



# Evaluation Summary



International  
Labour  
Office

Evaluation Unit

## From the Crisis towards Decent and Safe Jobs in Southern Caucasus and Central Asia

### Quick Facts

**Countries:** Armenia, Azerbaijan, Georgia, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Tajikistan, Turkmenistan, Uzbekistan

**Mid-Term Evaluation:** October 2012

**Mode of Evaluation:** Independent

**Administrative responsibility:** DWT-CO/Moscow

**Technical Area:** EMP/OSH/Social Security

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**Project End:** Dec. 31, 2013

**Project Code:** RER0905FIN

**Donor:** Finland (USD 5,432,871)

**Keywords:** employment policy; vulnerable groups; working conditions; OSH management systems; social security

### Background & Context

#### Summary of the project purpose, logic and structure

The Project “From the Crisis towards Decent and Safe Jobs in Southern Caucasus and Central Asia” (hereinafter DW project) was planned as a reaction to the global economic and financial crisis with an aim to develop long term solutions. The Development Objective of the DW Project is to support employment security in society and to promote sustainable social development, through the implementation of Decent Work Country

Programmes (DWCPs) and the Decent Work Agenda. The Immediate Objectives the DW Project (as adjusted during the Inception Period) are: (I) Employment opportunities will be increased; (II) Working conditions will be improved; (III) The minimum level of social security will be increased.

Though being at different stages of development today, all of the countries have common structural characteristics:

- The Labour Markets have large shares of informal economies and unemployment and labour migration, and the gender gap is rising.
- Occupational Safety and Health systems are not adequately developed. Hence, the occupational safety is challenging the development of the countries.
- Social Security Systems, especially pension and social security for the poor in the countries lack of effectiveness and efficiency and need structural reforms.
- Social partnership as a tool to develop adequate policy strategies is somehow developed, but there is a need for further capacity development of the constituents.

#### Purpose, scope and clients of the evaluation

The mid-term evaluation purpose is in line with the learning and accountability function of evaluation: it is programme adaptation and improvement. The DW project was planned for implementation in eight countries. The mid-term evaluation looked as a matter of priority at activities implemented in three

countries: Armenia, Kazakhstan and Tajikistan, and related to all three pillars or immediate objectives of the project (Employment; Occupational Safety and Health; Social Security).

### **Methodology of evaluation**

Active involvement of the relevant stakeholder and constituents in mid-term evaluation process was of highest relevance. Although the DW project did not produce a clear baseline study, its close connection to the Decent Work Country Programs (DWCPs) and its inclusion in the ILO programming cycle balanced out this deficit. The following methods had been used for the preparation and the implementation of the mid-term evaluation:

*Document Review: Planning Meetings and Country specific Field Interviews.*

The limitations of evaluation include limited resources, with only one evaluator in the team, very short time available for field research with only two-day stay in each of the visited countries and, finally, no possibility to visit other target countries of the project.

## **Main Findings & Conclusions**

### *Relevance and design of the project*

(i) Aspects of contribution to the national priorities and stakeholders' ownership: The great majority of the interviewed persons confirmed that ILO's input is relevant and adequate for each country and a helpful input to the recovery activities in the region. Mixed observations must be reported in terms of the stakeholders' ownership of the project.

(ii) Validity of project design and the adequacy of indicators: The logic of the design changed during the implementation of the project. Initially it was designed as a quick and additional reaction to the risky outcomes of the financial crisis in 2009.

In the overall because this is a kind of a project which has unique characteristics – three complex intervention areas in eight countries

in two regions – we can sum up that the relevance of the project is all in all good.

### *Effectiveness of the project*

The effectiveness in pillar I (employment) is quite good. In Kazakhstan employment and labour market policies and related legislation were changed/improved with the support of the DW project. Armenia is working on its reforms supported by the DW project. Moreover, in Armenia the DW project aided the development of pilot based innovative options for people with disabilities to get access to decent work. Only in Tajikistan the institutional development of the PES so far shows limited effectiveness.

Related to pillar II (working conditions/OSH) the development of National OSH systems is in Tajikistan (a National OSH Program is drafted) already on that level of development that was expected for the end of 2013. Further on, it seems probable that the objectives for Kazakhstan may be achieved too until the end of the project (there are plans to develop a "Strategy OSH 2020" in Kazakhstan).

Under Pillar III (Social Security) limited effectiveness is observed in the lower-income countries because of technical complexity and political nature of the subject areas covered by this pillar. However, in the upper-middle income country like Kazakhstan, two ILO conventions have been ratified in 2012 with the support of the DW project: In June 2012 the C183 (Maternity Protection Convention, 2000) and in November 2012, C156 (Workers with Family Responsibilities Convention, 1981), which exemplified the official commitments by the Kazakh government to improve their maternity protection and work and family system.

Very effective is the usage of social dialogue and tripartism as an instrument for capacity development of the constituents and as well as a tool to improve policy outcomes in the related countries. The list of the main factors influencing the achievement or non-achievement of the objectives is topped by the

capacities of the constituents. Capabilities of the constituents in the DW project countries to add own (financial) resources to the implementation of activities/programs are also an important success factor.

### *Impact*

**Pillar I (Employment):** First of all to mention here is the development and introduction of the new policy for people with disabilities in Armenia. A real paradigm change happened. Before the PES staff were assessing people with disabilities on what they cannot do. Now, within the new approach PES staff are checking what these people can do. This new approach will be part of the ALMP system in Armenia in 2013 and follow on years. A comparable impact can be identified in Kazakhstan: After a period of de-regulation policy, in which the public employment services and corresponding active labour market activities had been reduced if not abolished, now with the support of the DW project the new Employment Policy 2020 was developed and confirmed.

**Pillar II (Working conditions):** In all the countries OSH management systems are implemented on enterprise level. Even sometimes within bi-partite committees, which are managed in social partnership. The National OSH systems are up to yet not in the point of development to be seen as an impact, but it seems to be highly probable to achieve this stage until the end of 2013.

**Pillar III (Social security):** Prominent impacts are confirmed under the gender component with the ratification of the relevant ILO conventions No.183 and No.156 in Kazakhstan. Not really finalized yet, but we may mention here the option for improvement of the subsistence minimum definition in Kazakhstan and the increased capacities of the tri-partite constituents in integrating gender equality in their work or develop social policies.

**General Impact:** According to research findings, the project contributed to capacity

development of the constituents in all the visited countries in all areas of interventions. The capacities developed are practically used by the constituents in their work. The overall project impact is good and can be even improved until December 2013.

### *Sustainability*

**Pillar I:** There is a high probability of sustainability in the implementation of the Employment 2020 Strategy in Kazakhstan. It is not certain if the recently founded trade unions for workers in informal economy in Kazakhstan will develop in a sustainable manner. There are some doubts too if the policy for people with disabilities in Armenia will be sustained. It is highly risky to expect that the PES in Tajikistan will have an improved LMI(A)S at the end of the project. **Pillar II:** There is a chance that OSH policy or strategies will be established in one or two of the DW project countries thus leading to long-term effects. **Pillar III:** The ratification of Conventions 183 and 156 will have a long term impact in Kazakhstan.

To sum up: the sustainability is already given but on a limited level. The overall assessment of sustainability of the DW project up to yet is satisfactory.

Based on careful assessment of project performance as per all five evaluation criteria the overall assessment of the project is good.

## **Recommendations & Lessons Learned**

Full Recommendations are available in the evaluation report.