



Evaluation Summary



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From the crisis towards Decent and Safe Jobs in Kyrgyzstan and Tajikistan, Phase II - Independent Midterm Evaluation

Quick Facts

Country: Kyrgyzstan and Tajikistan
Mid-Term Evaluation: January 2017
Mode of Evaluation: Independent
Administrative Office: CO-Moscow
Technical Office: DWT-Moscow
Evaluation Manager: Ms. Irina Sinelina
Evaluation Consultant: Ms. Katerina Stolyarenko
Project End: December 31, 2018
Project Code: RER/13/01/FIN
Donor & Project Budget: Ministry for Foreign Affairs of Finland
Keywords: employment policies; employability of vulnerable groups; working conditions; OSH management systems; social security policies and systems; maternity protection

Background & Context

The project “From the Crisis towards Decent and Safe Jobs, Phase II (DW II Project)” supports the ILO tripartite constituents in Kyrgyzstan and Tajikistan to implement specific decent and safe labour-related issues, related to the pursuit of Decent Work. Phase II was designed as a follow up to the project “From the Crisis towards Decent and Safe Jobs in Southern Caucasus and

Central Asia, phase I” implemented by the ILO from February 2010 to February 2014.

The immediate objectives of the Phase II are:

- Increase Constituents’ capacity to promote more and better jobs and enhance employment opportunities for young people;
- Enhance workplace compliance through Labour Inspection and facilitation of transitioning from informal to formal economy; and
- Improve capacity of constituents to extend national social protection systems.

The Contribution Agreement between ILO and the Ministry for Foreign Affairs of Finland for the implementation of the Phase II was officially signed in March 2014. However, the actual implementation of the Project started in August 2014 when the Chief Technical Advisor (CTA) was recruited. The total budget of the Project is EUR 4 million and the expected overall duration after project revision constitutes 48 months. As of December 31, 2016, approximately EUR 2,864,489 (56.20% of the total budget) has been spent/committed.

Methodology of evaluation

The evaluation adheres to the ILO standard policies and procedures, UNEG Norms and Standards as well as the OECD/DAC Evaluation

Quality Standards. It responds to twelve overarching questions inspired by the Project's Outcomes and by the internationally accepted evaluation criteria. The Evaluation Expert adopted a consultative and transparent approach and made use of the following methods and tools: (i) a desk review of literature, including the documents detailed in Annex 8.2; (ii) preparation of an evaluation matrix with related evaluation questions; (iii) semi-structured interviews with key informants and stakeholders; (iv) surveys among ILO staff and key project partners; (v) direct observation during field visits to Moscow/Russia, Bishkek/Kyrgyzstan and Dushanbe/Tajikistan; and (vi) de-briefing consisted of discussion on MTE findings, conclusions and recommendations with senior ILO officers and project staff in Moscow.

Main Findings & Conclusions

Relevance

The DW II Project is highly relevant to the ILO tripartite constituents in Kyrgyzstan and Tajikistan and in their view fully corresponds to their needs and priorities due to their low level of social protection, a large part of their population employed in the informal sector and being of young age, and with outdated labour market information systems. The information gathered from the desk review documents and interviews with the project's counterparts confirms that the DW II Project is effectively aligned with the National Development Frameworks in each target country. The Phase II is also linked to the key priorities of the UNDAF in the Republic of Tajikistan for the periods 2010-2015 and 2016-2020 and UNDAF in the Kyrgyz Republic for 2012-2016. The project contributes to the priority goals of the Tajikistan State Strategy for the Development of the Labour Market until 2020 and the National OSH Programme of Tajikistan

(2013-2016). The Phase II constitutes the implementation modality of the Decent Work Country Programme for the Republic of Tajikistan (2015-2017), in particular to 7 out of 10 its outcomes under all priority areas. The project is linked to the National Strategy for Sustainable Development of the Kyrgyz Republic 2013-2017 and the Social Development Programme for the period of 2015-2017. In the Kyrgyz Republic, because of absence of the DWCP, the Phase II directly contributes to implementation part of the DWT/CO-Moscow Country Workplan for 2014-2015 and 2016-2017.

Effectiveness

Evidence shows that the DW II project has made progress in achieving its outcomes in supporting inclusive job-rich growth, improve employment opportunities, working conditions and social protection of women and men. Feedback from evaluation interviews with stakeholders and surveys among ILO staff and partners show that the overall delivery of outputs under Outcome 3 is perceived as highly satisfactory (i.e. very good progress under each output, although reforming social security system is a long-term process which might go beyond the lifetime of Phase II due to its complexity), under Outcome 1 and 2 as satisfactory (the vast majority of activities under this component are still in process of implementation; however, there are good prospects for achieving the set targets), while under Outcome 6 - moderately satisfactory (the project started important initiatives on raising awareness of constituents on rights'-based equality model enshrined in C159 with regard to vocational rehabilitation and employment for disabled persons, but was not able to finish the started activities under this component due to the cuts in funding in 2015 and as a result had to discontinue this component starting from 2016).

Efficiency of resources use and management arrangements

Although the project did not have a separate M&E plan, it had a well-established documentation system consisting of the ToRs, minutes of meetings, mission reports, needs assessment/fact finding mission reports, reports for trainings and study tours, narrative progress reports and project workplans. However, the desk review showed that the reports vary in quality due to the absence of the standardized templates. Further, while the project has a clear approach towards training, the monitoring and evaluation of training remains focused on short term training outcomes and there is not as yet a mechanism to measure long term impacts of training in terms of retention of skills and knowledge, quality of ongoing training provided by project and institutional efforts in strengthening internal training capacities and sustainability of training. The DW II Project has a very good reporting practice. The reporting of the ILO (within the organization and to donor) has been in accordance with agreed on formats and time-frames.

Sustainability and impact orientation

In overall, the project has good signs of short-to-medium term impacts. A considerable impact can be found under Outcome 3 as the project determines the main directions for implementation of the Social Development Programme in the Kyrgyz Republic. Positive signs of impact could be seen under Outcome 1 and Outcome 2.

Recommendations

1. ILO DWT/CO – Moscow should develop a clear sub-regional strategy for the office which will spell out the objectives, areas and approaches on how the regional cooperation among target countries and institutions is taking place. This will allow to make proper

assessment of regional initiatives undertaken within the Phase II.

2. Taking into consideration fluctuations in donor funding for Phase II, it is recommended for ILO to expand the donor base and explore a possibility of introduction of a Donor/Multi-Donor Support Facility for the next phase of DW project to ensure the achievement of the set targets.
3. To strengthen the project management structure of DW II Project in Tajikistan, it is recommended to consider either hiring of a National Project Coordinator or make promotion of the National Project Assistant who performs assignments corresponding to NPC level to the position of the National Project Coordinator with provision of a proper induction training.
4. The project should strengthen the Monitoring and Evaluation System of DW II Project to better manage the process of monitoring, analysing, evaluating and reporting progress toward achieving the project's objectives. It should be done through development of a Performance Monitoring Plan (PMP) for the Phase II and preparation of the standardised templates of data collection tools like trainers' reports, feedback questionnaires, etc.
5. For ensuring more systematic approach towards institutional strengthening of the tripartite constituents under DW II Project, ILO should consider the development of a comprehensive capacity-building strategy for the project which will include an approach towards institutional strengthening of tripartite partners as well as standards towards trainings conduction, and monitoring and evaluation mechanisms. Database system for capacity building component across DW II Project should be also established and should include information both on trainees and trainers prepared by the project.

6. For better assessment of the efficiency of resources use and ensuring consistency with the concepts of Results-Based Management (RBM), it is recommended to introduce since 2017 the Output-Based Budget (OBB) method for preparation of the DW II Project budget which will link project expenditures to the specific activities, outputs and objectives. The OBB also will allow to provide the required information for reporting to the Governments regarding budget allocations and cost efficiency in each target country.
7. To ensure better sustainability of the work undertaken under SPF in Kyrgyzstan, ILO should ensure that the results of Assessment-Based National Dialogue (ABND) exercise will be incorporated in the new Social Protection Development Program for the Population of the Kyrgyzstan to be developed during 2017 as the current one is active only for the period of 2015-2017. Consider the provision of support for the design of specific social protection floor schemes or the reform of existing schemes based on the ABND recommendations.
8. During conduction of OSH risk assessment and management programme in Kyrgyzstan during 2017-2018 make sure that as many as possible of the 27 labour inspectors of the State Inspection for Ecological and Technical Safety under the Government of Kyrgyz Republic pass ToT as they teach entrepreneurs on the level of enterprises. Consider using the potential of the training center of the State Inspection for Ecological and Technical Safety for institutionalization of the risk assessment and management programme.
9. For achievement of the set targets under OSH component, ILO should continue to advocate for preparation and approval of the OSH National Programme.
10. Further work is necessary for enhancing capacity of constituents to address labour market inclusion regulatory aspects. It is recommended to carry out further promotional activities on maternity protection through legal analysis, training for capacity building, and awareness raising to support the ratification of ILO Convention No.183.
11. The Constituents, government in particular should consider conduction of public awareness raising campaign to increase the knowledge of population at large and youth in particular about the new Labour Code. Consider provision of support with printing of new Labour Code and its distribution among departments of Ministry of Labour, Public Employment Service and State Service for Supervision in the sphere of Labour, Employment and Social Protection of Population of Republic of Tajikistan at the local level.
12. The DW II Project could make great input in achievement of SDGs and monitoring of the implementation of SDGs by both project's target countries.
13. The project should better articulate an outcome-based strategy towards gender mainstreaming in order to strengthen the gender orientation of project's activities and activities undertaken by its partners, as well as impact of the project.
14. The project should develop sustainability plan for DW II Project which should both outlines the steps that should be taken throughout the rest of implementation period to ensure sustainability and describe how tripartite partners intend to carry forward project results.