

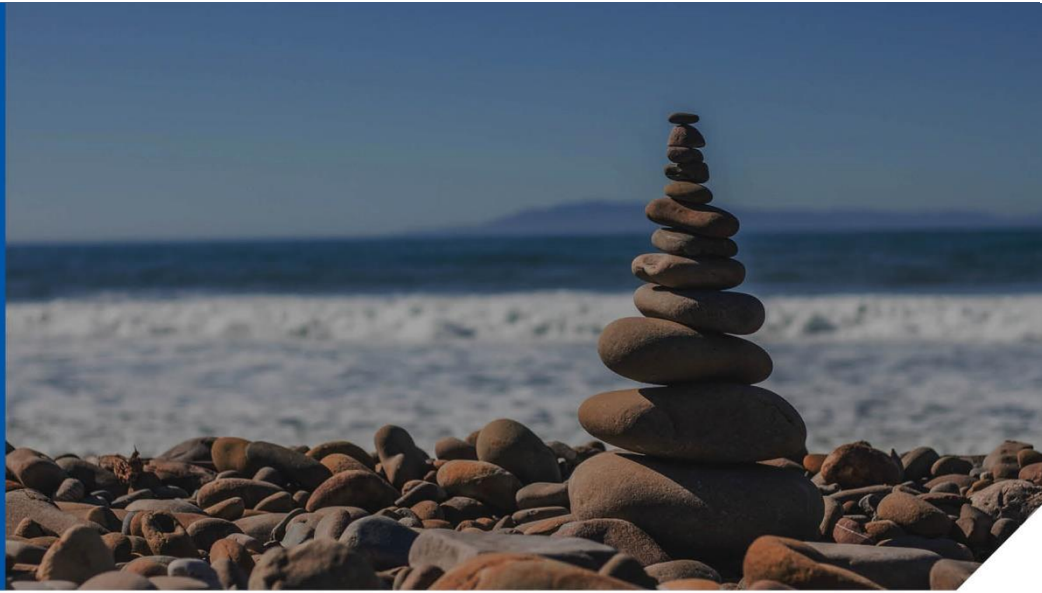


International
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i-eval Discovery



ILO's Cluster of Interventions funded under RBSA round 2020-21 (improved employment opportunities COVID response focused)

ILO DC/SYMBOL: [BGD/20/01/RBS, LKA/20/02/RBS, TLS/20/01/RBS, and VNM/20/01/RBS]

Type of Evaluation: Clustered

Evaluation timing: Final

Evaluation nature: Independent

Project countries: [Bangladesh, Sri Lanka, Timor Leste, Viet Nam]

P&B Outcome(s): [BGD101: Outcome 4, 5 and 1; LKA102&107: Outcome 5 and 4; TLS 176: Outcome 3; and VNM 128: Outcome 3, A1, 6 and 2]

SDG(s): [BDG 101: SDG targets 1.5, 4.4 and 8.3; LKA 102 and 107: SDG targets 4.4, 8.6 and 8.3; TLS 176: SDG target 8.2; and VNM 128: SDG target 8.6]

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ILO Administrative Office: [ILO Country Office, Bangladesh; ILO Country Office for Sri Lanka and the Maldives; ILO Country Office for Indonesia and Timor-Leste; and ILO Country Office, Viet Nam]

ILO Technical Office(s): [BGD 101: Skills, Migration, Gender, Enterprise, ACTEMP, and ACTRAV Specialist's in DWT Delhi and ILO Headquarters; LKA 102 and 107: DWT Delhi; TLS 176: DWT ROAP, Employment Department, EMPINVEST, and DEVINVEST; and VNM 128: DWT Bangkok]

Joint evaluation agencies: [Not Applicable]

Project duration: [Bangladesh: October 2020 – December 2021; Sri Lanka: September 2020 – November 2022]; Timor Leste: August 2020 – December 2022; and Viet Nam: August 2020 – December 2021). *No-Cost Extensions are included: See Table 1 and Figure 1.*

Donor and budget: [Regular Budget Supplementary Account (RBSA); Budget: US\$ 2,015,000 (including Bangladesh 500,000 USD; Sri Lanka 485,000 USD; Timor Leste 550,000 USD; and Viet Nam 480,000 USD)]

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List of Abbreviations

ACT/EMP	Bureau on Employers' Activities (ILO)
ACTRAV	Bureau of Workers' Activities (ILO)
ADB	ADB Asian Development Bank
AEC	ASEAN Economic Community
ASEAN	Association of Southeast Asian Nations
BEF	Bangladesh Employers' Federation
BW	Better Work
CEC	Central Economic Commission
CO	Country Office
COP-26	Conference of the Parties - 26
CPO	Country Program Outcome
DAC	Development Assistance Committee
DTET	Department of Technical Education and Training
DWCP	Decent Work Country Programme
DWT	ILO Decent Work Team
EBMO	Employers' and Business Member Organizations
ENTERPRISES	Enterprises Department ILO
EO	Employers' Organisation
FDMN	Forcibly Displaced Myanmar Nationals
FPRW	Fundamental Principles and Rights at Work
FUNDAMENTALS	Fundamental Principles and Rights at Work Branch ILO
GED	Gender Equality and Diversity Branch ILO
GEEW	Gender Equality and Empowerment of Women
GOVERNANCE	Governance and Tripartism Department
GSO	General Statistics Office (GSO) of the Ministry of Planning and Investment, Viet Nam
ICLA	International Conference of Labour Statisticians
ILO	International Labour Organization
ILS	International Labour Standards
INWORK	Inclusive Labour Markets, Labour Relations and Working Conditions Branch ILO
IR	Industrial Relations
ITC-ILO	International Training Centre of the ILO
LABADMIN/OSH	Labour Administration, Labour Inspection and Occupational Safety and Health Branch
MOLISA	Ministry of Labour, Invalids and Social Affairs, Viet Nam
MSME	Micro and Small and Medium Enterprises
NAITA	National Apprentice and Industrial Training Authority
NCCWE	National Coordination Committee for Workers' Education
NGO	Non-Governmental Organization
NUSS	National Union of Seafarers Sri Lanka
ODA	Official Development Assistance
OECD	Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development
OSH	Occupational Safety and Health
P&B	Programme & Budget
PAC	Project Advisory Committee
PARTNERSHIPS	Department for Multilateral Partnerships and Development Cooperation
RBSA	Regular Budget Supplementary Account
ROAP	Regional Office for Asia and Pacific
SAARC	South Asian Association for Regional Cooperation
SCORE	Sustaining Competitive and Responsible Enterprises (ILO)
SDG	Sustainable Development Goal
SECTOR	Sectoral Policies Department ILO
SIYB	Start and Improve Your Business programme

SLITHM	Sri Lanka Institute of Tourism and Hotel Management (public sector training institute)
SLNSS	Sri Lanka Nidahas Sevaka Sangamaya
SM/FEP	State Ministry of Foreign Employment Promotion – Sri Lanka
ToC	Theory of Change
ToR	Terms of Reference
TVEC	Tertiary and Vocational Education Commission
TVET	Technical and Vocational Education and Training
UN	United Nations
UNCT	United Nations Country Team
UNDAF	United Nations Development Assistance Framework
UNDP	United Nations Development Programme
UNEG	United Nations Evaluation Group
UNEP	United Nations Environment Programme
UNFCCC	United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change
UNIDO	United Nations Industrial Development Organization
UNSDCF	United Nations Sustainable Development Cooperation Framework
UN-SWAP	UN System-Wide Action Plan on GEEW
UN Women	United Nations Entity for Gender Equality and the Empowerment of Women
USD	United States Dollars
VCCI	Viet Nam’s Chamber of Commerce and Industry
VGCL	Viet Nam General Confederation of Labour
VTA-SL	Vocational Training Authority of Sri Lanka
WB	World Bank
WEP	Women Empowerment Principles (UN Women)
WHO	World Health Organization
WLP	Women’s Leadership Programme
WRC	Worker Rights Consortium

Executive Summary

Background and project description

The present evaluation report is mandated by the Terms of Reference (ToR) for the Final Independent Cluster Evaluation entitled “**ILO’s Cluster of Interventions funded under RBSA round 2020-21 (improved employment opportunities COVID-19 response focused)**” (Annex 1). RBSA is the Regular Budget Supplementary Account of the ILO. The clustered evaluation concerned four interventions focussed specifically on **improved employment opportunities** in diverse environments through *different* sets of interventions in Bangladesh, Sri Lanka, Timor Leste and Viet Nam. Each intervention was originally designed for 15-months starting in late 2020, but various no-cost extensions were implemented, and the last intervention was completed in December 2022 (Figure 1). The interventions were implemented by the respective ILO Country Offices under the overall support from ROAP in Bangkok. The RBSA funding varied between US\$ 480,000 and 550,000 for each intervention.

Purpose, Scope and Methodology of the Evaluation

The present evaluation’s *purpose* is to have overall organization learning from the experiences of the four interventions as well as for accountability of the results planned to be achieved. The *scope* of the Evaluation covers the four RBSA interventions in Bangladesh, Sri Lanka, Timor Leste and Viet Nam. The evaluation also examines the Project’s performance in relation to all relevant ILO’s *cross-cutting issues* including gender equality and non-discrimination. The *main clients* include the relevant programming officers of ILO’s Country Offices in the Asia Pacific region as well as the ILO ROAP and ILO’s Headquarters. The *methodology* includes a desk study of the relevant documents and primary data collection through online interviews with 38 Stakeholders (42% female). The participatory methodology further includes a critical reflection process by the key stakeholders in particular through the online stakeholders’ workshop and the inputs by stakeholders to the draft report. *Key deliverables* are the inception report, the preliminary presentation of findings at the online stakeholders’ workshop, the draft report, and the present final report taking into consideration the feedback on the draft report.

Findings

The conclusions of the present final independent clustered evaluation of four RBSA Interventions in Bangladesh, Sri Lanka, Timor Leste and Viet Nam are analysed in this section according to the eight evaluation criteria used throughout this report. With respect to the first evaluation criteria, **Relevance and Validity of Design**, the Evaluation found that the four interventions were **highly relevant** for the targeted groups bearing in mind the severe impact of the COVID-19 pandemic. All four were directed at improved employment levels and/or improved probability of decent employability options for affected vulnerable groups, i.e., a host community, returnee migrant workers, the rural poor and informal workers. The stakeholders interviewed all underlined the high relevance of the interventions for these target groups as well as its *timely* COVID-19 response.

In terms of the **Validity of Design**, the RBSA Guidance in 2020 laid down some ground rules: a maximum allocation of \$600,000 with an implementation period that should not exceed 15 months. Unlike in Development Cooperation projects and programmes, *no* full-fledged M&E systems and logical frameworks are required in RBSA proposals, although reporting and monitoring does take place. That evaluations of RBSA interventions are important for learning was found by the 2020 Review of the RBSA Funding Modality. Each RBSA proposal does have a targeted Results Framework related to the respective P&B Outcomes (Annex 3) and generally

it was found that the link with the P&B Outcomes is clear. In certain cases, measures to promote gender equality could have been more explicitly included in the proposals.

A high degree of **Coherence** was found between the interventions and the existing efforts of the ILO Country Offices either building on previous projects or cooperating directly with (in part) simultaneously implemented projects. The coherence with the existing efforts of tripartite partners was found to be mixed. While the overall fit with the needs of the respective countries was assessed as quite good since urgent needs were addressed, attention for the explicit alignment to the policies of the workers' and employers' organisations could have been better at times.

On **Effectiveness**, the interventions were generally found to be quite effective in achieving the desired results (cf. Table 3 and Annex 9). While they all achieved positive contributions towards addressing **improved employment opportunities** amidst the COVID-19 pandemic, they were undertaken in diverse environments through quite different sets of interventions. While in Timor Leste a direct contribution was made towards an increase in employment during crisis times, in the other countries the contribution was more indirect: In Bangladesh through building the capacity of *local* tripartite constituents and enterprise development; in Sri Lanka through institutional capacity development (incl. TVET institutions, e-RPL and 'Skills Passport') and through cooperation with Workers' Organisations; and in Viet Nam through providing accurate statistics informing policies and innovative work on informality.

The interventions encountered a range of overall and more country specific **challenges** during their implementation, including delays due to COVID-19, the limited timeframe of RBSA interventions, and coordination is required with many stakeholders within ILO. The challenges by country are manifold, but the key ones are as follows: In Bangladesh it was difficult in the initial stages to get the engagement of local stakeholders in Cox's Bazar for the proposed activities with the host communities as this was a novel approach. Sri Lanka was hit during the implementation by a deep economic and social crisis. In Timor Leste the COVID-19 measures were particularly severe with the GoTL declaring a three-month State of Emergency in 2020. In Viet Nam the tripartite government partner, MOLISA, decided against undertaking certain activities during the COVID-19 pandemic, while the important work with the high level Central Economic Commission (CEC) was not anticipated leading to some budget reallocations. Overall, it was found that the ILO teams have responded swiftly and adequately to most of these challenges.

The achievements made by the four interventions were facilitated by several pertinent **Enabling or Success Factors**: the great achievement by PARTNERSHIPS to have and to maintain unearmarked funds via RBSA; the realisation among all stakeholders of the importance of Decent Work in times of crises and the widely felt commitment to target the vulnerable groups; the high commitment and competence of the ILO staff involved and of ILO Country Offices; and the flexibility of the RBSA funding modality including supporting the continuity of activities and staff. The area that could have been done better in terms of effectiveness is more systematic involvement of Workers' Organisations and to a lesser extent also of Employers' Organisations. While all four interventions have made efforts to engage them, there is clearly room for improvement, including targeted capacity building and dedicated budgets for these organisations.

For the **Efficiency** of resource use investigations are made, among others, of the expenditures, which shows that the great majority of expenditures in the four interventions has been spent on what can be called 'actual activities', i.e. subcontracts, seminars and other training (55 - 75%). The second largest category is 'staff' (20 - 35%), whereby the Bangladesh and Sri Lanka interventions overspent compared to the RBSA maximum of 30%. The **Expenditure Rates** varied

from over 99% in in Timor Leste and Viet Nam, to 84% in Bangladesh and just 64% in Sri Lanka. However, there are very pertinent reasons for this underspending. In Sri Lanka the main reason was the economic crisis and the severe currency depreciation in early 2022. Another reason was the return of unspent amounts by implementing partners in the end-phase of the intervention. The latter reason was also important in Bangladesh, while various other savings were made. In both countries the expenditure rates coincided with the overspending on staff costs, and the two factors are causally related since most of the unspent amounts were *not* allocated to staff costs.

While only the Bangladesh intervention was completed within the original timeframe of 15 months, the longest **no-cost extensions** were for Sri Lanka (1 year) and Timor Leste (14 months). The main reason for requesting for the no-cost extensions were delays due to the COVID-19 pandemic. But in all three interventions specific reasons need to be underlined: In Timor Leste the second extension was requested mainly to provide support and contribution for the **upgrade** of IRMIS system; in Sri Lanka the economic and social crisis had disrupted the implementation severely; and in Viet Nam a no-cost extension of just two months was requested in particular because of the involvement of an important new partner (CEC). Most interventions have achieved the (large) majority of the initially defined outcomes.

In terms of **management arrangements**, the ILO Project Responsible is the Country Director of the respective Country Offices. In each country a different set-up was chosen with either Programming Officers, Labour Economists and/or dedicated NPC's playing vital roles. All four interventions were solidly embedded in the administrative and financial systems of the respective ILO Country Offices and there were at times substantial additional inputs from other technical and programming staff of these COs. Furthermore, support was provided by administrative and/or finance assistants mostly funded from the RBSA intervention. The Regional Programming Unit (RPU) at the ILO Regional Office (ROAP) provided substantial backstopping, while support from DWT experts from Bangkok and Delhi was at times hindered by the travel restrictions of the pandemic. Support from ILO departments in Geneva was provided as and when required.

Communication by the ILO team/CO has been assessed as very good by all interviewed stakeholders. While no dedicated communication plans were presented, several highlights of communication materials for each of the interventions were identified in the report. The interventions did less well in terms of their online presence; while only two out of the four interventions have a 'project website' (Sri Lanka and Timor Leste), these were not updated. **Reporting** has generally been done regularly and on time following the RBSA Guidance. The End-of-Intervention reports provide clear and concise information on key results achieved and main lessons learned. The **Risk Assessment** sections both in the proposals and in the End-reports provide very useful insights into the implementation challenges faced by the interventions. The interventions have **leveraged resources** to enhance the project impact and efficiency; within each of the Country Offices cooperation was forged with several projects (see below). In addition, various forms of cost-sharing of staff were undertaken with technical and programming staff within the CO's and with admin/finance staff with different ILO projects.

The four interventions were assessed to have different types of **Impact** on the existing problem which they were designed to address. In *Bangladesh* ILO's presence in Cox's Bazar was for the first time established and triggered other DC interventions; in addition, Local Economic Development was enhanced and in various cases trainees were actually employed by enterprises. In *Sri Lanka* several steps were made towards the implementation of (e-)RPL and the Skills Passport for migrant workers. In addition, employment-linked training courses and apprenticeship training were conducted, while one workers' organisation targeting women (CWW)

was firmly established thanks to the intervention. In *Timor Leste* the intervention provided substantial direct employment and wages for the most affected rural poor impacting on their health and wellbeing, while the road maintenance benefited transport in the rural areas. In *Viet Nam* the intervention has placed ‘informality’ squarely in the spotlight, and the CEC is now employing insights from the RBSA activities and emphasised that “*This triggered a Paradigm shift within the Viet Nam Government!*” Lastly, statistical information on informality was institutionalized in the legislation based on the information and data provided to MOLISA, and capacity building was implemented within GSO and MOLISA by cooperating with ILO experts on the Quarterly Reports. Overall, impact could at times have been enhanced by more systematic capacity building of the tripartite constituents and this was also a key area found by the *Independent High-Level Evaluation of ILO’s COVID-19 Response 2020-22* (three out of its eight recommendations).

The efforts and progress made by the interventions showed substantial signs of [Sustainability](#). Most of the interventions for example laid grounds to *mobilise further resources*. In Bangladesh it directly led to two new DC projects in Cox’s Bazar: one funded by GAC of CAD 44 million and one by the Netherlands of US\$ 2.3 million. In Sri Lanka there were synergies between three ILO projects that were implemented partly simultaneously (RBSA, Japan and SDC), and agreements on the way forward were discussed at a *multi-stakeholder forum* in January 2022. In addition, due to the demonstration effect of the RBSA intervention, SIYB was also included in a follow-up ILO-IOM project funded by Japan. In Timor Leste the intervention was a rapid response benefitting those most affected by the pandemic aligned to the multi-year R4D programme funded by DFAT and it clearly contributed to getting the next phase of DFAT funding. In Viet Nam there were synergies with the outcome-based ILO-Sida partnership sharing certain activities as well as with a new ILO project on productivity funded by SECO and NORAD.

Another key indicator of sustainability is *ownership*. Although the limited project period of initially 15 months may not in itself be sufficient to arrive at genuine ownership, some signs could still be assessed in each country of government organisations taking charge. In addition, the majority of stakeholders interviewed would prefer to continue the cooperation with ILO. More specific inroads into sustainability include: the lessons learned in Sri Lanka on migration provided feedback into the revision of the National Labour Migration Policy; several stakeholders mentioned that their staff is benefiting from the learning-by-cooperating with ILO experts; and in Viet Nam the questions on Informality were *permanently* included in the Questionnaire of the periodic Labour Force Survey and the Quarterly reports of GSO/MOLISA will continue to include the Infographics version and press conference modality. Although there were no explicit Sustainability or Exit Plans in the four proposals, during implementation discussions on sustainability were very adequately conducted with key stakeholders, for example: Closing Workshop in Bangladesh, multi-stakeholder forum in Sri Lanka, while in Viet Nam and Timor Leste the RBSA intervention was directly followed-up by other interventions involving in part the same staff members.

With respect to the [Cross-Cutting Issues](#) the evaluation found that all interventions were designed in a **gender sensitive and inclusive** manner as this was also a condition in the RBSA Guidance. In some cases, it was taken a step further, while in other cases prohibitive challenges were encountered of which specific examples are detailed in the report (Section 3.7). For all four interventions it was found that data were mostly gender disaggregated and gender mainstreaming was common. However, only in Sri Lanka certain activities were explicitly targeted at women, and in future interventions this should be enhanced including a dedicated budget. **People with disability and other special needs** were mainly not explicitly included in the interventions, except in *Timor Leste* where 0.3 % of the 2,572 beneficiaries were persons with disability. The impact on the **environment** of the interventions was not considered.

The normative context and the impact of [International Labour Standards \(ILS\)](#) have not played a central role in the four interventions. ILO Conventions were not specifically targeted and only in Viet Nam national consultants were engaged to support the national reporting on the newly ratified Conventions No. 159 and 88, while planned work for promoting Convention No. 160 was not undertaken. On the whole the ILO CO's and/or the ILO teams ensured that *tripartite* inputs were included in the design of the interventions, and **Social Dialogue** was then used in most workshops, seminars and symposia. In addition, all interventions were developed to contribute directly to the **P&B Outcomes** as well as to the **CPO Outcomes and Outputs** of the respective DWCP's. Furthermore, the four interventions were contributing to **SDGs** 8, 1 and 4.

Recommendations

On the basis of the findings of the present final independent cluster evaluation **nine Recommendations** have been formulated as follows:

- 1) **Continue, and if possible, expand the RBSA Fund** as it is a highly appreciated funding modality for its flexibility and relatively low-cost procedures especially also in the context of crisis when the interventions are (even) more likely to target selected highly affected vulnerable groups.
A related recommendation is to **explore the possibility of having a longer timeframe of the RBSA interventions** especially for such activities as policy making, statistics work, etc. However, the RBSA Guidance for the new Round 1 in 2022-2023 has *already* followed-up earlier recommendations to that effect and has increased the maximum to **24 months**. At the same time, it was found in the present evaluation that under certain circumstances a longer timeframe is less necessary as other interventions were already in place to take over (such as in Bangladesh).
- 2) **Continue to conduct regular evaluations of RBSA interventions**, preferably clustered, and thereby “Strengthen the RBSA learning capacity” (cf. ILO Review of the RBSA funding modality, 2020). In addition, a **stronger results framework** would allow for a better assessment of RBSA achievements.
- 3) **Continue with the practice of RBSA interventions to build on other (earlier) ILO interventions and on established networks and partnerships within the CO** as this has shown to be an important enabling factor in the present evaluation in all its diversity among the four countries.
- 4) **Involve the workers’ and employers’ organisations more systematically in future interventions** and provide **capacity building** to key staff including a minimum number of female staff members and allocate **dedicated funding**. This recommendation is aligned with those of the HLE on ILO's COVID-19 Response 2020-22 (in particular Nos. 1, 5 and 6; cf. Annex 10).
- 5) **Maintain the possibility of No-Cost Extensions within RBSA** as delays are likely amidst a crisis context, including pandemic and economic crisis. The present evaluation has shown that the ILO COs provide detailed reasons for the need of extensions in their requests. In addition, RBSA has the advantage that closely related key activities can be added during an extension (such as the upgrade of the IRMIS jointly with the Prime Minister's Office in Timor Leste and the cooperation with the new Centre for Working Women, CWW, in Sri Lanka).
- 6) **Maintain the flexibility in management arrangements** as is now common in RBSA interventions whereby CO technical staff is assigned depending on the proposal's topic and technical and networking experience of the staff, supported by the involvement of Programme Officers in the programming and administration of RBSA interventions.

- 7) **Make sure that each intervention has an updated ILO website** where all the links to the latest reports, outputs, videos and other relevant material of the interventions are available to enhance knowledge sharing including the exchange of Good Practices.
- 8) **Include a sustainability workshop ('Closing Event')** as was conducted in Bangladesh in all RBSA interventions in order to consolidate the outcomes by discussing long-term strategies with key stakeholders and to investigate ways to keep the momentum going created by the RBSA intervention.
- 9) **Continue to use a Gender Equality Strategy from the design stage onwards**, including gender mainstreaming but also activities targeted specifically at women and make sure to allocate dedicated resources to this Strategy.

Lessons Learned and Good Practices

From the experience gained by evaluating the four RBSA interventions two Lessons Learned (LL) and two Good Practices (GP) have been identified in this report as follows:

- **LL1** – *'Thinking out of the box' in forging new key partnerships is a Lesson Learned in all four interventions amidst the crisis context using the RBSA funding as leverage.*
- **LL2** – *No-Cost Extensions are an important tool to enhance impact especially amidst a crisis context.*
- **GP1** – *It is a Good Practice to conduct regular clustered and other evaluations of RBSA-funded interventions in order to strengthen RBSA's learning capacity.*
- **GP2** – *It is a Good Practice to build on other (earlier) ILO interventions and on established networks and partnerships of the ILO Country Offices.*

The details are discussed in Chapter 5 of the present report, while the ILO/EVAL *Templates* with the full description of these LL and GP are provided in *Annex 11*.

1 Introduction and Background of the Cluster of Interventions

The present report provides the findings of the Final Independent Cluster Evaluation entitled “**ILO’s Cluster of Interventions funded under RBSA round 2020-21 (improved employment opportunities COVID-19 response focused)**”¹, and it is based on the Terms of Reference for this evaluation (see Annex 1). RBSA is the Regular Budget Supplementary Account of the ILO.

1.1 Introduction

The present **Cluster Evaluation** includes four RBSA interventions and their titles and contributions to the relevant Country Program Outcomes (CPO) of the respective Decent Work Country Programmes (DWCP) are as follows:

- 1) **Bangladesh: Improved Economic Opportunities for the Host Communities of Cox’s Bazar: Exploring Ways and Piloting Intervention for Program Formulation.**
 - ✓ Contributes to CPO **BGD101: Employability of young women and men is improved through implementation of the national skills development policy.**
- 2) **Sri Lanka: Skilling Sri Lankan migrant workers affected by COVID-19 for employment, decent jobs, and entrepreneurship.**
 - ✓ Contributes to CPO **LKA102: National strategy formulated to respond to technological advancements and other productive market demands for population at large.**
 - ✓ Contributes to CPO **LKA107: Sri Lankan workforce have more and better employment opportunities.**
- 3) **Timor Leste: Supporting recovery from the COVID-19 pandemic through employment intensive emergency public works for the rural poor and vulnerable in Timor-Leste.**
 - ✓ Contributes to CPO **TLS176: More employment generated by rural infrastructure investment programmes.**
- 4) **Viet Nam: Equal Opportunity in Post COVID-19 Recovery: Making Structural Transformation Work for All.**
 - ✓ Contributes to CPO **VNM128: Employment policies and programmes provide better opportunities in decent employment and sustainable entrepreneurship for women and men, particularly ones in the vulnerable groups.**
 - ✓ Contributes to CPO **VNM826: Deepened commitment to ratify and apply international labour standards (Not part of this evaluation but it is included in one and the same RBSA Proposal).**

The details of these interventions are summarized in Table 1 below including the links to the relevant CPO’s and P&B Outputs, as well as the original budget and period of implementation. A

¹ Although the ToR specifies ‘projects’ (cf. Annex 1), under RBSA the term ‘interventions’ is used.

graphic representation of the timelines of the four interventions, including one or two approved *no-cost extensions*, is given in Figure 1. The specifics of the P&B Outcomes, Outputs and Indicators are explained in detail in Table 2.

Table 1: The details of the four RBSA interventions under the present evaluation.

Country	RBSA Code	CPO Link (DWCP)	P&B Output	Amount (US\$)	Start date	End date
Bangladesh	107681 BGD/20/01/RBS	BGD101	4.2	500,000	Oct 2020	Dec 2021
			5.3			
			1.1			
			1.2 ^{***)}			
Sri Lanka	107725 LKA/20/02/RBS	LKA102	5.1	485,000	Sep 2020	Nov 2022
		LKA107	4.2			
Timor Leste	107673 TLS/20/01/RBS	TLS176	3.2	550,000	Aug 2020	Dec 2022
Viet Nam	107699 VNM/20/01/RBS	VNM128	3.1	310,000	Aug 2020	Dec 2021
			A.1	90,000		
			6.2 ^{*)}			
		VNM826 ^{**)}	2.2	80,000		
TOTAL				2,015,000		

^{*)} This work under P&B Output 6.2 was initially not planned to be funded from RBSA, but in the end some activities were funded from the RBSA budget.

^{**)} VNM826 is in itself not part of the present evaluation but it is included in one and the same RBSA Proposal.

^{***)} Outputs 1.1 and 1.2 are listed as additional contributions without resources budgeted for them.

Figure 1: The timelines of the four interventions, with the original timeline (green) and the no-cost extension periods (yellow for the first, and red for the second extension).

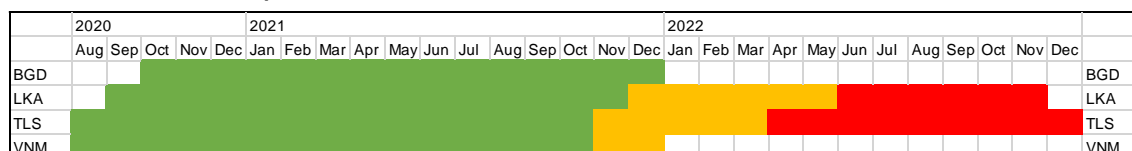


Table 2: The respective P&B Outputs to which the four RBSA interventions are expected to contribute.

P&B Policy Outcomes, Outputs and Indicators		RBSA project
1. Strong tripartite constituents and influential and inclusive social dialogue		
	1.1 Increased institutional capacity of employer and business membership organizations (EBMOs)	
	1.1.1 Number of EBMOs with improved governance systems, strategies to widen representation and/or enhanced service provision.	BGD101-Additional
	1.2 Increased institutional capacity of workers' organizations	
	1.2.1 Number of national workers' organizations with innovative strategies to attract new groups of workers and/or to improve their services.	BGD101-Additional
2. International labour standards and authoritative and effective supervision		
	2.2 Increased capacity of the member States to apply international labour standards	VNM128
3. Economic, social and environmental transitions for full, productive and freely chosen employment and decent work for all		
	3.1 Increased capacity of member States to formulate and implement a new generation of gender-responsive national employment policies, including for youth	VNM128
	3.2 Increased capacity of member States to formulate and implement policies and strategies for creating decent work in the rural economy	TLS176
4. Sustainable enterprises as generators of employment and promoters of innovation and decent work		
	4.2 Output 4.2. Strengthened capacity of enterprises to adopt new business models, technology and techniques to enhance productivity and sustainability	
	4.2.1 Number of member States with effective interventions to support productivity, entrepreneurship, innovation and enterprise sustainability.	BGD101 LKA102&107

5. Skills and lifelong learning to facilitate access to and transitions in the labour market		
	5.1 Increased capacity of the ILO constituents to identify current skills mismatches and anticipate future skill needs	
	5.1.2 Number of member States with institutionalized national or sectoral mechanisms to measure skills mismatches and anticipate future skill needs.	LKA102&107
	5.3 Increased capacity of the ILO constituents to design and deliver innovative, flexible and inclusive learning options, encompassing work-based learning and quality apprenticeships	
	5.3.1 Number of member States that have applied ILO approaches to work-based learning and quality apprenticeships.	BGD101 LKA102&107
	5.3.2 Number of member States with innovative, flexible and inclusive skills programmes and services targeting women, youth or persons in vulnerable situations.	LKA102&107
	5.3.3 Number of member States with inclusive skills recognition mechanisms.	BGD101
6. Gender equality and equal opportunities and treatment for all in the world of work		
	6.2 Increased capacity of the ILO constituents to strengthen policies and strategies to promote and ensure equal opportunities, participation and treatment between women and men, including equal remuneration for work of equal value	VNM826 (see footnote of Table 1).
Enabling Outcome A. Authoritative knowledge and high-impact partnerships for promoting decent work *)		
	A.1 More accurate and sustainable statistics on decent work using the latest statistical standards	VNM128

Source: ILO P&B 2020-2021.

These four interventions are funded under ILO's **RBSA** which is a voluntary source, that allows development partners to provide un-earmarked core funding to the ILO, increasing the Office's capacity to deliver and achieve results at country level. The distinct and strategic partnership goals of RBSA include to leverage greater funding from other sources, and to increase sustainability of ILO assistance through partnerships with UN agencies.² The ILO allocates RBSA funds flexibly when and where they are most needed. It is mandatory for the RBSA resources to be allocated to Official Development Assistance (ODA)-eligible countries and are aligned with the results-based framework of the ILO. In 2022, nine governments supported the RBSA, contributing US\$ 16.5 million (see Annex 2 for the details of the division among donor countries).

The RBSA as per its regular exercise conducted an assessment of the **proposals** submitted for funding by different ILO Country Offices in the year 2020. This phase was comparatively more challenging as compared to other years as many countries in the Asian Pacific region were hit by the COVID-19 pandemic, that had created significant labour related challenges of varied nature in each country in the region.

The present evaluation specifically looked into the four different interventions mentioned above, which were **common in purpose** and were therefore evaluated **as a cluster** to assess their level of results, and the contribution it has secured in achieving its relevant P&B outcomes, DWCP outcomes, and SDG targets. All four interventions focussed specifically on **improved employment opportunities** in diverse environments through **different** sets of interventions in Bangladesh, Sri Lanka, Timor Leste and Viet Nam keeping in view the challenges posed by the COVID-19 pandemic and the massive labour migration. They contribute to different P&B Outcomes (cf. Tables 1 and 2) and are complementing efforts towards achieving targets under SDG 1, 4 and 8. It is this reason why, these interventions have been selected to be evaluated as a cluster of interventions together to assess the overall impact these interventions have had in addressing the employability challenges in the targeted countries amidst the COVID-19 pandemic.

² Source: wcms_317826.pdf (ilo.org)

Moreover, the ILO under its EVAL office conducted the *Independent High-Level Evaluation of ILO's COVID-19 response 2020-22* and the report was published in August 2022.³ It was used as a guiding factor for the present evaluation.

1.2 Introducing the Four Interventions

In this section the four interventions are introduced by discussing the Background, the Objectives and Outcomes, the Key Stakeholders and Beneficiaries, as well as the Geographic Scope of Activities for each intervention.

- **BANGLADESH - BGD101**

Background

Bangladesh experienced a significant influx of Rohingya refugees from Myanmar (called 'Forcibly Displaced Myanmar Nationals', FDMN) in 2017, and in 2020 was a host to 859,161 refugees residing in the two sub-districts (Upazilas) of Ukhiya and Teknaf of Cox's Bazar District, the south-eastern district of Bangladesh. The district is characterized by poverty, low human capital development, and vulnerability to natural disasters, with 60% of the total workforce being employed in subsistence agriculture and fishing. The influx of refugees in Cox's Bazar district furthered the poverty and vulnerability of the district as the locals now had limited access to natural resources and declining wages over the last two years. This situation gave a rise to the risk of potential social unrest.

The outbreak of COVID-19 in early 2020, worsened the situation in the district. Close to 0.5 million workers from nearly 100,000 MSMEs lost their jobs during the pandemic with a limited chance of revival. Most of these were informally employed women, youth, and micro-entrepreneurs. Besides, thousands of migrant workers were also anticipated to return to the district due to COVID 19. Getting back to work for them required different ways to connect with markets, health and safety practices, and changes in their products and services where MSMEs and workers required support. These MSMEs and their workers were less likely to receive government support due to their informality.

ILO's assessment conducted then identified employment and entrepreneurship opportunities in the districts, mainly in tourism, infrastructure development, and fisheries sectors. Most of these, however, had remained unexploited by the locals due to their low skills and entrepreneurship abilities. Based on the interaction with the district level social partners and stakeholders, ILO prioritized entrepreneurship and skills development of the vulnerable host communities as critical for maintaining peace and social cohesion in the district, hosting nearly a million refugees.

Objectives and Outcomes

Adhering to International Labour Standards (especially ILO Convention 187 on OSH and Convention 142 on Human resources development), ILO designed this intervention that would capacitate and mobilize the Workers' and Employers' Organizations in the district. Through this

³ https://www.ilo.org/eval/Evaluationreports/Strategyandpolicyevaluations/WCMS_854253/lang--en/index.htm

intervention, ILO **aims** to improve employment outcomes, reduce vulnerabilities of the host communities and reduce the likelihood of disruption in social cohesion between host communities and the FDMN Rohingya community. Specifically, the project aims to achieve the following **objectives**:

- **Explore** ways to promote entrepreneurship and employment opportunities amidst the COVID-19 pandemic for the host communities including women returnee migrants and other minority groups in tourism and fisheries value chains.
- **Identify** opportunities to promote skills development of the women, youth, and returnee migrants of host community members in the areas of tourism and construction sectors.
- **Support** entrepreneurs and workers to return to work by improving access to health and safety procedures and business support services.

The above objectives resulted in a results framework with two outputs and four targets for each output as identified in the RBSA Proposal for this project (see Annex 3A). The interventions were further designed to build on the following processes and approaches:

- The Bangladesh Multi-sector Action Plan for COVID-19.
- Approach to inclusive Market system development (AIMS) for the host communities and refugees.
- ILO's approach to promoting apprenticeship and lifelong learning

In addition, the interventions were designed in such a way that if successful, they might guide the development of a multi-year program.

Key Stakeholders and Beneficiaries

The *Stakeholders* are the Tripartite Constituents and their representatives at the district level, the ILO CO, DWT Delhi, ROAP Bangkok and ILO Geneva. The ILO Country Office for Bangladesh at its initial stage also aimed to complement its efforts by working together with various UN agencies mainly, UNHCR, FAO, UNDP, and IOM, while implementing the interventions.

The *Direct Beneficiaries* are:

- Cox's Bazar Chamber of Commerce and Industries,
- Cox's Bazar association of small and cottage industries,
- Business associations in tourism and fish sectors,
- Cox's Bazar District Committee of Workers associations of the main trade union body in Bangladesh, entitled Sramik Karmachari Oikya Parishad (SKOP) and its educational wing, the National Coordination Committee for Workers' Education (NCCWE),
- Sectoral trade unions in tourism, construction, and fisheries,
- Skills training centers,
- Cox's Bazar District Councils.

The *Ultimate Beneficiaries* are women, youths, returnee migrant workers, and entrepreneurs in MSMEs of the host communities in two Upazilas in Cox's Bazar District (see below); they are expected to benefit from the project through improvement in employability and enterprise performance.

Geographic Scope of Activities

The two sub-districts (Upazilas) of Ukhiya and Teknaf of **Cox's Bazar District** in South-Eastern Bangladesh.

• SRI LANKA - LKA102&107

Background

This proposal was an effort to have an urgent response to the COVID-19 pandemic and to the demands of the constituents. Its strategy was to build back better through using innovative tools such as the “Skills Passport” to anticipate skills needs, improved and inclusive skills development of workers vulnerable to forced labour and human trafficking, enhancing their access to decent formal economy employment, as well as securing incomes and jobs through sustainable and resilient micro and small enterprises. Its interventions were aimed at strengthening coordination between government and social partners. The project targeted returnee and blocked migrant workers, using synergies with the UNSG MPTF project ‘Healthy Socio-Economic Response of Micro and Small Enterprise Sector of Sri Lanka’.

The COVID-19 crisis had severely affected labour migration in Sri Lanka. One in four in Sri Lanka’s labour force were migrant workers. Remittances were the country’s largest source of revenue and foreign exchange. Many women had found waged work abroad, amidst low (34%) labour force participation at home. However, in 2020 figures some 40,000 ‘out-of-status’ Sri Lankans awaited repatriation. A monthly average of 15,000 Sri Lankans ordinarily migrating for work abroad was accumulating since March, with no foreseeable prospect of overseas recruitment or alternative employment at home. As the economy slowed, tourist inflows stopped, and supply chains were disrupted, the informal economy – where low-skilled returnee, blocked and aspiring migrant workers originate and return – was badly hit. The GoSL, through its ministries of Foreign Affairs and Skills Development, Employment and Labour Relations (MSDELR) had requested the ILO’s services in the economic reintegration of migrant workers. Returnee migrant workers had skills which lacked formal recognition. While many aspirant and blocked youth and women migrant workers lacked access to skills development through on-the job training.

This project was designed with an aim to support the recognition of the vocational skills through “Recognition of Prior Learning” (RPL) assessment; the documentation of skills profiles through the ‘Skills Passport’ programme; and offer greater inclusion in quality apprenticeships and work-based learning for decent employment and higher incomes.

Research shows that many returnees, regardless of vocational experience, faced limited formal employment opportunities for their particular skillsets. These returnees preferred to set up or run micro or small enterprises (MSEs) upon return. These undertakings often failed due to lack of entrepreneurial skills and financial support. Therefore, COVID19-affected migrant workers interesting in starting a business were offered entrepreneurial skills development and access to affordable credit and financial services. ILO tools such as SIYB and SCORE were introduced to support sustainable and resilient enterprises that also encouraged formalisation and create decent jobs. Further, Public Employment Services centres were capacitated to provide online job matching and placement services, for returnees seeking salaried employment in the private sector, reinforcing the value of establishing strong links with employers’ organisations.

Efforts were made to mainstream Occupational health and safety (OSH) into entrepreneurship training through information and communication, trainings, and personal protective equipment. This was to reduce workplace related infections and injuries. To tackle potential harassment and discrimination, the national communication campaign in the UN-MPTF project was used to inform and influence potential employers and the wider community.

The role of **social partners** in the COVID-19 recovery phase was strengthened for skills recognition of returnee workers and linking them with local employment opportunities. Through access to data and skills profiles of returnees, EBMOs were supported in their partnership with government in skills matching and anticipating future needs; while trade unions were capacitated to expand their membership services, including representation of workers in skills development and employment services supplied at sub-national and national level.

Objectives and Outcomes

This project **aims** to increase capacity of the ILO constituents to identify current skills mismatches and anticipate future skills needs; to design and deliver innovative, flexible and inclusive learning options encompassing work-based learning and quality apprenticeships; and to create an enabling environment for entrepreneurship and sustainable enterprises, with a focus on enhancing the employability of returned and aspirant migrant workers. The **specific objective** of the intervention is to support the sustainable reintegration of Returned and Aspirant Migrant Workers, by way of recognising their employability skills; and facilitating upskilling and reskilling processes to make them ready for employment (both local and abroad) or self-employment opportunities. The above objectives resulted in four outputs and nine targets as is indicated in the results framework in Annex 3B.

Key Stakeholders and Beneficiaries

The *Stakeholders* are the representatives of the Government, including the Ministries of Foreign Affairs and of Skills Development, Employment and Labour Relations (MSDELIR, including SLBFE and FEDOs), Public Employment Service centres (PES), EBMO's (EFC), Trade unions (SLNSS and NTUF), TVEC and TVET Institutions (VTA-SL, SLITHM, NAITA & DTET), the ILO CO, DWT Delhi, ROAP Bangkok and ILO Geneva. The *Target Beneficiaries* are the Returnee and Aspiring Sri Lankan Migrant Workers, and MSEs.

Geographic Scope of Activities

Interventions in Sri Lanka are scheduled for the national level.

● **TIMOR LESTE - TLS176**

Background

The Poverty and unemployment levels in Timor-Leste are high, particularly among rural people in the informal economy. This situation was further aggravated by the COVID-19 restrictions. Although several infrastructure projects were expected to resume shortly, they did not explicitly target **the most affected rural community** and were not modelled around **emergency employment support** that necessitates quick delivery, a high labour-intensity and low delivery costs.

The ILO proposed a project that aimed to leverage capacities and approach development through existing Employment Intensive Investment Programmes (EIIP) projects and complement their work. ILO and its EIIP projects have had a long-standing working relationship with the Timor-Leste Trade Union Confederation (KSTL) and the Chamber of Commerce and Industry (CCI-TL). KSTL and CCI-TL both showed keen interest to actively participate in the project to gain their

visibility and leadership in infrastructure sector, increase bi-partite dialogue, their knowledge on C122, and to benefit from strengthened capacities in executing their mandate.

Objectives and Outcomes

The project supports recovery of the COVID-19 pandemic by providing direct employment opportunities for the rural poor and vulnerable population through routine road maintenance activities. It was to provide a model for targeted employment support through public works interventions.

The Ministry of Public Works (MPW), KSTL and CCI-TL fully agreed to support the proposal as it aligned with national COVID-19 recovery strategies. UNWOMEN/IOM agreed for their data access in identifying vulnerable groups. Relevant Constituents and ILO specialists were also consulted in this regard. The project was designed to directly support 1,850 vulnerable beneficiaries - including at least 50% women and 2% persons with a disability, and migrant workers. Works were to be contracted to small, EIIP-trained, local contractors (CCI-TL members) who were to engage local community members to implement the works. The above objectives led to the identification of two Results and four Outputs as is indicated in the results framework in Annex 3C.

Key Stakeholders and Beneficiaries

Project recipients included trade unions (KSTL), EBMO's (CCI-TL), the Secretariat of State for Vocational Training and Employment (SEFOPE) and the Ministry of Public Works (MPW). These organizations benefitted from the project as it provided the model for targeted employment and income support, along with increased ownership and capacities in executing their mandated roles in relation to the project. To successfully implement the project, the programme team identified the following roles of various stakeholders:

- MPW – coordination and management
- Municipal Governments – supervision
- SEFOPE – monitoring and reporting of employment
- KSTL – ensure compliance to workers' rights and OSH requirements
- CCI-TL – support private contractors in meeting contractual requirements
- Participating *Sucos* ('Villages') – selection of beneficiaries.

Other stakeholders include the ILO CO, ROAP/DWT Bangkok and ILO Geneva

Geographic Scope of Activities

Implementation is partly undertaken at the national level, and partly focused on the poorest *Sucos* ('Villages') to be selected in cooperation with the Government.

● **VIET NAM - VNM128**

Background

The COVID-19 crisis resulted in posing significant challenges to the Viet Nam's employment policy cycle. The labour market information system was unable to capture the rapidly evolving situation, and its impact on disadvantaged groups. Tripartite dialogue was not used effectively to identify the challenges that workers and enterprises were facing every day. The design of employment policy response lacked focus on hardest-hit groups, namely informal workers, and women. Policy implementation capacity was weak, and uneven use of data collection standards

by local government institutions meant that implementation results could not be feedback easily into the policy design. Consequently, posing a challenge that the Vietnamese workers and enterprises may not receive the needed support in the times of hardship. The Government, however remained committed to improving employment policy in 2020-21 where the COVID-19 crisis made this priority even more urgent.

Objectives and Outcomes

According to the RBSA Proposal (2020: 2) “The **development objective** of the proposed intervention is *P&B Outcome 3, Output 3.1*, which contributes to achieving SDG 8 (8.5.1, 8.5.2). In addition, this proposal contributes to P&B Outputs A.1, 6.2, and 2.2.” (see Table 2).

The Intervention Logic/Theory of Change of the RBSA Proposal, here included in Annex 4, then identifies **Four Pillars or Outcomes** as follows:

- 1) **Tripartite partners and other stakeholders have access to more accurate evidence of labour market challenges.** Data collection is more frequent and granular, and better captures challenges of hard-hit groups (including informal workers and women).
- 2) **Tripartite partners have an increased understanding of crisis-related labour market challenges.** National partners are more familiar with indicators on LM vulnerabilities. By using this information in their own analytical reports and consultations, stakeholders gain a clearer understanding of current challenges.
- 3) **Policy formulation processes are more relevant to current LM challenges.** The Government, in consultation with the social partners, formulates employment policy based on a more inclusive picture of current LM issues.
- 4) **Policy implementation is improved as on-the-ground institutions are better able to produce** information and feedback in line with national standards, more easily used by Central Government for policy adjustments.

The Implementation Plan in this RBSA Proposal identifies **nine Deliverables** as provided in Annex 3D. The linkages are quite complex as the above Pillars and the P&B Outputs are in different orders, while at the same time different types of funding are proposed for these nine deliverables of this RBSA project (cf. the last column in Annex 3D). The complete results framework is provided in Annex 4 which includes the “Detailed deliverable descriptions”.

Key Stakeholders and Beneficiaries

The *direct beneficiaries* are national and provincial officials from the Ministry of Labour, Invalids and Social Affairs (MOLISA), the Ministry of Planning and Investment (MPI) and its General Statistics Office (GSO), the Viet Nam’s Chamber of Commerce and Industry (VCCI), and the Viet Nam’s General Confederation of Labour (VGCL). The *Ultimate beneficiaries* are women and men on Viet Nam’s labour market, especially hard-hit groups.

Collaborating and implementing partners include the Department of Employment (DOE), Institute for Labour and Social Affairs (ILSSA), Gender Equality Department (GED), International Cooperation Department (ICD), Legal Department, and provincial-level government institutions such as Department of Labour, Invalids and Social Affairs (DOLISA), Public Employment Services (PES), and Provincial Statistical Offices (PSO). Other stakeholders include the ILO CO, ROAP/DWT Bangkok and ILO Geneva, as well as relevant UN agencies such as UN WOMEN.

Geographic Scope of Activities

Interventions in Viet Nam are scheduled for national and provincial levels.

1.3 Purpose and Scope of the Final Independent Evaluation

Purpose and Objectives of the Evaluation

The main **purpose** of the evaluation is to have overall organization learning from the experiences of the four interventions as well as for accountability of the results planned to be achieved. The evaluation aims to assess the relevance, validity of design, coherence, effectiveness, efficiency, impact, and sustainability of the interventions in light of ILO's mandate in the region and keeping in view the COVID 19 implications on the project.

The **specific objectives** of the evaluation are to:

- 1) Examine whether the project worked appropriately and was able to achieve the envisioned objectives, and results highlighted in the project documents.
- 2) Examine the role the interventions played in contributing towards the relevant P&B Outcomes, SDG targets, and DWCP outcomes as well as promoting the ILO's mandates, and addressing the crosscutting issues like decent work, social dialogue, gender and inclusivity.
- 3) Derive lessons learned and identify good practices from the interventions both at country level and overall regional level intervention for improved employment levels.
- 4) Propose recommendations to inform Regional Programming Office and relevant country offices of the ILO for future programming to continue complimenting the achievements secured by the interventions under evaluation.
- 5) In addition, examine whether the interventions were able to play a key role in the follow-up mobilisation of resources.

Scope of the Evaluation

The evaluation specifically looked into the **four RBSA interventions** in Bangladesh, Sri Lanka, Timor Leste and Viet Nam listed in Table 1. These interventions were directly administered by the ILO's Country Offices located in respectively Bangladesh, Sri Lanka, Indonesia and Viet Nam under the overall support from ROAP in Bangkok.

The respective **P&B Outputs** to which the interventions are expected to contribute can be summarised under P&B Outcomes 1, 3, 4 and 5 as well as A1, and both Outcomes and Outputs have been listed in detail in Table 2 above.

The evaluation investigated the four **results frameworks** of these individual interventions (cf. Annex 3) and assessed them in regard to the validity of design, relevance, coherence, efficiency, effectiveness, sustainability, and impact these interventions have caused. The evaluation looked specifically into the improvement the interventions have caused in the employment levels in the targeted countries, as well as the capacity it has improved of the local organizations/ government/ constituents to become more resilient in this regard, enabling them to continue the efforts made by the project at the sustainable level. Furthermore, the evaluation resulted in a set of **Recommendations** (Section 4.2) and **Lessons Learned** and **Good Practices** (Chapter 5).

The evaluation further addressed all relevant ***cross-cutting themes*** for ILOs work which include gender equality and non-discrimination, disability inclusion, promotion of international labour standards, tripartite processes and social dialogue, constituent capacity development and environmental sustainability. Where possible, the evaluation was conducted with ***gender equality*** as a mainstreamed approach and concern. This implied among others applying gender analysis by involving both men and women in consultation and evaluation's analysis, the inclusion of data disaggregated by sex and gender in the analysis and justification of project documents, the formulation and/or analysis of gender sensitive strategies and objectives and gender-specific indicators, and the inclusion of qualitative methods and utilization of a mix of methodologies. In sum, analysis of gender-related concerns was based on the ILO Guidance Note 3.1: Integrating Gender Equality in Monitoring and Evaluation.

Clients of the Evaluation

The intended clients of the evaluation were the relevant programming officers of ILO's Country Offices in the Asia Pacific region as well as the ILO ROAP and ILO's Headquarters. The evaluation also looked into the potential or actual mobilisation of other resources as RBSA funding is generally smaller in nature and does not cater to long term interventions. Lastly, the evaluation developed an understanding of what went wrong and how things could have been done better to create more impact in the targeted sectors.

Moreover, the findings from the evaluation may well serve as a good guiding note to all the tripartite stakeholders involved directly or indirectly in the implementation and planning phase of the four interventions to be evaluated, as well as support them in making informed decisions at their end to address the issues pertaining to improved employment levels, greater resilience and improving capacities in their relevant countries.

1.4 Contents of the Report

The present evaluation report provides in the next chapter (2) an overview of the conceptual framework based on the eight Evaluation Criteria and of the methodology, deliverables, management arrangements and work plan. In Chapter 3 the findings will be presented for each of the eight evaluation criteria identified. The Conclusions and Recommendations will be presented in Chapter 4, while the final Chapter (5) will discuss the Lessons Learned and the Good Practices identified.

2 Methodology of the Evaluation

2.1 Conceptual Framework

The evaluation followed the criteria as outlined in the ILO's evaluation policy and in line with the OECD/DAC guidelines. The ToR for the present evaluation identified the following eight *Evaluation Criteria*:

- A. Relevance and Validity of Design
- B. Coherence
- C. Effectiveness
- D. Efficiency
- E. Impact
- F. Sustainability
- G. Cross Cutting Issues including Gender, Environmental Sustainability and Disability Inclusion
- H. International Labour Standards, Tripartism and Social Dialogue

For each of these eight criteria, a number of Evaluation Questions (in total 19 questions) were identified in the Inception Report (22 May 2023) and these are included in the *Data Collection Worksheet* discussed in detail in that Report; the Worksheet itself is included here in Annex 5.

2.2 Methodology, Key Deliverables and Work Plan

Methodology

In order to respond to the evaluation questions identified above, a mixed method approach was utilised including the following three phases.

A. Inception Phase

This phase included the initial desk review of a selection of the key existing documents, such as the four RBSA Proposals, Progress Reports, the RBSA intervention completion reports and the various No-Cost Extension requests. This phase also includes virtual meetings with the Evaluation Manager and the Project Focal Points in the ILO-Country Offices, as well as the writing of the Inception Report (approved on 22 May 2023).

B. Data Collection Phase

This phase included several components. Firstly, a complete review was undertaken of the relevant documents including related evaluation reports, and a full list of documents consulted is included in Annex 12.

Secondly, virtual interviews were conducted with 38 key stakeholders related to the four interventions including Tripartite constituents, implementing partners and ILO staff. Of these stakeholders 42% were female (See Annex 7). These interviews were all conducted online, as field visits were not undertaken for reasons of efficiency: the interventions are relatively small and divided over four countries, and several of them were already part of broader evaluations (see

below). Surveys often have a very poor and biased response and in particular in this case where the interventions have already been completed and fully closed quite some time ago (between 6 and 18 months ago). Many stakeholders were, therefore, expected to not clearly remember the specific project activities, also because the individual interventions were relatively small in terms of funding. This is also the problem with interviewing Beneficiaries; therefore, and because of the limited timeframe available, this was left out in close consultation with the evaluation manager and the respective focal points.

The final list of stakeholders interviewed as given in Annex 7 was prioritised and finalised in consultation with the Evaluation Manager and with the Intervention Focal Points (ILO Staff in the COs) of each of the interventions. The sheer number of interviews conducted (38) is quite substantial for the time frame given by the ToR (see also the paragraph below on the Work Plan). The criteria for selecting the particular stakeholders for interviews was based on purposive sampling based on their level of involvement and engagement in the preparation and implementation of the intervention, while also taking into account the gender aspect. The questions to be asked to these stakeholders relate to all of the eight evaluation criteria discussed in Section 2.1, whereby the 19 Evaluation Questions listed in Annex 5 were used as a checklist for these interviews. Annex 5 has specifically been developed as *the interview guide*.

Thirdly, several other evaluation studies were consulted (cf. Annex 12). Concerning Timor Leste, the evaluation avoided duplication of work already completed under the evaluation in early 2023 of the large Roads for Development (R4D-SP) programme (funded by DFAT) in which the present RBSA intervention was also evaluated; the final report of that evaluation has been completed in March 2023 and was used for the present evaluation. In addition, the intervention in Viet Nam was partly evaluated as one of eight RBSA interventions with an exclusive focus on ILS, and not on the COVID-19-response (February 2023). *A Review of the RBSA Funding Modality* in 2020 has also been consulted (March 2020). Lastly, the High-Level Evaluation (HLE) of ILO's global COVID-19 Response during 2020-22 were used in the present evaluation as a guiding factor (August 2022).

Fourthly, a stakeholder workshop was held at the end of the data collection phase on Wednesday 21 June 2023 where the preliminary findings were verified with the key stakeholders participating and where a useful general discussion among the stakeholders was held on these findings which served as inputs into the draft evaluation report. In total 23 stakeholders participated in the workshop (see Annex 8).

The findings using the above given approaches from each of the interventions were collated, resulting in a set of conclusions and recommendations on the questions asked during the evaluation and also how each of these interventions in the Asia Pacific Region contributed to addressing the targets under P&B outcomes 1,3, 4 and 5 and also complemented the efforts towards achieving SDG targets 1.5, 4.4, 8.2, 8.3, and 8.6.

C. Data Analysis & Report Writing

This phase included the data analysis, including triangulation of the collected data ensuring the validity and rigour of the evaluation findings, and the writing of the draft report. The draft report was circulated by the evaluation manager to the key stakeholders and relevant ILO staff who provided their comments, on the basis of which the evaluator revised the draft report. The

evaluator also developed a stand-alone Evaluation Summary in the ILO-Template. Quality control was conducted by the Evaluation Manager, ILO ROAP and ILO EVAL.

To the extent possible, the data collection, analysis and presentation was responsive to and included issues relating to gender equality, diversity and non-discrimination, including disability issues. **Gender concerns** were addressed in accordance with ILO Guidance note 4: “Considering gender in the monitoring and evaluation of programmes”. In particular, the evaluator made sure that women's views and perceptions were reflected in the interviews, focus group discussions and that gender-specific questions were included.

Deliverables

The following four deliverables were provided:

a. Deliverable 1: Inception report

The Inception Report had been prepared as per the ILO EVAL Checklist 3: Writing the inception report, and it includes a workplan (Section 4.4). This report was drafted upon the review of an initial set of documents and after conducting an initial set of discussions with the Evaluation Manager and the relevant focal points of all four interventions being evaluated. It defines the final evaluation approach and methodology including the final evaluation questions, data collection methodologies and techniques selected. It was approved by the evaluation manager on 22 May 2023.

b. Deliverable 2: Stakeholder workshop/presentation on preliminary findings of the evaluation

At the end of the data collection exercise, the international evaluator presented a PowerPoint with the preliminary findings of the evaluation and recommendations, at the stakeholders' workshop on 21 June 2023. The workshop was well-attended with 23 participants (Annex 8). All inputs, feedback and questions raised by the stakeholders participating in this workshop were considered by the evaluator for inclusion into the draft report.

c. Deliverable 3: Draft evaluation report

The Draft Evaluation Report was prepared in accordance with the EVAL Checklist 5: Preparing the Evaluation report. The structure of the draft and final reports followed closely the tentative outline of chapters and annexes given in the ToR.

d. Deliverable 4: Final evaluation report with evaluation summary (in a standard ILO format)

The final report was prepared in accordance with the EVAL Checklist 5: Preparing the Evaluation report. The comments from all the stakeholders on the Draft Report were used by the evaluator as a basis to revise the draft report into the revised final report.

The final approval of the evaluation report was given by the ILO's Evaluation Office. The quality of the report was assessed against the relevant EVAL Checklists (Checklist 6 Rating the quality of evaluation report, in Section 12).

Management Arrangements

The evaluator has been reporting and working directly under the supervision of the Evaluation Manager named Mr. Ahmad Ullah Qazi. The evaluation was conducted by an independent international evaluator, Mr. Theo van der Loop. The project teams of the four RBSA interventions

provided logistic and administrative support to the evaluation throughout the process. They also provided all relevant and updated project and non-project documents reviewed. As it is a participatory evaluation, the key stakeholders have been consulted throughout the evaluation process.

Work Plan

The Evaluation consultancy amounted to 32 working days. The final evaluation was carried out in the period between May and July 2023, and a detailed workplan is provided in Annex 6.

Legal and ethical matters

The present evaluation has complied with UN Norms and Standards. UN Evaluation Group (UNEG) ethical guidelines were followed. The evaluator abided by the EVAL's Code of Conduct for carrying out the evaluations. Evaluators had personal and professional integrity and abided by the UNEG Ethical Guidelines for evaluation and the Code of Conduct for Evaluation in the UN system to ensure that the rights of individuals involved in an evaluation were respected. The evaluator acted with cultural sensitivity and paid particular attention to protocols, codes and recommendations that may be relevant to his interactions with women. Evaluator signed the ILO Code of Conduct to show that he has read and understood the UNEG Code of Conduct for Evaluation in the UN System process.

Limitations

The Evaluation assignment was clearly laid out in the ToR (Annex 1) and the list of stakeholders to be interviewed was comprehensive and considered to be representative of the main stakeholders. However, as indicated in the above, the sheer number of stakeholders (cf. Annex 7) is quite large (38) considering the timeframe available as detailed in Annex 6. Especially in combination with the widely diverging levels of detail of the Outcome Statements or Results Frameworks of four different interventions in four countries (cf. Annex 3), the timeframe for the present evaluation is quite tight.

It was decided not to conduct travel to any of the four countries for reasons of efficiency (cf. Section 4.1), and the mitigation strategy was to conduct *online* interviews through virtual and/or phone interviews with project stakeholders through online means of communication.

3 Overall Findings

For the Final Independent Cluster Evaluation of “ILO’s Cluster of Interventions funded under RBSA round 2020-21 (improved employment opportunities COVID-19 response focused)”, **eight Evaluation Criteria** have been identified in the previous chapter which will be discussed in depth in the present chapter (Sections 3.1 – 3.8). These criteria have been analysed with the help of the **19 Evaluation Questions** (listed in Annex 5).

3.1 Relevance and Validity of Design

RBSA Interventions

The RBSA Funding Modality is special in that it concerns unearmarked funding provided by nine different donors (cf. Annex 2). Because the funding is unearmarked and because the interventions contribute to one or more Country Programme Outcomes (CPO), PROGRAM and PARTNERSHIPS underlined during the interviews that a set of activities under RBSA are preferably called ‘**interventions**’ and not **projects**.

Relevance for improved employment opportunities COVID-19 response focused

The Evaluation found that the four interventions were **highly relevant** for the targeted groups bearing in mind the severe impact of the COVID-19 pandemic. All four were directed at improved employment levels and/or improved probability of decent employability options in their own specific ways:

- The host community in Cox’s Bazar, **Bangladesh**, was severely affected by the pandemic.
- Migrant Workers (MW) returning to **Sri Lanka** due to the pandemic could not find jobs upon their return.
- The Rural Poor in **Timor Leste** were severely affected especially because the lockdown in this country was particularly strict (‘State of Emergency’).
- Informal workers in **Viet Nam** were among the so-called “hard-hit groups” in this country, and these workers account for the majority of the workforce (68.5%).

The stakeholders interviewed all underlined the high relevance of the interventions for these target groups. In addition, the interventions were considered by the stakeholders as a *very timely* COVID-19 response, for example, in Viet Nam the number of informal workers increased rapidly due to the pandemic and there were no Development Cooperation (DC) projects targeting them. The same applies for the rapidly increasing numbers of migrant workers in Sri Lanka. In addition, there was a very urgent need for statistical data in particular in Viet Nam on the impact of the pandemic on the labour market making the statistical work also very timely. In Timor Leste, the broader R4D Evaluation similarly found that: “*The project did well to continue activities despite the disruption caused by the pandemic and took clear action to minimize risk to staff, communities and contractors. The RBSA-funded COVID response project provided a rapid response benefitting those most affected by the crisis.*” (R4D Evaluation 2023: 60, Finding 9).

Validity of Design

In terms of the Validity of Design, the criteria for the approval of interventions were specified by the RBSA Guidance in 2020 (PROGRAM and PARTNERSHIPS 2020), in particular:

- ✓ Financial threshold: A minimum amount of \$150,000 and a maximum amount of \$600,000 will be allocated to each proposal.
- ✓ The implementation period for each approved RBSA-funded proposal should not exceed 15 months.
- ✓ Proposals for RBSA funding will need to support work in one of three areas of strategic focus of which only the first one is of relevance here, notably: *“Immediate and long-term responses to the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic on the world of work, in particular through human-centred, innovative and coordinated solutions with potential to catalyse stronger partnerships and leverage additional resources.”*⁴

Since these criteria are quite absolute requirements for the *approval* of the proposal it is only logical that the four proposals adhered to all of them.

Unlike in Development Cooperation projects and programmes, *no* full-fledged M&E systems and logical frameworks are required in RBSA proposals as was agreed with the RBSA Donor countries. The underlying rationale and assumption were that CPO and RBSA descriptions are of sufficient quality to enable measuring the RBSA contribution to the achievement of the CPO. The intention was not to recreate a separate and fully fledged project management cycle for this specific, and limited funding source, ensuring flexibility. In fact, before 2020 there were even less requirements for M&E Systems, but after the Review of the RBSA funding modality in March 2020 it became more structured, and the RBSA Guidance of 2020 has *“...five templates that will be used at different stages from the design of a proposal through to the end of an RBSA-funded intervention.”*⁵

Another recommendation by the above-mentioned 2020 Review was to: **“Strengthen the learning capacity of the RBSA funding modality”**, and: *“For completed and present RBSA allocations, a compilation and analysis of the results achieved for a sample of RBSA interventions should be carried out, especially those with allocations lower than US\$ 500,000 not subject to a formal evaluation.”* (2020: 4).

The approval process of the proposals follows a structured path with inputs by the responsible Regional Office and the Leads of relevant Outcome Coordination teams, ahead of PROGRAM's and PARTNERSHIPS's appraisal. On that basis, PROGRAM makes the final decision on the approval of RBSA funding for the proposal or not.

⁴ The other two areas of strategic focus were (RBSA Guidance April 2020: 2):

- Promoting social dialogue and supporting the social partners for their contribution to and participation in decent work-related COVID-19 responses and the achievement of the SDGs at country level; and
- Promoting compliance with international labour standards (ILS).

⁵ The five templates are: Proposals for RBSA Funding 2020-21; RBSA Quality Assurance Checklist 2020-21; Scoring Matrix for the Appraisal of Proposals; How to write an RBSA Executive Summary; and End of an RBSA-funded intervention.

Results Frameworks

As mentioned in the above, under RBSA there are no full-fledged M&E Systems or LogFrames and Theories of Change required, but each proposal has an Outcome Statement or Results Framework related to the respective P&B Outcomes and Outputs (which were detailed in the above Table 2). These are linked in the proposals to the interventions' Outputs and Targets and these Results Frameworks are included in Annex 3 for each of the four interventions. The format varies between the four interventions, but the link with the P&B Outcomes is generally clear and the outputs and targets are logically deduced. In the case of Viet Nam, it is more complicated as we have already seen in Section 1.2 and Annex 4 with different funding sources for different outputs of the intervention. In addition, as mentioned in Section 1.2 the proposal includes two CPO's, i.e. VNM128 and VNM826; this was the result of the particular comments brought forward by the NORMES Department in Geneva with a view to addressing the comments of the Committee of Experts on the Application of Conventions (CEACR) on Convention 122 on Employment Policy and on implementing the recently ratified Convention 88 on Employment Service. NORMES insisted that these should be included in the RBSA proposal diverting it a bit from its original scope (cf. Annex 3), and therefore this set of activities was brought under a different CPO, i.e. VNM826, lumping them together in one and the same proposal.

Issues that could have been done better to make proposals more relevant

The evaluation found that the RBSA approval process has been working well in making the proposed interventions relevant to the needs of the target groups and responsive to the challenges at hand in the field. There are only a few exceptions in which the risk assessment in the proposals missed out on issues that turned out to be impactful such as the unexpectedly lower levels of capacity of some implementing partners resulting in slow progress of the implementation of activities, as well as the economic crisis in Sri Lanka (although the extreme severity of it and the accidental concurrency with the COVID-19 pandemic could not have been predicted). In addition, in certain cases measures to promote gender equality could have been more explicitly included in the proposals.

3.2 Coherence

Coherence with the existing efforts of the ILO

The evaluation found that there was a high degree of Coherence between the interventions in most countries and the existing efforts of the ILO Country Offices. For example, in **Sri Lanka** two proposals were developed simultaneously: one funded by RBSA and another by the Government of Japan which started about half a year later and took over selected activities from the RBSA intervention when that was completed in November 2022. The Japan-funded project is expected to be completed by August 2023. Both interventions were also related to a multi-year project on migration governance until 2024 funded by the Swiss Development Cooperation (SDC). In fact, the three interventions even organised a *multi-stakeholder forum* in January 2022 on how to guarantee the sustainability of the RBSA intervention and how to proceed from that time onwards. Furthermore, the RBSA intervention targeted returnee and blocked migrant workers using synergies with another COVID-19 response project on direct COVID-19 support for example

training on COVID-19 hygiene measures at the workplace, provision of personal protective equipment, etc. This was a joint ILO and UNOPS project funded by the Multi-Partner Trust Fund (MPTF) entitled 'Healthy Socio-Economic Response of Micro and Small Enterprise Sector of Sri Lanka'.

In **Viet Nam** the RBSA intervention built upon a previous RBSA project also dealing with statistics, and it was developed simultaneously with the outcome-based ILO/Sida partnership and certain activities were even jointly financed (see for details Annex 4). In addition, a follow-up project also dealing in part with statistics is the "Productivity Ecosystem for Decent Work" (2021-2025) funded by SECO and NORAD. In **Timor Leste**, RBSA provided a rapid response building on the large-scale DFAT funded R4D phases (about 50 million US\$) *before* (Phase I and II, 2012-2021) and *during* (2021-2022, called the 'Bridging phase') the RBSA intervention. In **Bangladesh**, however, the intervention did *not* build upon another project as its presence in Cox's Bazar was newly initiated, but here the coherence is with follow-up interventions because RBSA opened up support for the first time for the vulnerable host communities, which subsequently resulted directly into two new Development Cooperation projects in the region (see further section 3.6).

Coherence with the existing efforts of tripartite and other partners

The alignment to the existing efforts of tripartite constituents is mixed. In **Bangladesh**, a partial coherence exists with large-scale programmes in the region targeting the 'Forcibly Displaced Myanmar Nationals' (FDMN) as they are called in Bangladesh (outside of Bangladesh they are generally referred to as Rohingya Refugees). In **Sri Lanka** a large number of stakeholders from the government and social partners (about 15 in total) were consulted, and they did indeed get engaged. Among the *beneficiaries* there was some reluctance at first as they were afraid of being involved following their experiences during the early stages of the pandemic. In **Timor Leste**, consultations were mainly held with the national government and not with the employers' and workers' organisations.

Lastly, in **Viet Nam**, efforts were made by the ILO Country Office to match the requests from tripartite constituents with the RBSA-proposal criteria; for example, it was difficult to find donor funding for the Labour Market Information System (LMIS) needed to assess the COVID-19 impact on the Labour Market, and here RBSA offered a good alternative. The work on statistics with General Statistics Office (GSO) was on the explicit request of the Government of Viet Nam (GoV) in order to be able to use the data in the planning process, and to arrive at informed evidence-based policies. In addition, there was coherence with an activity on an SDG indicator jointly with UNFPA. Furthermore, a certain degree of coherence also existed with the workers' and employers' organisations: with the former (VGCL) a workshop was organised to discuss the role of trade unions in the informal sector, including a possible revision of the Trade Union Charter to include syndicates and informal unions in order to attract more members; and with the latter (VCCI) which joined meetings and shared information/know-how at workshops, e.g. how to protect the workplace during the pandemic although there was no specific budget from RBSA for VCCI.

The overall fit of the interventions to the needs of each country

The overall fit with the needs of the respective countries is therefore assessed as quite good since urgent needs were addressed which were felt widely in these countries. What could have been looked at better at times was the more explicit alignment to the policies of the workers' and employers' organisations and dedicated budgets for joint activities with these organisations.

3.3 Effectiveness

Achievements

The interventions were generally quite effective in achieving the desired results. Some selected Key Achievements have been summarized for each country in Table 3 below while the complete achievements by outputs and targets are detailed in Annex 9.

Table 3: Selected Key Achievements by Country (Full details are given in Annex 9).

Country	Key Achievements
Bangladesh	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1) Overcame the initial reluctance to target host communities in Cox's Bazar, and later it generated lots of attention. 2) Designed to demonstrate ILO's tools for LED, job creation and placement, and Enterprise Development for the host communities through competence-based learning. 3) Build capacity of <i>local</i> tripartite constituents including Chambers of Commerce and Training Centres, and involve local SMEs (e.g. 400 hotels in Cox's Bazar).
Sri Lanka	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1) Institutional Capacity Development and Coordination: Recognized TVET institutions, incl. SLITHM, conduct (e-)RPL (including 'Skills Passport') and use NVQ standards in 'Skilling MW' through. Support to distance learning. Awareness raising. 2) Entrepreneurship development (ED) for returnee Migrant Workers (COVID): SIYB. 3) Cooperation with Workers' Organisations: National Union of Seafarers Sri Lanka (NUSS; maritime jobs including for women), Centre for Working Women (CWW) and Sri Lanka Nidahas Sevaka Sangamaya (SLNSS).
Timor Leste	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1) Bring direct COVID support to the most affected rural people in terms of employment and wages: Direct employment created for 2,572 beneficiaries. 2) Road maintenance (273 km.). 3) Support to the transfer of the Management System (IRMIS) developed by R4D to the Prime Minister's Office.
Viet Nam	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1) Statistics: Support to GSO & MOLISA: Quarterly Reports (Bulletins & Infographics) on impact of COVID on Labour Market and in particular on workers; Labour Force Survey (LFS) Indicators on Informal Employment, Questionnaire & sampling; New ICLS-19 standard (training). *) 2) Informality: Flagship report: Data were needed to prepare revision of the Employment Law. Also CEC/VGCL report on definitions. 3) Capacity Building: Public Employment Service Center (MOLISA). Training on LMI.

*) The International Conference of Labour Statisticians (ICLS) is a vehicle for standard-setting in labour statistics hosted by the ILO every five years.

As was explained in Section 1.1 these four interventions were selected to be evaluated *jointly* in order to try to assess the overall impact which they may have had in addressing **improved employment opportunities** amidst the COVID-19 pandemic and the massive labour migration. While they all achieved positive contributions towards that objective, it was undertaken in diverse environments through different sets of interventions. While in Timor Leste a direct contribution was made towards an increase in employment during crisis times, in the other countries the contribution was more indirect: In Bangladesh through building the capacity of *local* tripartite constituents and enterprise development; in Sri Lanka through institutional capacity development

(incl. TVET institutions, e-RPL and 'Skills Passport') and through cooperation with Workers' Organisations; and in Viet Nam through providing accurate statistics informing policies and innovative work on informality. In terms of the sustainability of the results this varies as well, and this will be the subject of Section 3.6.

Challenges Encountered

The interventions encountered a few overall challenges during their implementation, as well as several specific ones for each country. The *overall challenges* are as follows:

- 1) Although the interventions were a COVID-19-response, there were still delays caused by the new way of working essentially through online means of communication and provision of knowledge. Online work was not always easy, and it turned out to be often difficult to approach workers in particular informal ones. In addition, in rural areas internet is not always (regularly) available.
- 2) Under the limitation of the RBSA criteria of an implementation period with a maximum of 15 months it was in particular difficult to undertake policy making, statistics work, etc. because that requires a longer-term intervention (multi-year).
- 3) Although the maximum budget under RBSA is relatively small, one still has to coordinate with a large number of stakeholders including CO, ROAP/RPU, DWT experts, HQ technical departments, PROGRAM & PARTNERSHIPS.

The challenges encountered during implementation by country are as follows:

➤ Bangladesh:

- In the initial stages it was quite a challenge to get the attention of stakeholders for the proposed activities with the host communities as all attention and major programmes in the targeted region were directed at the situation of the FDMN/Rohingya refugees.
- Due to the COVID-19 pandemic situation, it was at first difficult to find students for the training programmes.
- It turned out to be quite a challenge to secure the continued participation of women in the training programmes, for example in the hospitality and tourism sector, due to local culture regarding women travelling and participating in this sector, as well as to the distance needed to travel to training centres.

➤ Sri Lanka:

- The deep economic crisis in this country in the past few years and the severe currency depreciation during March 2022 until March 2023 resulting in queues for basic needs, fuel, etc. and in all too frequent power outages.
- Migrant workers returning home due to the COVID-19 pandemic often had spent all their earnings to make the journey to their country, and therefore they had a strong preference for monetary support.
- The disadvantage of online contacts is that the trust element is lacking, resulting in a reluctance to provide personal information while skills assessments can only be done in person.
- The lack of capacity and/or of IT-equipment among stakeholders resulted in delays in developing action plans, and, at the end of the intervention period unspent budgets

were returned with no time left in the intervention to develop other channels to use these funds.

➤ Timor Leste:

- The COVID-19 measures were particularly severe in this country with the GoTL declaring a three-month State of Emergency from April to June 2020.
- In order to get cash into the hands of the neediest, the project had to design ways to bypass the payment delays that persisted under GoTL systems during the various large-scale R4D programme phases.

➤ Viet Nam:

- The Government partner, MOLISA, decided against undertaking certain activities during the COVID-19 pandemic, such as the support to be provided to introductory work on ILO Convention 160.
- Certain activities of the Results Framework (Annex 3 and 4) were initially planned to be financed through the Outcome-based funding of the ILO/Sida partnership, but since the latter funding was delayed the team began using the RBSA funding for that.
- The work with the high level Central Economic Commission (CEC) was not anticipated in the proposal but turned out to be important leading to some budget reallocations (for example at the expense of the Gender Impact Assessment; cf. Section 3.7).
- The incorporation of questions in the LFS was challenging because the data were needed very urgently in order to assess the impact of the pandemic on the labour market. This was the first time it happened without first having one or more pilots.

Enabling/Success factors

While thus a large number of challenges were identified in the above, the interventions did manage to achieve very good progress as we saw in the above. This was facilitated by several pertinent Success Factors identified by the evaluation at the overall and at the country levels. The *overall* success factors are as follows:

- 1) It has been a great achievement by PARTNERSHIPS to have and to maintain unearmarked funds via RBSA.
- 2) The realisation among all stakeholders of the importance of Decent Work in times of crises such as the COVID-019 pandemic, and the widely felt commitment to work on the fragilities and vulnerabilities of many groups of workers and of enterprises (especially in the informal economy).
- 3) The high commitment and competence of the ILO staff involved and of ILO Country Offices, and the relevant networks of partnerships they have built.
- 4) The flexibility of the RBSA funding modality compared to Development Cooperation projects (in particular in the allocation of the funding, but often also in changing and/or replacing activities, and in adding new key partners during the implementation period and developing additional activities with them).
- 5) The RBSA funding can be of help in the continuity of activities, but also of staff (for a maximum of 30% of the total budget).

The success factors identified by the evaluation *at country level* are as follows:

- Bangladesh:
 - The ability of the ILO Country Office staff to convince national as well as regional and local stakeholders about the importance to support the host communities in Cox's Bazar, next to the predominant attention going to the plight of the Rohingya refugees in the large-scale camps.
 - The good cooperation between the team and the different local stakeholders (tripartite & others).

- Sri Lanka:
 - Not many donors in Sri Lanka have been ready to fund skills development with a focus on migration: no specific and national level program was there for upskilling outgoing migrant workers and especially recognising skills of returning migrant workers (RPL, e-RPL and Skills passport). The RBSA fund could be used to kick-start this.
 - The large number of participating tripartite and other stakeholders involved in the intervention (see Annex 9).

- Timor Leste:
 - Due to the previous long-term phases of the DFAT-funded R4D programme since 2012 there was a pool of trained and experienced road contractors in existence, in other words, the RBSA intervention was able to piggyback on earlier R4D phases.
 - The ability of the ILO Country Office to develop a faster procurement process in the COVID-19 crisis context by paying contractors directly.

- Viet Nam:
 - The close cooperation with the highly qualified General Statistics Office (GSO), as well as with MOLISA, CEC, VCCI, VGCL and other partners.
 - The continuity was also important, building on a previous RBSA project dealing also with statistics.

Areas that could have been done more effectively

The area that could have been done better in terms of effectiveness is more systematic involvement of Workers' Organisations (WO) and to a lesser extent also of Employers' Organisations (EO), and this would include targeted capacity building and dedicated budgets for these organisations. While all four interventions have made efforts to engage these social partners, there is clearly room for improvement. In **Bangladesh** the Cox's Bazar Chamber of Commerce & Industry (CoCI) was deeply involved in the activities and the local branch of the National Coordination Committee for Workers' Education (NCCWE) was invited to all relevant workshops and a capacity building workshop was organized for the local NCCWE members. The Chamber underlined that thanks to the RBSA intervention the social partners were able to interconnect with each other. In **Timor Leste** the social partners were not actively involved in the R4D programme, while the RBSA intervention at least enhanced joint monitoring visits to the project sites by the workers' and employers' organisations. In **Viet Nam** the VCCI (employers) and the VGCL (workers) participated and contributed to all workshops, while each were involved in one specific activity. In **Sri Lanka**, both the Employers' Federation of Ceylon (EFC) and the workers' organisations (NUSS, CWW and SLNSS) were actively involved in the intervention.

Mobilising further resources

One Evaluation Question under 'Effectiveness' (No. 7 in Annex 5) deals with whether the project laid grounds to mobilise further resources. For this topic, reference is made to Section 3.6 under Sustainability where it will be discussed in detail.

3.4 Efficiency

The efficiency of resource use will be measured by different criteria such as the expenditures by budget categories, the expenditure rate, management arrangements, communication, reporting and risk assessment.

Expenditures

Table 4 provides an overview of the expenditures by budget categories of the four RBSA interventions which all had an original modest budget between US\$ 480,000 and 550,000. The table shows that the great majority of expenditures has been spent on what can be called 'actual activities', in particular 'subcontracts' and 'seminars and other training', and together these two categories take up between 55 and 75% of the total expenditures. The second largest category is 'staff' taking up between 20 and 35%, and this is surprising since the limit specified in the RBSA Guidance is a maximum of 30% as we have seen in the above so both in Bangladesh and Sri Lanka there was overspending in this category (explained further below). The third largest budget category is 'operating expenses' (including equipment) which is relatively high in Bangladesh (over 9%) because ILO had to establish a new office set up in the peripherally located Cox's Bazar.⁶ The intervention office did not purchase office furniture as the shared office space with UNOPS was used.

Table 4: The Expenditures by Budget Categories of the four RBSA Interventions and the Expenditure Rates.

Budget Categories	Bangladesh	Sri Lanka	Timor Leste	Viet Nam
Staff	35.1%	32.9%	20.3%	29.6%
Subcontracts	52.0%	64.5%	75.7%	61.6%
Seminars & Other Training	3.4%	1.4%	0.0%	3.2%
Communication	0.1%	0.0%	0.9%	1.8%
Operating expenses	9.4%	1.2%	3.2%	3.8%
Total (%)	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%
Total expenditures (in US\$)	421,643	312,100	545,297	478,516
Original Budget (in US\$)	500,000	485,000	550,000	480,000
Balance (in US\$)	78,357	172,900	4,703	1,484
Expenditure Rate	84.3%	64.4%	99.1%	99.7%

⁶ The main expenditure items under operating expenses and equipment were: office rent, rental car, laptops, photocopier, mobile phones, UN Primary Health Care for Staff, support staff, telephone bills, stationeries, etc.

The last row in Table 4 shows the **Expenditure Rate** which is quite low in Sri Lanka and also on the low side in Bangladesh, especially when compared with the other two interventions (both above 99%). This is an important issue as underspending on any one RBSA intervention might sometimes lead to penalisation of Country Offices in that they are less likely to get a proposal approved in the next RBSA round, although exceptional cases are always considered. Therefore, some explanations are in order. For Sri Lanka there are very pertinent reasons why spending is just under two-thirds of the original budget leaving a total balance of US\$ 172,900 divided as follows:

- ✓ Due to the economic crisis the depreciation of the Sri Lankan Rupee (LKR) has been particularly high, and it increased against the US\$ from LKR 200 in early March 2022 within less than three months to LKR 360 in mid-May 2022, and it stayed around this high level until March 2023. This resulted in substantial exchange gains as the received funding was in US\$ amounting to a total of about 100,200 US\$. Since this occurred in the final phase of the project (closed in November 2022), there was no opportunity for the team to design other activities.
- ✓ Several partners encountered challenges when they were implementing the agreement (subcontract) signed with ILO for which they received the fund upfront. These challenges included: partners took much time to develop and implement action plans and budgets; the economic and political crisis diverted attention away from the implementation of the action plans; and the COVID-19 restrictions were delaying implementation substantially (e.g., the SIYB course had to be transferred to a virtual mode). As a result, at the end of the project period several partners returned their unspent funds to the tune of about US\$ 38,100 in total.
- ✓ Lastly, the uncommitted amount was US\$ 34,600.

The team and CO in Sri Lanka have tried different ways to enhance the spending and apart from staying in constant communication with the partners, one particular measure stands out: the Ministry of Education was requested by the ILO CO to intervene and to stimulate implementation by the public partners, for example to stimulate the involved government departments to sign MoU's and to allocate project officers in the departments.

For Bangladesh, the reasons for not spending the balance of about US\$ 78,000 are manifold as well. Due to the pandemic the travel budget could not be used (US\$ 12,600) and partners could not spend the already contracted amounts (they returned US\$ 21,588). Due to the sharing of office space with UNOPS another US\$ 6,258 was saved, while US\$ 16,106 allocated to general operating costs was in the end not used. The remaining amount of about US\$ 21,000 was due to various savings.

The overspending on staff costs mentioned above occurred in the same two countries as where the expenditure rate was below par, notably in Bangladesh and Sri Lanka. The two factors are causally related since most of the unspent amounts were *not* allocated to staff costs, and this would in turn have reduced the *percentage* of staff costs (to levels approaching or below 30%).

In sum, the interventions were generally efficiently managed especially in Timor Leste and Viet Nam, while in Bangladesh and Sri Lanka adverse circumstances at least partly beyond the reach of the ILO team (in particular COVID-19, economic crisis and currency depreciation) accounted for a large part of the unspent balance.

Delays and No-Cost Extensions

Only the Bangladesh intervention was completed within the original timeframe of 15 months in December 2021. However, in view of a balance of no less than US\$ 78,000, a no-cost extension could have been considered but the intervention had in fact achieved most of its deliverables as per the RBSA proposal and as a result the ILO-CO did not encourage to apply for a no-cost extension, and, more importantly, two new Development Cooperation projects were already on board in Cox's Bazar at the beginning of January 2022 requiring the full attention of the ILO CO staff. For the other three interventions no-cost extensions were required with the longest extensions for Sri Lanka (1 year) and Timor Leste (14 months). Based on a review of the various requests for no-cost extensions the main reasons for the delays, and thus for the extensions, were as follows:

- 1) COVID-19 pandemic, and in particular a surge of Omicron cases (in early 2022) and travel restrictions during implementation of the interventions.
- 2) In Timor Leste almost all subcontracts were already disbursed by March 2022 when the second no-cost extension was about to start (until December 2022). Thus, the extension was requested for another purpose, i.e., mainly to provide support and contribution for the **upgrade** of IRMIS jointly with the Prime Minister's Office and the Ministry of Public Works as well as with the R4D programme including joint financing by all three organisations. Details of the upgrade of IRMIS are provided in Box 1 below.
- 3) In Sri Lanka the first no-cost extension was requested because of the delays due to the pandemic, but the second no-cost extension was related to the economic and political crisis, the social unrest (in early 2022), the resignation of the Cabinet of Ministers and the time needed for new ministers to approve activities, as well as the austerity measures of the government. These factors have not only delayed the implementation of the intervention but has also created an unprecedented trend of mass migration, especially among returned migrant workers and youth.
- 4) In Viet Nam a no-cost extension of just two months was requested and approved (November-December 2021) mainly for two reasons: the fourth wave of the COVID-19 pandemic and the involvement in the intervention of a new partner: when the intervention started the first steps on the Employment Law revision process, the Central Party Economic Committee (CEC) became involved bringing about a much heavier work-plan, as well as potentially stronger policy influence.

Box 1: Upgrade of IRMIS in Timor Leste

*Discussion with the Ministry of Public Works and the R4D programme for the urgent need to extend the Contract Management Module of the **Integrated Road Management Information System (IRMIS)** for better monitoring of the public works program particularly for Municipal Road Units. IRMIS was developed and funded by R4D during 2017-2019, while thereafter funding support was required to finance the **Upgrade**. The total cost of the upgrade was proposed to be **co-shared** by R4D and RBSA, while the maintenance cost is to be covered by the Ministry of Public Works.*

For sustainability of IRMIS (and regular funding from Government to support maintenance of the IRMIS), the ILO together with the Ministry of Public Works are engaging the Information and Communication Technologies Agency (TIC). TIC is established under the Prime Minister's Office with the mandate to manage e-Government of Timor-Leste and reforming public administration using information technology. Engagement with the Prime Minister's Office to take ownership and to lead the upgrade of the system required extensive lobbying by the ILO.

Most interventions have achieved all or the majority of the initially defined outcomes, but as we saw in the case of Sri Lanka a few implementing partners could not complete their intended outputs, and in the end returned part of the funding allotted to them.

Management arrangements

As we have seen in the above under challenges, while the budget was modest a large number of stakeholders was involved. The ILO Responsible Official is the Country Director of the respective Country Offices who oversees activities. In each country a different set-up was chosen. In **Bangladesh** the proposal was developed by CO staff and it was managed by the Skills Development Officer of the CO. In **Sri Lanka** the proposal was also developed by CO staff while the dedicated NPC arrived at a time when the intervention had been operational since several months. The Programme Officer for **Timor Leste** based in the CO in Jakarta has been continuously involved in the intervention in this country having also been an integral part of the long-term R4D programme. In **Viet Nam** the Labour Economist developed the proposal and was deeply involved in the implementation until she left Hanoi towards the final stages of the intervention and she has been supported throughout by a dedicated NPC. In all interventions there were at times substantial additional inputs from other technical and programming staff of the ILO Country Offices.

In addition, the ILO focal points responsible for the intervention were in all CO supported by administrative and/or finance assistants mostly funded from the RBSA intervention, but at times this was also shared with and/or funded from other projects. To name two examples, in Viet Nam the administrative finance assistant was cost-shared by RBSA, ILO/Sida and Safe and Fair (EU) from July to December 2021, and in Cox's Bazar office space was shared with UNOPS. Overall, all four RBSA interventions were solidly embedded in the administrative and financial systems of the respective ILO Country Offices.

The ILO Regional Office (ROAP) provided substantial backstopping especially from the Regional Programming Unit (RPU), and this included commenting on progress reports and on requests for no-cost extensions, etc., as well as acting as the liaison between the intervention/CO and PROGRAM and PARTNERSHIPS in Geneva. Support was further provided by several DWT experts in both Bangkok and Delhi, but due to the prevailing COVID-19 pandemic they were mostly not able to travel to the countries in question during most of the intervention periods (2020-2022); the experts themselves would have preferred to be more directly involved in the interventions. Support from HQ technical departments in Geneva was not systematic and provided as and when required.

Communication by the ILO team/CO has been assessed as very good by all interviewed stakeholders. In some interventions, awareness raising campaigns were developed and implemented, but no dedicated communication plans were presented. However, some highlights of communication materials need to be mentioned as follows:

- ✓ A **Video Documentary** of the Closing Workshop in Bangladesh in December 2021 at: https://drive.google.com/file/d/1qkzdm_npm8h02ArRjdVuv6jl2o200zSt/view
- ✓ In Sri Lanka a **multi-stakeholder forum** on "Skilling Sri Lankan workforce towards Global talent pool" was organised in January 2022 by three interventions (RBSA, Japan and SDC), in order to bring consensus among all key partners on the vital importance of skills development of migrant workers and on how to guarantee the sustainability of the RBSA intervention.

- ✓ In Timor Leste **extensive lobbying** and engagement was required with the Prime Minister's Office and the Ministry of Public Works, in order for the PM Office to take ownership and to lead the upgrade of the IRMIS system.
- ✓ In Viet Nam the Quarterly National Reports on the impact of COVID-19 on the labour market were transformed into **Infographics** which attracted a much larger audience than the Bulletins, and this format was adopted by MOLISA; in addition, MOLISA also adopted the format for the **Press Conferences** that ILO had organised on the launching of the Bulletins.

In terms of communication and sharing knowledge gained by the different interventions it is quite customary within ILO to have an updated 'project website', but only two out of the four interventions have such a website: Sri Lanka⁷ and Timor Leste.⁸ It would, however, have even better if these websites would have been updated with links to the latest outputs, videos, and other relevant material of the interventions.

With respect to **Reporting** the RBSA Guidance on the 2020-2021 round of proposals specifies only the "End of an RBSA-funded intervention" (Template 5). Nevertheless, for each intervention there are one or two monitoring reports submitted to ROAP/RPU for comments, and these mostly take the format of a matrix with the CPO and P&B Outputs and include the progress made on each target/indicator. In addition, the incidental requests for no-cost extensions also provide monitoring moments. The End-of-Intervention report template includes basic data of the intervention, very brief statements on expenditure rate, timeliness, delivery of CPO deliverables and risk assumptions, and two longer sections on Key Results achieved and Main Lessons Learned. In general, these reports were submitted timely i.e., within one month of completion of the intervention, although the one in Bangladesh was submitted a little later (early March 2022). The reports provide clear and concise information on the topics mentioned above although some are more extensive than others partly also due to the specific type of project and the number of activities/targets specified in the proposals (compare for example the lists of achievements of the different interventions in Annex 9).

Risk Assessment

Template 1 for an RBSA Proposal has a mandatory section (4) on "Risks and risk response", and thus all four proposals do indeed have such a section. Here it will be analysed how the **self-assessments** in the End-reports are related to these initially identified risks and risk responses. In these End-reports both for Viet Nam and Timor Leste the box with "Adequately estimated" was ticked with respect to the Risk Assumptions, while in the other two countries it was indicated that such assumptions were "underestimated".

Although in **Timor Leste** it was assessed as adequate, there were two no-cost extensions of in total 14 months; however, as we have seen in the above the second no-cost extension was mainly for the upgrade of IRMIS (cf. Box 1). The risks identified were of quite a concrete nature: Health and safety risks; Delays in contracting; and Delays in payments of workers. As we saw in the above under success factors, the latter two risks were mitigated by a faster procurement and payment process in the COVID-19 crisis context.

⁷ https://www.ilo.org/colombo/whatwedo/projects/WCMS_782627/lang--en/index.htm

⁸ https://www.ilo.org/jakarta/whatwedo/projects/WCMS_771422/lang--en/index.htm

In **Viet Nam** the risk assumptions were also assessed as 'adequate', but here also a no-cost extension was required although it was only for two months. In fact, three out of the five risks initially identified are related to COVID-19, and this turned out to be one of the main reasons for the request for a no-cost extension, the other reason being the unanticipated introduction of a high-level new partner (CEC).

In **Bangladesh** five risks were initially identified, one overall (delays due to COVID-19), one Strategic, two operational and one environmental risk. The end-report stated that the risks were underestimated as a result of: "The project activities could not progress as per the original implementation plan due to the COVID-19 deterioration in Cox's Bazar and additional restrictions imposed by the government from April to June 2021." However, the overall risk precisely identified delays due to COVID-19 as the main reason for the extension, so in fact, it could have been just as well "Adequately estimated".

In **Sri Lanka** the initially identified risks were especially related to the potentially slow responses and/or reduced focus among key government institutions, as well as the weak quality of information provision and service delivery by central government institutions in some rural areas. The End-report's self-assessment provides revealing insights when it stated that the risks were underestimated as follows:

1. *"The lack of coordination and slow response from government institutions were much more severe than estimated at project inception, because of occasional shutdowns of such institutions, due to multiple waves of COVID-19 virus and shortage of resources (including fuel and energy).*
2. *Attracting and serving the target beneficiaries through usual means of service delivery were difficult under the restrictions on travel and public gathering occasionally imposed by the Government.*
3. *Post-pandemic economic shocks had not been anticipated in project design at all, which caused major disruption to supply of imported materials, fuel and other essential commodities, creating pro-long queues for such goods, causing a shift in people's priorities.*
4. *Government declared debt default (in April 2022), which resulted in unprecedented economic contraction, job losses, closure of businesses, and severe social unrest that eventually led to a political uprising.*
5. *The emerging demand for migration resulted in loss of interest (on project interventions) among many targeted beneficiaries as they were seeking avenues to flee away.*
6. *Frequent changes in mandates and top managerial positions in the implementing institutions (including Ministries, Departments, and even the EFC: Employers' organization) caused the need of repositioning and realigning the project interventions to meet aspired needs under challenging environment."*

In sum, the risk response sections both in the proposal and in the End-report provide very useful insights into the implementation challenges faced by the interventions.

Leverage resources with other projects

The interventions have leveraged resources with other projects/programmes of the ILO to enhance the project impact and efficiency. Within each of the Country Offices cooperation was forged with several projects and this will in detail be explained in Section 3.6 under sustainability. In addition, as we have seen in the above, various forms of cost-sharing of staff was undertaken with technical and programming staff within the CO's and with admin/finance staff with different ILO projects.

3.5 Impact

The interventions did prove to have an impact on the existing problem which they were designed to address. Some clear examples for each intervention are as follows (the details of which are included in Annex 9):

Bangladesh:

- Due to the RBSA intervention ILO's presence in Cox's Bazar was established and since then it has continued through other interventions.
- Local Economic Development (LED) and Enterprise Development (ED) were enhanced through competency-based learning and services by government agencies and Chambers of Commerce.
- The trainees of several training programmes were indeed employed by different enterprises (cf. Annex 9).

Sri Lanka:

- The RBSA intervention has led to several positive steps towards the implementation of Recognition of Prior Learning (RPL) and e-RPL for migrant workers as well as of the Skills Passport.
- Several employment-linked training courses were conducted as well as apprenticeship training.
- Support to workers' organisations was provided, for example, to the newly established CWW. It was initially the "Women's Wing" of another Trade Union, i.e., the National Workers Congress, and CWW was later formed as a separate trade union. ILO RBSA was the first intervention in which they cooperated with an international development agency, and they demonstrated their ability through this intervention, and since then CWW was involved in several projects with the ILO and other organizations.

Timor Leste:

- The RBSA intervention provided substantial direct employment and wages for the most affected rural poor during the period of the project which will have an impact on their health and wellbeing.
- The maintenance of the rural roads undertaken by these employment-intensive emergency public works had an impact on transport in the rural areas.

Viet Nam:

- Due to the RBSA intervention 'informality' is now in the spotlight in this country. The development of human resources in the informal economy (IE) including issues of social protection, was a new area for the CEC in 2020, which had as one of its results that the CEC is now working on a proposal how to reflect the IE in policies, thereby using insights from the RBSA activities, such as the RBSA Flagship report on IE. The CEC itself emphasised that "*This triggered a Paradigm shift within the Viet Nam Government!*"
- Also due to the RBSA intervention the CEC became a new, crucial partner for the ILO and both organisations stated their definite intention to continue this partnership.
- The RBSA intervention furthermore institutionalized statistical information on IE in the legislation including the definition of the IE (see further under sustainability in the next section).

- The close collaboration between MOLISA as data users and GSO as data producers maximized the value and quality of labour market data produced. The intervention also provided support and data, such as an improved LMIS, as evidence-base for the ongoing policy work within MOLISA, including for the revision process of the Employment Law (which is currently nearing its final stages).
- A final example of impact was the capacity building resulting from the active working together of GSO and MOLISA staff with ILO experts on the Quarterly Reports; for example, the quality of the reports has gradually increased and the last one is considered as the best one.

Another evaluation sub-question is whether anything could have been done better to improve the impact. Notwithstanding the above-mentioned substantial achievements and forms of impact, one area springs to mind that was also a key area found by the *Independent High-Level Evaluation of ILO's COVID-19 Response 2020-22* (August 2022): Several of the Recommendations of this HLE focus on capacity building of the tripartite constituents such as Nos. 1, 5 and 6 (see Annex 10). Although this was at least one component in each of the interventions, more emphasis on such capacity building would be beneficial as the HLE also recommended based among other methods on the review of 87 evaluation reports!

The key **challenges and constraints** that limited the RBSA interventions to achieve the desired impact have been discussed in detail in Section 3.3, and generally the ILO teams have responded swiftly and adequately to such challenges as was for example demonstrated in the above with the response to the different waves of the COVID-19 pandemic.

3.6 Sustainability

The efforts and progress made by the interventions showed substantial signs of sustainability. Most of the interventions for example laid grounds to *mobilise further resources*:

Bangladesh:

- The demonstration effect of the RBSA intervention directly led to two new Development Cooperation (DC) projects in Cox's Bazar:
 1. an ILO-FAO UN Joint Programme (UNJP) funded by the Netherlands (US\$ 2.3 million).
 2. Another UNJP led by the ILO entitled '*Leaving No One Behind: Improving Skills and Economic Opportunities for the Bangladeshi Community and Rohingya Women & Youths in Cox's Bazar*' funded by Global Affairs Canada (GAC) with a total budget of CAD 44 million. The other partners involved are UNHCR, IOM, UNDP and BRAC (Bangladesh Rural Advancement Committee).

Sri Lanka:

- Another project (funded by Japan) overlapped with the RBSA intervention but since the project period was longer it took the RBSA activities forward; there were also synergies with the SDC-funded project. Agreements for cooperation and for sustainability of the RBSA results were discussed at the multi-stakeholder forum held in January 2022.

- Due to the demonstration effect of the RBSA intervention, the Start and Improve Your Business Association in Sri Lanka (SIYB-ASL) was subsequently further facilitated technically to develop a proposal for a second phase of this initiative, which was financially assisted through another ILO project “*Supporting the Socio-economic Reintegration of Sri Lankan Migrant Workers Repatriated due to the COVID-19 Outbreak (IOM-ILO collaboration)*” funded by Government of Japan (April 2021 - March 2023).

Timor Leste:

- The RBSA intervention was a rapid response benefitting those most affected by the pandemic aligned to the large-scale DFAT funding of the multi-year R4D programme. The 34,563 worker days created (cf. Annex 9) are already completed and since it therefore does not concern *lasting* job creation but temporary work for quick relief, this is in itself not sustainable. However, the RBSA intervention clearly contributed to getting the next phase of DFAT funding.

Viet Nam:

- Just about half a year after starting the RBSA intervention the outcome-based funding of the ILO-Sida partnership became operational in this country and several activities were *shared* especially on the different requests of MOLISA, including the inclusion of hard-hit groups into the revision process of the Employment Law and related legislation (see also Annexes 4 and 9).
- ILO prepared a new project on productivity using the revised LFS and sampling thereby building on the RBSA intervention. The “*Productivity Ecosystem for Decent Work (HN Office)*” funded by SECO and NORAD will address constraints to productivity growth and decent job creation from end-2021 until end-2025.

Public financing was also enhanced at times and a clear example is the fact that the work at the national level in Viet Nam funded by RBSA demonstrated to the Government of Viet Nam (GoV) its importance, and thereafter the GoV allocated their own funds (to GSO and MOLISA).

Another key indicator of sustainability is **Ownership**. Although the limited project period of initially 15 months may in itself not be sufficient to arrive at genuine ownership, some signs could still be assessed:

- The high level of support from the District Commission in Bangladesh.
- The ownership among few Government Departments in Sri Lanka related to e-RPL and the Skills Passport.
- The ownership of the Prime Minister’s Office of Timor Leste in the upgrade of the management system (IRMIS).
- The RBSA support to the ongoing policy work in Viet Nam has led to a certain degree of recognition and ownership by MOLISA, and the good relations built with the GSO will be beneficial to future cooperation.

These are all important steps towards ownership, and the involvement of the national government organisations mentioned in the above has been shown in this report to continue in follow-up interventions and projects.

Furthermore, it needs to be underscored here that the majority of stakeholders interviewed indicated that they would very much value if the cooperation with ILO in the areas concerned can be continued.

Lastly, there are a few additional inroads into sustainability as follows:

- In Sri Lanka the lessons learned from the three overlapping interventions (RBSA, Japan and SDC) on migration provided feedback into the revision of the National Labour Migration Policy, which is currently still being supported by the SDC funded project. Under this policy revision, a higher degree of focus is given to Skills Development and economic reintegration of returnees, and also to disaster response mechanisms.
- Several counterparts made statements during the interviews which were similar to the one made by an institute in Viet Nam: “*Our staff is benefiting now from the RBSA activities including a lot of learning-by-cooperating with ILO experts*”.
- The work on statistics in Viet Nam is another prime example of sustainability: The questions on Informality were *permanently* included in the Questionnaire and sampling of the periodic Labour Force Survey (LFS), and this will thus continue to be used in the future. In addition, as we have seen the Quarterly reports of GSO/MOLISA will continue to include the Infographics version of the report as well as the press conference modality.

Although there were no explicit Sustainability or **Exit Plans** in the four proposals, in most interventions a **discussion** was initiated around sustainability with different stakeholders. In addition to the Closing Workshop in Bangladesh and the multi-stakeholder forum in Sri Lanka, in Viet Nam and in Timor Leste the RBSA intervention was directly followed-up by other interventions (respectively, one funded also by RBSA and the other by DFAT) involving in part the same staff members (continuity of staff). In general, all four interventions have made substantial efforts to mobilise further resources as described in detail earlier in this section, and thus, on the whole, discussions on sustainability were very adequately conducted.

The last evaluation question on sustainability is how well the interventions adapted **to the changing situation** around the COVID-19 pandemic. As already indicated in the above, the interventions adapted swiftly and very well to the changing circumstances moving to online modes of delivery, communication and meetings wherever possible, and using phone communication and social media where necessary. This certainly did have an impact on achievements as these are listed in Annex 9, and thereby certainly also on the sustainability of the interventions.

3.7 Cross-Cutting Issues

The evaluation found that all interventions were designed in a **gender sensitive and inclusive** manner as this was also a condition in the RBSA Guidance. In some cases, it was taken a step further, while in other cases prohibitive challenges were encountered. Some specific examples are as follows:

Bangladesh:

- In Cox’s Bazar it was found difficult to maintain the involvement of women in training activities, for example in the hospitality and tourism sector, due to local culture and to the distance needed to travel to training centres. For the future, it was thus found that training centres need to be brought closer to the trainees, for example through mobile training centres.
- Jointly with the Bangladesh Small and Cottage Industries Corporation (BSCIC) 200 existing/potential entrepreneurs were trained through ILO’s SIYB entrepreneurship

training. 65% of them were women, and it was found that many women in the host communities prefer to be micro-entrepreneurs rather than wage-employee.

Sri Lanka:

- Women were explicitly identified as the most vulnerable for the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic, and the intervention conducted the identification of 'pockets of poverty' where relatively many migrant workers (many of them female) were present through government databases.
- The intervention also undertook targeted support to women for example through the Centre for Working Women (CWW), and through targeted types of training which were breaking gender-stereotypes by introducing a few (3) young females into the male-dominated maritime sector jobs through the seafarers' union (NUSS).

Timor Leste:

- The RBSA intervention here made efforts to include as many women as possible among the rural road workers but found that it was in practice difficult in rural areas to convince women to join these employment-intensive emergency public works; in the end it was found that still about 30% of the workers were women.
- In the breaking gender-stereotypes category, it was found that a few female-headed road contractors were also involved.

Viet Nam:

- In this country the RBSA intervention was so deeply involved with MOLISA, CEC, GSO and the two social partners that initially planned activities targeted to women were chosen to be left out:
 - The Gender Impact Assessment was cancelled because of a re-arrangement of the budget after the inclusion of different new activities with the CEC (cf. Annex 9, P&B 3.1, CPO 3).
 - The intention to work with the Viet Nam Women's union did not materialize as capacity building was only directed at MOLISA, DoE and DVET (cf. Annex 9, P&B 6.2, CPO 8).
- Nevertheless, the investigations and studies implemented by the intervention into 'informality' did explicitly demonstrate the significantly higher vulnerability of women in the informal economy.

For all four interventions it was found that in the activities undertaken gender disaggregation was mainly available and mainstreaming in the activities was common for example through the explicit attention from the ILO teams and from ILO experts for the equal representation of women and men in all activities; several partners also indicated that they followed this advice and mobilised women to join in activities.

In sum, mainstreaming gender inclusiveness was quite common in the interventions, and women were generally very much encouraged to participate in the activities undertaken, but only in Sri Lanka activities targeted specifically at women were conducted. This would therefore be the advice for future interventions to include activities targeted explicitly at women with a dedicated budget in order to improve overall inclusivity and gender balance in future.

Other cross-cutting issues, such as considerations for **people with disability and other special needs** were mainly not explicitly included in the evaluated RBSA interventions, except in **Timor Leste** where a target was set at 2 % of persons with disability out of the total target group, but in the end 0.3 % was reached (out of 2,572 direct beneficiaries).

In the design of the interventions, the impact on the **environment** was not considered as they were in essence fully focussed on a direct COVID-response. Only in Viet Nam the impact of climate change on the labour market and on vulnerable groups was highlighted during training workshops involving ILO DWT experts.

3.8 International Labour Standards, Tripartism and Social Dialogue

The normative context and the impact of **International Labour Standards (ILS)**, including the possible ratification of ILO Conventions, have not played a central role in the four RBSA interventions evaluated. ILO Conventions were not specifically targeted in the different proposals and therefore the results achieved have not directly contributed to (the ratification of) the relevant Conventions, with one exception in the case of Viet Nam. The RBSA proposal for this country (2020: 2) stated that it would contribute to the observance of C88 and C122 (in line with CEACR) and promote dialogue on C160 and C190. Here the findings will be used of another ILO evaluation targeting eight RBSA interventions in the Asia Pacific Region with ILS focus (David Tajgman, February 2023). This evaluation included the Viet Nam intervention as far as it concerned its focus on ILS and it was found that this was only at best secondary as the main focus of the intervention was squarely on “the employment policy and employment services instruments”. Tajgman’s findings (2023: 100--102) were as follows:

- “*The project engaged national consultants’ support to prepare drafts for the first report for newly ratified Conventions No. 159 and 88.*”
- “*Planned activities promoting Convention No. 160 were not undertaken. This was in response to the prioritization of other work within the relevant MoLISA departments, including the Legal Department. It is foreseen that this will be supported under another current project.*”

This is fully in line with the findings of the present evaluation (details are provided in Annexes 4 and 9). Therefore, it is advisable to avoid having two CPO’s in one and the same RBSA proposal if the topics are not directly related; in the end the additional topic is likely to play a secondary role, and/or the work can not at all be undertaken.

On the whole the ILO CO’s and/or the ILO teams ensured that **tripartite** inputs were included in the design of the four RBSA interventions by conducting initial consultations with tripartite stakeholders sometimes plenary and sometimes bilaterally. **Social Dialogue** was then used in most workshops, seminars and symposia where tripartite stakeholders were invited to participate, contribute and comment. Training programmes were also often developed and implemented with the participation of the tripartite stakeholders (see further Annex 9).

In addition, all interventions were developed to contribute directly to the **P&B Outcomes** as well as to the **CPO Outcomes and Outputs** of the respective DWCP’s. All Outputs and Targets of the interventions were logically linked to both P&B and CPO Outcomes (see Table 2 and Annexes 3 and 9). Furthermore, the four interventions were also clearly contributing to several **SDGs**: while all four contributed to SDG8, other SDGs targeted were SDG1 and SDG4.⁹

⁹ The particular SDG-Targets are: SDG1.5, 4.4 and 8.3 (Bangladesh); 8.2 (Timor Leste); 4.4, 8.6 and 8.3 (Sri Lanka); and 8.6 (Viet Nam).

4 Conclusions and Recommendations

4.1 Conclusions

The conclusions of the present final independent clustered evaluation of four RBSA Interventions in Bangladesh, Sri Lanka, Timor Leste and Viet Nam are analysed in this section according to the eight evaluation criteria used throughout this report. With respect to the first evaluation criteria, ***Relevance and Validity of Design***, the Evaluation found that the four interventions were ***highly relevant*** for the targeted groups bearing in mind the severe impact of the COVID-19 pandemic. All four were directed at improved employment levels and/or improved probability of decent employability options for affected vulnerable groups, i.e., a host community, returnee migrant workers, the rural poor and informal workers. The stakeholders interviewed all underlined the high relevance of the interventions for these target groups as well as its *timely* COVID-19 response.

In terms of the ***Validity of Design***, the RBSA Guidance in 2020 laid down some ground rules: a maximum allocation of \$600,000 with an implementation period that should not exceed 15 months. Unlike in Development Cooperation projects and programmes, *no* full-fledged M&E systems and logical frameworks are required in RBSA proposals, although reporting and monitoring does take place. That evaluations of RBSA interventions are important for learning was found by the 2020 Review of the RBSA Funding Modality. Each RBSA proposal does have a targeted Results Framework related to the respective P&B Outcomes (Annex 3) and generally it was found that the link with the P&B Outcomes is clear. In certain cases, measures to promote gender equality could have been more explicitly included in the proposals.

A high degree of ***Coherence*** was found between the interventions and the existing efforts of the ILO Country Offices either building on previous projects or cooperating directly with (in part) simultaneously implemented projects. The coherence with the existing efforts of tripartite partners was found to be mixed. While the overall fit with the needs of the respective countries was assessed as quite good since urgent needs were addressed, attention for the explicit alignment to the policies of the workers' and employers' organisations could have been better at times.

On ***Effectiveness***, the interventions were generally found to be quite effective in achieving the desired results (cf. Table 3 and Annex 9). While they all achieved positive contributions towards addressing ***improved employment opportunities*** amidst the COVID-19 pandemic, they were undertaken in diverse environments through quite different sets of interventions. While in Timor Leste a direct contribution was made towards an increase in employment during crisis times, in the other countries the contribution was more indirect: In Bangladesh through building the capacity of *local* tripartite constituents and enterprise development; in Sri Lanka through institutional capacity development (incl. TVET institutions, e-RPL and 'Skills Passport') and through cooperation with Workers' Organisations; and in Viet Nam through providing accurate statistics informing policies and innovative work on informality.

The interventions encountered a range of overall and more country specific ***challenges*** during their implementation, including delays due to COVID-19, the limited timeframe of RBSA interventions, and coordination is required with many stakeholders within ILO. The challenges by country are manifold, but the key ones are as follows: In Bangladesh it was difficult in the initial

stages to get the engagement of local stakeholders in Cox's Bazar for the proposed activities with the host communities as this was a novel approach. Sri Lanka was hit during the implementation by a deep economic and social crisis. In Timor Leste the COVID-19 measures were particularly severe with the GoTL declaring a three-month State of Emergency in 2020. In Viet Nam the tripartite government partner, MOLISA, decided against undertaking certain activities during the COVID-19 pandemic, while the important work with the high level Central Economic Commission (CEC) was not anticipated leading to some budget reallocations. Overall, it was found that the ILO teams have responded swiftly and adequately to most of these challenges.

The achievements made by the four interventions were facilitated by several pertinent **Enabling or Success Factors**: the great achievement by PARTNERSHIPS to have and to maintain unearmarked funds via RBSA; the realisation among all stakeholders of the importance of Decent Work in times of crises and the widely felt commitment to target the vulnerable groups; the high commitment and competence of the ILO staff involved and of ILO Country Offices; and the flexibility of the RBSA funding modality including supporting the continuity of activities and staff. The area that could have been done better in terms of effectiveness is more systematic involvement of Workers' Organisations and to a lesser extent also of Employers' Organisations. While all four interventions have made efforts to engage them, there is clearly room for improvement, including targeted capacity building and dedicated budgets for these organisations.

For the **Efficiency** of resource use investigations are made, among others, of the expenditures, which shows that the great majority of expenditures in the four interventions has been spent on what can be called 'actual activities', i.e. subcontracts, seminars and other training (55 - 75%). The second largest category is 'staff' (20 - 35%), whereby the Bangladesh and Sri Lanka interventions overspent compared to the RBSA maximum of 30%. The **Expenditure Rates** varied from over 99% in in Timor Leste and Viet Nam, to 84% in Bangladesh and just 64% in Sri Lanka. However, there are very pertinent reasons for this underspending. In Sri Lanka the main reason was the economic crisis and the severe currency depreciation in early 2022. Another reason was the return of unspent amounts by implementing partners in the end-phase of the intervention. The latter reason was also important in Bangladesh, while various other savings were made. In both countries the expenditure rates coincided with the overspending on staff costs, and the two factors are causally related since most of the unspent amounts were *not* allocated to staff costs.

While only the Bangladesh intervention was completed within the original timeframe of 15 months, the longest **no-cost extensions** were for Sri Lanka (1 year) and Timor Leste (14 months). The main reason for requesting for the no-cost extensions were delays due to the COVID-19 pandemic. But in all three interventions specific reasons need to be underlined: In Timor Leste the second extension was requested mainly to provide support and contribution for the **upgrade** of IRMIS system; in Sri Lanka the economic and social crisis had disrupted the implementation severely; and in Viet Nam a no-cost extension of just two months was requested in particular because of the involvement of an important new partner (CEC). Most interventions have achieved the (large) majority of the initially defined outcomes.

In terms of **management arrangements**, the ILO Project Responsible is the Country Director of the respective Country Offices. In each country a different set-up was chosen with either Programming Officers, Labour Economists and/or dedicated NPC's playing vital roles. All four interventions were solidly embedded in the administrative and financial systems of the respective ILO Country Offices and there were at times substantial additional inputs from other technical and

programming staff of these COs. Furthermore, support was provided by administrative and/or finance assistants mostly funded from the RBSA intervention. The Regional Programming Unit (RPU) at the ILO Regional Office (ROAP) provided substantial backstopping, while support from DWT experts from Bangkok and Delhi was at times hindered by the travel restrictions of the pandemic. Support from ILO departments in Geneva was provided as and when required.

Communication by the ILO team/CO has been assessed as very good by all interviewed stakeholders. While no dedicated communication plans were presented, several highlights of communication materials for each of the interventions were identified in the report. The interventions did less well in terms of their online presence; while only two out of the four interventions have a 'project website' (Sri Lanka and Timor Leste), these were not updated. **Reporting** has generally been done regularly and on time following the RBSA Guidance. The End-of-Intervention reports provide clear and concise information on key results achieved and main lessons learned. The **Risk Assessment** sections both in the proposals and in the End-reports provide very useful insights into the implementation challenges faced by the interventions. The interventions have **leveraged resources** to enhance the project impact and efficiency; within each of the Country Offices cooperation was forged with several projects (see below). In addition, various forms of cost-sharing of staff were undertaken with technical and programming staff within the CO's and with admin/finance staff with different ILO projects.

The four interventions were assessed to have different types of **Impact** on the existing problem which they were designed to address. In *Bangladesh* ILO's presence in Cox's Bazar was for the first time established and triggered other DC interventions; in addition, Local Economic Development was enhanced and in various cases trainees were actually employed by enterprises. In *Sri Lanka* several steps were made towards the implementation of (e-)RPL and the Skills Passport for migrant workers. In addition, employment-linked training courses and apprenticeship training were conducted, while one workers' organisation targeting women (CWW) was firmly established thanks to the intervention. In *Timor Leste* the intervention provided substantial direct employment and wages for the most affected rural poor impacting on their health and wellbeing, while the road maintenance benefited transport in the rural areas. In *Viet Nam* the intervention has placed 'informality' squarely in the spotlight, and the CEC is now employing insights from the RBSA activities and emphasised that "*This triggered a Paradigm shift within the Viet Nam Government!*" Lastly, statistical information on informality was institutionalized in the legislation based on the information and data provided to MOLISA, and capacity building was implemented within GSO and MOLISA by cooperating with ILO experts on the Quarterly Reports. Overall, impact could at times have been enhanced by more systematic capacity building of the tripartite constituents and this was also a key area found by the *Independent High-Level Evaluation of ILO's COVID-19 Response 2020-22* (three out of its eight recommendations).

The efforts and progress made by the interventions showed substantial signs of **Sustainability**. Most of the interventions for example laid grounds to *mobilise further resources*. In Bangladesh it directly led to two new DC projects in Cox's Bazar: one funded by GAC of CAD 44 million and one by the Netherlands of US\$ 2.3 million. In Sri Lanka there were synergies between three ILO projects that were implemented partly simultaneously (RBSA, Japan and SDC), and agreements on the way forward were discussed at a *multi-stakeholder forum* in January 2022. In addition, due to the demonstration effect of the RBSA intervention, SIYB was also included in a follow-up ILO-IOM project funded by Japan. In Timor Leste the intervention was a rapid response benefitting those most affected by the pandemic aligned to the multi-year R4D programme funded by DFAT

and it clearly contributed to getting the next phase of DFAT funding. In Viet Nam there were synergies with the outcome-based ILO-Sida partnership sharing certain activities as well as with a new ILO project on productivity funded by SECO and NORAD.

Another key indicator of sustainability is *ownership*. Although the limited project period of initially 15 months may not in itself be sufficient to arrive at genuine ownership, some signs could still be assessed in each country of government organisations taking charge. In addition, the majority of stakeholders interviewed would prefer to continue the cooperation with ILO. More specific inroads into sustainability include: the lessons learned in Sri Lanka on migration provided feedback into the revision of the National Labour Migration Policy; several stakeholders mentioned that their staff is benefiting from the learning-by-cooperating with ILO experts; and in Viet Nam the questions on Informality were *permanently* included in the Questionnaire of the periodic Labour Force Survey and the Quarterly reports of GSO/MOLISA will continue to include the Infographics version and press conference modality. Although there were no explicit Sustainability or Exit Plans in the four proposals, during implementation discussions on sustainability were very adequately conducted with key stakeholders, for example: Closing Workshop in Bangladesh, multi-stakeholder forum in Sri Lanka, while in Viet Nam and Timor Leste the RBSA intervention was directly followed-up by other interventions involving in part the same staff members.

With respect to the [Cross-Cutting Issues](#) the evaluation found that all interventions were designed in a **gender sensitive and inclusive** manner as this was also a condition in the RBSA Guidance. In some cases, it was taken a step further, while in other cases prohibitive challenges were encountered of which specific examples are detailed in the report (Section 3.7). For all four interventions it was found that data were mostly gender disaggregated and gender mainstreaming was common. However, only in Sri Lanka certain activities were explicitly targeted at women, and in future interventions this should be enhanced including a dedicated budget. **People with disability and other special needs** were mainly not explicitly included in the interventions, except in **Timor Leste** where 0.3 % of the 2,572 beneficiaries were persons with disability. The impact on the **environment** of the interventions was not considered.

The normative context and the impact of [International Labour Standards \(ILS\)](#) have not played a central role in the four interventions. ILO Conventions were not specifically targeted and only in Viet Nam national consultants were engaged to support the national reporting on the newly ratified Conventions No. 159 and 88, while planned work for promoting Convention No. 160 was not undertaken. On the whole the ILO CO's and/or the ILO teams ensured that **tripartite** inputs were included in the design of the interventions, and **Social Dialogue** was then used in most workshops, seminars and symposia. In addition, all interventions were developed to contribute directly to the **P&B Outcomes** as well as to the **CPO Outcomes and Outputs** of the respective DWCP's. Furthermore, the four interventions were contributing to **SDGs** 8, 1 and 4.

4.2 Recommendations

On the basis of the findings of the present final independent cluster evaluation of four RBSA interventions **nine Recommendations** have been formulated below.

- 1) **Continue, and if possible, expand the RBSA Fund** as it is a highly appreciated funding modality for its flexibility and relatively low-cost procedures especially also in the context of

crisis when the interventions are (even) more likely to target selected highly affected vulnerable groups.

A related recommendation is to **explore the possibility of having a longer timeframe of the RBSA interventions** especially for such activities as policy making, statistics work, etc. However, the RBSA Guidance for the new Round 1 in 2022-2023 has *already* followed-up earlier recommendations to that effect and has increased the maximum to **24 months**. At the same time, it was found in the present evaluation that under certain circumstances a longer timeframe is less necessary as other interventions were already in place to take over (such as in Bangladesh).

Responsible Unit	Priority	Time Implication	Resource Implication
PARTNERSHIPS, PROGRAM, ROAP/RPU	Medium	Coming years	Departmental budgets

- 2) **Continue to conduct regular evaluations of RBSA interventions**, preferably clustered, and thereby “Strengthen the RBSA learning capacity” (cf. ILO Review of the RBSA funding modality, 2020). In addition, a **stronger results framework** would allow for a better assessment of RBSA achievements.

Responsible Unit	Priority	Time Implication	Resource Implication
RELEVANT COUNTRY OFFICES, ROAP/RPU, PROGRAM, PARTNERSHIPS	Medium	2023	EVAL

- 3) **Continue with the practice of RBSA interventions to build on other (earlier) ILO interventions and on established networks and partnerships within the CO** as this has shown to be an important enabling factor in the present evaluation in all its diversity among the four countries.

Responsible Unit	Priority	Time Implication	Resource Implication
RELEVANT COUNTRY OFFICES, ROAP/RPU, PROGRAM	Medium	2023	None

- 4) **Involve the workers’ and employers’ organisations more systematically in future interventions** and provide **capacity building** to key staff including a minimum number of female staff members and allocate **dedicated funding**. This recommendation is aligned with those of the HLE on ILO’s COVID-19 Response 2020-22 (in particular Nos. 1, 5 and 6; cf. Annex 10).

Responsible Unit	Priority	Time Implication	Resource Implication
RELEVANT COUNTRY OFFICES, ROAP/RPU, ACTRAV, ACTEMP, PROGRAM, Tripartite Constituents in the relevant countries	Medium	2023	Part of RBSA interventions

- 5) **Maintain the possibility of No-Cost Extensions within RBSA** as delays are likely amidst a crisis context, including pandemic and economic crisis. The present evaluation has shown that the ILO COs provide detailed reasons for the need of extensions in their requests. In addition, RBSA has the advantage that closely related key activities can be added during an extension (such as the upgrade of the IRMIS jointly with the Prime Minister’s Office in Timor Leste and the cooperation with the new Centre for Working Women, CWW, in Sri Lanka).

Responsible Unit	Priority	Time Implication	Resource Implication
PROGRAM, ROAP/RPU, Relevant Country Offices	Medium	2023	Part of RBSA interventions

- 6) **Maintain the flexibility in management arrangements** as is now common in RBSA interventions whereby CO technical staff is assigned depending on the proposal’s topic and technical and networking experience of the staff, supported by the involvement of Programme Officers in the programming and administration of RBSA interventions.

Responsible Unit	Priority	Time Implication	Resource Implication
Relevant Country Offices, ROAP/RPU, PROGRAM	Medium	2023	Part of RBSA interventions

- 7) **Make sure that each intervention has an updated ILO website** where all the links to the latest reports, outputs, videos and other relevant material of the interventions are available to enhance knowledge sharing including the exchange of Good Practices.

Responsible Unit	Priority	Time Implication	Resource Implication
Relevant Country Offices	Medium	2023-2024	Part of RBSA interventions

- 8) **Include a sustainability workshop (‘Closing Event’)** as was conducted in Bangladesh in all RBSA interventions in order to consolidate the outcomes by discussing long-term strategies with key stakeholders and to investigate ways to keep the momentum going created by the RBSA intervention.

Responsible Unit	Priority	Time Implication	Resource Implication
Relevant Country Offices, ROAP/RPU, PROGRAM	Medium	2023-2024	Part of RBSA interventions

- 9) **Continue to use a Gender Equality Strategy from the design stage onwards**, including gender mainstreaming but also activities targeted specifically at women and make sure to allocate dedicated resources to this Strategy.

Responsible Unit	Priority	Time Implication	Resource Implication
Relevant Country Offices, ROAP/RPU, PROGRAM, DWT Experts	Medium	2023-2024	Part of RBSA interventions

5 Lessons Learned and Good Practices

This chapter identifies two lessons learned (LL) and two good practices (GP) from the experience gained by the final independent clustered evaluation in the present report. In identifying these LL and GP the focus was on the commonalities between the interventions in the four countries (Bangladesh, Sri Lanka, Timor Leste and Viet Nam) and not so much on the individual experiences of each intervention separately. The “End of an RBSA-funded intervention” reports have already identified Lessons Learned specific for each country as part of the RBSA template.

Lessons Learned

One of the purposes of evaluations in the ILO is to improve project or programme performance and promote organizational learning. Evaluations are expected to generate lessons that can be applied elsewhere to improve programme or project performance, outcome, or impact. The present evaluation has identified two Lessons Learned (LL) and these are briefly introduced below while the full descriptions in the ILO/EVAL Templates are included in Annex 11.

LL1 – ‘Thinking out of the box’ in forging new key partnerships is a Lesson Learned in all four interventions amidst the crisis context using the RBSA funding as leverage.

LL2 – No-Cost Extensions are an important tool to enhance impact especially amidst a crisis context.

Good Practices

ILO evaluation sees lessons learned and emerging good practices as part of a continuum, beginning with the objective of assessing what has been learned, and then identifying successful practices from those lessons which are worthy of replication. The present evaluation has identified two Good Practices (GP) and these are briefly introduced below while the full ILO/EVAL Templates are included in Annex 11.

GP1 – It is a Good Practice to conduct regular clustered and other evaluations of RBSA-funded interventions in order to strengthen RBSA’s learning capacity.

GP2 – It is a Good Practice to build on other (earlier) ILO interventions and on established networks and partnerships of the ILO Country Offices.

Templates in Annex 11

The ILO/EVAL Templates with the full description of these Lessons Learned (LL) and Good Practices (GP) are provided in Annex 11.

ANNEXES

Annex 1: Terms of Reference (TOR)

Terms of Reference

Final Independent Evaluation of ILO’s Cluster of Projects funded under RBSA round 2020-21 (improved employment opportunities COVID response focused)

1. Key facts

Title of project being evaluated	Cluster Evaluation of following projects: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Bangladesh – BGD 101: Improved Economic Opportunities for the Host Communities of Cox’s Bazar: Exploring Ways and Piloting Intervention for Program Formulation; 2. Timor-Leste – TLS 176: Supporting recovery from the COVID-19 pandemic through employment intensive emergency public works for the rural poor and vulnerable in Timor-Leste; 3. Sri Lanka – LKA 102 and 107: Skilling Sri Lankan migrant workers affected by COVID-19 for employment, decent jobs, and entrepreneurship; 4. Vietnam – VNM 128 Equal Opportunity in Post COVID-19 Recovery: Making Structural Transformation Work for All.
Project DC (CPO) Code	<p>107725 - LKA 102 and 107 - LKA/20/02/RBS (1 September 2020 – 30 November 2022)</p> <p>107681- BGD101- BGD/20/01/RBS (1 October 2020 – 31 December 2021)</p> <p>107699 - VNM 128 - VNM/20/01/RBS (1 August 2020 – 31 May 2023)</p> <p>107673 - TLS176 - TLS/20/01/RBS (August 2020 – March 2022)</p>
Type of evaluation (e.g., independent, internal)	Independent Evaluation
Timing of evaluation (e.g., midterm, final)	Final
Donor	RBSA
Administrative Unit in the ILO responsible for administrating the project	<p>BGD101: ILO Country Office, Bangladesh;</p> <p>TLS 176: ILO Country Office, Indonesia;</p> <p>LKA 102 and 107: ILO Country Office for the Sri Lanka and Maldives.</p> <p>VNM 128: ILO Country Office, Vietnam</p>

Technical Unit(s) in the ILO responsible for backstopping the project	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • BGD 101: Skills, Migration, Gender, Enterprise, ACTEMP, and ACTRAV Specialist's in DWT Delhi and ILO Headquarters; • TLS 176: DWT ROAP, Employment Department, EMPINVEST, and DEVINVEST; • LKA 102 and 107: DWT Delhi; • VNM 128: DWT Bangkok
P&B outcome (s) under evaluation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • BGD101: Outcome 4 (Output 4.2), Outcome 5 (Output 5.3) and additionally contributing to Outcome 1 (Output 1.1 and 1.2) • TLS 176: Outcome 3 (Output 3.2); • LKA102&107: Outcome 5 (Outputs 5.1 and 5.3) and Outcome 4 (Output 4.2) • VNM 128: Outcome 3 (Output 3.1), and Outcome 6 (Output 6.2)
SDG(s) under evaluation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • BDG 101: SDG targets 1.5, 4.4 and 8.3; • TLS 176: SDG target 8.2 • LKA 102 and 107: SDG targets 4.4, 8.6 and 8.3 • VNM 128: SDG target 8.6
Budget	<p>Total budget of projects combined is equal to 2,015,000 USD including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • BGD 101: 500,000 USD; • TLS 176: 550,000 USD; • LKA 102 and 107: 485,000 USD; • VNM 128: 310,000 USD

2. Background information

The ILO's Regular Budget Supplementary Account (RBSA) is a voluntary source, which allows development partners to provide un-earmarked core funding to the ILO, increasing the Office's capacity to deliver and achieve results at country level.

The ILO allocates RBSA funds flexibly when and where they are most needed. As a priority, RBSA resources are allocated to Official Development Assistance (ODA)-eligible countries and are aligned with the results-based framework of the ILO.

The RBSA as per its regular exercise conducted a periodic assessment of various proposals submitted for funding from different country offices in year 2020. This phase was comparatively more challenging as compared to other years as many countries in the Asian Pacific region were hit by the COVID-19 pandemic, that had created significant labour related challenges of varied nature in each country forming the region. Some of the major implications of the pandemic involved, challenges in terms of occupational safety and health, massive unemployment rate complimented by increased returning overseas workers, layoffs of workers working in the local economy, and due to global supply chain disruptions greater pressure on economies and their abilities to function normally or respond to these challenges amidst increased health related expenses.

This evaluation will specifically look into four different projects, which were common in purpose and will be evaluated as a cluster to assess their level of results, and the contribution it has secured in achieving its relevant P&B outcomes, DWCP outcomes, and SDG targets. These projects include:

1. Bangladesh – BGD 101: Improved Economic Opportunities for the Host Communities of Cox’s Bazar: Exploring Ways and Piloting Intervention for Program Formulation;
2. Timor-Leste – TLS 176: Supporting recovery from the COVID-19 pandemic through employment intensive emergency public works for the rural poor and vulnerable in Timor-Leste;
3. Sri Lanka – LKA 102 and 107: Skilling Sri Lankan migrant workers affected by COVID-19 for employment, decent jobs, and entrepreneurship;
4. Vietnam – VNM 128: Equal Opportunity in Post COVID-19 Recovery: Making Structural Transformation Work for All.

As the title suggests, all these projects focussed specifically on improved employment opportunities in diverse environments through different set of interventions in Bangladesh, Sri Lanka, Timor Leste, and Vietnam keeping in view the challenges posed by the COVID-19 pandemic and the massive labour migration. All these projects contribute to Outcomes 1,3, 4, 5 and 6 and are complimenting efforts towards achieving targets under SDG 1, 4 and 8. It is this reason why, these projects have been selected to be evaluated as a cluster of projects together to assess the overall impact these projects have had in addressing the employability challenges in the targeted countries amidst the COVID-19 pandemic.

Moreover, it is also worthwhile sharing here that the ILO under its EVAL office conducted a high level independent evaluation on ILO’s COVID-19 response in general whose report was published in August 2022 (can be accessed using the following link: [High-level independent evaluation of ILO’s COVID-19 response \(2020-22\)](#)) and can be a guiding factor for the evaluation of projects for which the expression of interest is being sought.

BGD 101: Bangladesh experienced a significant influx of Rohingya refugees in 2017 and in 2020 was a host to 859,161 refugees from 187,620 families residing in the two sub-districts of Ukhiya and Teknaf of Cox’s Bazar, the south-eastern district of Bangladesh. The district is characterized by poverty, low human capital development, and vulnerability to natural disasters, with 60% of the total workforce being employed in subsistence agriculture and fishing. The influx of refugees in Cox’s Bazar district furthered the poverty and vulnerability of the district as the locals now had limited access to natural resources and declining wages over the last two years. This situation gave a rise to the risk of potential social unrest.

The outbreak of COVID-19 in the last days of year 2019, worsened the situation in the district. Close to 0.5 million workers from nearly 100,000 MSMEs lost their jobs during the pandemic with a limited chance of revival. Most of these were informally employed women, youth, and micro-entrepreneurs. Besides, thousands of migrant workers were also anticipated to return to the district due to COVID 19. Getting back to work for them required different ways to connect with markets, health and safety practices, and changes in their products and services where MSMEs and workers required support. These MSMEs and their workers were less likely to receive government support due to their informality.

ILO's assessment conducted then identified employment and entrepreneurship opportunities in the districts, mainly in tourism, infrastructure development, and fisheries sectors. Most of these, however, had remained unexploited by the locals due to their low skills and entrepreneurship abilities.

Based on the interaction with the district level social partners and stakeholders, ILO prioritized entrepreneurship and skills development of the vulnerable host communities as critical for maintaining peace and social cohesion in the district, hosting nearly a million refugees.

Adhering to International Labour Standards, ILO designed interventions that would capacitate and mobilize the Workers' and employers' organization in the district to:

- Explore ways to promote entrepreneurship and employment opportunities amidst the COVID-19 pandemic for the host communities including women returnee migrants and other minority groups in tourism and fisheries value chain;
- Identify opportunities to promote skills development of the women, youth, and returnee migrants of host community members in the areas of tourism and construction sectors;
- Support entrepreneurs and workers to return to work by improving access to health and safety procedures and business support services.

The interventions were designed to build on the following processes and approaches:

- The Bangladesh Multi-sector Action Plan for COVID-19;
- Approach to inclusive Market system development (AIMS) for the host communities and refugees;
- ILO's approach to promoting apprenticeship and lifelong learning

The interventions were designed in a way that if successful will guide the development of a multi-year program. The ILO Country Office for Bangladesh at its initial stage also aimed to complement its efforts by working together with various UN agencies mainly, UNHCR, FAO, UNDP, and IOM, while implementing the interventions.

TLS 176: The Poverty and unemployment levels in Timor-Leste are high, particularly among rural people in the informal economy. This situation was further aggravated by the COVID-19 restrictions.

Although several infrastructure projects were expected to resume shortly, they did not explicitly target the most affected rural community and were not modelled around emergency employment support that necessitates quick delivery, a high labour-intensity and low delivery costs.

The ILO proposed a project that aimed to leverage capacities and approach development through existing Employment Intensive Investment Programmes (EIIP) projects and complement their work. ILO and its EIIP projects have had a long-standing working relationship with the Timor-Leste Trade Union Confederation (KSTL) and the Chamber of Commerce and Industry (CCI-TL). KSTL and CCI-TL both showed keen interest to actively participate in the project to gain their visibility and leadership in infrastructure sector, increase bi-partite dialogue, their knowledge on C122, and to benefit from strengthened capacities in executing their mandate.

The project was designed in a way to provide direct employment opportunities for the rural poor and vulnerable population through routine road maintenance activities. It was to provide a model for targeted employment support through public works interventions.

The Ministry of Public Works (MPW), KSTL and CCI-TL fully agreed to support the proposal as it aligned with national COVID-19 recovery strategies. UNWOMEN/IOM agreed for their data access in identifying vulnerable groups. Relevant Constituents and ILO specialists were also consulted in this regard.

The project was designed to directly support the 1,850 vulnerable beneficiaries - including at least 50% women and 2% persons with a disability, and migrant workers. Works were to be contracted to small, EIIP-trained, local contractors (CCI-TL members) who were to engage local community members to implement the works.

Project recipients included KSTL, CCI-TL, Secretariat of State for Vocational Training and Employment (SEFOPE) and GoTL/MPW. These organizations benefitted from the project as it provided the model for targeted employment and income support, along with increased ownership and capacities in executing their mandated roles in relation to the project.

To successfully implement the project, the programme team also identified the following roles of various stakeholders:

- MPW – coordination and management
- Municipal Governments – supervision
- SEFOPE – monitoring and reporting of employment
- KSTL – ensure compliance to workers’ rights and OSH requirements
- CCI-TL – support private contractors in meeting contractual requirements
- Participating Sucos – selection of beneficiaries

LKA102 and 107: This proposal was an effort to have an urgent response to the COVID-19 pandemic and to the demands of the constituents. Its strategy was to build back better through using innovative tools such as the “Skills Passport” to anticipate skills needs, improved and inclusive skills development of workers vulnerable to forced labour and human trafficking, enhancing their access to decent formal economy employment, as well as securing incomes and jobs through sustainable and resilient micro and small enterprises. Its interventions were aimed at strengthening coordination between government and social partners. The project targeted returnee and blocked migrant workers, using synergies with the UNSG MPTF project *‘Healthy Socio-Economic Response of Micro and Small Enterprise Sector of Sri Lanka’*.

The COVID-19 crisis had severely affected labour migration in Sri Lanka. One in four in Sri Lanka’s labour force were migrant workers. Remittances were the country’s largest source of revenue and foreign exchange. Many women had found waged work abroad, amidst low (34%) labour force participation at home. However, in 2020 figures some 40,000 ‘out-of-status’ Sri Lankans awaited repatriation. A monthly average of 15,000 ordinarily migrating for work abroad was accumulating since March; with no foreseeable prospect of overseas recruitment or alternative employment at home. As the economy slowed, tourist inflows stopped, and supply chains were disrupted, the informal economy – where low-skilled returnee, blocked and aspiring migrant workers originate and return – was badly hit. The GoSL, through its ministries of Foreign Affairs

and Skills Development, Employment and Labour Relations (MSDELR) had requested the ILO's services in the economic reintegration of migrant workers.

Returnee migrant workers had skills which lacked formal recognition. While many aspirant and blocked youth and women migrant workers lacked access to skills development through on-the-job training.

This project was designed with an aim to support the recognition of the vocational skills through "**Recognition of Prior Learning**" (RPL) assessment; the documentation of skills profiles through the 'Skills Passport' programme; and offer greater inclusion in **quality apprenticeships and work-based learning** for decent employment and higher incomes.

Research shows that many returnees, regardless of vocational experience, faced limited formal employment opportunities for their particular skillsets. These returnees preferred to set up or run micro or small enterprises (MSEs) upon return. These undertakings often failed due to lack of entrepreneurial skills and financial support. Therefore, COVID19-affected migrant workers interesting in starting a business were offered **entrepreneurial skills development** and **access to affordable credit and financial services**. ILO tools such as SIYB and SCORE were introduced to support sustainable and resilient enterprises that also encouraged formalisation and create decent jobs. Further, Public Employment Services centres were capacitated to provide **online job matching and placement services**, for returnees seeking salaried employment in the private sector, reinforcing the value of establishing strong links with employers' organisations.

Efforts were made to mainstream **Occupational health and safety** into entrepreneurship training through information and communication, trainings, and personal protective equipment. This was to reduce workplace related infections and injuries. To tackle potential **harassment and discrimination**, the national communication campaign in the UN-MPTF project was used to inform and influence potential employers and the wider community.

The role of **social partners** in the COVID19 recovery phase was strengthened for skills recognition of returnee workers and linking them with local employment opportunities. Through access to data and skills profiles of returnees, EBMOs were supported in their partnership with government in skills matching and anticipating future needs; while trade unions were capacitated to expand their membership services, including representation of workers in skills development and employment services supplied at sub-national and national level.

VNM 128 The COVID-19 crisis resulted in posing significant challenges to the Viet Nam's employment policy cycle. The labour market information system was unable to capture the rapidly evolving situation, and its impact on disadvantaged groups. Tripartite dialogue was not used effectively to identify the challenges that workers and enterprises were facing every day. The design of employment policy response lacked focus on hardest-hit groups, namely informal workers, and women. Policy implementation capacity was weak, and uneven use of data collection standards by local government institutions meant that implementation results could not be feedback easily into the policy design. Consequently, posing a challenge that the Vietnamese workers and enterprises may not receive the needed support in the times of hardship. The Government, however remained committed to improving employment policy in 2020-21 where the COVID-19 crisis made this priority even more urgent.

Therefore, in the submitted proposal it was suggested address some of these challenges for Viet Nam so that they could emerge from the current crisis with stronger employment policy. This proposal had four pillars:

1) Labour market information/Evidence: The ILO was to assist the Government to improve LFS1 frequency and granularity, adherence to ICLS192, and ability to capture the COVID-19 impact on hard-hit groups;

2) Identification of labour market (LM) challenges: The ILO was to strengthen the capacities of tripartite partners to identify challenges based on evidence from quantitative data collected and direct inputs from social partners;

3) Employment policy design: The ILO was to provide assistance to strengthen relevance of COVID-19 response and the Employment Law to the needs of hard-hit groups;

4) Policy implementation: The ILO was to support provincial-level government institutions (such as DOLISA, PES and PSO) to improve their ability to capture information and communicate to the Central Government.

Throughout these pillars the ILO was to foster coordination between MOLISA, MPI (especially GSO), VCCI and VGCL5. It was also proposed that the approved project will contribute to the observance of C88 and C122 (in line with 2017 CEACR) and promote dialogue on C160 and C190.

Furthermore, the work outlined were also to respond to the following requests (among others):

1) Labour market information/Evidence: MOLISA (DOE and ILSSA8) and the GSO sought ILO support on data collection and dissemination, to monitor crisis impact.

2) Identification of LM challenges: DOE and ILSSA sought assistance to understand better the challenges of hard-hit groups.

3) Employment policy design: DOE requested support on Employment Law. VGCL and VCCI asked for support to strengthen their participation in the Law's formulation.

4) Policy implementation: DOE requested assistance on PES capacity, especially on collecting LM information based on national VSCO standards.

3. Purpose, objectives, and scope of the evaluation

Purpose:

The main purpose of the evaluation is to have overall organization learning from the experiences of the four projects as well as for accountability of the results planned to be achieved. The evaluation aims to assess the relevance, validity of design, coherence, effectiveness, efficiency, impact, and sustainability of the projects in light of ILO's mandate in the region and keeping in view the COVID 19 implications on the project.

Objectives:

The specific objectives of the evaluation are to:

1. Examine whether the project worked appropriately and was able to achieve the envisioned objectives, and results highlighted in the project documents;
2. Examine the role the projects played in contributing towards the relevant P&B Outcomes, SDG targets, and DWCP outcomes as well as promoting the ILO's mandates, and addressing the cross-cutting issues like decent work, social dialogue, gender and inclusivity;
3. Derive lessons learned and identify good practices from the projects both at country level and overall regional level intervention for improved employment levels; and
4. Propose recommendations to inform Regional Programming Office and relevant country offices of the ILO for future programming to continue complimenting the achievements secured by the projects under evaluation.

Scope of the Evaluation:

The evaluation will specifically look into the following four projects

1. Bangladesh – BGD 101: Improved Economic Opportunities for the Host Communities of Cox’s Bazar: Exploring Ways and Piloting Intervention for Program Formulation;
2. Timor-Leste – TLS 176: Supporting recovery from the COVID-19 pandemic through employment intensive emergency public works for the rural poor and vulnerable in Timor-Leste. The evaluation will avoid duplication of work already completed under R4D-SP final evaluation in which the said project is also being evaluated, **therefore no field work will be required in Timor Leste and this part will take guidance from the findings of another evaluation and may include a few virtual meetings with project stakeholders if required;**
3. Sri Lanka – LKA 102 and 107: Skilling Sri Lankan migrant workers affected by COVID-19 for employment, decent jobs, and entrepreneurship;
4. Vietnam – VNM 128: Equal Opportunity in Post COVID-19 Recovery: Making Structural Transformation Work for All.

These projects are directly administered by the ILO’s Country Offices located in Indonesia, Sri Lanka, Bangladesh, and Vietnam under the overall support from ROAP.

The above-mentioned projects contribute to the following P&B outputs that can be summarised under P&B Outcomes 1,3,4 5 and 6:

LKA 102&107

P&B Output 5.3 (5.3.1): Employers’ and workers’ organisations, and training institutions, through more effective collaboration, develop work-based learning and quality apprenticeships, for returnee, blocked and aspiring migrant workers, improving labour market access and decent work, especially for women.

P&B Output 5.3 (5.3.2): Innovative, flexible, and inclusive skills programme (Recognition of Prior Learning) and services (‘Skills Passport’) developed for returnee and blocked migrant workers, creating better quality employment and decent job opportunities for a vulnerable group badly impacted by COVID19.

P&B Output 5.1 (5.1.2): Skills mismatches measured, and future skills needs of returnee, blocked and aspiring migrant workers anticipated, by the Government (Ministry of Skills Development, Employment and Labour Relations), EBMOs and Workers Organisations

P&B Output 4.2 (4.2.1): The government (through Public Employment Services centres and other agencies) in consultation with social partners, operationalises a programme inclusive of returnee, blocked and aspiring migrant workers, to promote entrepreneurship and SME development, especially for women

BGD 101:

P&B output 4.2 (4.2.1) with additional contribution to 1.1 (1.1.1) and 1.2 (1.2.1) Business associations and value chain actors in tourism and fisheries sectors amidst the COVID-19 crisis design and pilot interventions to strengthen linkages with existing MSMEs, promote entrepreneurship, and adopt OSH practices in the enterprises with large concentration of women, youths and returnee migrants using ILO’s tools and methodologies

P&B output 5.3 (5.3.1, 5.3.3), with additional linkages to 1.1 (1.1.1), 1.2 (1.2.1) An innovative, flexible, and inclusive skills program including apprenticeship, recognition of prior learning for women, returnee migrants, other vulnerable groups of the Cox's Bazar district is designed by capacitating and engaging employers' and workers' organizations in the respective sectors

TLS176:

P&B Output 3.2 Increased capacity of member States to formulate and implement policies and strategies for creating decent work in the rural economy.

VNM 128:

P&B Output 3.1: Increased capacity of the member State to formulate and implement a new generation of gender-responsive national employment policies, including for youth

P&B Output A.1: More accurate and sustainable statistics on decent work using the latest statistical standards;

P&B Output 6.2: Increased capacity of the ILO constituents to strengthen policies and strategies to promote and ensure equal opportunities, participation and treatment between women and men, including equal remuneration for work of equal value

Therefore, the evaluation is to look into the results framework of these individual projects and assess them in regards to the validity of design, relevance, efficiency, effectiveness, sustainability, and impact these projects have caused. The evaluation is to specifically look into the improvement the projects have caused in the employment levels in the targeted countries, as well as the capacity it has improved of the local organizations/ government/ constituents to become more resilient in this regard, enabling them to continue the efforts made by the project at the sustainable level.

Furthermore, the evaluation is also to determine the key lessons learned from these projects, carve out recommendations, and provide adequate advise to the relevant country offices and regional programming office on the overall success of the interventions, future scope of work, available opportunities and evident weaknesses/ risks that require further attention, which will enable these offices in improved planning both at country and regional level in terms of improved skills, greater employability options, and increased resilience to unplanned disruptions in the economy like that caused by the COVID-19 pandemic.

Use of the Evaluation:

The evaluation will be of key use to the relevant programming officers of ILO's country offices in Asia Pacific region as well as the ILO regional office for Asia Pacific, and ILO's Headquarters. The findings of the evaluation will serve as a good starting point to pitch various resource mobilization plans to different donors in the region for projects at country and regional level, as RBSA funding is generally smaller in nature and does not cater to long term interventions as well as will develop a fair understanding of what went wrong and how things could have been done better to create more impact in the targeted sectors.

Moreover, the findings from the evaluation will also serve as a good guiding note to all the tripartite stakeholders involved directly or indirectly in the implementation and planning phase of the four projects to be evaluated, who will look forward to its findings to see further scope of

work as well as make informed decisions at their end to address the issues pertaining to improved employment levels, greater resilience and improving capacities in their relevant countries.

4. Evaluation criteria and questions (including Cross-cutting issues/ issues of special interest to the ILO)

The evaluation will follow the criteria as outlined in the ILO’s evaluation policy and in line with the OECD/DAC guidelines. The evaluation will assess the projects under review in terms of its relevance and validity of design, coherence, efficiency, effectiveness, impact, and sustainability while also reviewing them in light of international labour standards compliance, tripartism, social dialogue and cross cutting issues like gender, disability inclusion and environmental sustainability.

Evaluation Criteria	Questions
Relevance and validity of design	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • How were the project interventions implemented through RBSA funding relevant in terms of catering to the need for which they were designed including improved employment levels and improved probability of decent employability options for workers targeted bearing in mind the impacts of the COVID-19 pandemic? • What could have been done better to make the project interventions more relevant to the needs and better responsive to the challenges at hand in the field?
Coherence	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • In what ways did each project interventions fit well into the existing efforts both of the ILO and other partners in the relevant country in terms of addressing the challenge at hand? What areas could have been looked at better to improve the overall fit of the projects to the needs of each country?
Efficiency	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • How efficient were the projects in terms of delivering the desired outputs and outcomes in limited resources offered under RBSA? • Which areas can be marked as weak areas where the projects programming could have performed better and more quickly which had significant impact on the overall efficiency of the project? • Did the projects complete their activities in the given timeframe, if not, why? What were the reasons that caused the delay and what is the possibility that the

	<p>projects may still not achieve its initially defined outcomes?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> To what extent has the project leverage resources with other projects/programmes and through partnerships with other organizations, to enhance the project impact and efficiency? How could this have been done better?
Effectiveness	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Were the projects effective in achieving the desired results? If so to what levels? What could the projects have done better in terms of proving to be more effective in the areas worked at? Did the project lay grounds to mobilise further resources and provide a way forward that could be used to design further projects for further impact in the areas under consideration including better employment levels and improved employability options bearing in mind the impacts of the COVID-19 pandemic? If so to what levels?
Impact	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Did the projects prove to have any impact on the existing problem for which they were designed to address? If so to what levels and what could have been done better to improve the impact? What were the key challenges and constraints that limited the projects to have achieved the desired impact? How does the evaluation advise, these constraints and challenges could have been better responded to?
Sustainability	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Were the efforts and progress made under the projects under review sustainable? Was there a discussion initiated around sustainability secured with different stakeholders? If so, how was this planned and how could that be improved? How well did the project adapt to the changing situation around the pandemic and thus design and implement its interventions? Did this improve adaptability have an impact on the sustainability the projects are to have?
Cross Cutting Issues including Gender, Environmental Sustainability and Disability Inclusion	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Were all interventions designed as part of the project, gender sensitive and inclusive in nature, considering people with disability and other special needs? If so, what could have been done to improve this and what were the opportunities and challenges at hand that the future projects can capitalise or bear in mind to improve overall inclusivity and gender balance? Since the projects were focused on improved employment and employability options in different geographical locations under review, therefore while designing the interventions, did the project consider the impacts of the interventions on the environment? How friendly were the project interventions in light of environmental sustainability? What could have been done better?

International Labour Standards, Tripartism and Social Dialogue	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Did the projects ensure tripartite inputs and used social dialogue as a tool while designing and implementing its interventions and while dealing with different key stakeholders? • Were all interventions designed and implemented as part of the projects in line with the international labour standards and fully responded to the P&B outcomes and DWCP deliverables, the said projects were designed to contribute to? What areas could have been better addressed in this regard?
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5. Methodology

To successfully conduct the evaluation and respond on the evaluation questions identified above, a mixed method approach is to be utilised including desk review of the existing documentation, assess the progress of the project through quantitative data available against various deliverables and finally compliment the findings through qualitative analysis of the data gathered through individual interviews, survey tools and focussed group discussions. The details of this methodology will be further refined in the inception phase however will follow the given course:

A. Desk review:

A desk review of the existing documentation relevant to the project will be done to understand the context of the project and the key progress attained. Some key documents to be reviewed among others would include:

- a. Project Document;
- b. Project Progress Reports;
- c. RBSA Project completion report;
- d. Project Extension requests;
- e. Minutes and reports if any originating from various key meetings like that of project advisory committee and different capacity development interventions implemented through the projects.

B. Quantitative Analysis:

In order to determine the impact the project has caused the evaluation will look deeper into each of the projects and analyse the quantitative data available from the projects on some specific indicators including but not limited to data around new jobs created, number of capacity development sessions conducted segregated by type, skill and thematic areas, number of tripartite organizations capacities strengthened, the change in knowledge and skill levels in each area of intervention, the number of migrant workers provided with employment options, the number of interventions implemented in terms of improved labour standards compliance including better occupational safety and health etc. The evaluation may also seek to collect data in certain areas where the project had no data to report through various survey tools and other relevant methods deemed fit.

C. Qualitative Analysis:

For better triangulation of information and better response to the questions mentioned above the findings of the quantitative analysis and desk review will be complimented by a set of focused group discussions, small survey tools and individual interviews with all the relevant key stakeholders of the projects in three different countries. The final list of stakeholders to be interviewed, engaged in survey tools, and invited to participate in the focus group discussions will be finalised in consultation with the project management (Programme team) of each of the projects after all set of stakeholders involved are enlisted and prioritised.

Finally, the findings using the above given approaches from each of the projects will be collated, that will give us a set of conclusions and recommendations on the questions asked during the evaluation and also how each of these projects in three different countries in the Asia Pacific Region contributed to addressing the targets under P&B outcomes 1,3, 4 and 5 and also complimented the efforts towards achieving SDG targets 1.5, 4.4, 8.2, 8.3, and 8.6.

NOTE: During Evaluation, for projects complimenting CPOs TLS 176, VNM, the evaluators may be required to coordinate with other evaluators also evaluating part of these projects falling beyond the mandate of this evaluation to avoid duplication of efforts and in better interest of overall efficiency of these evaluations. The Evaluation Manager will facilitate this collaboration where required.

6. Main deliverables

The evaluators will deliver the following main outputs:

a. Deliverable 1: Inception report

The evaluators will draft an inception report upon the review of the initial set of documents and after conducting an initial set of discussions with the Evaluation Manager and relevant project implementation focal points of all projects being evaluated.

The inception report will define the final evaluation approach and methodology including the final evaluation questions, data collection methodologies and techniques including which data collection tools will adopted since all data collection will take place **virtually**, the list of stakeholders to be contacted in terms of data collection, evaluation tools to be used as well as a completed standard evaluation instrument matrix.

The methodology reflected in the inception report should clearly state the limitations of the chosen evaluation methods, including those related to representation of specific group of stakeholders and shall define how different approaches will be used to compliment the data and help triangulate the final findings. Similarly, the report shall also include a final timeframe in which the evaluation team will propose to complete the evaluation. This timeframe will be a reflection of the series of consultations held with the evaluation manager to make it concise and efficient.

The inception report will be prepared in accordance with the EVAL Checklist 3: Writing the inception report and will have to be duly approved by the evaluation manager for it to be further worked upon.

b. Deliverable 2: Stakeholder workshop/presentation on preliminary findings of the evaluation

At the end of the data collection exercise, the evaluation team will present the preliminary findings of the evaluation and proposed evaluation recommendations, at the stakeholders' workshop. The mode of this workshop will be virtual, where the ILO will provide necessary administrative and logistic support to organize this stakeholder workshop.

All inputs, feedback and questions raised by the stakeholders participating in this workshop will be taken a note off and based on that in consultation with the evaluation manager, the evaluation consultant/s will decide if it still needs to further data collection on one or two aspects or move towards preparation of the initial draft report.

c. Deliverable 3: Draft evaluation report

The draft evaluation report should be prepared in accordance with the EVAL Checklist 5: *Preparing the Evaluation report*, which will be provided to the evaluators. The draft report will be improved by incorporating evaluation manager's comments. Then the evaluation manager will circulate the draft report to key stakeholders including the project teams, the ILO officials and specialists concerned with the evaluation, and the national partners for each project for their relevant comments/ feedback.

d. Deliverable 4: Final evaluation report with evaluation summary (in a standard ILO format)

At this stage, the evaluation consultant/s will incorporate all comments received on the draft report into the second draft report. The evaluator/s will also be required to prepare an evaluation summary which will be submitted as part of the report. For finalisation purposes, please note that it has to be ensured that it is done in accordance with the EVAL *Checklist 5: Preparing the Evaluation report*.

The reports and all other outputs of the evaluation will be produced in English. All draft and final

reports, including other supporting documents, analytical reports and raw data should be provided in electronic version compatible with MS Office for Windows. The report should not be more than 30 pages (excluding annexures). Findings, gaps, and results should have a logical flow, be credible and clearly presented.

The subsequent draft report received will be circulated to key stakeholders and partners of the projects in each country, relevant tripartite constituents, and the ILO's staff including the ILO Country Offices, ILO Regional Office for the Asia-Pacific, and the ILO's HQ, for their final review.

Comments from all the stakeholders will be consolidated by the Evaluation Manager after assessing them against the fact that none of these comments influence the credibility and

neutrality of the findings and conclusions and will be sent to the evaluation consultant to incorporate them into the revised evaluation report.

The evaluation report will be **considered final only** when it gets final approval by the ILO's Evaluation Office. The quality of the report will be assessed against the relevant EVAL Checklists (Checklist 6 Rating the quality of evaluation report, in Section 12).

Please note that the evaluation report submitted should include the following sections:

- Cover page with key data (projects title, CPO number, relevant P&B Outcomes, project start and completion dates, present status, budget, technical area, managing ILO unit, geographical coverage) and evaluation data (type of evaluation, managing ILO unit, start and completion dates of the evaluation, name(s) of evaluator(s), date of submission of evaluation report);
- Acronyms;
- Executive Summary (*standard ILO format*) with key findings, conclusions, recommendations,
- lessons and good practices (*each lesson learned and good practice need to be annexed using standard ILO format*);
- Description of the projects and its intervention logic/ theory of change;
- Purpose, scope, and clients of the evaluation;
- Methodology and evaluation questions;
- Limitations;
- Presentation of findings for each criteria;
- A table presenting the key results (i.e., figures and qualitative results) achieved per objective (expected and unexpected);
- Conclusions and recommendations, (including to whom they are addressed);
- Lessons learned, potential good practices and models of intervention/possible future direction including key directions for future RBSA funding and points to look for during initial feasibility;
- Standard evaluation instrument matrix (adjusted version of the one included in the Inception report)
- Appropriate Annexes (list of meetings and interviews, TOR, and other relevant documents, lesson learn and good practices using standard ILO format);

7. Management arrangements and work plan (including timeframe)

Management Arrangement:

The Evaluation team will be reporting and working directly under the supervision of the Evaluation Manager named Ahmad Ullah Qazi. All concerns, issues, challenges experienced during the evaluation will be reported to the Evaluation Manager, who accordingly will then raise it with the relevant offices required to address them in order to ensure that the evaluation is successfully completed.

Moreover, to ensure a smooth conduct of the evaluation, the evaluation manager and the evaluation team will agree on a periodic progress review meeting of the evaluation for the

course of the evaluation period, whose frequency will be agreed on in the initial briefing meeting with the evaluation team. The purpose of this meeting will be to assess the progress till date of the evaluation as well as reflect on any challenges, data collection problems and opportunities that require further unfolding to make the evaluation more effective and concise.

Timeline:

The Evaluation consultancy will be of 32 days including the following:

Activity	Days
Initial Document Review	5 days
Preparation of Inception Report	1 day
Data Collection	15 days
First draft report	6 days
Validation Workshop	1 day
Report Finalization	2 days
Review meetings with Evaluation Manager (including sharing of inception report meeting)	2 days
Total	32 days

Workplan

The proposed workplan which is subject to further customisation at the inception phase of the evaluation once the evaluation team is fully aboard and the contract is issued is as follows:

Activity	Months					
	February	March	April	May	June	July
Final date of submission of applications	7 Feb 2023					
Tentative date of start of assignment		1 Mar 2023				
Review of the Initial Set of Project Documents						
Initial Discussion with the Evaluation Manager						
Preparation, submission, and finalisation of the Inception Report						
Data Collection using quantitative and qualitative tools						
Stakeholders Validation Workshop						
Preparation and submission of Initial Draft Report						
Review of the Initial Draft Report						
Submission of Subsequent Draft Report after consolidation of comments received						
Review of the Subsequent Draft report						

Approval of the Evaluation Report by EVAL as Final Report							
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8. Profile of the evaluation team

The consultant/s applying for the assignment shall have the following:

International Consultant:

- Holds no previous involvement/engagement in the design and delivery of the projects;
- Has minimum of ten years of experience in conducting programme or project level evaluations;
- Has knowledge of, and experience in applying, qualitative and quantitative research methodologies;
- Has proven knowledge of the international labour standards, as well as the political and economic context of Asia Pacific region, more specifically the countries where evaluation is to be conducted including Vietnam, Timor-Leste, Sri Lanka, and Bangladesh;
- Holds substantial working experience in implementing and /or conducting evaluation for projects pertaining to employment generation in challenging environments with significant coordination involved with multiple stakeholders;
- Knowledge of, and experience in gender issues will be an advantage;
- Holds knowledge of the ILO’s roles and mandate and its tripartite structure as well as UN evaluation norms and its programming;
- Has excellent analytical and communication skills including proven abilities to adapt field data collection approaches in line with the sensitivities involved with various geographical locations;
- Has excellent report writing skills in English;
- The national consultant will assist the international consultant (team leader) to provide interpretation and facilitate group meeting/discussions with all stakeholders, i.e., internal ILO staff and other identified key stakeholders including relevant partners.

9. Legal and ethical matters

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

Evaluators should have personal and professional integrity and abide by the UNEG Ethical Guidelines for evaluation and the Code of Conduct for Evaluation in the UN system to ensure that the rights of individuals involved in an evaluation are respected. Evaluators must act with cultural sensitivity and pay particular attention to protocols, codes and

recommendations that may be relevant to their interactions with women. Evaluators will be expected to sign the respective ILO Code of Conduct to show that they have read and understood the UNEG Code of Conduct for Evaluation in the UN System process.

Ownership of data from the evaluation rests jointly with the ILO and the consultant. The copyright of the evaluation report will rest exclusively with the ILO. The use of data for publication and other presentations can only be made with written agreement of the ILO. Key stakeholders can make appropriate use of the evaluation report in line with the original purpose and with appropriate acknowledgement.

1. Annex

1. All relevant UNEG and ILO evaluation guidelines and standard templates
 - [ILO policy guidelines for results-based evaluation: Principles, rationale, planning and managing for evaluations 4th edition](#)
 - [Code of Conduct for Evaluation in the ILO](#) (to be signed and returned by evaluator to the evaluation manager)
 - [Protocol on collecting evaluative evidence on the ILO's COVID-19 Response measures through project and programme evaluations](#)

Guidance Notes










- ✓ [Guidance Note 3.1 Integrating gender equality in monitoring and evaluation of projects](#)
- ✓ [Guidance Note 3.2 Adapting evaluation methods to the ILO's normative and tripartite mandate](#)
- ✓ [Guidance Note 3.3 Strategic clustered evaluations to gather evaluative information more effectively](#)
- ✓ [Guidance Note 4.3 Data collection methods](#)
- ✓ [Guidance Note 4.5 Stakeholder engagement](#)
- ✓ [Guidance Note 5.5 Dissemination of lessons learned and good practices](#)

EVAL Checklists and Templates for the Evaluator:

- ✓ [Checklist 4.8 Writing the inception report](#)
- ✓ [Checklist 4.2 Preparing the evaluation report](#) [including the templates for completing [lessons learned](#) and [emerging good practices](#), as well as the templates for the title page and [executive summary](#)
- ✓ [Checklist 4.3 Filling in the title page](#)
- ✓ [Checklist 4.4 Preparing the Evaluation Report Summary](#)
- ✓ [Checklist 4.5: Documents for Project Evaluators](#)
- ✓ [Checklist 4.9 Rating the quality of evaluation report](#)

Annex 2: Contributions to RBSA

In 2022, nine governments supported the RBSA, contributing **US\$ 16.5 million**.

▶ Contributions to ILO Core voluntary funding (RBSA) ¹				
FUNDING PARTNER	2016-17	2018-19	2020-21	2022
 Belgium	8 155	6 850	6 976	3 006
 Denmark	2 928	2 840	7 880	3 504
 France	-	-	588	249
 Germany	2 641	1 722	1 161	502
 Italy	447	455	478	210
 Luxembourg	2 140	2 539	3 035	1 116
 Netherlands	5 464	5 855	5 862	4 362
 Norway	3 307	3 616	3 395	2 000
 Sweden	4 215	3 473	5 032	1 585
TOTAL	29 297	27 350	34 407	16 534

1) All figures in US\$ ('000); all figures as at 15 January 2023.

Source: RBSA Website at: <https://www.ilo.org/pardev/donors/rbsa/lang--en/index.htm>

Annex 3: Results Frameworks for the four RBSA interventions

Annex 3A - Bangladesh Results Framework for BGD101.

Outputs	No.	Targets
Output 1 - Business associations and value chain actors in tourism and fisheries sectors amidst the COVID crisis design and pilot interventions to strengthen linkages with existing MSMEs, promote entrepreneurship and adopt OSH practices in the enterprises with a large concentration of women, youths, and returnee migrants using ILO's tools and methodologies (P&B 4.2).	1.1	Capacity building of Business associations in Cox's Bazar to undertake value chain coordination of tourism and fisheries value chain (linked to Output 1.1 BGD801)
	1.2	Businesses' and workers' associations supported to form a safety committee and capacitated to promote OSH practices to their existing and potential members (linked to 1.1 and 1.2 BGD801 and 802)
	1.3	Training and awareness program to promote workplace safety and health practices (WSHP) for 200 MSMEs workers
	1.4	Awareness on entrepreneurship opportunities and access to the government stimulus packages for the 200 existing/potential entrepreneurs in Tourism and Fisheries sectors of which 40% will be women
Output 2 - An innovative, flexible, and inclusive skills programme including apprenticeship, recognition of prior learning for women, returnee migrants, and other vulnerable groups of the Cox's Bazar district is designed by capacitating and engaging employers and workers' organizations in the respective sectors (P&B 5.3).	2.1	Cox's Bazar Chamber of commerce and industry and Hotel workers association capacitated to develop roll out apprenticeship training for 100 individuals from the host communities (40%) women (linked to Output 1.1 BGD801)
	2.2	District Coordination committee of SKOP, Workers' association in tourism, construction and fisheries sectors supported to mobilize their members to contribute to skills development programs in the post COVID context (linked to 1.2, BGD802)
	2.3	Two skills training institute develop strategies for skills training in the tourism and hospitality and crafts manufacturing sector in Cox's Bazar in consultation with the workers' association in the respective sectors
	2.4	A system for recognition of prior learning developed by two skills training institutes in Cox's Bazar

Sources: Outputs cf. ToR (p. 9), and Targets cf. RBSA Proposal (p. 6-8).

Annex 3B - Sri Lanka Results Framework for LKA102 and 107.

Outputs	No.	Targets
Output 1 - Employers' and workers' organisations, and training institutions, through more effective collaboration, develop work-based learning and quality apprenticeships, for returnee, blocked and aspiring migrant workers, improving labour market access and decent work, especially for women (P&B 5.3).	1.1	Quality apprenticeship/work-based learning programmes by NAITA in collaboration with Trade Unions and Employers, particularly for women returnee and blocked migrant workers developed
Output 2 - Innovative, flexible, and inclusive skills programme (Recognition of Prior Learning) and services ('Skills Passport') developed for returnee and blocked migrant workers, creating better quality employment and decent job	2.1	Ministry of Skills Development, Employment and Labour Relations issues "'Skills Passport' for skills recognition and better quality employment, to certified returnee and blocked migrant workers, supported by EFC and trade union
	2.2	TVET institutions conduct Recognition of Prior Learning assessment for certification and recognition of skills &

opportunities for a vulnerable group badly impacted by COVID19 (P&B 5.3).		better quality employment of returnee and blocked migrant workers
Output 3 - Skills mismatches measured, and future skills needs of returnee, blocked and aspiring migrant workers anticipated, by the Government (Ministry of Skills Development, Employment and Labour Relations), EBMOs and Workers Organisations (P&B 5.1).	3.1	Skills mismatches measured and future skills needs of returnee and blocked migrant workers identified by Ministry of Skills Development, Employment and Labour Relation through Skills Passport programme
	3.2	Trade Unions supported to organize returnee and blocked migrant workers as members, and identify skills profiles & needs to feed into the national Skills measuring system (Skills Passport programme under Ministry of Skills Development, Employment and Labour Relation)
	3.3	EMBOs (EFC) supported to measure the skills of the returnee and blocked migrant workers with employers by expanding the "Skills Passport" programme of the Ministry of Skills Development, Employment and Labour Relation
Output 4 - The government (through Public Employment Services centres and other agencies) in consultation with social partners, operationalises a programme inclusive of returnee, blocked and aspiring migrant workers, to promote entrepreneurship and SME development, especially for women (P&B 4.2).	4.1	Entrepreneurship promotion and development, including OSH, for women returnee and blocked migrant workers delivered by government and/or private providers (e.g. SIYB)
	4.2	MSDELRL (SLBFE & FEDOs) capacitated to provide advisory and support services on COVID19 relief packages, by banks and other financial institutions for micro and small enterprises, to returnee and blocked migrant workers
	4.3	Public Employment Services (PES) Centres online portal and job placement and entrepreneurial services extended to COVID-19 affected migrant workers, particularly women, compliant with C88

Sources: Outputs cf. ToR (p. 9), and Targets cf. RBSA Proposal (p. 4-6).

Annex 3C - Timor Leste Results Framework for TLS176.

P&B Output 3.2 Increased capacity of member States to formulate and implement policies and strategies for creating decent work in the rural economy.	
Result 1: Improved ability of the rural poor and vulnerable to mitigate the economic impact of COVID-19	
Outputs	Targets
Output 1.1: Decent employment and income support to 1,850 direct beneficiaries [incl. 50% women, 2% persons living with disability, and returning migrant workers]	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Identification, selection, training (incl. COVID-19 OSH training) and mobilization of beneficiary workers • Organization of work among workers • Implementation, supervision, monitoring, payments
Output 1.2: Improved rural road access on 275 kms of core rural roads	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Selection of roads for routine maintenance works
Result 2: Strengthened capacities of constituents in designing and implementing employment-intensive public works programs that target the most affected rural poor and vulnerable people	
Output 2.1: model for targeted emergency employment-intensive public works program	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Preparation of detailed design – with constituents • Documenting findings from implementation • Disseminating and promoting the model

<p>Output 2.2: Strengthened capacities among, and dialogues between, tri-partite constituents regarding design, implementation and monitoring emergency employment-intensive public works programs – with cross-cutting aspects like gender equality, involvement of people with a disability, and the principle of non-discrimination mainstreamed.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Involve, orient and train constituents on various aspects of the project • Facilitate and support bi-partite and tri-partite dialogue between constituents. Provide communication skills training to constituents in relation to social dialogue and the constituents' roles in disseminating information about the project
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Source: RBSA Proposal (p. 3), and ToR (p.9).

Annex 3D - Viet Nam Results Framework for VNM128 (and VNM826).

CPO	P&B	Outputs	Pillar No.	Remarks on Funding
VNM 128	3.1	1. Delivered capacity building for VGCL, VCCI, and MOLISA to understand and use indicators measuring impact of COVID-19	2	RBSA
		2. Study produced on COVID-19 impact on labour market, with focus on hard-hit groups and discussed at tripartite consultation	2	RBSA
		3. Support provided to COVID-19 response policy and Employment Law revision	3	Outcome-based funding ILO/Sida
	A.1	4. Assistance provided to increase frequency of LFS, its ability to capture informality and gender issues	1	RBSA
		5. Support provided to introductory work on C160	1	RBSA
	6.2	6. Feasibility of systematic measurement methodology for violence and harassment investigated and recommendations proposed.	1	Not from RBSA
		7. Support provided to a national study on the prevalence of violence and harassment in Viet Nam's world of work	2	Not from RBSA
		8. Tripartite consultations held for the Employment Strategy to address labour market challenges due to COVID-19, including on gender-responsive measures ensuring decent work for all women and men in Viet Nam	3	Not from RBSA
VNM 826 *)	2.2	9. National and local capacities strengthened for the further development and use of PES database	4	RBSA through VNM826

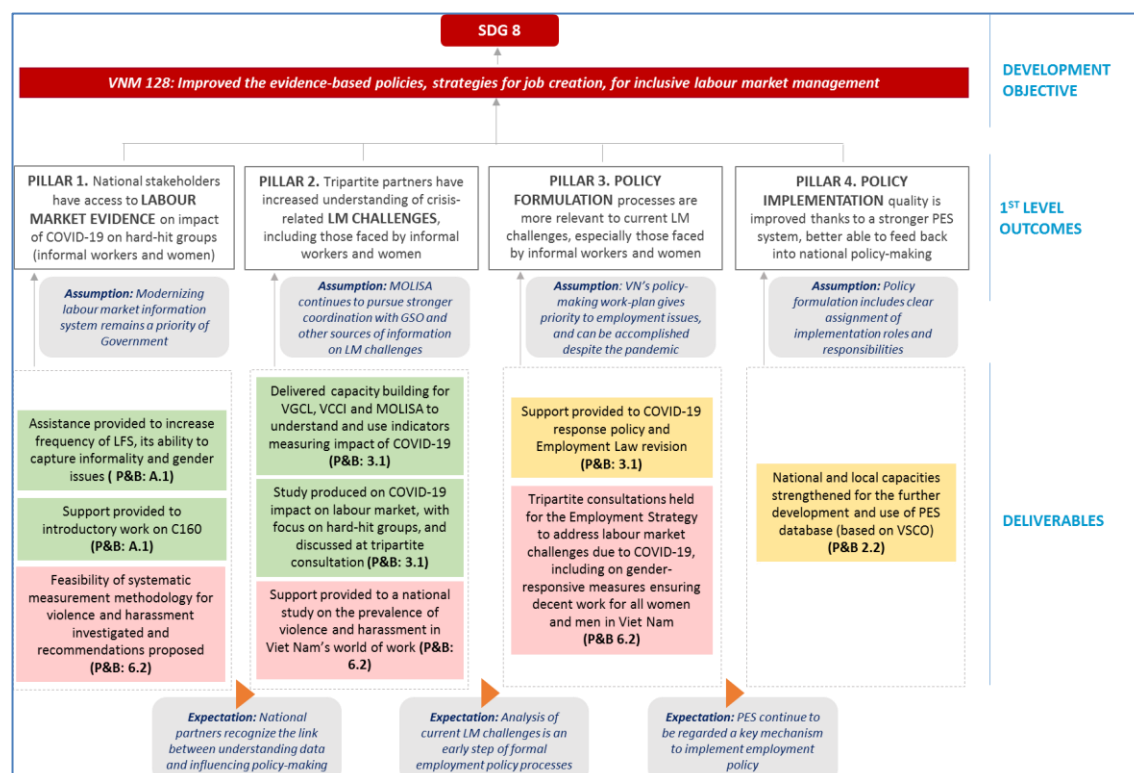
Source: RBSA Proposal (p. 5-10).

**) VNM826 is not part of this evaluation but it is included in one and the same RBSA Proposal.*

Annex 4: Viet Nam: Intervention Logic and Detailed Results Framework

VNM128: Intervention logic/Theory of Change:

In the Graph below, under DELIVERABLES, the ones in **GREEN** are fully funded by RBSA; the ones in **RED** indicate outputs fully funded by other sources; the ones in **YELLOW** are partially funded by RBSA, and partially by other sources (see also Table 6).



VNM128: Detailed Results Framework, including the Detailed deliverable description:

CPO	P&B	Deliverables (CPO Outputs)	Detailed deliverable description
VNM 128	3.1	1. Delivered capacity building for VGCL, VCCI, and MOLISA to understand and use indicators measuring impact of COVID-19	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Capacity of VCCI, VGCL and MOLISA built on new statistical standards adopted in VN for them to use them for policy dialogues. Capacity VCCI, VGCL and MOLISA strengthened on LM indicators on informality and gender.
		2. Study produced on COVID-19 impact on labour market, with focus on hard-hit groups and discussed at tripartite consultation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> One national report published on impact of COVID-19 on VN labour market in Q2. If resources allow, one published every quarter. Two consultations organized to discuss the implication of the COVID-19 report. Nation-wide study carried out on informal employment. At least two national tripartite consultations/capacity building sessions organized during the preparation of the study.

		3. Support provided to COVID-19 response policy and Employment Law revision	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Two position papers prepared expressing the views of VCCI and VGCL on priorities of Employment Law. • Tripartite forums organized for dialogue between social partners and MOLISA on the position papers. • Gender impact assessment prepared to feed into the Employment Law revision. • Capacity building provided to the research institution that will conduct the assessment. • Tripartite-plus consultations organized to discuss the assessment. • Review of international experience in unemployment insurance and applications to informal sector workers compiled. • Capacity building organized on this subject • Capacity building on employment measures to support informal workers delivered to departments of MOLISA that are not directly responsible for the Employment Law but that work on related legislation.
	A.1	4. Assistance provided to increase frequency of LFS, its ability to capture informality and gender issues	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • LFS questionnaire improved to switch to ICLS19 and to include Washington group • Quarterly LFS reports upgraded on informality and gender • LFS sample revised for monthly calculation of national-level indicators and quarterly calculation of provincial-level indicators • Pilot survey run using migration questionnaire, for inclusion in the LFS • Capacity building delivered to finalize Viet Nam's Standard Classification of Occupations (VSCO) • MOLISA's quarterly labour bulletins upgraded with data on hard-hit groups
		5. Support provided to introductory work on C160	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Legal review prepared on the compatibility of C 160 with national legislation. • Consultation held between GSO, MOLISA and social partners to discuss advantages of ratification of C160.
	6.2	6 Feasibility of systematic measurement methodology for violence and harassment investigated and recommendations proposed.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Tripartite plus workshop organized to raise awareness on v&h in VN context; • Study carried out, including a review of data available on v&h as well as an analysis of possible measurement methodologies • Tripartite validation workshops organized.
		7 Support provided to a national study on the prevalence of violence and harassment in Viet Nam's world of work	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • National study conducted based on selected methodology, including collection of primary data • Tripartite workshops organized for endorsement of data collection tools, preliminary findings, and final content.
		8. Tripartite consultations held for the Employment Strategy to address labour market challenges due to COVID-19, including on gender-responsive measures ensuring decent work for all women and men in Viet Nam	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Capacity building delivered for MOLISA, constituents and other partners (e.g. Women's Union) on the promotion of decent work for women through inclusive growth policies. • Events organized for dialogue on equal opportunity in the context of Socio-Economic Development Plan and Employment Strategy
VNM 826	2.2	9. National and local capacities strengthened for the further development and use of PES database (based on VSCO).	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • First report on C88 produced. • Capacity building delivered to PES on using the newly-developed VSCO. • Gender-specific review of PES effectiveness. • Assessment of DOLISA administrative data collection challenges delivered

Source: RBSA Proposal (p. 5-10).

Annex 5: Data Collection Worksheet

Below is the Data Collection Worksheet specifying the Evaluation Criteria and Questions, as well as the sources of data, stakeholder interviews and specific methods used in the present evaluation (Source: Inception Report, 22 May 2022).

Evaluation Criteria and Questions	Sources of Data	Stakeholder Interviews	Specific Methods
A. Relevance and Validity of Design			
1) How were the project interventions implemented through RBSA funding relevant in terms of catering to the need for which they were designed including improved employment levels and improved probability of decent employability options for workers targeted bearing in mind the impacts of the COVID-19 pandemic?	Proposals (incl. Results Frameworks & ToC), Policies of Governments and of Social Partners, RBSA Guidelines, UNSDCF, SDGs, ILO-P&B Outcomes, DWCPs (CPO)	Tripartite Constituents, Project Teams, ILO COs, ROAP & DWTs, PROGRAM, PARTNERSHIPS	Documents review & Stakeholder Interviews
2) What could have been done better to make the project interventions more <i>relevant</i> to the needs and better responsive to the challenges at hand in the field?	Proposals, Implementation Plans, Progress Reports, No-Cost Extension Requests, End-Reports	Tripartite Constituents, Project Teams, ILO COs, ROAP & DWTs, PROGRAM, PARTNERSHIPS	Documents review & Stakeholder Interviews
B. Coherence			
3) In what ways did each project interventions fit well into the existing efforts both of the ILO and other partners in the relevant country in terms of addressing the challenge at hand?	Proposals, Policies of Governments and of Social Partners, Progress Reports, UNSDCF, SDGs, DWCPs	Project Teams, ILO COs, ROAP & DWTs, PROGRAM, PARTNERSHIPS, Tripartite Constituents	Documents review & Stakeholder Interviews
4) What areas could have been looked at better to improve the overall fit of the interventions to the needs of each country?	Proposals, Policies of Governments and of Social Partners, Progress Reports, SDGs, UNSDCF, DWCPs	Project Teams, ILO COs, ROAP & DWTs, PROGRAM, PARTNERSHIPS, Tripartite Constituents	Documents review & Stakeholder Interviews
C. Effectiveness (<i>in sequence placed before Efficiency cf. text above table</i>)			
5) Were the interventions effective in achieving the desired results? If so to what levels?	M&E Frameworks, Progress Reports, No-Cost Extension Request, End-Reports, Project products	Project Teams, ILO COs, ROAP & DWTs, PROGRAM, PARTNERSHIPS, Tripartite Constituents, Implementing partners	Documents review & Stakeholder Interviews
6) What could the interventions have done better in terms of proving to be more effective in the areas worked at?	Progress Reports, No-Cost Extension Request, End-Reports, Project products	Project Teams, ILO COs, ROAP & DWTs, PROGRAM, PARTNERSHIPS, Tripartite Constituents, Implementing partners	Documents review & Stakeholder Interviews
7) Did the project lay grounds to mobilise further resources and provide a way forward that could be used to design further interventions for further impact in the areas under consideration including better	Progress Reports, No-Cost Extension Request, End-Reports, Project products	Project Teams, ILO COs, ROAP & DWTs, PROGRAM, PARTNERSHIPS, Tripartite Constituents, Implementing partners	Documents review & Stakeholder Interviews

employment levels and improved employability options bearing in mind the impacts of the COVID-19 pandemic? If so to what levels?			
D. Efficiency			
8) How efficient were the interventions in terms of delivering the desired outputs and outcomes in limited resources offered under RBSA?	Financial reports, Progress Reports, No-Cost Extension Requests, End-Reports	Project Teams, ILO COs, ROAP & DWTs, PROGRAM	Review of Financial Reports & Stakeholder Interviews
9) Which areas can be marked as weak areas where the interventions programming could have performed better and more quickly which had significant impact on the overall efficiency of the project?	Financial reports, Progress Reports, No-Cost Extension Requests, End-Reports	Project Teams, ILO COs, ROAP & DWTs, PROGRAM, Tripartite Constituents, Implementing partners	Review of Financial Reports & Stakeholder Interviews
10) Did the interventions complete their activities in the given timeframe, if not, why? What were the reasons that caused the delay and what is the possibility that the interventions may still not achieve its initially defined outcomes?	Financial reports, Progress Reports, No-Cost Extension Requests, End-Reports, Project products	Project Teams, ILO COs, ROAP & DWTs, PROGRAM, Tripartite Constituents, Implementing partners	Review of Financial Reports & Stakeholder Interviews
11) To what extent has the project leverage resources with other interventions/programmes and through partnerships with other organizations, to enhance the project impact and efficiency? How could this have been done better?	Financial reports, Progress Reports, No-Cost Extension Requests, End-Reports, Project products, SDGs, UNSDCF, DWCPs	Project Teams, ILO COs, ROAP & DWTs, PROGRAM, Tripartite Constituents	Review of Financial Reports & Stakeholder Interviews
E. Impact			
12) Did the interventions prove to have any impact on the existing problem for which they were designed to address? If so to what levels and what could have been done better to improve the impact?	Progress Reports, No-Cost Extension Requests, End-Reports, Project products	Project Teams, ILO COs, ROAP & DWTs, PROGRAM, Tripartite Constituents, Implementing partners	Documents review & Stakeholder Interviews
13) What were the key challenges and constraints that limited the interventions to have achieved the desired impact? How does the evaluation advise, these constraints and challenges could have been better responded to?	Progress Reports, No-Cost Extension Requests, End-Reports	Project Teams, ILO COs, ROAP & DWTs, PROGRAM, Tripartite Constituents, Implementing partners	Documents review & Stakeholder Interviews
F. Sustainability			
14) Were the efforts and progress made under the interventions under review sustainable? Was there a discussion initiated around sustainability secured with different stakeholders? If so, how was this planned and how could that be improved?	Progress Reports, No-Cost Extension Requests, End-Reports, Project products	Project Teams, ILO COs, ROAP & DWTs, PROGRAM, Tripartite Constituents, Implementing partners	Documents review & Stakeholder Interviews
15) How well did the project adapt to the changing situation around the pandemic and thus design and implement its interventions? Did this improve adaptability have an impact on the sustainability the interventions are to have?	Progress Reports, No-Cost Extension Requests, End-Reports, Project products	Project Teams, ILO COs, ROAP & DWTs, PROGRAM, Tripartite Constituents, Implementing partners	Documents Review & Stakeholder Interviews
G. Cross-cutting issues			
16) Were all interventions designed as part of the project, gender sensitive and inclusive in nature, considering people with disability and other	Proposals, Progress Reports, No-Cost Extension Requests,	Project Teams, ILO COs, ROAP & DWTs, PROGRAM, Tripartite	Documents review & Stakeholder Interviews

special needs? If so, what could have been done to improve this and what were the opportunities and challenges at hand that the future interventions can capitalise or bear in mind to improve overall inclusivity and gender balance?	End-Reports, Project products	Constituents, Implementing partners	
17) Since the interventions were focused on improved employment and employability options in different geographical locations under review, therefore while designing the interventions, did the project consider the impacts of the interventions on the environment? How friendly were the project interventions in light of environmental sustainability? What could have been done better?	Proposals, Progress Reports, No-Cost Extension Requests, End-Reports, Project products	Project Teams, ILO COs, ROAP & DWTs, PROGRAM, Tripartite Constituents, Implementing partners	Documents review & Stakeholder Interviews
H. International Labour Standards, Tripartism and Social Dialogue			
18) Did the interventions ensure tripartite inputs and used social dialogue as a tool while designing and implementing its interventions and while dealing with different key stakeholders?	Proposals, Progress Reports, No-Cost Extension Requests, End-Reports, Project products	Project Teams, ILO COs, ROAP & DWTs, PROGRAM, Tripartite Constituents, Implementing partners	Documents Review & Stakeholder Interviews
19) Were all interventions designed and implemented as part of the interventions in line with the international labour standards and fully responded to the P&B outcomes and DWCP deliverables, the said interventions were designed to contribute to? What areas could have been better addressed in this regard?	Proposals, Progress Reports, No-Cost Extension Requests, End-Reports, Project products	Project Teams, ILO COs, ROAP & DWTs, PROGRAM, Tripartite Constituents, Implementing partners	Documents review & Stakeholder Interviews

Annex 6: Evaluation Work Plan

Workplan: Activities, Input of working days and Timeline

Activity	Days	Timeline
Date of start of assignment		Mon 1 May 2023
Initial Discussions with Evaluation Manager and with the project Focal Points of all four interventions; Review of the Initial Set of Project Documents; and Preparation of the Inception Report	6	1 – 14 May
Submission of the draft Inception Report	1	15 May
Finalization the draft Inception Report	1	22 May
Data Collection	15	23 May – 20 June
Stakeholders Validation Workshop	1	21 June
Preparation and submission of Initial Draft Report	6	21 - 30 June
Submission of Draft Report		30 June
Review of draft report by stakeholders		1 – 10 July
Submission of Final Report	2	12 July
Approval of the Final Evaluation Report by EVAL		^{3rd} week of July
Total number of Working Days	32	

Annex 7: List of Stakeholders Interviewed

No.	Name	Organization	Status	M / F
Bangladesh				
1)	Mr. Abu Murshed Chowdhury	President, Cox's Bazar Chamber of Commerce and Industry	Employers	M
2)	Mr. Maruf Billah Jabed	Principal, SKUS Technical Training Centre	Private: Skills Training Provider	M
3)	Mr. M Hasan Ali	Deputy Director, Department of Youth Development	Public: Skills Training provider	M
4)	Mr. Md. Ridwanur Rashid	Assistant General Manager, Bangladesh Small and Cottage Industries Corporation (BSCIC)	Government	M
5)	Mr. Gunjan Dallakoti	SME Development Specialist, ILO-CO-Dhaka	ILO	M
6)	Mr. Serajul Islam	Focal point, Skills Development Officer/ Programme Officer	ILO	M
Sri Lanka				
7)	Ms. Himali Athaudage	Additional Secretary (Skills Development), Ministry of Education	Government (optional)	F
8)	Mr. Nikaril Kanth	Senior Assistant Secretary, Ministry of Labour and Foreign Employment	Government	M
9)	Mr. Janaka Jayalath & Mr. Marjula Chanudi	Deputy Director General & Operational Focal Point, Tertiary and Vocational Education Commission of Sri Lanka (TVEC)	Government	M M
10)	Mr. Kanishka	Director General, Sri Lanka Institute of Tourism and Hospitality Management (SLITHM)	Government	M
11)	Mr. K. Sogisusman	Assistant Director (Development) Vocational Training Authority of Sri Lanka (VTASL)	Government	M
12)	Ms. Champika Shiromali	Director (HRM and Int. Relations) Department of Manpower and Employment (DME)	Government	F
13)	Mr. Jalitha Hewage	Specialist – ICT and Projects, Employers' Federation of Ceylon (EFC)	Employers	M
14)	Mr. Somasiri Seneviratne	Chief Executive Officer, Start and Improve Your Business Association of Sri Lanka (SIYB – ASL)	Private Sector	M
15)	Ms. Amali Kalupahana	President, Centre for Working Women (CWW)	Workers	F
16)	Mr. Leslie Devendra & Ms. Nirmalanie Premathilake	General Secretary and Head of Womens' Wing, Sri Lanka Nidahas Sevaka Sangamaya (SLNSS)	Workers	M F
17)	Mr. Palitha Athukorala	President, National Union of Seafarers in Sri Lanka (NUSS)	Workers	M
18)	Ms. Simrin Singh	Country Director	ILO	F
19)	Mr Erandika Dissanayake	Focal point, National Project Coordinator	ILO	M
Timor Leste				
20)	Ms. Michiko Miyamoto	Country Director ILO Jakarta	ILO	F
21)	Ms. Lita Octavia	Focal point, NPO for Timor Leste, CO-Jakarta	ILO	F
Viet Nam				
22)	Mr. Đào Quang Vinh	Former director, Institute of Labour Science and Social Affairs (ILSSA)	Government	M
23)	Ms Trinh Thu Nga	Deputy Director General, ILLSA - MOLISA	Government	F
24)	Mr. Ngô Xuân Liễu	MOLISA/DOE, Director of National PES Center	Government	M
25)	Ms. Bùi Thị Ninh	VCCI Director of Employers' Activities Bureau	Employers	F
26)	Ms. Pham Thị Thu Lan	VGCL Vice director of Institute of Workers and Trade Unions	Workers	F
27)	Ms Nguyen Thi Thanh Mai	Deputy Director of Population and Labour Department, GSO	Government	F
28)	Mr. Doan Ngoc Xuan	Central Economic Commission (CEC)	Government	M
29)	Ms. Nguyen le Van	Former NPC RBSA project	ILO	F
30)	Ms Nguyen Thi Huyen	Focal point, National Project Coordinator	ILO	F

Bangkok, Delhi, Geneva, Islamabad				
31)	Mr. Qazi Ahmad Ullah	Evaluation Manager	ILO Islamabad	M
32)	Ms. Pamornrat Pringsulaka	Senior Evaluation Officer	ILO-0Bangkok	F
33)	Mr. Tite Habiyakare	DWT Bangkok	ILO-Bangkok	M
34)	Mr. Bordado, Gabriel	DWT Delhi	ILO-Delhi	M
35)	Ms. Maria Borsos	ILO Budapest, former ILO ROAP	ILO-Geneva	F
36)	Ms. Valentina Barcucci	Geneva, former Labour Economist, CO Hanoi	ILO-Geneva	F
37)	Mr. Iain Bald and	PROGRAM	ILO-Geneva	M
	Ms. Jing Liu			F
38)	Ms. Carlien van Empel, Mr. Francesco D'Ovidio and Mr. Parth Kanitkar	PARTNERSHIPS	ILO-Geneva	F
				M
				M
	TOTAL			25 M 18 F
	% Female respondents			41.9 %

Annex 8: Attendees at Stakeholder Workshop

The list of attendees who participated in the virtual Stakeholder Workshop on Wednesday 21 June 2023 is as follows:

No.	Name	Organization
Bangladesh		
1)	Mr. Abu Murshed Chowdhury	President, Cox's Bazar Chamber of Commerce and Industry
2)	Mr. Maruf Billah Javed	Principal, SKUS Technical Training Centre (STTC)
3)	Mr. Md. Amran	STTC
4)	Mr. Serajul Islam	Focal point, Skills Development Officer/ Programme Officer
Sri Lanka		
5)	Mr. Nikaril Kanth	Senior Assistant Secretary, Ministry of Labour and Foreign Employment
6)	Mr. Jalitha Hewage	Specialist – ICT and Projects, Employers' Federation of Ceylon (EFC)
7)	Mr Erandika Dissanayake	Focal point, National Project Coordinator
8)	Mr. Shevandra Wijemanne	ILO Colombo
9)	Ms. Dr. Janaka Jayalath	Deputy Director-General, Tertiary and Vocational Education Commission
Timor Leste		
10)	Ms. Lita Octavia	Focal point, NPO for Timor Leste, CO-Jakarta
Viet Nam		
11)	Mr. Đào Quang Vinh	Former director, Institute of Labour Science and Social Affairs (ILSSA)
12)	Mr. Ngô Xuân Liễu	MOLISA/DOE, Director of National PES Center
13)	Mr. Xuan	Central Economic Commission (CEC)
14)	Ms Nguyen Thi Thanh Mai	Deputy Director of Population and Labour Department, GSO
15)	Ms Nguyen Thi Huyen	Focal point, National Project Coordinator
16)	Mr. Anh	Interpreter
Other		
17)	Mr. Qazi Ahmad Ullah	Evaluation Manager, ILO Islamabad
18)	Ms. Pamornrat Pringsulaka	Senior Evaluation Officer, ILO Bangkok
19)	Mr. Tite Habiyakare	DWT Bangkok
20)	Mr. Kelvin Sergeant	DWT Delhi
21)	Ms. Jing Liu	PROGRAM, Geneva
22)	Mr. Francesco D'Ovidio	PARTNERSHIPS, Geneva
23)	Mr. Theo van der Loop	International Evaluator, The Hague

Annex 9: Achievements of the four interventions

Bangladesh:

P&B	Targets	Achievements
4.2		
1.1	Capacity building of Business associations in Cox's Bazar to undertake value chain coordination of tourism and fisheries value chain	ILO supported CCCI to review the Value Chains of the tourism and fisheries sectors in Cox's Bazar.
1.2	Businesses' and workers' associations supported to form a safety committee and capacitated to promote OSH practices to their existing and potential members	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Cox's Bazar Chamber of Commerce and Industry (CCCI) developed and rolled out an OSH, employment and entrepreneurship support service and established it as an institutional service to its members and wider business community in cooperation with the workers organizations in Cox's Bazar. CCCI provided coordination and advisory services to the businesses and aspiring entrepreneurs/workers regarding business and employment opportunities in the tourism and construction sectors value chains.
1.3	Training and awareness program to promote workplace safety and health practices (WSHP) for 200 MSMEs workers	BSCIC developed and rolled out sectoral workplace OSH practices training in Covid19 environment with the support of tourism, construction, and fishery sectors trade unions . 200 MSME workers (22% women) trained.
1.4	Awareness on entrepreneurship opportunities and access to the government stimulus packages for the 200 existing/potential entrepreneurs in Tourism and Fisheries sectors of which 40% will be women	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Bangladesh Small and Cottage Industries Corporation (BSCIC) rolled out ILO's SIYB entrepreneurship training: 200 entrepreneurs trained. 130 of them (65%) were existing/potential women entrepreneurs in the district, particularly community-based entrepreneurs in tourism, agro-food and fishery sectors, e-commerce, etc. as many women in the host communities want to be micro-entrepreneurs rather than wage-employee. The project worked with women organisations and employers/industry associations. The RBSA project organised workshops and awareness raising programme at the sub-districts level and established linkage between MSMEs, BDS providers and Bankers so that Covid19 affected MSMEs can get the benefit of government stimulus from the banking system and other financial institutions.
5.3		
2.1	Cox's Bazar Chamber of commerce and industry and Hotel workers association capacitated to develop roll out apprenticeship training for 100 individuals from the host communities (40%) women (linked to Output 1.1 BGD801)	ILO supported 35 workplaces and one skill training provider to implement an apprenticeship programme for 100 vulnerable youths (15% women) in Tourism and Construction sectors aligned with the NTVQF and with the support of the private sector and the Local CCWE members. 90% of apprentices received gainful employment.
2.2	District Coordination committee of SKOP, Workers' association in tourism, construction and fisheries sectors supported to mobilize their members to contribute to skills development programs in the post COVID context (linked to 1.2, BGD802)	RBSA supported 11 Trade Unions to form a Local level Coordination Committee for Workers Education (LCCWE) with the support of the national level NCCWE and built their capacity to participate and contribute to design the skills and entrepreneurship development training including workplace OSH practices in COVID 19 environment.

2.3	Two skills training institute develop strategies for skills training in the tourism and hospitality and crafts manufacturing sector in Cox's Bazar in consultation with the workers' association in the respective sectors	One Local TVET institution has been officially recognised (Skus Technical Training Centre-STTC) as Registered Training Organization (RTO) and another TVET institution (Youth Development Training Centre-YDTC) is waiting for the final approval of the Bangladesh Technical Education Board (BTEB) to become RTO. They are able to design and deliver training interventions to the vulnerable host communities as per the national competency standard for, respectively, construction and repair/maintenance occupations. 40 youths were trained (25% women).
2.4	A system for recognition of prior learning developed by two skills training institutes in Cox's Bazar	The STTC and Beachway Training Institute were also accredited as Recognition of Prior Learning (RPL) providers. 70 workers/Master Crafts Persons (MCPs) and 20 returnee migrant workers were assessed and certified through RPL.

Sri Lanka:

P&B	Out-put	Targets	Achievements	Counterpart
5.3	1.1	Quality apprenticeship/work-based learning programmes by NAITA in collaboration with Trade Unions and Employers, particularly for women returnee and blocked migrant workers developed	Delivered through two alternative programs: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Conduct Employment-linked Training (ELTP) in tourism sector for 500 MWs from September 2021. Train 24 young aspiring migrant workers to become Seafarers (virtual & face-to-face). Plus introducing 03 young females into maritime sector jobs (breaking gender-stereotypes). Launch a tripartite partnership with State sector (<i>Mahapola Maritime Academy of Sri Lanka Ports Authority</i>) and employers (international shipping companies) 22 of the 24 trainees were awarded with CDC (license). They were oriented for on-board training in Shipping Companies. 	SLITHM NUSS (WO) NUSS (WO) NUSS (WO) & Sri Lanka Ports Authority
	2.1	State Ministry of Skills Development, Employment and Labour Relations (MSDELR) issues "Skills Passport" for skills recognition and better-quality employment, to certified returnee and blocked migrant workers, supported by EFC and trade union	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Facilitated a resource sharing among TVET institutes for conducting skills assessment on sharing assessment center facilities, and on referral for RPL registration and assessment Train field officers (Skills Development Assistants) to identify and guide the returned and aspirant migrant workers on NVQ and RPL systems and upskilling and re-skilling programs at TVET sector. Completed in July 2021. Organised a multi-stakeholder forum (in Jan 2022) on "Skilling Sri Lankan workforce towards Global talent pool", to bring consensus among all key partners on the vital importance of skills development of migrant workers. Technically assisted in establishment of the "Committee on Assessment and Development of Skills of Overseas Sri Lankans" (ADSOSL). The NPC spearheaded this proposal and consequent discussions. Develop an information exchange (through an API) between the RPL and Skills Passport systems, so that all persons receiving NVQ through RPL path will automatically be linked to the Skills Passport system. 	NAITA, DTET, VTASL & SLITHM. TVEC & MSDELR. Multi-stakeholder Ministries of FA, Education, Labour, TVEC. TVEC
	2.2	TVET institutions conduct Recognition of Prior Learning (RPL) assessment for certification and recognition of skills & better-quality	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Support in devising a specific criterion for assessment of skills of Returnee MWs under the RPL regulations. Conduct RPL assessments for 620 returned and aspirant migrant workers (186 for NVQ3 and 434 for NVQ4). Conduct 8 skills-gap filling programs for 78 RMWs. Upskilling for 859 aspirant MWs (from October 2021). 	TVEC VTASL VTASL VTASL

		employment of returnee and blocked migrant workers	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Develop 20 National Curricula Standards (NCS) for hospitality sector; upskill 40 trainers to deliver virtual training and RPL assessment; refer 503 MWs for RPL (from Sept. 2021). Conduct a Webinar series on skills development for Industry-demanded occupations in par with World Youth Skills Day '21. Develop the Digitalization Master Plan, incl. digitalizing the RPL system, automation of assessor application and registration mechanism; staff capacity building; and launch a public awareness/outreach/ motivational program on e-RPL system. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Partly in cooperation with two other projects (LKA/20/03/CHE and LKA/20/04/IOM). 	SLITHM TVEC & Sector Skills Councils TVEC & ICTA
5.1	3.1	Skills mismatches measured and future skills needs of returnee and blocked migrant workers identified by MSDELR through Skills Passport programme	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Enhance coordination between 2 government organisations, and build capacity of 130 field officers who were to facilitate reintegration of returned migrant workers (RMWs): including identification, psychological support, career guidance and motivation for skills development and re-employment. Develop a linkage to exchange RMWs data. (Details of more than 17,000 returnees were provided to SM/FEP). Train 100 Skills Development Assistants (SDAs) on skills recognition (RPL), certification (NVQ), Documentation (Skills Passport), and up-skilling initiatives (at TVET institutes) through a virtual training platform. 	SM/FEP & DME SM/FEP & Foreign Ministry TVEC
	3.2	Trade Unions supported to organize returnee and blocked migrant workers as members, and identify skills profiles & needs to feed into the national Skills measuring system (Skills Passport progr. under MSDELR)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Capacity building to conduct 4 awareness programs for 185 MWs (68 males; 117 females) on skills development. Launch an awareness campaign in 10 Districts, to reach 1168 MWs (275 males: 893 females) and to refer 200 for skills assessments and development. This helped put CWW on the map as a new trade union in this area. Consultations to raise awareness of the migration context under the Pandemic, and for referral of membership for skills recognition, development and certification. 	SLNSS CWW Trade Unions (affiliated with ITUC)
	3.3	EMBOs (EFC) supported to measure the skills of the returnee and blocked migrant workers with employers by expanding the "Skills Passport" programme of the MSDELR	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Strengthen the Skills Passport system; capacity development for the "National Skills Passport Secretariat" on required HR and IT system development; and organizing a stakeholder consultation (in Oct 2022) to ascertain the aspirations of the employers (partly in cooperation with LKA/20/04/IOM project). 	EFC & TVEC
4.2	4.1	Entrepreneurship promotion and development, including OSH, for women returnee and blocked migrant workers delivered by government and/or private providers (e.g. SIYB)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Transform e-SIYB training manuals to local languages; awareness creation among 224 MWs on entrepreneurship; conduct training (GYB for 37, SYB for 102, IYB for 15, Digital Marketing for 82, BDP for 15, Access to Finance for 80, OSH for 145); provision of industrial safety equipment for 125; and train 72 field staff of DME for monitoring and supporting the businesses started by the beneficiaries. Facilitate two organisations to develop a special joint OSH training for MW (who were planning to start a business). 	SIYB-ASL DME SIYB-ASL & NIOSH
	4.2	MSDELR (SLBFE & FEDOs) capacitated to provide advisory and support services on COVID19 relief	The beneficiaries of ILO's entrepreneurship development programs (SIYB and SEDD) were linked to a grant scheme for supporting business start-ups by the returned migrant workers.	Grant Scheme of SM/FEP & SLBFE

		packages, by banks and other financial institutions for micro and small enterprises, to returnee and blocked migrant workers		
4.3		Public Employment Services (PES) Centres online portal and job placement and entrepreneurial services extended to COVID-19 affected migrant workers, particularly women, compliant with C88	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Extend the PES assistance to returned and aspirant migrant workers: Conducted (jointly funded with LKA/20/04/IOM): <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 194 career guidance programs for 3390 returned & aspirant MWs; 16 soft-skills development programs for 500 beneficiaries, 25 entrepreneurship promotion programs for 472 persons; 15 local job matching programs to facilitate meeting of 5351 jobseekers with 230 potential employers. 	DME & SEDD (MoY) & NYC

Timor Leste

No.	Key Outputs and Activities	Achievements
Achievements for P&B Output 3.2		
1	Result 1: Improved ability of the rural poor and vulnerable to mitigate the economic impact of COVID-19	
1.1	Output 1.1: Decent employment and income support to 1,850 direct beneficiaries [incl. 50% women, 2% persons living with disability, and returning migrant workers] <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Identification, selection, training (incl. COVID-19 OSH training) and mobilization of beneficiary workers Organization of work among workers Implementation, supervision, monitoring, payments 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Decent employment created for 2,572 direct beneficiaries, including 1,023 women (39%), 8 persons living with disability (0.3 %) with 34,562 worker days created. Income support to enhance livelihoods with USD 185,074 disbursed directly to the community as workers' wages from contracts amounting to USD 389,439 during crucial period so as to mitigate economic impact of COVID-19.
1.2	Output 1.2: Improved rural road access on 275 kms of core rural roads <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Selection of roads for routine maintenance works 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Improved rural road access on 273.5 kms of core rural roads to markets, other economic services/facilities and health services. Results realized through 21 routine-road maintenance contracts issues to 15 trained EIIP-contractors in 12 municipalities. This was implemented by leveraging on the existing systems and procedures of the R4D-SP and ERA-AF projects.
2	Result 2: Strengthened capacities of constituents in designing and implementing employment-intensive public works programs that target the most affected rural poor and vulnerable people	
2.1	Output 2.1: model for targeted emergency employment-intensive public works program <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Preparation of detailed design – with constituents Documenting findings from implementation Disseminating and promoting the model 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The Achievement under Output 2.2 demonstrated the viability of the approach as a scalable and replicable model for targeted emergency employment-intensive public works program and its adoption as part of economic stimulus packages. Support to the migration of the IRMIS developed by R4D-SP to the Information and Communication Technologies Agency (TIC) under the Prime Minister's Office.

		Ownership by the PM Office will ensure its sustainability.
2.2	<p>Output 2.2: Strengthened capacities among, and dialogues between, tri-partite constituents regarding design, implementation and monitoring emergency employment-intensive public works programs – with cross-cutting aspects like gender equality, involvement of people with a disability, and the principle of non-discrimination mainstreamed.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Involve, orient and train constituents on various aspects of the project • Facilitate and support bi-partite and tri-partite dialogue between constituents. Provide communication skills training to constituents in relation to social dialogue and the constituents' roles in disseminating information about the project 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Strengthened the capacity to advocate of the Directorate DRBFC, the CCI-TL and KSTL through direct involvement, on-the-job training, and monitoring in designing, implementation and documentation.

Viet Nam

P&B	Deliverables (CPO Outputs)	Pillar No.	Achievements	Counterpart
3.1	1. Delivered capacity building for VGCL, VCCI, and MOLISA to understand and use indicators measuring impact of COVID-19	2	A <i>training</i> on using labour market indicators in response to the impact of Covid-19 pandemic on 22-23 April 2021.	MOLISA, VGCL, VCCI, VCA & few academies
	2. Study produced on COVID-19 impact on labour market, with focus on hard-hit groups and discussed at tripartite consultation	2	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 5 Quarterly National Reports on <i>impact of Covid-19</i> on Viet Nam labour market in 2020 2021. • A national analysis on <i>informal employment</i> using statistical data from the Viet Nam LFS (Feb. 2021). • 2 <i>consultations</i> to verify statistical analysis. 	GSO GSO/LFS GSO
	3. Support provided to COVID-19 response policy and Employment Law revision <i>(Initially planned to be funded from Outcome-based funding ILO/Sida)</i>	3	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Technical workshop on the role of enterprise law in formalization of the informal economy (June 2021) • Training sessions for VGCL members (Dec 2021). • Support to Employment Law Revision (March 2021) and the Labour Market Bulletin (Apr 2021). • One note on definitions and concepts on informality. • Two legal reviews, one on informal employment, and one on business registration • One qualitative study on perception of informality (Sept 2021). • Capacity building workshops on skills development. • A communication plan for advocacy from April 2021 to arrive at a common 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • VCCI • VGCL • MOLISA/ILSSA • CEC/VGCL • Consultants • MOLISA/DoE • Constituents • All partners

			<p>understanding on informality among involved (completed by Sept 2021).</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Gender impact assessment: CANCELLED. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> n.a.
A.1	4. Assistance provided to increase frequency of LFS, its ability to capture informality and gender issues	1	Support to improve sampling and LFS-questionnaire. GSO has applied the new sampling and questionnaire since January 2021 with technical support from ILO.	GSO
	5. Support provided to introductory work on C160	1	CANCELLED: Activity was not possible during the COVID-19 pandemic.	MOLISA
6.2	<p>8. Tripartite consultations held for the Employment Strategy to address labour market challenges due to COVID-19, including on gender-responsive measures ensuring decent work for all women and men in Viet Nam.</p> <p>Incl. capacity building of MOLISA, constituents and other partners (probably the Women's Union) on the promotion of decent work for women through inclusive growth policies.</p> <p><i>(Initially planned to be funded NOT from RBSA)</i></p>	3	Support to the <i>Action Plan</i> developed for to implement the Employment Strategy for Viet Nam (Feb. 2020) in March and April 2021. Support to develop the Scheme to Skilling-up for labour market in Viet Nam.	<p>MOLISA/Do E</p> <p>MOLISA/DVET</p>
2.2	<p><u>VNM826:</u></p> <p>9. National and local capacities strengthened for the further development and use of PES database (based on the Viet Nam's Standard Classification of Occupations - VSCO) with a view to addressing CEACR comments on C122 and implementing the recently ratified C88.</p>	4	The deliverable on "capacity building delivered to PES on using newly-developed VSCO" was planned for mid 2021. An agreement had been signed but due to the fourth wave of the Covid-19 pandemic, this deliverable was postponed, and in the end only few activities were undertaken.	MOLISA

Annex 10: HLE COVID-19 Response Recommendations

The Recommendations of the HLE of ILO's COVID-19 Response 2020-22 (2022: 19-22) are as follows:

- 1) Continue to strengthen the capacity of the tripartite constituents to enhance and adapt their services to contribute to the development of effective global, regional and national post-pandemic recovery policies and actions.
- 2) Develop an Organization-wide crisis response strategy encompassing both headquarters and the field.
- 3) Expand and mainstream more broadly the approach to cross-departmental teamwork demonstrated in the pandemic and continue the efficient and effective management and governance practices that were introduced.
- 4) Enhance the ILO's capacity to monitor, report and evaluate crisis response actions that are developed and implemented outside the normal programming cycle.
- 5) Strengthen the institutional capacity of governments to respond to systemic crises through universal social protection.
- 6) Continue to strengthen the constituents' capacities to sustain international labour standards and fundamental principles and rights at work for workers, even during a crisis, and develop inclusive, gender-responsive policies for the protection of workers in insecure forms of work.
- 7) The ILO should more clearly integrate a just transition into its post-pandemic employment and skills development strategies and actions, and use its experience and expertise to implement approaches with maximum potential for impact. It should pursue financing and delivery partnerships with organizations with resources to help bring a just transition to scale.
- 8) The ILO should review its current capacity to deliver on the whole-of-government approach and new models of development financing, focusing on the scale and distribution of workload implied by its agreements as part of the UN COVID-19 response (including with both UN and other multilateral organizations), and devise a prioritized and specific plan to meet the resource requirements, including at the country level.

Source:

ILO (2022): Independent High-Level Evaluation of ILO's COVID-19 response 2020-22. EVAL office Geneva, August 2022:

https://www.ilo.org/eval/Evaluationreports/Strategyandpolicyevaluations/WCMS_854253/lang--en/index.htm

Annex 11: Lessons Learned (LL) and Good Practices (GP)

This Annex provides the full description of two Lessons Learned (LL) and two Good Practices (GP) in the ILO Templates as follows:

LL1: ‘Thinking out of the box’ in forging new key partnerships is a Lesson Learned in all four interventions amidst the crisis context using the RBSA funding as leverage.

ILO Lesson Learned Template

Project Title: ILO’s Cluster of Interventions funded under RBSA round 2020-21 (improved employment opportunities COVID response focused)

Project TC/SYMBOL: BGD/20/01/RBS, LKA/20/02/RBS, TLS/20/01/RBS, and VNM/20/01/RBS

Name of Evaluator: Theo van der Loop

Date: 18 July 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.

LL Element	Text
Brief description of lesson learned (link to specific action or task)	<i>‘Thinking out of the box’ in forging new key partnerships is a Lesson Learned in all four interventions amidst the crisis context using the RBSA funding as leverage.</i>
Context and any related preconditions	<i>In all four RBSA interventions evaluated in the present report new partnerships were forged which were not included in the original design and which were not part of the regular tripartite constituents, in other words requiring ‘thinking outside the box’. This is clearly facilitated by the flexibility of the RBSA funding modality (this is usually much more challenging to undertake in most DC projects). The paramount examples identified by this evaluation are as follows:</i> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Bangladesh: The District Commissioner.</i> • <i>Sri Lanka: The Ministry of Education.</i> • <i>Timor Leste: The Prime Minister’s Office.</i> • <i>Viet Nam: The Central Economic Commission (CEC).</i>
Targeted users / Beneficiaries	<i>ILO Country Offices, ILO ROAP/DWT, PROGRAM, PARTNERSHIPS.</i>
Challenges /negative lessons - Causal factors	<i>Since these partnerships were forged during the implementation, usually additional time was needed for their completion (hence the no-cost extensions). In some cases, these new partnerships took up so much of the time and budget of the intervention that other planned activities had to be cancelled or shifted to follow-up projects.</i>

Success / Positive Issues - Causal factors	<i>Since these new partners were generally what can be called ‘higher-level organisations’ their impact on development processes was also (substantially) higher and/or substantially more facilitative.</i>
ILO Administrative Issues (staff, resources, design, implementation)	<i>Forging such new partnerships tend to take up substantial time from the ILO Country Offices and of the involved staff members.</i>

LL2: No-Cost Extensions are an important tool to enhance impact especially amidst a crisis context.

ILO Lesson Learned Template

Project Title: ILO’s Cluster of Interventions funded under RBSA round 2020-21 (improved employment opportunities COVID response focused)

Project TC/SYMBOL: BGD/20/01/RBS, LKA/20/02/RBS, TLS/20/01/RBS, and VNM/20/01/RBS

Name of Evaluator: Theo van der Loop

Date: 18 July 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.

LL Element	Text
Brief description of lesson learned (link to specific action or task)	<i>No-Cost Extensions are an important tool to enhance impact especially amidst a crisis context.</i>
Context and any related preconditions	<i>No-Cost Extensions within RBSA interventions are important as delays are likely amidst a crisis context, including pandemic and economic crisis. The present evaluation has shown that the ILO Country Offices provide detailed reasons for the need for extensions in their requests. In addition,</i>
Targeted users / Beneficiaries	<i>ILO Country Offices, ILO ROAP/DWT, PROGRAM, PARTNERSHIPS.</i>
Challenges /negative lessons - Causal factors	<i>Assessing and approving no-cost extensions demand substantial inputs from ROAP/RPU and PROGRAM.</i>
Success / Positive Issues - Causal factors	<i>RBSA has the advantage that closely related key activities can be added during an extension (such as the upgrade of the IRMIS jointly with the Prime Minister’s Office in Timor Leste and the cooperation with the new Centre for Working Women, CWW, in Sri Lanka).</i>
ILO Administrative Issues (staff, resources, design, implementation)	<i>Requests for no-cost extensions are generally quite detailed documents requiring substantial inputs from the ILO staff in Country Offices.</i>

GP1: It is a Good Practice to conduct regular clustered and other evaluations of RBSA-funded interventions in order to strengthen RBSA’s learning capacity.

ILO Emerging Good Practice Template

Project Title: ILO’s Cluster of Interventions funded under RBSA round 2020-21 (improved employment opportunities COVID response focused)

Project TC/SYMBOL: BGD/20/01/RBS, LKA/20/02/RBS, TLS/20/01/RBS, and VNM/20/01/RBS

Name of Evaluator: Theo van der Loop

Date: 18 July 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.

GP Element	Text
Brief summary of the good practice (link to project goal or specific deliverable, background, purpose, etc.)	<i>It is a Good Practice to conduct regular clustered and other evaluations of RBSA-funded interventions in order to strengthen RBSA’s learning capacity.</i>
Relevant conditions and Context: limitations or advice in terms of applicability and replicability	<i>One of the recommendations of the ILO Review of the RBSA funding modality (2020) is to “Strengthen the RBSA learning capacity”.</i>
Establish a clear cause-effect relationship	<i>For completed and present RBSA allocations, a compilation and analysis of the results achieved for a sample of RBSA interventions should be carried out, especially those with allocations lower than US\$ 500,000 not subject to a formal evaluation. In addition, a stronger results framework would allow for a better assessment of RBSA achievements.</i>
Indicate measurable impact and targeted beneficiaries	<i>EVAL, ILO ROAP/RPU, ILO Country Offices, PROGRAM, PARTNERSHIPS.</i>
Potential for replication and by whom	<i>To be replicated in any RBSA intervention or cluster thereof.</i>
Upward links to higher ILO Goals (DWCPs, Country Program Outcomes or ILO’s Strategic Program Framework)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>ILO (2020) Policy Guidelines for Results-Based Evaluation (4th edition). ILO-EVAL, Geneva: November 2020.</i>
Other documents or relevant comments	<i>ILO Review of the RBSA funding modality (2020).</i>

GP2: It is a Good Practice to build on other (earlier) ILO interventions and on established networks and partnerships of the ILO Country Offices.

ILO Emerging Good Practice Template

Project Title: ILO’s Cluster of Interventions funded under RBSA round 2020-21 (improved employment opportunities COVID response focused)

Project TC/SYMBOL: BGD/20/01/RBS, LKA/20/02/RBS, TLS/20/01/RBS, and VNM/20/01/RBS

Name of Evaluator: Theo van der Loop

Date: 18 July 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.

GP Element	Text
Brief summary of the good practice (link to project goal or specific deliverable, background, purpose, etc.)	<i>It is a Good Practice to build on other (earlier) ILO interventions and on established networks and partnerships of the ILO Country Offices.</i>
Relevant conditions and Context: limitations or advice in terms of applicability and replicability	<p><i>In the present evaluation it was shown that this is an important enabling factor in all its diversity among the four countries, for example:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <i>In Sri Lanka: simultaneous development of three related interventions, funded by RBSA, Government of Japan and SDC.</i> <i>In Viet Nam the RBSA intervention built upon a previous RBSA project also dealing with statistics, and it was developed simultaneously with the outcome-based ILO/Sida partnership. In addition, a follow-up project also dealing in part with statistics is the “Productivity Ecosystem for Decent Work’ (2021-2025) funded by SECO and NORAD.</i> <i>In Timor Leste, RBSA provided a rapid response building on the large-scale DFAT funded R4D phases (about 50 million US\$) before (Phase I and II, 2012-2021) and during (2021-2022, called the ‘Bridging phase’) the RBSA intervention.</i> <i>In Bangladesh, the intervention did not build upon another project as its presence in Cox’s Bazar was newly initiated, but here the coherence is with follow-up interventions because RBSA opened up support for the first time for the vulnerable host communities, which subsequently resulted into two new Development Cooperation projects in the region.</i>
Establish a clear cause-effect relationship	<i>It provides for the continuity of topics, beneficiaries, partnerships and staff.</i>
Indicate measurable impact and targeted beneficiaries	<i>ILO Country Offices, ILO ROAP/RPU, PROGRAM.</i>
Potential for replication and by whom	<i>To be replicated in the design of RBSA interventions.</i>

Upward links to higher ILO Goals (DWCPs, Country Program Outcomes or ILO's Strategic Program Framework)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>The links to the DWCP and CPOs are key integral elements of any RBSA intervention (cf. RBSA Guidance 2020-2021).</i>
Other documents or relevant comments	<i>ILO RBSA Guidance 2020-2021 and 2022-2023.</i>

Annex 12: Documents Consulted

All four interventions:

- Terms of Reference (ToR) for the Final Independent Evaluation of “ILO’s Cluster of Projects funded under RBSA round 2020-21 (improved employment opportunities COVID response focused).” January 2023 (see Annex 1).
- Inception Report for the present Evaluation, 22 May 2023.
- ILO PROGRAM & PARTNERSHIPS (2020): Regular Budget Supplementary Account (RBSA): Guidance on programming resources in 2020-21. Geneva: 20 April 2020.
- ILO PROGRAM & PARTNERSHIPS (2022): Regular Budget Supplementary Account (RBSA): Guidance on programming resources under Round 1 in 2022-23. Geneva: 26 October 2022.

Bangladesh:

- RBSA Proposal 2020
- Monitoring reports
- End-of Project report
- Research and studies conducted by the Project.
- Financial reports
- Other documents/materials/publications that were produced through the project or by relevant stakeholders.

Sri Lanka:

- RBSA Proposal 2020
- Monitoring reports
- Requests for No-Cost Extension
- End-of Project report
- Research and studies conducted by the Project.
- Financial reports
- Other documents/materials/publications that were produced through the project or by relevant stakeholders.
- Project Website Sri Lanka:
https://www.ilo.org/colombo/whatwedo/projects/WCMS_782627/lang--en/index.htm
- ILO (2021): Final Joint Independent Evaluation of the project Healthy Socio-Economic Recovery of the Micro and Small Enterprise Sector of Sri Lanka. ILO/UNOPS, Multi-Partner Trust Fund (MPTF), UNDP. July 2021.

Timor-Leste:

- RBSA Proposal 2020
- Monitoring reports
- Request for No-Cost Extension
- End-of Project report
- Research and studies conducted by the Project.
- Financial reports
- Other documents/materials/publications that were produced through the project or by relevant stakeholders.
- ILO (2023): Roads for Development (R4D) – Cluster Independent Final Evaluation, Timor Leste, March 2023.

- Project Website Timor Leste:
https://www.ilo.org/jakarta/whatwedo/projects/WCMS_771422/lang--en/index.htm

Viet Nam:

- RBSA Proposal 2020
- Monitoring reports
- Request for No-Cost Extension
- End-of Project report
- Research and studies conducted by the Project.
- Financial reports
- Other documents/materials/publications that were produced through the project or by relevant stakeholders.
- ILO (2023): Cluster evaluation of eight RBSA-funded interventions with ILS focus in the Asia and Pacific Region. April 2023. (This includes VNM128).

RBSA:

- ILO (2019): Final Evaluation of “Capacity of government and the social partners to develop and implement employment policies and programmes that are well suited to Viet Nam's dynamic employment environment and favourable to decent work strengthened.” (VNM/16/03/RBS; October 2019):
<https://www.ilo.org/evalinfo/product/download.do?type=document&id=25705>
- ILO (2019): Final Evaluation of “RBSA Jobs for Peace and Resilience in Sri Lanka.” (LKA/16/02/RBS; December 2019):
<https://www.ilo.org/evalinfo/product/download.do?type=document&id=25687>
- ILO (2020): “Review of the RBSA funding modality.” (9 March 2020):
https://www.ilo.org/wcmstp5/groups/public/---dgreports/---exrel/documents/genericdocument/wcms_742336.pdf
- ILO (2019): “Drivers of decent work results and ILO effectiveness: A meta-analysis of ILO RBSA interventions 2013-2017”. ILO i-eval THINK Piece, No. 16; December 2019:
http://www.ilo.ch/wcmstp5/groups/public/---ed_mas/---eval/documents/publication/wcms_732223.pdf

Other Documents:

- ILO (2022): Independent High-Level Evaluation of ILO’s COVID-19 response 2020-22. EVAL office Geneva, August 2022:
https://www.ilo.org/eval/Evaluationreports/Strategyandpolicyevaluations/WCMS_854253/lang--en/index.htm
- ILO EVAL: Evaluation Policy Guidelines, including ILO policy guidelines for results-based evaluation: Principles, rationale, planning and managing for evaluations 3rd edition 2017.
- ILO (2020) Policy Guidelines for Results-Based Evaluation (4th edition). ILO-EVAL, Geneva: November 2020. See:
- https://www.ilo.org/eval/Evaluationpolicy/WCMS_571339/lang--en/index.htm
- EVAL (2020): Implications of COVID-19 on evaluations in the ILO: An internal guide on adapting to the situation. Geneva: http://www.ilo.ch/wcmstp5/groups/public/---ed_mas/---eval/documents/publication/wcms_741206.pdf, and:
www.ilo.ch/eval/WCMS_744068/lang--en/index.htm

- ILO EVAL (2021): ILO's response to the impact of COVID-19 on the world of work: Evaluative lessons on how to build a better future of work after the pandemic (August 2021): <http://www.unevaluation.org/document/download/2787>
- United Nations Evaluation Guidelines (UNEG) Norms and Standards ILO policy guidelines (4th edition, 2020): https://www.ilo.org/eval/WCMS_817079/lang--en/index.htm
- United Nations Evaluation Group. 2018. UN-SWAP Evaluation Performance Indicator - Technical Note and Scorecard
- OECD/DAC Network on Development Evaluation (2019): Better Criteria for Better Evaluation; Revised Evaluation Criteria Definitions and Principles for Use. December 2019.

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