



Evaluation Summary



International
Labour
Office

Evaluation
Office

"Towards a Holistic Approach to Labour Migration Governance and Labour Mobility in North Africa (THAMM)" Project – Midterm evaluation

Quick Facts

Countries: Morocco, Tunisia, Egypt

Mid-Term: November 2021

Evaluation Mode: Independent Joint (ILO-IOM)

Administrative Office: ILO Algiers Office-IOM

Technical Office: ILO Algiers and Cairo Office

Evaluation Manager: Ricardo Furman (ILO) & Faisal Sharif (IOM)

Evaluation Consultant(s): Cecilia Deme PhD (TEAM LEADER), Paola Chianca, Lejla Sunagic

Project Code: RAF/17/06/EUR

Donor(s) & Budget: The European Union Emergency Trust Fund for Stability and Addressing the Root Causes of Irregular Migration and Displaced Persons in Africa (Cost of ILO/IOM action: EUR 7 000 000)

Keywords: Labour migration, governance, policy framework, human rights, labour standards

Background & Context

Summary of the project purpose, logic and structure

The THAMM Programme is an initiative planned between November 2019 and October 2022 and covers three countries, Egypt, Tunisia and Morocco. It is co-financed under the North Africa window of the EU

Emergency Trust Fund for Africa (EUTF) by the European Union (EU) and the German Federal Ministry for Economic Cooperation and Development (BMZ) with EUR 7 000 000. Project implementation is divided among the International Labour Organization (ILO), the International Organization for Migration (IOM), the Belgian Development Cooperation Agency (ENABEL) and the German Development Cooperation Agency (GIZ).

The ILO (as the reporting lead) and IOM are implementing partners of the project and carry out activities under Specific Objectives 1,2,3, and 5 due to their mandate and competence in labour migration governance. The Programme aims "to improve the governance of labour migration and the protection of migrant workers in the North of Africa by supporting the development and implementation of coherent and comprehensive policy frameworks guided by relevant human rights and labour standards and based on reliable data and evidence."

THAMM applies a holistic approach to migration at the technical dimensions (governance frameworks, skills recognition and qualification, statistical data and information systems) and end beneficiaries (integration of foreign workers into labour markets and assistance to national workers seeking employment abroad).

The overall outcome of the Programme is to foster mutually beneficial legal migration and mobility, and ILO and IOM are responsible for achieving it through the following specific objectives and outcomes:

SO 1: Existing national frameworks in the field of migration and mobility are technically supported according to the needs and priorities of the National Government

SO 2: Mechanisms for assessment, certification, validation and recognition of migrants' skills and

qualifications are improved (Implemented by ILO/IOM);

SO 3: Migration related knowledge and data management in the field of legal migration and mobility is improved (Implemented by ILO/IOM);

SO 5: Cooperation between relevant stakeholders in the field of legal migration and mobility, in particular job placement, is improved

Present Situation of the Project

The inception period covered 1 November 2019 until 29 February 2020. In addition, the Programme added a COVID-19 Mitigation plan at the request of the Contracting Authority, represented by the EU Commission, DG NEAR. The Inception Report and Mitigation Plan were finally approved in May 2020 by the Contracting Authority.

In July 2021, ILO and IOM started discussions with DG NEAR about the possibility of a no-cost extension of the Programme, motivating the request with delays in implementation caused by COVID-19 and the lengthy process of obtaining security clearances.

Purpose, scope and clients of the evaluation

The mid-term evaluation's main objective was to help understand how and why the project has advanced so far and if it is in the way to achieve (or not achieve) the specific outputs, potential outcomes, and possible impact. The six OECD DAC criteria guided the evaluation¹. The evaluation covered the Programme implementation from November 2019 to September 2021, in Morocco, Tunisia and Egypt, by ILO and IOM. The review focused on four Specific Objectives (SO), namely SO1, SO2, SO3, SO5, and it was conducted with a strong gender lens and considering non-discrimination (i.e. disability inclusion, youth and migrants), social dialogue, tripartism, labour standards, environmental and COVID-19 resilience principles. This mid-term evaluation aimed to highlight and analyze the results, identify challenges, lessons learnt and good practices, and offer recommendations that will help IOM-ILO improve future joint programming and strengthen organizational learning and accountability.

The evaluation's primary audience is key government ministries and agencies, social partners, such as workers' and employers' organizations, the donor, and IOM and ILO programme teams.

Methodology of evaluation

The evaluation team used qualitative and quantitative methods to collect information. After a document review, remote key informant interviews (KII) with programme staff and partners were conducted. Intended and unintended results were compared against the project Theory of Change (ToC), the lograme and the milestones recorded in the outcome mapping tool. The project narrative reports and other project documents were explored through interviews and consultation with project managers. The UNEG evaluation norms and standards and the ILO internal guide, such as Implications of COVID-19 on evaluations in the ILO - Practical tips on adapting to the situation 2020 have been considered. A remote planning workshop was held on 28 September 2021 with ILO.

In light of the Covid-19 pandemic, this evaluation was conducted remotely. Semi-structured interviews and surveys have been used with project staff and selected key stakeholders. The total number of stakeholders consulted is 39 (25 women and 14 men), and 11 surveys were returned to the evaluation team. Among the main challenges of this evaluation were the inability to conduct site visits and organize data collection through face-to-face discussions, the low level of returned surveys and the availability of key stakeholders for interview purposes.

Main Findings & Conclusions

Relevance

The project demonstrates high relevance in addressing the identified needs of the national government institutions social partners, the human rights protection of final beneficiaries and the promotion of labour migration governance and mobility. Furthermore, since the project was designed in collaboration with the involved governments, most interviewed project stakeholders expressed that THAMM is a very relevant intervention for the objectives of their respective organizations.

Data harmonization in migration governance, the protection of migrant workers and skills development, and promoting social dialogue and tripartism gives THAMM a particular niche. Most key stakeholders agreed that the project had set itself ambitious objectives, which are hardly achievable in such a short timeframe and with many expectations. The overall

¹ *Relevance, coherence, effectiveness, efficiency, sustainability, and impact*

opinion of key informants is that social partners are actively involved, and they are present at the negotiation table, acknowledging the need for involving them in decision-making processes. However, the evaluation did not find relevant integration of cross-cutting themes- gender equality disability inclusion- in the project design. The COVID-19 restrictive measures were successfully mitigated by the design and implementation of the COVID-19 Mitigation Plan.

Coherence

The project demonstrates a solid internal and external coherence, both within the agencies and with other projects and strategic frameworks at the regional level. However, due to the high complexity of the intervention in each country, the complexity of the governing system of labour migration and the consensus-based decision-making processes delegated to governance structures, the project is slow in implementation. The involvement of a multitude of actors at different levels is assessed as sometimes overwhelming by project partners and national counterparts

Efficiency

The project shows financial stability, evidenced by the financial sheets that were up-to-date and available until the end of 2020 and the information provided by project managers.

As per the ILO-IOM COVID-19 Mitigation Plan² and project reporting, the delivery rates were slowed during the first phase of operation, in 2019 and 2020, due to external factors and including delays related to COVID-19.

Diplomatic tensions between Morocco and Germany, Spain and Algeria, and political tensions in Tunisia, the halting of project activities due to COVID-19 contributed to long delays in project implementation. Thus, changes in national stakeholders` priorities emerged. These developments prompted a re-sequencing of project outputs.

Feedback from national partners highlighted the need for more resources allocated to capacity development and regional "experience sharing and cooperation" events and field visit.

Effectiveness

The project could not achieve many visible results yet. It started late, and external factors contributed to a situation where some objectives have advanced more than others. The project was most successful under SO1 and advanced most slowly under SO2. The highest number of ongoing activities happened under SO1, contributing to a higher implementation rate of activities under this objective. There are 13 expected results recorded under SO1, three under SO5, and one in SO2 and SO3, respectively. Ten unexpected results occurred under SO1, two under SO2 and SO5, and four under SO3.

Based on interviewees' responses, the challenges for advancing the project outnumbered positive factors that helped the implementation. Among the challenging factors, there is a lack of political will and sense of national ownership and motivation of some national counterparts, the lack of technical capacity of governments institutions and national partners to implement the project, and a somewhat confusing coordination structure with the multitude of actors and dispersed roles and responsibilities. The positive factors are a multi-stakeholder approach to the project and the development of a common branding strategy with a joint communication and visibility plan.

COVID-19 impacted the human interaction side of the project heavily, very important in the North-Africa region. However, the hybrid methodology applied during the lockdown, including online learning and meetings, represented a partial solution.

Impact Orientation and Sustainability

The impact of the program and long-lasting change is too early to estimate. However, the evaluation team found a certain level of evidence of impact at the structural, institutional, and personal level, such as mainstreaming of labour migration into the Tunisian National Employment Strategy and the development of a draft National Strategy on International Employment, and the protection of migrant workers in Tunisia.

The project is on track to lay the ground for an exit strategy. Sustainability plans ensure rescheduled activities will advance according to the plans. The creation of the Technical Working Groups, which facilitate collaboration, sharing experiences and expertise, present evidence of sustainability.

² ILO-IOM COVID 19 Contextual Analysis and Mitigation Plan for the THAMM project (18.04.2020)

Gender and Human Rights

Gender equality is an essential component of ILO and IOM strategies. However, only a few activities focused on mainstreaming gender approaches, such as the IOM's focusing on migrant women in Morocco. The project is missing opportunities to strengthen gender mainstreaming and increase awareness on gender-related issues concerning labour migration. However, the project contributed to protecting human rights in general, including the humanitarian assistance delivered to vulnerable migrants in Morocco and Tunisia during the COVID-19 pandemic.

Recommendations

Main recommendations and follow-up

1. Share achievements, good practices, and benefits of bilateral and multilateral agreements on labour migration and protection with host governments.

Use advocacy tools, audio-visual products, exchange visits with national counterparts to ensure the necessary buy-in of national experts for international collaboration and cooperation.

Addressed to	Priority	Timeframe	Resources
Project Management ILO and IOM Country teams	Medium	Six months	High financial and human resources implications.

2. Support social partners and the government in absorbing the technical inputs provided by the project in the field of labour migration statistics and in collecting, disaggregating, storing and disseminating data based on cross-cutting issues.

Ministries and stakeholders involved in managing the migration data ecosystem should work together to define migration data sources and ensure access to available resources and databases.

Addressed to	Priority	Timeframe	Resources
Project Management ILO and IOM Country teams National Stakeholders	Medium	One year	Medium financial and human resources implications.

3. Ensure that the training and capacity building activities in data management have quality content and that the methodology is adapted, so it is fully applicable according to local needs, in the areas of a)

alignment of data with national-level SDG's, b) linkage between migration, education and labour statistics.

Addressed to	Priority	Timeframe	Resources
Project Management ILO Regional Office IOM Morocco Office Donor-EU DG NEAR National Stakeholders	High	Three months	Low financial and human resources implications.

4. Systematically apply social inclusion/human rights principles. Gender equality and the inclusion of people with disability that were identified as the most pertinent cross-cutting issues for THAMM should be mainstreamed at all pillars of the program. To this aim, **the project stakeholders should be trained on diversity and inclusion in general and in the field of labour migration. Additionally, the programme/project proposal should integrate gender-responsive situational analysis to assess how the intervention will affect women, men and gender relations in the implementation countries. The capacities of governments, workers and employers' organizations to mainstream gender and to monitor gender equality should be reflected in the M&E system of the programme/project.**

Addressed to	Priority	Timeframe	Resources
Project Management ILO Regional Office IOM Morocco Office Donor-EU DG NEAR	Low	Project timeframe	High financial and human resources implications.

5. Expand the online resource library developed within THAMM and develop online training courses on labour migration and protection for project participants.

Addressed to	Priority	Timeframe	Resources
Project Management ILO Regional Office IOM Morocco Office	Low	Project timeframe	Medium financial and human resources implication.

6. **Develop an Action Plan on sharing and disseminating the existing research papers and studies conducted within the project timeframe.** Ensure all the relevant stakeholders, including the Programme Steering Committee and DG NEAR receive the available documentation for future planning and strategy development.

Addressed to	Priority	Timeframe	Resources
Project Management ILO Regional Office IOM Morocco Office ILO and IOM country offices National Stakeholders	High	Three months	Low resource implications.

7. **Focus more on empowerment and national ownership by using the already existing skills training materials for conducting training at the national level. Apply a Training of Trainers (ToT) approach to develop national capacities, to foster cooperation and collaboration in the North-Africa region.**

Addressed to	Priority	Timeframe	Resources
Project Management ILO Regional Office IOM Morocco Office National stakeholders	Medium	Six months	High financial and human resources implications.

8. **Develop "labour migration and protection" key terms glossary for national counterparts, using country-specific Arabic language (for Egypt and Morocco, for example).**

Addressed to	Priority	Timeframe	Resources
Project Management ILO Regional Office IOM Morocco Office	High	Three months	Low financial and human resources implications.

9. **Maintain and continue using the Outcome Mapping Monitoring and Evaluation Tools.** Link the 35 milestones in the outcome mapping tool with indicators in the logframe and the workplans.

Addressed to	Priority	Timeframe	Resources
Project Management ILO and IOM Country Teams	High	Three months	Medium human resources implications.

10. **Maintain the Technical Working Groups and explore opportunities to expand their role to become a support network, both with national and international (EU, UN) organizations.**

Addressed to	Priority	Timeframe	Resources
Project Management National stakeholders	Low	Project timeframe	Low financial and human resources implications.

11. **Improve knowledge management and data coordination, mainly under SO2, in recognizing skills and qualifications.** Ensure to provide social partners and the government guidelines on better integrating ESCO classification in the skills recognition process.

Addressed to	Priority	Timeframe	Resources
Project Management ILO Regional Office IOM Morocco Office National Stakeholders Donor-EU DG NEAR	High	Three months	Medium financial and human resource implications.

12. **Be more mindful of facilitated migration and involve non-governmental stakeholders and civil society in providing information to migrants about destination countries, visa procedures, skills recognition, human rights and social protection.** Explore new possibilities offered by the post-COVID context to ensure more integration of remote working into national labour market development strategies.

Addressed to	Priority	Timeframe	Resources
Project Management ILO Regional Office IOM Morocco Office National Stakeholders Donor-EU DG NEAR	Low	Project timeframe	Medium financial and human resources implications.