



Evaluation Summary



International
Labour
Office

Evaluation
Office

ASEAN-focussed labour market governance programme (OSH and industrial relations) - Final Evaluation

Quick Facts

Countries: Brunei, Indonesia, Cambodia, Lao, Thailand, Malaysia, Philippines, Singapore, Viet Nam

Final Evaluation: March-May 2015

Mode of Evaluation: Independent

Administrative Office: DWT Bangkok

Technical Office: ILO DWT Bangkok, SAFEWORk ILO HQ

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Project End: March 2015

Project Code: RAS/12/50M/JPN and RAS/13/50M/JPN

Donor & Project Budget: Japan - US\$1,050,000

Keywords: Occupational safety and health, hazardous work

Background & Context

This is an independent final evaluation of the project "Occupational Safety and Health in Hazardous Work in Southeast Asia". Its purpose is to document key achievements, challenges, lessons learned and good practices for future applicable programmes and projects. It aims to:

- Assess the achievement of the project against the approved log frame and work plan
- Identify gaps, limitations and/or challenges
- Identify good practices and lessons learned.

The ILO is the executing agency. ILO's partners in this collaboration are the Cambodian Ministry of Labour and Vocational Training (MOLVT), the Viet Nam Ministry of Labour, Invalids and Social Affairs (MOLISA), Ministry of Health (MOH), Ministry of Industry and Commerce (MIC), Ministry of Construction (MOC), Viet Nam General Confederation of Labour (VGCL), and Viet Nam Chamber of Commerce and Industry (VCCI).

Present Situation of the Project

The project carried out a situation analysis, established a technical expert team to make recommendations, and drafted a roadmap towards the ban of asbestos in line with the Convention concerning Safety in the Use of Asbestos (ILO C162).

A significant obstacle that the project helped to overcome was an almost universal attitude amongst relevant ministries against the proposed ban. Viet Nam ratified the Rotterdam Convention on the Prior Informed Consent Procedure for Certain Hazardous Chemicals and Pesticides in International Trade, which promotes shared responsibilities in relation to importation of hazardous chemicals, including proper labelling and directions on safe handling. The treaty covers most forms of asbestos, except for white asbestos. In 2013,

Viet Nam was one of seven countries opposing its coverage by the treaty, the only importing country alongside six exporters.

As a result of the project activities, the Government of Viet Nam now no longer opposes the inclusion of white asbestos from coverage by the Rotterdam Convention, has a clearly established roadmap to ban asbestos by 2020, and is open to consideration of ratification of ILO's Asbestos Convention (ILO C162 – Convention concerning Safety in the Use of Asbestos).

ILO C187 aims to promote a preventative safety and health culture and the progressive achievement of a safe and health working environment. It requires ratifying states to develop in consultation with social partners (1) a national OSH policy, (2) a national OSH system, and (3) a national programme on OSH. The policy is to be developed in accordance with the principles of ILO C155 the Occupational Safety and Health Convention. ILO C155 sets out the principles of national policy on OSH, as well as action to be taken by governments and within enterprises to promote OSH and to improve working conditions.

Viet Nam ratified ILO C187 on 16 May 2014 and it will enter into force on 16 May 2015. This is a significant success because it makes Viet Nam the first country within ASEAN to have ratified both ILO C187 and C155. Viet Nam ratified C155 on 3 October 1994. This good OSH practice was shared with other ASEAN countries at the Regional ASEAN OSHNET Workshop on “Strengthening National OSH Policies referring to ILO C187” held in Viet Nam in 2014¹. Only Malaysia and Singapore have ratified C187 and no ASEAN countries have ratified C155. Thus, Viet Nam is a pioneer in ASEAN with regard to ratification of core ILO OSH standards.

Purpose, scope and clients

This evaluation was carried out over 29 working days from mid-March to end May 2015. The evaluation looked at all project

¹ The workshop actually took place slightly before the official ratification of ILO C187, and the good practice was shared in anticipation of ratification.

activities implemented from February 2012 to March 2015. It covered both project countries – Viet Nam and Cambodia, and the ASEAN component.

The geographical scope of the evaluation is generally limited to Bangkok, Thailand; Phnom Penh, Cambodia; Hanoi, Viet Nam, although some project activities were carried out in the provinces in Viet Nam. Due to time constraints, the decentralized perspective was included via telephone interviews rather than a mission.

The primary clients of the evaluation are ILO project management based in Hanoi and in Phnom Penh, management of the ILO/Japan Multi-lateral Programme, and the ILO regional and country offices, the donor agency, the members of the Project Advisory Committees.

Methodology of evaluation

The evaluation methodology involved a desk review of project documents and reports, as well as in depth interviews and focus group discussions with a range of stakeholders in Bangkok, Japan, Cambodia and Viet Nam. Primary and secondary data were analysed and compiled into a draft report into which various stakeholders provided input.

The evaluation was limited by the very short notice for the evaluation and the lack of adequate time for conducting field interviews, with many interviews in Cambodia and Viet Nam conducted with the assistance of a translator. Since the mission budget had to be spent by the end of March 2015, this cut short the available working days for the field mission. These factors meant that it was not possible to interview all stakeholders envisaged in the TOR. The evaluator and the national project coordinators prioritized interviews with the main stakeholders in each location, included telephone interviews with a sample of provincial level stakeholders, and conducted focus group discussions with the rest.

Other limitations of the evaluation included an apparent lack of sex-disaggregated data and very limited gender analysis in project documents, which may have inhibited a comprehensive gender evaluation as required by ILO templates for final evaluations. Moreover, the unavailability of a majority of

project documents in a UN working language inhibited a comprehensive analysis of what was actually carried out and to what standard.

Main Findings & Conclusions

The evaluation found that the project was relevant and well suited to (1) beneficiary requirements - in the ASEAN region, and at national and provincial levels in the project countries; (2) country needs - as identified in the First National OSH Master Plan in Cambodia and in the Second National OSH Programme in Viet Nam; and (3) global priorities as set out in ILO's Global Strategy on OSH. Also, the project complemented several other agency initiatives in Viet Nam and the region, namely the World Health Organization long term OSH programming, and the ASEAN Occupational Safety and Health Network initiative.

Furthermore, the project was effective in many ways. The project achieved all activities under the four immediate objectives, except for strengthening the occupational injury and disease reporting system in Viet Nam - due to the non-cooperation of the national partner. It was particularly effective with respect to Viet Nam's ratification of ILO C187 OSH Promotional Framework, the use of ILO participatory training courses for Work Improvement in Cambodia and Viet Nam at provincial levels, and promotion of the policy to ban asbestos in Viet Nam in line with the ILO Asbestos Resolution 2006.

Regarding efficiency, financial resources were allocated efficiently and strategically in some areas. The allocation of financial resources at provincial, national and regional levels delivered good value for money. Moreover, the project was resourceful in seeking funds from other sources for certain activities. This had the effect that the project was able to deliver better value for money by increasing the funds available to the project to carry out its activities. However, in other areas, financial and human resources were not allocated in the most efficient and strategic way. The project

was not cost-effective because it did not utilize the project budget to the best of its ability, allocating an insufficient amount for the Cambodia component and over funding the Viet Nam component. Human resource allocation was inadequate for the Cambodia component.

Recommendations

Three good practices emerged from the project: (1) the promotion of ratification and application of ILO C187 Promotional Framework for OSH Convention in a country that has already ratified ILO C155 OSH Convention, (2) the use of ILO's participatory training courses for Work Improvement at provincial levels to reach the informal sector through SMEs (WISE), and sectors dominated by women (such as agriculture and homeworkers, through WIND and WISH), and (3) use of grassroots movements to influence national level stakeholders about the merits of a policy to ban asbestos.

Several lessons may be learned from the project. First, good OSH project design and implementation should explore links to other OSH related projects within ILO, and with other UN agencies and development actors in project countries and the region, with a view to exploring synergies, sharing experiences, avoiding duplication, analyzing gaps, and potentially teaming up for joint implementation of certain components. Second, it is good project strategy to focus on OSH coverage in the informal sector, as well as the formal, at national and grassroots levels. Third, OSH is a good entry point for programming and organizing in the construction industry, which is prolific in rapidly developing economies of ASEAN, and inherently hazardous. Fourth, adequately funded national project coordinators are needed at the country level for multi country projects.

Main recommendations and follow-up

1. **Asbestos:** Given the success of the asbestos related outputs of the Viet Nam component of the project, consider replication and scaling up for Cambodia,

which is an asbestos exporting country and has high usage of asbestos in the construction industry.

2. **Entertainment industry:** Consider developing a Work Improvement participatory OSH tool tailored for workers in the entertainment industry, an industry which is inherently hazardous because of the increased risk of contracting HIV/AIDS and STDs, and one which is female dominated.
3. **Construction:** OSH is a good entry point for programming and organizing in the construction industry. It would be good to scale up and work more with employers, but also with unions in the construction sector.
4. **OSH coordination:** To support a multidisciplinary and coherent approach to OSH promotion, when designing & implementing projects, explore links & synergies with other ILO projects, UN and development actors to avoid duplication, address gaps, share experiences, and potentially team up for joint implementation of certain components.
5. **OSH ratification:** In line with the ILO Plan of Action 2010-2016 to achieve widespread ratification and effective implementation of the occupational safety and health instruments, consider programming for ratification and implementation of both ILO C155 and C187.
6. **OSH in the Informal economy:** It is good project strategy to focus on OSH coverage in the informal sector, as well as in the formal sector, at national and grassroots levels. Consider use of ILO's participatory training courses for Work Improvement at provincial levels to reach the informal sector through SMEs (WISE), and sectors dominated by women (such as agriculture and homeworkers, through WIND and WISH). Consider supporting Viet Nam's implementation of the new OSH law which extends coverage to the informal sector.
7. **Management:** Improve lines of communication and responsibility between ILO field and regional offices to improve delivery of technical assistance and central response to country level advice.
8. **Monitoring:** Implement more adequate monitoring arrangements and verification procedures to ensure that project funds are spent in the manner in which it was intended, and to verify what has actually been accomplished and to what standard. Properly vet potential national partners to handle project funds, and carry out proper risk analysis in the design phase.
9. **Governance:** Foster the spirit of tripartism that underpins all of ILO's work by ensuring that all Project Advisory Committees involve all tripartite constituents.
10. **Efficiency of resource use:** Adequately fund project coordinators at the country level for multi country projects. Projects need to streamline funding and recruitment processes at start up so as to avoid lengthy delays which impact on timely and quality achievement of project activities.
11. **Impact:** Consider carrying out an Impact Assessment of the Work Improvement participatory tools in the region, since they have been used for a long time with no quantifiable assessment of impact as yet. For example, Viet Nam has been using WIND since 1995.
12. **Sustainability:** An exit strategy is needed to deepen and build on achievements in Viet Nam; consider implementing this during the bridging period. The Cambodia component needs a second phase to ensure sustainability of most project benefits and to consolidate gains.
13. **Gender:** Consider addressing gender issues in OSH in hazardous industries e.g. mass faintings of women in factories, agriculture, home based workers, SMEs, informal sector. Include a gender allocation in the budget, and a gender mainstreaming strategy in the project document that forms the basis for implementation. Mainstream gender in the situation analysis, project goals, outputs, and indicators. Include sex-disaggregated data in the situation analysis, baseline data, and indicators to facilitate gender equality monitoring & evaluation.