



Evaluation Summary



International
Labour
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From Protocol to Practice: a Bridge to Global Action on Forced Labor – Midterm independent evaluation

Quick Facts

Countries: *Nepal, Mauritania, Peru*

Mid-Term: *May 2018*

Evaluation Mode: *Independent*

Administrative Office: *Fundamentals*

Technical Office: *Fundamentals*

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Project Code: *GLO/15/26/USA*

Donor(s) & Budget: *USDOL \$11,495,138*

Keywords: *Forced Labour, Protocol, ratification, evaluation, constituents*

Background & Context

Summary of the project purpose, logic and structure

Present Situation of the Project

The Bridge project aims to support global and national efforts to eliminate or significantly reduce forced labor by supporting the implementation of the 2014 ILO Protocol and recommendations on Forced Labor. The Project's management structure includes work at the global level, managed from Geneva, as well as at national levels initially in Peru, Nepal and Mauritania. The priority countries were selected to capture

geographic diversity and different forms of forced labor. Since the project was awarded, Malaysia and Niger have been added, and alter Thailand and the Dominican Republic (the latter as participating countries and will only include a limited number of activities).

The project identifies 5 intermediate objectives: 1) Increased knowledge, awareness, and ratification of the ILO Protocol and Recommendation; 2) Improved and responsive national policies and/or action plans and/or legislation on forced labor with strong implementation, monitoring, and enforcement mechanisms; 3) Increased efforts to collect reliable data in order to carry out research and share knowledge across institutions at national, regional, and global levels; 4) Workers' and employers' organizations actively support the fight against forced labor; and 5) Increased awareness and access to livelihood programs for victims of forced labor.

The project was a sole source award and designed jointly between ILO and USDOL with participation of key national stakeholders.

The project is managed by the ILO from Geneva with substantive oversight from USDOL. All management decisions, such as budget and work plans are agreed upon jointly. In addition, there is a National Program Coordinator in each implementation country.

The project was awarded in September of 2015 and is schedule to finish September of 2019. The initial budget of \$9,800,000 had increased to a total of \$14,395 by September of 2017. At the time of the

evaluation the average the average reported financial delivery rate was 30%¹.

Purpose, scope and clients of the evaluation

The purpose of the mid-term evaluation is to provide an independent assessment of the performance of the project, in terms of progress towards the stated goals, as well as to document learning and good practices, and make recommendations toward enhancing the project's impact and sustainability. As a pilot it also seeks to provide learning to inform future development efforts.

The scope of the evaluation covers programme implementation from the start of the Project in September 2015 up to and including November 2017² Only the global activities and three initial priority countries are covered by this mid-term evaluation.

The primary users of the evaluation are expected to be USDOL and the ILO as well as national counterparts of the countries covered by the evaluation. The Midterm Evaluation (MTE) is expected to inform development of the project in the other countries, as well as other practitioners involved in the prevention of forced labor.

Methodology of evaluation

This is an eminently formative exercise with some summative elements. As such, it is forward looking and seeks to identify components that will help improve programme performance. The evaluation conclusions stem from the systematic triangulation of data collected from varied methods including: systematic secondary document review; semi-structured interviews (KII); focus group discussions, direct observation when available and validation workshops with key stakeholders. The underlying conceptual approach used is Appreciative Inquiry, selected for its ability to identify strengths, good practices and opportunities, while also highlighting underlying factors that may have hindered progress.

Due to the independent nature of some of the project elements, such as work on surveys or the work of ITUC, it has proven challenging to come to conclusions that can apply across the board. The very

tight timeframes envisioned sometimes proved to be insufficient limiting the team's ability to triangulate data in some areas.

Main Findings & Conclusions

1. The sole source award is an effective mechanism to ensure project coherence and allows sufficient flexibility to adapt project strategy to the specifics at country level. Building on existing initiatives and strengthening existing structures. The downside of this process is that it reduces the implementation life of the project to three years, possibly too short for such a complex issue.
2. Project design with the inclusion of both normative elements and on-the-ground piloting experience, together with the identification of five intermediate objectives, amounts to a comprehensive approach that tackle the a complex problem at different levels.
3. Beyond the overall thematic coherence, the project implementation functions as small parallel projects fairly independent of each other. This results in increased demands on the project management team, especially as a result of the process of adding new countries, as a result opportunities for synergies and cross-learning may be lost.
4. The evaluation confirmed the project's TOC is still valid and addresses all key elements that are relevant to what is in effect a complex and multi-layered problem, however, the project design might have benefitted from a sequenced approach, with research and normative elements starting first to ensure the knowledge and tools are in place before starting with advocacy and livelihood pilots.
5. The project design adequately incorporated minorities and vulnerable groups, however, consideration of the gender aspect was weak. This led to generic approaches which did not take into

¹ These numbers exclude fixed costs for Nepal and yet to be verified by the financial department.

² Occasionally progress up to the time of the evaluation (February 2018) has been included

account specific needs or challenges, significantly absent was the lack of analysis of the national context, often patriarchal, which normalized certain types of exploitative labor (for both men and women).

6. Ratification of the Protocol by 22 countries at the time of the of the evaluation exceeded project goals and achieved the objective of creating momentum for the Protocol, however, caution should be taken when using ratification as an indicator as ratification of the Protocol does not guarantee compliance.
7. Current political instability in the three initial priority countries had an impact on the project's progress but also provided new opportunities, for example, in Nepal current changes provide the project with a unique opportunity as hundreds of laws will be revised in a short period of time.
8. Awareness raising has been a key activity of the project. Overall the progress at the global level in this outcome is delayed but expected to be completed before the end of the project, with the 50 For Freedom campaign having exceeded initial expectations. At the country level progress is mixed. Of the countries under evaluation Peru, having benefitted from a previous project, is most advanced and in a position to provide guidance from lessons learned to the other countries. In line with the piloting and learning objective of the project all three countries have developed innovative mechanisms.
9. In terms of improved and responsive national policies and/or action plans and/or legislation on forced labor with strong implementation, monitoring, and enforcement mechanisms; a key result, which builds on previous work by ILO-USDOL is the introduction of the national Legislative Decree 1323 in Peru that classifies forced labor as a crime. In Nepal, an office-wide response to legislation as well as the creation of a multi-ministry task-force exemplifies how ILO can provided added value towards this goal.
10. In terms of guidelines on statistical indicators and survey methods for the International Conference of Labor Statisticians, the project has supported the creation of a common framework for measuring bonded labor and forced labor. If adopted in October of 2018 this will be a significant contribution of the project.
11. In terms of increasing the availability of reliable data, a significant achievement was the inclusion of forced labor indicators into the Nepal Labor Force Survey, this will provide regular data collection and lessons learned on how to for the other countries. The project has also helped to highlight the political and sensitive nature of this type of exercise. As such, the importance of the processes required to create the necessary conditions bring these products about should not be underestimated. These processes are often slow and can require many years. Identifying means to measure the progress and achievements in the process should be found to better reflect the progress and achievements of the project.
12. Very much in line with ILO's tripartite nature, the project sought to promote activities that can bring the workers and employers on board as allies. These initiatives are key to ensuring that employers and businesses understand their role in preventing forced labor. The positive response to the Bridge confirms the need for work in this area. The Bridge also supported the International Trade Union Confederation's ongoing efforts for the implementation of the Protocol in Mauritania and Paraguay.
13. At the time of the evaluation, Nepal was the only country that had begun implementing the livelihoods component. Their experience will provide important inputs to the other countries, for example, their experience highlighted the importance of identifying eligibility and selection criteria which take into account vulnerability and provide transparency, as well as training options that take into account the low-level schooling of those most vulnerable. Of particular importance in

this initiative was the identification of empowerment and psychological support as a key element when supporting a population that has been subject to abuse.

14. In terms of efficiency, some of the initial management structures proved to be insufficient. In the case of overall project management from Geneva, resources have been stretched by the additional time requirements stemming from the various official project revisions, the additional preparatory work required to incorporate new countries, and the need to oversee the administrative management of Mauritania, all of which were not originally envisioned in the project and which diverted resources away from the M&E function.
15. The project's sustainability strategy relies on the promotion of inherently sustainable elements. As such, capacity building, research and the provision of reliable data (such as surveys) are not only expected outputs but also the strategy for sustainability beyond the projects' life. towards evidence-based policy-making as well as awareness raising.

progress in long-term processes (not just goals), as well as results where currently there is only output level. Focus on indicators to ensure they are a) useful for management of the programme and b) results oriented (RBM). b) **Revise existing reporting mechanisms to promote learning.**

4. **Institutionalize capacity building** to ensure sustainability
5. Ensure a more substantive **gender-sensitive approach** to educate implementers and counterparts and help visualize cultural biases.
6. **Incorporate lessons learned from livelihoods experience in Nepal** into future trainings including a) ensure there are clear eligibility and selection criteria in place which take into account vulnerability, the context and the need for empowerment and psychosocial rehabilitation, and a mechanisms to monitor these; and b) ensure there is a clear post-training strategy with all necessary aspects to ensure training (output) translates into outcome (increased livelihood).

Recommendations

The following **recommendations** are proposed as a means to strengthen project effectiveness and efficiency:

1. **Align project goals** (outputs) with findings from this report, lessons learned and changes in the operating context with the view of achieving maximum impact in the time remaining.
2. **Increase staff capacity** at Geneva level to free up resources for the learning element of M&E and to accommodate the increased demand for support due to the larger number of countries and the expected increased requirements for support to IO5.
3. **Strengthen M&E** through a) revision of the **indicators** to ensure they are able to measure