



Evaluation Summaries

Evaluation: Sustainable Development through the Global Compact

Quick Facts

Countries: Italy, Albania, Morocco, Tunisia

Mid-Term Evaluation: March 2007

Mode of Evaluation: independent

Technical Area: employment

Evaluation Management: Multinational Enterprises Programme (MULTI)

Evaluation Team: Giuseppe Querenghi

Project Start: October 2003

Project End: December 2007

Project Code: INT/02/M33/ITA

Donor: Italy (US\$ 4,128,673)

Background & Context

Summary of the project purpose, logic and structure

The context of the project is the globalization process and the need to make the global market compatible, in particular, with human and labour rights, if it has to become a powerful tool for sustainable development.

The main objectives of this project, covering Italy, Albania, Morocco and Tunisia, are the promotion of the labour principles included in the Global Compact as well as those stemming from international instruments such as the ILO Tripartite Declaration concerning Multinational Enterprises and Social Policies and the OECD Guidelines for Multinational Enterprises. The promotion of the said principles is to strengthen social dialogue

at the enterprise level. The areas on which the project focuses are: 1) awareness raising; 2) training; 3) collection and exchange of examples of good practice. The activities to be carried out are manifold: outreach events to stress the importance of respecting fundamental human and labour principles; training programmes for managers and trade union representatives to help companies making the above mentioned principles an integral part of their strategies; and public-private partnership projects to promote pilot schemes in the field of Corporate Social Responsibility.

The project carried out awareness raising activities also in Italy, supported financially by institutions, organizations and companies, which then put their expertise and resource persons at the disposal of the initiatives to be conducted in the project developing countries.

Purpose, scope and objectives of the evaluation

The purpose of the independent evaluation is to determine what have been the project outputs in three years of implementation and to provide recommendations on how to improve project performance.

Methodology of evaluation

Given the nature of the project, the methodology of the evaluation was mostly based on qualitative methods and included a desk review, interviews with key informants,

focus group sessions and observational techniques.

Main Findings & Conclusions

Project objectives, strategy and design

The Project Document was conceived before the project implementation was entrusted with the ILO and even before the geographical coverage was decided upon. Therefore, not only the outcomes and the expected outputs are not realistic and the indicators of very little use, but the tripartite approach and the focus on labour rights introduced by the ILO are not adequately reflected in the project document, which was never revised. Under the circumstances, the project document has not been a valid basis for the evaluation.

Project organization and ILO backstopping

The performance of the two experts in charge of the project and based in Geneva and Rome respectively, has been up to standards. Their professionals and human qualities allowed them to go successfully through difficult situations and to find the best compromise solutions between different approaches adopted by project partners. Frequent changes in the top management of the technical unit in charge (MULTI) have made some backstopping functions, namely guidance and advice, less effective than they might have been.

Project achievements

Had the project focused on a narrow interpretation of the Global Compact, as initially thought, it would have not been very relevant for the ILO constituents in the selected developing countries, where the priorities are quite different. The enlargement of the project scope decided upon at the beginning and the tripartite approach as a tool to strengthen social dialogue, allowed the project to achieve substantial results in the promotion of fundamental labour principles and international instruments concerning multinational enterprises.

The high degree of commitment to the project shown by the ILO constituents and their feeling of ownership were strongly advanced by their active participation in the activities, which went far beyond their institutional role and responsibilities in the tripartite Steering Committees established in the Project Countries.

The widening of the objectives and the tripartite participation have made the exercise more interesting, but also more complex. While the objectives set in the field of awareness raising were attained, the project could not produce so far all the expected results in the area of training and development of partnership exercises, which will have to allow the implementation of interesting pilot schemes at the company level. This was due to delays in the production of training materials and the duration of preparatory phases much longer than foreseen in some countries, for reasons beyond the project control. The staff is already taking the necessary measures to fill these gaps before the end of this year.

Sustainability of project achievements

Sustainability of achievements with regard to awareness raising are to a large extent granted. The web-site, the data-base on examples of good practices, and the coordination of the very many networks operational in the project fields, are progressively being taken over by a reliable institution. With regard to training, while in Italy the project partners already implement activities on their own, those in the developing countries concerned would need external support, at least for an additional year after project end, to get more familiar with the project materials and integrate them in their educational programmes.

Recommendations & Lessons Learned

Main recommendations and follow-up

- The PRODOC should have been completely revised at the beginning of the project life. Since it is now going through its last phase, the revision might be limited to the immediate objectives, the indicators

and the outputs for the year 2007. The indicators should be agreed upon by the donor.

- The last period of the project's life should be characterized by a strong priority to training activities and, in particular, training of trainers.
- The number of contacts the staff has successfully made so far with companies and the close cooperation established with the labour inspection departments in Morocco and Tunisia, should allow the carrying out of a few pilot partnership projects to train managers and workers representatives at company level.
- In Albania, activities should focus on fundamental labour principles and specific problems of the prevailing economic sectors in the regions where activities are held.
- Possible project shortcomings should be seriously and timely discussed at Steering Committee meetings, to help the management to overcome the difficulties they met with.
- Consultants under external collaboration contracts should be asked to submit a detailed final report.
- In Italy, where a number of institutions and organizations are active in the field of Corporate Social Responsibility, some sort of coordination by the Ministry for Social Affairs would maximise the endeavours being undertaken.
- The staff should prepare as soon as possible:
 - a) A detailed work-plan for 2007, with relevant budget including the last instalment the donor is expected to deliver;
 - b) A Project Document for a consolidation phase to be submitted to the donor in time to ensure continuity;
 - c) A list of managers and trade union representatives ready to act as resource persons on the occasion of training events;
 - d) A "post-project plan", including all the contacts and initiatives to be undertaken to ensure sustainability.

In this connection, MULTI is expected to take the lead and coordinate the various inputs, in particular from ILO departments.

Important lessons learned

- The developments that occurred under this project confirm that an in-depth analysis of the situation in the countries concerned should be carried out before a project document is designed, if objectives, outputs and strategies are to be specific and realistic.
- The relevance of action-oriented research should not be underestimated as shown by the successful exercises conducted in this field under the project.
- Projects whose key participants are employers' and workers' organizations should be conceived and designed in cooperation with the relevant ILO departments. If the necessary capacity building work is not done, the structural weakness of some partners might put serious obstacles to the achievement of meaningful objectives.
- It is interesting to note how a typical "supply driven" project has been geared towards the satisfaction of actual needs, thanks to the cooperation of project partners and the endeavours of the management.
- Sustainability will be obviously in the hands of the beneficiary organizations, but the external support by the ILO, in the framework of its institutional tasks, would encourage them to continue their endeavours and to progressively consider the issues at stake as part of their priorities.