Free Movement of Persons and Transhumance in the IGAD Region: Improving Opportunities for Regular Labour Mobility

QUICK FACTS

Countries: IGAD Members states - Djibouti, Ethiopia, Kenya, Somalia, South Sudan, Sudan and Uganda

Evaluation date: 13 September 2023

Evaluation type: Project

Evaluation timing: Final

Administrative Office: CO-Addis Ababa

Technical Office: MIGRANT, DWT/CO-Cairo, SKILLS, ENTERPRISES (SME & SFU)

Evaluation manager: Peneyambeko Alina Munkawa

Evaluation consultant(s): Loes van der Graaf (team leader) Rimantas Dumcius, , Radvile Bankauskaite, Tomas Armalys

DC Symbol: RAF 16/06/EUR

Donor(s) & budget: European Union Trust Fund for Africa, 7,85 million EUR

Key Words: Labour migration, mobility, capacity building, economic and social development, equal rights, labour standards, poverty alleviation, social dialogue, social protection, tripartism.

BACKGROUND & CONTEXT	
Summary of the project purpose, logic and structure	The ILO, with the EU's financial support, implemented the "Free Movement of Persons and Transhumance in the IGAD Region: Improving Opportunities for Regular Labour Mobility" Project between March 31, 2017, and April 30, 2023. The Project's overall goal was to improve opportunities for regulated labour mobility and decent work within 7 IGAD (Djibouti, Ethiopia, Sudan, Somalia, Kenya, Uganda, and South Sudan) countries. Initially, the Project had two specific objectives, which, after a Project orientation in 2019, left only one specific objective: strengthening the knowledge base for developing labour market and mobility policies and measures in IGAD countries.
Present situation of the project	According to the Programming of the Project, the Project ended on the 30th of April in 2023, followed by an evaluation of the Project. The final report with integrated stakeholder comments was submitted on the 15th of July.
Purpose, scope and clients of the evaluation	This is the final independent evaluation of the FMPT project. The evaluation covers all activities and components carried out by the Project under the direct responsibility of the ILO throughout the Project's lifetime (between March 2017 and April 2023). Primary users of the evaluation include: The IGAD Member States' tripartite constituents (including CIE, HACTU, national employers' and workers' organisations and Ministries of labour, and Ministries of Foreign Affairs), partners (IGAD Secretariat), the donor (EUD), ILO COs (Addis Ababa and Dar Es Salaam), DWT Cairo, ILO Regional Office for Africa (ROAF), Technical back-stoppers at headquarters (MIGRANT) and other stakeholders
Methodology of evaluation	The evaluation applied the key OECD/DAC evaluation criteria. It complied with the ILO Policy Guidelines for results-based evaluation (2020) and the UNEG Ethical Guidelines and Norms and Standards in the UN System. During the evaluation, PPMI followed strict data protection policies aligned with the General Data Protection Regulation from the European Union. The evaluation relied on desk research, interviews, and a stakeholder workshop, allowing for a great degree of triangulation. While the evaluation relied on the mid-term evaluation, in all data collection tools and approaches, the evaluation team ensured that staff, constituents, partners and donors could provide their input. At the regional and country levels, all stakeholders were given an equal opportunity to participate in data collection and contribute to the evaluation. Overall, 27 interviews were conducted with national, regional, and global representatives. The final stakeholder workshop focused on the dissemination of the findings and conclusions of the evaluation.

While some difficulties were encountered stemming from limited coverage of field visits, availability of stakeholders, institutional memory and the need for some aspects of impact to still materialize the evaluation team was able to mitigate these limitations. In particular, by a careful triangulation of data, collaborating with carefully selected national experts and adjusting to the availability of stakeholders.

MAIN FINDINGS & CONCLUSIONS	The Project was **relevant** for constituents and stakeholders as it included them in Project design, leading to a theory of change reflecting their needs. Regional and national governments benefitted from the development of migration governance expertise, policies, and frameworks and helping fill in knowledge gaps. The main beneficiaries - regular and irregular migrants – benefited from the harmonisation of migration policies and frameworks, creating opportunities for regular migration. Promoting ILS and workers' rights improved access to decent working conditions. The needs of ILO constituents were also accounted for as the Project undertook capacity-building activities in the field of labour migration. The fit and relevance of these activities were reinforced by ILO's prior experience in the region and work conducted prior to implementation to understand the socioeconomic condition and needs.

The Project was generally **effective** across all five result areas. The efforts to produce knowledge products helped inform labour policy negotiations and the drafting of key migration-related documents. Similarly, the Project's capacity building and other forms of support helped understand migration trends. At the same time, it contributed to a better understanding of a human rights-based approach to labour migration governance, as evidenced by the support of policy frameworks and the drafting of BLA agreements. Furthermore, the Project significantly contributed to social dialogue through capacity-building activities and the creation of a regional employer's union. However, despite these developments, stakeholders still need support in working with labour migration data and technical skills related to managing labour migration.

Well-developed Project management mechanisms ensured resilience when faced with COVID-19, and the M&E mechanisms provided sufficient feedback, leading to a successful reorientation of the Project to suit beneficiary needs. These factors contributed to an **efficient** delivery of results in line with available financial resources. However, the lack of human resources led to staff being overworked when meeting established goals.

The Project's **impact** and **sustainability** is ensured by anchoring policy frameworks into regional and national governance frameworks and the use of pre-existing governance structures for Project implementation. Furthermore, a sense of ownership was created

during the Project due to the cooperation of national and regional constituents and stakeholders. However, sustainability could still be jeopardised due to shortcomings in stakeholder capacity, the need to continue improving the IGAD secretariat's technical capacity and complex external factors.

Therefore, the Project was well designed, had a valid theory of change and incorporated the needs of various stakeholders and constituents all the while successfully delivering on them due to efficient management and monitoring mechanisms. Furthermore, the Project results show great potential for sustainability, with barriers stemming mostly from external circumstances rather than Project design issues.

RECOMMENDATIONS, LESSONS LEARNED AND GOOD PRACTICES

Recommendations	**ILO should ensure continuous technical support for the national-level implementation of the Protocol and Declaration, as well as the implementation of the LMIS and ILS, covering all IGAD MS.** While the Project achieved significant improvements, there is strong doubt among stakeholders whether the IGAD secretariat and its MS can introduce the necessary steps and changes to ensure the implementation of these documents – which is necessary to ensure impact. Therefore, steps need to be taken to ensure that the implementation of the aforementioned documents continues. ILO, Priority high, medium resources, Short-term timing
	ILO should continue enabling the role of IGAD as a political convener and provide logistical and technical support to IGAD's various efforts at the regional level. The Project has significantly improved the IGAD Secretariat's capacities. However, they still require significant support to oversee labour migration governance in the region. In particular, the ILO needs to support discussion mechanisms such as the ministerial meeting and support social dialogue. Furthermore, given its capacity and recognition, it can continue to play a role in supplementing the IGAD's capacity to tackle regional-level issues related to labour and social protection, facilitating labour agreements and disseminating lessons learned. ILO, Priority high, low resources, Short-term timing
	ILO should closely monitor the national-level activities of other development actors, such as IOM, and ensure clear delineation and alignment between ILO's activities and the activities of other ongoing projects that also target similar national institutions. Despite the considerable degree of coherence at the time, the Project ran into issues in ensuring complementarity with other Projects. For example, at times, the ILO encountered difficulties in coordinating its efforts with the IOM leading to overlap in Project activities and potentially contributing to inefficiencies. Similarly, the significant presence of ILO in the Horn of Africa through its various projects sometimes confuses

This evaluation has been conducted according to ILO's evaluation policies and procedures. It has not been professionally edited, but has undergone quality control by the ILO Evaluation Office.

4

stakeholders. Therefore, steps must be taken to ensure stakeholders' greatest amount of coherency and clarity. ILO, Priority high, medium resources, Short-term timing

ILO should support the national tripartite constituents by helping create more opportunities for exchange. IGAD countries face unequal development and have achieved varying progress towards key aspects of the Protocol and Djibouti Declaration. To ensure that these differences do not become detrimental to the goals of the Project, it is important that countries have opportunities to discuss relevant issues with each other not only at the IGAD level but also at the interstate level. ILO, Priority high, medium resources, medium-term timing

ILO should support the IGAD MSs in better documenting the best practices and lessons learnt in the labour migration field and sharing them between IGAD and other RECs. Given that MS may not always have the needed capacities, it is important to ensure that key lessons are not lost, and that ECs are able to learn from each other. Similarly, given the prevalence of migration on the continent, retaining the knowledge produced and disseminating it across different economic unions in Africa is important. Therefore, workshops and yearly high-level meetings can play an important role in this respect. ILO and FMPT, Priority high, high resources, medium-term timing

The ILO should ensure the allocation of sufficient (human) resources to implement future regional programming. The Project was implemented with high efficiency. However, it also needed more human resources. This led to insufficient support in some countries and overtime among staff to ensure that activities were met. While contracted consultants can support the activities, they are not a long-term solution, as they are not engaged in day-to-day management. ILO and FMPT, Priority high, high resources, medium-term timing

Efforts to continue capacity-building activities must be continued, given their perceived importance to stakeholders. ILO should continue strengthening capacities and expanding capacity-building activities while supporting national constituents in disseminating knowledge received during training. For example, the opportunities for the "train the trainers" system could be explored to further enhance national capacity without requiring extensive resource investment. ILO, Priority high, medium resources, medium-term timing

This evaluation has been conducted according to ILO's evaluation policies and procedures. It has not been professionally edited, but has undergone quality control by the ILO Evaluation Office.

5

Main lessons learned and good practices	**Lesson learned 1.** The Project has proven to be efficient, but both ILO staff and stakeholders noted that the Project was too large compared to the staff members assigned to it at the regional and national levels. This led to the staff's exhaustion and unequal support for the Project countries. Hence, it's important to have sufficient staff at the national and regional levels to ensure proper support for projects of such size and complexity. **Lesson learned 2.** To improve coherency in the future, ILO and IOM officials need to delineate roles regarding labour migration. Otherwise, they will continue to act inefficiently and undermine the one-UN principle. **Lesson learned 3.** Initially, the different locations of IGAD and ILO tended to impact the work of the two organisations negatively. The move to Djibouti allowed ILO and IGAD to work significantly closer, and ILO staff regularly visited the IGAD office. This shows that the closeness of key actors in a Project can have a vital role in influencing their cooperation. **Good practice 1.** The Project had well-planned M&E activities. For example, the mid-term evaluation and related M&E activities identified challenges in implementing the original log frame. This led to a reorientation of the Project, making it relevant for stakeholders and constituents, showing that reorientation is not a sign of failure but flexibility. **Good practice 2.** ILO and IGAD had a clear division of labour. ILO provided technical support and knowledge to IGAD and national stakeholders, while IGAD and MS implemented Project activities. This ensured the most significant benefits and relevance for regional and national stakeholders. Since many activities were initiated by stakeholders, there was also significantly less resistance from different actors helping the Project work successfully towards its outcomes. **Good practice 3:** In light of climate change, including an environmental sustainability focus was very important. Stakeholders deemed activities related to the topic as relevant and important. Their implementation helped highlight the importance of climate change and help the relevant stakeholders.