



Evaluation Summary



International
Labour
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Regional Fair Migration Project in the Middle East (Fairway Project)

Quick facts

Country: Lebanon, Jordan, Kuwait, Bahrain and the Middle East Region

Final evaluation date: October 2018 to March 2019

Evaluation mode: Final Independent Project Evaluation

Administrative office: ROAS

Technical office: Labour Migration Branch, Geneva

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Project code: RAB/15/03/CHE

Donor(s) and budget: Swiss Agency for Development Cooperation; USD 2,723,283

Keywords: Fair Migration, Migrant Workers, Decent Work, Policy Change, Media, Youth

Background and context

Summary of the project purpose, logic and structure

The ILO “Regional fair migration project in the Middle East” (hereafter referred to as Fairway or the Project) started in July 2016 and with three cost extensions, will be completing by 31st December 2019. A second phase is planned to start in January 2020. The overall goal of the project is to address some of the key drivers of decent work deficits of the migrant labour force employed in the domestic and construction sectors in four selected Middle-Eastern countries:

Lebanon, Jordan, Kuwait and Bahrain. Because of its regional approach, the Fairway project also contributes to ILO’s aim of facilitating and enhancing the (inter)regional dialogue on labour migration issues between countries of origin and destination with a particular focus on the Arab States that account among the main destination countries of migration globally.

In working toward its developmental objective of achieving fair migration and decent work of low skilled migrant workers (MWs) in the project countries, the phase 1 of the project’s outcome areas include supporting policy change through evidence-based knowledge creation and dissemination, improvement of institutional mechanisms and operational modalities of government institutions, core service delivery to vulnerable migrant workers through government institutions, trade unions (TUs) and migrant workers’ associations, and negative employer attitudes against mainly female migrant domestic workers in countries of destination.

Evaluation background and methodology

Evaluation Background

The objective of the phase 1 final independent evaluation is to ascertain the Fairway project’s progress towards targets, assess and analyse challenges faced during implementation, and provide recommendations applicable to Phase 2. The clients of the evaluation are the ILO-Fairway project team, the ROAS management and the donor Swiss Agency for

Development Cooperation (SDC). The primary users of the evaluation, together with the clients, are the tripartite constituents and all the other implementing parties involved by the project. The evaluation has taken place from October 2018 to March 2019 and has included three phases: a) An inception phase (October 2018 to January 2019); b) Field work visits to three of the four countries covered by the project: Lebanon, Jordan and Kuwait (January 2019), and c) The analysis and reporting phase (February to March 2019).

Evaluation Methodology

The evaluators collected data through a combined approach of desk review of project documentation and other relevant publications and reports; semi-structured interviews with key persons and focus group discussions with migrant workers, migrant workers' employers, government and media agencies staff. During field visits, the evaluators interviewed key persons in Bahrain through Skype and phone calls. A purposeful, non-random sampling methodology was used to select the interviewees in the inception phase and evaluators met with 98 persons. Finally, the team used qualitative data analysis methods to triangulate, and synthesize the data gathered and prepare the findings.

Main Findings & Conclusion

Main findings

Relevance and Validity of Design

The Project's three interrelated outcome areas strategically address the needs of the targeted tripartite constituents and specifically: a) Critical needs of MWs; b) Shortcomings of tripartism in the region by adopting a dual approach involving both TUs and CSOs; c) Technical and legislative gaps of the labour related government institutions. Through its comprehensive approach on labour migration, Fairway certainly constitutes an added value to the ILO's Fair Migration Agenda endorsed by the by ILO's tripartite constituents at the International Labour Conference of 2014 as well as by the Abu Dhabi Dialogue in 2014. Further, the Project is highly

relevant to international development priorities as Decent Work and fair migration feature strongly in the Declaration on the 2030 Agenda, especially for target indicators 8.8; 10.7 and 8.5.

The project design is coherent, with logical correlations between the objectives, outcomes and outputs. Overall, the TOC is well articulated. Although the assumptions have proven largely true, it is important to note that participation of governments and workers' organisations in an ILO project does not reflect their willingness to change policies or structures significantly.

Effectiveness

Outcome 1: Quality knowledge products on labour migration issues have been created and strategically disseminated, reaching key stakeholders. Some key evidence-based research has been directly referenced during high-level conferences and consultations. The Policy Advisory Committee (PAC) has met regularly and has had very useful discussions that inform Fairway and senior management of ILO. However, the uptake of these discussions is primarily by Fairway despite its original aim of acting as a think tank for the ILO ROAS.

Fairway operates in a very volatile political environment and fair migration do not constitute a priority in governments' agenda. Structural policy change has not happened yet, or has happened with limited benefit to migrant workers. However, the Project has had a series of dialogues with governments and relevant stakeholders at the national level to prepare the ground for broader policy change achieving valuable interim steps, but indicators currently do not track interim steps towards policy change.

Outcome 2: Trainings and capacity building have enabled the government to review and consider amending its policies and procedures. Examples include gap assessments of the labour inspection systems in Bahrain and Jordan, and consideration of legislative reform on prohibition of recruitment fees being charged to workers in Kuwait. Further, capacity building efforts have ensured ownership of the

initiative by the partners, ensuring sustainability. The examples include *a pilot project with the Office of Public Notaries in Lebanon aiming at ensuring that notaries use a right-based approach during the contract registration process*, and the complaints resolution system of the DWD, Jordan.

Overall, the project has constantly engaged with TUs to the extent possible and tried to stimulate opportunities to bring TUs and CSOs together. Some remarkable outcomes have been achieved, such as the foundation of the Sandigan Kuwait Domestic Workers Association (SKDWA). Deeply-rooted challenges are encountered in the Lebanese and Jordanian contexts due to competition and subsequent lack of coordination among TUs and CSOs that lies beyond the Project's operations. This has led to unintended impacts in terms of constraining the project capacity to continue consistent work initiated in Jordan with the General Federation of Jordanian Trade Unions (GFJTU) and the Arab Trade Union Confederation (ATUC).

Outcome 3: The fellowship for journalists and the production of a Migration Glossary (MG) have been key achievements. While media agencies find the MG very useful, actual use is contingent on the adaptation of the MG to country contexts, and its ownership and promotion through prominent state-owned and private agencies. Similarly, stronger focus on country contexts for the fellowship would significantly improve the value of the programme to the participants. The promotion of youth networks is an initiative that has had a successful start and needs continuation and mentoring to complete the task of establishing them as vibrant networks that take the campaigns to different regions of their respective countries. Engagement with employers through workshops and campaigns have created more awareness and enabled a discussion on practices and attitudes. However, effectiveness of these strategies is too early to measure.

Monitoring & Evaluation System

Efforts have been made to strengthen the M&E system after the Mid-Term Evaluation (MTE)

improving the Project Monitoring Framework (PMF) and conducting accurate result analysis through pre-tests and post-impact measurement tools for all categories of trainees. Further steps are needed to monitor outcomes at policy level, small steps towards larger policy change may be identified as interim targets, which would enable to better assess and highlight Fairway's contribution to broader goals. Room for improvement exists at the behavioural change monitoring level and for the monitoring of media-related activities. As per the former, a clear baseline has not been established. However, raw data has been collected and could be used to establish one for the second phase of the project. As per the latter, language content has not been monitored through systematized tools, and impact on readers has not yet been assessed properly.

Efficiency

Fairway has been a highly efficient project, compared to its overall expenditure. The Project has shared and leveraged resources with the Work in Freedom (WIF) project and potential overlap of the two projects in Lebanon and Jordan has been minimized through backstopping by the Deputy Regional Director and the Senior Migration Specialist in ILO ROAS. ILO's specialists have provided the crucial linkages among the Project and the constituents; however, some specialists have been involved to solve emerging problems, rather than to strategize the intervention.

Effectiveness of Management Arrangements

Although the overall management arrangements have been positive, smooth and timely with project partners, room for improvement exists concerning: a) time framing of pilot programmes, b) higher payments for national collaborators/experts, and c) composition and placement of the technical team.

Impact Orientation and Sustainability

According to the interviewed stakeholders, the Fairway project has contributed well towards the larger goal of fair migration and decent work of low-skilled migrant workers in the project countries. Impact, however, will be perceivable only in the long-term, and even then, Fairway and ILO would have

contributed along with several other stakeholders to achieve the goals.

Tripartite and Gender Issues

The Project has conducted extensive consultations with all tripartite constituents and engaged in supporting strategic and structural changes. However, a resolution of the shortcomings of the tripartism characteristics in the region lies beyond the scope of a Technical Cooperation project, requiring the guidance of a consistent strategy at the ROAS level in addressing competition among 'tripartite plus' partners especially in Lebanon and Jordan. This hampers the capacity of a Technical Cooperation Project such as Fairway to bring them closer, and to address the shortcomings of tripartism in the region through the so called 'dual approach' (aiming at working with both TUs and CSOs and to bring them closer).

The Fairway project is well informed about the discrimination, abuse and working and living conditions of women migrant domestic workers, and their lack of access to services and justice. Gender sensitivity is incorporated into all training. However, mental health needs should be recognized as OSH issues and be better integrated in OSH studies.

Positive and Negative Unintended Outcomes

An unintended positive outcome of the dissemination of Fairway knowledge materials was their use at Global Compact on Migration negotiations by the Philippines delegation. This also constitutes evidence of strategic and effective dissemination of policy knowledge products by the Fairway team. An unintended negative impact pertaining to the provision of legal services through a pilot project, was the inability of FENASOL to pursue court cases filed on behalf of MWs, which Fairway will find the resources to mitigate.

Conclusion

The Fairway project is overall well designed and implemented. Although policy change indicators have proven over-ambitious in retrospect, these could be readapted for the second phase to better assess Fairway contributions to long-term goals and structural policy change. The Project is highly valuable as it has contributed to strengthened ILO relations with government constituents in the countries of operation, especially in Kuwait and Bahrain where labour migration flows are high. In Kuwait, the dual approach taken to promote coordination among TUs and CSOs and build migrant workers voices has had very valuable results. Nonetheless, strategic discussion at the ROAS and HQ level is needed to address the lack of a productive relationship among 'tripartite plus' partners in Jordan and Lebanon to comprehensively orient Technical Cooperation Projects' implementation strategies.

In the policy domain, new research may be needed for covering emerging knowledge gaps and for updating information or retooling knowledge products to suit the needs of constituents. Besides these, the project can focus on dissemination and dialogue of the knowledge generated. Although policy changes are difficult to achieve, and require long-term engagement, tracking short and medium-term indicators may be feasible, especially because Fairway has contributed, through its direct experience, to shape a ROAS Theory of Change (TOC) where interim steps are highlighted. The monitoring system has greatly improved, yet needs specific measurement tools and processes, especially for behaviour change and media related activities. The pilots initiated by the Project are well targeted to the needs of MWs and constituents, and merit continuation with longer term planning.

The Fairway project addresses several structural issues within the region, aided by good integration within ROAS. As some structural issues need attention of the ILO beyond the project, the evaluators have included some recommendations that go beyond the project itself, and have the

potential to positively impact not only on the Fairway project but at the regional level, and migration-related projects more generally.

Lessons learned and good practices

The evaluation identifies the following good practices from the project:

GP 1: Establishment of the Sandigan Kuwait Domestic Workers Association (SKDWA) in Kuwait:

Fairway established the SKDWA in Kuwait, with over 1,000 members of which 100 have been in supporting migrant domestic workers and linking with the Philippines Embassy in Kuwait to provide support services for Filipino DWs in Kuwait.

GP 2: Establishment of Policy Advisory Committee as a Think Tank for ILO ROAS:

An external group of experts in labour migration have been brought to bear on the strategies followed by Fairway, thus bringing to the project the benefit of experience and knowledge from the region, and also benefits of the contacts of the PAC members.

GP 3: Use of Policy Dialogues and Stakeholder Meetings to Share Knowledge and Promote Advocacy:

Fairway has conducted multi-stakeholder dialogues on many of its studies and publications at national, and regional levels. These have served to bring the stakeholders on board and to create their ownership of the study findings, laying a foundation for further advocacy.

GP 4: Pilot Programme initiated on Promoting the Role of Public Notaries in Ensuring a Rights-Based Employment between Employers and MDWs in Lebanon:

Fairway trained members of the Office of Public Notaries and offered them translated contracts, so that workers and their employers were better informed before the mandatory registration of contracts. This initiative is currently poised for scale up across all offices of Public Notaries in Lebanon.

GP 5: Improved Complaint System of Domestic Workers Department (DWD) – Jordan:

Fairway provided technical support for an assessment and streamlining of the complaints system at the DWD, using participatory processes. The improvement has laid the foundation for effective digitalisation and monitoring of the complaints resolution system in DWD, Jordan.

GP 6: Fellowship initiated for Young Journalists to improve Fair Communication on Labour Migration:

A fellowship for young journalists, to sensitise them on labour migration issues, and to provide them with the tools for fair communication, has led to production of over 32 articles, podcasts and a movie. The journalists are motivated to continue their writing on migration.

The evaluation identifies the following primary lesson learned from the project:

LL: Short Duration Pilots can have Unintended Negative Impacts:

Two key pilots implemented by Fairway included a legal clinic for Migrant Domestic Workers in FENASOL, Lebanon and promotion of a youth network for campaigns to change employer mindsets, in Jordan and Lebanon. Although both pilots were well implemented and had positive outputs, the duration of 6 months proved too short to mainstream a legal clinic in the first case, and too short to enable formation of a youth network in the second.

Recommendations

Based on the findings and conclusions of this evaluation, the following recommendations are proposed:

	Recommendations	Responsible Stakeholder	Priority	Resources
1.	Consider conducting fewer new studies and focus on dissemination and use of already existing knowledge produced by Fairway and ILO	ILO Country Office (project management) and Donor	High	Moderate to substantial human or financial resources
2.	Consider designing interim indicators towards policy change needed to gauge project contribution to long-term achievements	ILO Country Office (project management) and Donor	High	No Resources required
3.	Consider different, tailored strategies for voice-building of migrant workers in the domestic and the construction sectors	ILO Country Office (project management) and Donor	High	No Resources required
4.	Consider stronger involvement of ILO ROAS specialists in building the Project strategy for Phase 2, which will add value to the Fairway approach towards constituents	ILO Country Office (project management) and Donor	High	Moderate to substantial human or financial resources
5.	Consider appointing personnel for M&E purposes with knowledge of the Arabic context and language	ILO Country Office (project management) and Donor	High	Moderate to substantial human or financial resources
6.	Consider placing the Technical Officer in one GCC country	ILO Country Office (project management) and Donor	Medium	No Resources required
7.	Consider conducting a thematic evaluation/ strategy paper covering all labour migration projects in ROAS	ILO ROAS and HQ	Medium	Moderate to substantial human or financial resources
8.	Consider development/ review of the strategy for institutional support to migrant workers	ILO ROAS and HQ	High	Moderate to substantial human or financial resources
9.	Consider integrating the PAC within all ROAS labour migration projects	ILO ROAS and HQ	Medium	Moderate to substantial human or financial resources