



Evaluation Summary



International
Labour
Office

Evaluation
Office

Strengthening tripartite social dialogue: Assessment of RBSA-funded outcomes 2014-15 - Final evaluation

Quick Facts

Countries: Armenia, Azerbaijan, Georgia,
Kazakhstan

Final Evaluation: *Sept.-Nov. 2015*

Mode of Evaluation: *Independent*

Administrative Office: *DWT/CO-Moscow*

Technical Office: DIALOGUE

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Project End: December 31, 2015

Project Code: ARM129; AZE803; GEO803;
KAZ129

Donor & Project Budget: RBSA (US\$ 250,000)

Keywords: *social dialogue; social justice;
tripartism*

Background & Context

Summary of the project purpose, logic and structure

The overall objective pursued in all four selected countries under evaluation was STRENGTHENING TRIPARTITE SOCIAL DIALOGUE. This Strategic cross-cutting objective of the ILO was linked to ILO 2014-2015 Program & Budget Outcome 12 - Social Dialogue and Industrial Relations: Tripartism and strengthened labour market governance contribute to effective social dialogue and sound industrial relations.

In 2014–15, the focus of interventions was placed on three interrelated dimensions:

(1) strengthening institutional capacity and performance of labour market institutions and employers' and workers' organizations; (2) reinforcing constituents' capacity in relation to tripartite social dialogue, workplace and industrial relations, labour law reform and compliance with national labour legislation and regulation, international labour standards and applicable collective agreements; and (3) targeted assistance on these issues at the sectoral level and along supply chains. Stronger labour laws and social dialogue institutions were to enhance the capacity of tripartite constituents to engage in effective dialogue and negotiations at all levels of policy-making.

At the beginning of 2014-2015 biennium, the ILO DWT CO for Eastern Europe and Central Asia (ILO DWT/CO-Moscow) elaborated a set of initiatives aimed at fostering Social dialogue at the national level in Armenia, Azerbaijan, Kazakhstan and Georgia.

Purpose, scope and clients of the evaluation

The purpose of the evaluation was to assess the work done in order to inform the next steps and improve further programming. It would help determine what the ILO should be doing in the target countries and the broader sub-region prior to conceptualizing future interventions on social dialogue and labour dispute settlement or engaging into the design of new DWCPs.

The evaluation applied the key criteria of relevance, effectiveness, efficiency, sustainability and impact potential.

The scope of the evaluation is the projects/Country Programme Outcomes (CPOs) 2014-2015 in Armenia, Azerbaijan, Kazakhstan and Georgia and the related DWCP outcomes. Field research has been conducted in two target countries (Azerbaijan and Georgia). Assessment of other country components was done based on documentation review (desk research). The main clients of the evaluation are ILO management, specialists, staff and tripartite constituents in the target countries.

Methodology of evaluation

One of the first tasks of the evaluation consultant was to review the available literature and materials. Then the consultant carried out an orientation meeting with the ILO Moscow DWT-CO management and Senior Specialists and with officials of the Social dialogue Unit, ACT/EMP and ACTRAV in ILO Geneva HQ. It was followed by field missions to the targeted countries for meetings with the ILO staff, National Coordinators, and tripartite constituents. Information was collected by means of group and individual interviews with the stakeholders and events' participants.

The methodological approach for data collection was primarily qualitative in nature. The following methods were applied: desk review; direct observation in the field; focus group discussions (FGDs); key informant interviews (face-to-face, telephone or computer-assisted). Data from Integrated Resource Information System (IRIS) was analysed as well.

Main Findings & Conclusions

Though different in terms of their levels of national development and the stage of social and political evolution, all the countries under evaluation have in common a complicated process of transition from centrally planned to market economies and a lack of well-established social dialogue institutional frameworks and culture. The social “triangles” are undergoing deep and dynamic changes in line with new roles of the “angles”: Government, trade unions, and the emergence

of the private sector organizations as a new party to social dialogue.

Relevance

The activities and outcomes of ARM129, AZER803, KAZ129 and GEO803 linked to the ILO P&B Outcome 12 “Social dialogue and Industrial Relations: Tripartism and strengthened labour market governance contribute to effective social dialogue and sound industrial relations” and funded through RBSA, were highly relevant to the stated needs of the tripartite constituents.

The relevance was linked to strengthening both SD institutions/frameworks and the capacity of the tripartite constituents to be effectively and responsibly engaged in them at various levels - from national decision-making bodies to enterprise collective bargaining.

Validity of intervention design

Major impacts – measured through both institutional results (e.g. revitalizing of national tripartite commissions) and capacity-building indicators (e.g. strengthening collective bargaining capacity) – have been achieved, particularly when Milestones and their outputs were linked to a combination of Strategic P&B Outcomes.

Sustainability

ILO interventions represented medium- to long-term “investments” and often triggered a national follow-up with political, administrative and sometimes financial involvement of the constituents. Thus, establishment of a new system of labour relations will benefit present and future generations of the social partners. The declared intentions to ratify ILO Conventions, if materialised, are likely to produce longer term sustainable effects and benefits to the tripartite constituents.

Effectiveness

To a large extent interventions progress depended on the general level of reforms and transformations carried out in the country concerned, and on real political willingness of Governments to fully follow ILO principles and technical advice.

Strengthening the capacity of social partners to engage in collective bargaining at national and sectoral levels was the most effective form of ILO interventions in many cases. The effectiveness of the interventions would have been greater if respective DWCPs were in operation in all the countries under evaluation. Assistance in the implementation of recommendations of ILO supervisory bodies, which concerned all countries under evaluation, could have been of particular additional benefit of ILO RBSA-funded interventions.

Efficiency

Generally, RBSA resources have been used in an efficient way, producing synergies and multiplying effects with activities carried out through other financial modalities (RB, XBTC) and involving other human resources under streamlined management arrangements. At the same time, in a few cases a somewhat excessive flexibility of RBSA use made it difficult to assess the exact impact of RBSA-funded interventions.

Sometimes it led to a certain fragmentation and/or overlap of activities and entered into contradiction with strict criteria of Results Based Management, namely with indicator-related reporting under specific Outcomes. The temporary absence of an ACT/EMP Specialist in the Moscow team resulted in a proportionately lower level of activities carried out for employers' organizations, while some of them needed particularly strong support (e.g. in Kazakhstan following the complaint of the IOE).

Conclusions

Interventions and their impacts are in line with the needs of tripartite target groups: The results of RBSA-funded CPOs ARM129, AZE803, KAZ129 and GEO803 have been highly relevant and substantial. ILO interventions took place in different political contexts and at unequal stages of transition from centrally planned to market economies. Notwithstanding that, the outcomes achieved, as measured by the Milestones generally met, show the rightness of Strategic planning and managerial

arrangements in implementing activities which were well correlated with the expected immediate objectives of the projects and stated needs of the tripartite constituents.

Institutional impacts have strengthened industrial relations machinery: Impacts on institutional mechanisms helped revitalizing or launching National Tripartite Commissions which was one of key objectives of all four CPOs, though the ultimate success of ILO interventions continues to depend on the political will of national authorities. Notwithstanding that, the outcomes already achieved at other levels have strengthened Social dialogue, conflict prevention/settlement mechanism and collective bargaining, particularly in major economic sectors, as the most effective form of social partners' interaction. Tripartite General Agreements are a good illustration of the effectiveness of ILO assistance in the field of new industrial relations machinery.

Capacity impacts may be less visible but are longer-term: In all the countries the impacts on the capacity of tripartite partners to engage in Social dialogue and more sound industrial relations were very tangible though sometimes not very spectacular. In any case, the capacity-building impacts of ILO interventions seem to be the most sustainable and among the best investments into long-term democratic transformations in the countries under evaluation. Provision of new/better services to their members is considered as a key priority by the social partners.

Synergetic approach was the best recipe of interventions' success: Interventions carried out in a strategic framework of correlated and/or mutually complementing objectives provided more tangible and sustainable results. Such a synergetic approach implied close cooperation of staff involved in RB, RBSA and XBTC activities. On the other hand, it created some management, monitoring and reporting problems which need to be addressed by both Geneva HQ and the Moscow Office. Partly these problems are related to the under-staffing of the Moscow Office which human resources

do not fully meet extensive expectations and needs of national constituents in 10 countries covered by the DWT/CO-Moscow.

RBSA, a versatile financing modality, should be used more strategically: RBSA provided a valuable flexibility in reacting to sometimes urgent needs of the constituents and in bridging gaps between interventions funded through RB and XBTC budget lines. But what the RBSA is often lacking is its perception by the Donor community as a means of strategic impact. Strategic and/or catalytic dimension of RBSA modality and an adequate involvement of GB members in determining larger packages of such funds may need further consideration.

Recommendations

To further strengthen assistance through reinforced DWT/CO-Moscow staffing

The ILO HQ and the DWT/CO-Moscow should together continue their active interventions in all four countries - and not only in Azerbaijan and Georgia as target countries for the next biennium – and pay equal attention to the three constituents. The ILO HQ should support the Moscow Office by further strengthening its team with required additional technical Specialists. It may require additional financial provisions, but - compared to strategic importance of real political needs and potential gains – these financial costs seem justified and recommendable.

To persevere in increasing ILO impacts on streamlining national legislations

Assisted by recommendations of its supervisory bodies, ILO HQ and the DWT/CO-Moscow should further strengthen their assistance in the field of the improvement of national legislations, including the Labour Codes and the Laws on Employers' organizations and Trade unions. (Linked to Conclusion 3)

To better align 2016-17 outcomes at the country level with the ILO's P&B outcomes and SPF

ILO HQ should provide Moscow Office with support for ensuring alignment of 2016-17 outcomes at the country level with P&B outcomes and SPF. If need be, country outcomes should be aligned with a broader set of existing Strategic outcomes or a combination thereof for greater versatility. (Linked to Conclusion 5)

To support the development of evaluable strategies, outcomes and indicators

ILO HQ should provide proactive support to field offices for the development of evaluable strategies, outcomes and indicators of achievement, including RBSA-funded activities which should become more strategic in their approach. (Linked to Conclusion 6)