Enhanced Capacity Of The Government And Social Partners To Develop A National Labour Policy, And Mainstream SDGs Relating To Employment And DW Into National Development And Crisis Response Frameworks

ILO DC/SYMBOL: LBN/20/01/RBS

Type of Evaluation: Project

Evaluation timing: Final

Evaluation nature: Internal

Project countries: Lebanon

P&B Outcome(s): Output 3.1. Increased capacity of member States to formulate and implement a new generation of gender-responsive national employment policies, including for youth.

Output A.1. More accurate and sustainable statistics on decent work using the latest statistical standards.

Output 1.4. Strengthened social dialogue and labour relations laws, processes and institutions.

SDG(s): SDG 8, target 8.3, 8.5 and 8.6, SDG 16, target 16.7

Date when the evaluation was completed by the evaluator: 30 November 2022

Date when evaluation was approved by EVAL: 30 November 2022

ILO Administrative Office: DWT

ILO Technical Office(s): Employment

Joint evaluation agencies: NA

Project duration: September – November 2022

Donor and budget: RBSA US$ 600,000

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Evaluation Office oversight: Lebanon

Evaluation budget: USD 8,100

Key Words: Constituents, Development, Employment, Governance and Tripartism, Social Protection.

Table of Contents

List of Acronyms

DW	Decent Word
ILO	International Labour Organization
LBN	Lebanon
RBSA	Regular Budget Supplementary Account
CAS	Central Administration of Statistics
ILS	International Labour Standards
ROAS	Regional Office for Arab States
EVAL	Evaluation Review
ALI	Association of Lebanese Industrialists
UN	United Nations
OECD	Organization for Economic Co-operation and Development
DAC	Development Assistance Committee
COVID-19	Coronavirus disease
FENASOL	National Federation of Worker and Employee Trade Unions in Lebanon
CGTL	General Confederation of Lebanese Workers
UNHCR	United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees
NEP	National Employment Policy
SDG	Sustainable Development Goals
DWCP	Decent Work Country Programme
FULFS	Follow-Up Labour Force Survey
ICLS	International Conference of Labour Statisticians
ILO	International Labour Organization
LL	Lesson Learned
GP	Good Practice
CATI	Computer Assisted Telephone Interviews

Executive Summary

Summary of the project purpose, logic and structure

The International Labour Organization (ILO) has initiated a proposal to support the Lebanese government in addressing labour market implications as a result of the compounded economic and health crises. Under the "Recovery through Employment Policy in Lebanon" program, the ILO tackled Lebanon 's longstanding structural employment challenges across genders.

The ILO's objective was to allocate a coordinated response and action plan to the existing employment challenges, while addressing urgent needs of individuals affected by the crises. In addition to this, the ILO, through the RBSA fund, aimed at providing a sustainable and inclusive labour market recovery and development roadmap.

The project consisted of four milestones :

1. Milestone 1: Updated and sex-disaggregated labour market data and statistics collected for evidence-based policies;

2. Milestone 2: Conducted research on the labour market context in Lebanon in order to inform policy developments;

3. Milestone 3: Improved social dialogue and enhanced tripartite capacities for employment policy dialogue and formulation;

4. Milestone 4: Developed and adopted a National Employment Policy for Recovery .

Present Situation of the Project

The evaluation will assess the project duration covering August 2020 - April 2022, of which the activities ended in April 2022.

Purpose, Scope and Clients of the Evaluation

The ILO considers evaluations as an integral part of RBSA projects and therefore proposed conducting a final internal evaluation of the project's design, implementation, and results. The evaluation aimed to assess the achievement of results against its planned objectives and outcomes to generate lessons learned, best practices, and recommendations. Additionally, it provided an analysis according to the OECD criteria and examined the efficiency, effectiveness, relevance, impact, and sustainability of the project.

The main clients of this evaluation were the ILO, the ILO ROAS, and the ILO constituents in Lebanon, including: the Ministry of Labour, the Association of Lebanese Industrialists (ALI), workers' organizations, the Central Administration of Statistics (CAS), and other UN agencies. Secondary users included the ILO EVAL, other project stakeholders, and units that may indirectly benefit from the knowledge generated by the evaluation.

Methodology of Evaluation

A qualitative approach was conducted for data collection and analysis. The approach enabled evaluators to draw extensive information from a range of stakeholders and overcome methodological or tool-specific limitations. It allowed to cross-reference and validate the information provided by a variety of key informants and respondents.

The evaluation was utilization- focused, gender- responsive, and used the principle of participation through stakeholders' involvement across the evaluation cycle. The below principles were taken into account:

- Inclusiveness: The methodology included a wide range of viewpoints and perspectives, including all project contributors and stakeholders. The project evaluation included people's feedback, data from open-ended questions and other participatory approaches focusing on quality, as well as those focusing on quantity in order to obtain a representative data sample.
- Precision of data and evidence: The information gathered for the study was accurate, reliable, and transparent.
- COVID-19 mitigation measures: Considerations to mitigate COVID-19 risks were upheld at all times. Consultants considered the "affective atmospheres" of conducting any kind of social research during a pandemic, when normal routines are disrupted, and many people are feeling uncertain about in-person interactions.

Main Findings & Conclusions

In the context of COVID-19 pandemic, the Lebanese economic crisis, and the lack of reliable and timely labour force data and updated statistics, the project conducted by the ILO to develop evidence-based policies was relevant to the needs of the labour market and the current employment situation. The project's strategies and framework were relevant to the overall objective, which was aligned with the ILO's strategic approach, the framework of the ILO Decent Work Country Programme of Lebanon from 2018-2020, and the ILO's Project and Budget (P&B) from 2020-2021. The project provided adequate and timely responses to the emerging needs and priorities given multiple external challenges faced in the country, including the economic crisis and shortage of basic goods. Gender was prioritized in the FULFs at the level of data collection and analysis, as well as the rights of migrants and refugees. Yet, given the data collection methods' restrictions, a proper disability module could not be included.

The project was managed in a cost-efficient manner; however, human resource limitations and contextual challenges resulted in the delay of project's completion. Coordination efforts with the Central Administration of Statistics (CAS), worker and employer representatives, and other project constituents were efficient.

The action fulfilled a part of its intended outcomes. External factors inhibited the achievement of project's milestones three and four . Social dialogue between the different stakeholders was effective in supporting the project's objectives. The effective communication between the ILO project's team and its headquarters contributed to the fulfillment of objectives, specifically under milestones one and two .

The project positively impacted the development process of a National Employment Policy (NEP) which, when completed, will impact the world of work and constitute a solid framework that all labour market actors expressed a willingness to abide to. Specific project components such as the Lebanon Follow-Up Labour Force Survey of January 2022 (FULFS 2022), capacity building, and social dialogue have proved to have a multi-faceted sustainable impact . However, sustainability requires additional measures and attention.

Summary of Recommendations

1. Given the project will be continued, it is important to continue the identification of external risks and specific conditions which may facilitate or hinder the project's implementation, in addition to considering potentially postponing or extending project timelines.

2. Insist on conducting regular follow- up surveys and evaluations to assess the situation and changes across different aspects of the labour market given its relevance and importance in closing the knowledge and data gap.

3. Expand capacity building activities for local actors at early stages of the project's implementation to empower local leadership and improve sustainability, as well as ensure impact, with consideration of high turnover rates faced by local actors.

4. Considering the emergency state of the country, it is crucial to maintain flexibility in adjusting specifications of the program and adapting to the various changing contextual needs.

5. Emphasize the inclusion of social dialogues in future programming due to its importance in bringing a diverse array of actors together and in order to increase efficiency and effectiveness of program interventions.

6. Coordinate with a fixed-term focal point at the Ministry of Labour, in addition to the Minister, to guarantee proper follow up and responsiveness.

Summary of Lessons Learned

1. During the design phase, a proper assessment of the capacities of institutions is necessary to ensure timely implementation and the achievement of program targets.

2. Expand the lobbying efforts and networking events to include governmental actors, specifically the relevant   ministries. Discussions and the promotion of dialogue between public, private, national and international actors will guarantee the relevance of the program's initiative and the achievement of its targets.

3. To avoid ineffective efforts, solid communication should be clearly established and evident between project implementers and the Ministry of Labour. Fixed-term ministerial actors should be informed of all programmatic steps in order to ensure an overall understanding of the program's goal and the expectations of their involvement, including maintaining transparent communication such as regular updates . Uniting the efforts of international organizations, such as   the ILO and governmental entities, will lead to the achievement of intended results despite political instability.

4. The development of national policies is a challenging task considering the adverse social, political, and environmental contexts. Administrative considerations such as the timing of such initiatives is necessary for reform knowing that all decision-making bodies should be set up and well- prepared .

Summary of Good Practices

The program evaluation concluded the following as good practices during programmatic activities:

1. The ways in which operational challenges faced by the program's implementing partner were handled proved effective, particularly during the program's survey phase and in regard to providing alternative solutions to issues that arise, such as resorting to external consultants, the provision of basic goods, and technical support.

2. The survey was effective in providing reliable data and statistics on the current market context as well as the impact of the compounded crises on employment and occupations in Lebanon . It helped close the data gap in the country.

3. Weekly planning and maintaining close follow up on the project's activities is essential, especially in challenging countries like Lebanon which undergo several crises simultaneously.

4. Access to a database of experts, specialists, and consultants is useful to support in overcoming challenges caused by external factors

5. For the drafting of the National Employment Policy, work groups and discussions were based on reliable data and statistics presented by ILO staff.

6. Remote data collection was an effective solution to collecting data on the labour market in the midst of inaccessibility of transportation due to rising fuel costs and COVID-19 safety measures.

Evaluation Synopsis

Background and Project Description

Lebanon has been compounded with multiple economic and social crises since the last quarter of 2019. Accompanied by a complex deteriorating political situation, the creeping crises escalated quickly and led to a swift decline in the economy and profoundly entrenched employment challenges. With the protests, political upheavals, and the disastrous Beirut Blast, businesses were severely hit and vulnerability levels mounted. The global pandemic only came to exacerbate the vigorous effects of all the latter imposing intermittent lockdowns and compounding the economic, employment, and vulnerability hardships further.

The Lebanese political class however failed to address or mitigate any of these crises, though some were of their own making. For nearly three years now, Lebanon has been enduring an economic collapse, pandemic repercussions, and deep-rooted political dilemmas. Of the three, the economic crisis has had the most persistent negative implication and plunged the country into prolonged economic depression. "Broken" now describes Lebanon's economic model. [1]

While facing those challenges, Lebanon remains the host of the highest share of Syrian and Palestinian refugees in the world[2]. This exerts additional pressures on the labour market amidst the overall instability, inflation, and increasing vulnerabilities. Today, decent and productive employment opportunities are nowhere to be seen and attempts to address challenges have been hindered by the lack of reliable and timely data and statistics. Youth and women were most affected as employers still consider that men are the main breadwinners.[3]

In line with the national priorities of the new government, the ILO has initiated a proposal to support the Lebanese government in addressing the labour market implications of the dual economic and health crises. The ILO, and under "Recovery through Employment Policy in Lebanon", tackled the country's longstanding structural employment challenges facing both men and women. This proposal further envisaged the development of a comprehensive policy based on analysis and social dialogue as a national policy.

Specifically, the ILO's objective was to allocate a coordinate response and action plan to the existing employment challenges, while addressing the urgent needs of individuals affected by the crises. On top, the ILO, through the RBSA fund, aimed at providing a roadmap for sustainable and inclusive labour market recovery and development. Thus, the ILO supported the development of a comprehensive National Employment Policy that addressed short-, medium-, and long- term challenges while simultaneously developing capacities of relevant institutions and promoting social dialogue.

The overall outcome of the proposal was "Developing a National Employment Policy for sustainable recovery based on updated sex-disaggregated labour market data and analysis and enhanced tripartite national capacities." The achievement of this outcome was bound to benchmarking the current labour market data and analyzing it for the policy development. Consequently, the design of the proposal included supporting the Central Administration of Statistics (CAS) to implement a follow up on the actual reality of the labour market following

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[1] The Economist Intelligence Unit.

[2] (2021). *Lebanon Annual Country Report*. WFP.

[3] (2021). *Lebanon Annual Country Report*. WFP.

the crises. In particular, it aimed at assisting the CAS to develop capacities and design survey to produce disaggregated data by sex and geographical location. The Policy proposal revolved around four core components being Data Collection and Analysis, Knowledge and Policy development, providing capacity building, and Social Dialogue

The project consisted of four milestones as below:

5. Milestone 1: Updated and sex-disaggregated labour market data and statistics collected for evidence-based policies

    Activity 1.1: Conduct a telephone-based follow-up survey to collect key labour market data and information.

6. Milestone 2: Research on the labour market situation in Lebanon conducted to inform policy development.

    Activity 2.1: Conduct a Diagnostic Study on Employment in Lebanon

7. Milestone 3: Improved social dialogue and enhanced tripartite capacities for employment policy dialogue and formulation

    Activity 3.1: Establish an ad hoc tripartite inter-ministerial committee and national technical task force responsible for the formulation of the National Employment Policy.
    Activity 3.2: Enhance capacities of tripartite stakeholders on policy dialogue including through providing tripartite capacity building and training on national employment policy development and labour market information and analysis.
    Activity 3.3 Establish a National Tripartite Council on Employment responsible for the implementation of the National Employment Policy and the review of employment-related issues more broadly.

8. Milestone 4: National Employment Policy for Recovery developed and adopted

The contribution of the government, parliament, and social partners was crucial in the discussion and establishment of a permanent tripartite structure to oversee the implementation of the Policy and review employment-related issues across Lebanon. This implementation did also involve social partners and different stakeholders that partook in the review, development, and execution of the Policy. Nevertheless, inter-ministerial coordination that was key for the development of the employment Policy.

Evaluation Background

Purpose of Evaluation

The ILO considers evaluations as an integral part of RBSA projects and therefore proposed conducting a final internal evaluation of the project's design, implementation, and results. The evaluation aimed to assess the achievement of results against its planned objectives and outcomes to generate lessons learned, best practices, and recommendations. Additionally, it provided analysis according to the OECD criteria and examined the efficiency, effectiveness, relevance, potential impact, and sustainability of the project.

The evaluation thus assessed the project duration spanning August 2020 till April 2022. It delved into the project's achievement at the level of each milestone. The evaluation also took into consideration the project's duration, existing resources, political, security, and environmental constraints by assessing different activities and actions implemented throughout the project.

Gender equality, inclusion of people with disabilities, environmental sustainability, ILS, social dialogue, and Covid-19 were crosscutting concerns integrated in the methodology and deliverables of this evaluation.

Evaluation Target

The main clients of this evaluation were the ILO, the ILO ROAS, and the ILO constituents in Lebanon: Ministry of Labour, the Association of Lebanese Industrialists (ALI), workers' organizations, the Central Administration of Statistics (CAS), and other UN agencies. Secondary users included the ILO EVAL, other project stakeholders, and units that may indirectly benefit from the knowledge generated by the evaluation.

Evaluation Criteria and Key Questions

The evaluation utilized the OECD-DAC methodology and in specific the following evaluation criteria were assessed: Relevance and strategic fit, Validity of design, Effectiveness, Efficiency, Impact, and Effectiveness of management arrangements and Sustainability:

Evaluation Criteria	Key Questions
Relevance and Strategic Fit	How well did the project approach fit in context of the protracted crisis in Lebanon? Were the problems and needs adequately analyzed? Was gender prioritized?
	How well were the project's objectives aligned with the framework of the ILO Decent Work Country Programme of Lebanon, the ILO's Project and Budget (P&B) 2020-21, and the SDGs?
	To what extent did the ILO project provide a timely and relevant response to constituents' needs and priorities in the COVID-19 context?
Validity of Design	Were the project's strategies and structures coherent and logical (the extent of logical correlations between the objectives?
	Were project's assumptions and targets realistic, and did the project undergo risk analyses and design readjustments when necessary?
	To what extent did the project design take into account: Specific gender equality and nondiscrimination concerns relevant to the project context? As well as concerns relating to inclusion of people with disabilities, environmental sustainability, ILS and social dialogue?
Efficiency	Were all resources utilized efficiently to reach the project's objectives?

	How efficient were the coordination efforts with the CAS, worker and employer representatives, and other constituents?	
	To what extent has the project been on track in terms of timely achieving the assigned milestones? If not, what factors contributed to the delays?	
	To what extent has the project leveraged new or repurposed existing financial resources to mitigate COVID-19 effects in a balanced manner? Does the leveraging of resources take into account the sustainability of results?	
	What were the intervention benefits and related costs of integrating gender equality?	
Effectiveness	Were all set targets, outputs, and outcomes achieved according to plan?	
	How effective was the coordination with the different stakeholders in supporting the project's objectives?	
	How have stakeholders, particularly women, been involved in project's implementation?	
	How did the outputs and outcomes contribute to ILO's mainstreamed strategies including gender equality, social dialogue, and labour standards?	
	What positive or negative unintended outcomes can be identified?	
	Has the project fostered ILO constituents' active involvement through social dialogue in articulating, implementing and sustaining coherent response strategies to mitigate the effects of the pandemic on the world of work?	
Impact Orientation	How were the survey results incorporated into the policy development?	
	What are the expected impacts of the policy on the world of work in Lebanon?	
Sustainability	Are the results achieved by the project so far likely to be sustainable- in terms of conducting surveys and drafting policies?	
	What measures have been taken to ensure that the key components of the project are sustainable beyond the life of the project? Are they sufficient?	
	How effectively has the project built national ownership? Is the CAS equipped to continue with the implementation beyond the project's lifespan?	
Effectiveness of Management Arrangements	What was the division of work tasks within the project's teams? Has the use of local skills been effective?	
	How effective was communication between the project's teams, the regional office and the responsible technical department at headquarters? Has the project received adequate technical and administrative support/response from the ILO backstopping units?	
Challenges, Lessons Learned, Recommendations for the formulation of new phases	What good practices can be learned from the different phases of the project that can be applied to similar future projects?	
	What were the main challenges identified? How were these different from the risk assumptions? What were the mitigation steps taken?	
	What are the recommendations for future similar projects?	
	What are the challenges, lessons learned and the recommendations regarding the cross-cutting issues of gender equality and inclusion, social dialogue, ILS, COVID-19 and environmental sustainability?	

Evaluation Methodology

To meet the research objectives and provide an evaluation of the project, its design, implementation, and results, a qualitative approach was utilized for information collection and analysis. The approach enabled the evaluators to draw extensive information from a range of stakeholders and overcome methodological or tool-specific limitations. It allowed to cross-reference and validate the information provided by a variety of key informants and respondents.

The evaluation was utilization focused, gender responsive, and used the principle of participation through stakeholders' involvement across the evaluation cycle. The below principles were taken into account:

- Inclusiveness: Methodology included a wide range of viewpoints including all project contributors
    - Project evaluation included people's feedback, open-ended listening and other participatory approaches focusing on quality, as well as those focusing on quantity.
- Precision of data / evidence: Information gathered for the study was accurate, reliable, and transparent
- COVID-19 mitigation measures: were upheld at all times. Consultants considered the 'affective atmospheres'[4] of conducting any kind of social research in a pandemic, when normal routines are disrupted, and many people are feeling uncertain.

Secondary Data Review

Prior to primary data collection, a comprehensive desk review of project background documents (including internal and external reports and data) and existing secondary data was conducted to identify key information gaps and themes which could be further explored. The review allowed the evaluators to better comprehend the project and understand its operational environment and challenges. It also helped cast the final evaluation into context. Findings from the secondary data review directly fed into the development of research tools and helped to inform the evaluators' analysis.

Evaluation Matrix

The evaluation started by developing an evaluation matrix *(Annex 5)* which included the key questions, indicators, and means of verification. Incorporating the same questions across a variety of stakeholders was critical to assess the varying perspectives reported.

Key Informant Interviews

Data collection took place between September 2022 and October 2022. A total of 10 KIIs were conducted with different key stakeholders who were the most involved in the project. Hence, the respondents had a high degree of awareness of both the project under evaluation and the wider community overall.

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[4] Presence and absence, materiality and ideality, definite and indefinite, singularity and generality of situations and/or effects which might place research respondent at risk. (Adey et al., 2013;Anderson, 2009;Closs Stephens, 2016)

Five KIIs were conducted with the ILO staff. The remaining KIIs were conducted with other project constituents and national counterparts. Below is the distribution of KIIs:

Organization / Establishment	Key Informant Interviews	Positions
ILO	5	Chief Regional Programming Units
		Senior Programme Officer Senior Regional Employment Specialist Statistician Project Officer
FENASOL	1	Lawyer
CGTL	1	Assistant to President
Ministry of Labour	1	Head of International Affairs
ALI	1	Social Committee President
UNHCR	1	Event Participant

Attempts to schedule an interview with CAS representative were challenging especially that the focal point of the project had already left. When CAS found an alternative representative to be interviewed, the evaluation timeline was tight which is why CAS Representative answered the main evaluation questions via email. A total of 11 transcripts were analyzed for the evaluation.

Data Compilation and Analysis

Discussions were analyzed, per interview, in the participant's language. Narrative analysis was performed using respondents' statements, remarks and expressions. Key themes were identified and quotes exemplifying the main findings were selected.

After the data collection, the information extracted from the KIIs and the desk research were triangulated to prepare the evaluation report. Findings were validated by stakeholders, the draft report was then processed into the final report.

Structure of the Document

Throughout this evaluation, the project's achievements were reviewed and assessed following the proposed OECD criteria; Relevance, Efficiency, Effectiveness, Impact, and Sustainability. Particular attention was given to the impact of the project results while touching upon cross cutting issues such as gender equality, disability, social dialogue, environmental sustainability, and international standards, and covid-19 in terms of challenges and opportunities for the most vulnerable segments in line with guidelines and protocols set by EVAL/ILO. Findings, including the analysis of the project plan, efficiency and effectiveness of the design, as well as the impact and sustainability of the project, are portrayed in the body of the evaluation. Finally, main conclusions, lessons learnt, and analysis of the best practices for replications are presented at the end of the report.

Limitations of Evaluation

During the evaluation process, some challenges arose and led to time delays on the timeline during data collection. Below are the limitations that ensued:

1. *Lack of availability of several key stakeholders for KIIs*: Delays in responses and postponement of several interviews resulted in no-cost extension of the evaluation.
2. *Delay in the interview with CAS*: The staff member who was the focal point on this project had left, and finding an alternative staff member required time from CAS's end. CAS requested to have the main questions sent by email to prepare before the interview. However, consultant ended up receiving their answers by email as he was short on time after the delays that occurred.

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Evaluation Findings

Relevance and Strategic Fit

Finding 1: Amidst the COVID-19 pandemic, the Lebanese economic crisis and the Beirut Blast, informality and labour underutilization especially among youth are growing and continue prompting a necessity to be addressed. At the same time, a significant lack of reliable and timely labour force data and updated statistics was evident and became more apparent due to the acute deterioration of the economic situation in the country. In this context, the project conducted by the ILO to develop evidence-based policy was relevant to the needs of the labour market and the current employment situation.

The project's overall design was key in evaluating the relevance of the action. Generally speaking, the project was adequately designed to respond to the local needs and priorities identified prior to its initiation. The compounding multiple crises have eliminated decent and productive employment opportunities and created additional challenges for vulnerable individuals, particularly women and youth. With the absence of reliable labour force data and statistics, attempts to develop employment policies that tackle critical issues and challenges in the labour market have been hindered for years. The action was developed as a follow up to a previous collaboration between the ILO and CAS on the Labour Force Survey. The latter was finalized early in 2019 and captured evidence-based information on the labour force and living conditions in Lebanon through a country level household survey. Though the data were representative at that time, yet with the multiple crises that have compounded the country since the last quarter of 2019, an urgent need to update the data gathered has emerged. Not only did the reality change, but also the impact of the crises has highlighted the weak capacity of the government in mitigating employment challenges and the increasing necessity to develop a National Employment Policy. The development of a policy as such was viable and a long standing need to tackle employment issues particularly among youth and women. Thus, in responding to the changes, existing and emerging needs after the crisis, the project's relevance was validated *by design*.

> *"In terms of objectives, the project was very relevant and is opt to become even more relevant with time." ILO Staff*

The relevance of the project was further ensured with the inclusion of labour market institutions, key stakeholders and experts in the training courses and NEP development process. Discussions were held by the ILO staff to highlight the importance of an employment policy and explained the available numbers, figures, and legislations, though limited. A participatory approach as such leveraged the expertise of key contributors and captured their perspectives on the local labour market. This also increased the project's relevance to the existing needs and priorities. On the other hand, providing reliable data that enables the quantification and comprehension of the actual impact of the crisis on the labour market was another critical factor that verified the relevance of the project as indicated by CAS representative.

Extensive involvement of governmental actors such as Ministry of Labour was crucial to corroborate the continuity of the project's relevance. According to the MoL representative, the absence of a designated focal point at the ministry hindered the regular follow up on the project's process to ensure continued relevance.

> *"If a focal point was assigned, proper follow up on the project's relevance would have been done amongst the existing instabilities and emerging challenges" Project Contributor*

Finding 2: The project's strategies and framework were relevant to achieve the overall objective. The main objective of the project was aligned with the ILO's strategic approach. The design of the project was consistent with the framework of the ILO Decent Work Country Programme of Lebanon and the ILO's Project and Budget.

Overall, the project strategies and framework were logical and relevant to achieve the general objective. The ILO's strategic orientation focuses on four main areas of work: promoting rights at work, encouraging decent employment opportunities, enhancing social protection, and strengthening social dialogue on work-related issues.[5] Thus, the overall objective of the project was aligned with the ILO's strategy particularly focusing on the promotion of full and productive employment.

> *"Developing a national employment policy in any country is a strategy that should be in place to have a kind of a long-term process for job creation and to be able to provide some support in terms of the whole implementation needs." ILO Staff*

Nonetheless, the development of an employment policy is consistent with the ILO's approach and specifically under output three: Increased capacity of member States to formulate and implement a new generation of gender-responsive national employment policies, including for youth[6]. In fact, the employment policy has been part of a broader strategic plan that has been studied and developed years before this project has started as indicated by the ILO staff member. Interviews also revealed that an employment policy is central and draws upon numerous indicators of SDG and even beyond, while the achievement of a NEP will create job opportunities, stabilize the labour market, and improve the general economic situation of the country.

On the other hand, interviews also confirmed the consistency of project design with the framework of the ILO Decent Work Country Programme of Lebanon[7]. Despite being completed, linking the existing DWCP to the strategic approach of the project was a priority for the ILO and achieving its intended results is still a work in progress internally. Interviews also confirmed that this project was a central pillar of the employment component and general framework of the DWCP. In terms of budget, the project's expenditure was reported as consistent with the set budget as all RBSA projects are initially designed in a way to feed into P&Bs budget.

> *"We have followed the plan and it is carefully linked to the ILOs strategic objectives, program, and budget." ILO Staff*

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[5] International Labour Organization. International Labour Organization. https://www.ilo.org/global/about-the-ilo/lang--en/index.htm

[6] KII with ILO staff member in answer to the questions: "What are the logical correlations between the overall objective, outcomes and outputs vis-a-vis ILO's strategic orientation?"

[7] KII with ILO staff member answering the question: "Was project design consistent with the framework of the ILO Decent Work Country Programme of Lebanon, the ILO's Project and Budget (P&B) 2020-21, and the SDGs?"

Finding 3: The project provided adequate and timely response to the emerging needs and priorities given the multiple external challenges faced.

When the project was launched in 2020, the crisis in Lebanon was just dawning. The Beirut Blast that ensued afterwards had numerous implications on the design of the project and its implementation which were adjusted to fulfill the priority of immediate recovery. Initially, the approach adopted did fit in context of the protracted crisis in Lebanon. However, the priority changed into immediate recovery after the blast. That being said, and to respond to the emerging needs and challenges, no-cost time extension of the implementation period was requested in 2021. Additionally, the blast had steered some modifications on the design of the project in terms of the studies included. With the collapse of the economic situation, some core studies that were part of the intervention and that should have guided the development of the policy were dropped as they were no longer relevant. Specifically, the identification of minimum wages amidst the volatility of the exchange rate and the instable economic situation was misleading and therefore disregarded[8].

On another note, a proper follow up on the external challenges allowed the ILO staff to overcome the different bottlenecks and maintain relevance of intervention to current contexts. Interviews highlighted reduction in the value of salaries for public institutions, CAS in particular. Accordingly, the ILO staff were keen on providing them with technical and financial support and adjusting the implementation strategy to accommodate those changes. Shortage of fuel was another issue that was successfully addressed by the ILO staff throughout the implementation process.

> *"We have managed to overcome many difficulties like purchasing the fuel for the CAS to keep their servers operating." ILO Staff*

Project work plan had to also accommodate the lockdown measures imposed by the pandemic. Less working hours were allocated for the operation phase and were taken into consideration when revising the initial work plan. The design of the survey was flexible and instead of adopting a typical ILO model questionnaire, the FULFS 2022 was modified to incorporate mainly the consequences of the Beirut Blast, the pandemic, the devaluation of the Lebanese Lira, and the increasing rate of immigration. By integrating those elements/variables, the ILO was successful in enriching the analysis by providing two data points prior and post- crisis.

> *"We changed and added some questions regarding the salary, lay-offs and absences as consequences of COVID-19, and high rate of migration." ILO Staff*

Other project contributors also reported that the approach met the emerging needs and issues. One interviewed stakeholder praised the ILO staff for tackling changes in needs and realities.

> *"The ILOs efforts were vital, realistic, and based on a well-designed plan and vision." Project Contributor*

Finding 4: Gender, a main component of the project, was prioritized at the level of data collection and analysis. Preserving the rights of migrants and refugees was a key concern for

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[8] KII with ILO staff member answering the question: "Were any adaptations to project or activity design made to respond to any changes? What were they and why?"

project stakeholders. Given the data collection restrictions, a proper disability module could not be included.

The project design took into consideration gender and discrimination issues. Unfortunately, the survey results showed that participation of women in the labour force was relatively low. This finding, as stated by an ILO staff, should intensify efforts to create a national employment policy in which women are motivated to participate in the labour force. Interviews affirmed that specific markers are usually set for any strategy or implementation plan, mainly the gender marker. The project did not target gender related issues in particular, yet all data collected was disaggregated by sex to guarantee equality and representativeness.

> *"Gender shows in every labour market indication and if there was gender disparity, we would make sure to show it and build a gender sensitive national employment policy in the future." ILO Staff*

Gender was extensively deliberated by contributing stakeholders and the ILO Staff during their sessions and work groups. Stakeholders further affirmed the female presence during the discussions on multiple topics that revolved around gender equality, wage reform, and social security. Discussions delved into hardships faced by women in terms of job safety and security. Interviewees condemned the absence of gender equality principles in many Lebanese sectors adding that discrimination between gender, race, nationality, and religion still exists across different sectors, of some which are governmental[9]. All interviews clearly highlighted that gender equality was considered in discussions and will be included in the development of a NEP.

> *"We were very keen on capturing data and gaps between men and women in the labour market and also amongst different groups in the society." ILO Staff*

Apart from gender, the rights of migrants and refugees were also debated between contributing stakeholders and the ILO staff. Discrimination between Lebanese workers and refugees was highly deliberated. Discussions probed into the high rates of immigration following the unemployment in Lebanon. The need to protect the Lebanese Labour Force was a major concern and topic of interest during the sessions. On that point, one contributing stakeholder praised the ILOs standards of dealing with everyone equally regardless of their nationality. Eliminating discrimination and preserving the rights of both migrants and refugees are crucial aspects to be included in the employment policy.

As for the inclusion of people with disabilities, the general situation of the country along with the COVID-19 implications have affected the integration of a proper disability module in the labour force survey. Having to switch to a telephone interview instead of face to face interviews, the survey was shortened and focused mainly on the changes in the labour market. Consequently, the labour market module was dropped. One ILO staff explained that inclusion issues would have been explicitly mentioned in the national employment policy if completed. He further clarified that in terms of the analysis for the employment policy, the draft that is available to date has not gone far in the path of disability inclusion.

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[9] KII with Fenasol

> *"Since the survey was a follow up and COVID-19 had imposed data collection restrictions, we had to focus on the labour market changes and remove the disability module." ILO Staff*

Social dialogue was a key aspect of the project design. The ILOs main goal was to engage with all constituents and provide them with the needed support to write the employment policy. This dialogue was mainly reflected at the level of training sessions and groups where employers engaged with organizations and other stakeholders. Interviewed ILO staff pointed out the government's lack of participation in those sessions.

Validity of Design

Finding 5: The project's assumptions and targets were realistic and risk analysis was conducted to ensure the validity of the project's design. However, certain readjustments were necessary to achieve intended results.

Risk analyses were conducted during the design phase of the project. However, with the ongoing changes and challenges, numerous readjustments were critical for the continuation of the implementation phase and achievement of intended results[10]. Many limitations were mitigated, including operational challenges facing CAS employees *(inability to afford transportation costs, cabinet's suspension, fuel crisis, and others)*, while others were inescapable. For instance, establishing needed inter-ministerial coordination was challenging with the political instability in the country and absence of active governmental entities, and therefore hindered the development of a proper national employment policy that involves all economic contributors.

> *"We were not able to establish inter-ministerial coordination because they were not functioning. This is essential to develop national policy that involves all economic sectors, governments, etc." ILO Staff*
>
> *"The lack of trust in the government has made the development of a national policy as such more complicated." Project Contributor*

Despite those changes, interviewed ILO staff agreed that the project's assumptions and targets were realistic yet optimistic given the prevailing instability in the country.

> *"Overall, I believe we were able to capture everything that we intended to capture throughout this project." ILO Staff*

Finding 6: The project was successful in complementing and building on other projects, specifically the Labour Force Survey 2019.

The project was built on a previous labour force survey [11]and came as a follow up to update data and figures after the multiple crises. Other studies[12] were also considered when designing the project and conducting pre-project diagnosis.

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[10] KII with ILO staff answering the question: "Were project's assumptions and targets realistic, and did the project undergo risk analyses and design readjustments when necessary?"

[11] ILO. (2019). Labour Force and Household Living Conditions Survey 2018-2019 Lebanon [Review of Labour Force and Household Living Conditions Survey 2018-2019 Lebanon].

[12] *Impact of the COVID-19 Pandemic on Youth Labour Markets – ILO Geneva 2018/ World Employment and Social Outlook – Trends 2021* among many others

Efficiency

Finding 7: The project was managed in a cost-efficient manner but human resources restrictions and contextual challenges resulted in the delay of project's completion.

Interviews affirmed that the project was managed in a cost-efficient manner. Results achieved were perceived as satisfying in comparison with human resources allocated and challenges faced. The modifications in the original framework in response to the emerging challenges and flexibility in amendments and extensions in specific contributed to the project's efficiency as well.

Human resources allocated by the ILO were described as limited but efficient. Core staff mainly included a National Employment Specialist, Technical officer, and a statistician. Staff limitation has limited project over-spending and rather focused on the achievement of intended results and products. On another note, despite the brain-drain in the country and the unprecedented rates of emigration, the ILO staff who were involved in this project did not change with time which contributed to an increased efficiency of the project.

However, human resources efficiency was disrupted with the shortage of staff at CAS[13]. With the increasing burden of transportation costs, reduction of salaries, and the deteriorating economic situation, CAS lost many employees creating additional challenges to achieve targets. This limitation resulted in implementation stalls and delays in the achievement of results. CAS representative affirmed that a significant effort was needed to mitigate socio-economic challenges and fulfill the Labour force Survey, surveys were carried out from home to limit delays and diversions from the original plan and timeline. CAS representative praised the technical support provided by the ILO to their staff on different aspects, and mainly on the use of CsPro.

In terms of financial resources, interviews revealed that the allocated budget was sufficient despite additional expenses to compensate the lack of fuel at CAS. In fact, the budget was underspent. Implementation notes showed that despite severe implications of the pandemic, the latter contributed to reduction of expenses through switching to online modalities. *"Face to face interviews would have cost a lot"[14]*. To also adjust with the COVID-19 lockdown measures and other implications, the existing financial resources were repurposed to accommodate phone interviews. This leveraging was balanced and even contributed to saving financial resources.

> *"Despite all challenges, the technical and financial support from ILO made it possible to perform this exercise successfully and efficiently." CAS Representative*

Interviewed ILO staff explained that the initial allocated timeframe for the project was realistic. However, one no-cost time extension was requested due to the multiple crises. Achievements of the intended objectives within the initial timeframe was quite *"tricky"*, the Covid-19 had a heavy impact on the timeframe. Evaluation data showed that Beirut Blast, economic crisis, and the pandemic affected the delivery of outputs and therefore the achievement of results. The electricity and fuel shortages have resulted in delaying the implementation processes in terms

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[13] KII with ILO staff answering the question: "Was the project managed in a cost-efficient manner (in terms of human, financial and other resources versus the results)?"

[14] KII with ILO staff answering the question: "Was the project managed in a cost-efficient manner (in terms of human, financial and other resources versus the results)?"

of the data collection, while the lack of availability and limited responsiveness from specific stakeholders, like that of governmental constituents, has caused a few delays to the project.

Finding 8: Coordination efforts with the CAS, worker and employer representatives, and other constituents were efficient. Challenges were reported in the responsiveness of and communication with the Ministry of Labour.

Regular and continuous coordination, two key factors contributing to cost and time efficiency, were reported during activities between the ILO and the different project contributors. The ILO has a long history working with all involved parties and were able to preserve a good relationship with them throughout this project. Interviews pointed out the extensive participation of project contributors during trainings sessions and work groups. Engagement was perceived as positive and genuine and this collaboration is still ongoing beyond project timeline.

No communication challenges were reported with any of the project contributors. However, CAS's limited financial and technical capacities slightly inhibited execution. The multiple crises further impacted team's available capacities and increased CAS dependency on the ILO. The evaluation data showed that challenges affected the timeline of the project but not the quality of deliverables.

Coordination with the Ministry of Labour was quite challenging on the other hand. The challenges were mostly related to delays in responses. The Beirut Blast and the pandemic affected the functionality of governmental institutions adding more difficulties on the coordinator aspect. Interviewed Ministry representative also reported lack of clarity when collaborating on this project and highlighted the importance of assigning a fixed -term ministerial employee as a focal point to facilitate communication and guarantee proper follow up despite political instability and changes within ministries.

Finding 9: Regular adaptation of strategies are key to improving overall efficiency. Establishing inter-ministerial communication requires flexibility in the timeline.

Overall, the efficiency of the project was affected by the economic crisis, Beirut Blast, COVID-19 pandemic, as well as the electricity and fuel shortages. Though challenges were external and inevitable, the ILO adapted their implementation methods to maintain the original plans and objectives. To improve the efficiency of the project, suggestions included having a flexible timeline while considering establishing inter-ministerial communication and promoting social dialogue between labour market actors. The capacities of local actors should be also considered especially when influenced by unpredictable circumstances.

Furthermore, interviews revealed that having more training modules and concrete documents, instead of partnership texts, would have improved the efficiency of the project[15].

> *"The training material was shared by email, but if a training module was shared, I think it would have been more beneficial." Project Contributor*

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[15] KII with Fenasol answering the question: "In your opinion, how could the efficiency of the project be improved?"

Effectiveness

Finding 10: The action fulfilled a part of its intended outcomes. External factors inhibited the achievement of project's milestones 3 and 4.

Generally, the expected results were partially achieved - Updated and sex-disaggregated labour market data and statistics collected for evidence-based policies, Research on the labour market situation in Lebanon conducted to inform policy development - with the exception of the National Employment Policy and the establishment of an ad hoc tripartite inter-ministerial committee and national technical task force responsible for the formulation of the National Employment Policy. The updated data, research on the labour market in Lebanon, and the social dialogue between constituents were all achieved according to plan. *"It is completely what we had in mind, we delivered the objective"* stated one ILO staff member. Though the development of the NEP was not fulfilled, yet the project gave a solid foundation for the government to work on and develop in the future. Interviews affirmed the effectiveness of the studies and research done while providing useful and reliable data for the Lebanese government to build upon.

Likewise, CAS representative delved into the effective results of the labour force survey and the provision of a comprehensive picture of the labour market after the multiple crises that have occurred over the period from 2019 till 2021. The survey covered demographic characteristics; labour force status; main job characteristics; job search; previous employment status; household income; and intention to migrate. A particular attention was oriented towards the changes in key labour force indicators. Despite having to adapt the questionnaire to a telephone interview, it maintained its basic structure and preserved its effectiveness.

Training sessions and work groups on the other hand helped raise awareness among employers, governmental entities, and workers on the importance of developing a national employment policy. Interviews revealed that the sessions broke a longstanding barrier between labour market actors. Interviews with project contributors also praised the interaction during the group sessions as it allowed them to realize their roles and share their perspectives. The active participation of women in those sessions was admired and several participants emphasized their good relationship with the ILO staff members who were transparent, interactive, and straight-forward.

> "This project helped and fostered the active involvement through all the social dialogues that happened." Project Contributor

Finding 11: The coordination with different stakeholders was effective in supporting the project's objectives. The effective communication between ILO project's team and Headquarters contributed to the fulfillment of objectives.

Effective collaboration was reported between the ILO staff involved in this project and other employees in different departments. This was key as the project activities were very important and their results are valuable to other projects as well. Interviews confirmed that the project was effective in fostering active involvement of project's constituents through social dialogue. The impact of this project component was remarkable in bringing actors together and inducing a difference. Despite the effectiveness of the social dialogue, developing an employment policy requires the involvement of an operational government. In the meantime, the ILO is

continuously working strengthening the capacities of different parties and engaging them in discussions of results and future steps.

> *"There were moments where we were able to bring our social partners to express their support and to show their commitment to a national employment policy process." ILO Staff*

Effective communication between the project's team and the headquarters contributed to the achievement of results. Constant support was being provided by the headquarters at Geneva especially that the project was internally driven, budgeted, and sustained. The responsible department at Geneva was informed about all challenges faced and was very flexible and responsive as reported by interviewees. Regionally, the collaboration between the project's team was also affirmed by interviewed stakeholders.

Impact Orientation

Finding 12: The project positively impacted the development process of a NEP which, when completed, will impact the world of work and constitute a solid framework that everyone will abide to.

The achievement of intended outputs has paved the way for the proper development of a national employment policy. A clear and defined policy would align the efforts of the government and social partners, unite their strategies, and optimize job creation potential. The planned policy was described as a vehicle that brings together different partners and ensures their commitment to a coherent agenda that serves the common objective. Interviews revealed that the achievement of a policy requires resources for implementation like the examples of Saudi Arabia, where numerous resources were allocated for the implementation of the Saudi Labour Market Strategy, and Palestine which lacked sufficient resources but resorted to fundraising as an alternative.

Interviewees unanimously expected a remarkable impact of the policy explaining that it will eliminate the mismatch between the supply and demand of skills in the labour market, facilitate the employment procedures, and create more job opportunities. The final impact of the latter will be reflected in the reduction of poverty and less immigration rates.

> *"I think it can make a big impact. Of course, if it becomes a document on a shelf, and no resources are allocated to it, then it's not going achieve much." ILO Staff*

The policy will impact the continuity and sustainability of the MoL's vision and will serve as a framework that guides and organizes the work of the ministry and induces necessary improvements and changes[16]. All interviewees considered the policy as a basis for employers to rely on in their recruitment processes which will help protect the rights of both employers and employees.

One stakeholder spoke of the long-term economic benefits of this policy. A big responsibility falls upon this policy, if achieved. Not only does it require resources for its implementation, but also trust from the community.

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[16] KII with MoL representative answering the question: "What are the expected impacts of the policy on the world of work in Lebanon."

> *"It's a framework. When the minister sees that the agreement is official and signed, he can't work against it. No one can." Project Contributor*

Apart from resources and trust, reliable statistics are the core for the development of this policy. FULFS 2022 have had a great impact on the policy development by identifying and understanding key issues in the labour market. Further mentions also included the ability of this survey to inform decisions about national employment policy, to shed light on policy concerns and to guide the employment policy. This survey could be used as a benchmark to track and monitor the effects of the policy over time.

In terms of short-term contributions of this project, it provided reliable information from direct beneficiaries on the labour market situation. Such information is valuable to development and social partners. Social dialogue consists a positive long term result of the project as it brought together constituents and encouraged them to become more involved in the discussion of policies.

> *"By bringing people together and making them aware of their timely contribution to the long term policies was a positive result." ILO Staff*

Sustainability

Finding 13: Project components such as the FULFS 2022, capacity building, and social dialogue have proved sustainable effects. However, their sustainability requires additional measures and attention.

Interviews affirmed the sustainability of the project's results. The sustainability of survey results, capacity building, and social dialogue were thoroughly discussed. Evaluation data showed that the follow- up survey results could be used afterwards to extrapolate additional insights based on the results achieved, however it requires regular update to ensure its validity and to remain reflective of the actual situation. On that point, and to ensure the sustainability of the FULFS, CAS representative clarified that the survey adopted aligned with the latest statistical standards established by the International Conference of Labour Statisticians (ICLS) at its 19th Session and that followed the recommendations made at its 20th Session which allows for international comparison.

In terms of capacity building, the investment in human resources was reported as sustainable. *"Building the capacities of human resources is never wasteful"*. In fact, the capacities they develop are viable and could be applied in different areas of their work[17]. Project contributors further affirmed the sustainability of the knowledge acquired during the training sessions. Creating an environment for social dialogue, which has been absent for years before, is one of the most sustainable results achieved by the project. Interviews highlighted that social dialogue is required at different stages of drafting the policy. It is a very important aspect needed across all projects that aim to support the Lebanese context in general. After all, consulting with different constituents is key to the success of initiatives.

> *"Everyone knows that there is no policy that can be developed without having all relevant stakeholders consulted in a certain situation." ILO Staff*

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[17] KII with ILO staff answering the question: "Are the results achieved by the project so far likely to be sustainable- in terms of conducting surveys and drafting policies?"

To ensure the sustainability of key components beyond the life of the project, additional measures and attention are required. Interviewed stakeholders shared their concerns in terms of sustainability. A major concern for the majority of the ILO staff is the limited capacity of local actors. Though the approach focused on developing capacity of one local actor – CAS-, yet additional efforts are required. With the recent crises, the loss of essential human resources is faced by all working actors as well as financial constraints. Further financial and human resources are still needed to support the continuation of local actors' activities knowing that achievements, especially data outputs, would lose their credibility and validation if not updated regularly.

> *"Data is the starting point of every policy. Thus is one concern that I have." ILO Staff*

Furthermore, the collaboration between constituents entails another concern to some interviewed stakeholders, particularly that between ministries and other parties. The lack of transparency from governmental entities threatens the sustainability aspect[18]. The alignment of priorities and objectives of the government recovery plan is crucial to ensure sustainability of results.

Political instability is another factor that might hinder the implementation of projects' recommendations. Interviewees acknowledged the role of the state in setting the employment policy. Though prioritizing this matter for the government is challenging, yet contributors were optimistic that when there is a will to activate and engage, difficulties could be mitigated.

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[18] KII with ILO staff answering the question: "What were the main concerns of the different team members in terms of sustainability?"

Conclusions

The project was relevant in terms of design and planning to its target groups and the labour market in general. It addressed the needs and priorities of the project contributors and CAS. With the major external challenges that have occurred, some of the methodologies' relevance was affected. Yet, the consistent efforts of the ILO staff were key to mitigate those effects. The participatory approach increased the overall relevance of the project. The design of the project and its overall objective were consistent with the ILOs strategic orientation and the framework of the ILO Decent Work Country Programme of Lebanon. Project's assumptions and targets were realistic with the exception of developing the national employment policy, which was considered to be "*too ambitious*".

The project was managed in a cost-efficient manner and resources used were sufficient to tackle existing needs. One no-cost time-extension was necessary to achieve intended objectives due to the unforeseen crises in the country. The allocated budget was not overspent, and resources were leveraged to achieve objectives. The efficiency of the work groups was good. The capacity building support provided was efficient. The shortage of staff at CAS slightly affected the efficiency of the project causing few delays. Coordination between the ILO and other stakeholders was efficient. Few challenges hindered satisfactory communication the Ministry of Labour.

The effectiveness of the project was satisfactory. The quality of the outputs delivered was described as good and maintained. The ILO and CAS succeeded in providing reliable data for the national employment policy to build upon. Some delays were evident, yet beyond the control of project implementers. However, the continuous efforts of the ILO staff to adapt and adjust were successful. The effectiveness of the training sessions and work groups was praised by all interviewed stakeholders.

With the achievement of project's milestones 1 and 2, the development of a national employment policy is now achievable yet depending on the political situation and ministerial status. The policy is expected to align the efforts of constituents and governmental entities, eliminate the mismatch between the supply and demand of skills in the labour market, govern the relationship between the employer and employee while preserving their rights, and provide an official framework that everyone showed willingness to abide to.

Due to the continuation of the current crises, sustainability requires additional measures and attention. Regular follow up on the survey results should be done to ensure sustainability and validity of results. CAS still needs technical and financial support to carry on with new activities. Continuity of social dialogue between project constituents should be sustained as well as the engagement of ministries in the dialogues.

Lessons Learned

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<tr><td colspan="2">ILO Lessons Learned Template</td></tr>
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ILO Lessons Learned Template

Project Title: **Recovery through Employment Policy in Lebanon**
Project TC/SYMBOL: **LBN/20/01/RBS**

Name of Evaluator: **Joseph Haddad**   **Date:** **11/2022**
The following lessons learned have been identified during the course of the evaluation. Further text explaining the lessons learned may be included in the full evaluation report.

Element 1	Description
Brief description of the lesson learned	Proper assessment of available capacities: During the project's design phase, a proper assessment of the capacities of various involved institutions is necessary to ensure timely implementation and the achievement of required targets.
Context and any related preconditions	A few challenges faced during the implementation phase of the project could have been mitigated if local institutions were assessed based on their available capacities and needs.
Targeted users and beneficiaries	ILO regional offices and headquarters
Challenges/negative lessons – causal factors	The inability of CAS to conduct the survey without support – the ILO provided needed technical and financial support and repurposed the budget accordingly.
Successes/positive issues – causal factors	The ILO is more aware of the available capacities at CAS and other institutions. Actions to ensure the overall long-term sustainability of the project will follow.
ILO administrative issues (staff, resources, design, implementation)	The design lacked a proper assessment of available capacities.

Element 2	Description
Brief description of the lesson learned	Social dialogues between all actors are essential for NEP development: Expanding lobbying efforts and networking events to include governmental actors, specifically the relevant ministries. Social dialogue between public, private, national and international actors will guarantee the relevance of the initiative, cohesion between actors, and the achievement of its targets.
Context and any related preconditions	The work groups between organizations, institutions, workers, and employers presented multiple perspectives on the current situation of the labour market and the needed priorities or reforms in the NEP . Yet, it lacked the contribution of the Ministry of Labour, a crucial component of the country's NEP and stakeholder with access to specific data on the labour sector in Lebanon.
Targeted users and beneficiaries	ILO / organizations / employers / employees / ministries

Challenges/negative lessons – causal factors	The lack of more working groups proved to be a challenge. Incorporating more work groups could have been beneficial for drafting the policy – ensuring tight cooperation between constituents' post- project. The absence of a functioning government to shed light on the importance of stakeholder cooperation also hindered the overall objective, with the ILO focusing on those institutions in the absence of a governmental effective presence
Successes/positive issues – causal factors	Raised awareness on the effectiveness of social dialogue not only among the ILO staff, but also among organizations, employers, and employees. This in turn could lead to p roject constituents being more motivated to participate in future groups.
ILO administrative issues (staff, resources, design, implementation)	The project's design should have focused more on achieving solid relationships between constituents i n the long run.

Element 3	Text
Brief description of the lesson learned	Frequent and continuous communication with the m ministries is important to align efforts and strategies: To avoid ineffective efforts, solid communication should be evident between project implementers and the Ministry of Labour. Fixed-term ministerial actors should be informed of all the program steps and regularly updated in order to ensure commitment to the project. Uniting international organizations' efforts (i.e. in the case of the ILO and governmental entities) will lead to the achievement of intended results despite the country's political instability.
Context and any related preconditions	The political instability in the country and the non-functional caretaker cabinet has made frequent communication with the ministries very difficult.
Targeted users and beneficiaries	ILO / ministries
Challenges/negative lessons – causal factors	Unresponsiveness of the ministries caused delays during the project's implementation phase. In order to bypass this challenge, the ILO staff have maintained contact point persons at ministries that are responsive and helpful across the organization's different projects. Another challenge was the alternating cabinet, particularly in light of the parliamentary elections, which resulted in the change of ministers, which forced the ILO to update and coordinate with an entirely new minister on the project.
Successes/positive issues – causal factors	None.
ILO administrative issues (staff, resources, design, implementation)	Implementation.

Element 4	Text
Brief description of the lesson learned	Conditions facilitating policy development: Development of national policies is a challenging task considering the adverse social, political, and environmental contexts. Administrative considerations such as the timing of such initiatives is necessary for reform knowing that all decision-making bodies should be set up and well prepared for shifting contexts and contextually-relevant interventions.

Context and any related preconditions	The role of politics and political actors is critical in policy development. Analysis of timing to be considered as condition facilitating/ or hindering reform actions.
Targeted users and beneficiaries	ILO/ government
Challenges/negative lessons – causal factors	Establishment of an ad hoc tripartite inter-ministerial committee and national technical task force responsible for the formulation of the National Employment Policy couldn't be accomplished given the country's unstable and shifting political situation.
Successes/positive issues – causal factors	None.
ILO administrative issues (staff, resources, design, implementation)	None.

Good Practices

ILO Emerging Good Practices Template

Project Title: Recovery through Employment Policy in Lebanon   **Project TC/SYMBOL: LBN/20/01/RBS**

Name of Evaluator: Joseph Haddad   **Date: 11/2022**

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

Element 1 Text	
Brief summary of good practices	Adaptation of methodology and adjusting to operational challenges: The handling of operational challenges faced by the program's implementing partner during the survey phase in particular was effective, specifically in regards to providing alternative solutions such as resorting to external consultants, provisions of basic goods, and technical support.
Relevant conditions and contexts: limitations or advice in terms of applicability and replicability	The follow- up survey was a key objective of the project, and the ILO was determined to mitigate challenges and provide relevant solutions when possible.
Establish a clear cause and effect relationship	Numerous challenges were faced during the follow- up survey, including: A shortage of staff, the fuel crisis, and lockdown measures. The ILO provided CAS with a pool of consultants, fuel when needed, and switched to remote work, as well as a timeline extension.
Impact and targeted beneficiaries	CAS were the target beneficiaries of this good practice. They became more resilient and capable of facing challenges.
Project replicability	This practice is replicable across different projects when challenges arise .

Links to broader ILO goals (DWCPs, Country Programme Outcomes or ILO's Strategic Programme Framework)	The success of the survey will contribute to promotion of rights at work and enhancing social protections. It is also aligned with the ILO's strategic programmatic framework.
Other documents or relevant comments	Not applicable.

Element 2 Text	
Brief summary of good practices	Inclusion of research component across programs to close the data gap: The survey was effective in providing reliable data and statistics on the current market situation as well as the impact of the crises on the world of labour, employment, and unemployment . It helped close the data gap in the country.
Relevant conditions and Context: limitations or advice in terms of applicability and replicability	Due to the compounded crises, a need to update the collected data in 2019 and measure the impact of the crises was critical . The FULFS 2022 was conducted as a follow- up and provided the desired results.
Establish a clear cause and effect relationship	The FULFS was the basis of achieving a NEP through the provision of reliable data and statistics.
Impact and targeted beneficiaries	The ILO, international and local organizations, governmental entities, workers, and employers are all beneficiaries of this practice. The data can be used by these beneficiaries l for different analytical purposes.
Project replicability	The survey can be and should be replicated on a regular basis by CAS and through the support of the ILO or other organizations. This type of survey can be replicated in different countries that have also encountered significant changes in a short period of time.
Links to broader ILO goals (DWCPs, Country Programme Outcomes or ILO's Strategic Programme Framework)	The survey was the starting point of achieving a NEP, which will contribute to the protection of rights in the workplace, social protections, and other key concerns.
Other documents or relevant comments	Not applicable.

Element 3 Text	
Brief summary of good practices	Weekly planning and close follow- up on project activities: Weekly planning and maintaining close follow- up on project activities is essential, especially in challenging countries like Lebanon, in order to ensure the project timeline remains on track and the project is resilient to various limitations and conflicts that arise.
Relevant conditions and Context: limitations or advice in terms of applicability and replicability	With the challenging context and daily emerging obstacles, constant communication and close monitoring of the situation were key to mitigate existing challenges during the implementation phase.
Establish a clear cause and effect relationship	Including a component of weekly planning helped the ILO to preserve the momentum and achieve targeted results.

Impact and targeted beneficiaries	The targeted beneficiaries are all stakeholders including the ILO staff, CAS, and contributing organizations. The delivery of results is beneficial to all.
Project replicability	This practice is replicable in all countries in the Middle East and North Africa region, especially those facing a similarly- challenging context.
Links to broader ILO goals (DWCPs, Country Programme Outcomes or ILO's Strategic Programme Framework)	This practice is linked to the Country Programme Outcomes and ILO's Strategic Programme Framework.
Other documents or relevant comments	Not applicable.

Element 4 Text	
Brief summary of good practices	Access to a database of experts, specialists, and consultants is useful to support in overcoming challenges caused by external factors: The ILO project team has hired external consultants and experts to provide technical support to the CAS staff on implementing the FULFS.
Relevant conditions and Context: limitations or advice in terms of applicability and replicability	CAS's shortage in staff, limited resources, and lack of technical knowledge on certain programmes have pushed the ILO to hire external consultants who provided experience, knowledge, and needed support across the project activities.
Establish a clear cause and effect relationship	Not to completely rely on internal resources, the ILO resorted to external consultants to provide support to the CAS when needed.
Impact and targeted beneficiaries	The targeted beneficiaries of this practice were the ILO project team, who were able to benefit from leveraging resources; CAS, who received needed support and acquired new skills, and consultants, who were able to share their knowledge and benefit accordingly.
Project replicability	This practice can be replicable across any organization that lacks needed human resources and is not capable of recruiting full- time employees.
Links to broader ILO goals (DWCPs, Country Programme Outcomes or ILO's Strategic Programme Framework)	This practice is linked to the Country Porgramme Outcomes and the ILO's Strategic Programme Framework.
Other documents or relevant comments	Not appliable.

Element 5	Text
Brief summary of good practices	Work groups and discussions were supported by evidence-based data: For the drafting of the NEP , work groups and discussions were based on reliable data and statistics presented by the ILO staff.
Relevant conditions and Context: limitations or advice in terms of applicability and replicability	Work groups between different project constituents were the starting point of the NEP drafting. Discussions were fruitful and were based on existing data on labour market numbers and statistics.
Establish a clear cause and effect relationship	The presentation of reliable data, figures, and statistics on the labour market increased the effectiveness of the discussions between project constituents and stakeholders.
Impact and targeted beneficiaries	The targeted beneficiaries are all project constituents and ILO staff that are working to develop an employment policy.
Project replicability	This practice can be replicated in all projects that aim to develop a certain strategy or policy.
Links to broader ILO goals (DWCPs, Country Programme Outcomes or ILO's Strategic Programme Framework)	This practice is linked to the Country Pro gramme Outcomes and ILO's Strategic Programme Framework.
Other documents or relevant comments	Not applicable.

Element 6	Text
Brief summary of good practices	Remote data collection was an effective solution to collect data on the labour market: The data collection was switched from face-to-face interviews to Computer Assisted Telephone Surveys (CATI) and were proved to be effective.
Relevant conditions and Context: limitations or advice in terms of applicability and replicability	The lockdown measures imposed by the COVID-19 pandemic had added restrictions to data collection procedures. Implementers decided on using CATI to collect data and adjust the survey accordingly.
Establish a clear cause and effect relationship	Switching to remote data collection was very effective in delivering the intended results of the project despite all challenges.
Impact and targeted beneficiaries	The targeted beneficiaries are all organizations and project implementers that could face this type of challenge or lack the resources to conduct face -to- face interviews (e.g. transportation inaccessibility due to high fuel costs).
Project replicability	This practice could be replicable in many countries and for different projects as long as efficient databases are available.

Links to broader ILO goals (DWCPs, Country Programme Outcomes or ILO's Strategic Programme Framework)	This practice is linked to the Country Porgramme Outcomes and ILO's Strategic Programme Framework.
Other documents or relevant comments	Not applicable.

Recommendations

Recommendation 1: Given the project will be continued, the continuous identification of external risks and specific conditions which may facilitate or hinder continuous project implementation is paramount, in addition to considerations around postponing or extending timelines of project depending on contexts and limitations that may arise.

Considering the emergency state of the country, ILO ROAS should revisit initial assumptions and risks on a regular basis when working on projects in Lebanon — particularly when monitoring external risks, including but not limited to political instability or economic issues. This should also include a continuation of introducing immediate measures to mitigate these risks or take necessary actions to postpone or delay specific outputs.

Addressed to	Priority	Resource	Timing
ILO regional office	High	Medium	Short-term

Recommendation 2: Insist on conducting regular follow- up surveys and evaluations to assess the situation and changes across different aspects of the labour market given its relevance and importance in closing the knowledge and data gap.

Conducting regular follow- up surveys to assess the overall changes in terms of the needs of stakeholders and various changes in the labour market is important to build upon in the development of various policies or introducing policy reforms. Ensure the continuity of services that were reported as highly efficient and highly in- demand in future programming.

Addressed to	Priority	Resource	Timing
ILO regional office / CAS	High	High	Long-term

> **Recommendation 3:** Expand capacity building activities for local actors at early stages of the project's implementation to empower local leadership and improve sustainability, as well as ensure impact, with consideration of high turnover rates faced by local actors.

The ILO is requested to combine training and coaching activities at early stages of the project to support the CAS and offer technical assistance in order to guarantee their ability to achieve results within the allocated timeframe and given the available resources. However, considering the current emergency state, ILO needs to address the high turnover situation that is compounded by the multiple crises through a provision of measures that are effective in the short-term with coordination between the international community and the Lebanese government :

- Provide immediate short-term employment and capacity-building opportunities along with any other expected long-term program output. Direct assistance would contribute to boosting the local economy, thereby creating additional jobs and reducing turnover rates, while encouraging and applying the concept of localization.

- To ensure effective use of funds, it is paramount that the programs offer short-term (i.e. cash-for-work employment opportunities and capacity building) in addition to long-term investments (i.e. development of policies).

Addressed to	Priority	Resource	Timing
ILO regional office	High	High	Long-term

> **Recommendation 4:** Maintain flexibility in adjusting the program and adapting to various changing needs.

Considering the emergency state of the country, ILO ROAS and program staff should be willing to revisit initial assumptions and designs of projects in Lebanon while maintaining flexibility in regards to adapting the methodology, repurposing budgets, and modifying activities when necessary.

Addressed to	Priority	Resource	Timing
ILO project team	High	Medium	Long-term

> **Recommendation 5:** Emphasize the inclusion of social dialogues in future programming due to its importance in bringing a diverse array of actors together and in order to increase efficiency and effectiveness of program interventions.

The ILO should increase and expand the lobbying efforts and networking events to include all Lebanese labour market actors, including governmental actors.

Addressed to	Priority	Resource	Timing
ILO project team	High	Medium	Long-term

> **Recommendation 6:** Coordinate with a fixed-term focal point at the Ministry of Labour, in addition to the Minister, to guarantee proper follow up and responsiveness.

The ILO regional office should coordinate with a fixed-term focal point at the Labour Ministry who is consistently present to provide support. This will ensure immediate responsiveness on urgent matters and guarantee proper follow up. Regular meetings should be also conducted to share opinions and unite efforts.

Addressed to	Priority	Resource	Timing
ILO regional office / Ministry of Labour	High	Medium	Long-term

Appendices
Lessons learned template

ILO Lesson Learned Template	
Project Title:	**Project TC/SYMBOL:**
Name of Evaluator:	**Date:**

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)	
Context and any related preconditions	
Targeted users / Beneficiaries	
Challenges /negative lessons - Causal factors	
Success / Positive Issues - Causal factors	
ILO Administrative Issues (staff, resources, design, implementation)	

Emerging good practice template

ILO Emerging Good Practice Template

Project Title: **Project TC/SYMBOL:**

Name of Evaluator: **Date:**

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.)	
Relevant conditions and Context: limitations or advice in terms of applicability and replicability	
Establish a clear cause-effect relationship	
Indicate measurable impact and targeted beneficiaries	
Potential for replication and by whom	
Upward links to higher ILO Goals (DWCPs, Country Programme Outcomes or ILO's Strategic Programme Framework)	
Other documents or relevant comments	

Terms of reference

lbn-rbsa_evaluation
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List of persons interviewed

S.N.	Name	Organization	Designation	Email	Mode of Interview
PASARIBU	OKTAVIANTO	ILO ROAS	CHIEF REGIONAL PROGRAMMING UNITS		
KARAME	JOUMANA	ILO ROAS – RPU Lebanon	SENIOR PROGRAMME OFFICER		
HAQ	TARIQ	ILO Regional Employment DWT	SR. REGIONAL EMPLOYMENT SPECIALIST		
EID	GRACE	ILO staff/ consultants involved in project	STATISTICIAN		
YASSIN	JAD	ILO	PROJECT OFFICER		
DAHROUJ	DENISE	Ministry of Labor	Head of International Affairs dpt		
DAHER	MAYSSA	CAS	CAS official involved in Follow Up LFS		
ABDALLAH	FARAH	FENASOL	Event participant – Lawyer in FENASOL		
CHAAYA	ELISSAR	CGTL	Event participant – assistant to president		
JABER	DR. AHMAD	ALI	Board Member – Social Committee president		
SAGHBINI	ROBIN	UNHCR	Event participant – working on similar issues		

Evaluation questions matrix

Question	Sub Questions	Measure(s) or Indicator(s)	Data Sources	Data Collection Method	Stakeholder/Informant	Data Analysis
Relevance and strategic fit						
the extent to which the objectives are aligned with sub-regional, national and local priorities and needs, the constituents' priorities and needs, and the donor's priorities	· How well did the project approach fit in context of the protracted crisis in Lebanon? Were the problems and needs adequately analyzed? Was gender prioritized? · How were local needs and priorities first identified? What are the sources of data used and how did they feed into the project design? · How well were the project's objectives aligned with the framework of the ILO Decent Work Country Programme of Lebanon, the ILO's Project and Budget (P&B) 2020-21, and the SDGs? · Did the project design take into consideration the emerging needs amid COVID-19 and Lebanese economic crises? To what extent did the ILO project provide a timely and relevant response to constituents' needs and priorities in the COVID-19 context?	•Project design and activities respond to the local priorities and needs •Project design is aligned with ILO's strategies, framework, P&B and the SDGs •Project design considered Lebanese current context	•Key Project Documents •Other pertinent documentations •Stakeholders	•Desk Research •In depth Interviews	•Project contributors	•Qualitative analysis of strategies and reports •Qualitative data analysis of KIIs

Question	Sub Questions	Measure(s) or Indicator(s)	Data Sources	Data Collection Method	Stakeholder/Informant	Data Analysis
Relevance and strategic fit						
the extent to which the objectives are aligned	· How well did the project approach fit in context of the protracted crisis in Lebanon? Were the problems and needs	•Project design and activities respond to the local priorities and needs	•Key Project Documents •Other pertinent documentati	•Desk Research •In depth Interviews	•Project contributors	•Qualitative analysis of strategie

with sub-regional, national and local priorities and needs, the constituents' priorities and needs, and the donor's priorities	adequately analyzed? Was gender prioritized? · How were local needs and priorities first identified? What are the sources of data used and how did they feed into the project design? · How well were the project's objectives aligned with the framework of the ILO Decent Work Country Programme of Lebanon, the ILO's Project and Budget (P&B) 2020-21, and the SDGs? · Did the project design take into consideration the emerging needs amid COVID-19 and Lebanese economic crises? To what extent did the ILO project provide a timely and relevant response to constituents' needs and priorities in the COVID-19 context?	•Project design is aligned with ILO's strategies, framework, P&B and the SDGs •Project design considered Lebanese current context	ons •Stakeholders				s and reports •Qualitative data analysis of KIIs

Efficiency							
the extent to which the outputs achieved are derived from an efficient use of financial, material and human resources	• How well was the project managed in a cost-efficient manner (in terms of human, financial and other resources) • Were all resources utilized efficiently to reach the project's objectives? • How efficient were the coordination efforts with the CAS, worker and employer representatives, and other constituents? • To what extent has the project been on track in terms of timely achieving the assigned milestones? If not, what factors contributed to the delays? • To what extent has the project leveraged new or	•Efficiency of resources allocated to project interventions •Adaptations in resources, institutional setup and arrangements for higher efficiency	•Key Project Documents •Stakeholders	•Desk Research •In depth Interviews	•Project contributors		•Qualitative analysis of strategies and reports •Qualitative data analysis of KIIs

	repurposed existing financial resources to mitigate COVID-19 effects in a balanced manner? Does the leveraging of resources take into account the sustainability of results? • What were the intervention benefits and related costs of integrating gender equality?					

Effectiveness

the extent to which the intervention can be said to have contributed to its overall objectives and more concretely whether the stated outputs have been produced satisfactorily with all targets	· Were all set targets, outputs, and outcomes achieved according to plan? · What were/are the major factors which influenced the achievement or non-achievement of the objectives and results? • How effective was the coordination with the different stakeholders in supporting the project's objectives? • How have stakeholders, particularly women, been involved in project's implementation? • How did the outputs and outcomes contribute to ILO's mainstreamed strategies including gender equality, social dialogue, and labour standards? • What positive or negative unintended outcomes can be identified? • Has the project fostered ILO constituents' active involvement through social dialogue in articulating, implementing and	•Project targets achieved •Outputs produced with consideration of gender equality, and COVID-19 context •Project succeeded in building synergies with national initiatives and with other donor-supported project; •Hindering factors and response to emerging needs	•Key Project Documents •Stakeholders	•Desk Research •In depth Interviews	•Project contributors	•Qualitative analysis of strategies and reports •Qualitative data analysis of KIIs

	sustaining coherent response strategies to mitigate the effects of the pandemic on the world of work?					

Effectiveness of management arrangements						
the extent of efficient operational arrangements that supported the timely, efficient, and effective delivery of the project	• What was the division of work tasks within the project's teams? Has the use of local skills been effective? • How effective was communication between the project's teams, the regional office and the responsible technical department at headquarters? Has the project received adequate technical and administrative support/response from the ILO backstopping units? What were the challenges faced?	•Partnerships and management arrangements are functional and conducive to project objectives	•Key Project Documents •Stakeholders	•Desk Research •In depth Interviews	•Project contributors	•Qualitative analysis of strategies and reports •Qualitative data analysis of KIIs

Impact Orientation						
the extent to which project has contributed to positive and/or negative changes at the national level	• How were the survey results incorporated into the policy development? • What are the expected impacts of the policy on the world of work in Lebanon? • What is the likely contribution of the project to social partners, government entities, beneficiaries, etc.? What are the positive and negative changes and effects caused by the intervention? Intended and unintended results? Direct vs. indirect and short vs. long term effects?	•How impactful are the project' outcomes according to stakeholders	•Key Project Documents •Stakeholders	•In depth Interviews	•Project contributors	•Qualitative analysis of strategies and reports •Qualitative data analysis of KIIs

Sustainability						
the extent to which the	• Are the results achieved by the project so far likely to be sustainable- in terms of	•Project results are considered sustainable(incl	•Key Project Document	•Desk Research		•Qualitative analysis

existing results are likely to be maintained beyond project duration	conducting surveys and drafting policies? • What measures have been taken to ensure that the key components of the project are sustainable beyond the life of the project? Are they sufficient? • How effectively has the project built national ownership? Is the CAS equipped to continue with the implementation beyond the project's lifespan?	uding operation and maintenance agreements, and knowledge production outputs) •Adequate capacity building of social partners took place	s •Stakehold ers	•In depth Interviews	•Project contribu tors	of strategie s and reports •Qualitat ive data analysis of KIIs
Good Practices, Lessons Learned and Recommendations						
Challenge s, Lessons learned and Specific Recomme ndations for the formulati on of new Phases	• What good practices can be learned from the different phases of the project that can be applied to similar future projects? • What were the main challenges identified? How were these different from the risk assumptions? What were the mitigation steps taken? • What are the recommendations for future similar projects? • What are the challenges, lessons learned and the recommendations regarding the cross-cutting issues of gender equality and inclusion, social dialogue, ILS, COVID-19 and environmental sustainability?	• Challenges faced vs. mitigation measures • Lessons learned and good practices extracted from all project phases •Improvements needed and Recommendati ons	•Key Project Document s •Stakehold ers	•Desk Research •In depth Interviews	•Project contribu tors	•Qualitat ive analysis of strategie s and reports •Qualitat ive data analysis of KIIs