



Evaluation Summary



International
Labour
Office

Evaluation Unit

Increasing protection of migrant workers in the Russian Federation and enhancing development impact of migration in the South Caucasus - Final Evaluation

Quick Facts

Countries: *Russia, Armenia, Azerbaijan, Georgia*

Final Evaluation: *April 2012*

Mode of Evaluation: *Independent*

ILO Administrative responsibility:
DWT/CO Moscow

Technical Area: *MIGRANT*

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Project Code: *RER/08/05/EEC*

Donor: *Europe Aid - US\$3,416,557*

Keywords: *labour migration, protection of migrant workers rights*

Background & Context

Increasing Protection of Migrant Workers in the Russian Federation and Enhancing Development Impact of Migration in Armenia, Azerbaijan and Georgia» is a project that is co-financed by the EC and coordinated by the ILO Decent Work Technical Support Team and Country Office for Eastern Europe and Central Asia. It addresses issues of labour migration under the ILO's overarching framework of decent work and social justice with its tripartite structure, involving governmental institutions, employers, migrant

workers and social partners. The present evaluation is at the final stage of the project that has already been extended twice on a non-cost basis and ended in April 2012.

Russia ranks top as a country of destination for labour migrants from South Caucasus, moving mainly for economic reasons and hence labour migration is the main trend. Despite the non-visa regime for CIS countries' citizens, the quota system installed, the facilities to obtain work permits or to register, the majority of migrant workers in Russia are still in an irregular situation regarding permits and contracts. Migrant workers and their employers are not well informed on registration and work permit procedures. Irregular migrants are vulnerable to labour exploitation and abuse and labour and human rights of many migrants are violated. They are also largely remaining outside of the overall revenues and tax system, which has adverse effects on public systems. At the same time, labour migration provides a vital source of income and boosts economic development of the host and sending countries while it drains the South Caucasus of its most useful workforce. Effective governance of labour migration in the Russian Federation is a priority. Information is essential. Informing and protecting labour migrant's rights is a priority in order to maintain social cohesion and avoid as much as possible discrimination.

The overall objective of the project is to increase the protection of migrant workers in the Russian Federation and promote well-managed labour migration in the region and enhance the development impact of migration in Armenia, Azerbaijan and Georgia. The project employs strategies that build on the current ILO work in the region and its institutional strengths and partnerships. Effective international practices, including from European Union member states and ILO experience, were drawn upon.

The specific objectives of the project are as follows:

- Ensure that migrant workers in target areas and sectors in Russia and in countries of origin have access to information on admission rules and procedures, rights and access to trade union services and participation;
- Increase awareness of employers in target areas and sectors in Russia, facilitate their recruitment of migrant workers in shortage areas, and improve employment and working conditions of migrants in construction;
- Increase capacity of governments in both countries of origin and destination (Russia) to effectively govern labour migration and increase cooperation;
- Development of a migration and development strategy in countries of South Caucasus and creation/strengthening of mechanisms for migrants, diaspora and returnees to contribute to development in their country of origin.

The project activities were aimed at:

- Improving access to information for migrant workers on admission rules and procedures
- Ensuring trade union services and participation for migrant workers
- Increasing cooperation and capacity of governments to regulate labour migration

- Supporting the development of migration strategies
- Strengthening mechanisms for migrants to contribute to their country of origin
- Raising awareness on labour migration and ILO Conventions
- Adapting objectives/activities to the needs of ILO partners
- Developing instruments for cooperation between partners
- Identifying common goals – across borders
- Adoption of strategies and action plans by partner organizations
- Cooperation with other international organizations and EU projects
- Building social partnership through the involvement of social partners in all project activities
- Making concrete steps towards change
- Promoting tolerance and cross-cultural communication
- Looking for sustainable solutions

The total budget of the project is \$3,416,557 (Euros 2,388,173.19), of which 80% is an EC contribution financed under the Thematic Programme of Cooperation with Third Countries in the Areas of Migration and Asylum, from the budget lines 2009-2010 of Call for Proposals. The total duration of the action was 30 months extended to 40. The project started in December 2008 and the chief technical advisor was identified in September 2009. The project ended in April 2012.

Through the ILO's tripartite structure, the project worked closely with an important number of stakeholders representing the social partners and governmental institutions. Many changes have occurred during the project – new EU agreements, migration policies – that were external but needed the project's support. Many changes occurred also stemming from the projects activities – agreements, action plans – that show clearly that the project's

activities are sustainable and the goals are attained and shall be continued. Through the empowering of the social partners, building capacities and creating important networks the project was able not only to change perceptions but also attitudes that gave way to new strategies and policies.

The project's contribution to migration management in general through an intensive work on the recognition of labour migration is important to underline.

1.4.1 – Relevance

- The objectives of the project are relevant and valid and address real needs of the countries in an adapted manner.
- The activities and outputs of the project are consistent with its overall goals and attainment of its objectives and empower the different partners to continue the work.
- The project objectives and goals are relevant to the EC Thematic Programme's main lines.
- The implementing agent and its main partners are the most adequate for the realisation of the project activities. The tripartite structure together with the ILO approaches and different instruments are the right tools. They give recognition to labour migrants and to their contribution to the development of the economy of the receiving country.
- The activities and outputs of the project are consistent with the intended impacts and effects.
- The activities and outputs of the project have a double approach: they are common to all the countries covered by the project and at the same time they are adapted to each situation. The project's flexibility helps achieve this adaptation.

1.4.2 – Efficiency

The project has a clear coordination structure through the national project coordinators and the establishment of the Country Project

Advisory Groups (PAGs) in all countries involving all constituents. The project has an efficient work methodology that has facilitated, improved and enhanced its impact.

Activities were cost-efficient and some of them were multiplied with the partners' own resources. The objectives did achieve on time and the project created momentum, but was also pulled by rapidly changing situations that highlighted the issues of migration and underlined its transversal character in all the four countries involved.

1.4.3 – Effectiveness

The project has been fully effective for the first component, which represents its major objective that is the protection of labour migrants' rights and the promotion of a well-managed migration.

This has been achieved by the full and active participation of all the stakeholders who have now included «migration» issues in their broad agendas. The second component is in continuation of the first where the major and most important basis has been prepared through quality research studies.

Different important factors influenced the course of the project like the advent of various agreements with the EU and the Member States. The direct influence of these factors was the shift of migration issues from «peripheral», «invisible» spheres to the centre of socio-economic and political life.

1.4.4 - Impact and sustainability

The direct impact of the project on migrants is a long-term issue, but on a short run many positive results of the project leave important impacts: on policy level, information wise and also on behavioural changes of attitudes and perceptions leading to elaboration of strategies, action plans and even new draft laws.

Around 6,000 persons have been directly affected by the project as migrants, potential migrants or returnees. This number is much

more when we consider the trainings, workshops, study tour visits and discussion seminars. This number is still more when the publication material is taken into account; booklets explaining risks and rights, flyers in airports, guidelines etc.

The project was successful in establishing a strong sense of ownership among its partners which is very important for the sustainability of the results. Direct, the agreements signed among different constituents and stakeholders are to continue the project's basic activities on mutual basis, common understanding and shared activities. Indirect, the creation of commissions for migration and elaboration of action plans, the drafting of the new migration policy and the project's comments can be considered as the main indicators related to the contributions of the project in raising and acquiring «ownership». Ownership has an important place in this project's main achievements. The management of migration - mainly through the labour migrants and returnees - has become one of the main missions and driving force of the social partners as well as the governmental structures.

1.4.5 – Recommendations and lessons learned

The overall recommendation is the continuation of activities with the same approach that «offers a platform where all stakeholders can meet, share competences and work together». More activities are needed in the following areas:

- 1) Information dissemination and awareness raising;
- 2) Sharing experiences and information with EU- MS on migration management;
- 3) Spreading information on international conventions and practices;

4) Improving professional qualifications and raising standards to match the market demands;

5) Brain drain is an important issue together with loss of work force and brain loss in sending countries. More emphasis should be put on this issue related to “migration and development”, especially in relation to the Readmission agreements and Mobility Partnership Programme with the EU MS;

6) Integration of returnees in a general “migration and development” framework;

7) More research analysis on diaspora organisations and their role in labour migration management.