



Evaluation Summaries

Gender mainstreaming in Norway/ILO Partnership Framework Agreement 2006-07

Quick Facts

Countries: Global

Final Evaluation: May 2009

Mode of Evaluation: Independent

Technical Area: Gender equality

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Project Start: July 2006

Project End: February 2009

Project Code: INT/06/59/NOR

Donor: Government of Norway

Keywords: Gender equality, gender
mainstreaming

Background & Context

Summary of the project purpose, logic and structure

The project Gender Mainstreaming in Norway/ILO Partnership Framework Agreement 2006-2007 was an interdepartmental partnership, which started in July 2006 and was completed at the end of February 2009.

The Bureau for Gender Equality (hereafter referred to as GENDER) was vested with the responsibility to assist and support five other ILO units – also having projects under the Norway/ILO partnership – to technically, and/or financially mainstream gender within these projects. GENDER thus worked in cooperation with the other five projects,

assuming a facilitating role vis-à-vis these units. This facilitating role depended, to a rather high extent, on the other units'/projects' initiatives and actions. Some activities were initiated and carried out by GENDER itself, however, still in close cooperation with others.

The collaborating ILO units/offices were DIALOGUE, INTEGRATION, DECLARATION, Employment Sector, Social Protection Sector, ACT/EMP, ACTRAV, as well as relevant ILO field offices.

The project started in July 2006 and among the key activities were development, and making accessible to ILO constituents and staff through knowledge sharing, an extended knowledge base of gender equality interventions in the world of work. The work was particularly related to themes such as child domestic work, bonded labour, youth employment, basic education, and social security. The ILO aims to ensure that this knowledge base is managed and made widely accessible to ILO constituents and staff for their benefit. Furthermore, efficient management and expansion of the knowledge base is regarded essential for continuously meeting diverse demands from ILO constituents and staff for guidance on how to design and implement relevant elements of a gender mainstreaming strategy.

Purpose, scope and clients of the evaluation

The purpose of the external evaluation was to analyse the role the project has played in

promoting gender mainstreaming within the ILO, as well as to identify whether it also has played a role vis-à-vis other UN agencies. It should also determine in which ways the project has facilitated knowledge development and how sustainability of activities has been envisioned by the project.

The evaluation was undertaken to determine the project's relevance, effectiveness, efficiency and sustainability according to ILO evaluation standards, also corresponding to the OECD/DAC evaluation criteria. It also assessed the role of the project in mainstreaming and increasing the "visibility" of gender concerns, particularly in the work of the five ILO departments involved in the overall Norway/ILO Partnership and its activities on knowledge development and capacity building.

The clients of the evaluation, in addition to GENDER, are the following ILO units:

- Bureau for Employers' Activities (ACT/EMP)
- Bureau for Workers' Activities (ACTRAV)
- Department of Communication and Public Information (DCOMM)
- International Programme for the Elimination of Child Labour (IPEC)
- Employment Sector
- Policy Integration Department (INTEGRATION)
- Programme for the Promotion of the ILO Declaration on Fundamental Principles and
- Rights at Work (DECLARATION)
- ILO's International Training Centre in Turin (TURIN)

Methodology of evaluation

Qualitative information and data collection methods were employed, including a desk review, consultations and interviews. In addition to interviews at ILO headquarters and with social partners in Norway, the methodology included contact and interviews with ILO field offices, replies to questionnaires and e-mails. Much of the work of the project was at headquarters-level in Geneva with the aim of supporting inter-

regional and global level work. The project had little emphasis on 'demonstration type' initiatives (typical of much technical cooperation) and therefore there was no requirement for the evaluator to make visits at country level.

Main Findings & Conclusions

The evaluation assessed the project's performance achievement and impact. In so doing, the somewhat complicated nature of the project and its interdependency on the other five Norway/ILO Partnership projects was duly considered.

Good work has been undertaken by GENDER in terms of promoting gender mainstreaming among the technical units working on child labour, youth employment, domestic work, ILO's research agenda and knowledge development, as well as promoting the visibility of ILO's work. In some cases, collaboration did not fully materialise, or activities were not followed through as anticipated, examples of which are given in the report. The cooperation with the ILO field Gender Specialists was mostly regarded as fruitful, although in this respect there were also some exceptions.

Good impact was found, particularly in the following areas:

- The technical support to ensure prominence and visibility of the girl child in the 2008 World Day Against Child Labour (WDACL) with focus on education for the girl child in particular and work related to girls and women employed in the informal economy and agriculture;
- The work with the International Agricultural Partnership for Collaboration on Child Labour with five other agencies, which ensured that ILO, as the lead technical agency, fully mainstreamed gender in its work with other international agencies;
- The work undertaken on gender and rural employment is another area where impact has been found;

- The comprehensive mapping of ILO's gender-related research has been important in particular, as it has pointed at gaps and areas of research to follow up in the future. The areas that required further research were: Productive (paid or unpaid) work; globalisation and the informal economy; rights and regulatory frameworks; improving access to social security; productivity enhancement through better capabilities and access to resources (including entrepreneurship development); and finally, organisation, representation and social dialogue;
 - The project contributed to making female domestic work more "visible". Amongst others through contributions to the Governing Body in 2008. The project also supported initial research on domestic workers in Ghana with focus on policy and legal frameworks and practice and the conditions of domestic workers;
 - The cooperation with ACTRAV in relation to its project in India targeting poor women in the informal economy, which for instance has assisted the Chief Technical Advisor, based at headquarters, to appreciate how to better provide gender-responsive backstopping to the national manager.
1. The cooperation between GENDER and other units and organisations should continue and be strengthened in order to "keep up the momentum" with closer cooperation with the management of other ILO departments to ensure full gender mainstreaming in all technical cooperation within these departments.
 2. With a full understanding that flexibility is an important prerequisite for the successful implementation of a project, partnership or any other venture, the evaluation recommends that GENDER consider using strategic planning and improved monitoring in the future, also in Partnership Agreements such as the Norway-funded project (strategic plans can be adjusted as necessary, and should be treated as flexible instruments to assist project management, as intended);
 3. Quality assurance should continue to be an important factor in GENDER's work as it serves and guides other technical units on how to work on gender mainstreaming, many of which also work in this area (Gender Focal Points at headquarters and Gender Specialists in the field) but are not closely involved in GENDER's programme.
 4. GENDER should develop a strategy to promote gender equality and gender mainstreaming in ILO in view of the new/up-coming RBSA modality. If development partners (donor agencies) increasingly find RBSA to be an efficient and a preferred channel to provide resources to ILO, GENDER may as a result have less direct "entry" to technical cooperation "on the ground", and less available resources to support gender mainstreaming. Such a strategy would also clarify for other units the role of GENDER, and would also state the level of resources GENDER would require to continue to improve its services within ILO and its cooperation with other organisations. Part of this strategy could be to improve ILO's skills and capability for monitoring and evaluation, an example being guidance to projects on gender specific-indicators.

Recommendations & Lessons Learned

Main recommendations and follow-up

The recommendations are based on the main findings of the evaluation. GENDER should further clarify and explain its role as the evaluation found in interviews that its role is perceived as being unclear – although many have appreciated the technical support received. There seems to be confusion among some officials, both at headquarters as well as in the field, as to whether GENDER is a department with a mandate to implement activities (in the sense of initiating, "drive its own", funding) or one which "only" guides others in gender mainstreaming. Four specific recommendations were also cited:

Important lessons learned

- The evaluation highlighted difficulties in assessing the project's activities as many of these were dependent on the plans and activities of the other five departments involved. ILO and donor agencies should in the future consider including a full assessment of gender mainstreaming into the overall evaluations of a Partnership Agreement (that includes several departments), instead of evaluating GENDER specifically. Perhaps this would give a more holistic overview of what has been accomplished and the responsibilities would be clearer.
- The project targeted and collaborated with Norway/ILO Partnership project managers in ILO departments. A lesson learnt is that full appreciation for gender mainstreaming from Department Heads should be ensured as well.
- Full inter-departmental cooperation on gender mainstreaming activities cannot be expected between GENDER staff and other ILO technical units if principles for gender mainstreaming and gender equality are not commonly shared. This includes methods for training and empowering women.
- The mapping and review of ILO's research on gender equality and women's empowerment revealed gaps that need to be followed up as well as lack of coherent and coordinated research efforts. For research to be meaningful as a basis for policy and technical cooperation, it has to be improved and in so doing the field Gender Specialists should continue to be actively involved and supported by headquarters. Information sharing between the field and headquarters on research ideas should be further encouraged.
- At headquarters, most of the staff members interviewed were satisfied with the approach of providing funding to certain gender mainstreaming activities within different technical fields/departments in a

flexible manner. Some of the field Gender Specialists expressed the opinion that the small funds they had received had not been fruitful, and therefore the RBSA funding was seen as more attractive, as more in-depth and decentralised gender-related interventions could be carried out, implemented by actors in the field. As much as possible, GENDER should backstop and monitor RBSA-funded field activities that are starting up.