



Evaluation Summaries

Sub-Regional Initiative on Promoting Gender Equality in the World of Work in Lebanon, Syria and Jordan

Quick Facts

Countries: *The Syrian Arab Republic, Lebanon and Jordan*

Final Evaluation: *November 2010*

Mode of Evaluation: *Independent*

Technical Area: *Gender*

Evaluation Management: *ILO ROAS*

Evaluation Team: *Taghrid Khuri*

Project Start: *January 2009*

Project End: *End April 2010*

Project Code: *RBSA 500-601*

Donor: *RBSA (Norway)*

Keywords: *GENDER*

Background & Context

Summary of the project purpose, logic and structure

This evaluation comes at the end of a one year sub-regional initiative in Lebanon, Jordan and Syria. The objective of the evaluation is to assess the achievements of the project during its life span (12 months extended to 15 months) and draw the conclusions and lessons learned that will assist the three targeted countries to continue to affect the goals of the project in their respective countries.

Present situation of the project

The goal of the sub-regional project in Lebanon, Jordan and Syria, was to advance gender equality in the world of work according to the International

Labour Organization's conventions and recommendations. It aimed to increase the capacities of the tripartite constituents to develop integrated policies and programmes on identified priority gender thematic issues.¹ The project came in response to the demand voiced by ILO constituents within the framework of the Decent Work Country Programme for Jordan and Syria, and in follow-up to ongoing technical advisory and cooperation work in Lebanon.

The project was funded by the ILO Regular Budget Supplementary account (RBSA) from Norwegian government contributions that were earmarked for gender equality with allocations earmarked for the specific region.

Purpose, scope and clients of the evaluation

The purpose of the final evaluation is to:

- a) Determine if the project has achieved the stated immediate objectives, explain the difficulties encountered and identify lessons learned.
- b) Determine the impact of the project in terms of sustained improvements achieved.
- c) Provide recommendations on how to build on the achievements of the project

¹ "Proposal for RBSA allocations: Decent Work and Gender Equality a Sub-Regional Initiative: Lebanon, Jordan and Syria."
"RBSA Gender Project Strategy (version 5)"

- and ensure that it is sustained by relevant stakeholders.
- d) Document lessons learned, success stories, and good practices in order to maximize the experiences gained.
- e) Examine stakeholders' perception of the value added of the project, and its impact in term of developing the capacities of national constituents to advance gender equality in the world of work.

Methodology of evaluation

The evaluation methodology triangulated two forms of data: a) existing data and documentation, b) interviews and participatory sessions with ILO programme staff and regional technical specialists, tripartite partners, as well as media, UN partners, donor and civil society.

The evaluation was conducted through: Step 1 a desk review, Step 2 data collection of primary and secondary sources, Step 3 Interviews, Step 4 Stakeholders' workshop and a brief workshop at ILO ROAS Beirut, Step 5 writing the report.

Main Findings & Conclusions

The ILO project "Sub-Regional Initiative on Promoting Gender Equality in the World of Work in Lebanon, Syria and Jordan" has partially met its objective.

The design of the project is deemed relevant as it was designed in response to demand voiced by ILO constituents (governments, employers' and workers' organizations) in the three countries of Jordan, Lebanon and Syria within the framework of the Decent Work Country Programmes for Jordan and Syria and in follow-up to ongoing technical advisory and cooperation work in Lebanon. However, extensive changes were made to the original vision of the project document during implementation. Design of the regional project reflects consultations and country level engagements for over five years prior to the drafting of the project document.

In term of effectiveness, the project attained the following achievements

- National Tripartite Taskforces on gender equality in the world of work were established in each of the three countries.
- Building partnerships between the ILO and national stakeholders on priority gender-thematic issues in the world of work in Jordan and Syria, specifically:
 - The Jordanian National Commission for Women committed itself to the establishment of a National Tripartite-Plus Committee on pay Equity.
 - In Syria, a MOSAL directive was issued establishing a national Tripartite Committee on gender Equality at work, with the DWGE taskforce coordinators as members.
- The project was able to raise awareness of gender related International Labour Standards among the tripartite partners in the three countries. Specifically, the project was able to establish an institutional structure in Syria for following-up the application of gender-related ILS and that in Jordan to advance pay equity.
- The project partially met his objective to improve knowledge base on gender Justice through several products:
 - TV spots on Conventions C100 and C111 were produced;
 - A printed materials toolkit on gender-related ILS was designed and tested in the three countries;
 - Two "Towards a Policy Brief" documents were produced in Jordan and Syria;
 - A legal assessment study (a comparison of national laws relating to gender thematic issues in the world of work from the three countries) was produced.

The Project has been implemented in an efficient manner; the earmarked funds were used properly and mostly efficiently and in line with financial rules and procedures. It was highlighted that most activities started late and were mainly carried out in three months (October 2009; December 2009; March 2010).

In term of impact, the one year project cannot possibly yield impact, especially when it had many objectives and aspiration (i.e. effectively promote five International Labour Conventions and one Resolution in three countries) over a period of one year.

In term of sustainability, the momentum built by the project should be maintained and built upon through more focused and targeted interventions in each country according to its identified interests and priorities.

Recommendations & Lessons Learned

Main recommendations and follow-up of the ILO “Sub-Regional Initiative on Promoting Gender Equality in the World of Work in Lebanon, Syria and Jordan”:

1. The main recommendation for moving this project forward is to focus on a few priority interventions in each country, as determined in conjunction with a tripartite body in that country. This should start with the formation and follow-through of a National Advisory Committee in each country which is committed to concrete and actionable interventions. Soliciting the contribution of each country in terms of committing staff and tripartite membership should be an integral condition of future collaboration.
2. The support of ILO is paramount to this continuity by formulating a follow up plan both technically and financially. Suggestions for follow up activities as identified by this evaluation exercise and emanating from discussions with all the concerned parties at both ILO-ROAS and the three countries’ tripartite members.

Syria

- **Technical assistance toward enforcement of the ratified conventions:** ILO needs to provide technical assistance to Syria toward devising the necessary mechanisms that will enable reinforcement of ratified gender-related labour conventions.

- **Technical assistance on labour inspection:** Improve labour inspectors’ sensitivity to gender equality issues in the world of work. Identify priority issues for gender-related labour inspection training (e.g. discrimination in hiring, pay discrimination, sexual harassment, childcare provisions, and maternity benefits).

Lebanon

- **Further Training for trade unionists:** It was requested further training to be of a less theoretical and more practical nature.
- **Technical assistance to institutionalize gender-mainstreaming:** Technical assistance from the ILO to establish specialized gender units or focal points in the government, employers’ organizations, and workers’ organizations to raise awareness, increase knowledge, and work towards implementation of the ILS that are specifically emphasizing gender equality.
- **Creating a knowledge base to support decent work and gender equality:** Conduct studies feeding into a national strategy on gender equality in the world of work in Lebanon.

Jordan

- **Technical assistance on pay equity:** The policy roundtable in Jordan laid the groundwork for further participation by the social partners on pay equity. At the end of the roundtable, it was decided that the ILO would support the Jordanian National Commission for Women in forming and activating a tripartite-plus Jordanian Committee on Pay Equity along with the Ministry of Labour.
- **Technical assistance on childcare provision:** Family responsibilities of women workers emerged as a major area of concern for all tripartite partners. The Ministry of Labour (MoL) and Social Security Corporation are at the preparatory stage of developing childcare

initiatives which could benefit from ILO technical assistance.

- **Technical assistance on the Maternity Fund:** Assistance in operationalizing the newly established Maternity Fund and raising the awareness of employers and women workers about the Fund.
3. There is a solid knowledge base on decent work and gender equality in Lebanon, Jordan and Syria, despite constituents' demand for research on these issues. This suggests that it is important for the ILO to engage with universities and research institutions to carry out quality research and data management with regard to priority issues on gender equality in the world of work. This includes capacity building for these institutions. The work carried out by ILO-ROAS in the Occupied Palestinian Territories is a good practice in this respect that could be replicated.
 4. It is of utmost importance to involve lawyers and judges of the legislative and judicial systems as well as labour inspectors in follow-up activities. In Syria in particular, since a new labour law come into force and is mostly compatible with the gender-related international conventions, it is timely to introduce capacity building exercises for all the parties concerned.

Important Lessons Learned

- A principal lesson for projects of such a short duration is to select a few topics based on national needs and focus on them to attain tangible results and add value to DWCP objectives. Focusing on national needs and priorities would improve ownership among the target constituents, and guarantee that ILO constituents will develop more and broader objectives in future besides maintaining continuity and sustainability.
- The evaluator noticed that successful policy advocacy requires a high level of engagement

with senior-level officials. Thus it is important that a senior-level steering committee is established from the very beginning of a project such as this. Such a steering committee should have a binding TOR ensuring commitment by the partner organizations. For that purpose, it is equally critical to find a mechanism to involve the tripartite decision makers as well as to continue to engage them and solicit their commitment over the long term.

- In Jordan, the MoL taskforce was formed by nominating a member from each department of the Ministry. Taskforce members contended that this had a great impact on knowledge and awareness and dissemination of this information across the different departments of the Ministry.
- In Jordan, the pay equity policy brief was drafted, reviewed and presented at the policy roundtable for discussion and dissemination in partnership with the Jordanian National Commission for Women in March 2010. At the roundtable, the recommendations were adopted by the Jordanian National Women's Commission which, as a quasi-governmental national organization, would ensure national ownership and follow-up for incorporation into national labour laws in due course. The National Commission for Women was already a partner in drafting the original study in 2007, and had integrated pay equity as a national priority in the women and development plan. This suggests that close cooperation with national constituents in drafting and disseminating the findings of ILO assessments and follow up policy briefs and round tables is a good practice.