



Evaluation Summary



International
Labour
Office

Evaluation
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Promoting Decent Work for Syrians under Temporary Protection and Turkish Citizens- Midterm evaluation

Quick Facts

Countries: *Turkey*

Mid-Term: 25th May 2021 to 31st July 2021

Evaluation Mode: *Independent*

Administrative Office: *ILO Ankara, Turkey*

Technical Office: **Migration**

Evaluation Manager: *M. Koray Abacı*

Evaluation Consultant(s): *Asude Örüklü & Aşyan Süleymanoğlu*

Project Code: Phase I: TUR/18/01/DEU and Phase II: TUR/19/03/DEU

Donor(s) & Budget: **Germany (KfW), Euro 25,538,614**

Keywords: Employment, employment creation, promotion of employment, livelihoods, migrant workers, capacity building, informal economy, international migration, migration policy, refugees, labour migration

Background & Context

Summary of the project purpose, logic and structure

Promoting Decent Work for Syrians under Temporary Protection and Turkish Citizens Project (“the Project”) funded by KfW seeks to upscale ILO’s ongoing efforts to support the labour market integration of Syrians under Temporary Protection (SuTP) as well as Turkish

Citizens (TC). The aim of the project is to promote decent work for SuTP and Turkish Citizens. The project is part of the five-year (2017-2021) comprehensive, holistic and integrated ILO Programme of Support that guides ILO’s Refugee Response. The project targets 14 priority provinces hosting the highest numbers of SuTP: Adana, Ankara, Aydin, Bursa, Denizli, Gaziantep, İstanbul, İzmir, Kayseri, Kocaeli, Konya, Manisa, Mersin and Şanlıurfa.

Present Situation of the Project

The Project was launched in December 2018, and was planned for four years, with the ultimate aim of supporting formality and tackling several root causes of informality. Due to the COVID-19 pandemic and policy changes concerning SuTPs, the Project has adapted its strategy, objectives and indicators several times. The majority of SuTPs are working in informal employment. Informal employment is strongly associated with lack of decent work opportunities, working poverty, low productivity, discrimination, exclusion from social security and vulnerabilities in the labour market. To increase the number of SuTP and TC working under decent conditions and contribute to the formalization efforts, the Project is designed around three objectives with specific aims:

Objective 1: “SuTP and TC are qualified to participate in the formal market,” which aims at building the skills of beneficiaries, so that they are qualified to participate in the formal labour market.

Objective 2: “Representational bodies of micro-enterprises are strengthened to support formalization of micro-enterprises and its workplaces for SuTP and

disadvantaged TC, which aims to promote formalization of micro-enterprises of Syrian and Turkish tradespersons and craftspeople and their employees.”

Objective 3: “Transition to formality is facilitated for SuTP and TC,” which aims to provide incentives to employers to hire SuTP and TC formally and support formal job creation.

Purpose, scope and clients of the evaluation

The main objective of this MTE is to assess the implementation of the Project to date and report on the results as well as define the precautions for enhanced implementation of the remaining part of the project. This evaluation, conducted between 25th May and 30th July 2021, was carried out in accordance with the guiding questions based on OECD-DAC criteria, relevance, effectiveness, efficiency, coherence, impact, and sustainability.

The evaluation aims to support the ILO to further learn from the experiences gained during the implementation of the project, with a view to draw lessons learned and good practices. In addition, it aims to come up with proposals for further improvements. The evaluation also ensures accountability to the implementing partners, donors and key stakeholders and promotes organizational learning within ILO as well as among key stakeholders.

Methodology of evaluation

The MTE was based on a combination of methods to gather information. The findings were derived from the desk review, one-on-interviews with stakeholders and the project team; and were critically reviewed, assessed, and systematized to identify trends in the responses and perceptions on the project’s results, overall performance, and perceived project challenges. Due to COVID-19 circumstances, all meetings including focus groups were organized online.

Main Findings & Conclusions

Based upon the detailed analysis and findings of the MTE; below are the main findings and conclusions:

- The Project was designed and is currently operating in a highly fluctuating political, social and economic environment and faced a

series of implementation challenges, some of which were anticipated by the ILO earlier like bureaucratic issues, however some were beyond control like the COVID-19 pandemic.

- Despite the challenges, the Project has also shown a flexible and responsive approach to the emerging needs and opportunities following the outbreak of COVID-19, the adaptation of project Objectives, activities and operation plan extending the incentives and financial support, which was very timely and in line with the needs and priorities of the target groups.
- The ILO Turkey office integrated the lessons learned from other refugee response programs, used the synergies effectively with the other ILO offices and the other international organizations in the field.

Relevance: Overall, the relevance of the Project is high as the project activities are well aligned with the project objectives, ILO strategic framework on refugees and decent work; as well as the United Nations Development Cooperation Strategy and national employment policy framework of the Project country. The Project design is able to (i) address needs of the target beneficiaries to access decent work opportunities, (ii) respond to the challenges in transition to formality and (iii) adapt the changing circumstances due to COVID-19. The general relevance, responsiveness, formality and social inclusion focus of the Project is widely appreciated by the stakeholders.

Effectiveness: The level of Project effectiveness varies among different project objectives. The Project is significantly effective in promoting transition to formality of the target beneficiaries. Both piloted designs of work-based learning (Objective 1) and the social security incentive programme building on transition to formality programme (Objective 3) have proven to be an effective and efficient way of improving the employability of SuTP and TC and their resilience. Adaptation of the project activities and approach of working with the employers directly is adequate and well-timed to meet the project timelines. The evaluation recorded efforts undertaken by the Project to start up Objective 2, however no progress has been observed during the first half of the project timeline.

Efficiency: The Project has shown a flexible and responsive approach to the emerging needs and opportunities following the COVID-19 outbreak. Based on the revisions of project Objectives, the budget and operation plans are now more focused, efficient and in line with the needs and priorities of the target beneficiaries. During the first two years of the implementation, ILO shared its extensive theoretical and practical experience on decent work, whereas the project management structure and technical capacity of ILO proved to be efficient. Overall, the national partners support the project activities. However, there is room for improvement in stakeholder communication by using the steering committee and engaging private sector and NGOs more actively for developing a more participatory approach.

The Coherence of the Project Design: The Project is built on the knowledge and lessons learned of the ongoing and completed projects, and there are examples of good synergies with the ILO Refugee Response Programme and with the work of other agencies in Turkey.

Impact Orientation and Sustainability of Interventions: The Project has high potential to bring a positive change. Sustainability of the Project results is highly linked to the ownership of the partners but also to the external factors such as labour market needs and establishing the institutional capacity which could be able to adapt to changing market needs and access direct beneficiaries. The capacities developed in the SSI is likely to remain and have the sustainability for their further implementations. Nevertheless, the incentive programme, KİGEP, will likely to cease to remain due to the absence of external funding (as a government agency, it is not likely to have an exclusive programme for SuTPs). On the positive side, KİGEP managed to create a certain level of awareness among the SuTPs which most likely to create a demand for formal and registered employment. However, significant and well-designed actions will be needed to ensure the institutional capacity for other local partners.

The impact of the Project is observed in social inclusion and transition to formality. Stakeholders across different categories value the positive effect of the Project in the areas of capacity building among target beneficiaries, raising awareness and providing opportunities for dialogue and social inclusion. A more

systematic approach to gender equality, which will be designed to engage with all major stakeholders, is needed to sustain current positive results.

Gender Equality & ILS and Social Dialogue: The Project has already noted some positive results (notably in the first component) for the employment of women. The incentives are mainly managed by the Project team, however institutionalized solutions may present sustainable outcomes. Gender equality in the workplace is a complex issue and requires a comprehensive and systemic approach. Incentives for women's employment and positive results could be used to raise awareness, however further actions will be needed to address possible barriers for the employment of women in cooperation with relevant actors. The Project promotes decent work practices at the beneficiary workplaces by reviewing employers' profile at the application stage and providing training. The Project engages with constituents on continuous basis. For tripartite dialogue, trade unions can also be considered to be included into regular communication. Given the limited representation of SuTP, opportunities for workplace social dialogue can be explored.

Lessons Learned

Some of the lessons learned from the project is as follows:

- **Pilot projects are crucial tools to assess the feasibility and effectiveness of interventions** targeting vulnerable groups, in particular if they plan to implement new incentives. The success of Objective 3 is highly linked to the expertise and lessons learned from the previous project funded by EU-MADAD. The established infrastructure and system allowed the Project to pass to the implementation stage quickly.
- **Identifying the both labour force and labour market needs is the key to plan and develop skill development programmes for refugees.** The target beneficiaries represent a diverse group of people with different educational backgrounds. Understanding the needs of these groups will help to place them with the suitable

workplaces and ensure the sustainability of the workforce.

- **Local ownership is significant for ensuring the efficiency and the sustainability of the Project.** Not only the capacity, but the interest of the partners and their matching capacity with the project activities should ideally be reassessed in detail in the early stages of the project implementation. In particular, changing circumstances and policy framework may shift their organizational agenda and their potential to contribute to the Project.
- **Flexibility is an important feature of the project design when operating in a politically fluctuating and risk-based environment.** The project has a potential to continue achieving positive results due to its flexibility to adapting objectives to the changing circumstances.

The Project has the ability to demonstrate some good practices:

- **Incentives on the social security schemes have proven to be effective to facilitate transition to formality.** The results from Objective 3 could be replicated by other donors in Turkey and globally.
- **Strong implementing partners facilitate Project implementation well.** The Project likely ensured the effectiveness of Objective 3 by creating strong partnership with SSI and taking measures such as capacity building among the SSI team, providing support in monitoring activities and raising awareness.
- **The Project is effective in encouraging women participation by creating incentives targeting beneficiary needs.**

Recommendations

Main recommendations and follow-up

The following recommendations were developed based on the findings and conclusions of the evaluation and comments from the stakeholder interviews.

1. Over the remaining project period, identify local partners' critical needs in terms of institutional capacity and focus on a communication strategy to connect ILO's and other stakeholders existing network on refugees and Micro, Small and Medium Enterprises (MSMEs) group to the information centres.
2. Use social dialogue to better identify the target group's needs and support the advocacy work on transition to formality by including the trade union representation into the Steering Committee and initiating Steering Committee meetings.
3. Use and workers' engagement mechanisms to better identify the target group's needs and support the advocacy work on transition to formality.
4. Consider developing a more sector-wide tailored approach as a pilot study which will better identify the labour market needs for Objective 1.
5. Consider developing a decent workplace approach while designing the training programs for direct beneficiaries and engaging directly with employers in building capacity to ensure decent work conditions.
6. Mainstream gender perspective systematically in whole project implementation approach
7. Keep on engaging with partners on monitoring results and build their capacity on monitoring and knowledge management.
8. Continue using communication and knowledge management to disseminate the results
9. Consider Requesting no cost extension

