



ILO EVALUATION

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This evaluation has been conducted according to ILO's evaluation policies and procedures. It has not been professionally edited, but has undergone quality control by the ILO Evaluation Office

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Abbreviations

| | |
|--------------------|---|
| ABND | Assessment Based National Dialogue |
| ADB | Asian Development Bank |
| COMWEL | Korea Workers and Compensation Service |
| Convention 102 | Social Security (Minimum Standards) Convention, 1952 |
| Convention 103 | Maternity Protection Convention, 1952 |
| CPO | Country programme outcome |
| CTA | Chief Technical Adviser |
| DAC | Development Assistance Committee (of the OECD) |
| DP | Development Partner |
| DWCP | Decent Work Country Programme |
| DWT | Decent Work Team |
| EPF | Employees Provident Fund |
| ESSA | Extending Social Security in Asia (ILO/Japan project) |
| EU | European Union |
| EVAL | ILO Evaluation Office |
| GIZ | Gesellschaft für Internationale Zusammenarbeit |
| GFP | Global Flagship Program |
| GTT | Global Technical Team |
| HLE | High-level Evaluation |
| HQ | Headquarters |
| ILO | International Labour Organization |
| IMF | International Monetary Fund |
| ISPA | Inter-agency Social Protection Assessment |
| ITC–ILO | International Training Centre of the ILO |
| MAPS | Promoting and Building Social Protection and Employment Services for Vulnerable Groups (ILO/Japan project) |
| OECD | Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development |
| OSH | Occupational Safety and Health |
| P&B | Programme and Budget |
| PRODOC | Project Document Template |
| Recommendation 202 | Social Protection Floors Recommendation, 2012 (202) |
| RB | Regular budget |
| RBSA | Regular Budget Supplementary Account |
| RBTC | Regular Budget Technical Cooperation |
| RTE | Regional thematic evaluation |
| SAARC | South Asian Association for Regional Cooperation |
| SDGs | Sustainable Development Goals |
| SOCPRO | Social Protection Department, ILO |
| SSDM | Social Service Delivery Mechanism project (Cambodia) |
| SR | Stocktaking Report on ILO support to extend the coverage and effectiveness of social security schemes in Asia and the Pacific (2006-2015) |
| TA | Technical Assistance |
| TC | Technical cooperation |
| UN | United Nations |

| | |
|--------|---|
| UNDAF | United Nations Development Assistance Framework |
| UNDP | United Nations Development Programme |
| UNDG | UN Development Group |
| UNICEF | United Nations Children's Fund |
| WFP | World Food Program |
| WHO | World Health Organization |
| XBTC | Extra-budgetary technical cooperation |

Executive summary

Background and objective

This report presents the findings of the regional thematic evaluation of ILO social protection work in the Asia-Pacific Region. Phase 1 of the regional thematic evaluation involved regional case studies in seven countries of the region. Phase II (this report) aims to provide (i) an assessment of relevance, effectiveness, efficiency, impact and sustainability of ILO support in the region; and (ii) input and recommendations to set strategic directions for the ILO in social protection at the sub-regional and regional level. The scope for the Phase II of the regional thematic evaluation on social protection is from 2012-2017. The geographic scope covers the Asia-Pacific region. The report draws on the case studies completed in Phase 1, a range of other documentation, interviews with key stakeholders and a peer review workshop.

Relevance: does the activity fit the priorities and policies?

Overall, it appears that ILO activities are relevant or very relevant to the needs of the countries involved, the social partners, the ILO itself and, where relevant, the donor. Generally, projects respond to needs expressed by countries and arise from previous ILO work. All the evaluations and the interviews carried out were positive (often very positive) about the relevance of the work which ILO supports.

However, it is less clear that there is a strategic approach to the allocation of resources within the region. There is no overall or regional strategy as to which type of countries should be supported, which type of activities should be prioritised, etc. Allocation of resources appears to be in line with the 'demand-driven approach' of ILO work combined with donor-driven priorities. In other words, ILO resources are largely allocated to countries which decide on their own priorities.

In relation to TC projects, which make involve the more intensive engagement by ILO, it would appear that the validity of design of TC projects could be improved. For example, there are cases where projects have been overambitious, where risk assessment and risk planning has been inadequate, and where somewhat disparate objectives are shoehorned into one. In general, it would appear that gender issues are not adequately incorporated at project design phase.

Effectiveness: the extent to which an activity attains its objectives

On the basis of the CPOs, one would conclude that ILO work in the Asia-Pacific region was highly effective since the indicator targets have been achieved or surpassed. Based on a broader view of the work implemented in the period, the RTE concludes that ILO work in the region is reasonably effective, especially when regard is had to the very limited resources available to it. The quality of ILO technical expertise and inputs is generally assessed as being high.

In terms of TC projects, it would appear that objectives are generally largely met, although in many cases it is not possible to meet all objectives due to design limitations or to contextual changes over time. Sources are also generally positive about the effectiveness of ongoing ILO work (i.e. non-project inputs to policy development, etc.). However, it is rarely possible to quantify this in any rigorous manner.

A general weakness in project design whereby gender is not adequately incorporated into work planning and indicators leads to a situation where gender is also rarely explicitly addressed in ILO work. There is also an apparent failure to prioritise gender explicitly at all regional and sub-regional levels. This is not to say that gender-relevant issues are not addressed but they are not addressed because of any explicit gender-focus by ILO.

ILO has co-operated with other UN agencies either through delivery of joint projects or involvement in joint planning (e.g. in development of ABNDs). However, despite efforts to improve co-ordination with other UN agencies, the extent of co-ordination and co-operation is still seen as less than optimal in some countries.

In terms of ongoing management, the process is somewhat complicated with responsibilities being shared between ILO staff, project boards (where relevant), country offices (often not in-country) and the (sub)regional level (in terms of practical allocation of support where necessary). However, evaluations and case studies do not indicate major issues with management structures *per se*. However, in terms of ongoing operations, it would appear that managing projects in countries without an in-country office creates difficulties both in administrative terms but also in terms of political support, i.e. it is more difficult for ILO staff to engage with key national decision-makers.

Efficiency: 'the outputs in relation to the inputs'

In terms of efficiency, most of the sources indicate that ILO work is regarded as efficient or very efficient. Reviews refer to a lack of resources (not strictly an efficiency issue), difficulties caused by the 'high transaction activity by activity' nature of much ILO work and various internal inefficiencies in terms of the sometimes bureaucratic nature of ILO procedures. Again one could argue that a more strategic use of resources would lead to greater efficiencies overall.

Impact: the positive and negative changes produced by the activity

It is difficult, in many cases, to measure the impact which ILO work (and indeed much development work) has at a macro level. While it is easy to measure the outputs of ILO work (in terms of reports, training, actuarial studies, etc.) it is much more difficult to measure outcomes. Again, while it is easy to list the measures which have been adopted at a national level, it is much more difficult to assess the extent to which the ILO (or other development partners) actually impacted on those measures and more difficult again to assess how ILO has contributed to the outcomes for individuals.

In general, sources are positive about the impact of ILO work but this arguably overstates its real impact since the issues discussed above are rarely addressed in detail (and, in

fairness, the scope of reviews and evaluations does not allow for the sort of rigorous evaluation techniques which would be necessary).

To date, ILO has arguably placed too much emphasis on outputs such as studies and reports (e.g. ABND) and not enough emphasis on how these (necessary) steps can be translated into concrete outcomes. This should be addressed in future developments of the CPOs

Sustainability: whether the benefits of an activity are likely to continue?

If sources are generally positive about the impact of ILO work, they are generally less optimistic about sustainability.¹ This is frequently related to the fact that the activity has been time-limited (with donor funding) and the lack of resources to continue to work with the country in a detailed manner. Sustainability is seen as highly dependent on the development of national institutional capacity in order to reduce reliance on external experts. However, the limited duration and scale of most ILO work obviously limits the extent of capacity building.

One good example of how the sustainability of ILO work can be enhanced is the series of ILO-Japan projects with ASEAN which are now on the third phase (ESSA). This ongoing series of projects (although focussing on different countries) has allowed ILO to engage with ASEAN and countries in the region in an ongoing manner and has helped to support the growing engagement by ASEAN in social protection issues. From an ILO perspective, this type of project allows flexible use of expertise and ILO has found that the involvement of ASEAN can facilitate engagement which certain.

Conclusions

Overall, we conclude, on the basis of the interviews carried out and the review of documentation, that ILO is carrying out a lot of very relevant social protection work in a wide range of countries in the region. Country reports and evaluations are generally very positive about the high quality of ILO's technical inputs. ILO work is advancing awareness and knowledge of social protection issues and, in a context where the socio-economic context in many countries in the region is changing rapidly, it is well placed to provide information and support to countries which wish to develop their social protection systems.

At the same time, the resources available to ILO are limited and the current approach means that these resources are spread thinly across a wide area. This leads to a situation where ILO is overstretched (arguably very overstretched) and is relying on short-term project funding and short-term contract staff and working in countries without in-country offices. This also means that the impact and, in particular, sustainability of ILO work is more limited.

¹ This finding should be seen in the context of how difficult it is to achieve a sustainable impact. Even a recent evaluation of (much larger) EU support to social protection work found that 'the sustainability of many effects/benefits achieved remains fragile' (MacKellar, 2018).

The key question for ILO is whether it wants to continue broadly in line with its current approach or whether it wants to move in the direction of a more strategic approach involving greater prioritisation of work, cost-sharing, more institutionalised capacity building, etc.

Recommendations

1. ILO should focus its activities in areas where it has unique expertise and where it can achieve most added-value and which will have multiplier effects.
2. To assist this approach, ILO at regional level should adopt a more strategic approach (insofar as possible) to the social protection work which is carried out in the coming five years. In particular, the regional office should
 - i) agree and publicise a number of policy areas which it wishes to prioritise;
 - ii) prioritise regional projects (in those sub-regions where this is possible) and avoid local pilot projects unless there is a compelling reason to implement such an approach;
 - iii) develop new modalities of work such as institutionalised capacity-building at a regional level;
 - iii) develop (insofar as possible with ILO HQ) a cost-sharing approach with national (and state/provincial) governments whereby governments contribute to the cost of technical assistance.

This approach should be formulated in a short document setting out a strategic position on social protection work in the coming 3-5 years.

3. ILO should allocate specific time to reviewing the current modalities of work and to developing a business case in relation to the implementation of new modalities such as institutionalised capacity-building.
4. Project design should be more realistic (i.e. less ambitious) and should involve better risk assessment and risk management so that implementation risks are identified at an early stage and actions identified to mitigate risks insofar as possible.
5. In terms of gender, gender priorities should be made more specific in the design both of ongoing country-level work and in specific projects.
6. ILO should look at how to increase its engagement with social partners by, for example, sharing examples of good practice, sharing experiences between social partners and (where possible) engaging with umbrella organisations at (sub)regional and federal level, for example, to develop capacity building and training programs.
7. Co-ordination of activities between UN agencies in Bangkok could be strengthened by becoming more formalised, e.g. by making the existing informal meeting into a subgroup of the Regional Thematic Working Group with clear terms of reference and more focus on substantive issues.
8. ILO should consider implementing an internal database for social protection projects with all key documentation (PRODOC, annual reports, evaluations, etc.). This would help

to make it easier to provide a comprehensive list of work in the social protection field and to provide data on inputs including expenditure.

9. Evaluation should be more systematic in line with the recent Evaluation Policy and be carried out in the context of the broader regional approach. In addition, there should be a formal process whereby evaluation reports are considered in the development of future policy and implementation (in line with section VI of the ILO Evaluation Policy (2017)). Finally, evaluation and reporting needs to be more rigorous and ILO EVAL should explore carrying out more scientific 'outcome-oriented' evaluations.

1. Brief background

The ILO's funding base consists of assessed and voluntary contributions. Voluntary contributions include the Regular Budget Supplementary Account (RBSA), which allows development partners to provide un-earmarked core funding to the ILO, increasing the ILO Evaluation Office (EVAL)'s capacity to deliver and achieve results at the country level. The ILO allocates RBSA funds for monitoring and evaluation purposes at the global and regional levels. Every biennium proposals are submitted to allocate RBSA funds towards the monitoring and evaluation of specific regional initiatives or needs. Based on the findings and lessons learnt from stocktaking report on the ILO interventions in social protection in Asia and the Pacific, the Asia region put together a proposal for a thematic evaluation of social protection issues in the Asia.

In advance of the evaluation, in 2016, a stocktaking exercise was conducted which covered the ILO interventions in social protection in Asia and the Pacific region from 2006 up to 2015. The report has helped the Asia region better understand the type of modalities and resources availability (all sources of funds including regular budget, regular budget supplementary account, extra-budgetary and trust funds) for ILO's efforts to assist member States in strengthening its social protection in all its forms. It was also served as direct input and background information for the preparation of the RBSA funded Asia region thematic evaluation on social protection, thereafter called the regional thematic evaluation.

The regional thematic evaluation on social protection also followed on from the Governing Body mandated High Level Evaluation (HLE) undertaken by the EVAL on ILOs strategies and activities to create and expand social protection floors covering the period of 2012-17. In order to leverage evaluation resources and avoid duplication of evaluation efforts in the Asia region, it was decided to conduct a joint process between the regional thematic evaluation and the HLE process.

Phase 1 of the regional thematic evaluation involved regional case studies. Seven countries were selected for case studies under the regional thematic evaluation: Viet Nam, Lao PDR, Cambodia, Thailand, Mongolia, India, and Nepal. Further details of these studies are set out at annex 2. These studies were also utilised in the High Level Evaluation.

Phase 1 of the RTE aimed to provide in-depth data collection and reporting on relevance and coherence, efficiency, effectiveness, sustainability and impact of ILO support in the region and feed findings and conclusions from the evaluation questions into the overall HLE.

Phase II (this report) aims to provide (i) an assessment of relevance and coherence, efficiency, effectiveness, sustainability and impact of ILO support in the region; and (ii) input and recommendations to set strategic directions for the ILO in social protection at the sub-regional and regional level.

2. Purpose, Scope and Clients of evaluation

2.1 Purpose and scope

As set out in the ILO Evaluation Policy (2017) an evaluation is

an assessment, conducted as systematically and impartially as possible, of an activity, project, programme, strategy, policy, topic, theme, sector, operational area or institutional performance. It analyses the level of achievement of both expected and unexpected results by examining the results chain, processes, contextual factors and causality using appropriate criteria such as relevance, effectiveness, efficiency, impact and sustainability. An evaluation should provide credible, useful evidence-based information that enables the timely incorporation of its findings, recommendations and lessons into the decision-making processes of organizations and stakeholders.

The policy further explains that

Thematic evaluations assess specific aspects, themes and processes, and can also focus on specific sectors, issues or schemes. Thematic evaluations provide a means for ILO technical programmes and regions to explore the effectiveness and impact of particular approaches in depth. These evaluations can draw on lessons learned at the project level, both inside and outside the ILO, and focus on themes that have significance beyond a particular project. ILO technical programmes are normally responsible for conducting and resourcing such thematic evaluations on a scheduled basis, with support from EVAL.

The two main tasks for this regional thematic evaluation (RTE) are to provide:

- (i) an assessment of the relevance, effectiveness, efficiency, impact and sustainability of ILO support in the region; and
- (ii) input and recommendations to set strategic directions for the ILO in social protection at the sub-regional and regional level.

The evaluation covers the period 2012-17 and the geographic scope of the RTE covers the entire Asia-Pacific region.² In practice, the main work carried on by ILO in the period focussed on South East and South Asia.

For the purposes of this evaluation, it is assumed, in relation to future work that the available resources will be of the same order as over the past five years.

² For ILO purposes the Asia-Pacific region covers 36 countries with a total population of more than 3.7 billion (<http://www.ilo.org/asia/countries/lang--en/index.htm>). There are two Decent Work Country Support Teams in Bangkok and New Delhi, and a number of country offices in Bangkok, Beijing, Colombo, Dhaka, Hanoi, Islamabad, Jakarta, Kathmandu, Manila, New Delhi, Suva and Tokyo. DWT-Bangkok covers Brunei Darussalam, Cambodia, China (including Hong Kong, China and Macao, China), Cook Islands, Fiji, Indonesia, Kirabati, Lao People's Democratic Republic, Malaysia, Marshall Islands, Mongolia, Palau (The Republic of), Papua New Guinea, Philippines, Republic of Korea, Samoa, Singapore, Solomon Islands, Thailand, Timor-Leste, Tuvalu, Vanuatu, and Viet Nam. DWT-New Delhi covers Afghanistan, Bangladesh, India, Islamic Republic of Iran, Republic of Maldives, Nepal, Pakistan and Sri Lanka.

2.2 Audience

The primary audience and key user for this regional thematic evaluation are the ILO Country Offices and Decent Work Technical Teams in the Asia region. The results of the regional thematic evaluation will be used to inform future social protection strategies in the next five years. Secondary audiences include the ILO Regional Offices, as well as other interested constituencies (e.g. State members, other donors, and academics).

2.3 Structure of Report

Chapter 2 of this report outlines the purpose, scope and clients of this evaluation. Chapter 3 sets out the criteria and questions while chapter 4 outlines the methodology. Chapter 5 sets out a review of implementation and provides a brief overview of the social protection work which has been carried on in the Asia-Pacific Region in 2012-17. Chapter 6 (presentation of findings) provides an assessment of relevance and coherence, efficiency, effectiveness, sustainability and impact of ILO support in the region. Chapter 7 discusses the issues in relation to future work in the coming 5 years period while chapters 8 and 9 set out conclusions and recommendations to set strategic directions for the ILO in social protection at the sub-regional and regional level. Finally, chapter 10 addresses lessons learned and emerging good practices.

3. Criteria and questions

The criteria used in this evaluation are the standard evaluation criteria of relevance, effectiveness, efficiency, impact and sustainability. These are taken from the OECD DAC Principles for Evaluation of Development Assistance.

These concepts are defined as follows:

Relevance: The extent to which the aid activity is suited to the priorities and policies of the target group, recipient and donor.

Effectiveness: A measure of the extent to which an aid activity attains its objectives.

Efficiency: Efficiency measures the outputs -- qualitative and quantitative -- in relation to the inputs. It is an economic term which signifies that the aid uses the least costly resources possible in order to achieve the desired results.

Impact: The positive and negative changes produced by a development intervention, directly or indirectly, intended or unintended. This involves the main impacts and effects resulting from the activity on the local social, economic, environmental and other development indicators.

Sustainability: Sustainability is concerned with measuring whether the benefits of an activity are likely to continue after donor funding has been withdrawn.

4. Methodology

Phase 1 of the RTE involved seven national case studies carried out by a number of different evaluators (Annex 2). These were, in general, carried out through site visits and interviews with key informants combined with a review of key documents. A minority (Lao PDR and Mongolia) involved desk reviews only based on recent work in the country by the evaluator.

Phase 2 required the evaluator to synthesise/analyse from available reports combined with some additional data collection by way of interview and peer review workshop.

As set out in the ToRs (Annex 1), the methodology for Phase 2 involved, first, reviewing existing materials including:

- Stocktaking Report
- All seven Phase 1 case studies.
- 2012-13, 2014-15, and 2016-17 ILO Implementation reports (focusing on social protection CPOs)³
- Asia Pacific Regional Meeting (2016) report (Bali).
- The HLE report on Social Protection.
- Relevant reports on Social Protection issues in Asia region from ASEAN, ADB, the World Bank, UN Agencies, and other international agencies.

Second, the ILO social protection experts suggested a number of internal (ILO) experts in different regions and countries who could contribute to the review and a number of external stakeholders who have worked with ILO in the region. These were interviewed by Skype. A full list of interviews is set out at annex 3.

Finally, a draft report was discussed with key stakeholders at a peer review workshop in Bangkok on 7 May 2018 (annex 4) and was revised in the light of these discussions.

A full list of the documentation reviewed is set out at Annex 5.

³ Documentation for 2016-17 was in draft.

5. Review of implementation

The evaluation looks at ILO interventions in social protection in Asia-Pacific region in 2012-17. This chapter reviews implementation and provides, insofar as possible, an overview of that work.

5.1 Activities

Supports provided in the period includes:

- Awareness raising work in relation to the importance of social protection including the concept of the Social Protection Floor (Recommendation 202). This includes promoting the ratification of Convention 102.
- Ongoing in-country technical support from local ILO staff, regional social protection experts and (in some cases) HQ staff including the provision of technical notes on issues such as legal reviews (Myanmar, Cambodia); social security governance (Cambodia); pensions (Cambodia); to support the development of the Master Plan on Social Insurance (Viet Nam); support to legal drafting (e.g. India, Nepal); support on standards (interpretation of Convention 103 in Nepal); feasibility study on Unemployment Insurance in Malaysia; reform of health insurance payments systems in China; etc.
- Actuarial assessments have been carried out in a number of countries including Cambodia, Indonesia, Lao PDR, Malaysia, Mongolia, Nepal, Thailand and Viet Nam (some of which have been carried out as part of wider projects as in Mongolia)
- Assessment-based national dialogues (ABND) have been carried out in Indonesia, Lao PDR, Mongolia, Myanmar, Thailand and Viet Nam (again some of these have been linked to or part of a wider project). ABNDs are ongoing in Philippines and Timor-Leste.
- Specific projects mainly funded by other development partners such as EU, Irish Aid, Japan, Korea, Luxembourg, Portugal, etc . In the period 2012-17 (including projects ending or commencing in that period), it appears that there have been about 20 active individual projects.⁴ Based on a review of the individual project documents, these projects ranged in size from small-scale projects such as Strengthening Social Insurance in Viet Nam (\$230K) to much larger projects such as the ILO-Japan MAPS project in ASEAN and Mongolia (\$2.1M). Some of these have been nationally based but others have been regionally based as in the series of ILO-Japan funded project which have covered a range of ASEAN countries.
- Capacity-building - most (if not all) the projects and much of the in-country technical support includes an element of training and capacity-building for nation governments

⁴ The Stocktaking Report (pp. 19-21) lists 17 individual projects in the period 2012-15. It does not refer to Social Service Delivery Mechanism (SSDM), a Single Window Service for Social Protection and employment services in Cambodia which is currently 'suspended'. There is also the Promoción de la Cooperación Sur-Sur en el área de la Seguridad Social en Timor-Leste project and a further ILO-Japan project (ESSA) which commenced in 2016.

and social partners.⁵ This has included one-off links with universities (e.g. in Lao PDR) and limited use of ILO/ITC.

Some of these projects included the development of guidelines and ‘good practices’ publications such as a good practice guide on unemployment protection. The work carried out has also contributed, at least in theory, to evidence-based policy research carried out or collated centrally. There have also been some publications on policy-issues such as the Comparative Review of unemployment and employment insurance programs (2013) and The State of Social Protection in ASEAN at the dawn of integration (2015).

The Stocktaking Report provides a more detailed overview of activities in the period and it is not intended to repeat a detailed outline of the work carried out in this report. In total it would appear that in the period 2012-17 technical assistance in one form or another was provided in 17 countries in the region.⁶

5.2 Outputs and outcomes

This work contributed to outcome 4 of the Strategic Policy Framework 2010–15 which aimed to ensure that “[m]ore people have access to better managed and more gender-equitable social security benefits” and to outcome 3 of the Strategic Plan 2016–17 which provided that “Member States implement the Social Protection Floors Recommendation, 2012 (No. 202), and extend social protection systems as a means to accelerate poverty reduction, inclusive growth and social justice.”

The Stocktaking Report provides details, based on the ILO Implementation Reports, of the extent to which indicators in relation to policies, programs, etc. have been achieved in the period 2010-2015. (These are set out in more detail in annex 6). In all cases the targets set had been achieved or surpassed.

The technical support provided has contributed significantly to the development of social protection in the region. For example, as noted above, ABNDs have been or are being carried out in 8 countries. While the direct impact on social protection policy is more difficult to identify, it is clear from individual evaluations that such processes have contributed to capacity and awareness of social protection amongst the tripartite partners. In addition, the technical notes mentioned above also make an important contribution to the development of social protection policy. For example, it is stated that the feasibility study on Unemployment Insurance in Malaysia formed the basis for the launch of Unemployment Insurance in that country.

At the sub-regional level, the ongoing series of projects involving ASEAN have increased the awareness of social protection issues at ASEAN level (and amongst the member states) and have led, for example, to the ASEAN Declaration on Strengthening Social Protection (2013) and the subsequent Regional Framework and Action Plan to implement this Declaration (2015). Work on social protection issues has also been embedded in ASEAN working groups.

⁵ The SR states that over 800 persons have been trained in 17 countries in the period 2012-15.

⁶ A number of additional countries have participated in ILO work, e.g. through participation in training/capacity building courses.

The SR reports that social protection has increasingly been reflected in UNDAFs (e.g. Thailand) and in DWCPs (e.g. India, Indonesia, Pakistan, Viet Nam). There have also been outputs with other UN agencies such as the UNDG Asia-Pacific Issues Brief on Social Protection (2014).

5.3 Limited resources

The HLE reports that in the period 2012-2016 XBTC spending in Asia was US\$7.6 million. This does not include RB and RBSA funding for which no details are given. Detailed information about resource allocation to individual countries was not readily available.⁷ However, it should be said that, in comparison with the work of other Development Partners (such as EU, ADB or World Bank) ILO support in terms of financial and human resources is at a modest level.

The HLE categorises countries into three groups based on the level of ILO support:

- i. Countries which receive the highest level of technical support and access to project funding;
- ii. Countries which receive regular visits from the DWT specialists, complemented with small- to medium-sized projects and possibly actuarial reviews; and
- iii. Countries serviced through visits from the DWT specialist, with the exception of small ad hoc projects.⁸

Of 10 countries identified by the HLE in the 'high support' group, four (Cambodia, India, Lao and Viet Nam) are in the Asia-Pacific region. However, in financial terms ILO support would have been modest compared to the level of support provided by other donors. For example, even in Lao PDR where ILO has been one of the more active DPs, other actors such as ADB, LuxAid, and WHO have been equally or more active in terms of funding and technical assistance.⁹ The limited level of resources available needs to be taken into account in evaluating the impact of ILO work.

5.4 Lack of comprehensive data

One issue which arose in the evaluation is that there is a lack of a comprehensive database of work carried out by the ILO in the period. This meant it is very difficult to get a clear picture of what has been done. The SR, which was to carry out this task, appears to have had difficulty in accessing full data including financial data. The seven country case studies generally also do not provide any comprehensive listing of the work carried out and rather provide an overview of key activities and issues.

It has, therefore, been necessary for the evaluator to seek individual reports on individual projects to try to identify what was done. However, it is not within the scope of the RTE

⁷ See below for further discussion on the difficulty in obtaining a comprehensive picture of the work carried out. The Stocktaking Report also discusses this issue.

⁸ The calculations upon which this is based are not specified and it is not, for example, clear why Mongolia is not mentioned as a 'high support' country in the period.

⁹ Including health care issues and the main area of ILO support has been on health insurance.

to redo the work of the SR or to provide a comprehensive account of work done, resources invested by ILO or outcomes achieved.

Therefore, despite the existence of the SR and the various national overviews prepared for the HLE, it was time-consuming (and ultimately impossible) to establish precisely what work had been carried out in the period and no comprehensive list appears to exist.¹⁰ Nor is there comprehensive data on expenditure on social protection work in the period (or annually).

ILO should consider implementing a comprehensive internal database for projects with all key documentation (PRODOC, annual reports, evaluations, etc.). This would help to make it easier to provide a comprehensive list of work in the social protection field and to provide data on inputs including expenditure.

¹⁰ The www.social-protection.org website generally contains useful information on specific projects and contained much documentation. However, it is not a useful guide to the current status of projects and ILO should consider including up-to-date status on the project and/or indicating who to contact for further information. It is also difficult to find anything on this site unless one already knows where to look which limits its usefulness. We note that the website includes Youtube videos which are not accessible in all countries in the region.

6. Findings

In this chapter we provide an assessment of relevance and coherence, efficiency, effectiveness, sustainability and impact of ILO support in the region based on the activities discussed in chapter 5.

6.1 Relevance: does the activity fit the priorities and policies?

Overall, it appears that ILO activities are relevant or very relevant to the needs of the countries involved, the social partners, the ILO itself and, where relevant, the donor (e.g. ASEAN evaluation, and case studies of Cambodia, India, Lao PDR, Mongolia, Nepal, Thailand, Viet Nam). Generally, projects respond to needs expressed by countries and arise from previous ILO work. All the evaluations and the interviews carried out were positive (often very positive) about the relevance of the work which ILO supports.

However, while ILO overall objectives are clear, it is less clear that there is a strategic approach to the allocation of resources within the region.¹¹ There is not any overall or regional strategy as to which type of countries should be supported, which type of activities should be prioritised,¹² etc. Allocation of resources appears to be in line with what the HLE referred to as the ‘demand-driven approach’ of ILO work combined with donor-driven priorities. In other words, ILO resources are largely allocated to countries which decide on their own priorities. So support for country work depends largely on the extent to which countries prioritise social protection in their DWCPs while project-based support is largely driven by the interests of donors in terms of topics and countries selected.

In relation to TC projects, which make involve the more intensive engagement by ILO, it would appear that the validity of design of TC projects could be improved. For example, there are cases where projects have been overambitious, where risk assessment and risk planning has been inadequate, and where somewhat disparate objectives are shoehorned into one project (as where ASEAN and Mongolia were combined in one project). The ‘suspension’ of the SSDM project in Cambodia due to the ‘lack of actual services available to be delivered’ would appear to be a further example of weak project design. In general, it would appear that gender issues are not adequately incorporated at project design phase.

¹¹ One issue in discussing a more strategic approach is that ILO strategic planning is constrained by its lack of resources. While there are many definitions of strategic planning, most would agree that it involves an organization's process of defining its aim and objectives and making decisions on allocating its resources to achieve these objectives. In the ILO's case, due to lack of resources, ‘strategic planning’ consists of defining objectives and then seeking resources to allow it to achieve them

¹² Indeed, in recent years, HQ appears to have prioritised advocacy work over technical assistance. However, the demand at country level would appear to be largely for TA.

6.2 Effectiveness: the extent to which an activity attains its objectives

The HLE concluded that ILO social protection work overall was ‘highly effective’. This appears to be based largely on the fact that the indicator targets set in CPOs had been achieved. This assumes that meeting these targets is a good indicator of effectiveness.¹³ On the basis of the CPOs, one would also conclude that ILO work in the Asia-Pacific region was highly effective since the targets have been achieved or surpassed. For example, the SR shows that targets were achieved or surpassed in the period 2012-15 (10 targets, 21 achieved). In the period 2016-17, achievement of 12 indicators under outcome 3 was set as a target for the Asia-Pacific region and 12 indicators had already been achieved by March 2017 (HLE).

However, for the purposes of this evaluation, we prefer to take a broader view drawing on the information collected during this evaluation. Based on a careful review of the documents described above and on interviews with key personnel, the RTE concludes that ILO work in the region is reasonably effective, especially when regard is had to the very limited resources available to it. The quality of ILO technical expertise and inputs is generally assessed as being high (e.g. case studies in Nepal, Viet Nam, Thailand).

In terms of ILO TC projects, it would appear that objectives are generally largely met, although in many cases it is not possible to meet all objectives due to design limitations or to contextual changes over time. The Cambodia single window (SSDM) project (mentioned above) is referred to as an example of ‘less than optimal’ effectiveness.¹⁴ Nonetheless, this type of experience is rare in ILO social protection projects.

Sources are also generally positive about the effectiveness of ongoing ILO work (i.e. non-project inputs to policy development, etc.). The SR, CPOs and country case studies contain lengthy details of achievements at national level linked to ILO supports. However, it is rarely possible to quantify this in any rigorous manner (e.g. case studies in Cambodia, India, Nepal, Thailand).¹⁵

A general weakness in project design whereby gender is not adequately incorporated into work planning and indicators leads to a situation where gender is also rarely explicitly addressed in ILO work (e.g. Lao PDR). There is also an apparent failure to prioritise gender explicitly at all regional and sub-regional levels (e.g. case studies in Cambodia, Nepal). This is not to say that gender-relevant issues are not addressed but they are not addressed because of any explicit gender-focus by ILO.

¹³ The HLE (p. 59) notes that ‘the available data do not allow a comprehensive assessment of the achievement of [ILO] goals’ and that it is often not possible to establish causal relationships between ILO activities and datasets at national level.

¹⁴ It would perhaps be more correct to refer to this project as of ‘very poor’ effectiveness.

¹⁵ The 2010-15 CPO indicators require that the outputs be achieved ‘with ILO support’. This is a rather minimal requirement and arguably any support provided by ILO (e.g. commenting on a law whether or not the comments were taken into account) would satisfy the indicator. The 2016-17 indicators do not even mention any causal link between ILO work and the indicators although this is still required by the reporting structure. It is stated that, in practice, the link between ILO inputs and reported outputs is being actively monitored.

ILO has co-operated with other UN agencies either through delivery of joint projects (Lao PDR) or involvement in joint planning (e.g. in development of ABNDs). However, despite efforts to improve co-ordination with other UN agencies, the extent of co-ordination and co-operation is still seen as less than optimal in some countries (e.g. Viet Nam case study).

In terms of ongoing management, the process is somewhat complicated with responsibilities being shared between ILO staff, project boards (where relevant), country offices (often not in-country) and the (sub)regional level (in terms of practical allocation of support where necessary). However, evaluations and case studies do not indicate major issues with management structures *per se* (other than the ‘transaction heavy’ nature of work which is probably unavoidable in a UN agency). However, in terms of ongoing operations, it would appear that managing projects in countries without an in-country office creates difficulties both in administrative terms (e.g. arranging for payments) but also in terms of political support, i.e. it is more difficult for ILO staff to engage with key national decision-makers.

6.3 Efficiency: ‘the outputs in relation to the inputs’

It is difficult to measure efficiency of the work in any concrete manner as ILO does not have any specific measure of efficiency and, even if it did, there is a lack of comprehensive data in relation to inputs and outputs (other than the CPO indicators).

In more general terms, however, in terms of efficiency, most of the sources again indicate that ILO work is regarded as efficient or very efficient.¹⁶ Reviews refer to a lack of resources (not strictly an efficiency issue), difficulties caused by the ‘high transaction activity by activity’ nature of much ILO work (e.g. Cambodia), and various internal inefficiencies in terms of the sometimes bureaucratic nature of ILO procedures.¹⁷

Again one could argue that a more strategic use of resources would lead to greater efficiencies overall. This issue is discussed in more detail in chapter 7.

6.4 Impact: the positive and negative changes produced by the activity

It is difficult, in many cases, to measure the impact which ILO work (and indeed much development work) has at a macro level. While it is easy to measure the outputs of ILO work (in terms of reports, training, actuarial studies, etc.) it is much more difficult to measure outcomes.¹⁸ Again, while it is easy to list the measures which have been adopted

¹⁶ In practice, project evaluations are normally very limited in the financial data and time available to them and do not have the ability to examine financial efficiency in any in-depth manner. We note that the HLE (p. 66) points out that ILO does not have the capacity ‘to report on detailed regular budget expenditures against results achieved, which complicates assessing efficiency in a comprehensive way’.

¹⁷ We note that there has been a recent Implementation Plan on Field Operations and Structures which has been evaluated: *Independent Evaluation of Field Operations and Structures, 2010-16* (2017). We do not discuss internal changes in ILO structures or procedures given that these issues are already being addressed to a certain extent.

¹⁸ The CPO indicators generally focus on outputs, e.g. improving the knowledge base, policies improving social security coverage (rather than an actual increase in social security coverage), legal framework, etc. This leads to an emphasis on reporting new laws, studies, etc. which may or may not lead to any actual

at a national level, it is much more difficult to assess the extent to which the ILO (or other development partners) actually impacted on those measures and more difficult again to assess how ILO has contributed to the outcomes for individuals.

In general, sources are positive about the impact of ILO work but this arguably overstates its real impact since the issues discussed above are rarely addressed in detail (and, in fairness, the scope of reviews and evaluations does not allow for the sort of rigorous evaluation techniques which would be necessary even if the scale of ILO work was sufficient to be detectable in any quantitative manner).

To date, ILO has arguably placed too much emphasis on outputs such as studies and reports (e.g. ABND) and not enough emphasis on how these (necessary) steps can be translated into concrete outcomes. This should be addressed in future developments of the CPOs

In terms of ILO Conventions (in particular Convention 102) it does not appear that any relevant Conventions have been ratified in the time period.

6.5 Sustainability: whether the benefits of an activity are likely to continue?

If sources are generally positive about the impact of ILO work, they are generally less optimistic about sustainability.¹⁹ This is frequently related to the fact that the activity has been time-limited (with donor funding) and the lack of resources to continue to work with the country in a detailed manner. Sustainability is seen as highly dependent on the development of national institutional capacity in order to reduce reliance on external experts. However, the limited duration and scale of most ILO work obviously limits the extent of capacity building.

The HLE (p. 67) also refers to ‘the limited resources for responding to the growing demands at country and global levels’ and ‘the nature and unpredictability of existing donor funding for social protection, which often results in rather small, short projects that are not conducive to supporting long-term processes of change’ as main challenges to the sustainability of ILO work.

One good example of how the sustainability of ILO work can be enhanced is the series of ILO-Japan projects with ASEAN which are now on the third phase (ESSA). This ongoing series of projects (although focussing on different countries) has allowed ILO to engage with ASEAN and countries in the region in an ongoing manner and has helped to support the growing engagement by ASEAN in social protection issues. From an ILO perspective,

improvement in the position of poor persons or workers. It is for example, clear that acceptance of an actuarial study by a government can be counted as meeting indicator 4.3 but this does not appear to require that the government do anything on the basis of the study. It is also clear from the country studies and evaluation reports that the adoption of laws and strategies has not, in all cases, led to implementation of these laws and strategies.

¹⁹ This finding should be seen in the context of how difficult it is to achieve a sustainable impact. Even a recent evaluation of (much larger) EU support to social protection work found that ‘the sustainability of many effects/benefits achieved remains fragile’ (MacKellar, 2018).

this type of project allows flexible use of expertise and ILO has found that the involvement of ASEAN can facilitate engagement which certain.

6.6 Overall assessment

On the positive side, ILO is carrying out a lot of very relevant social protection work in a wide range of countries in the region. Country reports and evaluations are generally very positive about the high quality of ILO's technical inputs. ILO work is advancing awareness and knowledge of social protection issues and, in a context where the socio-economic context in many countries in the region is changing rapidly, it is well placed to provide information and support to countries which wish to develop their social protection systems.

At the same time, the resources available to ILO are limited and the current approach means that these resources are spread thinly across a wide area. This leads to a situation where ILO is overstretched (arguably very overstretched) and is relying on short-term project funding and short-term contract staff and working in countries without in-country offices. This also means that the impact and, in particular, sustainability of ILO work is more limited.

The key question for ILO is whether it wants to continue broadly in line with its current approach (perhaps with some changes such as better project design) or whether it wants to move in the direction of a more strategic approach involving greater prioritisation of work, cost-sharing, more institutionalised capacity building, etc.

On the one hand, the current approach has, as we have set out above, been broadly positive in terms of ILO's reputation in the field and has generally raised awareness and supported the development of social protection systems. However, the overstretched nature of this work does create a risk that a continuation of this approach will lead to more limited returns in the future and potentially to less positive image of ILO. Potential options for a more strategic approach are discussed in chapter 7.

7. Improving Impact and Sustainability

In this chapter we look at possible options for improving ILO impact and sustainability. This includes issues of prioritisation of work (7.2), cost-sharing (7.3) and working with other agencies (7.4). A range of technical issues to improve impact and sustainability are discussed in section 7.5 including improving project design, supports needed for ILO work how to develop ABNDs, etc. Finally we look at issues concerning evaluation (7.6).

7.1 Improving Impact and Sustainability

The HLE raises the question as to

how the ILO can simultaneously deliver on the broadened social protection floor agenda and growing demand for country support, and enhance or maintain specialized in-house expertise, while also delivering on the expanding global agenda.

The answer for this evaluation for the Asia-Pacific region is that the **ILO cannot hope to and should not try to achieve these objectives simultaneously** (unless it receives a major increase in resources) and that the only way to balance these various objectives is to adopt a more strategic approach.

The HLE correctly describes the key challenges to sustainability as the ‘limited resources’ available to ILO and the ‘nature and unpredictability of existing donor funding for social protection, which often results in rather small, short projects that are not conducive to supporting long-term processes of change’. Obviously, one response would be for ILO to attempt further to improve funding. It is assumed that ILO is already doing what it can in this area which falls outside the remit of this evaluation.²⁰

Other than this, it would appear that the main possibility for ILO to improve its impact and sustainability at regional level would be to adopt a more strategic approach to the work which it does. To an external evaluator this would appear to be an obvious necessity.²¹ The HLE also recommends (recommendation 2) the ‘adoption of a more programmatic approach, based on longer time frames and continuity of engagement supported by sound monitoring and evaluation systems’.

At present, there is an almost unlimited potential demand for ILO support in the social protection field to countries in the region. In addition, there are new thematic streams which require additional resources (both human and financial) to be properly addressed including migrants and coordination of benefits, domestic workers, climate change, refugees, global supply chain, and non-standard forms of employment. However, as discussed in chapter 5, ILO capacity in the region is overstretched (arguably massively overstretched). In this context, rationing of support is inevitable. In the absence of a strategic approach to the allocation of resources, this rationing takes place through (in the words of the HLE) ‘under-staffing

²⁰ One example of this is the Global Global Flagship Programme on Building Social Protection Floors for All . In the Asia-Pacific region, the countries to be covered by the GFP are Cambodia, India, Indonesia, Lao PDR, Myanmar, Pakistan, Timor-Leste and Viet Nam (eight of 36 countries).

²¹ Indeed, evaluations of the social protection work of other DPs active in the region have also proposed a more strategic approach for their work: see ADB (2012) and IMF (2017).

in some of the countries; [and] challenges in relation to responding to requests in a timely manner.’ Arguably rather than having on-off project funding with limited ongoing support in up to 20 countries it would make more sense to have continuous support in a (much) smaller number of countries for a 3-5 year period.

However, there are significant constraints on the extent to which the regional level can move towards a more strategic/programmatic approach. It would entail a shift from the ILO’s traditional ‘demand-driven approach’ to its work. Reflecting this, the ILO does not currently have any explicit strategy at regional level. A key question is how a more strategic approach can be developed at regional level in a ‘light’ manner which does not add to the already ‘transaction-heavy’ nature of ILO work.

A regional strategy should seek to build on ILO’s unique strengths (such as its social protection expertise)²² and to seek to engage in those areas (both geographical and policy-related) where it can have most added-value. If ILO has limited control over the demand for its services, it should be able to direct the type of services which it provides and the modalities for the provision of those services, e.g. institutionalising capacity-building; and greater synergies with other development partners. These issues are discussed in the next section.

7.2 Prioritising work

There would appear to be a number of possible ways in which ILO could prioritise its work in a strategic manner so as to prioritise demand.

7.2.1. Scope of social protection work

One issue is the areas of social protection in which the regional office would seek to prioritise work. It is understood that the regional office has informally developed a number of areas which it feels should be a priority for future work. These may include the impact of ageing societies and the need to strengthen pensions systems; the informal economy and the precarization of work; migrant workers; and financing of social protection.

This would appear to be a sensible approach. All the areas identified are clearly ones of relevance to the region. It is recommended that these priorities should be more formally adopted. However, it would seem impossible (and it is presumably not the intention) that these priorities should be exclusive and it is assumed that work will continue in other social protection fields (such as health insurance where a project is due to commence in SE Asia). Thus this approach is likely to have a limited impact on controlling demand.

²² In order to adjust to changing trends in social protection, ILO may need to develop expertise in new areas such as long-term care or the links between social protection and disaster risk reduction but the costs involved must be factored in.

7.2.2 Modalities of service provision

On the basis of the interviews for this evaluation, the demand from countries is for technical assistance with the development and management of social protection systems, including issues such as actuarial analysis, technical advice on program design, capacity-building, etc. While ILO has limited control over the demand for such services, it can control how it provides services, e.g. by institutionalising capacity-building and enhancing the sustainability of the courses which are provided. Initial steps to adopt this type of approach are already underway. These include Executive Training on Pensions with EPF, ITC, UNESCAP and Help Age International in Malaysia; and employment Insurance and the employment injury insurance trainings in Korea in partnership with the Korea Workers and Compensation Service (COMWEL); ITC; Korea Employment Information Service and the Global Program on Employment Injury Protection. The planned development of a Regional Actuarial Services Unit is also aligned with this approach.

Given the increase in staffing in DWT-BKK, it is recommended that ILO should allocate specific time to reviewing the current modalities of work and to developing a business case in relation to the implementation of new modalities such as institutionalised capacity-building.²³ Such modalities should, insofar as possible, be developed in conjunction with other development partners and could be open to (funded) use by other agencies involved in social protection work in the region. Developing a business case would need to take into account issues such as ongoing management of these modalities, marketing, etc.

7.2.3 Type of projects

A further area in which ILO can adopt a more strategic approach is in the type of projects it supports. First, on the basis of the evaluations reviewed, it would appear that (in subregions where this is possible) there is much to be said for regional projects (within one coherent region). This is particularly the case in South East Asia given the ability to work with ASEAN. Regional projects allow knowledge sharing and, in the case of ASEAN, allow the regional body to develop policies on relevance to its members. From an implementation perspective, they provide the opportunity for ILO to use its technical expertise in a number of countries at the same time and to switch resources to countries where they can most add value over the lifetime of the project. This would appear to be less viable in South Asia where regional tensions are stronger and SAARC is less active on social protection issues.

Second, on the basis of the evaluations and discussions of nationally-based project, ILO's skills would appear to be best used at a national policy level (or in large decentralised countries at state/provincial policy level). Conversely, it is not clear that ILO has the skills to implement relatively small pilot projects or to ensure that the lessons of such pilots are fully evaluated and integrated into future policy development.

²³ This might also cover other areas of work such as a regional actuarial service unit building on the ongoing work with the Thai government.

Third, while the donor-driven nature of much ILO work has to be recognised, ILO needs to be cautious in becoming involved in small scale projects where the costs may well exceed the benefits to the organisation.

7.2.4 Countries covered

The Asia-Pacific Region covers a wide range of countries of enormously varying size which are at very different levels of development in terms of economic and social development, interest in social protection, capacity to implement reforms, etc. In practice, ILO currently works in some countries (on social protection) and does not do so in others.

There would appear to be cogent arguments why ILO might formally choose to prioritise certain countries²⁴ and (conversely) to deprioritise others (due, for example, to size, lack of strategic importance, ability to obtain support elsewhere or other reasons). The HLE (Recommendation 3) refers to support distinguishing between different types of partner countries (clustered through a relevant typology) and the possibility of graduating from one group to another. However, it is less than clear exactly what was envisaged.

On balance, however, it seems unlikely that ILO would yet be prepared to develop a clear listing of countries which are a priority (and conversely those which are not). If a prioritisation is to be adopted, it would perhaps better be done indirectly by way of an overall policy on cost-sharing discussed below. No doubt in the absence of a more strategic approach informal prioritisation will continue to take place.

7.3 Cost sharing

Some countries in the Asia-Pacific region are clearly in a position to contribute to or cover the entire cost of ILO support. Others are obviously not able to do so. The GFP states that ILO in seeking to find resources to implement the program is exploring 'national resources of target countries' as a potential source of funds. Indeed, at regional level there are already examples of cost-sharing (e.g. Thailand). Interviews with ILO personnel indicated that many felt that countries would be resistant to explicit cost-sharing requirements. The concern was also expressed that the fact that a country was paying for the service could call into question the ability of a project to be independent and to apply ILO normative frameworks.

However, given the financial constraints faced by ILO it would appear to be eminently sensible to pursue this issue in a structured way. It would clearly be possible to develop a coherent approach (as other development partners do in relation to allocation of resources) whereby ILO might provide support without any cost sharing to countries at a low level of development, might seek a contribution from middle-income countries and might require full cost-recovery from countries at a higher level of income. Indeed this approach might also be applied within countries where working with specific states/provinces.

To date, ILO HQ has made some moves in this direction by moving towards self-financing for aspects of technical assistance. In particular, SOCPRO decided to move regular

²⁴ Indeed it has done so in the GFP.

actuarial services, which are not part of the development phase of social protection schemes or systems, into a self-sustaining unit.²⁵ The HLE reports that SOCPRO ‘is at an advanced stage of scaling-up this model to other types of services’.

Given the desirability of a coherent approach and the likelihood that some countries may resist such an approach, it would seem preferable that an overall approach to cost-sharing be developed by (or at least mandated by) ILO head office. However, if this is not possible in the short-term it would seem advisable for the regional office to continue its efforts to encourage cost-sharing as a condition of future technical assistance (where appropriate).

7.4 Working with others

7.4.1 Regional bodies

The experience in South East Asia of working with ASEAN shows the potential for working with regional bodies both in terms of engaging a significant number of countries in one project and in engaging the regional body itself. In this case, the approach has been greatly strengthened by the fact that ILO (with Japan’s support) was able to run a series of consecutive projects involving ASEAN. It would appear to be strongly desirable that this work should continue and that ILO should locate funds to continue working with ASEAN when the current ESSA project ends. Of course, the success of work with ASEAN does not mean that it can easily be replicated in other different contexts but it does illustrate the potential in other sub-regions including South Asia (SAARC) and the Pacific (Pacific Community).

7.4.2 Tripartism

A tripartite approach working with government and social partners (employers and trade union) is a core ILO value. This evaluation finds that it can have long-term benefits in that capacity building with and engagement by social partners will enhance their involvement in social protection issues and thereby strengthen the constituency supporting the development of social protection systems. Nonetheless, the evaluation also found that engagement with social partners can be time-consuming and of limited immediate impact where some social partners are weak or not greatly interested in social protection. ILO should look at how to increase its engagement with social partners by, for example, sharing examples of good practice within countries,²⁶ sharing experiences between social

²⁵ It is not clear how this distinction is made in practice. During the interviews it was reported that one country (clearly still at a development stage) was initially asked to pay for technical services leading to considerable delays in project implementation.

²⁶ Examples of good practice at national level include India where the UN Employment and Social Protection Task Team was established and Nepal where the Social Protection Task Team facilitates inter-agency exchange.

partners and (where possible) engaging with umbrella organisations at (sub)regional and federal level, for example, to develop capacity building and training programs.

7.4.3 Working with other UN agencies

It is clear that the degree of co-operation with other UN agencies is variable. There are good examples of co-operation at regional level at least in relation to co-ordination of activities, research and sharing of information (e.g. with ESCAP). It was suggested that the co-ordination of activities between UN agencies in Bangkok could be strengthened by becoming more formalised, e.g. by making the existing informal meeting into a subgroup of the Regional Thematic Working Group with clear terms of reference and more focus on substantive issues rather than simply information sharing.

At a country level, the experience is very mixed. In some countries there was good co-operation in relation to the implementation of the ABND with other UN agencies closely involved in the process. Some projects have been implemented in conjunction with other UN agencies (albeit with some difficulties). However, in other countries co-operation is minimal. The degree of co-operation depends on a range of factors including whether UN agencies are co-located and simple personalities. This is fundamentally a reflection on the UN system within which ILO has to work. Obviously one would recommend that ILO should work more closely with other UN agencies at country level but the issue is to identify concrete ways in which it can do so.

7.4.4. Working with other DPs

At present, at regional level, ILO works with ADB in terms of some research outputs and events.²⁷ However, despite the agreement between ILO and the World Bank on a Global Partnership for Universal Social Protection (2016), there remain significant differences in approach at country levels and respondents did not see much realistic possibility for a closer working relationship at country level.

Limited collaboration with IMF in 2011-13 (including in Viet Nam) was described by a recent IMF evaluation (2017, 29-30) as 'not very successful' in part because IMF and ILO staff 'did not speak the same language'.²⁸ A recent evaluation of EU support to social protection (MacKellar, 2018) found that the 'EU supported one multi-country SPF costing study, covering Burkina Faso, El Salvador, and Cambodia' but otherwise identified limited co-operation in the region.

At a regional level, the ILO co-operates with other agencies such as HelpAge in relation to capacity building. Depending on the country context, there is some co-operation with other DPs such as GIZ and HelpAge but this obviously depends on the extent to which different DPs are present in a country and their varying priorities.

²⁷ Such as the Regional Workshop on Integrating Social Protection Indicators in Monitoring Sustainable Development Goals, March 2017.

²⁸ <http://www.imf.org/ieo/pages/EvaluationImages279.aspx>

Despite the agreements at global level it would appear that there remain significant differences between the approach adopted by the ILO and other DPs, such as the World Bank, at country level. Therefore, the possibilities for closer co-operation with these DPs are limited. However, ILO has cooperated with ADB on regional research and events. In addition, there are a range of other development partners and international NGOs which are active in the region where ILO currently does co-operate to some extent and where it would be useful to develop a more co-ordinated approach on specific issues, e.g. on institutionalising capacity building (see above). ILO should also be ready to implement social protection projects on behalf of agencies such as the EU where this fits into ILO priorities (e.g. China which is of key strategic importance and will have an important demonstration effect for other countries in the region).

7.5 Specific issues

7.5.1. Developing ABNDs

As we have seen, ILO has finalised ANBDs in a range of countries. These have often been valuable in terms of developing awareness of social protection issues and capacity amongst tripartite constituents and other stakeholders. In addition, the case studies report examples of where issues identified in ABNDs have been implemented (although again causation may be unclear). The question now arises as to how ILO can deepen and take forward the ABND approach. One option would be to ensure that future ABNDs include an implementation plan (as planned in Timor-Leste) to avoid a situation where the ABND is simply seen as an aspirational list without any real commitment to implementation. In general, ABNDs are intended to contribute to the development of social protection policy and are, therefore, most likely to be of added-value where the national government is already engaged and interested in such an approach. Given the resource-heavy nature of these processes, it would seem advisable to prioritise according to national (government) demand.

7.5.2 Capacity building

As set out in chapter 5, ILO has carried out extensive training and capacity-building work in the last five years. However, being mainly project-based, this tends to be once-off and to some extent lacking in continuity. A more programmatic approach would, of course, help to make capacity-building more sustainable. ILO has already developed links with some universities (e.g. Thailand) in the development and delivery of courses.²⁹ A further development of such institutional links would also help to institutionalise capacity-building and make it more sustainable. We understand that under the Support to the

²⁹ Further examples include ILO partnership with UN agencies including UNDP and the Faculty of Economics in Viet Nam and the partnership with ITC and the Employees Provident Fund (EPF) in Malaysia on pension training in which EPF will cover the costs of accommodation and meals for 50 participants in from the region.

extension of Social Health Protection in South-East Asia project it is proposed to establish a partnership with academic/research institutions (initially in Thailand) and other stakeholders working in the region to increase the regional capacity to promote research and deliver training and technical assistance. However, this needs to be done in an effective and efficient manner without the establishment of a long-term financial commitment which might not be justified. We have recommended above that ILO at regional level should allocate staff time to developing a business case for a more institutionalised form of capacity-building at regional level.

7.5.3 Supports needed

ILO staff interviewed indicated that they needed technical support from the regional office and/or HQ levels. It was said that senior levels of expertise were required. This is the opposite of the trend in recent years (as set out in the HLE, p. 13) whereby there has been 'a strategy to re-orient part of the existing capacity from highly specialized technical positions (P4) to a higher number of less experienced junior profiles (P2) to support the global advocacy efforts and knowledge products development'. Operational staff had generally negative views in relation to the move to self-financing for actuarial services and the deskilling of HQ staff. The view was also expressed that there was a need for more technical publications concerning issues such as pensions and technical topics in general including issues such as collection of social insurance contributions. The development of more technical supports at regional level (discussed above) could help to address these issues.

7.5.4 ILO Conventions

It does not appear that any social protection convention was ratified in the period under review, although work was carried out in assessing ability to do so in some countries (e.g. Mongolia). In general, and with specific exceptions (China) it does not appear that governments see further ratification of, for example, Convention 102 as a priority. At the same time, there are Conventions (such as Convention 19 on equality of treatment in accident compensation) which have already been ratified by some countries in the region which are relevant and where there should be further work on supporting implementation.

7.5.5 SDGs

ILO is now responsible for monitoring indicator 1.3 of the SDGs.³⁰ However, it is not clear how ILO will be able to do this so as to integrate the responsibilities into its overall work. The recognitions of social protection as part of the SDGs is important and ILO (at both HQ and regional level) need to give consideration as to how best to incorporate this task into its work and to integrate the achievement of the SDGs (or, at least, this indicator) into its

³⁰ This is: Proportion of population covered by social protection floors/systems, by sex, distinguishing children, unemployed persons, older persons, persons with disabilities, pregnant women, newborns, work-injury victims and the poor and the vulnerable

broader work. This will need to include support for data collection at country level (which already forms part of the existing CPO Indicators, under indicator 3.2). This could draw on the experience already under development through the ESSA project with ASEAN countries.³¹ It should also consider how best to develop partnerships with other UN agencies such as ESCAP in relation to collecting and reporting data.

7.6 Evaluation

The HLE recommended that ILO should adopt ‘a more programmatic approach, based on longer time frames and continuity of engagement *supported by sound monitoring and evaluation systems*’. The ILO Evaluation Policy (2017) sets out clear guidelines for evaluations and states that requirements for project evaluations ‘are based on a project’s budget-size threshold, reflecting levels of investment risk of the ILO, and on duration, reflecting needs and opportunities for adjustment’.³² At present, project evaluations presumably serve a useful purpose in providing an overview for stakeholders as to the implementation of specific projects.

However, in the context of a more strategic/programmatic approach, it is arguable that evaluation needs to be more systematic in line with the recent Evaluation Policy. Given the small scale nature of individual projects, evaluation needs to be carried out in the context of the broader regional approach (assuming there is one). A project-based focus runs the risk that ILO work is evaluated out of context. For example, an individual project may well have been relevant, implemented reasonably effectively and had had some impact but, in the overall context, it may well be that ILO could have invested its resources more strategically elsewhere. In addition, there should be a formal process whereby evaluation reports are considered in the development of future policy and implementation (in line with section VI of the ILO Evaluation Policy (2017)).

Finally, it is arguable that evaluation and reporting needs to be more rigorous. The structure of the current indicators and the overall emphasis of ILO on advocacy tends to create an environment in which the focus of reporting is on claiming success and where unrealistic claims may be made for the impact of work. This may not be ultimately useful for the organisation. It is noted that the HLE (p. 59) suggest that ‘[s]cientific outcome-oriented evaluations could be organized ..., for example, through evaluation approaches such as contribution analysis, process tracing and/or outcome harvesting’.³³

³¹ ILO could also draw on the experience of a recent ADB project collecting data for the ADB Social Protection Index which found, inter alia, that collecting social protection data requires ‘substantial financial and human resources’: <https://www.adb.org/sites/default/files/project-documents/47215/47215-001-tcr-en.pdf>

³² In the period covered here, a number of medium-sized projects do not appear to have been the subject of evaluation (e.g. Myanmar SPF project).

³³ For a more detailed discussion of these approaches and an actual application in a relevant area see Mackenzie and Hearn (2016) available at <https://www.odi.org/publications/10397-impact-evaluation-portfolio-programmes-policy-influence>

8. Conclusions

Overall, we conclude, on the basis of the interviews carried out and the review of documentation, that ILO is carrying out a lot of very relevant social protection work in a wide range of countries in the region. Country reports and evaluations are generally very positive about the high quality of ILO's technical inputs. ILO work is advancing awareness and knowledge of social protection issues and, in a context where the socio-economic context in many countries in the region is changing rapidly, it is well placed to provide information and support to countries which wish to develop their social protection systems.

At the same time, the resources available to ILO are limited and the current approach means that these resources are spread thinly across a wide area. This leads to a situation where ILO is overstretched (arguably very overstretched) and is relying on short-term project funding and short-term contract staff and working in countries without in-country offices. This also means that the impact and, in particular, sustainability of ILO work is more limited.

The key question for ILO is whether it wants to continue broadly in line with its current approach (perhaps with some changes such as better project design) or whether it wants to move in the direction of a more strategic approach involving greater prioritisation of work, cost-sharing, more institutionalised capacity building, etc.

On the one hand, the current approach has been broadly positive in terms of ILO's reputation in the field and has generally raised awareness and supported the development of social protection systems. However, the overstretched nature of this work does create a risk that a continuation of this approach will lead to more limited returns in the future and potentially to a less positive image of ILO.

9. Recommendations

1. ILO should focus its activities in areas where it has unique expertise and where it can achieve most added-value and which will have multiplier effects.
2. To assist this approach, ILO at regional level should adopt a more strategic approach (insofar as possible) to the social protection work which is carried out in the coming five years. In particular, the regional office should
 - i) agree and publicise a number of policy areas which it wishes to prioritise;
 - ii) prioritise regional projects (in those sub-regions where this is possible) and avoid local pilot projects unless there is a compelling reason to implement such an approach;³⁴
 - iii) develop new modalities of work such as institutionalised capacity-building at a regional level;
 - iv) develop (insofar as possible with ILO HQ) a cost-sharing approach with national (and state/provincial) governments whereby governments contribute to the cost of technical assistance.
3. This approach should be formulated in a short document setting out a strategic position on social protection work in the coming 3-5 years.
4. ILO should allocate specific time to reviewing the current modalities of work and to developing a business case in relation to the implementation of new modalities such as institutionalised capacity-building.
5. Project design should be more realistic (i.e. less ambitious) and should involve better risk assessment and risk management so that implementation risks are identified at an early stage and actions identified to mitigate risks insofar as possible.³⁵
6. In terms of gender, gender priorities should be made more specific in the design both of ongoing country-level work and in specific projects.
7. ILO should look at how to increase its engagement with social partners by, for example, sharing examples of good practice, sharing experiences between social partners and (where possible) engaging with umbrella organisations at (sub)regional and federal level, for example, to develop capacity building and training programs.
8. Co-ordination of activities between UN agencies in Bangkok could be strengthened by becoming more formalised, e.g. by making the existing informal meeting into a subgroup

³⁴ Availability of resources or donor support for a pilot approach should **not** be considered to be a compelling reason.

³⁵ The recent Support to the extension of Social Health Protection in South-East Asia project will include a six-month inception phase to allow an assessment of country needs and to identify specific areas of intervention and concrete activities. This is a very useful model which would assist in addressing these recommendations.

of the Regional Thematic Working Group with clear terms of reference and more focus on substantive issues.

9. ILO should consider implementing an internal database for social protection projects with all key documentation (PRODOC, annual reports, evaluations, etc.). This would help to make it easier to provide a comprehensive list of work in the social protection field and to provide data on inputs including expenditure.

10. Evaluation should be more systematic in line with the recent Evaluation Policy and be carried out in the context of the broader regional approach. In addition, there should be a formal process whereby evaluation reports are considered in the development of future policy and implementation (in line with section VI of the ILO Evaluation Policy (2017)). Finally, evaluation and reporting needs to be more rigorous and ILO EVAL should explore carrying out more scientific 'outcome-oriented' evaluations.

10. Lessons learned and emerging good practices

Lessons learned³⁶

As set out in ILO Guidance, lessons learned are to describe knowledge gained by experience and are derived from specific and well-defined situations.³⁷ They are intended to be significant, to have a relevance to a wider context, to be generalized and replicable.

On the basis of the evidence collected in this evaluation we identify the following lessons learned:

1) **ILO work has most impact when it is based on ILO's core areas of expertise** such as technical advice on social insurance, actuarial services and capacity-building. Conversely, **ILO should not** (other than in exceptional circumstances) **engage in pilot projects** to implement activities (such as in Lao PDR and Cambodia).

The evaluations and interviews indicate that ILO is able to have most impact on the development of social protection policy when its work is in its core areas of expertise such as technical policy development, actuarial services, etc. This can be seen in evaluations and case studies in ASEAN, Cambodia, India and Viet Nam. Conversely, evaluations and studies of pilot projects suggest that ILO often has difficulty implementing projects at a distance (often without an in-country office), in areas where it does not have technical expertise and/or IT resources (e.g. Single Window). Even where such pilots are successfully implemented (e.g. Mongolia) ILO does not have the resources to ensure that the country learns from the experience and implements the lessons from the pilot.

2) **Project design**: ILO should be **more realistic** in what can be achieved in a project. A number of project evaluations indicate too many and overambitious objectives. Second, ILO should carry out a rigorous **risk assessment** process in order to refine (where necessary) the project design. In particular, a rigorous risk assessment should be carried out including risk mitigation. Third, in order to ensure that **gender issues form an integral part of projects**, ILO should ensure that such issues are fully integrated at the design stage rather than expecting these to be identified and addressed during implementation.

A number of project evaluations found that project objectives were overambitious (e.g. Social Protection & Gender in Cambodia, MAPS). In addition, risk assessment and risk mitigation is frequently minimal in project design. Therefore, if and when problems arise,

³⁶ A lesson learned is an observation from project or programme experience which can be translated into relevant, beneficial knowledge by establishing clear causal factors and effects. It focuses on a specific design, activity, process or decision and may provide either positive or negative insights on operational effectiveness and efficiency, impact on the achievement of outcomes, or influence on sustainability. The lesson should indicate, where possible, how it contributes to 1) reducing or eliminating deficiencies; or 2) building successful and sustainable practice and performance.

³⁷ http://www.ilo.org/wcmsp5/groups/public/---ed_mas/---eval/documents/publication/wcms_165981.pdf

no risk mitigation has been built into the project design. Improving project design should help to improve the effectiveness of project implementation.

Insofar as possible, it is useful to build in an inception period in longer-term projects (as in the recent Support to the extension of Social Health Protection in South-East Asia project) to allow an up-to date assessment of country needs and to identify specific areas of intervention and concrete activities. This is a very useful model which would assist in ensuring that activities are realistic and which would help take assist in precise risk assessment.

A number of evaluations also found that gender issues are not always integrated into project design. This does not mean that gender-related issues are not addressed in project implementation but it does mean that they do not form an integrated part of project implementation. Given the importance of gender issues in social protection work, a gender perspective should be built into project design.

Emerging good practice³⁸

One example of emerging good practice is **the series of linked ILO-Japan projects which have been operated with ASEAN** over the period from 2011 to date. This commenced with a project on unemployment insurance and was focussed on Viet Nam. The second project (MAPS) ran from 2104 to 2016.³⁹ Finally, the current ESSA is focussed on improving application of social security laws in ASEAN and, in particular, in Indonesia and Viet Nam.

This has been possible due to the provision of funding on a continuous basis by Japan (through the ILO/Japan Multi-Bilateral Program) and the close working relationship between ILO and Japan⁴⁰ and also by the willingness of ASEAN to engage on social protection issues on a long-term basis.

This has allowed the development of an ongoing relationship between ILO and ASEAN which has contributed to increasing the awareness of social protection issues at ASEAN level (and amongst the member states) and have led, for example, to the ASEAN Declaration on Strengthening Social Protection (2013) and the subsequent Regional Framework and Action Plan to implement this Declaration (2015). As discussed in the mid-term evaluation of ESSA, there is clearly potential to extend this co-operation further with ASEAN.

The possibilities for replication with other regional agencies may be more limited but the general approach of having a series of projects funded by the same donor and focussing in the same strategic area would clearly help to enhance the impact and sustainability of ILO work.

³⁸ An emerging good practice is any successful working practice or strategy, whether fully or in part, that has produced consistent, successful results and measurable impact.

³⁹ This project focussed on Mongolia which was a donor-driven decision and did not make much logical sense. Despite this the work with ASEAN continued successfully.

⁴⁰ Including location of a Chief Technical Adviser and Overall Coordinator in the ILO's BKK office.

Annexes

Annex 1: Terms of reference

RBSA funded Asia Region Thematic Evaluation on Social Protection 2012-2017 (Phase II): Data Analysis and Reporting

Introduction & Background

1. The ILO's funding base consists of assessed and voluntary contributions. Voluntary contributions include the Regular Budget Supplementary Account (RBSA), which allows development partners to provide un-earmarked core funding to the ILO, increasing the ILO Evaluation Office (EVAL)'s capacity to deliver and achieve results at the country level. The ILO allocates RBSA funds for monitoring and evaluation purposes at the global and regional levels. Every biennium proposals are submitted to allocate RBSA funds towards the monitoring and evaluation of specific regional initiatives or needs. Based on the findings and lessons learnt from stocktaking report on the ILO interventions in social protection in Asia and the Pacific, the Asia region put together a proposal for a thematic evaluation of social protection issues in the Asia which will be conducted in the 2016-17 biennium.
2. Conducted in 2016, the stocktaking exercise encompassed the ILO interventions in social protection in Asia and the Pacific region from 2006 up to 2015. The report has helped the Asia region better understand the type of modalities and resources availability (all sources of funds including regular budget, regular budget supplementary account, extra-budgetary and trust funds) for ILO's efforts to assist member States in strengthening its social protection in all its forms. It was also served as direct input and background information for the preparation of the RBSA funded Asia region thematic evaluation on social protection, thereafter called the regional thematic evaluation.
3. The regional thematic evaluation on social protection coincides with the Governing Body mandated High Level Evaluation (HLE) being undertaken by the EVAL on ILOs strategies and activities to create and expand social protection floors covering the period of 2012-17.
4. In order to leverage evaluation resources and avoid duplication of evaluation efforts in the Asia region, it was decided to conduct a joint process between the regional thematic evaluation and the HLE process.
5. The regional thematic evaluation on social protection therefore composes two phases: Phase I: a joint process between the regional thematic evaluation on social protection and the HLE process and provide input into the HLE on social protection; and Phase II: data analysis and reporting.

Purpose of the Evaluation

6. The regional thematic evaluation on social protection serves two purposes. For Phase I, it aims to provide in-depth data collection and reporting on relevance and coherence, efficiency, effectiveness, sustainability and impact of ILO support in the region and feed findings and conclusions from the evaluation questions into the overall HLE. For Phase II, it aims to provide (i) an assessment of relevance and coherence, efficiency, effectiveness, sustainability and impact of ILO support in the region; and (ii) input and recommendations to set strategic directions for the ILO in social protection at the sub-regional and regional level.

Scope

7. The scope for the Phase II of the regional thematic evaluation on social protection will follow the scope of Phase I and the HLE which is from 2012-2017. The geographic scope will cover the Asia-Pacific region with a focus on both South East Asia, South Asia and where relevant the Pacific. There are seven countries selected under the regional thematic

evaluation: Viet Nam, Lao PDR, Cambodia, Thailand, Mongolia, India, and Nepal. ASEAN will also be included in Phase II.

Audience

8. The primary audience and key user for this regional thematic evaluation is the ILO Country Offices and Decent Work Technical Teams in the Asia region. The results of the regional thematic evaluation will be used to inform future social protection strategies in the next five years. Secondary audiences include the ILO Regional Offices, as well as other interested constituencies (e.g. State members, other donors, and academics).

Methodology

9. Phase II will focus on data analysis and reporting. The regional thematic evaluation report will provide analysis and synthesis of findings, lessons learnt, conclusions and recommendations which will inform strategic directions on social protection for the ILO in the next five years taking into account the challenges and new developments in the region including the SDGs. The report will be prepared from consolidating all case studies and reference made in the case studies from Phase I, the 2012-13, 2014-15 and 2016-2017 Program Implementation Reports, the HLE report on social protection, and other relevant reports from ASEAN, ADB, the World Bank, UN Agencies, and other international organizations.
10. An additional data gathering may be required e.g. interviewing with the social protection specialists in Bangkok and New Delhi and any relevant stakeholders in the region (e.g. ASEAN), if necessary. The draft and final report should meet ILO evaluation quality standards.

Sources of information

11. The consultant will work with the ILO's Regional Monitoring and Evaluation Officer and the social protection specialists in Bangkok and New Delhi to identify the key sources of documentation but should include:
 - Country Programme Reviews of Decent Work Country Programme.
 - Evaluation of relevant projects in the identified countries.
 - Decent Work Country Programme documents.
 - ILO CPO and Programme and Budget documents.
 - Social Protection Platform documents.

In addition, the consultant who will conduct tasks during Phase II should review the following documents but not limit to:

- 2012-13, 2014-15, and 2016-17 ILO Implementation reports (focusing on social protection CPOs).
- Asia Pacific Regional Meeting (2016) report.
- The HLE report on Social Protection.
- All case studies in Asia region incorporated in the HLE report on Social Protection.
- List of documents consulted in each case studies.
- Relevant reports on Social Protection issues in Asia region from ASEAN, ADB, the World Bank, UN Agencies, and other international agencies.

Required Qualifications

12. The international consultant should have at least 10 to 15 years of professional experience working on social protection related issues in the Asia region. Substantial experience in evaluation is an advantage. S/he must be fluent in English and have excellent writing and presentation skills.

The consultant should also have additional common skills/experience as follows:

- Ability to conduct interviews, analyze and synthesize information and write reports;
- Ability to work collaboratively as a team; and

- Knowledge of and experience in operating environments similarly to complexity and challenging to the Asia.

Key Tasks and Outputs

13. The consultant on social protection will provide the following tasks and outputs:
- 1) Prepare analysis and synthesis conclusions based on case studies received from Phase I, list of documents consulted during Phase I, the HLE report on Social Protection, and other relevant reports from ASEAN, ADB, the World Bank, UN Agencies, and other international organizations;
 - 2) Interview/Skype call with relevant ILO's specialists based in Bangkok and New Delhi and, if necessary, conduct a field visit to Jakarta to discuss with ASEAN Secretariat and other relevant stakeholders;
 - 3) Prepare more in-depth case studies and analysis of relevance and coherence with regional/sub-regional strategies (e.g. ASEAN) and recommendations to inform future the ILO's Social Protection strategies in Asia for the next five years; and
 - 4) Finalize the draft report based on feedback received from the ILO's Regional M&E Officer.

| Tasks | Dates /Duration |
|--|-----------------|
| Phase II | |
| Case study and regional/sub-regional analysis including extra desk review countries and drafting and finalizing the report | 22 working days |
| Field visits if need be | 5 working days |
| Total | 27 days |

Timeframe

14. It is foreseen that the Phase II will start on 9 October 2017 and complete on 30 November 2017.

Management Arrangements

15. The regional thematic evaluation consultants will work under the ILO's Regional Monitoring and Evaluation Officer in Bangkok and in consultation with DWT Social Protection specialists.

Annex 2: Case studies

| Country | Evaluator(s) | Date of field work |
|----------|--|--|
| Cambodia | Don Clark | 8-9 June, 2017 |
| India | Mini Thakur | June-July 2017 |
| Lao PDR | Don Clark | Desk based drawing on interviews carried out during DWCP review, March/April 2016; ILO/WHO project evaluation, March/April 2016; and DWCP consultations, Oct 2016/ June 2017 |
| Mongolia | Mel Cousins | Desk based drawing on evaluation of MAPS updated by contact with ILO staff Mongolia in June 2017 |
| Nepal | Mini Thakur | 22 – 26 May 2017 |
| Thailand | Don Clark | Week of 10 July, 2017 |
| Viet Nam | Dr. Huib Huyse, Mini Thakur, Ulrich Eisele | 8 – 12 May 2017 |

Annex 3: People interviewed

| Name | Agency |
|----------------------------|--|
| Pamornrat Pringsulaka | ILO regional office evaluation unit, BKK |
| Raviprapa Srisartsanarat | ILO regional office evaluation unit, BKK |
| Nuno Meira Simoes da Cunha | ILO, Decent Work Technical Support Team, BKK |
| Markus Ruck | ILO, Decent Work Technical Support Team, BKK [formerly New Dehli] |
| Celine Peyron Bista | ILO, Dakar [formerly CTA, BKK] |
| Li Qingyi | ILO, Beijing |
| Bettina Ramirez Lopez | ILO, Cambodia |
| Saad Gilani | ILO, Pakistan |
| André F. Bongestabs | ILO, Timor-Leste |
| Karuna Pal | Programming, Partnerships and Knowledge-sharing Unit , SOCPRO, ILO |
| Vanessa Steinmayer | UNESCAP |
| Tess Bjork | UNESCAP |
| Eduardo Klien | HelpAge |
| Peter Morrison | HelpAge |
| Usa Khiewrord | HelpAge |

Annex 4: Workshop attendance

| Name | Title | Organization |
|-------------------------------|---|-------------------|
| Ms. Panudda Boonpala | Deputy Regional Director | ROAP/ILO |
| Mr. Graeme Buckley | DWT-Bangkok Director and Country Director for Cambodia, Lao PDR and Thailand | DWT-Bangkok/ILO |
| Mr. Nuno Merira Simoes Cunha | Senior Technical Specialist-Social Protection | DWT-Bangkok/ILO |
| Mr. Markus Ruck | Social Protection Specialist | DWT-Bangkok/ILO |
| Ms. Divya Verma | Programme Officer | DWT-New Delhi/ILO |
| Ms. Reiko Tsushima | Chief, Regional Programming Services Unit | ROAP/ILO |
| Ms. Pamornrat Pringsulaka | Regional Monitoring and Evaluation Officer | ROAP/ILO |
| Ms. Margaret Reade Rounds | Regional Programme Analyst | RPS/ROAP/ILO |
| Mr. Jungwoo Hong | Project Manager and Coordinator of ILO-Korea Partnership Programme | ROAP/ILO |
| Ms. Rakawin Leechanavanichpan | Programme Officer (Malaysia and Brunei) | ROAP/ILO |
| Ms. Sara Elder | Head/Senior Economist | RESA/ROAP/ILO |
| Mr. Sho Sudo | Chief Technical Adviser and Overall Coordinator of ILO/Japan Multi-bi Programme | ROAP/ILO |
| Mr. Ippei Tsuruga | Technical Officer/Project Manager of Promoting and Building Social Protection in Asia (3rd Phase): Extending Social Security Coverage in ASEAN (2017) | ROAP/ILO |
| Mr. Tuomo Poutiainen | Head of Quality and Factory Services (Better Work) | ROAP/ILO |
| Ms. Cristina Martinez | Senior Specialist on Environment and Decent Work | DWT-Bangkok/ILO |
| Ms. Raviprapa Srisartsanarat | Monitoring and Evaluation Officer | ROAP/ILO |

| | | |
|------------------------|---|---------------|
| Mr. Don Clarke | Independent Consultant | ILO and ESCAP |
| Ms. Tess Bjork | Social Affairs Officer | UNESCAP |
| Ms. Ruchika Chaudhary | Economist | RESA/ROAP/ILO |
| Ms. Rang Tran | Technical Officer on Institutional Partnership | ROAP/ILO |
| Ms. Jayna Ahuja | Intern | ILO |
| Ms. Vanessa Steinmayer | Population Affairs | UNESCAP |

Annex 5: Documents reviewed

ILO publications

Bali Declaration on Extending Social Protection, 2016

Comparative review of unemployment and employment insurance experiences in Asia and worldwide, 2013

Evaluation Policy, 2017

Policy Guidelines for Evaluation, 2017

Social protection assessment based national dialogue: A good practices guide, 2013

The state of social protection in ASEAN at the dawn of integration, 2015

UNDG Asia-Pacific Social Protection Issues Brief, 2014

Unemployment protection: A good practices guide and training package, 2017

ILO Evaluations

Extending social security in ASEAN (ILO/Japan- ESSA Project) - Mid-term self-evaluation, 2017

Improving social protection and promoting employment, 2013

Independent evaluation of the ILO's Decent Work Country Programme strategies and actions in the Mekong subregion 2012–2017, 2017

Independent evaluation of the ILO's field operations and structure 2010–2016, 2017

Independent evaluation of the ILO's strategy and actions for creating and extending social protection floors, 2012–2017, 2017

Interim Self Evaluation: Administration for ILO-Japan Fund for Building Social Safety Nets for Asia and the Pacific, 2016

Promoting and Building Social Protection and Employment Services for Vulnerable Groups, 2016

Promotion and building unemployment insurance and employment services in ASEAN countries, 2013

Social Protection and Gender in Cambodia, 2012

Stocktaking Report on ILO support to extend the coverage and effectiveness of social security schemes in Asia and the Pacific, (2006-2015), 2016

Strengthening the performance of the social insurance system in Viet Nam through improved legislation and legal framework for social insurance, 2016

Supporting the establishment of the National Health Insurance scheme in Lao PDR and the extension of coverage, 2016

Synthesis review: creating and extending social protection floors, 2017

Towards establishing a Social Protection Floor in Odisha: An Interim-Evaluation Report, 2016

Project documents and reports

ACTION/Portugal – Strengthening the Social Protection Systems of the PALOP and Timor-Leste within the Framework of the Global Flagship Programme on Social Protection Floors

Inclusive Growth, Social Protection and Jobs

Regional UNDG support to Social Protection in Asia and the Pacific

Support to the extension of Social Health Protection in South-East Asia

South-South and triangular cooperation for the implementation of gender sensitive social protection floors at country level

Supporting the implementation of the single window service of the social protection strategy of East Java province

Support to the extension of Social Health Protection in South-East Asia

ASEAN documents

Declaration on strengthening social protection, 2013

Regional framework and action plan to implement the Declaration on strengthening social protection, 2013

External publications

ADB, (2012). *Strengthening Social Protection Systems in Asia and the Pacific*, ADB.

ESCAP (2018). *How to design inclusive social protection systems*, ESCAP

IMF, (2017). *The IMF and Social Protection*, IMF

L. McKellar, (2018). *Evaluation of EU support to social protection in external action 2007-2013*, EU.

J. Mackenzie and S. Hearn (2016). *Impact evaluation for portfolio programmes on policy influence*, ODI.

J. Zhou (2017). *IMF collaboration with partner institutions on social protection*, IMF

Annex 6: CPO Indicators

The indicators established under the ILO Implementation Plan during the period 2012-17 are as follows:

20120-2015: Outcome 4 “More people have access to better managed and more gender equitable social security benefits”.

Ind 4.1: Number of member States that, with ILO support, improve the knowledge and information base on the coverage and performance of their social security system.⁴¹

Ind 4.2: Number of member States that, with ILO support, develop policies improving social security coverage, notably of excluded groups⁴²

Ind 4.3: Number of member States that, with ILO support, improve the legal framework, general and financial management and/or tripartite governance of social security in line with international labour standards⁴³

⁴¹ To be counted as reportable, results must meet the following criteria: Sex-disaggregated information on population coverage and/or expenditure in at least five out of ten categories of benefits (nine identified in Convention No. 102 plus general social assistance income support) is available in the country and publicly accessible through the ILO Social Security Inquiry/database and/or the ILO Internet-based knowledge platform on the extension of social security.

⁴² To be counted as reportable, results must meet all three of the following criteria:

1. A plan to extend social security is developed, as documented either through a white book, the national development plan, legislation, government regulations or the de facto implementation of a social security scheme.
2. The plan specifically addresses the coverage of excluded groups in at least one of the ten categories of benefits.
3. Development of the ILO's policy recommendations to the government includes consultation of employers' and workers' organizations

⁴³ To be counted as reportable, results must meet at least one of the following criteria:

1. Legislation is adopted that seeks to improve the performance, management or governance of a social security scheme or a national system in line with up to date ILO social security Conventions.
2. An actuarial or social budgeting report aiming to enhance the financial viability of the social security scheme is submitted and accepted by a social security scheme or a government agency, after consultation of employers and workers organizations.
3. A body of social security experts, trained under a capacity-building programme established through a memorandum of understanding with the ILO, is employed in social security government agencies, employers and workers organizations or academic institutions dealing with social security.

2016-17: Outcome 3 “Member States implement the Social Protection Floors Recommendation, 2012 (No. 202), and extend Social Protection systems as a means to accelerate poverty reduction, inclusive growth and social justice”.

Indicator 3.1: Member States that have improved their social protection policies and financing strategies, the governance of social protection schemes or the coordination of social protection⁴⁴

Indicator 3.2: Member States that have enhanced their knowledge base, analytical capacity, financial management, statistics or means of information dissemination for the delivery of social protection⁴⁵

Indicator 3.3: Member States that have set up new programmes or improved the existing ones that contribute to extending social protection coverage or improving benefit adequacy⁴⁶

⁴⁴ Reportable results must meet one or more of the following criteria:

1. Government and the social partners agree on a national social protection policy or reform that is in line with international labour standards and promotes gender equality and non-discrimination.
2. Government, in consultation with the social partners, develops or revises legislation, regulations, policies or programmes, to improve the performance, management and governance of a social security scheme.
3. A national coordination mechanism or institution to support national dialogue on social protection is strengthened or operationalized.

⁴⁵ Reportable results must meet one or more of the following criteria:

1. Government endorses or operationalizes a knowledge product (national diagnostic, actuarial valuation or technical report, guide or tool) that improves capacity to deliver or extend gender-responsive social protection.
2. Government designs or updates a delivery mechanism, a statistical database or a monitoring and evaluation system to improve the management of social protection.
3. Social security experts, trained in capacity-building programmes supported by the ILO, are employed in social security government agencies, employers’ or workers’ organizations to deliver social security policies or programmes .

⁴⁶ Reportable results must meet one or more of the following criteria:

1. Government, in consultation with social partners, develops new or revises existing social protection programmes, which can be either contributory or non-contributory, that extend coverage of social protection.
2. Government designs, revises or implements regulations that improve benefit adequacy in contributory and non-contributory social protection programmes..