



INTERNATIONAL LABOUR ORGANIZATION

FINAL PROJECT EVALUATION

Project title:	Building capacity for improving national industrial relations database for evidence-based policy-making
ILO TC/SYMBOL:	VNM/16/04/CAN
Type of evaluation	Self-evaluation
Countries and relevant country outcomes:	Vietnam
Date of Evaluation	August- September 2019
Evaluator	Le Duy Binh (external consultant from Economica Vietnam)
Project starting and ending date	16.03.2017 - 30.09.2019
ILO Administrative Office	Country Office for Vietnam
Main implementing partner:	Ministry of Labour, Invalids, and Social Affairs (MOLISA) The Viet Nam Chamber of Commerce and Industry (VCCI) The Viet Nam General Confederation of Labour (VGCL) The General Statistics Office
Project Budget	USD 297,154
Evaluation budget	USD 4,000
Donors	Canadian Government (ESDC)

LIST OF ACRONYMS AND ABBREVIATIONS

ESDC	Employment and Social Development Canada
CB	Collective Bargaining
DIRWA	Department of Industrial Relations and Wage
DoLISA	Department of Labour, Invalids and Social Affairs
DWCP	Decent Work Country Programme
FTA	Free Trade Agreement
FPRW	Fundamental Principles and Rights at Work
GDP	Gross Domestic Product
GED	Gender, Equality and Diversity Unit
GOV	Government of Viet Nam
GSO	General Office for Statistics
ILO	International Labour Organization
ILS	International Labour Standards
IR	Industrial Relations
ILSSA	Institute for Labour, Social Science and Social Affairs
IWTU	Institute of Workers and Trade Union
MoLISA	Ministry of Labour, Invalids and Social Affairs
NIRF	New Industrial Relations Framework
NGO	Non-governmental Organization
PCI	Provincial Competitiveness Index
SDG	Sustainable Development Goals
TPP	Trans-Pacific Partnership
UN	United Nations
USDOL	United States Department of Labour
VCCI	Viet Nam Chamber of Commerce and Industry
VGCL	Viet Nam General Confederation of Labour

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

International labour standards in general and industrial relations in particular are part of the new generation of free trade commitments (e.g. EVFTA and CP-TPP) to which Viet Nam is a signatory. In Viet Nam, the system of indicators, information and data on industrial relations is still incomplete and has some limitations. Therefore, the establishment of a database on industrial relations is imperative to meet the needs of Viet Nam in affirming and fulfilling commitments to free trade agreements. The NIRF Canada project is designed to build the capacity of government agencies and social partners to improve the national IR database, thereby supporting the evidence-based policy-making process. The project is therefore relevant and strategically fit with the actual context in Viet Nam.

The design of the project is in line with the needs and priorities of Viet Nam, the functions and responsibilities of national partners, the capabilities and strengths of the ILO. The logic of activities, output, results and impact of the project is appropriate. The project design also allows NIRF Canada to benefit from overall coordination provided by the ILO Office, technical backstopping in ILO Bangkok Office, and technical and quality control provided by ILO headquarters units in Geneva. Though not of the same level of effort, project partners, especially MOLISA, actively contributed to the concepts and formulation of the project. However, the design and approval time of the project is relatively long. The design of the project started in early 2017 and the project document was approved only in March 2019. . Although the objectives are very consistent and the logic between the goals, outcomes, outputs and activities is reasonable, the resources for project implementation are very modest as compared with the ambitious objective of the project. Due to limited resources, the number of project activities is not commensurate with the expected results set for the project.

The project encountered many difficulties at its inception. This is especially due to the need to be redesigned and to delays in project approval process. These delays prevented some project activities from being best planned for its most relevant phase of the project. Some activities started at time too close to the end of the project. Due to the delays from the project inception, the project was extended for another 6 months. Despite these difficulties and delays, the achievement of project outputs is satisfactory.

In general, project partners appreciate the effectiveness of project activities and support. The project is effective in implementing activities and in achieving outputs. Given the project limited resource, the cost-benefit relationship of the project is very positive. However, it should also be noted that the effectiveness of the project could have been higher if the project approval time was shortened.

The resources allocated to the project are modest compared to the objectives and expected outputs of the project. Given its very limited resources, it is evident that the NIRF Canada project has shown a high level of efficiency in resource utilization. Within the allocated resources, the project devotes the highest possible resources to activities, and implements all activities in a reasonable and effective manner, with focus on practical needs of Vietnamese partners. The project made efforts to implement activities which were

considered possible before the approval of project document. Therefore, most of the planned activities within the project are completed within the project's resources and time.

The project partner structure is relevant. Implementing partner agencies such as MOLISA, VGCL, and VCCI have roles and functions directly related to social dialogues, and on policy formulation, policy advocacy in industrial relations. These institutions have function and responsibility in collecting data and evidence for the purpose of this process.

Project partners appreciate the support, commitment and performance of the national project coordinator, project staff, national experts and international experts.

Reporting and monitoring work have been satisfactory under the project. Periodical technical progress reports were prepared and important activities were documented. Technical reports, meeting minutes, etc. are documented. Project monitoring system is in line with requirements applicable to an ILO executed project.

Due to its small size, NIRF Canada Project did not have a project steering committee or a project management unit. This gives the project the flexibility in the implementation process. However, this, according to national project partners, is a constraint that hinders the coordination between national partners, making the coordination process more time-consuming. The project document does not specify the counterpart funds from the Vietnamese side. Vietnamese partners reveal that they understand that the nature of a technical assistance project and the benefits of its being mostly in the form of technical assistance and the improved capacity. However, limitation in resources, especially in terms of finance and time, has discouraged national partners from proactively implementing project activities.

Issues related to gender, non-discrimination and paid due attention to and are adequately mainstreamed in the project.

In term of impact and sustainability, the project has had a direct impact on changing the awareness and understanding of project participants on the significance and importance of evidence-based policy making and of the IR database in support of this purpose. At the time of the evaluation, Directive 22 of the Central Committee is being reviewed after 10 years of implementation and a new directive is undergoing the approval process¹. According to project implementation partners, some results of the project have also been incorporated in the final report on implementation of the directive. The IR indicator framework is highly appreciated by all partner organizations. The tripartite partners and other stakeholders stated that this is the first time such a framework is developed. It promises to be a good foundation to enhance collection, analysis and sharing of IR information and data in Viet Nam. The Industrial Relations Report will be maintained and used by national partners for reporting to high-level policy makers (Party, National Assembly and Government), as well as by other central ministries and agencies, and by

¹ On 3 September 2019, the Central Committee of the Communist Party issued Directive 37/TW regarding “Strengthening the Harmonious Industrial Relations, Stability and Progress in a new Stage” to replace Directive 22.

local government agencies. A network of IR researchers has been set up through project activities. The Labour Research Contest has a positive impact on universities and research institutes which are interested in labour issues and in industrial relations.

Under NIRF-Canada, there are some constraints that need to be address, for example the issues related to project formulation and approval, allocation of resources in project implementation, implementation of some follow-up activities to support the sustainability of some nascent outputs of the project. However, in general, the NIRF Canada project has been effectively implemented and has delivered satisfactory outputs and results. The project is well on track to achieve its objective. The project has been effective in terms of delivering results, efficient in using resources with value-for-money outputs being delivered. The project implementation is satisfactory to national partners and beneficiaries.

I. BRIEF BACKGROUND ON THE PROJECT, RATIONALE AND LOGIC

1. Background and rationale

Along with the process of international economic integration, especially in adhering to new generation free trade agreements such as the EVFTA and CP-TPP, Viet Nam is becoming increasingly subject to international labour standards (international labour standards in general and industrial relations principles in particular). It is in this context that the MOLISA submitted its plan to the Social Affair Committee of the National Assembly, outlining a timetable for labour code revision and also for preparatory steps towards ratification of the Freedom of Association and Protection of the Right to Organise Convention, 1948 (No. 87), the Right to Organise and Collective Bargaining and Convention, 1949 (No. 98) and the Abolition of Forced Labour Convention, 1957 (No. 105). With the commitment to the reform of labour laws governing industrial relations, it is expected that the government and social partners continue their joint efforts to create new industrial relations framework (NIRF) which would serve Vietnamese businesses, workers and society.

International labour standards in general and industrial relations in particular are part of the new generation of free trade commitments (e.g. EVFTA and CP-TPP) to which Viet Nam is a signatory. In Viet Nam, the system of indicators, information and data on industrial relations is still incomplete and has some limitations. Therefore, the establishment of a database on industrial relations is imperative to meet the needs of Viet Nam in affirming and fulfilling commitments to free trade agreements. This is very important for timely assessment of industrial relations, tracking changes and progresses, and making evidence-based recommendations to further improve and ensure harmonious and sustainable industrial relations.

In reality, Vietnam's industrial relations indicator system, information and data are still incomplete and have some limitations as follows:

- There is no consistency on the criteria and indicator used to collect data: the definitions, calculation methods, time and methods for collecting data in each agency and province are not consistent. The data collected is therefore inconsistent and difficult for comparative analysis.
- Information systems and data on industrial relations are inadequate, scattered and there are discrepancy of the same information between agencies.
- The coordination in IR data collection, sharing and dissemination between data producers is limited and inefficient.

Therefore, the establishment of an industrial relations database system is necessary and highly relevant to meet the needs of Viet Nam. It will help to effectively solve issues related to industrial relations in the new situation as well as further affirming the nation's commitment to free trade agreements. Based on practical situation and needs, the Project is designed to address the problems and challenges in the labour information and data system in Viet Nam.

2. Objectives and results

2.1. Objective

The project is designed to build the capacity of government agencies and social partners to improve the national IR database, thereby supporting the evidence-based policy-making process.

2.2. Specific objective

The specific objectives of the project include:

- *Objective 1.* The gender-responsive industrial relations data system was strengthened and to better meet the national needs and obligations under the ILO Declaration on fundamental principles and rights in labour.
- *Objective 2.* Strengthen the capacity of Vietnamese partners in developing and implementing evidence-based policies and social dialogues on industrial relations.

2.3. Key project results

The project is aimed strengthening the capacity of Vietnamese partners in evidence-based policy making and social dialogues. It therefore targets at producing results along two main axes:

- Research report, review of indicator system, data on labour planning are implemented; gaps in targets, data based on comparison with ILO international standards are identified; solutions to improve the labour data system are proposed; the data collection mechanism is standardized and suitable to the context of Viet Nam and international labour standards based on discussion and agreement between tripartite partners and other stakeholders; the handbook on indicators and guidelines for data collection of labour planning is issued.
- Training program on impact measurement by using IR data for labour policy makers, policy implementation agencies and research are implemented; The draft of the annual IR report is developed on the basis of using the standardized, improved data system and with participation of tripartite partners, and evidence-based research on industrial relations are implemented.

II. PURPOSE, SCOPE AND CLIENTS OF EVALUATION

1. Purpose of the evaluation

The main purpose of this evaluation is to support accountability and facilitate learning within the ILO and key project implementing partners. The evaluation findings and

recommendations are also used to inform design and implementation of future ILO development cooperation activities in Viet Nam. In particular, the evaluation aims to:

- Evaluate the effectiveness and efficiency of the project, including the level of achievement of objectives and targets, identifying both intended and unintended results, and the sustainability after the project's end;
- Identify and document lessons learnt and good practices which can be valuable to ILO and Vietnamese implementing partners for other similar or future development activities in Viet Nam.

The primary users of the evaluation report are ILO Country Office for Viet Nam and ILSSA, VCCI, VGCL, and GSO. The secondary users are the Government of Canada, MoLISA and other ILO's units.

2. Scope of the evaluation

The evaluation covers the period of 16 March 2017 to 30 September 2019. The evaluation covers the following dimensions: intervention relevance, progress and effectiveness; efficiency of resource use; and effectiveness of management arrangements.

In the evaluation, dimensions related to gender, non-discrimination and SDG were considered as issues which cut cross the methodology, deliverables and final report of the evaluation. To the extent possible, data collection and analysis was disaggregated by sex as described in the ILO Evaluation Policy Guidelines and relevant Guidance Notes.

3. Evaluation methodology

The evaluation complied with evaluation norms, standards and follow ethical safeguards, as specified in the ILO's evaluation procedures. Specifically, the evaluation follows the "ILO Policy Guidelines for Evaluation: Principles, Rationale, Planning and Managing for Evaluations (3rd Edition, ILO 2017).

The evaluation used qualitative and quantitative research methods (to the extent possible). The evaluation fieldwork has been participatory in nature. Qualitative information was obtained through key informant interview, for example with MOLISA, VCCI, VGCL, and other stakeholders. Opinions coming from stakeholders helped to clarify the quantitative data obtained from project documents. The participatory nature of the evaluation has contributed to the sense of ownership among stakeholders. Quantitative data was drawn from project documents including the Technical Progress Reports (TPRs), deliverables of the projects and the projects' monitoring and evaluation plans/frameworks and other secondary sources. A consultation meeting with all project partners and key informant were held by the end of the evaluation to validate the findings and recommendations from the evaluation², thus ensuring the participation and ownership of key project partners.

A combination of sound quantitative and qualitative research methods has been developed for each evaluation question. Information and data were collected data from

² The workshop was held on 27 September 2019.

different sources by different methods for each evaluation question and findings be triangulated with multiple stakeholders of the project. The gender dimension was also considered as a cross-cutting concern throughout the methodology, deliverables and final report of the evaluation.

Specifically, the following activities were used for the implementation of the evaluation:

- Hold a briefing with the project coordinator, the officer in charge of M&E at ILO Hanoi Office, and desk review of all documents, reports, workshop reports, mission reports etc. to be familiarized with the project.
- Prepare evaluation plan and tools;
- Interviews with project partner and other relevant stakeholders of the project.
- Discuss the findings, conclusions and recommendations with the project coordinator;
- Prepare a draft evaluation report in the English and Vietnamese language;
- Obtain comments from the Project Coordinator, the officer in charge of M&E at ILO Hanoi Office, and relevant stakeholders on the draft
- Consult project partners and relevant stakeholders on findings of the evaluation through a consultation workshop.
- Finalize the report as per comments received.

During the evaluation, some partners sometimes are confused between different NIFR project, thus can lead to some bias in their overall evaluation. This is the most significant risk related to methodology of the evaluation. This risk was mitigated by explaining clearly to respondents about the project at the beginning of the interview, and also sometimes in the middle of the interview.

III. EVALUATION OF THE PROJECT- MAIN FINDINGS

1. Relevance and strategic fit

Viet Nam has committed to making continued and sustained efforts towards ratifying, to the extent it has not yet done so, fundamental Conventions of the ILO. In June 2018, the Right to Organise and Collective Bargaining Convention, 1949 (No.98) was also ratified by Viet Nam. To date, Viet Nam has ratified six of these Conventions, with two outstanding, namely the Freedom of Association and Protection of the Right to Organise Convention, 1948 (No.87); and Abolition of Forced Labour Convention, 1957 (No.105).

Viet Nam has becoming increasingly integrated into the world economy and open its economy to international trade and investment. Most recently on 30 June 2019, the country has signed the EVFTA and the EVIPA with the European Union. Before that, Viet Nam also signed the CP-TPP. These are new generation FTAs and investment protection agreements. The agreements offer tremendous opportunities for Viet Nam. They also provide new requirements and standards, especially those on sustainable development and labour, that Viet Nam should comply with.

These trade agreements require Viet Nam to make many changes and reforms on labour policies, and regulations on labour and industrial relations in particular. The labour standards and industrial relation requirements have been raised to a new level that is much higher than before. In order to support this process, Viet Nam needs to have a comprehensive and well-structured database on IR to support the law and policy making process to make it more evidence-based, and to provide evidence on the compliance of labour standards and IR requirements in accordance with such trade agreements.

Strategically, the project is therefore relevant and fit with the priority of Viet Nam in implementing these agreements, especially on chapters related to international labour standards in the future.

The project also contributes to national development framework and priorities. Viet Nam is in the process of revising the Labour Code, partly to meet the new needs from the practice, partly to meet the new requirements under the new-generation FTA which Viet Nam have adhered to.

The revisions of the Labour Code have been accelerated, particularly after the signature of the EVFTA, EVIPA and the CP-TPP. In May 2019, the first draft of the revised Labour Code has been made available to the public for comment. According to this draft, the revised Labour Code aims to fully institutionalize the principles of the 2013 Constitution in relations to ensuring human rights and citizenship in the field of labour, ensuring sustainable employment, and aim to build harmonious, stable and progressive industrial relations. The revision of the Labour Code also aims to institutionalize international labour commitments and standards to be in line with Vietnam's socio-economic development and political institutions, especially fundamental international labour standards.

From this perspective, the NIRF Canada is relevant and strategically fit with the actual context in Viet Nam. It is relevant with national development framework and contributes to effective implementation of national development priorities in Viet Nam, especially for the process of developing and implementing the labour policies in the framework of the amended Labour Law, guiding implementation regulation of the Labour Law as well as of other relevant laws in the near future, with the objective of better fulfilling the requirements set by new-generation trade agreements.

2. Contribution to the Decent Work Country Programme (DWCP) and other ILO/UN Programmes

The NIRF Canada is built on the priorities and pillars of the ILO and Viet Nam Decent Work Country Programme (DWCP) for 2017-2021: Country Priority 3 on “Building effective labour market governance compliant with fundamental principles and rights and at work” and the following DWCP outcomes:

- Outcome 3.1 Effective industrial relations systems built in line with international labour standards and fundamental principles and rights at work.

- Outcome 3.4 Deepened commitment to ratify and apply international labour standards.

This project supports the approved One Strategic Plan between the Government of Viet Nam and the UN in Viet Nam, which aims to contribute to development assistance for 2017-2021 primarily under Outcome 3.2: *Inclusive labour markets and expansion of opportunities for all* - which expresses that by “2021, a fairer, inclusive labour market ensures decent work and opportunities for all, particularly for excluded groups and disadvantaged geographic areas.”

The project makes contributions to the following Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) at the country level, in particular, in the following SDG indicators:

- SDG Indicator 8.8.2: Increase in national compliance of labour rights (freedom of association and collective bargaining) based on ILO textual sources and national legislation by sex
- SDG Indicator 10.4.1: Labour share of GDP, comprising wages and social protection transfers

3. Relevance with ILO competency

The International Labour Organization, through the Hanoi Office and technical assistance of experts in the regional office and Geneva, is a specialized organization that supports tripartite partners in Viet Nam. ILO provided technical assistance to the Government of Viet Nam and its social partners in improving labour laws and policies to assist tripartite partners in establishing a new industrial relations framework.

The ILO is recognized for its industrial relations expertise, international labour standards, and experience in providing technical assistance in law and regulation making in Viet Nam. ILO Hanoi Office with technical assistance of regional office experts and head office units is uniquely positioned to assist tripartite partners in Viet Nam in this critical process. ILO has been involved in industrial relations projects in Viet Nam for many years including the Industrial Relations Project (2002-2008) focusing on supporting governments and social partners to understand key IR concepts. Fundamentals of Modern Industrial Relations Project (2009-2016) focus on improving the legal framework (through support to the revision of the 2012 Labour Code and Trade Union Law). ILO is also involved in support to establishing the National Wage Council, initiating industrial relations pilot project to help creating a core group of staff for industrial relations reforms.

Regarding international experience in similar projects, ILO has developed and piloted a process of analysis and evaluation to support governments, employers' organizations and trade unions, so they can work together to promote the freedom of association and the right to collective bargaining.

4. Relevance to the needs and priorities of Vietnam

The design of the project is in line with the needs and priorities of Viet Nam, the functions and responsibilities of national partners, the capabilities and strengths of the ILO. The functions and tasks of the partners involved in the project implementation are also consistent with the objectives and results of the project, for example those of MOLISA (including the ILSSA and DIRWA), the VGCL, VCCI, GSO and some other partners. These are also agencies that play important roles in the formation of a database on industrial relations and in use of data and evidence from this database in the making of policy, programs and legal documents in Viet Nam. The project's partner structure of direct and indirect partners is also relevant to ensure the ability to achieve project objectives effectively.

The logic of activities, output, results and impact of the project is appropriate. The emphasis of using evidence in the process of policy making is very necessary and is in line with principle and priority which is encouraged in Viet Nam. For example, the Law on Promulgation of Legal Normative Documents issued in 2015 required that policy impact assessment be implemented in the making of any regulations. The law also emphasizes on the use of evidence, data, qualitative and quantitative methods in policy analysis and in formulating policy and regulations in Viet Nam. However, the number of project activities is modest as compared with the expected outcome and objective of the project.

The project design also allows NIRF Canada's partners to benefit from overall coordination provided by the ILO Office, technical backstopping in ILO Bangkok Office, and technical and quality control provided by ILO headquarters units in Geneva. Access to this valuable source of international knowledge and experience allows to improve the quality of the project's activities, especially the technical aspect within the project's resources.

Though not of the same level of effort, project partners, especially MOLISA, actively contributed to the concepts and formulation of the project. The conceptualization and elaboration of activities were carried out between March and December 2017. However, due to some changes from the actual situation such as the delay of the signing of TPP agreement, then the emergence of the CPTTP and the EVFTA, the contents of the project were also adapted to fit with the actual situation. In response to the changes, ILO conducted a series of consultation meetings with national partners including ILSSA, DIRWA and other stakeholders to exchange views, ideas on project approach. On the basis of this consultation, the project was redesigned to be more suitable to the actual context, priorities and capacities of national partners.

The project has been implemented in parallel with the (i) New Industrial Relations Framework Programme (US Department of Labour and Japan); and (ii) Fundamental Principles and Rights at Work Project (EU). This is a good condition for coordinated support by ILO to achieve a better national framework for industrial relations in Viet Nam.

5. Project Design and Approval

The design and approval time of the project is relatively long. The design of the project started in early 2017 and the project document was approved only in March 2019. The main reason is due to changes in external conditions, for example the delay of the TPP and the change in the format of the agreement and the changes in ODA management regulation of the Vietnamese Government. As a result, the original designs and logic of the project's original design became obsolete and was therefore no longer suitable. In addition, the Government also made changes to the ODA management decree at this time.

Due to changes in external circumstance, MOLISA and ILO made revisions to the design of the project. The new project design has an appropriate design in terms of objectives, outcomes, outputs and activities. The project partners, especially through tripartite cooperation, have contributed effectively to the project design, especially for the project activities.

The change of project design from being a component of the overall NIRF program into an independent project shows the necessary flexibility by ILO and Vietnamese national partners. However, this also resulted in difficulty in the implementation process, mostly related to the allocation of expected resources (human and financial) within the project.

The project duration according to the original design is relatively appropriate. However, due to changes in the project design during the implementation process and to the delays in project approval³, the actual time for implementation is incompatible with the expected results. Such results as development of IR indicators, piloting, post-pilot refinement, and institutionalizing of the indicators often require a longer timeframe. The NIRF Canada project is not exceptional in facing the delays related to approval of the project document. This has become an issue that is observed in almost all other projects implemented by the ILO. The risks of these delays have not been properly taken into account and mitigated during the project design process in order to ensure that project activities are consistent with the actual implementation time of the project.

6. Relevance between project resource and expected objective and results

In general, the project is appropriately designed in terms of content, logical framework to achieve the overall objective. The project is also in line with Vietnam's development context and priorities. However, the number of activities to ensure the achievement of the results and objectives of the project is relatively modest due to the limitations of resources allocated to the implementation process.

One of the limitations in the project's design is the mismatch between the expected objectives, results and the financial resources for activities and implementation. Although the objectives are very consistent and the logic between the goals, outcomes, outputs and activities is reasonable, the resources for project implementation are very modest as compared with the ambitious objectives of the project. Due to limited resources, the number of project activities is not commensurate with the expected results set for the project. For example, the outcome of building up and strengthening the gender-

³ The project document was approved by MOLISA six month before the ending date of the project.

responsive industrial relations data system is supported by two main outputs and activities related to analysis of situation, developing the IR indicator framework and piloting the framework in two provinces. These outputs and activities are insufficient to guarantee the achievement of the targeted outcome.

7. Delivery of outputs

The project encountered many difficulties at its inception. This is especially due to the need to be redesigned and to delays in project approval process. These delays prevented some project activities from being best planned for its most relevant phase of the project. Some activities were started at time too close to the end of the project. Due to the delays from the project inception, the project was extended for another 6 months.

Despite these difficulties and delays, the achievement of project outputs is satisfactory. More details are as follows:

Outcome 1: Gender-responsive industrial relations data system strengthened to better meet country needs and capture additional data relating to obligations under ILO FPRW Declaration

Output 1.1 IR data system reviewed, gaps identified and guiding document for IR data system improvement adopted by the Government

The IR data system has been thoroughly reviewed via a survey conducted by MOLISA and the top national IR researchers at the central level and three target provinces. The survey report assisted the Government in addressing the IR data gaps, not only to improve quality of existing data and filling the gaps of missing and essential IR data, but also to improve coordination among various data producers.

Through this study, it is revealed that the current IR and wages database in Viet Nam possesses certain gaps. For example, many pieces of database and information on IR are not available to policy-makers and labour research community, such as the coverage of collective bargaining agreements (CBAs), data on labour costs, including cost of wages and others, or impacts of labour disputes and strikes to economic performance of business and economy as a whole. In addition, in some cases, certain data and information are available; however, the method and quality of data collecting and sampling are not consistent, i.e. the data on strikes and wages. Furthermore, multiple data producers are tracking same certain types of indicators for different purposes, yet it lacks coordination amongst these producers to synthesize all of collected data and information as well as to disseminate them.

Upon the evaluation of the current databases and proposed indicators, the research team proposed a list of nine indicators on industrial relations and five indicators on wages, with formulas for calculation to each. The review report identifies the loopholes in the current system and suggest necessary steps to improve it. The report is highly appreciated by the tripartite stakeholders and data producers, while being employed as the basis for

MOLISA to develop the Manual for data indicators as mentioned in the next sections of this report.

Output 1.2: Manual on IR data collection aligned to local context and ILS adopted and used by authorities at the central and local level

The project facilitated the development of a manual on data collection on industrial relation and wage indicators. The manual provides guidance for IR collectors to standardize the data on both industrial relations and wages. This set of IR and wage indicators help IR actors at both local and central levels in evidence-based policy making, IR and wage management and administration. It will be also very helpful for them in IR dialogues, especially at provincial and local levels.

The manual consists of two main parts the indicators and the “how-to” section to collect the data in a proper manner. There are 12 indicators in industrial relations and 6 indicators on wage adopted by tripartite partners. These 12 indicators have been developed from the suggested 9 indicators in the current situation report (Output 1.1). Moreover, there are several “Vietnamese” indicators added and adopted by national constituents to measure the national IR progress properly. Each of the indicator is presented in complete form of a definition and meaning, a calculation formula, disaggregation, its frequency of dissemination, its data sources and the agencies responsible for data collection and aggregation. The indicator framework also pays due attention to the requirement of gender disaggregated data.

The development involved the participation of tripartite constituents, namely different departments of MOLISA, General Statistics Office, VGCL and VCCI. The draft Manual has been validated with the constituents and its potential users at the central and local levels in December 2018. The Manual set out the framework for the data collection pilot in 2019. The workshop to review the pilot implementation was implemented by MOLISA and ILO with participation of VGCL and other stakeholders in August 2019. After the pilot, the Manual would be further improved to match the actual need and situation at the local level.

In addition, the Project provided technical support to review the labour related sections of the Provincial Competitive Index Report (PCI). PCI survey is a large-scale enterprise survey, covering 63 provinces in Viet Nam and with a sample size of nearly 12,000 businesses. The report on the integration of IR indicators in annual PCI survey are highly appreciated by VCCI (the Employer’s Bureau and the Legal Department), both in terms of its relevance and feasibility. Information and data, if integrated in the annual PCI survey, will be a valuable source of information on industrial relations. They will be highly supplementary to the data which are being collected by MOLISA, VGCL and GSO.

Especially, IR-related data collected under PCI survey will allow the comparative analysis between 63 provinces and cities in Viet Nam. If properly implemented in the future, integrating IR indicators in PCI annual survey will help to provide evidence for the policy making process not only at the central level but also in 63 provinces and cities of the country. VCCI disclosed that the indicator framework provides important

suggestions for them in considering the integration of some indicators to complement the labour survey section in the annual PCI Survey and in some other surveys to be implemented by VCCI. This is also to support VCCI to fulfil better their role as employer's representative. However, according to VCCI, they will do it on a selective basis as integrating all of the indicators in the framework and which are seen as relevant to the chamber is out of its capacity at the current stage.

Outcome 2: Viet Nam strengthened capacity for developing and implementing evidence-based industrial relations policy and social dialogue

Output 2.1. Policy makers and implementers have strengthened capacity in analyzing and using IR data to serve the process of evidence-based policy making

Under NIRF Canada, the cooperation in collecting and analyzing IR data through different channels is strengthened. At MOLISA, the newly established Department of Industrial Relations and Wage (DIRWA) bureau is the technical focal point for IR data collection. The project supported DIRWA/MOLISA and social partners to use the available data for the development of IR policies and programmes based on improved quality IR data collected in a systematic and coordinated manner.

As proposed by national partners, the project engaged in the development of Viet Nam IR Reports. The project provided technical assistance to the report through providing experts and technical meetings. MOLISA has a high expectation on the report, expecting that this will be an important policy paper for policy makers, especially those at the Government and the National Assembly, and also for policy advocates and other stakeholders to be used for social dialogue. The report has been implemented with inputs and participation of the national experts and representatives of tripartite partners on 10th May 2018. This report marks further national effort toward evidence-based policy making process. The findings and recommendations from the IR report 2017 directly affect the discussion of the ongoing labour law reforms namely disputes settlement process or the tripartite consultation mechanism at both the central and local levels.

The Project actively worked with the General Statistics Office (GSO) and support GSO to improve the new statistical standards through the Labour Force Survey (LFS). Through this axis, the survey questions on industrial relations have been carefully reviewed and improved to fill the identified loopholes. More specifically, a new question on Trade Union membership has been included in the set of questionnaires for Labour Force Survey 2019.

Besides, the Project supported national partners to develop various types of communication materials which include collected findings and recommendations on new policies priority including the National IR reports 2017 and the IR Newsletter on the theme "Revision of the Labour Code in the context of CPTPP approval" to reflect the current situation and development of IR at policy level and provide information to raise the awareness of targeted audience on the topic.

Output 2.2: Research capacity for measuring impact using IR data strengthened among IR local researchers and policymakers

Besides the support to strengthen the Government's policy making capacity, the Project contributed to improving the IR policy research capacity of Viet Nam. The Project successfully conducted two training courses on IR policy and the connection between IR policies and IR research. The first training "IR Spring School" was organized in April 2018 with the participation of leaders and staff of the relevant departments of MOLISA, VGCL, VCCI as well as selected representatives of localities and research institutes. The Spring School is facilitated by ILO Viet Nam Country Director and IR Specialist from ILO Regional Office. At the training, the participants had the opportunities to develop better and clearer ideas about IR policies in VN context and use existing data and studies to analyze IR challenges and trends. The second training on "Industrial Relations Research: research methodology and better understanding and policy insights" was dedicated for the 28 Contestants to the Labour Research Contest in September 2018. The training, co-organized by the ILO and MOLISA, consists of interactive lectures, group discussions and several case studies adapted from the submitted proposals to the Labour Research Contests. The main areas training content include research design, research skilled on labour related topics as well as IR policies and recent trends. More than 50% of the people attending the trainings are women. These trainings record the satisfaction rate of 82% and the knowledge increase of 37% on the trained topics.

In another effort to promote national IR research capacity, the Project succeeded in organizing the Labour Research Contest with the topic of "Research for exploring Industrial Relations practices and its reflection toward better policies". The initiative aimed to support Vietnamese researchers and academic institutions with interests in measuring and reflecting the dynamic changes of industrial relations through their research lens while acknowledging their creative empirical research proposals on various aspects of industrial relations towards potential policy impacts. Launched in April 2018, this is the first-of-its-kind funding opportunity for local researchers in labour areas. The Contest attracted Vietnamese researchers both inside and outside the country. During the research process, the researchers received technical support and joined the training on research methodology organized by co-organizers. Via these activities, the network of labour researchers is strengthened and their capacity is improved significantly. This is positive evidence that the labour research community is ready to become an important part of the national policy-making process by presenting their empirical research results. Female researchers participating in the contest account for a higher proportion with 67% of the participants being female. 60% of research team leaders are women. At the same time, the person considered by to be the coordinator of the informal network of labour and industrial relations researchers is also female.

The contest was launched at 5 universities in the South and the North of Viet Nam. In addition, communication materials were disseminated in 30 other universities across the country. 23 newspapers and websites carried news on the contest.

The Contest received 24 research proposals from different independent researchers, research institute and tripartite partners, which is three times higher than expected. The Project was able to provide support for the implementation of five potential research proposals. These five researchers/research team conducted their research ideas with technical and financial support from ILO and MOLISA and submitted their research reports in December 2018 for assessment. Within the framework of the project, the researchers was provided with methodology knowledge, guidance, and a humble budget to conduct field trips and complete research reports in both English and Vietnamese languages.

For both of the output areas, it should be noted that some of these outputs are nascent. The new IR indicators framework has been piloted in two localities (Ho Chi Minh City and Hai Phong). The remaining time and resources of the project do not allow the implementation of such activities as refining the indicator framework, institutionalizing the indicator framework according to the functions and tasks of each implementing partner, formulating the guideline for wide-scale implementation. At both the provincial and central level, the Project has no further financial and time resources to support the analysis of the data collected from the pilot implementation process, incorporating the analysis result into social dialogues and into a policy formulation process. Obviously, the pilot process has been implemented with many positive results. However, the results are nascent and the process is incomplete. The delays at the outset of the project result in the fact that some important activities such as data collection and pilot implementation could be implemented at the very late stages of the project.

Although the IR indicator framework has taken shape, there is still a lot of work to do in order for IR databases to be in place and become operational in Viet Nam. The indicator framework and its guidelines, the proposals for integrating such indicators into PCI annual survey, labour force survey conducted by GSO will need further follow-up. It is important the some follow-up activities be implemented, and national partners will take actions to set up IR databases, to share the data and information and to use them the best for evidence-based policy making and social dialogues in Viet Nam.

8. Effectiveness

The NIRF Canada project has achieved the expected results as set out in the project document. Despite the delays in the first year, the project activities were accelerated in 2018 and 2019. Therefore, the project effectively implemented and completed most activities and achieved most of the outputs as planned in the project document.

The project had good cooperation with all partners and could access both direct and indirect beneficiaries. The effectiveness of the project is shown in some specific aspects as follows:

- Industrial relations data system, including collection, dissemination and analysis, for monitoring industrial relations trends, application and enforcement of domestic labour laws and compliance with Fundamental Principles and Rights at

Work (FPRW) is established and improved. These systems incorporate and build the capacity to collect sex-disaggregated data and qualitative information on industrial relations specific to challenges facing women workers.

- The evidence based industrial relations policy development and social dialogue will be enhanced. This is achieved through full tripartite involvement in project activities, and through more structured stakeholder consultative mechanisms aimed at discussing the findings of monitoring followed by the adoption of relevant policy priorities.

The outputs of the project are used by the relevant partners. One example is the pilot implementation of the IR indicators for data collection and the guide on data collection, results of the study to assess the situation. In particular, a number of studies carried out within the framework of the labour research contest has been upgraded to articles which are published in international scientific journals (one article has been published and one article is being peer-reviewed). The Industrial Relations Report is expected to be an exemplary document which providing quantitative, qualitative information and evidence for reports on IR by MOLISA to the Industrial relation Committee, to the Government and to the National Assembly. VCCI is also considering to integrate IR indicators in the questionnaires of annual PCI survey with the business community in 63 provinces and cities across the country. Similarly, GSO also considers a more complete employment of labour force survey with questions about industrial relations and wages.

In general, project partners appreciate the effectiveness of project activities and support. The project is effective in implementing activities and in achieving outputs. Given the project limited resource, the cost-benefit relationship of the project is very positive.

The effectiveness of the project could have been higher if the project approval time is shortened. The project took a long time to complete the project approval procedures. The delays in the approval process are due to objective reasons and due to changes in ODA management procedures at the time of project design and approval. However, these delays are partly due to reasons that can be overcome or can be mitigated by more proactive measures which could have been taken by ILO and MOLISA. However, the extension of the project to September 31, 2019 is a much-needed flexibility that helped to increase significantly the effectiveness of the project.

9. Efficiency of resources uses

9.1. Adequacy of resources uses

The resources allocated to the project are modest compared to the objectives and expected outputs of the project.

Two main results of the project include: (i) industrial relations data system, including collection, dissemination and analysis, for monitoring industrial relations trends, application and enforcement of domestic labour laws and compliance with Fundamental Principles and Rights at Work (FPRW) is established and improved. These systems

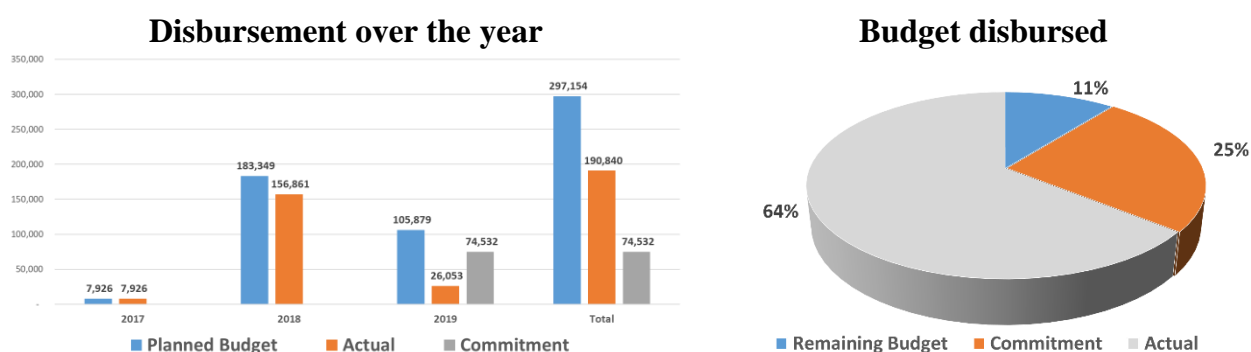
incorporate and build the capacity to collect sex-disaggregated data and qualitative information on industrial relations specific to challenges facing women workers; and (ii) the evidence based industrial relations policy development and social dialogue is enhanced. This is achieved through full tripartite involvement in project activities, and through more structured stakeholder consultative mechanisms.

These results require significant amount of resources, both in finance and human terms. The financial, time and human resource constraints faced by project have led to some difficulties in project implementation, such as ensuring the full working time of project staff for the project. Due to the requirement of sharing staff and overhead costs between NIRF projects, staff of NIRF Canada project can only spend 30% of their time working on the project. This facilitates the arrangement of the use of manpower in the implementation of projects at the ILO. It might also support the coordination between various ILO projects on industrial relations. However, this also means that project staff are unable to fully focus on project activities and to be fast enough in responding the requests and needs of project partners. In reality, the fact that project staff spending only one third of their time on project activity as now is a constraint to project efficiency and effectiveness.

Besides, this also imposed some constraints on the time and funding for a number of follow-up activities to ensure the sustainability of some of the new activities initiated, or complete a pilot process for a series of activities (e.g. refining the IR indicator framework after the pilot process, or analysis the collected data and use them for some social dialogue or policy development activities, etc.).

9.2. Efficiency of resource use

By the time of evaluation, the project achieved very positive progresses from the disbursement perspective. Due to the difficulties of approval procedures and the need to adjust content in the early stages, the funds disbursed in 2017 was relatively modest. However, the disbursement rate increased rapidly in 2018 and 2019, commensurate with the level of activity implemented in these two years. It is expected that the project will achieve disbursement rate of about 96% by the end of the project's extension period at the end of September 2019, and after the project's current commitments are all disbursed.



Source: ILO Hanoi Office (as of September 2019)

Of the disbursed fund, the fund disbursed for project activities reached US\$ 189,993, or 64% of project budget. This is a relatively high rate, contributing significantly to the effectiveness and efficiency of the project.

Given its very limited resources, it is evident that the NIRF Canada project has shown a high level of efficiency in resource utilization. Within the allocated resources, the project devotes the highest possible resources to activities, and implements all activities in a reasonable and effective manner, with focus on practical needs of Vietnamese partners. The project made efforts to implement activities which were considered possible before the approval of project document. Therefore, most of the planned activities within the project are completed within the project's resources and time.

To maximize the impact of limited resources, the Project worked closely with other projects which are part of the New Industrial Relations Framework initiative and with funding by other donors. In this way, projects can contribute to each other. The coordination and cooperation between these projects contributed to improving the efficiency of NIRF Canada's resource and other NIRF project.

10. Efficiency of management arrangement

The project partner structure is relevant. Implementing partner agencies such as MOLISA, VGCL, and VCCI have roles and functions directly related to social dialogues, and on policy formulation, policy advocacy in industrial relations. These institutions have function and responsibility in collecting data and evidence for the purpose of this process. The structure of this implementation partner is based on the well-established partnership between them while ensuring the tripartite principle of project activity. In addition, other institutions such as the General Statistics Office (GSO), selected universities and media agencies also participated in the implementation process. The project also allows participation of local agencies such as the Department of Labour, Invalids and Social Affairs in some provinces (Ho Chi Minh City, Hai Phong) to participate in and to implement project activities. This open and flexible structure ensures a high level of adaptability to requirements from practice during project implementation. The implementation structure of the project is therefore consistent with the objectives, expected results and project activities.

Project partners appreciate the support, commitment and performance of the national project coordinator, project staff, national experts and international experts. Information exchange and communication between project staff and Vietnamese partners are regular and seamless. Periodical monitoring of project progresses were also implemented. On that basis, project partners and the ILO jointly developed follow-up activities, made necessary adjustments, addressed the challenges and planned for new activities.

NIRF Canada maintains an efficient mechanism in which overall coordination and technical inputs is provided by the ILO Office, efficient technical backstopping from ILO in Bangkok, technical and quality control provided by ILO headquarters units. The technical inputs and backstopping are highly appreciated by Vietnamese national partners. Such a mechanism enables the project to tap into good expertise sources and

benefit from international experts in Bangkok and Geneva despite constraints in budget and resources.

Reporting and monitoring work have been satisfactory under the project. Periodical technical progress reports were prepared and important activities were documented. Technical reports, meeting minutes, etc. are documented. Project monitoring system is in line with requirements applicable to an ILO executed project. The monitoring and evaluation of the NIRF Canada project is carried out in coordination with other NIRF projects by the ILO.

One of the constraints in the management of the project is the time for finalization of project document and approval was long. In reality, ILO is yet to nominate a specialized staff (who spend part of his time in addition to other tasks) to be responsible for following up with all project documents of ILO, and to build up and maintain working relations with officials in charge at relevant ministries like MOLISA, MPI, MOF and others for this purpose. ILO and MOLISA are yet to conduct a serious review of the whole project formulation and approval process, identifying the room and areas for improvement.

Due to its small size, NIRF Canada Project did not have a project steering committee or a project management unit. This gives the project the flexibility in the implementation process. However, this, according to national project partners, is a constraint that hinders the coordination between national partners, making the coordination process more time-consuming. The project document does not specify the counterpart funds from the Vietnamese side. Contribution by Vietnamese national partners mostly take the form of in-kind contribution like office space or working time. Such a design is fully understandable due to current Vietnamese regulations and context. However, lack of counterpart funds and limited resources on the side of Vietnamese counterparts (both financial and resource) is one of the prime obstacles and one of the most important disincentives for Vietnamese national partner to be more active in implementing project activities. Vietnamese partners reveal that they understand that the nature of a technical assistance project and the benefits of its being mostly in the form of technical assistance and the improved capacity. However, limitation in resources, especially in terms of finance and time, has discouraged national partners from proactively implementing project activities.

11. Gender and non-discrimination issues

Gender is mainstreamed at the project activities. The project monitoring and evaluation system tracks women's participation in activities. In the framework of the Labour Research Contest, female researchers also account for a high proportion. Female researchers participating in the contest account for a higher proportion with 67% of the participants being female. 60% of research team leaders are women. Of the five prize-winning researches under the contest, 3 were implemented by female researchers, and 2/5 of the researches were focused on gender issues at workplace.

In particular, two female researchers have achieved encouraging results in publishing their studies implemented under the Labour Research Contest in international scientific

journals (one article has been published and the other is under peer review). The project outputs, for example the situation analysis report, an IR indicator framework... have given adequate attention to gender and non-discrimination issues.

In training courses and workshop organized by the project, male and female participants are of equal proportion. The project also pay due attention to equal participation of male and female trainers in project training and capacity building activities.

Many of project researches, consulting activities were implemented by female consultants and researchers. Results of these consulting work and researches, e.g. the IR indicators framework, are highly appreciated by project partners. Besides, the informal labour researcher network set up under the project is also coordinated by a women researcher.

In all of project products, e.g. researches, studies, IR indicator frameworks, etc. due attention are paid on gender and non-discrimination issues.

12. Impact orientation and sustainability

The project has had a direct impact on changing the awareness and understanding of project participants on the significance and importance of evidence-based policy making and of the IR database in support of this purpose. MOLISA, VGCL and VCCI both confirmed that the labour database will help to improve the quality of reports to the Industrial Relation Committee, and of MOLISA's report to the Government and the National Assembly on labour issues. The databases, once effectively functioning, will help to improve the quality of reports by Viet Nam to ILO and to international organizations on the implementation of ILO conventions or conventions with other UN organizations. Through the project, Vietnamese partners have also strengthened the awareness of the importance of developing IR databases, preparing data and evidences for the purpose of settling disputes which might arise when implementing free trade agreements, or in the process of collective bargaining and social dialogues. This is one of the important and sustainable long-term impacts generated by NIRF Canada project.

At the time of the evaluation, Directive 22 of the Central Committee is being reviewed after 10 years of implementation. According to project implementation partners, some results of the project have also been incorporated in the final report on implementation of the directive, for example the need to set up the databases on industrial relations, introduction of industrial relation indicator framework, improving research capacity on industrial relation, and on using databases and empirical studies in the development of labour policies. On 3 September 2019, the Central Committee of the Communist Party issued Directive 37/TW regarding “Strengthening the Harmonious Industrial Relations, Stability and Progress in a new Stage” to replace Directive 22. The new directive lays strong emphasis on the need to set up the databases on industrial relations, introduction of industrial relation indicator framework, improving research capacity on industrial relation, and on using databases and empirical studies in the development of labour policies. This will be an important foundation for institutionalizing the task of developing the IR database which will provide evidences needed for policy and regulation making.

It also provides the necessary basis for the subsequent actions by government agencies in developing and introducing a national IR indicator framework, in formally integrating IR indicators into annual surveys, such as the labour market survey or the enterprise survey of GSO or in the reporting system of such agencies as MOLISA and VGCL. The changes in awareness will be institutionalized in directives of the Party and then in multiple policies, regulations of the Government. Obviously, these are important impacts that the project has helped to bring about.

The IR indicator framework is highly appreciated by all partner organizations. The tripartite partners and other stakeholders stated that this is the first time such a framework is developed. It promises to be a good foundation to enhance collection, analysis and sharing of IR information and data in Viet Nam. The indicator framework has been piloted in two cities. The pilot proves that the framework is highly feasible. The indicators are significant and meaningful. This is a potentially sustainable result which can have broad and long-term impact. However, partner organizations agreed that there should be some follow-up activities to refine the indicator framework after the pilot phase, to officially transfer the framework to the partner organization with official mandate of IR data collection and analysis, and to formulate a formal coordination mechanism to collect and share data according to the framework. Especially, some follow-up activities need to be implemented to upgrade the indicator framework into a national framework which is widely accepted and endorsed by all parties for consistent implementation.

The Industrial Relations Report will be maintained and used by national partners for reporting to high-level policy makers (Party, National Assembly and Government), as well as by other central ministries and agencies, and by local government agencies. The Ministry of Labour, Invalids and Social Affairs affirmed the importance as well as the intention of maintaining the annual report on industrial relation. The ministry considers it one of the important policy reports of the ministry (or of the Industrial Relations Committee under which the MOLISA is a member and DIRWA plays the role of the Secretariat). Contribution of the Project to the 2019 Industrial Relation Report on structure and content help to create an exemplary or model report for replication of the report in the coming year and even with better quality. The tripartite partners also believed that the good use of the IR indicator framework for data collection and to provide inputs for the annual IR report is a good approach of the project, ensuring long-term sustainable impacts.

A network of IR researchers has been set up through project activities. Members of the network come from universities, research institutes, and a number of national and international NGOs. This network will be maintained by the members in the long term. It will continue to expand and bring in new members thanks to increasing interest of researchers on labour issues in general and on industrial relations in particular.

The Labour Research Contest has a positive impact on universities and research institutes which are interested in labour issues and in industrial relations. Through the contest, interests on researching labour issues are further expanded through communication activities and through the participants themselves. The contest also helps to narrow the gap between academic studies and practical issues of industrial relations in Viet Nam. It

helps to improve the practicality of studies and research implemented by universities and research institutes. This activity also provides good opportunities for many researchers at universities and research institutes to present their research results at seminars, policy forums. The activity helped them to get critical comments from policy-making agencies, industrial relations practitioners on their academic researches. The contest is highly potential to be sustained thanks to its relevance, significance and effectiveness. In particular, the organization costs of the contest are not too high, making it possible to be replicated by mobilizing contributions from other international organizations, domestic and international NGOs, businesses and research institutes and universities.

IV. CONCLUSIONS

In general, the NIRF Canada project have been effectively implemented and has delivered satisfactory outputs and results. The project is well on track to achieve its objective. The project has been effective in terms of delivering results, efficient in using resources with value-for-money outputs being delivered. The project implementation is satisfactory to national partners and beneficiaries.

The results of the project have created an important foundation for future activities of tripartite partners and other partners to improve the quality of social dialogue activities and quality of industrial relation policies. The results generated by the projects are highly likely to be sustained by national implementation partners and by ILO constituents. Continued support by ILO and by donor agencies is still needed to deepen and widen the outcome and impact generated by the project.

V. GOOD PRACTICES

The NIRF Canada project has achieved the expected results and outcomes and is on track to achieve the project objective and impacts. Key good practices include:

- *NIRF Canada project has relevant implementation partners.* The choice of relevant partners play an important role in achieving the project results. It is important that the project objectives, activities, outputs, etc. are close to the core mission and competency of the national partners. The cohesion, ensuring the objectives and expected results of the project to follow the functions and duties of the implementing partner is an important factor, ensuring the commitment and interest of the partners for operational implementation, as well as the long-term sustainability of project results and impacts.
- *Respecting the tripartite principle is important factor to ensure the effectiveness of the project.* Compliance with this principle has a direct impact on the quality of the output products of the project, such as the labour relation indicator framework and the labour research contest... The active participation of tripartite partners is also important factors, ensuring the sustainability of project results in the future, such as the implementation of IR databases on the basis of the indicator framework, and maintaining and improving the quality of annual IR reports.

- *Make the best use of technical inputs and backstopping from ILO Hanoi Office, ILO units in Bangkok and Geneva.* During the implementation process, NIRF Canada project made the best use of the technical backstopping of technical experts in ILO Hanoi Office, ILO units in Bangkok and Geneva. This enables the project to tap into good expertise sources and benefit from international experts in Bangkok and Geneva despite constraints in budget and resources.
- *Being responsive and sensitive to the national priorities is critically important.* Industrial relation is one of the prime concerns of the Government, especially in the context of the robust development of the business sector in Viet Nam and its increasing integration with the regional and world economy through international trade agreements.
- *Being flexible in the implementation process.* The flexibility in separating NIRF Canada project from a larger program to speed up the approval process was a good lesson learnt. The flexibility is also seen in the adjustment of the project design as compared with the original one in order to adapt to the actual situation, changes in priorities, and to institutional changes of on the side of national partners.
- *The project made strong efforts to pilot the industrial relation indicator framework at the provincial level.* This is a lesson learnt in developing a product at the central level, and then test it in practical context at provincial, district and commune levels to ensure feasibility in the future.
- *Narrow the gap between academic research and the practical issues.* The interaction between researchers at institutes, universities and industrial relation practitioners, policy makers is enhanced, thereby improving the quality and practicality of the studies and also improving the quality of labour policies.

VI. RECOMMENDATIONS

Although the overall implementation of the NIRF Canada project has been satisfactory, effective and efficient, there is room for improvement. Based on the constraints as discussed in the previous sections, below are some of the main recommendations:

Recommendation	Implementation Agency/ Priority
1. Reviewing the process and procedures of designing and approving of project approval and the coordination mechanism between ILO and MOLISA; Agreeing on the actions to be taken to shorten project approval process and duration.	ILO, MOLISA Priority: High
2. ILO to nominate a specialized staff (who spend part of his time in addition to other tasks) to be responsible for following up with all project documents of ILO and in establishing working relations with official in charges in relevant ministries like MOLISA, MPI and MOF...	ILO Priority: High
3. It is important that further support be extended to a number of important activities such as support for reviewing and finalizing the IR indicator	ILO Priority: High

Recommendation	Implementation Agency/ Priority
framework after pilot, the annual IR report, supporting the implementation of some of the project results which have been included in the new Directive 37 which replaces Directive 22.	
4. Establish an alliance in which ILO and MOLISA are the core, with the participation of other donors, institutes, universities, NGOs in order to continue the Labour Research Contest, encouraging the use of IR indicator framework in social surveys.	ILO and relevant donors Priority: Medium
5. The Industrial Relation Report should be further supported to be upgraded to be a report of the Industrial Relation Committee (with the participation of tripartite partners), making it an annual report of the committee. This will become an annual activity of the Industrial Relation Committee with contribution of MOLISA, VGCL and VCCI.	ILO and relevant donors Priority: High
6. Some of the project results and products need to be packaged into complete products, and then officially transfer to relevant national partners, possibly at the project final meeting. For example, the IR indicator framework and the plan to upgrade the framework into a kind of national industrial relation indicator framework should be transferred to the DIRWA under MOLISA.	ILO and relevant donors Priority: Medium
7. ILO, via its ongoing or upcoming activities, should support the institutionalization and the establishment of the IR database, the making of regulations on IR data collection and on the cooperation mechanism between the tripartite parties in sharing IR information by using the IR indicator framework and according to the newly issue Directive 37.	ILO Priority: High
8. The resource of the project should match with the objective, outcomes and results of the project. Or within a given limited resources, the results and activities of the project should be designed in a way that match with the resources.	ILO and relevant donors Priority: Medium
9. In the design of the project, it is necessary to form an organizational structure on the Vietnamese side to support coordination of project activities by Vietnamese partners; counterpart funds should also be planned and allocated in order to support the national partners in the implementation of project-related activities.	MOLISA and ILO Priority: High

Recommendation	Implementation Agency/ Priority
10. In project staffing and internal resource allocation, project staff should be able to spend more of their time on project's activities. Project staff spending only one third of their time on project activity as now is a constraint to project efficiency and effectiveness.	ILO Priority: Medium
11. Gender and social dialogues will continue to be integrated in the future project, both in the design, implementation and monitoring & evaluation.	ILO and implementation partners Priority: Medium

ANNEXES

Annex 1 – Delivery of Outputs under the Project

Outputs		Delivery Status	Output summary/ comments
<i>Outcome 1: Gender-responsive industrial relations data system strengthened to better meet country needs and capture additional data relating to obligations under ILO FPRW Declaration</i>			
1.1	Output 1.1 IR data system reviewed, gaps identified and guiding document for IR data system improvement adopted by the Government	Satisfactory	<p>The IR data system has been thoroughly reviewed via a survey conducted by MOLISA and the top national IR researchers at the central level and three target provinces.</p> <p>Upon the evaluation of the current databases and proposed indicators, the research team proposed a list of nine indicators on industrial relations and five indicators on wages, with formulas for calculation to each. The review report identifies the loopholes in the current system and suggest necessary steps to improve it. The report is highly appreciated by the tripartite stakeholders and data producers, while being employed as the basis for MOLISA to develop the Manual for data indicators as mentioned in the next sections of this report.</p>
1.2	<i>Output 1.2: Manual on IR data collection aligned to local context and ILS adopted and used by authorities at the central and local level</i>	Satisfactory	<p>The project facilitated the development of a manual on data collection on industrial relation and wage indicators. The manual provides guidance for IR collectors to standardize the data on both industrial relations and wages. This set of IR and wage indicators help IR actors at both local and central levels in policy making, IR and wage management and administration.</p> <p>In addition, the Project provided technical support to review the labour related sections of the annual Provincial Competitive Index Report (PCI). PCI survey is a large-scale enterprise survey, covering 63 provinces in Viet Nam and with a sample size of nearly 12,000 businesses.</p>

Outputs		Delivery Status	Output summary/ comments
<i>Outcome 2: Viet Nam strengthened capacity for developing and implementing evidence-based industrial relations policy and social dialogue</i>			
2.1	Output 2.1. Policy makers and implementers have strengthened capacity in analyzing and using IR data to serve the process of evidence based policy making	Satisfactory	<p>Under NIRF Canada, the cooperation in collecting and analyzing IR data through different channels is strengthened. As proposed by national partners, the project engaged in the development of Viet Nam IR Reports. The Project actively worked with the General Statistics Office (GSO) and support GSO to improve the new statistical standards through the Labour Force Survey (LFS).</p> <p>Besides, the Project supported national partners to develop various types of communication materials which include collected findings and recommendations on new policies priority including the National IR reports 2017 and the IR Newsletter on the theme “Revision of the Labour Code in the context of CPTPP approval” to reflect the current situation and development of IR at policy level and provide information to raise the awareness of targeted audience on the topic.</p>
2.2	Output 2.2: Research capacity for measuring impact using IR data strengthened among IR local researchers and policy-makers	Satisfactory	<p>Besides the support to strengthen the Government’s policy making capacity, the Project left its footprint on improving the IR policy research capacity of Viet Nam. The Project successfully conducted two training courses on IR policy and the connection between IR policies and IR research.</p> <p>In another effort to promote national IR research capacity, the Project succeeded in organizing the Labour Research Contest with the topic of “Research for exploring Industrial Relations practices and its reflection toward better policies”.</p>

Annex 2 – Performance Tracking Table

Indicator	Baseline	Target/Actual	2017		2018		2019	2019	Total	Rating achievement
	2016		March	September	March	September	March	September		
Overall Goal: To make better informed, evidence-based policy decisions by the Government of Vietnam, together with social partners that will improve Vietnam's industrial relations system by recognizing freedom of association and the right to collective bargaining										
MTO 1: Objective 1. Gender-responsive industrial relations data system strengthened to better meet country needs and capture additional data relating to obligations under ILO FPRW Declaration.										
OTC1. Level of improvement of the quality of IR data	IR definitions varies among IR data producers (GSO, VGSL, ILSSA, VCCI??)	Target	0	0	0	0	2		2 Definitions of at least Strikes, CB, Labour disputes standardized, and agreed among IR data producers	Achieved target
		Actual						2	Definition on strikes, labour disputes are discussed and agreed among IR Data producers	
OPT 1. Availability of situational analysis report on IR data system (Y/N)	No situational analysis report	Target	0	0	1				Situational analysis report on existing IR data system prepared	Achieved target
		Actual				1			Situational analysis report on existing IR data system by Dr. Do Quynh Chi	

Indicator	Baseline	Target/Actual	2017		2018		2019	2019	Total	Rating achievement
	2016		March	September	March	September	March	September		
OPT 2: Existence of manual on IR data collection (Y/N)	No manual on IR data collection yet	Target				1			Manual on IR data collection finalized and adopted by IR Bureau	Achieved target
		Actual						1	Manual on IR data collection finalized	
Objective 2: Vietnam strengthened capacity for developing and implementing evidence-based industrial relations policy and social dialogue										
OTC 2. Number of national event discussing the promotion and usage of IR data on policy making organized	0	Target				2	1		3 national events discussing the promotion and usage of IR data on policy	Under achievement
		Actual				1		1	IR Report meeting 10 May 2018; International Conference in July 2019	
OTC 3: Number of IR data producers with strengthened capacity to promote use of IR data for policy formulation and implementation	0	Target				1	2		3 national data producers including but not limited to MOLISA, VGCL and GSO	Exceeded target
		Actual				2	2		MOLISA, VCCI, GSO, VGCL	
OPT 3. Availability of IR annual report (Y/N) disaggregated by year	No IR annual reports produced by IRWB annually	Target					1		2018 IR annual report developed and validated	Exceeded target
		Actual				1		1	2017 IR Annual Report developed and validated; IR	

Indicator	Baseline	Target/Actual	2017		2018		2019	2019	Total	Rating achievement
	2016		March	September	March	September	March	September		
									Report is under development	
OPT 4. Number of participants of national IR seminar disaggregated by gender and type of stakeholders	0	Target			25	25			50 tripartite partners and other stakeholders	Exceeded target
		Actual				54		143	197 participants to IR Report meetings (09 May) and the International IR Conference to be added	
OPT 5. Availability of communication materials with IR data promotion contents	0	Target			1	2			03 materials including information on IR data promotion disaggregated by types and topics	Exceeded target
		Actual				8		2	4 Promotion materials for IR research contest, Two books on LD and CB, IR report, IR Newsletter, IR e-Newsletter, CB statistics guide and other working documents	
OPT 6. Number of local researchers and policy makers trained, satisfaction rate and % of their knowledge increase in subject matter disaggregated by gender, type of stakeholder, topic	0	Target				15			15 local researchers and policy makers trained	Exceeded target
		Actual				28	32		60 local researchers and policy makers trained (32 in IR schools, 28 in Post-contest training in Vung Tau)	

Indicator	Baseline	Target/Actual	2017		2018		2019	2019	Total	Rating achievement
	2016		March	September	March	September	March	September		
OPT 7. Satisfaction rate is 60% and percentage of their knowledge increase in subject matter is 30%	TBD	Target				60%/30%			60%/30%	Achieved target
		Actual				82/23%			Satisfaction and knowledge increase rate of the IR Schools and research training	
OPT 8: Number of local researchers submitted the research proposals and number of mini-grants disbursed disaggregated by topic	0	Target				7 proposals submitted, 3 research grants granted			7 research proposals received and 3 mini-grants for implementation of research proposal supported	Exceeded target
		Actual				24 proposals, 5 research awards delivered			24 proposals submitted, 5 research awards delivered as of January 2019	
OPT9: Number of research papers on IR prepared disaggregated by topic	0	Target					3		3 research papers on specific IR topics for measuring impacts supported	Exceeded target
		Actual					5		5 research paper supported and submitted	

* LF and indicators as per revised project document version dated 25 Jan 2018.

Annex 3 – List of agencies interviewed

1. DIRWA, MoLISA
2. VCCI Bureau for Employers' Activities
3. Lecturer, Trade University
4. CIRD MOLISA
5. ILO CO-Hanoi (management board and programming unit)
6. IR Department, VGCL
7. NIRF USDOL Project
8. IR Specialist, ILO Regional Office
9. ILSSA
10. Labour Wage Division, MOLISA Hai Phong
11. Labour Wage Division, DOLISA HCMC
12. NIRF Canada Project team,

Annex 4 – Terms of Reference

National Consultant to conduct Final Project Evaluation

Project Title	Building capacity for improving national industrial relations database for evidence-based policy-making (NIRF CANADA project)
ILO Project Code	VNM/16/04/CAN
Administrative Unit in charge of the project	CO-Hanoi
Technical Backstopping Unit	MULTI and DWT Bangkok
Timing of Evaluation	Final Project Evaluation
Project Period	16 March 2017 to 30 September 2019
Total Project Budget	US\$297,154
Funding Agency	The Government of Canada

Background and Justification

1.1.Introduction and rationale

This term of reference covers the final evaluation of the project “*Building capacity for improving national industrial relations database for evidence-based policy-making*” (NIRF Canada project), which has been implemented by ILO Country Office for Vietnam and local counterparts with financial resource from the Government of Canada. In 2016, an agreement between the Government of Canada and ILO was signed to implement NIRF Canada project with starting date of 16 March 2017 until 31 March 2019. The project afterwards has received six months of no-cost extension and thus will close on 30 September 2019. As per ILO programme management and evaluation standards and commitments with the funding agency, the project conducts the end-of-project evaluation to learn to what extent the project has achieved its expected results and to identify good practices and lesson learns that can be valuable for ILO, local counterparts and the donor to apply for other similar or future works. The evaluation will be conducted and managed in conformance with the ILO evaluation policy guidelines and UN Norms and standards, and ethical safeguards.

1.2.The project context

After 30 years of the Doi Moi which drove economic development and pulled millions out of poverty, Viet Nam is entering a new era of economic development. Vietnam’s industrialization and development strategies are fully anchored in its pursuit of global integration agenda, through becoming a manufacturing hub in the global supply chains, and also through negotiating and concluding free trade agreements (FTA) and investment agreements. The global economic integration requires adjustment of not only economic and trade policies, but also social and labour policies for sustainable and inclusive growth with social justice at global and national level. As a member of the ILO since 1992, Viet Nam has committed itself to respect and promote the 1998 ILO Declaration on Fundamental Principles and Rights at Work (“ILO FPRW Declaration”).

In 2016, Vietnam took a bold step towards a new round of comprehensive labour law and industrial relations reform, driven not only by the 12 nations Trans-Pacific Partnership Agreement (TPP), but also by long-standing aspiration to modernize its labour market and industrial relations institutions to make it serve interests of Vietnamese workers, businesses and society. While the suspension of the 12 nations TPP created a brief period of uncertainty about direction of the labour law and industrial relations reforms in the 1st half of 2017, Vietnam has remained committed to its global integration agenda and accompanying international expectations and obligations. After the brief pause, Vietnam has resumed its efforts to reform labour laws and industrial relations system, motivated partly by a need to move towards the ratification of EU-Viet Nam FTA. It is in this context that the MOLISA submitted its plan to the Social Affair Committee of the National Assembly, outlining timetable for labour code revision and also for preparatory steps towards ratification of the Freedom of Association and Protection of the Right to Organise Convention, 1948 (No. 87), the Right to Organise and Collective Bargaining and Convention, 1949 (No. 98) and the Abolition of Forced Labour Convention, 1957 (No. 105). With the commitment to the reform of labour laws governing industrial relations, it is expected that the government and social partners will continue their joint efforts to create new industrial relations framework (NIRF) which would serve Vietnamese businesses, workers and society.

For the government to develop and implement new industrial relations policies and also for social partners to promote and establish new practices of voluntary negotiations and social dialogue, there is a need to improve and strengthen industrial relations data which will enable tripartite partners to develop evidence-based industrial relations policies and social dialogue.

At present, there are multiple shortcomings of industrial relations data and information, including wage data, in Viet Nam. Firstly, there are many industrial relations data and information, which are not available for policy-makers and labour research community, such as information on unfair labour practices. Secondly, when there are available data and information, there are problems with quality and consistencies of the available data, such as strike data. Lastly, there is no coordination among various producers of industrial relations data and information with regard to compiling all available data and information, and sharing and disseminating such information and data. At the same time, there is lack of technical capacity of the government and other IR data producers, in term of data collection, data management, data sharing and dissemination, and data analysis for evidence-based policy making and social dialogue. Hence, this project aims at addressing the above deficits and challenges of IR data/information system in Viet Nam.

Project Overview

The overall objective of the project is for the Government of Vietnam, together with social partners, to make better informed, evidence-based industrial relations policy decisions through improved industrial relations data collection, dissemination and analysis.

This overall objectives is to be pursued through two immediate objectives and four outputs:

- **Objective 1.** Gender-responsive industrial relations data system strengthened to better meet country needs and capture additional data relating to obligations under ILO FPRW Declaration.
 - **Output 1.1.** IR data system reviewed, gaps identified and guiding document for IR data system improvement adopted by the Government
 - **Output 1.2:** Manual on IR data collection aligned to local context and ILS adopted and used by authorities at the central and local level
- **Objective 2:** Vietnam strengthened capacity for developing and implementing evidence-based industrial relations policy and social dialogue
 - **Output 2.1.** Policy makers and implementers have strengthened capacity in analyzing and using IR data to serve the process of evidence based policy making
 - **Output 2.2:** Research capacity for measuring impact using IR data strengthened among IR local researchers and policy-makers

The project has been executed by the ILO in collaboration with MoLISA/Institute of Labour Science and Social Affairs and in partnership with different Vietnamese agencies.

Beneficiaries of the project.

- Labour administration agencies (MOLISA and DOLISA) at a central and provincial level benefiting from the project's technical assistance for strengthening capacity to improve produce, collect and analyze quality IR data, and also to improve coordination among IR data producers.
- Local labour researcher with increased skills and knowledge on IR data analysis, evidence-based research and policy development based on improved IR data.
- Workers and Employers in the global supply chains indirectly benefit from improved IR policies which are likely to create conducive environment for more stable and predictable workplace relations.

Purpose of the Evaluation, Scope and Users

1.3.Purpose

The main purpose of this evaluation is to support accountability and facilitate learning within the ILO and key project implementing partners. The evaluation findings and recommendations will also be used to inform design and implementation of future ILO development cooperation activities in Vietnam. In particular, the evaluation aims to:

- Evaluate the effectiveness and efficiency of the project, including the level of achievement of objectives and targets, identifying both intended and unintended results, and the sustainability after the project's end;
- Identify and document lessons learnt and good practices which can be valuable to ILO and Vietnamese implementing partners for other similar or future development activities in Vietnam.

1.4.Scope

The evaluation is solely for the activities implemented by the project between **16 March 2017 and 30 September 2019**. All objectives, outputs and activities are to be covered under this evaluation, and all key project implementing partners are expected to work with the evaluator under this evaluation.

Gender equality and non-discrimination should also be considered in this evaluation throughout its methodology and deliverables, including the final report

1.5.Users of the evaluation

The primary users of the evaluation report are ILO Country Office for Vietnam and ILSSA. The secondary users are the Government of Canada, MoLISA and other ILO's units

Evaluation Criteria and Questions

Suggested criteria and evaluation questions:

Relevance

- To what extent has the project been responding to the needs and priorities of the Government and social partners (workers' and employers' organisations) in Vietnam?
- How well does the project align with and support national development plans/ with strategic priorities of key partners?

- How well does the project complement and link to activities of UN and non-UN development partners at national level?

Validity of design

- To what extent does the designed project approach align with ILO, donor and the local Government?

Effectiveness

- Has the project achieved its planned objectives? Is the project on track to achieve the performance targets according to schedule? If not, what have been the obstacles to the achievement? Is there unintended results occurring?
- To what extent has the project contributed to capacity building and/or law advancement/policy formulation in Vietnam?
- To what extent are the tripartite constituents and the project counterparts satisfied with the quality of the outputs and are likely to, or have used the tools/practices developed?

Project management and efficiency of resource use

- To what extent have stakeholders been involved in project design and implementation?
- Have resources (funds, human resources, time, expertise etc.) been allocated and delivered strategically to achieve the project objectives?

Impact orientation and Sustainability

- How effective have the project been in establishing and fostering national/local ownership?
- What are the key project achievements thus far that could be sustained beyond the life and the context of the project? Does the project have a strategy in place to sustain these elements?
- What is the possibility of replicating the Labour Research Contest and strengthen the connection between policy makers and the research community raised from the Project's intervention?

Lesson learnt and good practices

- What are key lessons and good practices that are useful for the ILO and project implementing partners which can be applied to other similar projects/programmes?
- What are the lesson learnt from the Data collection pilot process on MOLISA – DOLISA coordination and DOLISA internal arrangements on conducting the pilot?
- What are the lesson learnt to improve the project approval and triggering process?

Cross-Cutting Issues

- How does the project address crosscutting issues (gender and non-discrimination, social dialogue, SDGs)

The above evaluation criteria and questions can be modified or adapted but any fundamental changes needs to be agreed between the ILO project manager and the evaluator, and reflected in the evaluation report.

Suggested Methodology

- A detailed methodology will be elaborated by the evaluator on the basis of this ToR. The methodology proposal should include detailed methods, data collection instruments, data collection plan.
- A mix-method (both qualitative and quantitative evaluation approaches) should be considered for this evaluation. Qualitative information can be obtained through field visits, key informant interviews and focus group discussions as appropriate. Quantitative data can be drawn from relevant project documents including the Technical Progress Reports (TPRs) and the projects' monitoring and evaluation information. A combination of sound quantitative and qualitative research methods should be developed for each evaluation question as deemed appropriate.
- Data should be collected from different resources by different methods for each evaluation question and findings should be triangulated to draw valid and reliable conclusions. Data shall be disaggregated by sex where possible and appropriate.
- The evaluation shall comply with evaluation norms, standards and follow ethical safeguards, as specified in the ILO's evaluation procedures. The ILO adheres to the United Nations system of evaluation norms and standards as well as to the OECD/DAC Evaluation Quality Standards.

Main Deliverables

The evaluator will provide the key deliverables as follows:

- Deliverable 1: A concrete evaluation methodology proposal, which should include the evaluation questions, indicators, data collection methodologies, draft tools, and draft data collection plan (less than 5 pages). All documents should be prepared in English.
- Deliverable 2: First draft evaluation report, in Vietnamese, which should follow the evaluation report structure suggested by the evaluator and agreed by ILO
- Deliverable 3: Final evaluation report, in Vietnamese first then in English, which should reflect feedbacks or comments from ILO and other key stakeholders. The report should not exceed 35 pages (350-400 words per page) exclusive of annexes.
- The evaluation report must be produced in both English and Vietnamese.
- Besides reports, raw data should be provided in electronic version compatible with Microsoft Office for Windows. Ownership of the data from the evaluation rests with ILO. The copy rights of the evaluation report rests exclusively with the ILO.

Management Arrangements and Work plan

ILO project team will be responsible for the following:

- Providing project background and related documents;
- Providing inputs on the evaluation methodology proposal and planning;
- Providing logistical and administrative support that is needed for the evaluation operation;
- Coordinating the related stakeholders to get them engaged in this evaluation;
- Organizing stakeholder/validation workshops if required;

The consultant is responsible for conducting the evaluation according to the Terms of Reference. He/she will also:

- Report to the ILO/Programme Officer who is also NIRF EU project manager during the evaluation;

- Deliver the key aforementioned deliverables to the ILO project manager at the timing agreed and with the quality level at ILO's satisfaction.
- Respect ILO's policy and Evaluation [Codes of Conducts](#) when conducting this evaluation

Indicative time frame, and outputs and estimated number of working days

Below are indicative tasks to be completed an estimated number of working days foreseen for evaluator(s). The estimated working days for evaluation expert in one task can be reallocated to another task where justified and in consultation with ILO.

No	Key activities	# working days estimated	Output	Time frame (by end)
1	Review project documents and develop evaluation proposal and data collection instruments	03	Evaluation methodology proposal, tools	1 st week of August, 2019
2	Data collection – in Hanoi, and tentatively in pilot provinces (Hai Phong and HCM city)	03-05	Raw data	2 nd – 3 rd week of August, 2019
3	Analyse data and draft report (in Vietnamese)	08	Draft report	1 st week of Sep 2019
4	Present the evaluation findings at the project stakeholders meeting	01	Power point and the presentation	2 nd week of Sep. 2019
5	Finalize the report based on comments from ILO, ILSSA and other stakeholders (in Vietnamese)	01	Final Vietnamese report	2 nd week of Sep. 2019
6	Translate the final report from Vietnamese into English	Lump sum, equivalent to 1.5 consultancy workdays	English report	3 rd week of Sep. 2019
	Total of working days	17.5 – 19.5		

Qualifications requirement

- University Degree with minimum 5 years of demonstrated expertise in development project evaluation.
- Experience in the thematic area in which the ILO/NIRF Canada project is currently supporting will be an advantage (evaluator can team up with other experts if necessary);
- Demonstrated excellent report writing skills and in English;
- Not have any links to the ILO/NIRF Canada project management and implementation, or any other conflicts of interests that would interfere with the independence of the evaluation;

- Knowledge of ILO's roles and mandate, as well as UN evaluation norms is a plus;
- Commit to be available to deliver this evaluation at highest level of quality during August and September 2019.

Legal and Ethical Matters

The evaluation will comply with UN Norms and Standards. The evaluator will abide by the EVAL's Code of Conduct for carrying out the evaluations. The UNEG ethical guidelines will be followed. The evaluation team should have not any links to project management, or any other conflict of interest that would interfere with the independence of the evaluation.