



Mid-term and Independent Evaluation of the Project for Enhancing Agricultural Opportunities through Training and Technology Investment (PROFIT)” (HTI/20/01/NOR)

Quick Facts

Country:	HAITI
Evaluation Date:	January – February 2023
Evaluation Type:	Project independent
Evaluation Timing:	Mid-term
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DC Sybmol:	HTI/20/01/NOR
Donor and Budget:	Norway, US\$3,000,000

Keywords: Grand-Anse/South - Haiti, Agricultural Opportunities and Quality Approach, Generalized insecurity/Armed gangs, COVID-19/Cholera, Green and sustainable jobs, Inclusion/integration in preferential markets, Gender, Fight against extreme poverty and exclusion, Agricultural logistics and traceability, Pooling of services, Credit and agro-hydro insurance climate change, ecosystem resilience and sustainable cities, inter-organizational synergies.

This evaluation was carried out in accordance with ILO evaluation policy and procedures. It has not been professionally edited but has been quality checked by the ILO Evaluation Office.

BACKGROUND AND CONTEXT

Summary of project purpose, logic and structure

PROFIT (HTI/20/01/NOR), funded by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Norway in the amount of USD 3,000,000, is implemented following a set of recommendations from evaluations of other sustainable development initiatives carried out in Haiti – in accordance with its mandate; in consultation with the public authorities and the most representative civil society organizations concerned by the fields and/or sectors of intervention of the project and therefore, in coherence with: "The country program for the promotion of decent work" of the ILO over the period in Haiti. This project is in principle aligned with " **Output 4.2.: Strengthening the capacity of companies and their support systems to improve productivity and sustainability** " of the aforementioned program and, focused on SDG 8, while establishing very strong and inseparable conceptual, structural and programmatic links with the SDGs 9 and 12 . This project is also embedded in other strategic orientation frameworks developed by the United Nations System and national sectoral public policies in Haiti. Its implementation is ensured by the National Projects Office of the International Labor Organization (ILO) of Haiti in support of the ministries and sectoral bodies, in consultation with the parties involved in organized civil society at different socio-geographical scales of the country. It started in December 2020 and its closing date is theoretically scheduled for November 30, 2023.

The overall objective of the project is to contribute to improving the living conditions of small farmers in the promising agricultural sectors of the South and Grand'Anse departments. The main expected results are:

- (i) The ability of farmers to develop (refined) products in larger quantities and of better quality, corresponding to growing market demand, is improved (adapted technical and managerial training, better structured producers), with particular attention to the specificities and gender needs,
- (ii) The technological capacity of agriculture and applied research along the value chains for the selected products is improved (traceability, fermentation, post-harvest equipment),
- (iii) The incomes and financial capacity of beneficiary farmers are improved, green and decent jobs are created in support of the two targeted agricultural and agri-food value chains,
- (iv) Support for setting up a credit/savings system.

Objective, scope and methodology of the evaluation

The mid-term and independent evaluation combined two (2) approaches. One focused on the logic of the intervention, the other more global, centered on interactions. The evaluation followed the evaluation norms and standards of the United Nations Evaluation Group (UNEG). Thus, it applied the criteria and approaches of international development assistance as defined in the OECD Quality Standards for Development Evaluation. The evaluation combined quantitative study methods and qualitative approaches to better appreciate the subjective dimensions and lead to a more objective analysis of the project's achievements.

In addition to reviewing project documentation, the evaluation designed and used semi-structured interview guides, observation sheets and individual questionnaires. In order to guarantee an acceptable level of representativeness, a systematic random sampling method was applied. This allowed the collection and/or co-construction of the necessary qualitative and quantitative data. To ensure a good level of representativeness, the evaluation had set a sampling rate greater than or equal to 30%, in relation to each of the main expected results. The deductive and inductive analysis made around the discriminating parameters made it possible to formulate the elements of conclusions, suggestions, and consequent recommendations.

The actual consultative process of the evaluation was carried out during the period from January 15 to February 15, 2023 in an extremely difficult context, and characterized in particular by: 1) the effects of the end and start of the holiday season year, 2) the implications of the pandemic of the resurgence of cholera and COVID-19, 3) the deleterious and very worrying climate of generalized insecurity, 4) conflicts and armed struggles between gangs and/or rival neighborhoods on the project road, 5) socio-political instability (cf.: Assassination of the President in power on July 7, 2021, Jovenel Moïse), 6) the aggravation of cases of kidnapping in certain areas of influence of the project (ZIP), 7) logistical difficulties and repeated fuel crises at service stations. The data collected was validated at different geographical, organizational, and institutional levels, through an iterative process, focused on a representative and inclusive participatory approach.

MAIN FINDINGS AND CONCLUSIONS

Main results and conclusions

Relevance

The project's theory of change remains very relevant. On the other hand, in relation to the scale of the problem, the evaluation concluded that for a project of this scale, implemented against the background of a multidimensional, complex, complicated crisis, and with relatively limited financial resources (5 municipalities), it will have to mobilize more resources to move in the direction of this promising and very promising agro-economic paradigm shift on the global level.

Design validity

The project's conceptual and operational framework is consistent with the context. It is in line with the main references relating to the "departmental, national and supranational legal, legal and institutional framework".

Efficiency

The **PROFIT implementation process has reached a satisfactory level of efficiency.** Because, the implementation deficits identified are not inherent to the recommended management approach, but rather and above all linked to at least 90% either to the insufficiency of funds, and/or, to the complex execution context, complicated, difficult and very risky.

Management effectiveness and efficiency

The evaluation considers that there is enough evidence to say that: **"The level of effectiveness of the PROJECT is satisfactory and shows a relatively good level of social acceptability"**. This conclusion takes into account in particular: i) the advocated theory of change; (ii) difficulties related to the general context of the country, which had caused delays in implementation; iii) the first elements of the response provided by the implementation process - in relation to the holistic and programmatic vision of the said project.

Orientation towards impact and sustainability

The increased and empowered involvement of producers can facilitate the expansion of these sectors while strengthening territorial anchoring and thus facilitating a gradual reduction of the negative externalities of poor production practices on ecosystems. To achieve this, this requires more sustained support, taking into account the weak points identified in the productive mesosystem of the PROFIT areas of influence.

LESSONS LEARNED, GOOD PRACTICES AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Lessons learned

LA1. Possibility of developing synergy bridges with civil protection actors: *The traceability system set up within the framework of the project, with the support of the service provider GEONOVA, can also be used by the municipal civil protection committees in the management of emergency situations, in particular the occurrence of natural disasters.*

LA2. Substituting wheat flour with breadfruit flour in bread making has the potential to create added value and stimulate local economic growth: *Research by Quisqueya University (UNIQ) has shown that it is possible to successfully substitute up to 30% wheat flour with breadfruit flour in the traditional Haitian bread-making process. This very relevant news brings hope for operators who have them. The latter lose each year between 75 to 80% of their natural production of this commodity.*

LA3. Lessons learned 3 (L-3) – Adaptation and strengthening of local facilitation structures and the Steering Committee: *The central mechanism established for the strategic management of the project (cf.: Institutional Steering Committee) is structured taking into account the logic of "tripartism social dialogue"; however, at the field level, although relations with the institutions are generally cordial, the evaluation reveals, at the departmental level (between the influential actors and stakeholders of the beneficiary municipalities), a certain lack of synergy.*

Good practices

BP1. Establishment of, from the start-up phase, the reference situation of projects (baseline) : *The baseline facilitates monitoring exercises and concomitant internal and independent evaluations; otherwise, this mid-term evaluation report will have been carried out on an insufficiently SMART basis, with, in addition, very subjective considerations and/or conclusions .*

BP2. Establishment and structuring of mutual solidarity groups (MUSOs) and related umbrella structures in the project intervention areas, in a context of practically non-existent access to credit and agricultural financing: *The collaboration with KNFP for the establishment of 58 mutual of solidarity groups is beginning to make the farmers involved less worried and less dependent on credits that are not appropriate and difficult to mobilize. It paves the way for the sustainability of the actions and results targeted for a sustainable improvement in income.*

BP3. Technical support with a view to strengthening and enhancing the economic sectors of cocoa and breadfruit: *The establishment of post-harvest conservation and processing infrastructures - to structure and strengthen the economic sectors carrying cocoa and breadfruit is a contribution highly appreciated by stakeholders who move through the different segments of agricultural value chains and constitutes a lever for growth and economic development based essentially on community commitments at different levels.*

Recommendations

R1. Improve the visibility of the project at the level of Grande-Anse and in the country: To fill the visibility gap noted by the mid-term evaluation, an aggressive and intelligent communication plan must be applied

by: 1) publication of articles on research results (Le Nouvelliste¹, Magic 9, Haïti Climat², etc.), 2) signaling of the project in the field (visibility actions), 3) presentation of progress, bottlenecks strangulation and prospects; not only through the most popular media spaces in Grande-Anse, but also in the metropolitan area of Port-au-Prince; to better draw everyone's attention to these investments and, 4) the presence of PROFIT in departmental and sectoral thematic tables.

R2. Ask UNIQ to translate into French (already included in its contract with PROFIT) and Creole (the project must pay) then, popularize the new knowledge produced in these deliverables: *The beneficiaries greatly appreciate the news provided on the studies carried out on the fruit at bread, but UNIQ wrote its reports in English, in a community where most of the beneficiaries speak only Creole.*

R3. Mobilize funds to better strengthen the autonomy of mutual solidarity groups (MUSOs) and related umbrella structures: Given the budgetary constraints of the project, tailor-made but limited support is being given to young MUSOs; it will be necessary to think of the definition of a clear agenda on the roles, the responsibilities, the bridges of synergies to be released and the additional financial commitments; so that they can gradually develop functional autonomy.

R4. Promote the mobilization of additional resources to consolidate, replicate and extend the positive achievements of PROFIT: *100% of stakeholders are in favor of the institutionalization of the MUSO approach, in support of the development of agro-ecological value chains, while integrating a more robust component of agricultural insurance based on hydro-climatic risks. This approach is new and highly appreciated in the community compared to the old schools, which were very fixed and not financially sustainable.*

R5. Make adaptations in the Steering Committee (CoPIL) to better establish the dynamics of tripartism and social dialogue in the context of the project beneficiary areas: According to the testimonies of certain institutional actors consulted at the level of the Grand-Anse department, the fact of integrating into the CoPIL representatives of workers' unions based in Port-au-Prince, who do not master - in practice - the real concerns of the ground sometimes constitutes an obstacle to the progress of certain activities in the project.

R6. Promote in the project an inter-municipal facilitation structure that includes, among other things, local civil protection committees and representation of people with reduced mobility: To improve community ownership and levels of accountability for the project, PROFIT must capitalize on what already exists and develop, through its areas of influence, an inter-municipal facilitation structure, with the integration of a member who represents people with reduced mobility

R7. Involve the BAC-MARNDR (Municipal Agricultural Bureau) in the construction and management of the database on the traceability system (Agrotracking): For an appropriation of the very important work carried out by GEONOVA, the project must study an adequate strategy so that at least the BACs (5 agricultural offices of the municipalities involved /MARNDR) can master and use the database on agricultural holdings.

¹ <https://lenouvelliste.com/>

² <https://haiticlimat.org/site/>