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# EU-ILO Mainstreaming Employment into Trade and Investment (METI) Programme

## Mid-term evaluation

ILO DC/SYMBOL: GLO/19/12/EUR

Type of Evaluation: Project

Evaluation timing: Mid-term

Evaluation nature: Independent

Project countries: Algeria, Israel, Egypt, Jordan, Lebanon, Libya, Morocco, Occupied Palestinian Territory and Tunisia

P&B Outcome(s): Outcome 3: Economic, social and environmental transitions for full, productive and freely chosen employment and decent work for all

SDG(s): SDG 8 / Target 8.5

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ILO Technical Office(s): Development and Investment Branch (DEVINVEST)

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Key Words: trade, investment and employment, South Mediterranean region, EC

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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# LIST OF ACRONYMS

AFD	Agence Française de Développement
DG NEAR	Directorate-General for Neighbourhood and Enlargement Negotiations
EA	Evaluability assessment
EBRD	European Bank for Reconstruction and Development
EIB	European Investment Bank
HQ	Headquarters
IFI	International financial institutions
ITC	International Trade Center
ITCILO	International Training Centre of the ILO
KfW	Kreditanstalt für Wiederaufbau
METI	Mainstreaming Employment into Trade and Investment in the Southern Neighbourhood
OECD	Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development
PWG	Policy working groups
SME	Small and medium-sized enterprises
STRENGTHEN 2	Employment impact assessment to maximize job creation in Africa
T&I	Trade & investment
TOC	Theory of change
TOR	Terms of reference
ROM	Results oriented monitoring

# LIST OF TABLES AND EXHIBITS

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Exhibit 2: Revised TOC

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Table 3: METI progress vis-à-vis its activities

Table 4: METI budget expenditures by years, Euro

# EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

## Project Background

The “Mainstreaming Employment into Trade and Investment in the Southern Neighbourhood” (METI) with implementation period of September 2020 - August 2024, was launched as an integral part of the “Inclusive Economic Development and Job Creation in the Neighbourhood South” Action funded by the EU and implemented by three partners: ILO, Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD), and International Trade Center (ITC).

The project implementation covers the Southern Mediterranean region including Algeria, Israel,<sup>1</sup> Egypt, Jordan, Lebanon, Libya, Morocco, Occupied Palestinian Territory and Tunisia. The regional dimension of the project includes all the countries, the national dimension is focused on Egypt, Jordan, Morocco, and Tunisia as partner countries. The implementation of the project on its component related to the potential trade and employment effects of infrastructure investment in the Southern Neighbourhood countries is closely coordinated with the EU-funded Employment impact assessment to maximize job creation in Africa (STRENGTHEN 2) project.<sup>2</sup>

## The project objectives

**The development objectives:** Policy makers in the Southern Neighbourhood of the EU incorporate employment issues into trade and investment policies and design and implement trade and investment interventions that ultimately optimise the quality and quantity of employment created in the region.

To achieve its development objectives the project intended to realize the following results:

- **Result 1:** Knowledge on the positive and negative impact of trade and investment policies on productive and decent employment in the Southern Neighbourhood countries is generated, improved, discussed, and disseminated.
- **Result 2:** Capacity of policy makers, social partners, staff in statistical offices and research institutions in partner countries to collect and analyse relevant data, to produce and use evidence on the effects of trade and investment policies on employment and to discuss, design and coordinate policies is improved.
- **Result 3:** Sectoral approaches to the development of export-oriented value chains and industries are implemented in the partner countries to enhance the employment opportunities and to mitigate the employment challenges arising from trade and investment policies.
- **Result 4:** Governments, financial institutions, EU delegations and other relevant stakeholders are informed of and consider the potential trade and employment effects of infrastructure investment in the Southern Neighbourhood countries

For the purpose of the MTE, the evaluation team reconstructed the TOC of the METI project. Given the special focus of the MTE to strengthen the project LogFrame, a new one is proposed in Annex 7 of this report.

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<sup>1</sup> Though for political issues Israel is not engaged in the project implementation and therefore, not covered by this MTE

<sup>2</sup> For further information on the Employment impact assessment to maximize job creation in Africa (STRENGTHEN 2) project, see: <https://www.ilo.org/employment/Whatwedo/Projects/strengthen2/lang--en/index.htm>

## Evaluation purpose and primary use

The **purpose** of this mid-term evaluation is to provide both *accountability* on what has been achieved and *learning* through lessons learned and strategic recommendations for the future programming for its remaining period. The evaluation took place during April – June 2023.

The **primary intended users** of this evaluation include the METI project team at the ILO HQ, regional and country offices, ILO constituencies in each of the four partner countries as well as across the region, the European Commission as the project financing partner, as well as the regional and national institutions concerned with the issues of improved employment through T&I in the Southern Neighbourhood.

## Evaluation methodology

The proposed evaluation methodology used a mix of qualitative and quantitative methods, including *desk review and (individual and group) stakeholder interviews* aligned with the ILO's Evaluation Policy Guidelines.<sup>3</sup> To the extent possible, all categories of project participants were consulted, including ILO staff at HQ, regional and national levels, national stakeholders, independent consultants engaged in the project, donor representatives at HQ and at the EU Delegations in each country where project has national level interventions, OECD and ITC.

The **data** was **analysed** through two compatible strategies:

- *change analysis* to compare the results indicators over time and provide a status of achievement towards results at the time of the evaluation as achieved, partly achieved, or not achieved.
- context-sensitive *contribution analysis* to provide evidence to support **reasonable conclusions about the contribution** made by the project to the desired outcomes based on evaluation criteria.

Evaluation ensured gender-responsiveness throughout its implementation process and analysis, by factoring gender-related considerations during data collection and analysis across each evaluation criteria.

## Evaluation findings

The MTE concluded that after a period of delays due to uncleared issues of project management and adequate division of roles and responsibilities among staff members, the project is back on track and completed most of its activities planned for the current period and progress towards expected outputs and outcomes.

The findings of the evaluation per evaluation criteria are listed below:

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<sup>3</sup> [https://www.ilo.org/wcmsp5/groups/public/---ed\\_mas/---eval/documents/publication/wcms\\_853289.pdf](https://www.ilo.org/wcmsp5/groups/public/---ed_mas/---eval/documents/publication/wcms_853289.pdf)

### ***Relevance and strategic fit***

**Finding # 1:** The project has had a clear logic of intervention from its onset. Though the project initial LogFrame lacks key elements (e.g., SMART<sup>4</sup> indicators for outcomes, baseline, and targets).

**Finding # 2:** The project design and implementation are sufficiently gender sensitive and consider non-discrimination imperative at its current stage of implementation.

**Finding # 3:** The project benefited from the ILO's comparative advantage of tripartism and social dialogue

**Finding # 4:** The Global COVID-19 pandemic caused major delays in the project implementation, revealing at the same time the criticality of the METI strategic focus for more human-centred recovery.

**Finding # 5:** The outcomes as defined in the reconstructed LogFrame of the METI Project remain highly relevant for the final 1,5 years of the project implementation

### ***Coherence***

**Finding # 6:** The project design and outcomes are very much in line with the national development priorities, UNSDCF/UNDAF and EC's specific priorities in the Southern Neighbourhood region and in each partner country specifically. Also, the project demonstrated high relevance to the ILO's Global policy outcomes, the SDGs, and national priorities

**Finding # 7:** The project has put efforts to consider the specifics of each country and different stakeholders in its design, inception and implementation, however, there are missed opportunities for more tailored and effective implementation of the project and need for adjustments for the remaining phase of its implementation

### ***Effectiveness***

**Finding # 8:** The project demonstrated slow progress at its inception and in the early phase of its implementation due to combination of factors (e.g., global pandemic, project management structure). By the time of MTE, the project is fully back on track with its implementation, however, more intensified efforts are required at its regional dimension and within its capacity development component.

**Finding # 9:** There are several major factors that affected project implementation in each partner country to a different degree: global pandemic and shift to remote regime; confused division of roles and responsibilities between some project team members, and miscommunication with some national stakeholders.

**Finding # 10:** There are several factors that contribute to the eventual success of the project: (i) high relevance of the METI project to the national needs and priorities in each partner country, (ii) the reputation of ILO in the partner countries and its capacity to mobilize a wide international expertise, (iii) the space METI created for cross-country, cross-region and cross-stakeholder knowledge exchange, and (iv) the multi-stakeholder and highly diverse PWGs in each partner country.

**Finding # 11:** No unplanned effects (negative or positive) were found during the evaluation.

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<sup>4</sup> SMART – specific, measurable, achievable, relevant and time-bound



**Finding # 12:** METI project produced high quality knowledge products

**Finding # 13:** The project implementation demonstrated constant consideration of the imperative to ensure engagement of social partners throughout all its activities

**Finding # 14:** The project demonstrated sufficiently strong focus on gender equality, non-discrimination in its activities and its products.

### ***Efficiency***

**Finding # 15:** The budget implementation demonstrates no significant deviations, except some savings accumulated due to the restriction of travel in pandemic period and staff changes in the ILO Cairo office

**Finding # 16:** Country presence is a critical success factor for the METI to ensure effective communication, coordination, and trust with the national stakeholders.

**Finding # 17:** As part of a larger envelope of EU-funded programme, METI project established high-level collaboration with OECD and ITC, though at the operational level there are hardly any avenues for the three interventions to coordinate their efforts

### ***Impact orientation and sustainability***

**Finding # 18:** The early indications of impact within the METI project (such as e.g., knowledge created, tools provided, discussion platforms established, etc.) suggests strong potential. However, to realize that potential there are efforts required (i) to intensify communication with national and regional stakeholders, (ii) strengthen capacity development component of the project, and (iii) revise the project management arrangement for stronger on-ground presence in the target countries.

**Finding # 19:** Effective and proactive communication with national and regional stakeholders required further reinforcement from the METI team.

**Finding # 20:** While all products within METI are highly relevant and useful for the national stakeholder, the strongest precondition for their sustainability and long-term utilization is the capabilities of the national stakeholders. This requires stronger focus within the remaining period of the METI project.

**Finding # 21:** There is no exit and sustainability strategy developed within METI project yet

## **Conclusion**

The METI project has dual aspects: on one hand, the quality of its deliverables and the need and relevance of them perceived by the national stakeholders is very high; on the other, the project was significantly delayed due to global pandemic and there is still a strong need to intensify the communication and relationships with the national stakeholders. Besides, the capacity development component of the project, if strengthened, has a great potential for creating critical precondition for lasting impact in each partner country and for the whole region.

By the time of MTE, the METI project has created a critical momentum that needs to be preserved and amplified through more intensified communication and upfront planning with the national stakeholders; stronger efforts for capacity developments at regional and national levels; and intensified policy dialogues in the partner countries, creating a model to follow for the other countries in the region. Critical revision of the METI management structure and its

regional presence could unlock larger potential for stakeholders' engagement and ease pathway towards more policy coherence between employment and T&I in each partner country.

It remains important to put all necessary efforts to successfully accomplish the METI project and ensure its continuation with another round of METI with explicit focus on the implementation of the recommendations developed within this project.

## Lessons learned

Lessons learned 1: Cultural and institutional context play critical role in project performance. Building effective personal relationships and trust with people lead to success of the project performance.

Lessons learned 2: Results of the project studies/assessments could be owned and internalized by the national stakeholders if those studies were produced in a highly consultative manner and with due validation of the findings

## Good practices

Good practice 1: PWG in the partner countries as a viable and much needed inter-agency coordination mechanism to explore the nexus between employment and T&I

Good practice 2: Effective working relationships between ILO, OECD, and ITC that ensure the opportunity to mobilize critical expertise on employment, investment, and trade respectively

Good practice 3: Evidence-driven policy discussion and recommendation to enhance policy coherence in the partner countries.

## List of all recommendations

1. Consider using the MTE proposed project LogFrame with strengthened focus on capacity development component of the project. Additionally, ensure there is a monitoring plan in place aligned with the new LogFrame.
2. Revisit the composition of each PWG based on the emerging needs to ensure all relevant stakeholders are included.
3. Ensure that any assessment at the national level is carried out with intensive consultations with national stakeholders, followed with formal validation of the findings as the basis for policy dialogue and recommendations.
4. Ensure stronger focus on the capacity development component. More specifically:
  - a. to organize training courses on ITC tools used within METI to allow its institutionalization.
  - b. to organize on-job training during value chain assessment (for experts nominated by the Ministries and selected through national/ILO joint selection committees in each partner country). When relevant, consider expanding these efforts towards non-partner countries, meaning, the countries engaged in regional knowledge sharing within METI.

- c. to intensify regional knowledge sharing events within four partner countries and within all countries of the METI project. For cost-effectiveness, consider regional venues of the events (e.g., PWGs meeting in one of the four partner countries).
  - d. to keep the discussion at the PWG level on-going inter alia by providing some predictability of the PWG activities and METI project activities on an annual basis, intensifying communication with national stakeholders, creating space for cross-country PWG interaction and learning.
  - e. to intensify activities with PWGs as multi-stakeholder platform in each partner country (i) to facilitate policy dialogues, (ii) to foster high-level coordination with a wide range of donors and external collaborators, and (iii) to create synergies across various on-going efforts in the country beyond METI project.
5. Strengthen coordination between ILO, OECD, and ITC at the product level by creating a joint digital gateway for trade, investment and employment resources in the South Mediterranean Region including inter alia Euromed Trade Helpdesk, all the studies from METI, OECD, etc.
  6. When organizing national or regional events consider minimizing logistical and financial impediments for participants (e.g., travel between Casablanca and Rabat)
  7. Consider 3-6 month no-cost extension to factor and effectively implement additional capacity development and policy dialogue efforts within the project
  8. Consider cost-sharing arrangements with the ILO project offices in Jordan, Tunisia, and Morocco to stimulate more effective project continuation over its remaining period
  9. Consult with the ILO Senior Risk Officer to strengthen the METI risk lenses, contributing thereby to its effective implementation
  10. Confidently explore the options for the potential second phase of the METI with the focus on implementation of policy recommendations developed within METI project as there is a strong support from all national counterparts.

# 1. PROJECT BACKGROUND

This section provides an overview of the project context, its logical model, budget, its management, and reporting. It also explains in brief the main events and milestones reached.

## 1.1 Project context

The Southern Mediterranean countries have all embarked – to varying degrees – on economic reform and trade liberalization programmes with the aim of promoting trade, attracting foreign direct investment (FDI), and enhancing economic growth. However, as data indicates, the openness to trade and investment has not adequately stimulated labour demand or created jobs for disadvantaged groups or brought substantial productivity increase and improvements in working conditions in the Southern Mediterranean countries. While the region struggles with diverse political, social, and economic conditions, employment remains among the main challenges.

Joblessness and informal work over the last decade remain high in the region, while unemployment rates among youth people and women are two to three times higher than the overall unemployment rates. The young people remain inadequately prepared to enter labour market as because of the weak education systems, skills mismatches, as well as inexistent or ineffective labour-market information systems in the region. Women hardly participate in labour market with 75 per cent of working-age women remaining outside the labour force.<sup>5</sup>

In the context where trade and investment policies are designed largely independently from employment policies in the Southern Mediterranean region, there is a dire need to creating space for more efforts to align these processes.

The project is designed to better enable policymakers in Middle East and North Africa (MENA) to incorporate an employment perspective into trade and investment policies. The programme is funded by the European Union through the European Fund for Sustainable Development + (EFSD+)<sup>6</sup> functioning under Directorate-General for Neighbourhood and Enlargement Negotiations (DG NEAR).<sup>7</sup> METI is hosted by the DEVINVEST branch of the ILO's Employment Policy Department and implemented across nine programme countries, i.e., Algeria, Egypt, Israel, Jordan, Lebanon, Libya, Morocco, Occupied Palestinian Territory and Tunisia. The programme is implemented at the regional level with the purpose to share knowledge, lessons, and good practices and at the national level with more focused interventions in Egypt, Jordan, Morocco, and Tunisia as partner countries. This programme is an integral part of the "Inclusive Economic Development and Job Creation in the Neighbourhood South" Action funded by the EU and implemented by three partners: ILO, Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD), and International Trade Center (ITC).

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<sup>5</sup> Data is taken from the project Action document.

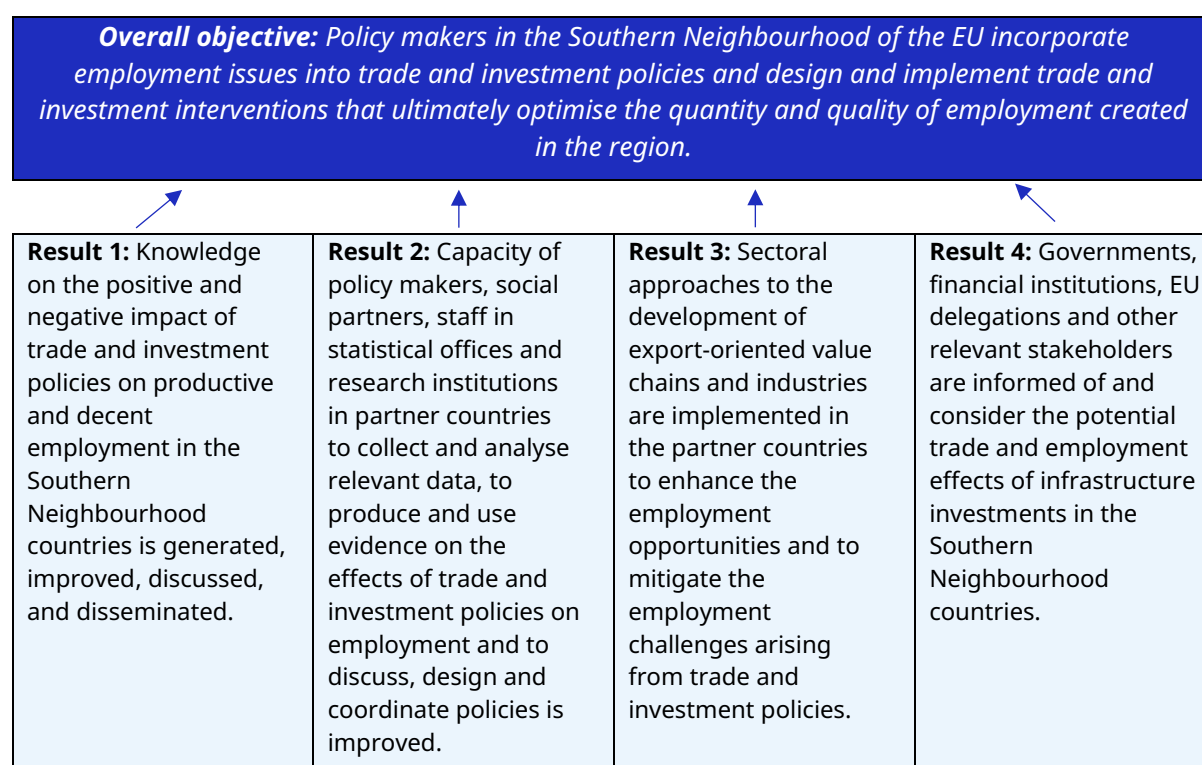
<sup>6</sup> <https://eur-lex.europa.eu/EN/legal-content/glossary/european-fund-for-sustainable-development.html#:~:text=The%20European%20Fund%20for%20Sustainable,neighbourhood%20and%20in%20African%20countries.>

<sup>7</sup> [https://commission.europa.eu/about-european-commission/departments-and-executive-agencies/european-neighbourhood-and-enlargement-negotiations\\_en#:~:text=The%20mission%20of%20the%20Directorate,EU%27s%20Neighbourhood%20and%20Enlargement%20policies.](https://commission.europa.eu/about-european-commission/departments-and-executive-agencies/european-neighbourhood-and-enlargement-negotiations_en#:~:text=The%20mission%20of%20the%20Directorate,EU%27s%20Neighbourhood%20and%20Enlargement%20policies.)

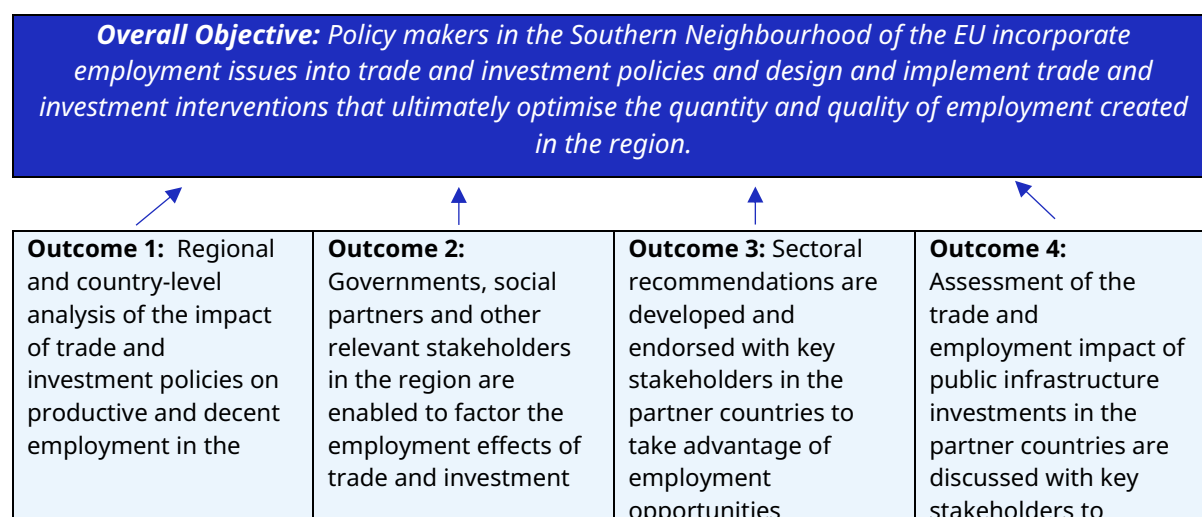
## 1.2 Project logical model

The METI project is designed to address critical link between employment and trade and investment in the Southern Mediterranean region with the focus to create knowledge and build capacities of national stakeholders as precondition for effective employment creation in the region. The initial TOC of the project is presented in Exhibit 1 below. After the evaluability assessment (EA) that took place in June 2022, the METI team embarked on the process of revision of the project TOC and the LogFrame. Exhibit 2 illustrates the TOC revised by the METI team but not finalized and not approved yet by the time of the MTE.

**Exhibit 1: Initial TOC**



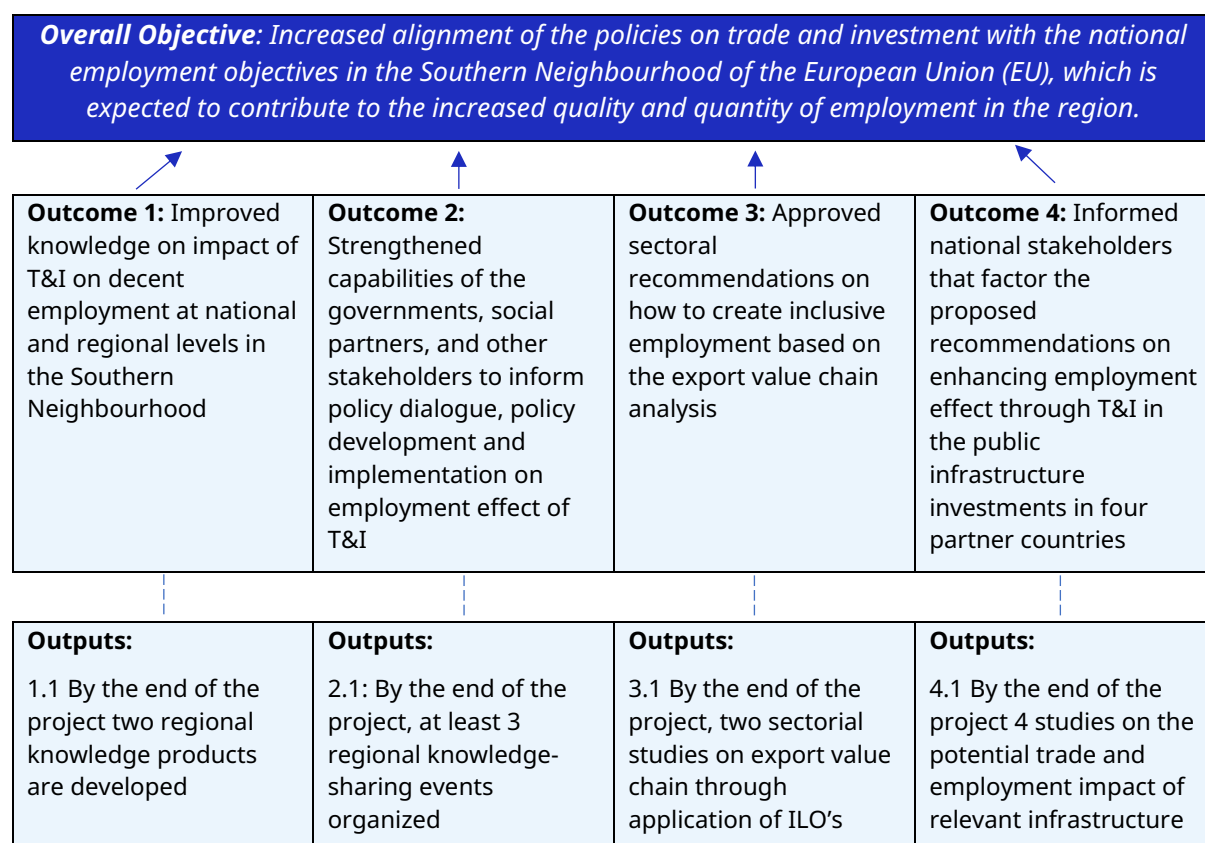
**Exhibit 2: Revised TOC**



partner countries is strengthen.	into policy dialogue and coordination.	resulting from trade and investment policies.	optimize employment creation.
<b>Output 1:</b> Knowledge on the positive and negative impact of trade and investment policies on productive and decent employment in the Southern Neighbourhood countries is generated, improved, discussed, and disseminated	<b>Output 2:</b> Capacity of policy makers, social partners, staff in statistical offices and research institutions in partner countries to collect and analyse relevant data, to produce and use evidence on the effects of trade and investment policies on employment and to discuss, design and coordinate policies is improved	<b>Output 3:</b> Sectoral approaches to the development of export-oriented value chains and industries are implemented in the partner countries to enhance the employment opportunities and to mitigate the employment challenges arising from trade and investment policies	<b>Output 4:</b> Governments, financial institutions, EU delegations and other relevant stakeholders are informed of and consider the potential trade and employment effects of infrastructure investments in the Southern Neighbourhood countries

Given the interest of the EC on a potential result-oriented monitoring (ROM) exercise, the MTE was given a stronger than usual focus on revising the TOC and the LogFrame of the project. The reconstructed TOC which serves as the basis for this MTE is presented in Exhibit 3 below. The updated LogFrame proposed by the MTE is provided in Annex 7.

**Exhibit 3: Reconstructed TOC**



1.2: By the end of the project 8 national knowledge products developed 1.3 By the end of the project regular outreach and dissemination of knowledge products is organized	2.2 By the end of the project, 2 training courses for policy makers, social partners and other stakeholders at national level are organized 2.3: One new platform for national policy dialogue on the impact of T&I policies on employment is established in each partner country 2.4 By the end of the project, at least 4 policy dialogues are organized in partner countries	coordinated TRAVERA/STED methods are organized in each partner country 3.2 By the end of the project, at least 4 recommendations on improvement of value chain are developed in each partner country	investments are organized in four partner countries. 4.2 By the end of the project one validation meeting of each study is organized with policy and decision makers, social partners, and other relevant stakeholders. 4.3 By the end of the project key indicators/markets on employment for using in funding public infrastructure projects in the region are developed
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## 1.3 Project budget

The overall budget of the project is EUR 4,492,414. The budget categories are explained in Table 1 below. The original budget is developed in EURO and ILO provides financial reporting to EU in Euro, while keeps its internal reporting in USD.

**Table 1: Initial project budget, Euro**

Budget categories	Amount / EURO
1. Human Resources	2,724,788
2. Travel	75,137
3. Equipment and Supplies	6,000
4. Local office	36,432
5. Other costs, services	1,356,161
Subtotal direct eligible costs	4,198,517
6. Indirect costs (7% of sub-total of direct eligible costs of the project)	293,896
7. Total eligible costs of the project	4,492,414
8. Total accepted costs of the project	4,492,414

## 1.4 Project main events and milestones

The project implementation covered various dimensions under the project outcomes, however, the main milestones and events might be summarized as follows:

- Under Outcome 1: several knowledge products were developed. More specifically, the comprehensive Regional Thematic report was published in 2022 and widely disseminated in the partner countries, across the region, and beyond. Four country reports were developed with the focus on each partner country, i.e., Tunisia, Morocco, Egypt, Jordan.
- Under Outcome 2: efforts were made to build capacities of national stakeholders. More specifically, (i) the regional knowledge sharing workshop was organized on 14-16 March 2023 at the ITCILO premises in Turin, (ii) the regional technical training was organized on 31 October – 4 November 2022, (iii) national Policy Working Groups (PWGs) are established in each partner country and met few times: in Egypt in June 2022 and May 2023; in Tunisia in December 2021 and January 2022, in Morocco in March 2022 and February 2023, and in Jordan in June and August 2022 and in January 2023.
- Under Outcome 3: efforts were made to initiate value chain assessment of the selected tradable sectors/sub-sectors in the partner countries. More specifically, the selection of sectors/sub-sectors in each partner countries have been finalized in a highly consultative process. The international consultant is hired to support the value chain assessment.
- Under Outcome 4: efforts were made to prepare for the assessment on the potential trade and employment impact of relevant infrastructure investments in the four partner countries. More specifically, with direct support from the EU-funded Employment impact assessment to maximize job creation in Africa ILO STRENGTHEN 2 project and in coordination with the donor, the METI team has identified 12 projects co-funded by the EU through IFIs (EBRD, EIB KfW, and AFD) for the assessment.

## 1.5 Project management and reporting

The project is financially centralized at the ILO's HQ within the DEVINVEST department, while its management is partially decentralized, namely, management of the regional component and the strategic guidance of the project is managed from the HQ, while the implementation of the national level component of the project is shared between HQ (for Jordan) and the team based in CO-Cairo (for Egypt, Morocco, and Tunisia). Exhibit 4 below provides the project organigram.

The project implementation for outcome 4 is closely coordinated with the ILO the EU-funded Employment impact assessment to maximize job creation in Africa (STRENGTHEN 2) project.<sup>8</sup> As an integral part of the EU-funded "Inclusive Economic Development and Job Creation in the Neighbourhood South" Action, the project cooperates closely with the OECD and ITC. A "Joint Steering Committee EU Trade and Investment Package" is established between ILO, ITC, and OECD, organized by the EU on an annual basis to discuss and approve work plans, assess progress, and provide recommendations for the project implementation.

The project provides annual narrative and financial report, starting from the inception report followed the first six months after the project inception.

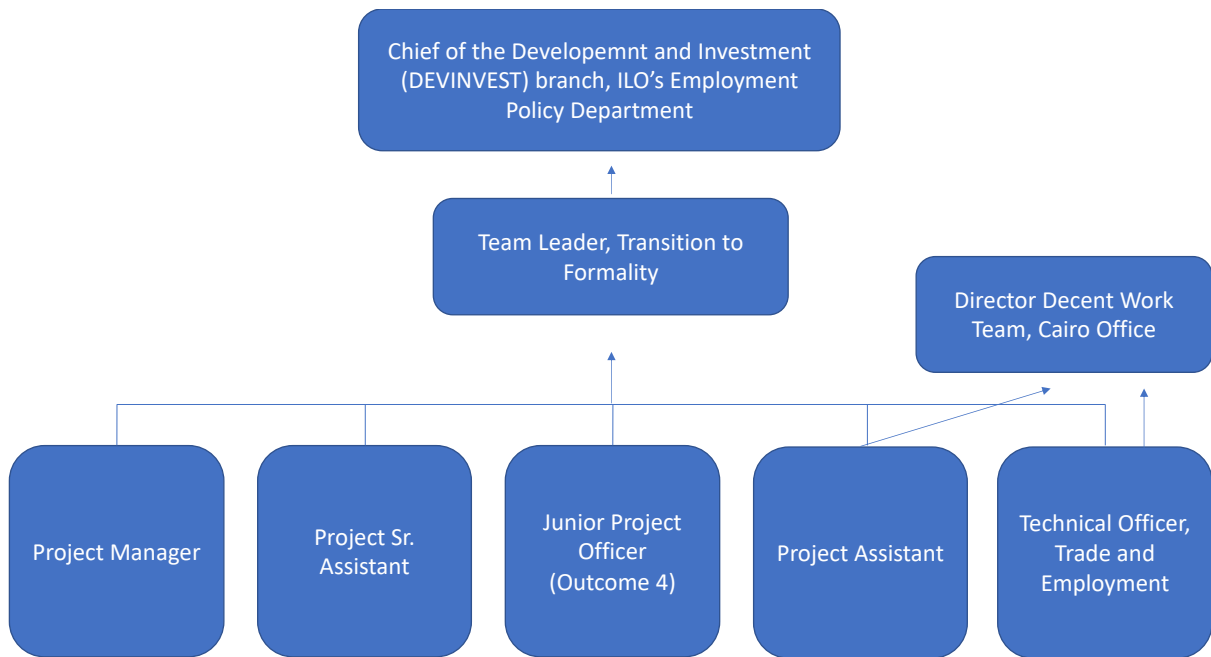
There is a specific of ILO project composition and administrative divisions between the HQ and regions. Project has its line of communication and oversight. The Director of DW team in Cairo is part of the ILO administrative hierarchy and by that provides (though largely nominal) oversight function over Project assistant and technical officer.

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<sup>8</sup> For further information on the Employment impact assessment to maximize job creation in Africa (STRENGTHEN 2) project, see: <https://www.ilo.org/employment/Whatwedo/Projects/strengthen2/lang--en/index.htm>



**Exhibit 4: Project organigram**



## 2. EVALUATION BACKGROUND

This section provides an overview of the evaluation purpose, objectives and scope and discuss the primary users of this evaluation.

### 2.1 Purpose, objectives, and scope

The **purpose** of this mid-term evaluation is twofold: (i) to provide a systematic and evidence-based review of the progress made towards the realization of the project results; and (ii) provide strategic recommendations for the remaining period of the project implementation as well as the similar future programming and planning in the project beneficiary countries and beyond. The evaluation is guided by the OECD DAC evaluation criteria<sup>9</sup> and includes the following: *relevance and validity of design, coherence, effectiveness, efficiency, impact orientation and sustainability* of the project.

The **evaluation scope** is further defined by the following:

- **Period covered:** September 2020 – August 2023
- **Geography:** The Southern Neighbourhood region of the EU including Algeria, Egypt, Jordan, Lebanon, Libya, Morocco, Occupied Palestinian Territory, Tunisia, and Israel (though for political issues Israel is not engaged in the project implementation and therefore, not covered by this MTE).
- **Programmatic focus:** across the whole scope of the project

### 2.2 Primary users

The **primary intended users** of this evaluation include the following:

- METI project team at the ILO HQ, regional and country offices.
- ILO constituencies in each of the four partner countries as well as across the region
- The European Commission as the project financing partner
- Regional and national institutions concerned with the issues of improved employment through T&I in the Southern Mediterranean.

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<sup>9</sup> <https://www.oecd.org/dac/evaluation/daccriteriaforevaluatingdevelopmentassistance.htm>

### 3. METHODOLOGY

This section provides an overview of the evaluation approach and evaluation criteria, methods for data collection and analysis, stakeholder participation, limitations, and risks as well as evaluation norms, standards, and ethics.

#### 3.1 Evaluation team set-up

The evaluation team consists of the International Team Leader (female) and two National Consultants (male and female) based in the region. The National consultants are based in Egypt and Algeria respectively. Each evaluation team member has extensive expertise in evaluation, strong knowledge of the region and each partner country specifically.

#### 3.2 Methodological approach, evaluation criteria and questions

The **methodological approach** towards this evaluation is explained by the following three perspectives:

- *Results-based Approach (i.e., Theory of Change (TOC) Approach)* – to explore non-linear cause and effect relationships throughout the activities-output-outcome-impact results chain.
- *System-based Approach* – to understand the complexity of the project interventions as a system with its elements, i.e., the relationships, interactions, and context of the key stakeholders working together towards common development results. This approach helps explaining linkages missed by the TOC.
- *Participatory Approach* – to ensure meaningful engagement of various stakeholders to ensure the evaluation is conducted in a consultative and transparent manner.

In accordance with the ILO policy guidelines for results-based evaluation (4<sup>th</sup> edition), OECD DAC evaluation criteria and TOR, the following **evaluation criteria** were applied: *relevance and strategic fit, validity of design, coherence, effectiveness, efficiency, and impact orientation and sustainability.*

**Table 2: Evaluation questions**

Evaluation criteria	Evaluation question
Relevance and validity of design	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Are the project’s strategic elements (objectives, outputs, implementations strategies, targets, and indicators) achievable? Is the intervention logic realistic? If not, why? And what should be done differently?</li> <li>2. To what extent does the design of the project consider gender, non-discrimination, and inclusion, especially of persons with disabilities (PWDs)?</li> <li>3. Has the project been able to leverage the ILO contributions, through its comparative advantages (including tripartism, international labour standards, etc.)?</li> </ol>

	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>4. To what extent the project design allowed to respond to emerging needs due to the COVID-19 pandemic? Are adaptations in the project needed to support a human-centred recovery?</li> <li>5. To what extent the project has incorporated the recommendations and results of the evaluability assessment report into the project's design and implementation?</li> <li>6. Are the objectives/outputs planned for the final years of implementation of the project still relevant?</li> </ol>
Coherence	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Does METI's design effectively address the national development priorities, UNSDCF/UNDAF, and donor's specific priorities and concerns in the 9 countries?</li> <li>2. Has the specific context of each country and the interests of different stakeholders and final beneficiaries been sufficiently considered in the design and implementation of the project?</li> <li>3. How does the project fit within the ILO's Global Policy Outcomes, the SDGs, and relevant targets, especially those identified as priority in the national development strategies?</li> </ol>
Effectiveness	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. To what extent have the overall project objectives and expected outputs, qualitatively and quantitatively been achieved? Will the project be likely to achieve its medium and long-term outcomes by the end of the project?</li> <li>2. Are there any external factors that hindered (e.g., COVID-19 affect of crisis situations, changes in government's priorities) or facilitated the achievement of the project outcomes?</li> <li>3. Were there any unplanned effects (negative or positive)?</li> <li>4. Which have been the main contributing and challenging factors towards project's success in attaining its targets?</li> <li>5. What is the assessment regarding the quality of the project outputs?</li> <li>6. To which extent have the social partners been involved in the implementation of the project?</li> <li>7. To what extent did the project address gender equality, non-discrimination and inclusion of people living with disabilities in its activities and its products?</li> </ol>
Efficiency	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. What evidence is there of cost-effectiveness in the project's implementation and management?</li> <li>2. How effective are the project management arrangements? Is the project able to leverage expertise in the field, particularly in those countries where the project does not have permanent presence?</li> <li>3. Have project's funds and outputs been used and delivered in a timely manner? What are the time and cost efficiency measures that could be introduced to improve the achievement of results?</li> <li>4. What are the partnership arrangements in the implementation of the project at national and regional levels? What are the challenges in the formulation of these partnerships? What are the results of these partnership and how to improve them?</li> </ol>
Impact orientation	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. What are the elements of the project that are not likely to be achieved or sustained?</li> <li>2. What are the noteworthy, good practices and lessons learned?</li> </ol>

	What are the areas for further reinforcement of the project achievements?
Sustainability	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. To what extent are the results of the intervention likely to have a long term, sustainable positive contribution to the relevant SDGs and targets (explicitly or implicitly)?</li> <li>2. How has ownership and sustainability been addressed?</li> <li>3. Has the project developed and implemented any exit strategy?</li> <li>4. What are the immediate actions/interventions by the ILO and donor to ensure that the achievements of the project can be met and sustained?</li> </ol>

### 3.3 Methods for data collection and analysis

The evaluation applied a combination of qualitative and quantitative **methods for data collection** such as *desk review, stakeholder interviews, and case studies* in the partner countries *i.e., Egypt, Jordan, Tunisia, and Morocco*. The team of national consultants visited each partner country to collect data on the project performance. In total 51 people were interviewed (18 women and 33 men) and in-depth analysis of the project performance in each partner countries carried out. The purpose of the latter was to explore what worked and what did not during the project implementation, lessons learned and good practices, stakeholders' perception of the project, their understanding of the results achieved, and the level of ownership over the project results, etc. The *triangulation principle* of utilizing multiple sources for data and methods was applied to validate evaluation findings. Attention was paid to the strategies employed for the project communication and visibility purposes.

To ensure logical coherence and completeness of the **data analysis**, two compatible strategies of analysis will be used:

- *change analysis* to compare the results indicators over time and against targets as defined in the LogFrame. It will provide a status of achievement towards results at the time of the evaluation as achieved, partly achieved, or not achieved.
- context-sensitive *contribution analysis* to explore cause-effect assumptions and conclude about the contribution the programme has made or not to both intended and unintended outcomes. The focus of the contribution analysis will be not to quantify the degree to which the project has contributed to the outcomes but to provide evidence to support **reasonable conclusions about the contribution** made by the programme to the desired outcomes.

Evaluation also strived to gender balance during data collection phase. The evaluation was conducted in a gender and culturally sensitive manner and with due respect to human rights (HR) and gender equality (GE) principles utilizing the *ILO Guidance Note 3.1: Integrating gender equality in monitoring and evaluation*<sup>10</sup> that provides recommendations on how to ensure gender-responsive evaluation.

The gender lenses in this MTE evaluation will be explored vis-à-vis the following:

- (i) *How results are analysed*, e.g. with the focus on how the crosscutting issues of social dialogue and tripartism are addressed throughout the project implementation; how the interventions advance the rights of the target groups and particularly youth, women and people with disabilities; how the social, historical, economic, and

<sup>10</sup> [https://www.ilo.org/wcmsp5/groups/public/---ed\\_mas/---eval/documents/publication/wcms\\_165986.pdf](https://www.ilo.org/wcmsp5/groups/public/---ed_mas/---eval/documents/publication/wcms_165986.pdf)

political context could be understood from the perspective of gender equality and human rights; how the gender equality and human rights accountability mechanisms are promoted in compliance with national and international standards, etc.

- (ii) *How the evaluation process is approached, e.g., to ensure adequate representation of men and women in all stages of the evaluation.*

More specifically, (i) the major publications of the report were analysed to ensure they were sufficiently gender sensitive, (ii) the main events that took place during the project (e.g. PWG composition, regional and national training, dissemination events, etc.) were analysed to check if sufficient attention was paid to gender balance of participants and that the information presented was sufficiently gender sensitive, (iv) the evaluation team attempted to create gender balance during data collection phase as much as it was possible given the composition of the staff of the national authorities from the partner countries, (v) the evaluation team attempted to ensure all findings, lessons learned, good practices and recommendations were sufficiently tuned and adherent to gender mainstreaming principles.

Annex 3 provides the Evaluation Matrix that guided data collection.

## 3.4 Stakeholders consulted

The Ministries responsible for Trade and Investment, Labour, Economic Affairs, Planning, and other relevant line Ministries; staff in National Statistical Agencies; representatives from Trade Unions and Employers' Organizations; private sector representatives; technical specialists from National and Regional Institutions and development practitioners. Also, the key stakeholders include the ILO HQ, regional and country offices; DG NEAR and EU Delegations in all target countries; the ITC and OECD; as well as UN RCOs in all target countries and representatives of relevant programming in the region. Annex 1 provides the list of key stakeholders interviewed for MTE.

## 3.5 Limitations and risks

There are few limitations and risks that impacted of this MTE evaluation:

- **Resource limitation:** The time allocated for the MTE is limited and therefore, only targeted interventions were organized to collect data, ensure triangulation, and deliver quality results. Due to limited budget allocated for the MTE 2-days country trips were organized by the NCs only, while all regional consultations were held on-line.
- **Measurement and sampling limitations:** The inability to collect a random representative sample of respondents influenced the assessment design. The evaluation employed non-random availability sampling keeping strong eye on ensuring proportional representation of the ILO tripartite constituents, i.e., government, workers', and employer's organizations as well as private sector organizations. This bias was further reduced through triangulation of data, i.e., collecting data from different sources and methods (i.e., interviews, group meetings).
- **Language barriers in the region:** The evaluation team ensured that the national consultants are fluent in Arabic, French and English. While the Lead Evaluator is fluent in English, the National Evaluators are fluent in Arabic (for Jordan and Egypt) and both French and Arabic (for Morocco and Tunisia) besides English. Therefore, this risk was fully managed within the evaluation.

- **General limitation during data collection:** the evaluation remained vigilant to the following biases: (a) Confirmation bias, i.e. tendency to seek out evidence that is consistent with the expected effects; (b) Empathy bias, i.e. tendency to create a friendly (empathetic) atmosphere during data collection with the consequence of creating overoptimistic statements over project; (c) Strategies that could be used by respondents on self-censor (reluctance of respondents to freely express themselves) or purposely distorted statements to attract evaluation conclusions closer to their views; (d) Reliance on qualitative data largely, which is to be validated through triangulation.
- **The presence of baseline and end-line data as well as project monitoring data:** The poor quality of the initial LogFrame and the absence of monitoring plan affected the availability of project performance data. To mitigate the risk, additional data mining was carried out by the evaluation team to ensure adequate information is collected to describe and analyse the project performance.

## 3.6 Evaluation norms, standards, and ethics

The evaluation was managed in accordance with the evaluation norms and standards in line with the UN Evaluation Standards and Norms<sup>11</sup> as well as the ILO EVAL Evaluation Guidelines<sup>12</sup> and ILO/EVAL checklists.<sup>13</sup> The evaluation integrated gender equality and non-discrimination, international labour standards, social dialogue, as crosscutting themes throughout its design, implementation process and in its deliverables in line with the EVAL guidance note 3.1 on gender<sup>14</sup> and guidance note 3.2 on ILO's normative and tripartite mandate.<sup>15</sup>

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<sup>11</sup> <http://www.unevaluation.org/document/detail/1914>

<sup>12</sup> [https://www.ilo.org/wcmsp5/groups/public/---ed\\_mas/---eval/documents/publication/wcms\\_853289.pdf](https://www.ilo.org/wcmsp5/groups/public/---ed_mas/---eval/documents/publication/wcms_853289.pdf) and [https://www.ilo.org/wcmsp5/groups/public/---ed\\_mas/---eval/documents/publication/wcms\\_746722.pdf](https://www.ilo.org/wcmsp5/groups/public/---ed_mas/---eval/documents/publication/wcms_746722.pdf) and

<sup>13</sup> [https://www.ilo.org/wcmsp5/groups/public/---ed\\_mas/---eval/documents/publication/wcms\\_178440.pdf](https://www.ilo.org/wcmsp5/groups/public/---ed_mas/---eval/documents/publication/wcms_178440.pdf)

<sup>14</sup> [https://www.ilo.org/wcmsp5/groups/public/@ed\\_mas/@eval/documents/publication/wcms\\_165986.pdf](https://www.ilo.org/wcmsp5/groups/public/@ed_mas/@eval/documents/publication/wcms_165986.pdf)

<sup>15</sup> [https://www.ilo.org/wcmsp5/groups/public/---ed\\_mas/---eval/documents/publication/wcms\\_721381.pdf](https://www.ilo.org/wcmsp5/groups/public/---ed_mas/---eval/documents/publication/wcms_721381.pdf)

## 4. MAIN FINDINGS

This section provides the evaluation findings through change analysis and contribution analysis based on OECD DAC evaluation criteria.

### 4.1 Key findings: project progress

The focus of *change analysis* is to compare the results indicators over time and against targets as defined in the LogFrame. It will provide a status of achievement towards results at the time of the evaluation as completed, partly completed, or not achieved. However, given the degree of uncertainty around *initial* LogFrame, the change analysis of the MTE is focused on comparing the activities declared in the initial LogFrame and actually implemented in the METI project as provided in Table 3 below.

**Table 3: METI progress vis-à-vis its activities**

Activities	Progress till May 2023	Completion rate
<b>Output 1: Knowledge on the positive and negative impact of trade and investment policies on productive and decent employment in the Southern Neighbourhood countries is generated, improved, discussed, and disseminated</b>		
Activity 1.1 Commission, publish and disseminate one Thematic Report on key issues in relation to the impact of trade and investment policies on productive and decent employment in the Southern Neighbourhood.	The Regional Thematic report was published in 2022 and widely disseminated in the partner countries, across the region, and beyond	Completed
Activity 1.2: Commission, publish and disseminate Country Reports and Policy Briefs on the impact of trade and investment policies on productive and decent employment in countries of the Southern Neighbourhood.	The country reports and policy briefs are under development (CR Egypt, Morocco, Tunisia, and Jordan completed)	Completed
Activity 1.3: Draft, publish and disseminate a Policy Resource Guide of lessons learnt from the METI project on how to align trade and investment policies with national employment objectives in the Southern Neighbourhood.	Policy Resource Guide	Not started
<b>Output 2: Capacity of policy makers, social partners, staff in statistical offices and research institutions in partner countries to collect and analyse relevant data, to produce and use evidence on the effects of trade and investment policies on employment and to discuss, design and coordinate policies is improved</b>		
Activity 2.2: Organize regional knowledge sharing workshops and strategic training on the impact of trade and investment policies on productive and decent employment for government	The regional knowledge sharing workshop was organized on 14-16 March 2023 at the ITCILO premises in Turin / hybrid event with 29	Partially completed



officials, social partners, and representatives of other organizations.	face-to-face participants and 12 online	
Activity 2.2: Organize regional technical training for specialists from relevant government departments, statistical agencies, research organizations and other national and regional institutions on assessing the effects of trade and investment policies on employment.	Regional technical training was organized on 31 October – 4 November 2022. Hybrid event	Partially completed
Activity 2.3: Establish a Policy Working Group (PWG) in four partner countries and conduct PWG meetings within an existing or a new platform for national policy dialogue on the impact of trade and investment policies on employment.	PWGs in all four partner countries are established	Completed
<b>Output 3: Sectoral approaches to the development of export-oriented value chains and industries are implemented in the partner countries to enhance the employment opportunities and to mitigate the employment challenges arising from trade and investment policies</b>		
Activity 3.1: Implement the ILO's TRAVERA (Trade and Value Chains in Employment-Rich Activities) approach in four partner countries to raise productive employment and mitigate unproductive employment.	The process initiated to conduct a coordinated TRAVERA/STED assessment and international consultant is hired	Partially completed
Activity 3.2: Conduct studies using the ILO's STED (Skills for Trade and Economic Diversification) methodology to identify current skills gaps for the development of selected export value chains of four partner countries.	The process initiated to conduct a coordinated TRAVERA/STED assessment and international consultant is hired	Partially completed
<b>Output 4: Governments, financial institutions, EU delegations and other relevant stakeholders are informed of and consider the potential trade and employment effects of infrastructure investments in the Southern Neighbourhood countries</b>		
Activity 4.1: Conduct studies on the potential trade and employment impact of relevant infrastructure investments in four partner countries.	The process is initiated and 12 projects co-funded by the EU through IFIs (EBRD, EIB, KfW, and AFD) are identified	Partially completed
Activity 4.2: Organize validation meetings of the studies with policy and decision makers, social partners, and other relevant stakeholders.	The process is initiated and 12 projects co-funded by the EU through IFIs (EBRD, EIB, KfW, and	Partially completed

The table above allows concluding that the METI project is on track to accomplish the activities identified in the initial LogFrame within the project timeline. However, more nuanced contribution analysis along evaluation criteria allows revealing additional specifics of the project implementation discussed in the sub-section below.

## 4.2 Key findings per evaluation criteria

The focus of context-sensitive *contribution analysis* is to explore cause-effect assumptions and conclude about the contribution the project has made or not to both intended and unintended outcomes. The focus of the contribution analysis is on the project performance along the evaluation criteria.

### 4.2.1 Relevance and validity of design

**Finding # 1: The project has a clear logic of intervention from its onset. Though the project initial LogFrame lacks key elements (e.g., SMART indicators for outcomes, baseline, and targets).**

The validity of the project design should be approached from two perspectives: (i) theory of change, and (ii) LogFrame. While the project initial TOC is quite straightforward and demonstrates sufficiently clear intervention logic, the project initial LogFrame is poorly designed with multiple flaws, e.g., it lacks outcome indicators, has some inconsistency between outcomes and outputs, lacks SMART output indicators. The evaluability assessment conducted in June 2022 raised a recommendation to revise the LogFrame, following which the project team embarked on the revision of the LogFrame and came up with the revised LogFrame.

The MTE was requested with an additional task to reconstruct *initial* project LogFrame taking into consideration the *revised* project LogFrame. The revised LogFrame was in the near-final stage at the inception of the mid-term evaluation, which allowed MTE team to reconstruct the Theory of Change of the project based on its revised LogFrame.

**Finding # 2: The project design and implementation are sufficiently gender sensitive and consider non-discrimination imperative at its current stage of implementation.**

The project initial and revised design is predominantly focused on employment for youth, women, and SMEs (specifically, in its analytical products such as reports, models, assessments, and such), providing sufficient attention to these groups throughout all its studies, assessments, modelling as well as during discussions with stakeholders. These dimensions are duly considered in the Thematic report (2022), including consistent gender-sensitive analysis throughout the document and dedicated section on gender analysis with focus on women (section 3.2), when organizing regional events (e.g., women represented 43 per cent of participants in the Regional Technical Training on Trade and Employment, held in October 2022) and when shaping the PWGs, including by ensuring the participation of women-focused social partners in the groups. It remains, however, critical to ensure that the recommendations to follow will be sufficiently tailored to the employment needs and employability specifics of each target group.

**Finding # 3: The project benefited from the ILO's comparative advantage of tripartism and social dialogue**

ILO has a long-standing history of presence in Southern Mediterranean region, since 1976.<sup>16</sup> Over the period till 2023, ILO supported the countries covered by the METI project to adopt important ILO conventions and to enhance the culture of social dialogue. All ILO member countries from the Southern Mediterranean have ratified all eight Fundamental ILO conventions on freedom of association, forced labour, non-discrimination, and child labour

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<sup>16</sup> <https://www.ilo.org/beirut/aboutus/lang--en/index.htm>

(except for Jordan, Lebanon, and Morocco, which have ratified seven). Hence, the METI project is based on strong normative context in each country engaged in the project. Within the METI project, ILO remained adherent to the principles of tripartism and promotion of social dialogue in the partner countries. Hence, the policy working groups (PWGs) as a multi-stakeholder platform created to facilitate policy dialogue between various actors at each partner country (i.e., Egypt, Jordan, Morocco, and Tunisia) engages all ILO constituencies and advances tripartism and social dialogue in those countries. PWG was largely appreciated by the national stakeholders.

#### **Finding # 4: Global pandemic caused major delays in the project implementation**

The global pandemic significantly impacted the implementation pace of the METI project and most importantly, the perception of the project on behalf of its regional and national stakeholders. Not being able to travel and therefore, visit partner countries for in-person meetings with the national stakeholders, significantly limited capacities of the METI team to keep the project high in the memories of the national stakeholders and create a sense of a 'process' within the project. This is partially caused by the nature of the project itself that was predominantly focused on knowledge creation (e.g., regional and country reports) with less active engagement of the national stakeholders.

#### **Finding # 5: The outcomes as defined in the reconstructed LogFrame of the METI Project remain highly relevant for the final period of the project implementation**

While the project faced some challenges including serious delays during the period of 2020-2022 as further explained under the effectiveness section, the priority outcomes of the project as of its reconstructed LogFrame remain highly relevant for the region and for each partner country. The national stakeholders expressed their continuous support to the project priority areas and their increasingly strong demand to intensify operations within the project towards the expected results.

Following the recommendations from the evaluability assessment, the project team embarked on revision of its TOC and LogFrame to subsequently shape the comprehensive monitoring and evaluation system. The work has been continued within the frame of this evaluation to propose the reconstructed TOC and LogFrame as the basis to guide the remaining period of the project implementation.

#### **4.2.2 Coherence**

#### **Finding # 6: The project design and outcomes are in line with the national development priorities, UNSDCF/UNDAF and EC's specific priorities in the Southern Neighbourhood region and in each partner country in specifically. Also, the project demonstrated high relevance to the ILO's Global policy outcomes, the SDGs, and national priorities.**

The outcomes of the METI project are fully in line with the national priorities of all partner countries as well as the countries in the region engaged in the regional activities of the project. This is confirmed through the desk review and through stakeholders' consultations. Also, the outcomes are aligned with the UNSDCF priorities in the partner countries and the ILO global policy outcomes. The project implementation directly contributes to the realization of the SDG 8 in the Southern Mediterranean region. It is also aligned with the priorities of the Agenda for the Mediterranean and the Economic and Investment Plan flagship on inclusive economies. It also directly linked and contribute to the realization of the Outcome 3 of the ILO's Programme and

Budget proposals for 2022-2023,<sup>17</sup> which stated: Economic, social, and environmental transition for full, productive, and freely chosen employment and decent work for all.

**Finding # 7: The project has put efforts to consider the specifics of each country and different stakeholders in its design, inception and implementation, however, there are missed opportunities for more tailored and effective implementation of the project and need for adjustments for the remaining phase of its implementation**

At the *design phase*, there were consultations with the donor, the DG NEAR, and the national counterparts in the Southern Mediterranean region to define the strategic priorities of the project. The decision to combine the funding for OECD and ITC in one funding envelope with the ILO came later in the process of the project design but it was fully justified. The efforts of all three partners are geared towards the long-term strategic priority of creating coherence between T&I and Employment policy frameworks in the region from various perspectives: OECD from the perspective of investment, ITC – from the perspective of trade and ILO – from the perspective of employment.

At the *inception phase* of the project, there were consultations with the national counterparts to define the project partner countries, meaning, four countries for national level implementation of the METI project. The selection criteria included the following: advice from the EU Delegations, potential synergies with previous collaborations and ongoing projects, ILO's regional network and field presence, potential for productive engagement with the Government and the national social partners, security risks (given the need for extensive field research), data availability. The missed opportunity at the inception phase was not to sharpen the TOC of the project and its LogFrame, introducing SMART indicators to guide project implementation.

At the *implementation phase*, the project employed efforts to ensure responsiveness and coherence to the needs of the national stakeholders and the specifics of the national context. Some important steps were made within the project to ensure continuous alignment with national priorities.

- **Thematic report:** The regional thematic report "Trade, investment and employment in the Southern Mediterranean Countries", supplemented with respective national reports, was developed, and broadly disseminated at the national and regional levels. The work was designed as a desk review and provided mega trends across all countries engaged in METI project. The report was well received by the broad range of stakeholders. The findings provide sufficient ground for both cross-country and national level policy dialogues in each partner country. The national reports, however, were produced without intensive consultations and validation from the national stakeholders, which has raised some level of criticism at the national level. Therefore, the lesson should be taken to ensure that other assessments (e.g., value chain assessment, employment impact of T&E, etc.) with national focus are conducted in highly consultative manner, followed by a formal validation of the results to support local ownership and subsequent uptake of the proposed recommendations.
- **PWG:** The efforts to ensure the project responsiveness are further visible in how the PWGs are organized. While the PWG is established in each partner country, its composition, frequency of meetings, and the scope of discussions are tailored to some extent to the local needs. However, the project performance at the PWG level does not

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<sup>17</sup> [https://www.ilo.org/wcmsp5/groups/public/--ed\\_norm/--relconf/documents/meetingdocument/wcms\\_768021.pdf](https://www.ilo.org/wcmsp5/groups/public/--ed_norm/--relconf/documents/meetingdocument/wcms_768021.pdf)

fully meet the expectations of the national stakeholder, who expect more intensive dialogues and more active role of ILO in facilitating the meetings of the PWGs.

As of its initial design, the PWGs meant to meet once a year. However, the criticism was raised that the PWG meetings lack continuity, predictability, and a sense of 'process'. To illustrate: in Egypt PWG met two times in June 2022 and May 2023, in Jordan three times - in June 2022, in August 2022 and in January 2023; in Tunisia had two meetings- in December 2021 and January 2022, and in Morocco two meetings - in March 2022 and February 2023. In all countries, the official launch of the project was combined with the 1<sup>st</sup> meeting of the PWG. Despite what is perceived by the national stakeholders a slow and irregular PWG process, there is strong support to the concept of PWG in each country and heightened expectations of the national stakeholders to intensify efforts and even, to learn from the PWG performance from the other partner countries.

- ***Selection of the trade-oriented sectors/sub-sectors for value chain assessment:*** this work has been done through extensive bi-lateral discussions between the project and its national counterparts and in consultation with the PWGs. The selection of the sectors and sub-sectors were carried out in full compliance with the expectations of the national stakeholders, triggering even more heightened interests towards this assessment and active contribution from the ILO side. For instance, in Egypt, the Ministry of Planning and Economic Development demanded METI to provide technical and statistical input for pre-selection and final selection of the sectors/sub-sectors for value chain assessment.

The evaluation noted that there is an interest on behalf of the national stakeholders to expand the work of value chain assessment to more industries. For instance, in Egypt, there was much enthusiasm about value chain assessment and willingness to replicate it in other sectors and sub-sectors, even considering possibility of mobilizing additional funding from the state. This illustrates the importance of utilizing METI as a catalytic initiative in each partner country to expand value chain assessments and to provide actionable policy recommendations. Towards this end, there is a need to strengthen the capacity development component of the METI project and to institutionalize the value chain assessment methodology in all partner countries.

### **4.2.3 Effectiveness**

#### **Finding # 8: The project demonstrated slow progress at its inception and in the early phase, but by the time of MTE, the project is fully back on track with its implementation - however specific areas require intensified efforts**

The project had a slow start due to combination of factors (e.g., global pandemic, project management structure), but is managing to catch up with delays. However, more intensified efforts are required at its regional dimension and within its capacity development component. This implies, for instance, not only building capacities of few experts to use a specific tool but also supporting to institutionalize and internalize that tool. Also, remains critical to ensure cross-country learning and knowledge sharing and therefore, more regional meetings, discussions, policy dialogues are needed.

The nature of the METI project is such that it is focused on knowledge creation, sensitization, learning, and capacity development across multiple stakeholders. The progress on these dimensions is not tangible, especially given the limited time frame of the project implementation and its challenging start. However, comparing the project progress vis-à-vis its activities as mentioned in Table 3, the project completed much of its activities under Outcome 1

and Outcome 2, initiated and is on track with its activities under Outcome 3, and made first steps for Outcome 4. Therefore, it is highly likely that the project will achieve all its outputs by the end of its lifecycle as initially planned.

**Finding # 9: There are several major factors that affected project implementation in each partner country to a different degree: global pandemic and shift to remote regime; confused division of roles and responsibilities between some project team members, and miscommunication with some national stakeholders.**

The project started in September 2020, when the global pandemic was in full scale, making impossible active country visits and building relationships with the national stakeholders. This inevitably affected the initial design of the project implementation. Another critical factor that affected the project implementation was some confused communication took place that impacted relationships with the national stakeholders and caused some additional delays in the project implementation. This was resulted from some uncertainty in division of roles and responsibilities of the project team and specifically, division of technical and managerial responsibilities. It took about two years from the ILO team to correct the situation.

There were also some factors specific to the partner country context. ***In Egypt***, for instance, the Ministry of Planning and Development and the ILO had differences in approaching selection of sectors for value chain assessment. The ILO expected the Ministry to make some initial scoping of the potential sectors, while the Ministry insisted on the METI team providing technical support and having the PWG to discuss and agree on the sector selection. The ILO country office in Egypt played a critical role in resolving this issue by leveraging its communication channels with the Ministry of Planning to get the project back on track. Another factor that contributed to the delay though not a significant one was a common issue in Egypt: each new project requires a security clearance by the Ministry of Planning and Economic Development (MoPED). *At the time of MTE*, the project implementation in Egypt is back on track with very promising positive reflections and expectations from the national stakeholders.

***In Jordan***, for instance, there was a challenge related to the uncertainty of the future of the Ministry of Labour as the key focal point for the METI and the Chair of the PWG. The Jordanian government intention of merging the Ministry of Labour and the Ministry of Trade and Industry into one entity caused some uncertainties not only for METI but for all partners of the Ministry. The solution within METI project was found by effectively integrating the Economic and Social Council of Jordan who took the lead from the Ministry of Labour into the project as its focal point. *At the time of MTE*, Jordan too is back on track with the METI project implementation.

***In Tunisia***, the project launch and the first meeting of the PWG took place in December 2021. Due to the global pandemic and the challenges with the stakeholder communication, there were delays in the project implementation. *At the time of MTE*, Tunisia is yet to catch up in the implementation but importantly, there is satisfaction of the national partners with the selection of the sectors for value chain assessment and heightened expectations towards more dynamic developments within METI. Further work is required to intensify policy dialogue with the national stakeholders.

***In Morocco***, the first meeting of the PWG was held on March 28, 2022, after two years since the beginning of the project. The project progress in Morocco is very challenging.) There was confused stakeholder communication at the inception of the project, followed by low response rate from the stakeholders. Also, the political context with the election campaign in 2021 shifted attention of national authorities from a new project. The situation was resolved with hiring additional staff member and reshuffling the country responsibility at the ILO-Cairo office to intensify dialogue with the Moroccan authorities, build effective relationships and trust. *At the time of MTE*, there is a positive progress on this direction noted by the MTE, however, the METI

implementation in Morocco required very focused attention to (i) intensify contacts with stakeholders by proactively informing them on project progress and plans across all its outcomes; (ii) intensify policy dialogues at the PWG platform, and (iii) maintain effective communication with the national stakeholders with upfront expectations management.

**At the regional level,** though the initial knowledge sharing meeting for the regional stakeholders was delayed due to COVID-19, both activities planned are completed. There were five regional events planned, reduced to four and partially completed by the time of MTE. However, there is a critical demand to intensify efforts at the regional level, providing platform for the project countries to learn from each other and to build their capacities. For the remaining period of the METI, the regional component should be further prioritized.

Many of the contextual changes and challenges the project faced were retrieved by the evaluation team retrospectively as they were not fully reflected in the progress reports. Neither were they strategically envisaged through careful risk assessment to be mitigated or prevented in due course.

**Finding # 10: There are several factors that contribute to the eventual success of the project: (i) high relevance of the METI project to the national needs and priorities in each partner country, (ii) the reputation of ILO in the partner countries and its capacity to mobilize a wide international expertise, (iii) the space METI created for cross-country, cross-region and cross-stakeholder knowledge exchange, and (iv) the multi-stakeholder and highly diverse PWGs in each partner country.**

The METI project has high support from its national stakeholders and promising preconditions for its successful implementation and impact for the region and for the partner countries. This is explained by the high relevance of the project vis-à-vis needs in each partner countries – national stakeholders highly valued the tools and methodologies provided by the ILO and see the opportunities to benefit from them. This is also seen through the prism of ILO as a renown international partner with vast technical expertise and capacities to mobilize such expertise for the benefits of the partner countries. Besides, the space provided by the METI project for cross-country, cross-region and cross-stakeholder knowledge sharing is quite unique in the context of the region and the partner countries. The national stakeholders are explicit in their expectations to utilize the opportunities provided by such space and specifically, through the PWG mechanism.

**Finding # 11: No unplanned effects (negative or positive) found during the evaluation.**

No unplanned effects either negative or positive were noted by the MTE.

**Finding # 12: METI project produced high quality knowledge products**

The knowledge products developed so far within the METI project has been considered by the national stakeholders as of high quality, i.e., the Regional Thematic Report, the modelling tools provided by the ITC despite challenges related to data availability and quality mitigated through utilization of various open-source datasets. Though, the quality of some country reports that followed the Regional Thematic Report have raised some concerns by few national stakeholders.

**Finding # 13: The project implementation demonstrated constant consideration of the imperative to ensure engagement of social partners throughout all its activities**

The social partners were to sufficient degree involved in the implementation of the project – through PWG in the first place or through considerations of engaging social partners when organizing trainings, workshops, and meetings both at regional and national level. There are

more avenues for the project to continue and intensify its collaboration with the social partners in each partner country when entering actual implementation of the value chain assessment.

**Finding # 14: The project demonstrated sufficiently strong focus on gender equality, non-discrimination in its activities and its products**

The project is predominantly focused on employment for youth, women, and SMEs, but not PWDs and these considerations were fully integrated in the project products developed so far: Regional thematic report, country reports, ITC assessment. Besides, to ensure fair access to the project capacity development events, the selection of the participants for regional events was organized based on open call applications. The selection of participants for the regional knowledge-sharing workshop was based on nominations by the ILO constituents.

#### **4.2.4 Efficiency**

**Finding # 15: The budget implementation demonstrates no significant deviations, except some savings accumulated due to the restriction of travel in pandemic period and staff changes (P4 level) in the ILO Cairo office**

Table 4 below provides an overview of the METI project budget expenditures by years in Euro.

The column A, B, and C indicates total available budget as per project inception. Column D and E provides actual expenditures per first and second year of the project implementation with total indication of all expenditure presented in column F. The column G indicates estimated expenditures as per May 2023, the MTE. The column H provides indicative total spendings as per May 2023 and column I provides indicative remaining amount for the METI Project.

The budget expenses indicate the availability of funds unspent during the pandemic period for travel and some additional funds available due to change in personnel in the ILO Cairo office. In general, budget implementation demonstrates no significant deviations from what was planned.

**Table 4: METI budget expenditures by years, Euro**



METI project expenditures by year in EUROS									
<b>Approved Budget</b>									
4.492.414,00									
<b>A. Income :</b>									
Funds received from EU in August									
1.100.228,00									
Funds received from EU in February									
1.169.470,46									
Funds Received from EU in February									
837.709,23									
Total									
3.107.407,69									
<b>B. Expenditure by year</b>									
	Total available budget			Actual expenditure year 1 (09/2020-08/2021)	Actual expenditure year 2 (09/2021-08/2022)	Total expenditure year 1+2	Estimated expenditure 09/2022-05/2023	Total estimated expenditure 09/2020-05/2023	Estimated Remaining amount
	Number of unites	Unit value	Total cost						
<b>Human resources</b>									
1.1.1 Technical (Cairo) P4, Senior Trade and Employment Officer (STEO)	48	15.962	766.176,00	95.741,84	135.816,69	231.558,53	80.441,75	312.000,28	454.175,72
Employment Officer (TEO)	42	11.311	475.062,00	0,00	98.148,26	98.148,26	82.755,78	180.904,04	294.157,96
1.1.3 Administrative/ support staff (Cairo) G5	42	2.080	87.360,00	1.024,34	15.693,14	16.717,48	12.481,02	29.198,50	58.161,50
<b>1.2 Salaries</b>									
1.2.1 Technical (HQ) P3, Project Coordinator/Trade and Employment Officer	46	16.048	738.208,00	119.771,51	138.969,59	258.741,10	122.001,07	380.742,17	357.465,83
1.2.2 Administrative/support staff (HQ) G5	48	10.602	508.896,00	103.692,69	105.303,20	208.995,89	97.102,69	306.098,58	202.797,42
1.2.3 Visibility action support (HQ) P4	2	19.219	38.438,86	8.586,11	8.183,80	16.769,91	0,00	16.769,91	21.668,95
1.2.4 STED action support (HQ) - P4	-	-	0,00	7.567,55	23.582,65	31.150,20	0,00	31.150,20	-31.150,20
1.2.5 Outcome 4 action support (HQ)									
<b>1.3 Per diems for missions/travel</b>									
1.3.1 Abroad (staff assigned to the Action)	117	243	28.439,00	0,00	4.054,89	4.054,89	13.042,18	17.097,07	11.341,93
1.3.2 Seminar/conference participants	352	234	82.208,00	0,00	0,00	0,00	26.848,55	26.848,55	55.359,45
<b>Sub-total Human Resources</b>			<b>2.724.787,86</b>	<b>336.384,04</b>	<b>529.752,22</b>	<b>866.136,26</b>	<b>434.673,03</b>	<b>1.300.809,29</b>	<b>1.423.978,56</b>
<b>2. travel</b>									
2.1. International travel	177	424,5	75.137,00	0,00	4.826,45	4.826,45	71.263,15	76.089,60	14.126,40
<b>Sub-total Travel</b>			<b>75.137,00</b>	<b>0,00</b>	<b>4.826,45</b>	<b>4.826,45</b>	<b>71.263,15</b>	<b>76.089,60</b>	<b>14.126,40</b>
<b>3. Equipment and Supplies</b>									
3.1 Furniture, computer equipment	3	2000	6.000,00	3.687,38	0,00	3.687,38	0,00	3.687,38	2.312,62
<b>Sub-total Equipment and Supplies</b>			<b>6.000,00</b>	<b>3.687,38</b>	<b>0,00</b>	<b>3.687,38</b>	<b>0,00</b>	<b>3.687,38</b>	<b>2.312,62</b>
<b>4. Local Office</b>									
4.1 Office rent, services, security Cairo (P4) G5)	48	276	13.248,00	0,00	0,00	0,00	0,00	0,00	13.248,00
	42	552	23.184,00	0,00	0,00	0,00	0,00	0,00	23.184,00
<b>Sub-total Project Office</b>			<b>36.432,00</b>	<b>0,00</b>	<b>0,00</b>	<b>0,00</b>	<b>0,00</b>	<b>0,00</b>	<b>36.432,00</b>
<b>5. Other costs, services</b>									
5.1 Publications	12	1.167	14.000,00	0,00	22.244,29	22.244,29	10.471,75	32.716,04	-18.716,04
5.2 Studies, research and policy resource guide	6	18.667	112.000,00	24.265,99	53.656,89	77.922,88	0,00	77.922,88	34.077,12
5.2.2. TRAVERA and STED studies	12	29.333	352.000,00	72.250,00	48.950,07	121.200,07	16.834,96	138.035,03	213.964,97
5.2.3. Investment in infrastructure studies	4	18.000	72.000,00	0,00	0,00	0,00	0,00	0,00	72.000,00
5.3 Evaluation costs	1	90.000	90.000,00	0,00	7.797,87	7.797,87	12.773,94	20.571,81	69.428,19
5.4 Translation, interpreters	50	2.072	103.600,00	0,00	2.655,10	2.655,10	43.870,76	46.525,86	57.074,14
5.5 Costs of conferences/seminars material, speakers)	5	44.000	220.000,00	0,00	0,00	0,00	33.263,68	33.263,68	171.657,32
material, speakers)	12	15.000	180.000,00	0,00	0,00	0,00	0,00	0,00	180.000,00
meetings	12	5.000	60.000,00	0,00	13.396,46	13.396,46	4.744,61	18.141,07	41.858,93
coordination, facilitation)	18	7.000	126.000,00	0,00	0,00	0,00	0,00	0,00	126.000,00
5.6 Visibility actions	1	26.561	26.561,00	1.492,64	0,00	1.492,64	492,22	1.984,86	24.576,14
<b>Sub-total Other Costs, Services</b>			<b>1.356.161,00</b>	<b>98.008,63</b>	<b>148.700,68</b>	<b>246.709,31</b>	<b>122.451,93</b>	<b>369.161,24</b>	<b>971.920,76</b>
<b>Sub-total Direct Eligible Costs of the Action (1-</b>			<b>4.198.517,86</b>	<b>438.080,05</b>	<b>683.279,35</b>	<b>1.121.359,40</b>	<b>506.009,57</b>	<b>1.627.368,97</b>	<b>2.571.148,88</b>
<b>Administrative Costs Maximum 7%</b>			<b>293.896,00</b>	<b>30.665,61</b>	<b>47.829,54</b>	<b>78.495,15</b>	<b>43.812,96</b>	<b>122.308,11</b>	<b>171.587,89</b>
<b>Total Eligible Costs of the Action</b>			<b>4.492.413,86</b>	<b>468.745,66</b>	<b>731.108,89</b>	<b>1.199.854,55</b>	<b>549.822,53</b>	<b>1.749.677,08</b>	<b>2.742.736,78</b>

### Finding # 16: Country presence is a critical success factor for the METI to ensure effective communication, coordination, and trust with the national stakeholders.

The METI project has a complicated management arrangement: the financial management of the project is centralized at the ILO HQ in Geneva; the technical implementation is decentralized with technical teams located both in Geneva and in ILO CO- Cairo. There is no country presence envisaged in the four partner countries, though the project team location in Egypt is in fact, its on-ground presence in Egypt. The global pandemic and the issues with communication with some the national stakeholders even more 'distant' them from the project management. By the time of MTE, the project team managed to restore communication with national partners though intensive efforts are still required in this direction in Morocco and Tunisia.

In this region, personal relationships and trust is often valued above any formal institutional arrangements. Establishing PWG is a step forward towards inter-agency coordination however, to ensure that PWGs are viable there is a need to continuously build relationships with the PWG members and upfront communication and expectation management. This requires strong country presence.

**Finding # 17: As part of a larger envelope of EU-funded project, METI project established high-level collaboration with OECD and ITC, though at the operational level there are hardly any avenues for the three interventions to coordinate their efforts**

DG NEAR established an “Joint Steering Committee EU Trade and Investment Package” engaging ILO, OECD, and ITC to ensure there is high-level information exchange and coordination to the degree necessary for the project implementation. The meetings are organized by the EU on an annual basis to discuss and approve work plans, assess progress, and provide recommendations for the project implementation. *There are no interdependencies in their design, implementation or reporting of the three elements of the envelop, there are no operational plans or joint activities planned among three parties.* The METI project demonstrated sufficient level of engagement with the OECD and ITC required for the realization of its objectives.

#### **4.2.5 Impact orientation and sustainability**

**Finding # 18: The early indications of impact within the METI project (such as e.g., knowledge created, tools provided, discussion platforms established, etc.) suggests strong potential. However, to realize that potential there are efforts required (i) to intensify communication with national and regional stakeholders, (ii) strengthen capacity development component of the project, and (iii) revise the project management arrangement with more on-ground presence.**

While it is early to explore METI impact, the early indication of the possible impact suggests, that there is a high potential for strong impact on the ground: there are number of knowledge products developed, several tools introduced, the PWG platform is created as a space for policy dialogues.

**At the national level,** there is a great demand to internalize the tools provided within METI project and thereby, build the stronger capabilities of the national stakeholders. In the same vein, the opportunities could be used at the time of value chain assessment to establish national teams from the Ministries of each partner country to learn from international consultant and support him/her at the same time, i.e., learning by doing.

**At the regional level,** too, there is a great demand on the side of project countries to continue regional efforts to share knowledge, best practices, lessons learned and such. This is particularly important from the perspective of the four partner countries, that expressed their willingness to learn from their peers on PWG, value chain assessment, etc.

Besides, the majority of stakeholders interviewed confirmed that there is a high demand and high willingness to benefit from the ILO and its partners expertise, and there is interest to scale up METI small-scale but catalytic initiatives. However, these positive preconditions required more nurturing approach and stronger focus on knowledge transfer to the national partners and stronger on-ground presence as explained earlier in the report. Besides, national stakeholders expressed strong interests on what comes next after METI project to keep the efforts evolving.

**Finding # 19: Effective and proactive communication with national and regional stakeholders required further reinforcement from the METI team.**

The project lacks the sense of 'continuity', while the communication with the national stakeholders has been very weak with some attempts to improve the situation over the last few months. The national stakeholders have confused understanding of the METI project and have limited or no information on the project implementation modality, its workplan, its timeline. The situation through has significantly improved in the last half year.

**Finding # 20: While all products within METI are highly relevant and useful for the national stakeholder, the strongest precondition for their sustainability and long-term utilization is the capabilities of the national stakeholders. This requires stronger focus within the remaining period of the METI project.**

The achievement of METI project impact is conditioned on the strengths of the recommendations produced and the capabilities of the national stakeholders built. At the time of MTE, it is obvious that there is a strong need to strengthen the Outcome 2 of the project to ensure sustainability of the project results. Specifically, the PWGs as a multi-stakeholder platform for policy dialogue and collaboration has a great potential for a more universal application in each partner country beyond METI. In those countries there are different on-going initiatives related to employment and T&I. In case of Jordan, for instance, there is a thematic donor working group exploring employment and T&I. To strengthen policy dialogues, high-level coordination, and synergies across various on-going efforts in the country, the METI project might facilitate PWG's contacts with other initiatives, contributing thereby to the sustainability of this inter-ministerial mechanism.

During the remaining period of the METI implementation there are policy recommendations to be developed at the level of each partner country.

**Finding # 21: There is no exit and sustainability strategy developed within METI project yet**

No exit and sustainability strategy designed at the inception of the METI project and up till the MTE. It is however an important precondition for the impact of the project.

## 5 CONCLUSIONS

The METI project has dual aspects: on one hand, the project was significantly delayed due to global pandemic and there is still a strong need to improve the communication and relationships with the national stakeholders; on the other, the quality of its deliverables and the need and relevance perceived by the national stakeholders is very high. Besides, the capacity development component of the project, if strengthened, has a great potential for creating critical precondition for lasting impact in each partner country and for the whole region.

By the time of the MTE the METI project has created a critical momentum that needs to be preserved and amplified through more intensified communication and upfront planning with the national stakeholders; stronger efforts for capacity developments at regional and national levels; and intensified policy dialogues in the partner countries, creating a model to follow for the other countries in the region. Critical revision of the METI management structure and its regional presence could unlock larger potential for stakeholders' engagement and ease pathway towards more policy coherence between employment and T&I in each partner country.

It remains important to put all necessary efforts to successful accomplish the METI project and ensure its continuation with another round of METI with explicit focus on the implementation of the recommendations developed within this project.

## 6 LESSONS LEARNED AND GOOD PRACTICES

Lessons learned 1: Cultural and institutional context play a critical role in project performance. Building effective personal relationships and trust with people lead to success of the project performance.

Lessons learned 2: Results of the project studies/assessments could be owned and internalized by the national stakeholders if those studies were produced in a highly consultative manner and with due validation of the findings

Good practice 1: PWG in the partner countries as a viable and much needed inter-agency coordination mechanism to explore the nexus between employment and T&I

Good practice 2: Effective working relationships between ILO, OECD, and ITC that ensure the opportunity to mobilize critical expertise on employment, investment, and trade respectively

Good practice 3: Evidence-driven policy discussion and recommendation to enhance policy coherence in the partner countries

The detailed description of the lessons learned, and good practices are found in annexes 4 and 5, respectively.

## 7 RECOMMENDATIONS

1. Consider using the MTE proposed project LogFrame with strengthened focus on capacity development component of the project. Additionally, ensure there is a monitoring plan in place aligned with the new LogFrame.

Addressed to	Priority	Resources	Timing
METI management	High	Low	Immediate

2. Revisit the composition of each PWG based on the emerging needs to ensure all relevant stakeholders are included.

Addressed to	Priority	Resources	Timing
METI team	Medium	Low	Before the end of the project

3. Ensure that any assessment at the national level is carried out with intensive consultations with national stakeholders, followed with formal validation of the findings as the basis for policy dialogue and recommendations.

Addressed to	Priority	Resources	Timing
METI team	Medium	Low	Prior to finalizing of the next assessment planned to be done within the project

4. Ensure stronger focus on the capacity development component. More specifically,
  - to organize training courses on ITC tools used within METI to allow its institutionalization.
  - to organize on-job training during value chain assessment (for experts nominated by the Ministries and selected through national/ILO joint selection committees in each partner country). When relevant, consider expanding these efforts towards non-partner countries, meaning, the countries engaged in regional knowledge sharing within METI.
  - to intensify regional knowledge sharing events within four partner countries and within all countries of the METI project. For cost-effectiveness, consider regional venues of the events (e.g., PWGs meeting in one of the four partner countries).
  - to keep the discussion at the PWG level on-going inter alia by providing some predictability of the PWG activities and METI project activities on an annual basis, intensifying communication with national stakeholders, creating space for cross-country PWG interaction and learning.
  - to intensify activities with PWGs as multi-stakeholder platform in each partner country (i) to facilitate policy dialogues, (ii) to foster high-level coordination with a wide range of donors and external collaborators, and (iii) to create synergies across various on-going efforts in the country beyond METI project.

Addressed to	Priority	Resources	Timing
METI management	High	High	Short-term

5. Strengthen coordination between ILO, OECD, and ITC at the product level by creating a joint digital gateway for trade, investment and employment resources in the South Mediterranean Region including inter alia Euromed Trade Helpdesk, all the studies from METI, OECD, etc.

Addressed to	Priority	Resources	Timing
METI management	Medium	Low	Medium term

6. When organizing national or regional events consider minimizing logistical and financial impediments for participants (e.g., travel between Casablanca and Rabat)

Addressed to	Priority	Resources	Timing
METI team	High	Low	Each time when an event is organized

7. Consider 3-6 month no-cost extension to factor and effectively implement additional capacity development and policy dialogue efforts within the project

Addressed to	Priority	Resources	Timing
METI management	High	Medium	Short-term

8. Consider cost-sharing arrangements with the ILO project offices in Jordan, Tunisia, and Morocco to stimulate more effective project continuation over its remaining period

Addressed to	Priority	Resources	Timing
METI management	High	Medium	Short-term

9. Consult with the ILO Senior Risk Officer to strengthen the METI risk lenses, contributing thereby to its effective implementation

Addressed to	Priority	Resources	Timing
METI team	Medium	Low	Short-term

10. Confidently explore the options for the potential second phase of the METI with the focus on implementation of policy recommendations developed within METI project as there is a strong support from all national counterparts.

Addressed to	Priority	Resources	Timing
DEVINVEST	High	Medium	Medium-term

## **ANNEXES:**

### **Annex 1: List of people interviewed**



#	First name	Last name	Affiliation	Position	Region / country
1	Mito	Tsukamoto	ILO	Chief of the Development and Investment branch	HQ
2	Christoph	Ernst	ILO	Team Leader, Transformation to Formality	HQ
3	Sonia	Forero Rodriguez	ILO	Project Senior Assistant	HQ
4			ILO	Junior Project Officer (Outcome 4)	HQ
5	Sarah	Sabri	ILO	Programme Officer	CO-Cairo
6	Martin	Ostermeier	ILO	METI Technical Officer	HQ
7	Nacer	Bouyahia	ILO	METI Technical Officer	CO-Cairo
8	Aysha	Elsharabassy	ILO	METI Project Assistant	CO-Cairo
9	Elektra	Tsakalidou	EC DG NEAR	Trade, investment, economic governance in the Southern Neighbourhood	HQ
10	Ralf	Kruger	ILO, STRENGTHEN2	Project Manager	HQ
11	Elodie	Robin	ITC	TIFM II project manager	HQ
12	Sara	Ali	Ministry of Labor	Head of Planning Department	Palestine
13	Eric	Oechslin	ILO	Director	CO-Cairo
14	Julia	Spies	ITC	Trade and market Intelligence Section	HQ
15	Sylvain	Perillat	ITC	Associate Statistician	HQ
16	Roland	Salton	ILO	Employment specialist	CO-Cairo
17	Chema	Tikki	Independent consultant		
18	Marco	Di Benedetto	EUD	EU delegation	Egypt
19	Dr Reham	Rizk	Ministry of Planning and Economic Development	Lead of Social Planning and Development Unit, Ministry of Planning and Economic Development	Egypt
20	Mrs. Amal	Alnaggar	Ministry of Trade and Industry	International Relations Specialist from the Technology and Industrial Innovation Centres, Ministry of Trade, and Industry	Egypt

#	First name	Last name	Affiliation	Position	Region / country
21	Mr. Saad	Shaaban	Democratic Labour Congress	President, Egyptian Democratic Labour Congress	Egypt
22	Mr. Mostafa	Rostom	Egyptian Trade Union Federation	Director of International Relations, Egyptian Trade Union Federation	Egypt
23	Yossria	Yassine	Food and Agro Industries Technology Center	Technical Support Specialist	Egypt
24	Rodrigo	Romero Van Cutsem	EUD	EU delegation	Jordan
25	Frida	Khan	ILO	Country Coordinator for Jordan	Jordan
26	Nizar	Awad	Ministry of Planning and International Cooperation (MOP)	Head of Section European Union Partnership	Jordan
27	Zaid	Najada	Ministry of Investment (MOIN)	Ministry of Investment (MOIN)	Jordan
28	Mohammad	Abuhelweh	Ministry of Labor (MOL)	Ministry of Labor (MOL)	Jordan
29	Metri	Mdanat	Secretary-General	Economic and Social Council (ECOSOC)	Jordan
30	Malik	Al Maaitah	General Federation of Jordanian Trade Unions (GFJTU)	Director of Planning and International Cooperation	Jordan
31	Dema	Arabyat	The Jordanian National Commission for Women (JNCW)	Economic Empowerment Programs Coordinator	Jordan

#	First name	Last name	Affiliation	Position	Region / country
32	Mohammad	Alsarabi	Jordon Exports	Markets Intelligence Manager	Jordan
33	Nour	Aldabbas	ILO-Better Work Program	National Project Coordinator Better Work	Jordan
34	Mr Fares	AL-HUSSAMI	OECD	Project Leader and Economist	Jordan
35	Cengi	Cihan	UNRC	Senior Economist	Jordan
36	Dr Reham	Rizk	Ministry of Planning and Economic Development	Head of Modelling Unit	
37	Lahna	KACHACH	UMT	Representant of Workers Union	Morocco
38	Saad	HAMOUMI	CGEM	CGEM Consultant and representant	Morocco
39	Hicham	Achabi	Employment Ministry	Director of Cooperation	Morocco
40	Amal	Mansouri	Haut Commissariat au Plan	Sous Directrice	Morocco
41	Soumoud	Ben Slimane	Agence Marocaine de Development des Investissements	Representant	Morocco
42	Ouafae	ALAOUI	Association des Femmes Chefs d'Entreprise	Présidente locale	Morocco

#	First name	Last name	Affiliation	Position	Region / country
43	Rachid	ElHassouni	Le ministre marocain de l'Industrie et du Commerce	Directeur de Coopération	Morocco
44	Celine.	ANSELME	EU Delegation	Representant	Morocco
45	Mohamed	Faical Kadhkathi	Union Générale Tunisienne du Travail	Representant	Tunisia
46	Jamel	Elifa	Ministère du Commerce et du Développement des Exportations	Directeur en charge de la Coopération avec les Organisations Régionales et Internationales	Tunisia
47	Hammouda	Gabsi	Ministère du Commerce et du Développement des Exportations	Sous-Directeur, Direction de la Formation Professionnelle et de l'Emploi	Tunisia
48	Wissem	Romdhane	Ministère de l'Economie et de la Planification	Sous-Directeur, Instance Publique du Développement Sectoriel et Régional	Tunisia
49	Hichem	Neji	Centre de Promotion des Exportations	Directeur de la Coopération Internationale	Tunisia
50	Ali	Gomri	Agence de Promotion de l'Industrie et de l'Innovation	Direction de cooperation Internationale	Tunisia
51	Katarina	Motoskova	EU Delegation	EU Representant	Tunisia

## Annex 2: Literature reviewed

A very broad list of literature was studied including the following:

### ***Project documents***

- Description of Action
- Logical framework & activity matrix
- Scope Thematic Research
- PARDEV Minute sheet
- National development plans
- Special Conditions
- Communication & Visibility Strategy
- Risk Register
- Workplan
- EU budget

### ***Baseline reports and related data***

- Data repository

### ***Monitoring reports conducted during the project***

- Comprehensive Monitoring and Evaluation system/ framework
- Monthly catch-up with the EC: presentations
- Joint Steering Committee Regional Trade and Investment package - OECD, ILO, ITC. Presentations

### ***Progress and status reports, extensions, and budget revisions***

1. Inception Report

2. First year Progress Report:

- Narrative
- Financial Statement
- Management declaration
- Request of payment
- Attachments

3. Second year Progress Report:

- Narrative
- Financial Statement
- Management declaration
- Request of payment
- Attachments

***Previous phase or related evaluation reports of the project, including the evaluability report***

1. Evaluability Assessment Report
2. Evaluability Assessment's implementation
3. EA - Managerial response (This document will bring the others documents into context.)

***Project products, activity reports***

**Project products**

**Global:**

- METI Thematic report (Activity 1.1):

Country level:

1. Country Report (CR) (Activity 1.2)

- Egypt: CR full report EN and AR (incl. executive summaries in EN and AR)
- Jordan: CR full report EN (incl. executive summaries in EN, FR, AR)
- Morocco: CR full report FR and AR (incl. executive summaries in EN, FR and AR)

- Tunisia CR full report FR and AR (incl. executive summaries in EN, AR and FR)

## 2. ITC infographics (Activity 3.1)

- Infographics for Egypt, Jordan, Morocco, and Tunisia.

### **Activities reports**

#### Global:

- Information notes for 1<sup>st</sup> Regional training workshop Co-organised by ITCILO, (Activity 2.1)
- Final report for 1<sup>st</sup> regional training (by ITCILO) (Activity 2.1)
- Information notes for 1st Regional knowledge-sharing workshop co-organised by ITCILO, Concept note (Activity 2.2)

#### Country level

- PWG concept note (Activity 2.3)
- PWG meetings report and list of participants for Egypt, Jordan, Morocco, and Tunisia (Activity 2.3 and 3.1)
- Mission reports for Jordan, Morocco, and Tunisia

### **Other studies and research undertaken by the project**

- Infrastructure assessments studies concept note (Activity 4.1)

### **Project beneficiary documentation**

- Stakeholder register
- Stakeholder mapping

### **Theory of change/ Log frame/Results-based framework**

- Theory of change
- Revised logframes: one created by the external consultant conducting the evaluability assessment and the one developed by METI team in response to evaluability assessment recommendations
- Indicator reporting sheet

### ***National development frameworks, including those relevant for SDGs***

- Updated mapping of national employment, trade, and investment strategies
- Mapping with UN framework

- UNSDCFs

***ILO Decent Work Country Programme Documents***

- Decent Work Country Programme (DWCP)<sup>18</sup> for Tunisia

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<sup>18</sup> DWCP have been not developed for the other countries of the project.



## Annex 3: Evaluation matrix

Evaluation question	Indicators	Data Sources	Means of Verification
<b>RELEVANCE AND VALIDITY OF DESIGN</b> Is the intervention doing the right thing?			
<p>1. Are the project's strategic elements (objectives, outputs, implementations strategies, targets, and indicators) achievable? Is the intervention logic realistic? If not, why? And what should be done differently?</p> <p>2. To what extent does the design of the project consider gender, non-discrimination, and inclusion, especially of persons with disabilities (PWDs)?</p> <p>3. Has the project been able to leverage the ILO contributions, through its comparative advantages (including tripartism international labour standards, etc.)?</p> <p>4. To what extent the project's design allowed to respond to emerging needs due to the COVID-19 pandemic? Are adaptations in the project needed to support a human-centred recovery?</p> <p>5. To what extent the project has incorporated the recommendations and results of the evaluability assessment report into the project's design and implementation?</p> <p>6. Are the objectives/outputs planned for the final years of implementation of the project still relevant?</p>	<p>Documental evidence of adherence to the national reference frameworks</p> <p>Documents on the history of ILO's presence in the country</p>	<p>National strategic project and policies</p> <p>ILO projects' documents including reports and studies</p>	<p>Desk review</p> <p>Group and individual interviews</p>
<b>COHERENCE</b> How well does the intervention fit?			

<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Does METI's design effectively address the national development priorities, UNSDCF/UNDAF, and donor's specific priorities and concerns in the 9 countries?</li> <li>2. Has the specific context of each country and the interests of different stakeholders and final beneficiaries been sufficiently considered in the design and implementation of the project?</li> <li>3. How does the project fit within the ILO's Global Policy Outcomes, the SDGs, and relevant targets, especially those identified as priority in the national development strategies?</li> </ol>	<p>Evidence of the extend the project fits into the landscape of various initiatives</p> <p>Evidence suggesting that the project collected data to demonstrate its progress towards expected outcomes</p>	<p>National strategic documents, publicly available studies, project's progress reports and analytical studies, EA report and revised LogFrame</p>	<p>Desk review Group and individual interviews</p>
<p><b>EFFECTIVENESS</b></p> <p>Is the intervention achieving its objectives?</p>			
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. To what extent have the overall project objectives and expected outputs, qualitatively and quantitatively been achieved? Will the project be likely to achieve its medium and long-term outcomes by the end of the project?</li> <li>2. Are there any external factors that hindered (e.g., COVID-19 affect of crisis situations, changes in government's priorities) or facilitated the achievement of the project outcomes?</li> <li>3. Were there any unplanned effects (negative or positive)?</li> <li>4. Which have been the main contributing and challenging factors towards project's success in attaining its targets?</li> <li>5. What is the assessment regarding the quality of the project outputs?</li> <li>6. To which extent have the social partners been involved in the implementation of the project?</li> </ol>	<p>Evidence on the extend the planned outputs have been achieved on time</p> <p>Evidence suggesting the project's results are designed in an inclusive manner</p> <p>Evidence suggesting un-envisaged negative and positive results</p> <p>Evidence suggesting project employed gender sensitive M&amp;E, generated gender-disaggregated data</p> <p>Evidence suggesting that the project adjusted its implementation during COVID-19 pandemic accordingly</p>	<p>National strategic documents, publicly available studies, project's progress reports and analytical studies, EA report</p>	<p>Desk review Group and individual interviews Micro-narratives</p>

7. To what extent did the project address gender equality, non-discrimination and inclusion of people living with disabilities in its activities and its products?			
<b>EFFICIENCY</b> How well are resources being used?			
1. What evidence is there of cost-effectiveness in the project's implementation and management? 2. How effective are the project management arrangements? Is the project able to leverage expertise in the field, particularly in those countries where the project does not have permanent presence? 3. Have project's funds and outputs been used and delivered in a timely manner? What are the time and cost efficiency measures that could be introduced to improve the achievement of results? 4. What are the partnership arrangements in the implementation of the project at national and regional levels? What are the challenges in the formulation of these partnerships? What are the results of these partnership and how to improve them?	Evidence on adequacy of project's organizational assets, structures capabilities (in terms of financial and human resources)  Effectiveness of internal coordination and communication mechanisms (both vertical and horizontal)  Performance and qualification of contracted  Evidence on the quality of partnerships established	Financial reports, internal data recording system, project narrative reports	Desk review Group and individual interviews
<b>IMPACT ORIENTATION</b> What difference does the intervention make?			
1. What are the elements of the project that are not likely to be achieved or sustained? 2. What are the noteworthy, good practices and lessons learned?	Evidence of the common understanding of the national partners on the intend and purpose of the project	National strategic documents, publicly available studies, project's progress reports and analytical studies	Desk review Group and individual interviews Micro-narratives

3. What are the areas for further reinforcement of the project achievements?	Evidence of emerging good practices		
<b>SUSTAINABILITY</b> <i>Will the benefits or change last?</i>			
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. To what extent are the results of the intervention likely to have a long term, sustainable positive contribution to the relevant SDGs and targets (explicitly or implicitly)?</li> <li>2. How has ownership and sustainability been addressed?</li> <li>3. Has the project developed and implemented any exit strategy?</li> <li>4. What are the immediate actions/interventions by the ILO and donor to ensure that the achievements of the project can be met and sustained?</li> </ol>	<p>Evidence of financial, governance, and technical viability of the project's results</p> <p>Evidence the risks to sustainability were identified and responded throughout the project implementation</p>	National strategic documents, publicly available studies, project's progress reports and analytical studies	<p>Desk review</p> <p>Group and individual interviews</p> <p>Micro-narratives</p>

## Annex 4: Lessons learned

### ILO Lesson Learned Template

**Project Title:** EU-ILO Mainstreaming Employment into Trade and Investment (METI) Project

**Project TC/SYMBOL:** GLO/19/12/EUR

**Name of Evaluator:** Magda Stepanyan

**Date:** June 2023

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

<b>Brief description of lesson learned (link to specific action or task)</b>	Building effective personal relationships and trust with people lead to success of the project performance.
<b>Context and any related preconditions</b>	While institutional relationships are present in the partner countries, the strength of them is defined by the trust build through informal, interpersonal relationships. Cultural and institutional context play critical role in project performance.
<b>Targeted users / Beneficiaries</b>	National stakeholders in the partner countries and in the region
<b>Challenges /negative lessons - Causal factors</b>	Lack of personal relationships led to less traction on behalf of national stakeholders
<b>Success / Positive Issues - Causal factors</b>	Ensuring regular contacts with national stakeholders allows building trust and stimulating more productive relationships within the project
<b>ILO Administrative Issues (staff, resources, design, implementation)</b>	n/a

### ILO Lesson Learned Template

**Project Title:** EU-ILO Mainstreaming Employment into Trade and Investment (METI) Project

**Project TC/SYMBOL:** GLO/19/12/EUR

**Name of Evaluator:** Magda Stepanyan

**Date:** June 2023

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

<b>Brief description of lesson learned (link to specific action or task)</b>	Results of the project studies/assessments could be owned and internalized by the national stakeholders if those studies were produced in a highly consultative manner and with due validation of the findings
<b>Context and any related preconditions</b>	The nexus between employment and trade and investment requires advocacy efforts that are built on strong evidence. However, the evidence could be perceived and accepted when it reflects the variability of perspectives of national stakeholders.
<b>Targeted users / Beneficiaries</b>	National stakeholders
<b>Challenges /negative lessons - Causal factors</b>	Lack of contribution to the development of evidence and lack of formal validation leads to lack of internalization of the evidence created
<b>Success / Positive Issues - Causal factors</b>	Stronger engagement and ownership of the national stakeholders are preconditions for their active utilization of the evidence created
<b>ILO Administrative Issues (staff, resources, design, implementation)</b>	n/a

## Annex 5 Good practices

### ILO Emerging Good Practice Template

**Project Title:** EU-ILO Mainstreaming Employment into Trade and Investment (METI) Project

**Project TC/SYMBOL:** GLO/19/12/EUR

**Name of Evaluator:** Magda Stepanyan

**Date:** June 2023

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

<b>Brief summary of the good practice (link to project goal or specific deliverable, background, purpose, etc.)</b>	PWG in the partner countries as a viable and much needed inter-agency coordination mechanism to explore the nexus between employment and trade and investment.
<b>Relevant conditions and Context: limitations or advice in terms of applicability and replicability</b>	There is typically institutional silos and lack of any other platform for information exchange and coordination among national stakeholders with regards to employment and trade and investment. Policy working groups are not supported by the current legal and normative frameworks, therefore, their viability is a matter of willingness and cooperation of the national stakeholders. Stronger facilitation from the ILO is expected.
<b>Establish a clear cause-effect relationship</b>	Availability of the space for policy dialogues on the nexus employment and trade and investment lead to more policy coherence
<b>Indicate measurable impact and targeted beneficiaries</b>	# of policy dialogues implemented, # of recommendations developed and approved; perceived coherence of the employment and trade and investment policies
<b>Potential for replication and by whom</b>	Great potential for replication by other countries
<b>Upward links to higher ILO Goals (DWCPs, Country Programme Outcomes or ILO's Strategic Programme Framework)</b>	Directly contributes to the Decent Work Country Programme's objectives and specifically creation of decent work in the region
<b>Other documents or relevant comments</b>	n/a

## ILO Emerging Good Practice Template

**Project Title:** EU-ILO Mainstreaming Employment into Trade and Investment (METI) Project

**Project TC/SYMBOL:** GLO/19/12/EUR

**Name of Evaluator:** Magda Stepanyan

**Date:** June 2023

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

<b>Brief summary of the good practice (link to project goal or specific deliverable, background, purpose, etc.)</b>	Effective working relationships between ILO, OECD, and ITC that ensure the opportunity to mobilize critical expertise on employment, investment, and trade respectively
<b>Relevant conditions and Context: limitations or advice in terms of applicability and replicability</b>	Each of the partners has a specific expertise and the huge network of resources to be mobilized to address various issues across employment and trade and investment nexus.
<b>Establish a clear cause-effect relationship</b>	Effective relationships and continuous coordination between ILO, OECD, and ITC unlock potential for more informed policy coherence on employment and trade and investment nexus in the region (e.g., informal contacts, timely information exchange, attempt to synchronize events to create more opportunities for their beneficiaries to benefit from other interventions)
<b>Indicate measurable impact and targeted beneficiaries</b>	Perceived responsiveness of each partner; instances of technical expertise provided to the partner countries
<b>Potential for replication and by whom</b>	Great potential for replication by other regions
<b>Upward links to higher ILO Goals (DWCPs, Country Programme Outcomes or ILO's Strategic Programme Framework)</b>	Directly contributes to the Decent Work Country Programme's objectives and specifically creation of decent work in the region
<b>Other documents or relevant comments</b>	n/a



## ILO Emerging Good Practice Template

**Project Title:** EU-ILO Mainstreaming Employment into Trade and Investment (METI) Project

**Project TC/SYMBOL:** GLO/19/12/EUR

**Name of Evaluator:** Magda Stepanyan

**Date:** June 2023

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

<b>Brief summary of the good practice (link to project goal or specific deliverable, background, purpose, etc.)</b>	Evidence-driven policy discussion and recommendation to enhance policy coherence in the partner countries
<b>Relevant conditions and Context: limitations or advice in terms of applicability and replicability</b>	Strong advise to ensure solid discussions in each partner country on evidence created within the METI project. Showcase this practice across other countries in the region.
<b>Establish a clear cause-effect relationship</b>	Policy recommendations have greater potential to be understood and approved when they are supported by rigorous evidence base.
<b>Indicate measurable impact and targeted beneficiaries</b>	Buy-in by the national stakeholders to the evidence provided by the project; increased number of policy recommendations adopted
<b>Potential for replication and by whom</b>	Great potential for replication by other countries in the regions
<b>Upward links to higher ILO Goals (DWCPs, Country Programme Outcomes or ILO's Strategic Programme Framework)</b>	Directly contributes to the Decent Work Country Programme's objectives and specifically creation of decent work in the region
<b>Other documents or relevant comments</b>	n/a

## Annex 6: Terms of Reference



International  
Labour  
Organization



Funded by the  
European Union

### Terms of Reference

Mid-term evaluation of EU-ILO programme “Mainstreaming Employment into Trade and Investment in the Southern Neighbourhood” (METI)

### Key facts

Title of project being evaluated	EU-ILO programme “Mainstreaming Employment into Trade and Investment in the Southern Neighbourhood”
Project DC Code	GLO/19/12/EUR
Type of evaluation	Independent
Timing of evaluation	Mid-term (01 September 2020 to 31 August 2022)
Donor	European Commission, DG NEAR
Countries Covered	Algeria, Egypt, Israel, Jordan, Lebanon, Libya, Morocco, Occupied Palestinian Territory and Tunisia
Administrative Unit in the ILO responsible for administrating the project	DEVINVEST and CO-CAIRO
Technical Unit(s) in the ILO responsible for backstopping the project	DEVINVEST
P&B outcome (s) under evaluation	Outcome 3: Economic, social and environmental transitions for full, productive and freely chosen employment and decent work for all
SDG(s) under evaluation	SDG 8 – Target 8.5
Evaluation Manager	André F. Bongestabs ( <a href="mailto:bongestabsa@ilo.org">bongestabsa@ilo.org</a> )

### Background information

#### Context

Although several years have passed since the global recession of 2008 and the Arab Spring in 2011, many countries in the Southern Mediterranean are still struggling with fragile political, social, and economic conditions. Employment remains an important challenge in most of these countries. The struggle to find Decent Work in the region, especially among women and youth,

has been further exacerbated by the global COVID-19 pandemic, ongoing armed conflicts, political and economic instability, population displacement and immigration waves.

At the same time, countries in the Southern Mediterranean have all embarked - to varying degrees - on economic reform and trade and investment liberalization programmes to promote economic growth. These trade and investment policies have often been introduced independently of any national employment strategy, if one exists, or sufficient effort to align these policies with national employment objectives.

Individually, some Southern Mediterranean countries have also been active in bilateral trade negotiations (e.g., with the USA and Turkey) as well as in multilateral trade negotiations (e.g., the Uruguay and Doha Rounds of the World Trade Organization and the Greater Arab Free Trade Area (GAFTA). The EU, as Africa's largest trading partner supports the African Union's efforts to implement a sustainable and inclusive the African Continental Free Trade Area (AfCFTA) through development cooperation and trade policy. However, despite the number of bilateral and regional free trade agreements (FTAs) signed by the Southern Mediterranean countries, the region remains one of the least integrated in the world. Relatively limited integration has slowed down the region's significant potential for economic growth and job creation. At the same time, there is a growing perception in the region that the growth of national industries and jobs is jeopardised by trade and investment liberalization and the proliferation of FTAs – as the employment implications of trade and investment liberalization in the Southern Mediterranean countries have not been addressed. Consequently, openness to trade and investment has not adequately stimulated labour demand or created jobs for disadvantaged groups or brought substantial productivity increases and improvements in working conditions in the Southern Mediterranean countries.

Policy makers in the Southern Mediterranean countries acknowledge that, in the current context, there is a great need for creating new trade and investment opportunities that will lead to quality job creation. However, to better understand and act upon the employment implications of trade and investment policies, the Southern Mediterranean countries will need to address scarcity of quality data and knowledge of labour markets, limited institutional capacity for assessing the impact of trade and investment policies on employment and inexistent or weak mechanisms to align trade and investment policies with national employment objectives.

### **Programme background**

The “Mainstreaming Employment into Trade and Investment in the Southern Neighbourhood” (METI) is a programme hosted in the DEVINVEST branch of the ILO’s Employment Policy Department, funded by the European Union (EU), and implemented by the ILO. METI is a regional programme that aims to better enable policymakers in Middle East and North Africa (MENA) to incorporate an employment perspective into trade and investment policies. This will support the design and implementation of investment strategies that optimize the quantity and quality of employment creation in the region. These objectives are all the more urgent in the context of post-COVID-19 pandemic recovery.

The programme is facilitating the operationalization of the third pillar of the European Fund for Sustainable Development + (EFSD+) through political dialogue and support initiatives related to the COVID-19 pandemic. It aims to boost public and private investment to create more jobs and higher growth and work towards meeting other UN Sustainable Development Goals. METI was launched in September 2020 and will continue to support policymakers for a four-year period. The project collaborates closely with the “Employment impact assessment to maximize job creation in Africa” (STRENGTHEN2) programme, which covers related issues for countries in the sub-Saharan African countries.

The target groups of the programme are government officials from Ministries responsible for Trade and Investment, Labour, Economic Affairs, Planning, and other relevant line Ministries; staff in National Statistical Agencies; representatives from Trade Unions and Employers' Organizations; private sector representatives; technical specialists from National and Regional Institutions and development practitioners. The final beneficiaries are workers (especially women and youth) and employers (SMEs, in particular) in the tradable sectors of the partner countries.

### **The purpose of the programme**

The overall objective of the programme is to enable policy makers in the Southern Mediterranean to incorporate employment issues into trade and investment policies and design and implement interventions related to trade and investment that ultimately optimise the quantity and quality of employment created in the region. METI's four principal outcomes are:

- ▶ Regional- and country-level analysis of the impact of trade and investment policies on productive and decent employment in the partner countries is strengthened.
- ▶ Governments, social partners, and other relevant stakeholders in the region are enabled to factor the employment effects of trade and investment into policy dialogue and coordination.
- ▶ Sectoral recommendations are developed with key stakeholders in the partner countries to take advantage of employment opportunities resulting from trade and investment policies.
- ▶ Assessments of the trade and employment impact of public infrastructure investments in the partner countries are discussed with key stakeholders to optimize employment creation.

### **The programme strategy**

The fundamental logic of the programme is that strengthening the capabilities of stakeholders in the Southern Mediterranean to assess and monitor the employment impact of trade and investment policies will lead to a better understanding of how trade and investment policies affect employment outcomes across different sectors and groups in society and ultimately enhance policy design and implementation.

To do this, the programme will work with a regional component covering nine project countries (Algeria, Egypt, Israel, Jordan, Lebanon, Libya, Morocco, Occupied Palestinian Territory and Tunisia), which will bring relevant stakeholders together from the Southern Mediterranean countries to engage in joint capacity building, knowledge sharing, peer learning and wider regional dialogue on the employment impact of trade and investment policies.

At the national level, the programme works with four partner countries (Egypt, Jordan, Morocco, and Tunisia) to generate knowledge, transfer expertise, and enhance policy dialogue and coordination among government agencies, the social partners, and the private sector on creating and upgrading employment through trade and investment policies. It will ensure that policy dialogue on trade and investment in the region accounts for decent employment and that policy makers and private sector representatives have the tools to design national and sectoral strategies that will ultimately help create more and better jobs, especially for women and youth, and in small- and medium-sized enterprises.

### **Expected results**

The METI programme is contributing to the knowledge on the impact of trade and investment policies relevant to the region. This includes project support for the analysis of country-specific industrial and trade policies and measures (including infrastructure) to take advantage of

potential employment opportunities, mitigate any negative effects, and propose targeted policy recommendations. The four result areas of the programme focus respectively on:

- i. Synthesizing existing evidence and generating new knowledge on what works and what does not work with regard to creating employment through trade and investment policies in the Southern Mediterranean,
- ii. Guiding policy actors by building a comprehensive understanding of the employment effects of trade and investment policies to allow for the design and implementation of coherent policies at national and sectoral level,
- iii. Using the ILO's TRAVERA (Trade and Value Chains in Employment-Rich Activities) and STED (Skills for Trade and Economic Diversification) methods in order to develop sectoral recommendations for key stakeholders in the four partner countries and
- iv. Assessing the potential trade and employment impact of relevant public investments in the infrastructure sector in the selected partner countries and developing recommendations through public-private dialogue.

### **Programme management**

The project is financially centralised at ILO's headquarters in Geneva and overall managed by the Senior Specialist (not covered by METI funds).

The implementation of the programme is decentralized, with a Technical Officer and an Administrative Assistant based in Geneva, and a team composed of a Technical Specialist, a Junior Trade and Employment Officer and Project Assistant based in Cairo.

The Technical Officer in Geneva provides support to the overall financial management of and reporting on the programme, as well as support to global products in English language, technical backstopping to partner countries in the Middle East, and to the development of regional training events.

The Technical Specialist and her team in Cairo support the development of global products in Arabic and French language, provide backstopping to partner countries in North Africa and support to regional knowledge-sharing events.

For partner country-based activities, the programme team works in collaboration with the respective ILO Country/Regional Office (CO-Algiers for Morocco and Tunisia, CO-Cairo for Egypt, and RO-Arab States for Jordan). Similarly, for the regional activities, the programme liaises with relevant Country Offices (COs).

### **Purpose, objectives, and scope of the evaluation**

As the METI programme approaches halfway of its duration, the programme must undergo an independent mid-term evaluation, and later, at the end of the programme, will also undergo an independent final evaluation, in accordance with ILO's evaluation policy. Both evaluations are managed by an ILO certified evaluation manager and implemented by independent evaluators.

The programme completed an Evaluability Assessment in June 2022, which established that the programme is evaluable, however with some actions required to allow for more effective monitoring and evaluation processes. Significant to the mid-term evaluation is the recommendation to review and improve the programme's theory of change and logframe, in order to better link the programme's structure and actions to how it will achieve its results. The Evaluability Assessment also pointed out that at this stage the programme can be evaluated, but limitations on the programmatic scope may be required (e.g., some outputs and deliverables may still be at preparation or early stages to allow for a proper evaluation).

The mid-term evaluation will be used for accountability to the donor and ILO's constituents, and most importantly, to understand the progress of the programme towards its objectives, verify

to what extent the recommendations of the Evaluability Assessment are being implemented, how the programme links with other strategic interventions (e.g., ITC's Trade and Investment Facilitation Mechanism programme, and OECD's Support to the Investment Climate in the South Mediterranean Region for Sustainable Jobs and Growth programme), and provide programme learning for the final years of implementation, including course-correction recommendations and best practices, as relevant. Moreover, the mid-term evaluation will also aim to identify and provide recommendations opportunities, strategic and operational, for further work after the project period. The ILO applies the evaluation criteria established by the OECD/DAC Quality Standards for Development Evaluation and the UNEG Code of Conduct for Evaluation in the UN System. This evaluation will follow guidelines on results-based evaluation of the ILO Evaluation Department (EVAL) contained in the "ILO Policy Guidelines for Evaluation (3rd edition)"<sup>19</sup> and, more specifically, the checklist "Preparation of the Evaluation Report".

### **Evaluation purposes**

The METI programme's mid-term evaluation purpose is to assess the continued relevance of the programme and the progress made towards achieving its planned objectives and inform the programme on needed adjustments to ensure objectives are achieved. In particular, the mid-term evaluation will assess the programme in terms of coherence and relevance, efficiency, effectiveness, impact, and sustainability. It will have to:

- ▶ Assess the extent to which the programme has progressed in achieving its stated objective and expected results regarding the different target groups, as well as identify unexpected positive and negative results of the programme.
- ▶ Identify supporting factors that are allowing the programme to progress and constraints that may be limiting success, including implementation modalities chosen, partnership arrangements, contextual issues (e.g., the COVID-19), and how the programme has responded to these constraints.
- ▶ Assess the continuity of the relevance of the programme's design and implementation strategy in relation to the ILO, UN and SDGs and national development frameworks, priorities and needs.
- ▶ Assess the extent to which the project outcomes are likely to be sustainable and provide recommendations to programme stakeholders to promote sustainability and support further development of the outcomes.
- ▶ Identify lessons learned, good practices and synergies from the activities and results implemented so far, to inform the key stakeholders, particularly the programme's management, donor, and constituents, for the continuation of the programme's implementation.
- ▶ Assess to what extent the programme addressed the evaluability assessment recommendations were implemented.

This evaluation will be conducted by an evaluator with experience in conducting the full evaluation process. The evaluation consultants have the sole responsibility for the substantive content of the mid-term evaluation report in line with EVAL quality requirements.

### **Scope of the evaluation**

The METI programme's mid-term evaluation will evaluate the progress of the programme from the start of the programme's implementation period, 01 September 2020, to 31 August 2022. The evaluation will encompass the entire programme's interventions, including the regional and national level interventions. It will consider all the documents linked to the project, including

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<sup>19</sup> Available at: [https://www.ilo.org/eval/Evaluationpolicy/WCMS\\_571339/lang-en/index.htm](https://www.ilo.org/eval/Evaluationpolicy/WCMS_571339/lang-en/index.htm)

the project document, progress reports, results of the evaluability assessment and implementation of its recommendations, as well as documents produced as outputs of the programme. Especial attention should be given to the impacts that the COVID-19 pandemic had in the programme's implementation, and how and to what extent the pandemic affected the relevance, efficiency, and effectiveness of the programme's activities.

The scope of the evaluation for the regional component of the programme should cover how the programme has supported capacity building, knowledge sharing, peer learning and policy dialogue, from a regional perspective, but, to the extent possible, also from the perspective of the each of the nine countries included in the component, through desk reviews and interviews with selected stakeholders. Considering the national level component of the programme, the evaluation should cover the implementation of interventions in Egypt, Jordan, Morocco, and Tunisia, with more in-depth desk review, and interviews with key stakeholders and focus group discussions.

The evaluation process should emphasize lessons learned and needed adjustments to inform the implementation of the programme in its remaining duration.

The evaluation should integrate gender equality, disability inclusion and other non-discrimination concerns, adherence to international labour standards, social dialogue, and a just transition to environmental sustainability as crosscutting themes throughout its deliverables and process.

### **Clients of the evaluation**

The main clients of the mid-term evaluation are:

- ▶ The METI Programme team and management, including the team directly responsible for the implementation of the programme, but the findings of the mid-term evaluation will also inform collaborating ILO Country/Regional Offices.
- ▶ ILO's constituents, including government officials from Ministries responsible for Trade and Investment, Labour, Economic Affairs, Planning and other relevant line ministries, National Statistical Agencies, and representatives from Trade Unions and Employers' Organizations.
- ▶ The European Commission, as the programme's donor and prominent stakeholder.
- ▶ Regional institutions concerned with trade and investment matters and engaged with the programme.

### **Evaluation criteria and questions**

The mid-term evaluation will be conducted according to the criteria and approaches as defined in the ILO Policy Guidelines for results-based evaluation<sup>20</sup>, namely: relevance, coherence, effectiveness, efficiency, sustainability, and impact. Moreover, the evaluation should assess the alignment and extent the project has to ILO's cross-cutting policy drivers (gender equality and non-discrimination, inclusion of persons living with disabilities, international standards, social dialogue, and environmental sustainability).

The following questions are intended to guide and facilitate the evaluation. Other aspects can be added or modified as identified by the evaluator in accordance with the given purpose and in consultation with the evaluation manager. Any fundamental changes to the evaluation criteria and questions should be agreed between the evaluation manager and the evaluator and reflected in the inception report.

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<sup>20</sup> Available at: [https://www.ilo.org/eval/Evaluationpolicy/WCMS\\_571339/lang--en/index.htm](https://www.ilo.org/eval/Evaluationpolicy/WCMS_571339/lang--en/index.htm)

Table 1: Key evaluation questions and related evaluation criteria

ILO Evaluation Criteria	Evaluation Questions
1. Relevance and Validity of Design	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1.1. Are the programme’s strategic elements (objectives, outputs, implementation strategies, targets, and indicators) achievable? Is the intervention logic realistic? If not, why? And what should be done differently?</li> <li>1.2. To what extent does the design of the programme consider gender, non-discrimination, and inclusion, especially of persons with Disabilities (PWD)?</li> <li>1.3. Has the project been able to leverage the ILO contributions, through its comparative advantages (including tripartism, international labour standards, etc.)?</li> <li>1.4. To what extent the programme’s design allowed to respond to emerging needs due to the COVID-19 pandemic? Are adaptations in the programme needed to support a human-centred recovery?</li> <li>1.5. To what extent the programme has incorporated the recommendations and results of the evaluability assessment report into the programme’s design and implementation?</li> <li>1.6. Are the objectives/outputs planned for the final years of implementation of the project still relevant?</li> </ul>
2. Coherence	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1.</li> <li>2.</li> <li>2.1. Does METI’s design effectively address the national development priorities, UNSDCF/UNDAF, and donor’s specific priorities and concerns in the 9 countries?</li> <li>2.2. Has the specific context of each country and the interests of different stakeholders and final beneficiaries been sufficiently considered in the design and implementation of the programme?</li> <li>2.3. How does the Programme fit within the ILO’s Global Policy Outcomes, the SDGs, and relevant targets, especially those identified as priority in the national development strategies?</li> </ul>
3. Efficiency	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>3.</li> <li>3.1. What evidence is there of cost-effectiveness in the Programme’s implementation and management?</li> <li>3.2. How effective are the project management arrangements? Is the programme able to leverage expertise in the field, particularly in those countries where the programme does not have permanent presence?</li> <li>3.3. Have Programme’s funds and outputs been used and delivered in a timely manner? What are the time and cost efficiency measures that could be introduced to improve the achievement of results?</li> <li>3.4. What are the partnership arrangements in the implementation of the Programme at national and regional levels? What are the challenges in the formulation of these partnerships? What are the results of these partnerships and how to improve them?</li> </ul>



4. Effectiveness	<p>4.</p> <p>4.1. To what extent have the overall Programme objectives and expected outputs, qualitatively and quantitatively been achieved? Will the project be likely to achieve its medium and long-term outcomes by the end of the programme?</p> <p>4.2. Are there any external factors that hindered (e.g., COVID-19, political instability, changes in government's priorities) or facilitated the achievement of the programme outcomes?</p> <p>4.3. Were there any unplanned effects (negative or positive)?</p> <p>4.4. Which have been the main contributing and challenging factors towards project's success in attaining its targets?</p> <p>4.5. What is the assessment regarding the quality of the project outputs?</p> <p>4.6. To which extent have the social partners been involved in the implementation of the project?</p> <p>4.7. To what extent did the project address promote gender equality, non-discrimination and inclusion of people living with disabilities in its activities and its products?</p>
5. Impact	<p>5.1 What are the elements of the programme that are not likely to be achieved or sustainable?</p> <p>5.2 What are the noteworthy, good practices and lessons learned?</p> <p>5.3 What are the areas for further reinforcement of the project achievements?</p>
6. Sustainability	<p>6.1 To what extent are the results of the intervention likely to have a long term, sustainable positive contribution to the relevant SDGs and targets (explicitly or implicitly)?</p> <p>6.2 How has ownership and sustainability been addressed?</p> <p>6.3 Has the project developed and implemented any exit strategy?</p> <p>6.4 What are the immediate actions/interventions by the ILO and donor to ensure that the achievements of the programme can be met and sustained?</p>

## Methodology

The independent mid-term evaluation will comply with evaluation norms and standards and follow ethical safeguards, all as specified in ILO's evaluation procedures. The ILO adheres to the United Nations Evaluation Group (UNEG) evaluation norms and standards as well as to the OECD/DAC Evaluation Quality Standards. The final methodology and evaluation questions will be determined by the consultant in consultation with the Evaluation Manager. For required quality control of the whole process, the evaluator will follow the EVAL evaluation policy guidelines and the ILO/EVAL checklists. The policy guidelines are available [\[here\]](#).

The evaluation will be primarily qualitative in nature but will incorporate quantitative summative target values tracked and reported by the project. It will include triangulation to increase the validity and rigor of the evaluation findings, engaging with tripartite constituents,

stakeholders, and partners of the programme, as much as feasible, at all levels during the data collection and reporting phases.

The evaluation methodology will include:

▶ **Desk review** of all relevant documents, which should include at least:

From the Programme:

- Project document and its logical framework.
- Funding agreement/ relevant minute sheets.
- Implementation plan.
- Performance evaluation plan.
- Progress and status reports, including the Evaluability Assessment Report.
- Studies and research undertaken by the programme.
- Trainings, workshops and dialogues' reports and documentation.
- Financial documentation.
- Any other documents that might be useful for the evaluation

From the relevant countries' development framework, including those relevant for SDGs:

- UN Development Action Framework (UNDAF)/or UN Sustainable Development Cooperation Framework (UNSDCF).
- Decent Work Country Programme (DWCP) documents for each country.
- ILO's Strategic Programme, Framework and Programme and Budget.

Access to the relevant documents and additional sources will be provided with the support of the programme's team.

- ▶ **Meetings with the project staff (virtual)**, to reach a common understanding for the evaluation process and preparations for the evaluation on the different components of the programme, including the four partner countries, the regional and global components.
- ▶ **Meetings with backstopping units, Country Offices, and the donor (virtual)**: the evaluator will meet (virtual) with the technical backstopping in the DWT Cairo, RO-Arab States and in HQ, with management of ILO Country Offices covering the partner countries (CO-Algiers for Morocco and Tunisia, CO-Cairo for Egypt, and RO-Arab States for Jordan), and with the donor (EC DG/NEAR). These meetings aim to reach a common understanding in relation of the technical and financial status of the project.
- ▶ **Interview with stakeholders**: the evaluator will meet with the national key partners of the programme on the national and regional level. Given the number of countries covered by the programme and the time and budget available for the mid-term evaluation, different approaches should be taken for partner countries and those covered by the regional component.

The evaluation team will ensure that women's views and perceptions are also reflected in databases, interviews, and that gender-specific questions are included in the questionnaires.

**Partner Countries** (Egypt, Jordan, Morocco, and Tunisia):

- Field Visits for data collection, interviews and focus groups with stakeholders should ideally be conducted to all four partner countries.
- The evaluator will meet with as many and wide-ranging stakeholders as possible to successfully inform the evaluation, with a focus on meeting the ILO constituents involved in the programme and the Delegation of the European Union in each country. The evaluator will prepare an interview guide that includes a list of interview questions for each type of stakeholder.

- The exact itinerary of the field visits will be determined between the consultant and the ILO, based on scheduling and availability of interviewees.
- At the end of the fieldwork the evaluator will organize a debriefing meeting for the key national partners and relevant stakeholders, ILO, and the donor to present and discuss the preliminary findings and the lessons learned.

Countries covered by the programme's regional component:

- The evaluator will conduct online interviews with ILO constituents involved in the programme, and the Delegation of the European Union in each country.
- A regional debriefing workshop (online) will be organized with participation from key stakeholders, ILO staff and partners donor to present and discuss the preliminary findings and the lessons learned.

An indicative list of persons to be interviewed for each country will be prepared by the programme team in consultation with the Evaluation Manager.

To the extent possible, the data collection, analysis and presentation should be responsive to and include issues relating to ILO's normative work, social dialogue, diversity, and non-discrimination, including disability issues.

Due to the Covid-19 pandemic and its impact on the world of work, this evaluation will be conducted in the context of criteria and approaches outlined in the ILO internal guide: "Implications of Covid-19 on evaluations in the ILO: An internal Guide on adapting to the situation".

- ▶ **A validation workshop (virtual)** will be organized toward the end of the evaluation, with participation from key stakeholders, the donor, ILO staff and programme partners. This is an opportunity to present the preliminary findings, invite the participants to validate them and fill in any data gaps.
- ▶ **Production of the evaluation report.** The draft will be subject of a methodological review by the evaluation manager, and upon the necessary adjustments, it will be circulated among the key stakeholders. Subsequently, the evaluation manager will consolidate any written comments and provide to the evaluator - who will develop the final version of the report, addressing the comments - or explain the reason for not addressing the comments, if that would be the case.

## Main deliverables

The evaluation team will produce and deliver the following deliverables:

- ▶ **Deliverable 1: Inception report** - including the conceptual framework that will be used to undertake the evaluation; the review of the methodology proposed in the TOR, including evaluation questions, with proposed changes, as required; details on data needs, data collection approach, sources, and tools; detailed work plan; list of stakeholders for interviews, with interview guides; agenda for stakeholders' workshop; outline of Mid-term Evaluation Report. The inception report should be no more than 20 pages, excluding annexes.  
The Inception report should be approved by the Evaluation manager before proceeding with the field work.
- ▶ **Deliverable 2: Draft evaluation report** (to be written in English) - the report should answer the questions related to the evaluation criteria, including the recommendations, lessons learned, good practices, technical recommendations for the key stakeholders. The report must be no longer than 30 pages excluding annexes.  
The report will be sent to the evaluation manager for review.

- ▶ **Deliverable 3: Final evaluation report** (written in English) - incorporating written comments received from ILO and other key stakeholders; including an executive summary (using ILO/EVAL template), lessons learnt and good practices (using ILO/EVAL template), and annexes. Must be about 30-40 pages maximum (excluding annexes and executive summary).

Annexes should include the questions matrix, the interview guides, field work schedule, a list of interviewees, and a list of documents analysed, a PowerPoint summary in English.

### Management arrangements and work plan (including timeframe)

The evaluation will be managed by Mr. André Bongestabs (bongestabsa@ilo.org), ILO officer in process of certification by EVAL as evaluation manager, who has no prior involvement in the project, and oversight by Mr. Peter Wichmand, Senior Evaluation Officer EVAL.

The evaluation team will discuss with Mr. Bongestabs all technical and methodological issues when needed. The Evaluation Manager will coordinate with the METI team to provide the evaluation team with the main documents and any information that they will need to carry out their assignment, to organize meetings with the authorities, partners and beneficiaries concerned by the programme. The evaluation team will also receive technical, logistical, and administrative support from the programme team.

The programme team will provide logistical support to the evaluator team and will assist in organizing the data collection (documents and interviews). The programme will ensure that all relevant documentation is up to date and easily accessible (in electronic form in a space such as Google Drive) by both consultants from the first day of the contract (desk review phase).

### Evaluation Timetable and Schedule

The mid-term evaluation is planned to take place from February 2023 to May 2023.

Phase	Responsible Person	Tasks	Effort and Tentative Dates
I - Inception	Evaluator	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Briefing with the evaluation manager,</li> <li>• Briefing with programme team and the donor</li> <li>• Desk Review of programme related documents</li> <li>• Virtual briefing with ILO stakeholders</li> <li>• Inception report preparation</li> </ul>	7 workdays  February 2023
II – Data Collection	Evaluator with organizational support from ILO HQ Geneva, CO-Cairo, CO-Algiers, and RO-Arab States	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• In-country for consultations with programme staff</li> <li>• Field visits</li> <li>• Interviews with programme staff, stakeholders, partners, and beneficiaries</li> <li>• Stakeholders debrief for sharing of preliminary findings and validation of results</li> </ul>	20 workdays  February-March 2023 (field visits)  March-April 2023

		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Virtual interviews with stakeholders of regional component</li> <li>Regional debriefing workshop (online)</li> <li>Debriefing with CO-Cairo, CO-Algiers, RO-Arab States and DEVINVEST</li> </ul>	April 2023 (Debrief)
III – Report preparation	Evaluator	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Draft report based on consultations from field visits and desk review and the stakeholders' meetings</li> </ul>	9 workdays April 2023
	Evaluation Manager	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Quality check and initial review by Evaluation Manager</li> <li>Circulate draft report to stakeholders</li> <li>Consolidate comments of stakeholders and send to the evaluator</li> </ul>	April-May 2023
	Evaluator	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Validation workshop (virtual) to present preliminary findings, validate them and fill in any data gaps</li> <li>Finalize the report including explanations on why comments were not included</li> </ul>	4 workdays May 2023
TOTAL WORKDAYS			40 workdays

### Profile of the evaluation team

The mid-term evaluation will be conducted by an experienced evaluator.

#### Qualifications

- ▶ Advanced university degree preferably in economics, business management or related qualifications.
- ▶ A minimum of 7 years of professional experience in evaluating international programmes and projects, development initiatives, logical framework and other strategic approaches, M&E methods and approaches, and information analysis and report writing.
- ▶ Previous involvement and understanding of ILO procedures is an advantage and extensive international experience in the fields of project formulation, execution, and evaluation is required.
- ▶ Understanding of the development context and work experience in the contexts of Egypt, Jordan, Morocco, Tunisia, and North Africa and Middle East are desirable.
- ▶ Excellent communication, interview, and report writing skills.
- ▶ Demonstrated ability to work in group and deliver quality results within strict deadlines.
- ▶ Excellent knowledge and excellent drafting skills in English and Arabic. Knowledge of French constitutes additional asset of selection.

- ▶ Knowledge of ILO's roles and mandate and its tripartite structure as well as UN evaluation norms and its programming is desirable.

The Evaluator will be responsible for conducting the mid-term evaluation, including the coordination with the Evaluation Manager, Programme Team and stakeholders, conduct a desk review of all relevant documents and conduct field missions to all partner countries to meet main stakeholders and collect data, elaborate the inception report (incl. methodological elaborations), the first version and final report in deadlines and in conformity with ILO and international standards, conduct a virtual stakeholders' workshop to share preliminary findings and validate results, participate to debriefings with main stakeholders on the main results and recommendations of the evaluation.

### **Legal and ethical matters**

The independent mid-term evaluation will comply with evaluation norms and standards and follow ethical safeguards, all as specified in ILO's evaluation procedures. The ILO adheres to the United Nations Evaluation Group (UNEG) evaluation norms and standards as well as to the OECD/DAC Evaluation Quality Standards, and the evaluation team must abide by the EVAL's Code of Conduct for carrying out the evaluation.

The evaluation team, its individuals and as group, should not have any links to the programme management, design, or implementation, or any other effective or perceived conflict of interest that would interfere with the independence of the evaluation.

All data and information received from the ILO or other stakeholders for the purposes of this assignment shall be treated as confidential and shall be used only for the purpose of executing this mandate. All intellectual property rights arising from the execution of this mandate are attributed to the ILO. The contents of the written documents obtained and used in connection with this assignment may not be disclosed to third parties without the prior written consent of the ILO or the relevant stakeholders.

## Annex 7: Updated LogFrame

	Intervention Logic	Indicators	Baseline	Targets	Assumption
Overall objective	Increased alignment of the policies on trade and investment with the national employment objectives in the Southern Neighbourhood of the European Union (EU), which is expected to contribute to the increased quality and quantity of employment in the region.	# of policy documents and policy makers statements re employment creation through T&I	5 policy documents	2 policy documents per partner country (1 on trade and employment and 1 on investment and employment)	n/a
Outcomes					
	<b>Outcome 1:</b> Improved knowledge on impact of T&I on decent employment at national and regional levels in the Southern Neighbourhood	Increased knowledge of policymakers and technical experts of the relevance and usefulness of knowledge generated by the project	n/a	100% of the targeted policy makers and technical experts engaged in capacity development activities of the project	Knowledge generated by project is of high quality and reaches the right stakeholders
	<b>Outcome 2:</b> Strengthened capabilities of the governments, social partners, and other stakeholders to inform policy dialogue, policy development and implementation on employment effect of T&I	Increased number of project stakeholders who factor the employment effects of trade and investment into policy dialogue and coordination.	0	100% of the PWGs	Trade, investment, and employment are political priorities.  Relevant stakeholders are willing and available to receive training.

	<b>Outcome 3:</b> Approved sectoral recommendations on how to create inclusive employment based on the export value chain analysis	# of sectoral recommendations approved	0  0	5 per partner country  360 (50%)	Relevant stakeholders are willing and available to engage with the project on pro-employment expert value chain development
	<b>Outcome 4:</b> Informed national stakeholders (e.g., national authorities, EU, and the financial institutions) that factor the proposed recommendations on enhancing employment effect through T&I in the public infrastructure investments in four partner countries	Extent of awareness of trade-related public infrastructure investments with employment creation among national authorities  # of recommendations developed on employment considerations (markers) in new public infrastructure projects in the region	n/a  0	100% of the PWGs  4	Relevant stakeholders are willing and available to engage with the project on public infrastructure investment  Relevant documents are publicly available
<b>Outputs<sup>21</sup></b>					
Outputs 1	1.1 By the end of the project two regional knowledge products are developed	# of regional knowledge products developed	0	1 Thematic Report on key issues in relation to the impact of trade and investment policies on productive and decent employment in the	Necessary data and information are available and accessible.

<sup>21</sup> [https://www.ilo.org/wcmsp5/groups/public/---ed\\_mas/---hrd/documents/instructionalmaterial/wcms\\_393392.pdf](https://www.ilo.org/wcmsp5/groups/public/---ed_mas/---hrd/documents/instructionalmaterial/wcms_393392.pdf)



	<p>1.2: By the end of the project 8 national knowledge products developed</p> <p>1.3 By the end of the project regular outreach and dissemination of knowledge products is organized</p>	<p># of national knowledge products developed</p> <p># of people reached by all knowledge products</p>	<p>0</p> <p>0</p>	<p>Southern Neighbourhood.</p> <p>1 Policy Resource Guide of lessons learnt from the METI project on how to align trade and investment policies with national employment objectives in the Southern Neighbourhood.</p> <p>4 Country Reports and 4 Policy Briefs on the impact of trade and investment policies on productive and decent employment in countries of the Southern Neighbourhood.</p> <p>600 (50% women)</p>	<p>Stakeholders are willing and available to participate in training and meetings on sectoral approaches.</p>
Outputs 2	2.1: By the end of the project, at least 3 regional knowledge-sharing events organized	<p># of stakeholders trained</p> <p># of regional knowledge-sharing events organized</p>	<p>0</p> <p>0</p>	<p>80</p> <p>3 (including one among PWGs)</p>	<p>Stakeholders are willing and available to participate in training and PWG meetings.</p>

	<p>2.2 By the end of the project, 2 training courses for policy makers, social partners and other stakeholders at national level are organized</p> <p>2.3: One new platform for national policy dialogue on the impact of T&amp;I policies on employment is established in each partner country</p> <p>2.4 By the end of the project, at least 4 policy dialogues are organized in partner countries</p>	<p># training courses organized</p> <p># PWGs established</p> <p># of policy dialogues at national/PWG level organized</p>	<p>0</p> <p>0</p> <p>0</p>	<p>2 (1 on coordinated TRAVERA/ STED assessment, 1 on using ITC methodology)</p> <p>4 Policy Working Group (PWG) in four partner countries</p> <p>4 per country (including at least 1 on the assessment of the T&amp;I impact of public infrastructure to optimize employment creation; 2 on value chain assessment)</p>	
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Outputs 3	<p>3.1 By the end of the project, two sectorial studies on export value chain through application of ILO's coordinated TRAVERA/ STED methods are organized in each partner country</p> <p>3.2 By the end of the project, at least 4 recommendations on improvement of value chain are developed in each partner country</p>	<p># of sectorial studies produced</p> <p># of meetings/workshops</p> <p># of recommendations developed</p> <p># of recommendations adopted</p>	<p>0</p> <p>0</p> <p>0</p> <p>0</p>	<p>12</p> <p>12</p> <p>5 per country</p> <p>4 per country</p>	<p>Necessary data for analysis is available and accessible</p> <p>Suitable experts are available.</p> <p>Stakeholders are willing and available to participate in training and meetings on sectoral approaches.</p>
Outputs 4	<p>4.1 By the end of the project 4 studies on the potential trade and employment impact of relevant infrastructure investments are organized in four partner countries.</p> <p>4.2 By the end of the project one validation meeting of each study is organized with policy and decision makers, social partners, and other relevant stakeholders.</p> <p>4.3 By the end of the project key indicators/markers on employment for using in funding public</p>	<p># of assessments of the trade and employment impact of public infrastructure investments.</p> <p># of validation meetings and discussions held on the trade and employment impact of public infrastructure investments.</p> <p># of key indicators/markers proposed</p>	<p>0</p> <p>0</p>	<p>4</p> <p>2 per partner country</p>	<p>Necessary data for analysis is available and accessible</p> <p>Suitable experts are available</p> <p>Stakeholders are willing and available to participate in project's meetings and discussions.</p>

	infrastructure projects in the region are developed		0	4	
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