide suggested approach to identify, select and support CAAFAG: The training guide /handbook (N Singh et al, 2020) was developed to provide operational guidance to the key programmatic areas of: prevention of recruitment; preparedness of response; negotiation of release; interim/transitory care following release; identification/verification; family tracing; reunification; reintegration; monitoring of recruitment and re-recruitment; follow-up and advocacy. The training guide proposes a sequence of steps for effective planning and implementation of project interventions. These steps are a) context /gap analysis, b) community-based approach for prevention of recruitment, c) parental support, d) profiling of CAAFAGs, e) social and economic re-integration of CAAFAGs. In addition, the training guide provides suggestions on 'what to do' and 'how to do'. Some of recommended approaches are community dialogue, tailored and gender-sensitive messaging, engagement of local authorities and family engagement etc. Furthermore, the training guide acknowledged that *Yemen is an environment overwhelmed by humanitarian and economic emergency including the presence of large number of domestic IDPs and returnees with no means of subsistence²³. Therefore, it is hard to identify who is not affected by the conflict among children. However, and given the limited resources available for CAAFAGS reintegration programs in the current conflict situation in Yemen, there is a need to set a clear criterion for who is more vulnerable for recruitment by armed groups among the children.* The training guide proposed five criteria for children who are conflict-affected, and who should be considered for re-integration programs.

6. Recommendations

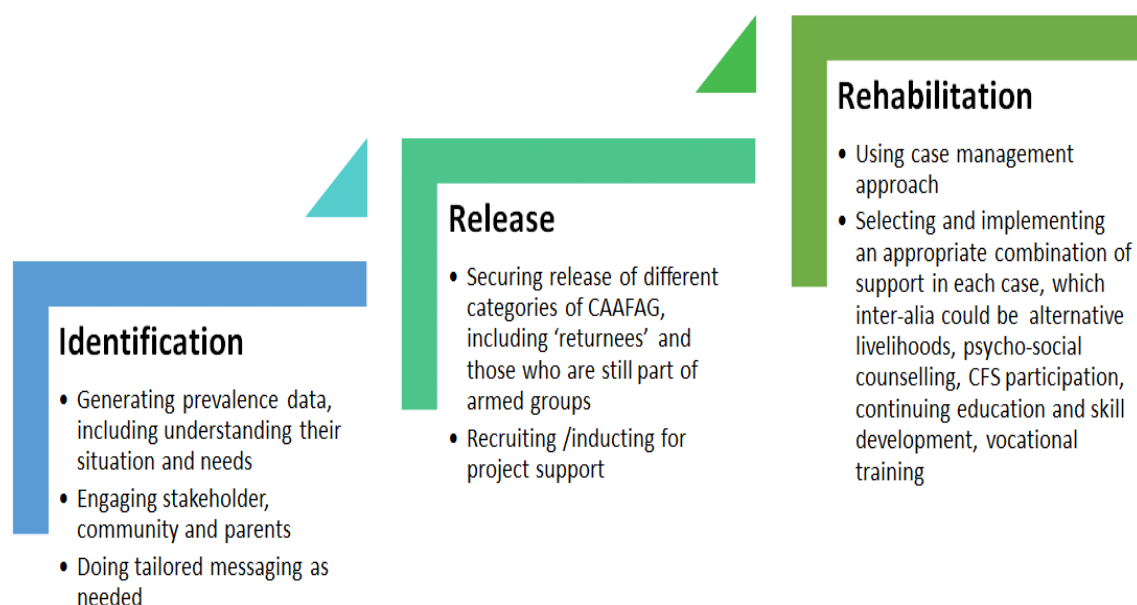
ROAS /UN HQ:

While the ERRY project can continue to focus on the 'prevention' part, a new distinct project should be designed, focussing on the 're-integration' related outcomes: As is the lessons learned from the CRUCSY first phase, 're-integration' would require a very distinct focus. 'Re-integration' is crucially needed in the Yemenis context and is potentially feasible with the ILO working with other members of the UNCT, the national governments and the international agencies. The CRUCSY project developed a training manual on 're-integration' approach that can potentially work. This approach, along with UNICEF's case management system, would need to be tested, and improved upon for CAAFAGs. This can be done in the newly designed second phase of the CRUCSY project. This new intervention from the ILO will be well-aligned with the critical need to intervene on the Humanitarian-Development-Peace nexus in Yemen. Any 're-integration' project would need to be designed in three phases. The first phase could be 'identification' phase, wherein data and procedures are followed to track the locations of vulnerable families from where children are joining armed forces or armed groups. This phase would involve stakeholder engagement, community dialogue, parental engagement, tailored messaging as is recommended by the training guide. In the second

²³ IOM Displacement Tracking Matrix, Yemen Area Assessment, round 37, March 2019, as quoted in the ILO training guide

'release' phase, several categories of CAAFAGs would need to be identified, and their release would need to be secured. This will involve 'returnees' as well as those who are still part of armed forces /armed groups. The selected group would then be recruited /inducted to receive the project support. In the third 'rehabilitation' phase, a case management approach would need to be appropriately designed to provide support as per each individual case. This support could entail a combination of alternative livelihoods, psycho-social counselling, CFS participation, continuing education, skill development and vocational training. The design of 're-integration' project can also learn from similar ILO initiatives in other countries, such as in Syria or from other agencies, such as the work of Norwegian Refugee Council on the 'Protection' theme. A schematic frame of design thinking of the second phase of CRUCSY project is captured in the figure below. **(High priority, medium to high resource requirement, to be implemented with at least three years' timeframe)**

Figure 3. Ladder of 're-integration' of CAAFAG



Review donor communication protocols: The donor communication protocol can be reviewed especially where the donor desires to have direct communication links with the resident entity (in this case the ILO Yemen team) implementing the project. This can make the donor appreciate the field realities and provide quick feedback on the policy decisions that may affect the project. This has potential to improve understanding between the ILO team and the donor and reduce delays in project execution, thereby improving project effectiveness. **(Low priority, low resource requirement, long-term vision)**

Improve knowledge management function: The knowledge management function within the ILO project could be improved with regular sharing of thematic experiences across different contexts which are similar to Yemen, e.g., the ILO interventions in Syria are following a comprehensive model working with CAAFAG. Sharing of these models and experiences could potentially provide requisite 'good practice' to the project team to response to operational challenges and risks. A highly improved knowledge management is even more essential in conflict programming where challenges are faced on a daily basis and where responses decide the course and effectiveness of interventions. If these responses are informed by several good practices in the field, then it can potentially improve operational effectiveness of the project at the ground level. **(Medium priority, low resource requirement, long-term vision)**

ILO Project team:

Improve the CRUCSY theory of change, with clear identification of strategies for ensuring result-transitions, and for risk management: The existing theory of change is logical but needs improvement. Based on the project experiences and the lesson learned from the first phase, 'The CRUCSY model' can become a high-impact model with an improved theory of change. The improvements in the theory of change required are, a) better conceptualisation of need assessment (with engagement of families) of CAAFAGs, b) better targeting, clear description of how implementation of activities would lead to a hierarchy of results and the results-transition (from output to outcomes) over the project period, c) clear design of follow up strategies till the beneficiaries can overcome some of their present constraints and root causes that condemn them to be CAR and CAAFAG. Further, ensuring result-transitions would require more intense and longer engagement (at least three years) and an effective process of risk management. The project implementation modality in conflict zones would need to consider all possible risks and plan for delays to happen. The projects planned in conflict zone should consider a longer timeframe accounting for such delays rather than plan a short-duration project which becomes a shorter duration due to the delays that are bound to happen. A longer timeframe for the project implementing partners to properly plan and implement their activities, with follow ups as necessary should be ensured. With these changes, the ILO CRUCSY model can potentially become an exemplary approach to work with CAAFAG and can inspire other similar interventions by the ILO and other agencies in Yemen and other similar contexts. ***(High priority, low resource requirement, long-term vision)***

Improve effectiveness of vocational training by providing post-training finance and market linkage support to the trainees: It is learned from the project experiences that the financial and market linkages can enhance the effectiveness of vocational training. For example, for the trainees who received bakery or sweets' making or cooking vocational training, and after the trainees get the kits and start making their own products, they would need support towards markets linkages and a business partnership model so that they can run their business profitably. As per the stakeholders interviewed, sewing is another example, after the trainees get the training kits, they would need support to link them with sewing shops and clothing businesses so they can start working with them or selling through them according to the market demand. Similarly, the trainees would benefit if financial linkages were facilitated so that some of them are able to get access to finance to start their own business. This support can be designed in the form of a 'business mentorship' or BDS support to the trainees who start their business. ***(Medium priority, low resource requirement, long-term vision)***

Develop result-oriented M&E systems that capture beneficiary feedback systematically: The project of this nature can regularly trace the beneficiaries and capture their feedback and progress. It can conduct follow ups tracer studies to understand how the beneficiaries can be better supported. Further, the external monitoring mechanism should be designed to provide supportive supervision to the implementing partners teams, with actions agreed after each visit. An improved recording template should be followed to capture incremental improvement over time. Overall, the M&E system in the project would need to result-oriented in addition to providing progress on the activities. This can be achieved by designing the M&E system on the improved theory of change of the project. ***(Medium priority, low resource requirement, long-term vision)***

7. Appendices

Annex 1: Evaluation Question Matrix (EQM)

| Evaluation aspect (as per OECD /DAC criteria) | Sub-aspect | Evaluation questions /sub questions | Measure (s) or indicator (s) | Data sources | Data collection method | Stakeholders /informants | Analysis and assessment |
|--|-------------------|--|---|---|---|---|--|
| RELEVANCE | Context alignment | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - In what ways, the project is aligned with the situation and needs of target population, including women and girls? - In what ways, the project is aligned with the national development and humanitarian response plans, and whether the design is realistic? | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Citations and instances demonstrating conformance /non-conformance of project design with the needs of the target population. - Analysis of extent to which the need assessments have translated into workable project interventions - Citations and instances demonstrating conformance/ non-conformance of the project design with the national development and humanitarian response plans - Practical feasibility of the project interventions | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Secondary literature - Project design /appraisal documents - Key informants | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Review of project documents and national development and humanitarian plans - Review of secondary literature - Key Informant Interviews (KII) | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - ILO ROAS team - National stakeholders - CSO, Govt. private entities - Beneficiaries - UNICEF in Yemen | Review of evidence and analysis of data from several sources, including KIIs, to distil appropriate findings and to draw correct conclusions |

| Evaluation aspect <i>(as per OECD /DAC critieria)</i> | Sub-aspect | Evaluation questions /sub questions | Measure (s) or indicator (s) | Data sources | Data collection method | Stakeholders /informants | Analysis and assessment |
|---|---------------------|--|---|---|--|--|--|
| | Strategic alignment | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - In what ways, the project is aligned with the priorities of USDL in Yemen, and with the tripartite constituent objectives and needs? - In what ways, the project addresses the ILO's global commitments and SDGs, as well as gender strategy? | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Citations and instances demonstrating consistency (or inconsistency) of the project design with the priorities of the USDL in Yemen and with the tripartite objectives - Analysis of the extent to which the project addresses the ILO's global commitments, and gender strategy - The project contribution to ILO's COPs for Yemen | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - USDL policy documents in relation of Yemen - ILO strategic documents, incl. gender strategy - Key informants | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Review of USDL and ILO strategic documents - KIIs | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - USDL representative - ILO ROAS CTA responsible for Yemen | Review of evidence and analysis of data from several sources, including KIIs, to distil appropriate findings and to draw correct conclusions |
| | Complementary | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - In what ways, the project built on the previous ILO interventions and to the other ongoing ILO interventions in the country? - In what ways, the project complements the ongoing local efforts? | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Stand-out examples of specific project components that are complementary with the other ongoing interventions in the country - Stand-out examples of specific project components that are seeking to address constraints and | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - ILO Yemen country strategy and intervention document - UNICEF Yemen country strategy and intervention document - Key informants | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Review of ILO and UNICEF documents - KIIs | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - ILO Yemen team - UNICEF Yemen team - CSOs working in Yemen or ILO implementing partners - Govt. rep. if available | Review of evidence and analysis of data from several sources, including KIIs, to distil appropriate findings and to draw correct conclusions |

| Evaluation aspect <i>(as per OECD /DAC criteria)</i> | Sub-aspect | Evaluation questions /sub questions | Measure (s) or indicator (s) | Data sources | Data collection method | Stakeholders /informants | Analysis and assessment |
|--|-------------------|--|---------------------------------------|---------------------|-------------------------------|---------------------------------|--------------------------------|
| | | | opportunities in the Yemenis context? | | | | |

| | | | | | | | |
|--------|-------------------|--|--|--|---|--|--|
| DESIGN | Logical /coherent | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - To what extent, strategies and structures created are coherent and logical to trigger some change process - In what ways the articulated theory of change is plausible and consistent with the logic of hierarchy of results? - Whether assumptions were articulated and analysed? - To what extent the project design integrates gender equality in all aspects? | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Stakeholders' perception on appropriateness of strategies and choice of activities in terms of triggering results in the Yemenis context - Stakeholders' perception on whether the two outcomes (prevention and re-integration) are at all achievable in the Yemenis context, what more the project should have done to achieve the outcomes? Based on the perspectives received, testing the validity and consistency of the hierarchy of results and assumptions as conceptualised - What assumptions were correctly made and what were not? - Number and proportion of interventions targeting women and girls as per the project design documents | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Project design documents - Key informants | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Review of project documents - KIIs | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - ILO Yemen team- UNICEF Yemen team- CSOs working in Yemen or ILO implementing partners- Govt. rep. if available | Review of evidence and analysis of data from several sources, including KIIs, to distil appropriate findings and to draw correct conclusions |
| | Adaptations | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Whether the project design has been adaptive to emerging realities? | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Instances of adaptations in design carried out over the project period | Key informants | Stakeholders perceptions captured | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - ILO Yemen team - CSOs working in Yemen or ILO implementing | Analysis of perceptions of multiple stakeholders |

| Evaluation aspect (as per OECD /DAC criteria) | Sub- aspect | Evaluation questions /sub questions | Measure (s) or indicator (s) | Data sources | Data collection method | Stakeholders /informants | Analysis and assessment |
|--|---------------------|---|--|----------------|--|---|---|
| | | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - How effective were adaptations to informal apprenticeship models? - to what extent the tailored informal apprenticeship models, tailored project timeframe from design to implementation were effective? | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Instances of original assumption proving invalid and revising assumptions based on a new reality - Instances of extent of tailoring carried out (to apprenticeship model and project strategies) and examples of how tailoring helped in effective execution of the project | | during the Key Informant Interviews | partners - Govt. rep. if available | to distil appropriate findings and to draw correct conclusions |
| | Fit for the purpose | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Whether chosen stakeholders /social partners (MOSAL and CBOs) are a good fit for this type of project? | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Examples of matching of skills, expertise, and experiences of the social partners to deliver the project components effectively - Instances of mismatch /missed opportunities /challenges in terms of engaging and collaborating with social partners | Key informants | Stakeholder s perceptions captured during the Key Informant Interviews | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - ILO Yemen team - CSOs working in Yemen or ILO implementing partners - Govt. rep. if available | Analysis of perceptions of multiple stakeholders to distil appropriate findings and to draw correct conclusions |
| | | | | | | | |

| Evaluation aspect <i>(as per OECD /DAC criteria)</i> | Sub-aspect | Evaluation questions /sub questions | Measure (s) or indicator (s) | Data sources | Data collection method | Stakeholders /informants | Analysis and assessment |
|--|-------------------------------------|--|--|---|---|------------------------------------|---|
| Efficiency and Effectiveness | Efficient resource allocations | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - How strategically resources (funds, human resources, time, expertise, etc.) been allocated strategically to achieve outcomes? - Extent to which synergy is achieved in cost sharing with other ILO and non-ILO interventions? | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Financial allocations of project budgets across activities, outputs, and outcomes. Successes and missed opportunities in resource allocations - Cost sharing data with other ILO and non-ILO interventions - Instances of sharing of human resources, time, and expertise across ILO and beyond ILO, for implementing this project | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - ILO project management /financial management datasets - Key informants | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Review of project management and financial data - KIIs | - ILO project team /ROAS / HQ team | Analysis of financial data along with stakeholder perception can guide to distil appropriate findings and to draw correct conclusions |
| | Cost-benefits of gender integration | What were the intervention benefits and related costs of integrating gender equality? | - Disaggregated budgets for analysing costs and benefits of interventions targeting women and girls | - ILO project management /financial management datasets- Key informants | - Review of project management and financial data- KIIs | - ILO project team /ROAS / HQ team | Analysis of financial data along with stakeholder perception can guide to distil appropriate findings and to draw correct conclusions |

| Evaluation aspect <i>(as per OECD /DAC criteria)</i> | Sub-aspect | Evaluation questions /sub questions | Measure (s) or indicator (s) | Data sources | Data collection method | Stakeholders /informants | Analysis and assessment |
|--|---|---|---|--|--|---|--|
| | Effective project performance (target vs. achievements) | Did the project succeed in achieving the development objective and module outcomes? Were targets reached? | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Disaggregated achievements (plan Vs. actuals) of outputs and outcomes - Reasons for variance if any | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Project progress reports - Key informants | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Review of project progress reports - KIIs | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - ILO Yemen team - CSOs working in Yemen or ILO implementing partners - Govt. rep. if available | Analysis of project progress and its validation with key project stakeholders to derive findings and conclusions |
| | Effective stakeholder participation and contribution | To what extent has the project management been participatory and has the participation contributed towards achievement of the project objectives? | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Perceptions of stakeholders regarding their involvements in different stages of project design and implementation - Specific contributions and effectiveness of social partners, including CSOs, and challenges therein - Any missed opportunities in terms of type of stakeholders and process of their participation in the project | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Project progress reports - Key informants | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Review of project progress reports - KIIs | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - ILO Yemen team - CSOs working in Yemen or ILO implementing partners - Govt. rep. if available | Analysis of project progress and its validation with key project stakeholders to derive findings and conclusions |
| | Effective execution | How effectively the project implemented a range of strategies, | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Specific capacity building inputs provided by the project to local Yemenis partners and | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Project progress reports containing data related to project strategy | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Review of project progress | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - ILO Yemen team - CSOs working in Yemen or ILO implementing | Analysis of project progress and its validation |

| Evaluation aspect <i>(as per OECD /DAC critieria)</i> | Sub- aspect | Evaluation questions /sub questions | Measure (s) or indicator (s) | Data sources | Data collection method | Stakeholders /informants | Analysis and assessment |
|---|--|--|---|------------------------------------|---------------------------------------|---|--|
| | of project strategies | related to capacity development of local Yemeni partners and capacity of MoSAL to address child labour, child friendly spaces in communities, a referral mechanism, employable skills, BDS, advocacy with listed warring parties to end violations against children, tailoring content and delivery of ILO IPEC SCREAM methodology, breaking gender stereotypes? | MoSAL - Specific benefits and results of strengthened capacity of CSOs and MoSAL (child unit) - Specific achievements and gaps in strategy implementation in the Governorate where the project was implemented - Internal and external factors that impacted the effective execution | implementation - Key informants | reports - KIIs | partners - Govt. rep. if available | with key project stakeholders to derive findings and conclusions |
| | Unintended outcomes (positive or negative) | What positive or negative unintended outcomes can be identified? | Instances and examples of outcomes witnessed which were unintended | Key informants | KIIs | - ILO Yemen team- ILO implementing partners - Beneficiaries | |
| | | | | | | | |

| Evaluation aspect (as per OECD /DAC criteria) | Sub-aspect | Evaluation questions /sub questions | Measure (s) or indicator (s) | Data sources | Data collection method | Stakeholders /informants | Analysis and assessment |
|--|-----------------|---|---|--|--|--|--|
| IMPACT | Beneficiaries | What are the benefits derived by direct beneficiaries of the project- CAAFG and CAR, youth including young women at risk? | Perception of beneficiaries, CSOs, and the project team regarding the benefits obtained by the beneficiaries, in terms qualitative changes in their lives, related to both prevention (of joining in an armed conflict) and re-integration (rehabilitation from the armed groups) | - Project progress reports - Key informants | - Review of project progress reports - KIIs | - ILO Yemen team - CSOs working in Yemen or ILO implementing partners - Beneficiaries - Govt. rep. if available | Analysis of project progress and its validation with key project stakeholders to derive findings and conclusions |
| | Social partners | What are the benefits derived by the social partners – CSOs, Government and private sector entities? | Perception of social partners and project teams in terms of benefits to the social partners from the project | - Project progress reports - Key informants | - Review of project progress reports - KIIs | - ILO Yemen team - CSOs working in Yemen or ILO implementing partners - Beneficiaries - Govt. rep. if available | Analysis of project progress and its validation with key project stakeholders to derive findings and conclusions |
| | | | | | | | |

| Evaluation aspect (as per OECD /DAC criteria) | Sub- aspect | Evaluation questions /sub questions | Measure (s) or indicator (s) | Data sources | Data collection method | Stakeholders /informants | Analysis and assessment |
|--|------------------------------------|--|--|---|--|---|--|
| SUSTAINABILITY | Continuity | What is the likelihood of interventions continuing beyond the life of the project by MoSAL and CSOs? Will benefits produced by the project continue? What are the mechanisms to ensure continuity? | Perception of stakeholders regarding continuity of operations which are then validated with national development plans if any available | - Key informants - Relevant documents if available | - Review of available documents - KIIs | - ILO Yemen team - CSOs working in Yemen or ILO implementing partners - Govt. rep. if available | Analysis of project progress and its validation with key project stakeholders to derive findings and conclusions |
| | Commitment | To what extent capacities and commitments exist of social partners, donors to ensure sustained operations and benefits? | Perception of stakeholders regarding commitment which are then validated with donor country strategies or another relevant document if any available | - Key informants - Relevant donor strategy document if available | - Review of available documents - KIIs | - ILO Yemen team - CSOs working in Yemen or ILO implementing partners - Govt. rep. if available - Donor representative | Analysis of project progress and its validation with key project stakeholders to derive findings and conclusions |
| | | | | | | | |
| MANAGEMENT ARRANGEMENT | Governance and staffing structures | What was the division of work tasks within the project's team? Has the use of local skills and management | - Stakeholder perception and feedback on the quality delivered by the CSOs and other social partners | - Project and governing board meeting minutes- Key informants | - Review of project meeting minutes and other associated | - ILO Yemen team - CSOs working in Yemen or ILO implementing partners | Analysis of project progress and its validation with key project stakeholders |

| Evaluation aspect <i>(as per OECD /DAC criteria)</i> | Sub-aspect | Evaluation questions /sub questions | Measure (s) or indicator (s) | Data sources | Data collection method | Stakeholders /informants | Analysis and assessment |
|--|-------------------|--|--|---|--|---|--|
| | | (CSOs) been effective? How does the project's governance structure facilitate good results and efficient delivery? What can be learned for efficiency gains? | - Perception of representatives of the governing and project steering structure regarding its effectiveness and what could have been done better | | documents- KIIs | - Govt. rep. if available | to derive findings and conclusions |
| | Role divisions | How clear is the understanding of roles and responsibilities and division of labour between project's staff, CSO's staff, and government entities? | - Stakeholders satisfaction with division of labour and work allocations - Challenges in work allocations and missed opportunities if any | - Project and governing board meeting minutes - Key informants | - Review of project meeting minutes and other associated documents - KIIs | - ILO Yemen team - CSOs working in Yemen or ILO implementing partners - Govt. rep. if available | Analysis of project progress and its validation with key project stakeholders to derive findings and conclusions |
| | Risk management | What risks to project implementation were perceived? What risks were witnessed and how these were different to the ones originally conceived? How | - Stakeholder feedback on the risks faced and how these were managed | - Project documents - Key informants | - Review of project documents - KIIs | - ILO Yemen team - CSOs working in Yemen or ILO implementing partners - Govt. rep. if available | Analysis of project progress and its validation with key project stakeholders to derive findings and conclusions |

| Evaluation aspect <i>(as per OECD /DAC critieria)</i> | Sub- aspect | Evaluation questions /sub questions | Measure (s) or indicator (s) | Data sources | Data collection method | Stakeholders /informants | Analysis and assessment |
|---|---|---|--|--|---|--|---|
| | | risks that emerged were managed? | | | | | |
| | Systems for assessing performanc e and impact | How effectively does the project's management team monitor the project's performances and results? Does the project report on progress in a regular and systematic manner, both at project level, to the donor? What M&E system has been put in place, and how effective has it been? Does the M&E system provide for capturing results in terms of women's and PwDs' participation? | - Project teams' self- assessment of the M&E framework and systems deployed in the project, including what challenges and information gaps were witnessed, and what more could have been done- Evaluator's assessment of the M&E system | - Project documents- Key informants | - Review of project documents- KIIs | - ILO Yemen team- CSOs working in Yemen or ILO implementing partners- Govt. rep. if available | Analysis of project progress and its validation with key project stakeholders to derive findings and conclusions |
| | Adaptive manageme nt | - How adaptive have the entire project management been? Whether and | - Instances and examples of adaptive project management and gaps therein (project team's self- | - Project documents - Key informants | - Review of project documents - KIIs | - ILO Yemen team - CSOs working in Yemen or ILO implementing partners | Analysis of project progress and its validation with key |

| Evaluation aspect <i>(as per OECD /DAC criteria)</i> | Sub-aspect | Evaluation questions /sub questions | Measure (s) or indicator (s) | Data sources | Data collection method | Stakeholders /informants | Analysis and assessment |
|--|-------------------------------------|---|---|---|---|---|--|
| | | how course corrections been carried out? - What path corrections regarding Covid-19 led disruptions | assessment), also analysing Covid-19 related disruptions and project response - Evaluator's assessment of the adaptiveness | | | - Govt. rep. if available | project stakeholders to derive findings and conclusions |
| | Internal and external communication | How effective was communication between the project's team, the regional office, and the responsible technical department at headquarters? Has the project received adequate technical and administrative support/response from the ILO backstopping units? | - Communication methods used - Communication products generated - Best practices in internal and external communication - Challenges and missed opportunities in dissemination and communication about the project | - Project documents - Key informants | - Review of project documents - KIIs | - ILO Yemen team - CSOs working in Yemen or ILO implementing partners - Govt. rep. if available | Analysis of project progress and its validation with key project stakeholders to derive findings and conclusions |

Annex 2: List of stakeholders interviewed

| S.No. | Type of stakeholder | Name | Designation | Email | Contact phone | Date of discussion (2021) | Mode of Interview |
|-------|---------------------|---------------------|---|--|----------------|---|-------------------|
| 1 | ILO | Ali Dehaq | National Program Coordinator, Yemen | dehaq@ilo.org | +967 711353437 | 4 th and 5 th August | Online (Teams) |
| 2 | Government (IRG) | Muna Ali Salim | Child Labour Unit Director - MoSAL Aden | munasalemalban@gmail.com | +967 775253804 | 17 th August | Online (Teams) |
| 3 | ILO | Lara Ali Qershi | Former ILO admin/finance assistant / former OIC CRUCSY project officer | lara.qershi@gmail.com | +967 713151555 | 17 th August | Online (Teams) |
| 4 | ILO | Ahmed Khamis | ERRY project, Yemen | khamis@ilo.org | | 17 th August | Online (Teams) |
| 5 | ILO | Oktavianto Pasaribu | Chief, Regional Programming Unit, ROAS | pasaribu@ilo.org | | 17 th August and 2 nd September | Online (Teams) |
| 6 | ILO | Simon Hills | Technical Specialists Fundamental Principles and Rights at Work, covering Europe and Central Asia, Arab World | hills@ilo.org | | 25 th August | Online (Teams) |
| 7 | ILO | Sarah Al Jamal | Program officer in the regional office -Yemen, Jordan | eljamal@ilo.org | | 26 August | Online (Teams) |
| 8 | ILO | Leena | Coordinator for Child Labour Programmes, | rammah@ilo.org | +963 | 27 th August | Online |

| S.No. | Type of stakeholder | Name | Designation | Email | Contact phone | Date of discussion (2021) | Mode of Interview |
|-------|----------------------------|----------------------|--|--|---------------|---------------------------|---------------------|
| | | Rammah | Syria | | 933417777 | | (Teams) |
| 9 | ILO | Maha Katta | Chief Technical Advisor, Resilience, and crisis response specialist ROAS | kattaa@ilo.org | | 27 th August | Online (Teams) |
| 10 | ILO | Parth Kanitkar | ILO HQ donor relations and communication | kanitkar@ilo.org | | 3 September | Online (Teams) |
| 11 | UN partners | Fuad Ali | UNDP, Deputy Team Leader economic recovery and development unit, Yemen | fuad.ali@undp.org | | 9 th September | Online (Teams) |
| 12 | Gov. MoSAL - Sana'a | Abdulalem Abdulqader | Head of Workforce Dept | | 775030497 | 28 th August | In-person interview |
| 13 | Implementing Partner - SDF | Eysha Saeed | Project Manager | | 711193321 | 2 nd September | In-person interview |
| 14 | Implementing Partner - SDF | Fadhel Mohsen | | | 770178202 | 31 st August | In-person interview |
| 15 | Implementing Partner - SDF | Mohammed Al-Mashali | | | 773652911 | 31 st August | In-person interview |

| S.No. | Type of stakeholder | Name | Designation | Email | Contact phone | Date of discussion (2021) | Mode of Interview |
|-------|--------------------------------|-------------------|------------------------------|-------|---------------|---------------------------|---------------------|
| 16 | Implementing Partner - SDF | Mohammed Abdullah | | | 775618167 | 31 st August | In-person interview |
| 17 | Implementing Partner - Ghaddaq | Mahdi Salem | Lahj Coordinator | | 773360440 | 4 th September | In-person interview |
| 18 | Implementing Partner - Ghaddaq | Salem Ahmed | Aden Coordinator | | 770648637 | 4 th September | In-person interview |
| 19 | Implementing Partner - Ghaddaq | Ali Hamoud | Project Advisor | | 77781483 | 4 th September | In-person interview |
| 20 | Implementing Partner - Ghaddaq | Wijdan AbdulMomen | Project Officer | | 776559916 | 4 th September | In-person interview |
| 21 | Implementing Partner - Ghaddaq | Fadhal Awad | Trainer, Safety and Security | | 770648637 | 4 th September | In-person interview |
| 22 | Implementing Partner - Ghaddaq | Abdullah Hajib | Trainer, Solar Energy | | 770501063 | 4 th September | In-person interview |
| 23 | Gov (IRG). | Omar Al-Samati | Lahj Governor Advisor | | 771644056 | 6 th September | In-person interview |

| S.No. | Type of stakeholder | Name | Designation | Email | Contact phone | Date of discussion (2021) | Mode of Interview |
|-------|----------------------------|-----------------|---------------------------------------|--|---------------|----------------------------|---------------------|
| 24 | Implementing Partner - SDF | Amal Al-Mujahed | Psychosocial Support trainer | | 772492811 | 21 st September | In-person interview |
| 25 | Donor | Nagina Sawezn | USDL officer in charge of the project | sawezn@state.gov | | 16 September | Online (Teams) |

Focus group discussions conducted with the beneficiaries:

| S No. | IP | Number | Male | Female |
|-------|--------------------------------|--------|------|--------|
| 1 | Implementing Partner – Ghaddaq | 6 | 4 | 2 |
| 2 | Implementing Partner – Ghaddaq | 5 | 1 | 4 |
| 3 | Implementing Partner - SDF | 7 | 7 | 0 |
| 4 | Implementing Partner - SDF | 8 | 2 | 6 |

Annex 3: Project performance on outputs and outcomes (Plan Vs. Achievements)

| Outcome | Output | Indicator | Target | Achievements | | | Evaluation |
|--------------|--|--|--------|--------------|--------|-------|---|
| | | | | Male | Female | Total | |
| 1 Prevention | – Output 1.1: Yemeni local actors and communities are capacitated to educate, inform, and change their attitudes and behaviours towards children's use in armed conflict | Training guide developed and disseminated | 30 | | | 40 | Stakeholders and practitioners were targeted for dissemination; Training guide was originally planned to be developed in Q2 (Jan to Mar 2019) of the project. The activity was transferred from quarter to quarter and finally was delivered in Q10 (Jan to Mar 2021) of the project, with about 2 years delay, representing limited opportunities for promoting use of the training guide within the project period. |
| 1 Prevention | – Output 1.1: Yemeni local actors and communities are capacitated to educate, inform, and change their attitudes and behaviours towards children's use in armed conflict | No of people who completed the training program | 100 | 32 | 18 | 50 | Achieved during July to September 2019; rest was to be covered Q10 (Jan to Mar 2021) of the project but were covered in June 2021, mentioned in the last quarterly (Q11) report. |
| 1 Prevention | – Output 1.2: Facilities and mechanisms to support children and youths are established | No. of children and adolescents benefiting from recreational, psycho-social, and life-skill education services in the child/adolescent-friendly spaces | 1000 | 688 | 249 | 937 | The activity started from Q4 (Jul to Sep 2019) of the project and continued up to Q8 (July to September 2020) of the project. |
| 1 Prevention | – Output 1.2: Facilities and mechanisms to support children and youths are | Number of youths at risk of violence trained in social or leadership skills through | 50 | 41 | 5 | 46 | Achieved during Oct to Dec 2019 progress report. Location wise data: 21 Sana'a city, 15 Hajjam, 10 Lahj |

| Outcome | | Output | Indicator | Target | Achievements | | | Evaluation |
|-----------------|---|--|---|--------|--------------|--------|-------|--|
| | | | | | Male | Female | Total | |
| | | established | USG assisted programs | | | | | |
| 1 Prevention | – | Output 1.2: Facilities and mechanisms to support children and youths are established | No of identified cases provided with mental health care support | 100 | 80 | 18 | 98 | Achieved during Jan to March 2020 quarter. location wise data - Sana'a 8, Hajjah 42 and Lahj 48 |
| 1 Prevention | – | Output 1.2: Facilities and mechanisms to support children and youths are established | No. of youths involved in clubs / membership variation | 200 | 134 | 103 | 237 | The activity started from Q4 (Jul to Sep 2019) of the project and continued up to Q8 (July to September 2020) of the project. |
| 1 Prevention | – | Output 1.2: Facilities and mechanisms to support children and youths are established | No. of trained youths running the clubs | 20 | 12 | 12 | 24 | Achieved during July to September 2019; Training to 24 facilitators on 7 modules of SCREAM over 4 days |
| 2 Reintegration | – | Output 2.1 CAAFAG and CAR are assisted in matching their skills/aspirations to labour market | Number of Market assessment conducted and validated | 3 | | | 3 | Achieved during Q6 (Jan to Mar 2020) of the project |
| 2 Reintegration | – | Output 2.1 CAAFAG and CAR are assisted in matching their skills/aspirations to labour market | Number of child soldiers identified | 300 | | | 300 | Achieved during Q8 - July to September 2020 |
| 2 Reintegration | – | Output 2.1 CAAFAG and CAR are assisted in matching their skills/aspirations to labour market | No. of youth provided with career counselling and orientation on the most marketable skills | 200 | 108 | 92 | 200 | Achieved in Q9 2020 of the project; It is not clear how 100 female members were provided counselling when all child soldiers are male. |
| 2 | – | Output 2.3 CAAFAG and CAR empowered with functional | No. of participants who acquired functional literacy | 100 | 72 | 96 | 168 | Achieved during July to September 2020 |

| Outcome | Output | Indicator | Target | Achievements | | | Evaluation |
|-------------------|--|---|--------|--------------|--------|-------|--|
| | | | | Male | Female | Total | |
| Reintegration | literacy and numeracy skills | and numeracy skill | | | | | |
| 2 – Reintegration | Output 2.3 CAAFAG and CAR empowered with functional literacy and numeracy skills | No. of children that completed the training programme | 100 | 44 | 66 | 110 | Achieved during July to September 2020 |
| 2 – Reintegration | Output 2.4 CAAFAG and CAR empowered to set up and run their own small businesses | No. of small business start-up | 20 | | | 24 | Those provided toolkit to start their own business; Originally planned for Q9 of the project, shifted to Q10 and then finally delivered in the Q11 of the project. |
| 2 – Reintegration | Output 2.4 CAAFAG and CAR empowered to set up and run their own small businesses | Apprentices trained on BDS and ILO my first business training package | 80 | 43 | 37 | 80 | In Aden and Lahj (40 each), during the last (11th) project quarter (April to June 2021) on four occupations - mobile maintenance, solar panel installation, repair and maintenance, beauty therapy, Embroidery, cloth design and dressmaking. First two were mainly for men and last two were mainly for women |
| 2 – Reintegration | Output 2.4 CAAFAG and CAR empowered to set up and run their own small businesses | Toolkits provided to apprenticeships | 40 | 20 | 20 | 40 | In Aden and Lahj (24 and 16 respectively, during the last (11th) project quarter (April to June 2021) on four occupations - mobile maintenance, solar panel installation, repair and maintenance, beauty therapy, Embroidery, cloth design and dressmaking |

Source: Quarterly progress reports and evaluators assessment

Annex 4: References

Common Country Assessment of the United Nations for the Republic of Yemen, 2021

ILO project evaluation ieval discovery reports [i-eval Discovery \(ilo.org\)](#)

ILO conventions ratified by Yemen, [Ratifications of ILO conventions: Ratifications for Yemen](#)

The King Salman Humanitarian Aid and Relief Centre (KS Relief) work with the child soldiers
[KS Relief helps rehabilitate child soldiers in Yemen \(arabnews.com\)](#)

Report of the Secretary-General of the general assembly of the security council on children in armed conflict [15-June-2020 Secretary-General Report on CAAC Eng.pdf ; United Nations Official Document ; United Nations Official Document](#)

Visioning exercise, Sustainable Development Cooperation Framework 2022-2024, United Nations, Yemen, July 2021

Training Guide (2020) on socio-economic reintegration of children associated with armed groups and the prevention of the use of children by armed forces and armed groups in Yemen, prepared by Naresh Singh and Khalid Ibrahim for the International Labour Organisation

Other documents and webpages reviewed:

Implementation partner grant agreements

[OHCHR | Yemen Homepage](#)

Project grant agreement

Project progress reports of all 11 quarters

Project financial reports – generic (not activity-wise) and consolidated

[UNHCR Yemen Factsheet](#)

ILO Yemen webpage [Yemen \(ilo.org\)](#)

Annex 5: Terms of Reference of the CRUCSY evaluation

INTERNATIONAL LABOUR ORGANIZATION TECHNICAL COOPERATION

Terms of Reference (ToR) for Final Internal Project Evaluation

“Protecting Children and Youth in Yemen from Recruitment and Use in Armed Conflict”

| 1. KEY FACTS | |
|-------------------------------------|--|
| TC Symbol: | <i>YEM/18/01/USA</i> |
| Countries: | <i>Yemen</i> |
| Project title: | <i>Protecting Children and Youth in Yemen from Recruitment and Use in Armed Conflict</i> |
| Duration: | <i>34 months</i> |
| Start Date: | <i>27 September 2018</i> |
| End Date: | <i>31 July 2021</i> |
| Administrative unit: | <i>Regional Office for the Arab States (ROAS)/DWT-Beirut</i> |
| Technical Backstopping Unit: | <i>FUNDAMENTALS</i> |
| Collaborating ILO Units: | |
| Evaluation requirements: | <i>Final Internal Evaluation</i> |
| Donor: | <i>US Department of State (Bureau for Democracy, Human Rights and Labour)</i> |
| Budget: | <i>US\$ 987,654</i> |

2. BACKGROUND INFORMATION

Project Context

Since 2015, Yemen has been facing a violent armed conflict. This protracted crisis has had

devastating effects on all Yemenis, especially on the most vulnerable groups including children. Yemeni children are being deprived from their basic human rights to live a safe and healthy childhood. According to the Monitoring and Reporting Mechanism (MRM), there were 1,309 cases of child death as a result of the conflict between January 2015 and September 2016, in addition to 1,950 cases of child injury. Children are also experiencing family separation; conflict-related psychological trauma; exploitation and lack of access to protection services. Above all, the conflict has led thousands of children to fight wars as part of the armed groups in the worst form of child labour. Some of them are used as combatants and take part in direct hostilities, while others are used in supportive roles.

The Country Task Force on monitoring and reporting documented 1,702 cases of child recruitment and use in armed groups since March 2015. Those recruits included girls who were used to gather intelligence and cook or carry detonators. Some as young as 10, have been systematically conscripted for use as child soldiers in the ongoing hostilities.

Furthermore, the UN estimated that approximately 200 children have been abducted since the conflict commenced in March 2015. There are no ways to currently identify if they were recruited by armed groups.

According to UNICEF, in the 2015-2016 academic year, the destruction of over 1,600 schools hindered approximately 350,000 children from continuing their learning. Schools were destroyed, damaged, used to host displaced families or were occupied by the warring parties. Factors contributing to this situation include high rate of unemployment and widespread poverty, lack of access to education and basic services, and forceful recruitment and indoctrination of vulnerable children.

It is due to the aforementioned crisis that the ILO has collaborated with the US Department of State (Bureau for Democracy, Human Rights and Labour) to implement the *Protecting Children and Youth in Yemen from Recruitment and Use in Armed Conflict (CRUCSY)* project. The USDL funded project extends from September 2018 until July 2021 through a \$ 987,654 budget. The project aims to support the capacity development of local Yemeni partners in order to educate, inform, and change their attitudes and behaviours towards children's use in armed conflict.

The overall goal of the project is to prevent the recruitment of children and youth as child soldiers and to sustainably reintegrate children formally associated with the conflict in Hajjah, Sanaa, and Lahj governorates in Yemen.

The basis to achieve the overall goal has been through the following outcomes:

1. Outcome 1 - Children and youths have better access to services and facilities for their social and economic integration
2. Outcome 2 - Former CAAFAG and other children at risk of recruitment in conflict above the minimum working age are reintegrated through access to employable skills to achieve decent work and sustainable income

Description of activities

The project consists of two major results:

01: Children and youths have better access to services and facilities for their social and economic

integration

The project has planned to achieve this through the capacity development of local Yemeni partners as well as local actors and community leaders. They have received trainings on how to prevent the use of children in armed conflicts as well as the socio-economic reintegration of CAAFAG in their communities.

Moreover, the project has established child friendly spaces in communities where the children attended recreational activities using ILO-IPEC SCREAM Methodology. Finally, a referral mechanism has been developed and implemented which in turn has provided mental health care support to CAAFAG.

O2: Former CAAFAG and other children at risk of recruitment above the minimum working age are reintegrated through access to employable skills for improved working conditions and sustainable income

The proposed intervention adopted a multi-pronged approach in order to increase the market-driven skills training. This is critical for the CAAFAG and children at risk to obtain the relevant skills needed to secure employment, gain self-esteem and adjust to changes in labour demand.

To achieve this, market labour assessments have been done throughout four selected communities to identify marketable skills relevant to the needs of the beneficiaries. This has been complemented by a vocational skills training provided for 200 CAAFAG and CAR. In addition to that, literacy and numerical skills training has been provided to CAAFAG and CAR to increase their probabilities in the job market as well as to enhance their confidence and reintegration into society.

Finally, the project has provided business development services for those of the youth who showed potential for entrepreneurship. This approach has been gender specific and it provided special assistance for young women at risk.

Suggested Approach

The project aimed at contributing to the identification, verification and the secure release of underage recruits still associated with armed conflict as well as support their integration back into their communities. It also planned to increase engagement towards the signature of the Action Plan with listed warring parties, to support advocacy with all parties to end violations against children, and to strengthen existing mechanisms that are included in the Child Act.

To achieve its outcomes, the project has adopted holistic and multidisciplinary approaches encompassing a wide range of CAAFAG vulnerabilities. CAAFAG and children at risk were not considered in isolation; their situation was analysed holistically, taking into account the various factors that make them vulnerable to recruitment by armed actors and affect their wellbeing. The ILO has previously implemented upgraded informal apprenticeship models in Africa. These models have shown high potential to increase the income of CAAFAG and children at risk and effectively contribute to poverty reduction. This is mainly because these models prioritize the needs of the workplace dominated by the most vulnerable households and poorer businesses and accordingly tailor skills trainings to meet these needs. These tools and approaches have been contextualized to Yemen in consultation with partner organizations and stakeholders.

As part of ILO's approach to this project, coordination and collaboration with the General Administration of Labour Inspection under the MoLSA have taken place. MoLSA has the mandate to monitor child labour; however, it lacked the capacity. Additionally, there was no mechanism to receive child labour complaints due to inadequate capacity of the labour inspectors. This intervention has, therefore, planned to strengthen the capacity of MoLSA to address child labour including its worst forms, and, in particular will build the technical capacity of the Child Labour Unit.

To implement the project, the ILO has worked in collaboration with two CSOs: Sustainable Development Foundation (SDF) and the Ghadaq for Development. The physical presence in the targeted governorates is fundamental given the fluidity and volatility of the Yemen's geo-political environment. Ghadaq for Development's mission is to empower youth, particularly the vulnerable and marginalized youth especially female youth. SDF aims to create safe and healthy environment for vulnerable communities through socioeconomic empowerment and peacebuilding initiatives including access to psychosocial counselling services.

3. PURPOSE AND SCOPE OF THE EVALUATION

Evaluation Background

ILO considers evaluation as an integral part of the implementation of development cooperation activities. Provisions are made in all projects in accordance with ILO evaluation policy and based on the nature of the project and the specific requirements agreed upon at the time of the project design and during the project as per established procedures. The Regional M&E and Knowledge Management Officer at the ILO ROAS supports the evaluation function for all ILO projects.

The project document states that a final evaluation will be conducted, which will be used to assess the achievements of results, identify the main difficulties/constraints, assess the impact of the programme for the targeted populations, and formulate lessons learned and practical recommendations to improve future similar programmes.

ILO's established procedures for development cooperation projects are followed for monitoring, reporting and evaluation of the project throughout the project cycle and at different stages of project execution.

Purpose

The purpose of the internal final evaluation is to assess the overall achievements of the project against its planned outcomes and outputs to generate lessons learned and best practices.

It will provide analysis according to OECD criteria at country level and will examine the efficiency, effectiveness, relevance, potential impact and sustainability of the projects. The evaluation report shall reflect findings from this evaluation on the extent to which the different phases

have achieved their stated objectives, produced the desired outputs, and realized the proposed outcomes. This evaluation will also identify strengths and weaknesses in the project design, strategy, and implementation as well as lessons learned with recommendations. Furthermore, it will touch upon cross cutting issues such as gender equality and disability.

The evaluation will comply with the [ILO evaluation policy](#), which is based on the United Nations Evaluation Norms and Standards and the UNEG ethical guidelines.

Scope of the evaluation

The evaluation will cover the whole project and look at the project activities, outputs and outcomes in Yemen. The evaluation will take into consideration the project duration, existing resources and political, security and environmental constraints.

Given the COVID-19 situation, the evaluation will be home-based and all field-work will be conducted online.

The evaluation will take place from 01/07/2021 until 30/09/2021 through online field work to collect information from different stakeholders. The consultancy shall start with initial briefing with the project team and the Regional Office for Arab States (ROAS).

The evaluation will integrate gender equality and inclusion of people with disabilities as a cross-cutting concern throughout its methodology and all deliverables, including the final report.

Clients of Evaluation

The primary clients of this evaluation are ILO ROAS, ILO constituents in Yemen, MOLSA, partner organizations (Ghadaq for Development, Sustainable Development Foundation) and the donor; US Department of State. Secondary users include other project stakeholders and units that may indirectly benefit from the knowledge generated by the evaluation.

4. EVALUATION CRITERIA AND QUESTIONS

The evaluation utilizes the standard ILO framework and follows its major criteria:

- ✓ **Relevance and strategic fit** – the extent to which the objectives are aligned with sub-regional, national, and local priorities and needs, the constituents' priorities and needs, and the donor's priorities for the country.
- ✓ **Validity of design** – the extent to which the project design, logic, strategy, and elements are/remain valid vis-à-vis problems and needs.
- ✓ **Efficiency** – the productivity of the project implementation process taken as a measure of the extent to which the outputs achieved are derived from an efficient use of financial, material, and human resources.

- ✓ **Effectiveness** - the extent to which the project can be said to have contributed to the development objective and the module objectives and more concretely whether the stated outputs have been produced satisfactorily; in addition to building synergies with national initiatives and with other donor-supported projects;
- ✓ **Impact** - positive and negative changes and effects caused by the project at the sub regional and national levels, i.e. the impact with social partners, government entities, beneficiaries, etc.;
- ✓ **Effectiveness of management arrangements;** and
- ✓ **Sustainability** - the extent to which adequate capacity building of social partners has taken place to ensure mechanisms are in place to sustain activities and whether the existing results are likely to be maintained beyond project completion; the extent to which the knowledge developed throughout the project (research papers, progress reports, manuals and other tools) can still be utilized after the end of the project to inform policies and practitioners,

Relevance and strategic fit:

- ❖ How well does the project's approach fit the context of the on-going armed conflict in Yemen? To what extent does the project fit into national development and humanitarian response plans set for Yemen? Does the project's design take into account local efforts addressing the crisis? Are the planned project's objectives and outcomes relevant and realistic to the situation and needs of the Yemeni people in general and of children in particular? Were the problems and needs adequately analysed?
- ❖ How well does the project complement and build on other previous ILO projects in Yemen?
- ❖ How does the project's objectives respond to the priorities of USDL in Yemen?
- ❖ Are the project's objectives aligned with tripartite constituents' objectives and needs? Were any special measures taken to ensure alignment?
- ❖ To what extent are the project's activities linked to the global commitments of the ILO including the Sustainable Development Goals and the agenda 2030?
- ❖ Does the project align with ILO's mainstreamed strategy on gender equality?

Validity of design:

- ❖ Are the project's strategies and structures coherent and logical (what are logical correlations between the development objective, module outcomes, and outputs)? Were the multidisciplinary approaches followed as planned? Did the analysis of the CAAFAG and children at risk situation reflect their true vulnerabilities? What were the advantages

and disadvantages of this analysis? Do any changes need to be made to the design of the project? (recommendations for future and ongoing phases)

- ❖ *How well were the upgraded informal apprenticeship models in Africa adopted and tailored to the Yemeni context?*
- ❖ *Were the chosen stakeholders (MOLSA and CBOs) a good fit for this type of project?*
- ❖ *What needs to be changed in terms of the design for future similar projects?*
- ❖ *Is the project's timeframes appropriate including (i) project identification (ii) project design including approvals (iii) tender process, and (iv) project implementation?*
- ❖ *What lessons could be learned in terms of the project's governance and staffing structure?*
- ❖ *Were the project's assumptions and targets realistic, and did the project undergo risk analysis and design readjustments when necessary?*
- ❖ *Does the project make use of the monitoring and evaluation framework? How appropriate and useful are the indicators in assessing the project's progress? If necessary, how should they be modified to be more useful? Are indicators gender sensitive? Are the means of verification for the indicators appropriate? Are the assumptions for each module objective and output realistic?*
- ❖ *Did the design successfully integrate mainstreaming gender equality in aspects of work according to ILO conventions on gender equality?*

Effectiveness:

- ❖ *Did the project succeed in achieving the development objective and module outcomes? Were targets reached?*
- ❖ *Have all outputs been produced and delivered and has the quality of these outputs been satisfactory? In cases where challenges have been faced, what intermediate results can be reported towards reaching the outcomes?*
- ❖ *How have stakeholders been involved in project's implementation? To what extent has the project management been participatory and has the participation contributed towards achievement of the project objectives?*
- ❖ *How did outputs and outcomes contribute to ILO's mainstreamed strategies including gender equality, social dialogue, poverty reduction and labour standards?*
- ❖ *How effective were the contributions from the CSOs (SDF and the Ghadaq for Development)?*
- ❖ *Has the Child Labour Unit capacity been improved to handle issues of child labour and recruitment into armed conflict?*

- ❖ *Were the provided trainings capable of providing the trainees with the knowledge on how to prevent the use of children in armed conflicts? Did the beneficiaries gain the intended skills planned? Were there any additional skills acquired such as social cohesion skill, conflict management skills, etc…)*
- ❖ *Did the trainings include information on how to initiate and maintain the socio-economic reintegration of CAAFAG in their communities?*
- ❖ *Have child friendly spaces been established in communities where the children can go through recreational activities using ILO-IPEC SCREAM Methodology? Was the ILO-IPEC SCREAM Methodology effective?*
- ❖ *Did the market place assessments reflect the actual skills needs of the communities under the intervention?*
- ❖ *Did the project provide business development services? And were these services gender sensitive?*
- ❖ *What, if any, alternative strategies would have been more effective in achieving its objectives?*
- ❖ *What positive or negative unintended outcomes can be identified?*
- ❖ *How has the knowledge been used? Does the project include a clear dissemination and advocacy plan for use of the knowledge generated?*
- ❖ *What have been specific strategies in terms of breaking gender stereotypes? Have they been successful? What are the next steps ahead?*

Sustainability:

- ❖ *Are the MOLSA Child Labour unit and the CSOs willing to carry on the project after implementation is over?*
- ❖ *Are the results achieved by the project so far likely to be sustainable? What measures have been considered to ensure that the key components of the project are sustainable beyond the life of the project?*
- ❖ *To what extent was sustainability of impact taken into account during the design of the project?*
- ❖ *To what extent does capacity building and procedures/policy development by the project contribute to sustainability?*

Efficiency:

- ❖ *To what extent have the project's activities been cost-effective? Have resources (funds, human resources, time, expertise, etc.) been allocated strategically to achieve outcomes?*

- ❖ *To what extent has the project been efficient in keeping up with the timeframe taking into consideration any delays?*
- ❖ *To what extent has the project been able to build on other ILO or non-ILO initiatives either nationally or regionally, in particular with regard to the creation of synergies in cost sharing?*

What were the intervention benefits and related costs of integrating gender equality?

Effectiveness of management arrangements:

- ❖ *What was the division of work tasks within the project's team? Has the use of local skills and management (CSOs) been effective? How does the project's governance structure facilitate good results and efficient delivery? What can be learned for efficiency gains?*
- ❖ *How clear is the understanding of roles and responsibilities and division of labour between project's staff, CSO's staff, and government entities?*
- ❖ *How effective was communication between the project's team, the regional office and the responsible technical department at headquarters? Has the project received adequate technical and administrative support/response from the ILO backstopping units?*

How effectively does the project's management team monitor the project's performances and results? Does the project report on progress in a regular and systematic manner, both at regional level, to PROGRAM and the donors? What M&E system has been put in place, and how effective has it been? Does the M&E system provide for capturing results in terms of women's and PwDs' participation?

Impact orientation:

- ❖ *Did the project (CRUCSY) have an impact on the perceptions, treatment or use of child soldiers (by all sides involved)? What are the children's perception of hope in their future? What is the community's hope for the reintegration of the children?*
- ❖ *Did the project increase the community's trust in the reintegration of children and the initiation of change?*
- ❖ *Have the rate of child recruitment into armed groups changed? Is it expected to change in the foreseen period and what are the measures in place to assess this rate?*
- ❖ *To what extent are national partners able and willing to continue with the project? How effectively has the project built national ownership?*
- ❖ *At this stage, would considering a continuation of the project be justifiable? In what way could achievements be consolidated? In what way could future phases differ from the current one?*

Challenges, Lessons learned and Specific Recommendations for the formulation of new Phases:

- ❖ *How has the nature of the conflict affected the planning, implementation and progress of the project?*
- ❖ *With the closure of the project, what is the current situation (Recruitment of child soldiers) in Yemen and how different is it from the project's inception period?*
- ❖ *Based on the challenges identified during the implementation, how can challenges be addressed in future phases?*
- ❖ *What good practices can be learned that can be applied to the future phase and similar future projects?*

COVID-19 Context:

- ❖ *The effect of COVID-19 pandemic on the country, employment, and nature of interventions and progress of implementation within the milestones.*
- ❖ *To what extent has the project leveraged new or repurposed existing financial resources to mitigate COVID-19 effects in a balanced manner?*
- ❖ *To what extent has the intervention leveraged partnerships (with constituents, national institutions, IFIs and UN/development agencies) to support constituents while targeting the COVID-19 response?*
- ❖ *Assess the timeliness of response, relevance of contingency measures, and lessons learned in relation to the Programme's response to the impact of Covid-19.*
- ❖ *How has the change (decrease) in capacity of government staff due to Covid-19 affected the achievement of some of the project's goals (work permits, etc.), and what should be considered for future planning if the situation persists?*
- ❖ *Assess the impact on the achievement of project goals and objectives with disruptions caused by the Covid-19 national and local lockdowns*
- ❖ *To what extent has the programme provided a timely and relevant response to constituents' needs and priorities in the COVID-19 context?*

5. METHODOLOGY

The evaluation will be carried out by a hired external consultant. The following is the proposed evaluation methodology. Any changes to the methodology should be discussed with and approved by the Evaluation Manager, Regional Evaluation Officer and the Project Manager.

1. Desk Review

The evaluator will review project background materials before conducting any interviews.

2. Briefing

The evaluator will have an initial consultation with the EM, REO, relevant ILO specialists and support staff in ROAS. The objective of the consultation is to reach a common understanding

regarding the status of the project, the priority assessment questions, available data sources and data collection instruments and an outline of the final assessment report. The following topics will be covered: status of logistical arrangements, project background and materials, key evaluation questions and priorities, outline of the inception and final report.

3. Individual Interviews and/or Group Interviews

After the initial consultation with EM and REO in ROAS, and following the initiation briefing with project CTA and the desk review and the inception report, the evaluator will have a virtual mission to Yemen, and have meetings with constituents/stakeholders together with interpreters supporting the process if needed. Interviews will use a questionnaire designed to solicit feedback on opportunities and constraints to the delivery of project outcomes. The questionnaire will be developed by the evaluator in consultation with project staff.

Individual or group interviews will be conducted with the following:

- a) Project staff/consultants that have been active.
- b) ILO ROAS DWT Director, RPU, and Senior Specialists in Gender, Skills and Employability, Resilience and Crisis Response Specialist Employers' and Workers' Organizations, etc.
- c) Interviews with national counterparts (MoLSA, local council, Members of the Higher Council for Childhood and Motherhood, partner CSOs, BDS Centers, public institutions, social partners, IPs, etc.),
- d) Interviews or meetings with UNICEF constituents in Yemen working in collaboration with regards to Outcome 2.
- e) Interviews with direct and indirect beneficiaries (men and women, local trainers, CFS employees, community members, children)

A list of interviewees as well as scheduled meetings shall be developed by the project staff and provided to the evaluator.

4. Debriefing

Upon completion of the missions, the evaluator will provide a debriefing to the Project team, ILO DWT and ROAS on the evaluation findings, conclusions and recommendations in Beirut at ROAS. The evaluator will also debrief stakeholders to validate results.

Evaluation Management

The evaluator will report to the ILO EM in ROAS and should discuss any technical and methodological matters with the EM and REO. The ILO ROAS office will provide administrative and logistical support during the evaluation mission.

6. MAIN DELIVERABLES

The main outputs of the evaluation consist of the following:

- *Deliverable 1: Inception Report*
- *Deliverable 2: Draft evaluation report*
- *Deliverable 3: Stakeholder debrief and PowerPoint Presentation (PPP)*
- *Deliverable 4: Internal Debrief*
- *Deliverable 5: Draft 2 evaluation report*
- *Deliverable 6: Final evaluation report with executive summary (as per ILO's standard procedure, the report will be considered final after quality review by EVAL. Comments will have to be integrated)*

Inception Report

The evaluator will draft an Inception Report, which should describe, provide reflection and fine-tuning of the following issues:

- *Project background*
- *Purpose, scope and beneficiaries of the evaluation*
- *Evaluation criteria and questions*
- *Methodology and instruments*
- *Main deliverables*
- *Management arrangements and work plan*

Final Report

The final version of the report will follow the format below and be in a range of 25-30 pages in length, excluding the annexes:

1. *Title page*
2. *Table of Contents, including List of Appendices, Tables*
3. *List of Acronyms or Abbreviations*
4. *Executive Summary with key findings, conclusions and recommendations*
5. *Background and Project Description*
6. *Purpose of Evaluation*
7. *Evaluation Methodology and Evaluation Questions (evaluation questions to also capture gender information to better mainstream gender in the report)*
8. *Key evaluation findings (organized by evaluation criteria)*
9. *A table presenting the key results (i.e. figures and qualitative results) achieved per objective (expected and unexpected)*
10. *Clearly identified conclusions and recommendations on how to proceed with future phases (identifying which stakeholders are responsible and the time and resource implications of the recommendations)*
11. *Lessons Learned (in prescribed template)*

12. Potential good practices (in prescribed template) taking into account gender specificities

13. Annexes (list of interviews, TORs, list of documents consulted, list of meetings and interviews attended, etc.)

The quality of the report will be assessed against the EVAL Checklists 4, 5, and 6.

The deliverables will be submitted in the English language, and structured according to the templates provided by the ILO.

7. MANAGEMENT ARRANGEMENTS

REQUIREMENTS

The evaluator should have:

- An advanced degree in social sciences, economics, or similar;
- Proven expertise on evaluation methods, child protection, conflict issues and the ILO approach;
- Extensive experience in the evaluation of development and humanitarian/emergency interventions;
- Expertise in the Labour intensive modality; more specifically child labour, child protection projects, capacity building and skills development and other relevant subject matter;
- An understanding of the ILO's tripartite culture;
- Knowledge of Yemen and the regional context;
- Full command of the English language (spoken and written) will be required. Command of the national language (Arabic) would be an advantage.

The consultant should not have any links to project management or any other conflict of interest that would interfere with the independence of the evaluation.

The final selection of the evaluator will be approved by the Regional Evaluation Officer in the ILO ROAS based on a short list of candidates prepared by the EM in consultations with the REO and ILO technical specialists, EVAL, ILO HQ technical departments, etc.

ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

The External Evaluator is responsible for conducting the evaluation according to the terms of reference (ToR). He/she will:

- Review the ToR and provide input, propose any refinements to assessment questions, as necessary, during the inception phase;
- Review project background materials (e.g., project document, progress reports);
- Prepare an inception report;
- Develop and implement the evaluation methodology (i.e., conduct interviews, review documents) to answer the evaluation questions;

- Conduct preparatory consultations with the ILO EM and REO prior to the evaluation mission.
- Conduct online field research, interviews, as appropriate, and collect information according to the suggested format;
- Present preliminary findings to the stakeholders;
- Prepare an initial draft of the evaluation report with input from ILO specialists and constituents/stakeholders;
- Conduct a briefing on the findings, conclusions, and recommendation of the evaluation to ILO ROAS.
- Prepare the final report based on the ILO, donor and constituents' feedback obtained on the draft report.

The ILO Evaluation Manager is responsible for:

- Drafting the ToR;
- Finalizing the ToR with input from colleagues;
- Preparing a short list of candidates for submission to the Regional Evaluation Officer, ILO/ROAS and EVAL for final selection, noting that shortlisted consultant/consultancy firm will be shared with Project Coordinator to ensure no conflict of interest;
- Hiring the consultant;
- Providing the consultant with the project background materials in consultation with project staff;
- Participating in preparatory consultations (briefing) prior to the assessment mission;
- Assisting in the implementation of the assessment methodology, as appropriate (i.e., participate in meetings, review documents);
- Reviewing the initial draft report, circulating it for comments and providing consolidated feedback to the External Evaluators (for the inception report and the final report);
- Reviewing the final draft of the report;
- Disseminating the final report to all the stakeholders;
- Coordinating follow-up as necessary.

The ILO REO:

- Provides support to the planning of the evaluation;
- Approves selection of the evaluation consultant and final versions of the TOR;
- Reviews the draft and final evaluation report and submits it to EVAL;
- Disseminates the report as appropriate.

The Project Coordinator is responsible for:

- Reviewing the draft TOR and providing input, as necessary;

- *Providing project background materials, including studies, analytical papers, reports, tools, publications produced, and any relevant background notes;*
- *Providing a list of stakeholders;*
- *Reviewing and providing comments on the inception report;*
- *Participating in the preparatory briefing prior to the assessment missions;*
- *Scheduling all meetings and interviews for the missions;*
- *Ensuring necessary logistical arrangements for the missions (Daily transportation to the field, translation during interviews and field visits if needed, hotel and flight bookings, terminal pick-up, and drop-off) with oversight from ROAS.*
- *Reviewing and providing comments on the initial draft report;*
- *Participating in the debriefing on the findings, conclusions, and recommendations;*
- *Providing translation for any required documents: ToR, PPP, final report, etc.;*
- *Making sure appropriate follow-up action is taken during consultancy.*

Duration of Contract and Timeline for Delivery

The collaboration between ILO and the Consultant is expected to start as of 1 July, 2021 (or upon signature) until the end of September.

Evaluation Timeframe: TO BE DEVELOPED AND AGREED on later

Supervision

The evaluator will work under the direct supervision of Regional Monitoring and Evaluation Manager and in close collaboration with the Project Coordinator on any technical and methodological matters related to this evaluation. The evaluator will be required to provide continuous updates on the progress of work and revert to the ILO with any challenges or bottlenecks for support. Coordination and follow-up with the evaluator will take place through e-mail or skype or any other digital communication mean.

8. LEGAL AND ETHICAL MATTERS

- *This evaluation will comply with ILO evaluation guidelines and UN Norms and Standards.*
- *The ToRs is accompanied by the code of conduct for carrying out the evaluation “Code of conduct for evaluation in the ILO” (See attached documents). The selected consultant will sign the Code of Conduct form along with the contract.*
- *UNEG ethical guidelines will be followed throughout the evaluation.*
- *The consultant will not have any links to project management or any other conflict of interest that would interfere with the independence of the evaluation.*

Annex 6: Lessons Learned

Lesson 1

Project Title: Protecting Children and Youth from Recruitment and Use in Armed Conflict (CRUCSY) project **TC/SYMBOL:**
YEM/18/01/USA

Name of Evaluator: Ravinder Kumar, Ali Al-azaki

Date: 30 September 2021

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

| LL Element | Text |
|--|--|
| Brief description of lesson learned (link to specific action or task) | <i>CRUCSY has demonstrated that a project focusing on both 'livelihoods' and 'protection' is both unique and urgent in Yemen and that it should be continued and expanded:</i> The CRUCSY project has amply demonstrated that the ILO work in Yemen is unique, important and significant. The evaluation could not find out any other similarly designed holistic intervention in Yemen. The CRUCSY programming is crucially needed to address both CAR and CAAFAG as part of interventions on the HDP nexus in the conflict zones. The ILO, therefore, has unique opportunity to share lessons from this project and to build up a consortium of UN and other agencies working on the ground interested in continuing and expanding the CRUCSY project in Yemen. |
| Context and any related preconditions | Collaborating with all agencies with the similar mandate, also continually exploring windows of opportunities for working with de facto and IRG authorities is a key to move forward. This evaluation study provides evidence-based insights and a way forward for developing a comprehensive model of programming in the next phase. |
| Targeted users / Beneficiaries | Users of the lessons generated from the CRUCSY evaluation are the ILO ROSA and the ILO Country team. The main beneficiaries of the re-designed CRUCSY project for the phase 2 would be CAR and CAAFAG. |
| Challenges /negative lessons - Causal factors | Shifting of the project geographical scope led to communication challenges among the key stakeholders. Leaving the project in the North at a quick notice is likely to have compromised both the completion as well as follow-on work needed in the North. |
| Success / Positive Issues - Causal factors | The project succeeded in creating an outlet for beneficiaries to express their feelings and receive needed support. However, this impact could be transitory in nature without case management system in practice and without follow up on support as needed. |

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| ILO Administrative Issues (staff, resources, design, implementation) | <p>The UN and other international agencies, including the ILO have continuing commitments to provide support on the HDP nexus, which is likely to keep the hope alive in Yemen. As quoted in the CCA report by the UNCT, the human rights situation on the ground in Yemen needs serious improvement, therefore addressing both 'protection' and 'livelihoods' needs of vulnerable communities is one the most priority intervention for the ILO. The ILO, being an active member of the Consultative Committee on Social Protection chaired by MoSAL, can continue to use its influence to engage with the national institutions and actors in developing and implementing time-bound activities aimed at ending and preventing grave violations against children and improving the protection of boys and girls living in situation of armed conflict.</p> |
|---|--|

Lesson 2

Project Title: Protecting Children and Youth from Recruitment and Use in Armed Conflict (CRUCSY) project **TC/SYMBOL:**
YEM/18/01/USA

Name of Evaluator: Ravinder Kumar, Ali Al-azaki

Date: 30 September 2021

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

| LL Element | Text |
|--|---|
| Brief description of lesson learned (link to specific action or task) | <i>The project predominantly focused on ‘prevention’, and ‘re-integration’ would require a different set of working modalities:</i> The beneficiaries of the project were those who are vulnerable and at risk of ‘recruitment’ to armed forces. Several beneficiaries with mental trauma were those who were directly and indirectly affected due to the impact of the war on themselves and their families. This impact was related to experiences of physical harm, loss of social capital and financial assets and severe reduction in livelihoods due to the ongoing conflict. A very few of the beneficiaries of the first phase of CRUCSY project were those who were ‘returnees’ as is acknowledged by several stakeholders interviewed. The project reached out successfully to vulnerable groups to potentially ‘prevent’ some of them joining the armed forces. Therefore, the project model worked well for ‘prevention’. ‘Re-integration’ is a distinct agenda requiring different strategies and approaches. Given that a proportion of front-line soldiers in the ongoing conflict are children, ‘re-integration’ is vastly important to be focused on for the planned second phase of the CRUCSY project. It would need to be designed based on the experiences of the first phase, using some of the approaches ²⁴ highlighted in the training module on the subject. |
| Context and any related preconditions | The incentives of being a child soldiers, though reduced over the years, are still strong. At the beginning of the war 2015-18, the child soldiers used to receive monthly salary of 1000 ²⁵ Saudi Rial (267 \$ US) which was a strong economic incentive for many families to send their children to the frontlines. Things have changed now as armed forces paying are not coming regularly or the payment have reduced to around US\$ 100. The last prescribed /official minimum wage was in 2010 in the 2 nd Strategy of the Ministry of Civil service as 28,000 Yemeni Rial which was almost 111 \$ USD ²⁶ . So, the child soldiers receive comparable minimum wages. Child soldiers transfer the monthly salary to their families. |
| Targeted users / Beneficiaries | Users of the lessons generated from the CRUCSY evaluation are the ILO ROSA and the ILO Country team. The main beneficiaries of the re-designed CRUCSY project for the phase 2 would be CAR and CAAFAG. |

²⁴ Training module on ‘reintegration’ lays stress on several approaches needed, such as stakeholder engagement and tailored communication, community-based approach, parental support to foster children retention, gender-sensitive outreach.

²⁵ As per the key informants interviewed by the evaluation

²⁶ Feedback of a staff from Ministry of Planning, Studies Department 13th Sept. 2021.

| | |
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| Challenges /negative lessons - Causal factors | <p>Achieving 're-integration' is very challenging. For one, the child soldiers get used to a diet of chewing 'qat'. It is very difficult to replace 'qat' with school bags. Most of the child soldiers suffers from physical harm and mental trauma. Recovering from physical harm is possible but it takes considerable time and efforts to make erstwhile child soldiers to recover from mental trauma. Then there is a political and diplomatic challenge of making armed forces accept the principle of non-recruitment of children on the frontline. There are several 'release' approaches to be adopted for child soldiers to come out from the armed forces /armed groups. Simultaneously, the family level food basket (short-term support) and livelihoods provisions would need to be created for 're-integration' process to start. Further, operating amidst warring parties in a conflict situation, the project experienced several challenges in influencing the social partners for taking actions related to CAAFAG</p> |
| Success / Positive Issues - Causal factors | <p>The project succeeded in creating an outlet for beneficiaries to express their feelings and receive needed support. However, this impact could be transitory in nature without case management system in practice and without follow up on support as needed.</p> |
| ILO Administrative Issues (staff, resources, design, implementation) | <p>As recommended by the evaluation, a new distinct project should be designed, focusing on the 're-integration' related outcomes. This would require the ILO working collaboratively with other members of the UNCT, the national governments and the international agencies. This new intervention from the ILO will be well-aligned with the critical need to intervene on the Humanitarian-Development-Peace nexus in Yemen. The design of 're-integration' project can also learn from similar ILO initiatives in other countries, such as in Syria or from other agencies, such as the work of Norwegian Refugee Council on the 'Protection' theme. The evaluation results show this this is a high priority for the ILO and would require higher resources (than the phase-1 CRUCSY) as the new phase of CRUCSY project would need to be comprehensively designed and implemented over at least three years' timeframe.</p> |

Lesson 3

Project Title: Protecting Children and Youth from Recruitment and Use in Armed Conflict (CRUCSY) project **TC/SYMBOL:**
YEM/18/01/USA

Name of Evaluator: Ravinder Kumar, Ali Al-azaki

Date: 30 September 2021

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

| LL Element | Text |
|--|---|
| Brief description of lesson learned (link to specific action or task) | <i>Effective co-ordination and collaboration with the local authorities is a key to success in a conflict zone as the project experience shows:</i> In a conflict zone, basing the project interventions on the local support is even more essential, even though seeking and getting it is all the more difficult. Local authorities can and do play important role in tracking and identifying CAAFAGs as it happened in Aden. The MoSAL functionaries in Aden provided the project details of the boys and girls with previous and potential military recruitment records. This was very helpful for the project in accessing locations of CAAFAGs including military training camps to meet the potential beneficiaries. Converse is also true as without the necessary support of local authorities in the Northern governorates, the project efforts could not go very far in terms of targeting the CAAFAG. The project team kept a low profile in the North to not attract undue attention from the warring parties. |
| Context and any related preconditions | The ongoing conflict and security situation could undermine the gains that the project has achieved in establishing collaboration with the local authorities. There are restrictions specially on the North on implementing protection programs by delaying / suspending approvals or sub-agreement of projects i.e., child protection response remains severely constrained, mostly due to funding gaps and restricted humanitarian access ²⁷ . An enabling institutional structure is a key lever for sustaining the project created infrastructure, capacities, tools, and benefits. In Sana'a and Hajjah and in the North in general, the demand is high for the project however, the de-facto authority is not in favour of such projects. Unless there is an agreement from the authorities' similar projects cannot be implemented. |
| Targeted users / Beneficiaries | Users of the lessons generated from the CRUCSY evaluation are the ILO ROSA and the ILO Country team. |
| Challenges /negative lessons - Causal factors | The ILO and the donor communication could have been better. The USDL and the ILO communication was not smooth. There were instances of communication from one party and response from the other being delayed. This affected project level decision-making and accounted for delay in project implementation. The donor did not have direct access to the ILO team in Yemen implementing the project. By design, communication flows were through the ILO HQ. |

²⁷<https://reliefweb.int/sites/reliefweb.int/files/resources/Yemen%20Protection%20Brief%20-%20January%202021.pdf>

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|---|--|
| Success / Positive Issues - Causal factors | Nuanced external communication of the project allowed the project to make connections. The term 'child soldier' or CAAFAG is a highly sensitive term in Yemen, therefore the project adopted a nuanced communication approach. The project was communicated externally as the one working for children engaged in 'worst form of child labour'. This approach allowed the project to make connections with its constituencies for developing collaboration |
| ILO Administrative Issues (staff, resources, design, implementation) | Shifting of the project geographical scope led to communication challenges among the key stakeholders. The project progress report (July to Sep 2020) says that it was a donor policy decision not to operate in Houthi-controlled areas taken on 30 April 2020. After this date, all activities in the North were stopped. The donor representative maintains it was communication misunderstanding. Nonetheless, it was agreed (by the ILO and the donor) that the project's geographical scope should be shifted to non-Houthi controlled areas, with the same scope of work and targets. As this entailed programmatic and budgetary changes, it took time, and the donor approval was received only around September 2020. Aden was selected as additional governorate to complete the project activities along with Lahj. Ghadaq (IP) was given the responsibilities to start the activities in Aden and to continue the training in Lahj. |

Annex 7: Emerging Good Practice

Emerging Good Practice 1

Project Title: Protecting Children and Youth from Recruitment and Use in Armed Conflict (CRUCSY) project **TC/SYMBOL: YEM/18/01/USA**

Name of Evaluator: Ravinder Kumar, Ali Al-azaki

Date: 30 September 2021

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

| GP Element | Text |
|---|---|
| Brief summary of the good practice (link to project goal or specific deliverable, background, purpose, etc.) | <i>An exemplary apprenticeship model:</i> Linked to the second outcome (re-integration of CAAFAG) of the project, the project did exemplary work in adaptation of the ILO-IPEC-SCREAM methodology to the country context and to the specific situation of CAR and CAAFAG. The apprenticeship was effective as it was systematically designed and implemented. It started with a market assessment and need assessment of youth (18- 25 years) and identified priorities. In Lahj, four occupations (Beauty therapy, embroidery, cloth design and dressmaking, solar panel installation, repair and maintenance, mobile maintenance) were selected and 29 master craftsmen were recruited to deliver 29 workshops with selected CAAFAG and CAR. The stakeholders of the projects (the local authorities, vocational education) were consulted at this stage. The apprenticeship implementation was monitored technically by IP supervisors recommended by the Ministry of Technical Education and vocational Training, and by IP project coordinator. Trainees were provided with theoretical underpinnings and then taken to related workshops or businesses for practical orientation. The apprenticeship component was also supported by the Chamber of Commerce in Aden. Al-Kuraimi Microfinance Bank, Al-Amal Microfinance Bank and Al-Tadhamaon Microfinance Program were brought to the project and delivered presentations on financial inclusion and access to credit requirement to those of the trainees who think of starting their own business, so they know the guarantees' requirements for start-up loans. |
| Relevant conditions and Context: limitations or advice in terms of applicability and replicability | The local authorities in both Aden and Lahj and the informal private workshop owners were key to the success of apprenticeship model implemented in Yemen. Private sector role was extended to providing markets and financial linkages. While this good practice is generally applicable to all country-contexts of the ILO work, the strategies and approaches used would need to be adapted as per the prevailing situations in different countries. |
| Establish a clear cause-effect relationship | There were no other specific projects working with CAAFAG in the country, while several agencies are delivering humanitarian support to other target groups. The CRUCSY project delivered capacity and skill building interventions for CAAFAG. |
| Indicate measurable impact and targeted beneficiaries | The project provided career counselling and apprenticeship to 200 youth members. Among them 40 members (20 boys and 20 girls) were provided with the necessary toolkit to start their own business. |

| | |
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| Potential for replication and by whom | The apprenticeship training in the CRUCSY project could cover only a small number of eligible beneficiaries. The need and demands for such interventions are very high in Yemen, indicating a large scope for replication within the country. The Yemen apprenticeship model can be documented in detail to support lessons learning among other ILO teams working in similar country-contexts. |
| Upward links to higher ILO Goals (DWCPs, Country Programme Outcomes or ILO's Strategic Programme Framework) | The project interventions on apprenticeship model are aligned with the Yemen Common Country Assessment (CCA) prepared by the UN Country Team in Yemen (UNCT), the Yemen Government's Strategic Vision 2025 reflects the official government priorities for inclusion of marginalized youth and gender equality. The CCA further states that the marginalised youth have limited social and economic opportunities which are deemed essential to prevent their recruitment in armed conflicts and violence. The CCA captures the Government priorities to target women's economic empowerment and the development of their skills in relation to the market. The CRUCSY project responded to these expressed humanitarian action plans, as captured by the CCA. The ILO do not have a Decent Work Country Programme (DWCP) in Yemen and followed a strategic framework as contained in the CCA. The project was aligned with the UN Yemen approach related to operationalizing the humanitarian, development, peace nexus and enabling human development in a complex crisis country environment. |
| Other documents or relevant comments | |

Emerging Good Practice 2

Project Title: Protecting Children and Youth from Recruitment and Use in Armed Conflict (CRUCSY) project **TC/SYMBOL: YEM/18/01/USA**

Name of Evaluator: Ravinder Kumar, Ali Al-azaki

Date: 30 September 2021

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

| GP Element | Text |
|---|---|
| Brief summary of the good practice (link to project goal or specific deliverable, background, purpose, etc.) | <i>Training guide suggested approach to identity, select and support CAAFAG:</i> The training guide /handbook (N Singh et al, 2020) was developed to provide operational guidance to the key programmatic areas of: prevention of recruitment; preparedness of response; negotiation of release; interim/transitory care following release; identification/verification; family tracing; reunification; reintegration; monitoring of recruitment and re-recruitment; follow-up and advocacy. The training guide proposes a sequence of steps for effective planning and implementation of project interventions. These steps are a) context /gap analysis, b) community-based approach for prevention of recruitment, c) parental support, d) profiling of CAAFAGs, e) social and economic re-integration of CAAFAGs. In addition, the training guide provides suggestions on 'what to do' and 'how to do'. Some of recommended approaches are community dialogue, tailored and gender-sensitive messaging, engagement of local authorities and family engagement etc. Furthermore, the training guide acknowledged that Yemen is an environment overwhelmed by humanitarian and economic emergency including the presence of large number of domestic IDPs and returnees with no means of subsistence ²⁸ . Therefore, it is hard to identify who is not affected by the conflict among children. However, and given the limited resources available for CAAFAGS reintegration programs in the current conflict situation in Yemen, there is a need to set a clear criterion for who is more vulnerable for recruitment by armed groups among the children. The training guide proposed five criteria for children who are conflict-affected, and who should be considered for re-integration programs. |
| Relevant conditions and Context: limitations or advice in terms of applicability and replicability | The training guide is designed for a specific target group (CAR and CAAFAG) in fragile and conflict affected states. The training guide is likely to be applicable for other similar contexts within the Middle East and North Africa. Before adopting the training guide in other context, it will need adaptations in terms of approaches and strategies for various steps proposed in the training guide. |
| Establish a clear cause-effect relationship | Not relevant for this good practice. |
| Indicate measurable impact and targeted beneficiaries | Training guide was developed in Q10 of the project and could be applied to actual implementation processes. It is difficult to estimate the impact of this good practice on the effectiveness of the project implementation. |
| Potential for replication and by whom | The training guide is likely to be applicable for other similar contexts within the Middle East and North Africa. |

²⁸ IOM Displacement Tracking Matrix, Yemen Area Assessment, round 37, March 2019, as quoted in the ILO training guide

| | |
|---|---|
| <p>Upward links to higher ILO Goals (DWCPs, Country Programme Outcomes or ILO's Strategic Programme Framework)</p> | <p>The strategies and approaches proposed in the training guide are aligned with the Yemen Common Country Assessment (CCA) prepared by the UN Country Team in Yemen (UNCT), the Yemen Government's Strategic Vision 2025 reflects the official government priorities for inclusion of marginalized youth and gender equality. The CCA further states that the marginalised youth have limited social and economic opportunities which are deemed essential to prevent their recruitment in armed conflicts and violence. The ILO do not have a Decent Work Country Programme (DWCP) in Yemen and followed a strategic framework as contained in the CCA. The training guide recommendations are aligned with the UN Yemen approach related to operationalizing the humanitarian, development, peace nexus and enabling human development in a complex crisis country environment.</p> |
| <p>Other documents or relevant comments</p> | |