



Evaluation Summary



International
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“Migrants Rights and Decent Work (MIRIDEW) project combined with labour migration related component under the Skills for Employment Programme (SEP)” – Mid-Term Evaluation

Quick Facts

Countries: *Nepal*

Mid-Term: *December 2020-January 2021*

Evaluation Mode:

Administrative Office: *CO-Nepal*

Technical Office: *DWT- New Delhi*

Evaluation Manager : *Basanta Kumar Karki*

Evaluation Consultant(s) : *Pierre Mahy*

Project Code : *NPL/18/01/CHE & NPL/17/01/GBR*

Donor(s) & Budget: *MIRIDEW (CHF 1,398,880 – SDC) SEP migration component (US\$ 1,986,814 – DFID)*

Keywords:

Background & Context

Summary of the project purpose, logic and structure

The objective of the **Migrant Rights and Decent Work (MIRIDEW)** project is to strengthen support systems of the Government of Nepal to better protect the rights of Nepali migrant workers along with increased benefits from labour migration. To achieve this, the project aims at achieving four outcomes:

- **Outcome 1:** Labour migration policies strengthened and implemented at federal and state levels.

- **Outcome 2:** Bilateral and regional mechanisms strengthened to improve Nepali migrant workers' access to better jobs.
- **Outcome 3:** Nepali consular and diplomatic missions in country of destinations provide effective support services to Nepali migrant workers.
- **Outcome 4:** The GoN has effectively engaged with regional and global policy dialogues on labour migration and has implemented relevant policy outcomes.

The overall goal of the **Skills for Employment Programme (SEP)** is to support the Government of Nepal to adopt and effectively implement evidence-based policies enabling the creation of new domestic jobs, increase productive employment and enable a higher development impact from migration. Labour migration is covered under the following outcomes:

- **Outcome 3:** National policies strengthened and implemented to enhance the governance of labour migration in Nepal.
- **Outcome 4:** Bilateral and regional mechanisms strengthened to improve Nepali migrant workers' access to better jobs.

Present Situation of the Project

The **MIRIDEW** project formally started on 1 October 2018 for a duration of 35 months; the **SEP** project has a duration of 4 years (August 2017-July 2021).

Activities have been delayed after the outbreak of the COVID-19 pandemic.

Purpose, scope and clients of the evaluation

The main purpose of the internal Mid-Term Evaluation (MTE) is to improve project performance, enhance accountability and learning for the International Labour Organization (ILO) and key stakeholders and look into need and relevance of its extension.

The scope of the MTE covers all interventions of MIRIDEW and SEP (labour migration only) that ILO has implemented until 30th September 2020.

Methodology of evaluation

The evaluation tools employed were documentary analysis, identification of relevant evaluation questions and sub-questions, semi-structured interviews to elicit the facts relevant to the evaluation questions and synthesis of findings, conclusions and recommendations. Findings were validated by means of various cross-checks with stakeholders whenever possible.

Due to COVID-19 travel restrictions, the MTE has been undertaken remotely by the international expert with the support of a national expert based in Kathmandu.

Interviews have been conducted with informants suggested by the National Programme Coordinator.

Main Findings & Conclusions

Relevance, strategic fit and design

The MIRIDEW project, as well as the SEP project, perfectly match the key priorities of ILO's Decent Work Country Programme (DWCP) and fall in line with the Government of Nepal's main legal frameworks governing labour migration, i.e. the Foreign Employment Act (FEA) 2007 and the Foreign Employment Regulation 2008.

The overall approach of the design aiming at addressing the migrant workers' problems in the destination countries is coherent, though ambitious considering the budget allocated to cover developing and/or strengthening policies at federal and state level, strengthening bilateral and regional mechanisms to improve working conditions in destination countries, reinforce the services provided by diplomatic missions abroad and support the

government in engaging more effectively in regional and global policy dialogues.

Effectiveness

Up to 30/09/2020, MIRIDEW and SEP have been able to implement a remarkable number of activities despite a certain reluctance of the government to fully engage with the project in all actions, and also considering the emergence of the COVID-19 outbreak.

A significant number of outputs have been delivered, some of which already have allowed to partially achieve outcome indicators, as for example:

- the production of the Nepal Labour Migration Report 2020 and the expansion of the Shuvayatra platform (O1),
- the signature of a new bilateral labour agreement with Mauritius (O2),
- the Rapid Market Appraisal conducted (with SEP) of 10 potential destination countries for low-skilled and medium-skilled workers (O2),
- the draft National Strategy for the Implementation of the Global Compact for Migration (GCM) supported by SEP (O2),
- the implementation of outreach activities in Malaysia, Kuwait, and Saudi Arabia (O3), and/or
- the government's interventions in regional dialogues (O4).

MIRIDEW has also launched an important response to the COVID-19 situation in providing direct support to thousands of migrant workers in Malaysia, Saudi Arabia, Qatar, and United Arab Emirates.

Overall, work is still in progress and even though some actions have been delayed in prioritizing the COVID-19 response, the project is expected to be able to roll-out all planned activities by the end of the contractual implementation time, hence delivering all outputs contributing to the outcomes which however remain subject to the government's further follow-up and decisions.

Efficiency

Financial data provided by the project team shows that 24 months into implementation (i.e. up to 30/09/2020), only 29.9% of the budget have been disbursed (actual expenditures), and that 52.5% of the budget have been committed. The low level of

expenditures partially reflects the delays in implementation caused by the COVID-19 situation, but also the time needed to obtain a proactive engagement of the government in all activities.

The methodology of implementation is adequate and relies on the management capacity of the ILO.

Impact and Sustainability

Impact at **policy level** (O1) will only emerge once the Monitoring and Reporting Framework is finalized, approved and operational, and when revised and/or new policies to which the project has contributed are enacted by the government.

Access to better jobs (O2) by means of bilateral agreements with destination countries can be further boosted on basis of the recommendations and experience provided by the project if the government decides to further engage in this direction.

The activities of the project to **support migrant workers in destination countries** (O3) will provide diplomatic and consular offices with a new and better framework to deliver services to the Nepali migrants when finalized and approved.

The project's efforts to support Nepal's **regional and global engagement** (O4) have been rather challenging considering the fact that the GoN has been hesitant to accept external support, which is expected to persist in the future.

Both impact and sustainability depend on the government's choices on how to proceed to maintain the benefits of the intervention. The level of interest and ownership among the key partners of the project is different from one ministry to another and from one activity to another.

Besides a stronger engagement of the government in the early stages, the project would have benefited from a greater involvement of the private sector and from the presence of a formal Project Steering Committee which could have enabled all stakeholders to jointly take ownership of the intervention.

Recommendations

Main recommendations and follow-up

1. Priority should be given to develop inter-ministerial coordination and policy engagement of all stakeholders involved in labour migration issues.
2. Boost ownership of project outputs by the Government towards impact and sustainability.
3. Despite having reached mid-term of project implementation, set up the Project Steering Committee with all relevant stakeholders.
4. Enhance the participation of the private sector in order to secure better protection of migrant workers.
5. Revise inadequate indicators in the LFM and add gender-specific indicators at output level.
6. Given the virtual setting that we all are working in, seek to ensure long term sustainability of the Shuvayatra platform so that information and services, job matching, skilling, and entrepreneurship development are promoted to a large section of migrant workers.
7. Provide time extension to MIRIDEW project to offset the time loss due to COVID-19 impact and to conclude the major interventions to the expected results level.
8. Prepare exit strategies based on increased government ownership of project achievements.
9. Define options for future possible interventions building on the achievements of MIRIDEW particularly to work with the Ministry of Foreign Affairs for the implementation of concrete recommendations put forth by the Nepali missions' capacity gap assessment report.