



# Evaluation Summary



International Labour Office

Evaluation Office

*Final evaluation - RBSA Jobs for Peace & Resilience in Sri Lanka: Disadvantaged and vulnerable groups in rural areas, especially in conflict affected and economically lagging regions, have equitable and enhanced access to more and better jobs and expanded product markets*

## Quick Facts

|                                  |                               |
|----------------------------------|-------------------------------|
| <b>Countries:</b>                | Sri Lanka                     |
| <b>Final Evaluation:</b>         | 24 December 2019              |
| <b>Evaluation Mode:</b>          | <i>Independent</i>            |
| <b>Administrative Office:</b>    | <i>CO-Colombo</i>             |
| <b>Technical Office:</b>         | <i>ENTERPRISE, EMP/INVEST</i> |
| <b>Evaluation Manager:</b>       | <i>Rebecca Napier-Moore</i>   |
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| <b>Project Code:</b>             | <i>LKA/16/02/RBS</i>          |
| <b>Donor(s) &amp; Budget:</b>    | <i>RBSA (US\$ 1,000,000)</i>  |
| <b>Keywords:</b>                 | <i>Disaster Resilience</i>    |

## Background & Context

### Summary of the project purpose, logic and structure

The project is complementary to the ILO Country Programme and explores ILO opportunities and roles in land and water resource management programming for disaster resilience. The project aims to contribute to the National Policy of Disaster Management’s priority to build resilience and disaster mitigation measures by developing effective models in rural communities. This is done through building resilience in disaster prone districts through improved land and water resource management and through supporting policy coherence by integrating livelihood resilience building with existing national rural development programmes. In drought-affected communities in

the North, the project supported the Department of Agrarian Development (DAD) to renovate tanks that had been abandoned and deteriorated during the conflict years. In flood-affected communities of the Southwest, the project through the government’s District Secretariat, and contractors (SEDD-Small Enterprise Development Department, IUCN-International Union for Conservation of Nature) introduced land and water management and farming technologies that intended to make rice cultivation, smallholder tea, Kithul and home gardens more flood-resilient and more profitable, and to strengthen livelihood resilience by supporting value chain development for Kithul (syrup from Caryota palm). In support of the government’s efforts it developed and disseminated (through contracted partners) land and water management guidelines and disaster resilience strategies for local government agencies and Community Based Organisations.

### Present Situation of the Project

The project period is 2017-2019 and all activities are completed or nearly so. An extension is granted until March 2020 to ensure sustainability. In the North, the project conducted a drought impact assessment, and identified and selected three tanks, which have been renovated. In the Southwest, the project conducted extensive studies and consultations, and drafted technical guidelines, before it undertook through

government and IUCN a range of activities: introduction of flood resilient rice varieties, improved land and water management for smallholder tea farmers, planting of Kithul palms on flood prone lands, home gardening and strengthening of the Kithul value chain.

### **Purpose, scope and clients of the evaluation**

The project is coming to its end by March 2020 and requires an evaluation of its relevance, effectiveness, efficiency, impact and sustainability to promote accountability to ILO stakeholders, to enhance learning, and to provide recommendations for possible future programming.

### **Methodology of evaluation**

The evaluation methodology consisted of document review, field observations, and consultations with stakeholders. Because the project (RBSA) used a process approach, had not updated its results framework after initial planning or conducted periodic progress reporting, part of the evaluation was a reconstruction of a project-level list of interventions and likely results.

## **Main Findings & Conclusions**

### **Results**

The main results included:

#### In the North (Kilinochchi):

- Tanks (DAD): renovated three dilapidated tanks (175 households) that is likely to reduce drought-related crop failure, increase annual crop production and improve dry season cash crops and household well water availability. Generated 20 labour days for each of about 200 households.

#### In the Southwest (Ratnapura, Kalutara districts):

- Kithul (SEDD, Private sector): Development of the Kithul (*Caryota urens*) syrup value chain, increasing linkages (government, private sector and CBOs), skills and worker safety, possibly leading to higher production, product quality and price for at least 600 farmers and Small and Medium Enterprises (SMEs).

- Home gardens (IUCN): Development of 38 flood resilient home gardens for improved livelihoods

- Rice (NRMC-Natural Resource Management Centre): Introduction of 20 old flood-tolerant rice varieties with 23 farmers

- Tea (TSHDA-Tea Small Holder Development Authority): Introduction of improved tea cultivation practices, land and water management and nurseries for 44 tea farmers

- Knowledge products (EFL-Environmental Foundation Limited, UoC-University of Colombo, ISB- Industrial Services Bureau Kulunegara, IUCN): Land and water resource management for disaster resilience strategy and guidelines (tea sector) developed, and promoted with CBOs and local government; drought and flood impact assessments

- ILO sector role and opportunity exploration: new and improved sector expertise, networks, partnerships and clarity about opportunities for future programming

### **Relevance**

The project's rationale, aims, interventions and overall design were relevant to the local and government needs, priorities and limitations as well as ILO's mandate, comparative advantage, and the objective of RBSA (addressing urgent needs, complementarity to country programme outcomes, innovation and leverage, partnership development).

### **Effectiveness**

Although the project did not formulate or monitor outcomes (yet), circumstantial evidence suggests that effectiveness should be assessed as likely high when likely outcomes are compared with what can be reasonably expected from a 2 year project.

Community outcomes. The community-level outcomes in the North are likely high to high (income, food, peace dividend), but will remain limited to 175 households, while the outcomes in the Southwest are still small (effect, number of households) and often unknown till after the project ends, but they might increase over time once partners learn and adjust, more farmers adopt successful technologies and value chains become stronger. Gender equity and social

inclusion were not at the centre of this project, but there was evidence that poor people and women participated adequately and benefited from the intervention results. No detailed data exist, however.

Government outcomes. It is too early to evaluate whether government agencies and local CBOs will end up stronger in addressing disaster resilience. Exchanges showed that awareness has been raised and will likely be increased further once the guidelines and strategy dissemination workshops will be held. The project conducted a workshop need assessment for CBOs and District Secretariat Divisions, but otherwise it did not assess strengths and weaknesses of the target institutions like DAD, District Secretariats, SEDD, nor their ability, need and opportunities to apply the new strategic insights and guidelines information.

ILO Outcomes. Effectiveness for ILO itself should be assessed as high as ILO largely achieved the desired sector knowledge, experience, linkages and networks and an idea of ILO's place in the concerned sector and the sector's possible place in ILO's programming.

Contributions to ILO Country Programme Outcomes. The project contributions towards P&B Outcome 5 (Decent work in the rural economy) includes temporary employment (200hh), improved community disaster and income resilience (175hh in North and potentially 700hh in SW), and institutional strengthening (200 SMEs, 3 Farmer Organisations, various CBOs and local government agencies).

Contribution to the SDGs. The project mainly contributed to Goal 8 (economic growth, employment and decent work for all) by generating temporary work and improving productive employment and incomes (potentially more than 1000hh) through programming that will be continued by the government.

#### **Efficiency.**

It is unlikely that the project could have achieved more in terms of quantity within the given time

and budget limitations. The project team worked hard and by early 2020 all intended interventions will be completed. Leveraging ongoing government and private sector initiatives has been optimal and instrumental. It is possible that in terms of quality the project could have achieved more if it had established simple (preferably outcome indicator-related) baselines and intended outcomes for each target community, CBO, and government partner as basis for the detailed intervention design and sustained focus of project staff. Project management and organisational learning would have also benefited from this, and from systematic and periodic monitoring and reporting.

#### **Impact.**

In general terms all efforts were designed to contribute to often broader long-term changes, and most interventions will or can create opportunities for decent work and economic growth (SDG 8), in some cases by working jointly with the government and private sector.

#### **Exit Strategies and Sustainability**

The strengths of the project lie in the integration with ongoing government programmes, the relatively simple, maintainable and potentially replicable technologies. Exit strategies are therefore relatively straightforward. Sustainability of tanks, tank-related farming and management by farmer organisations should be rated as high. Smallholder tea and Kithul efforts have good scope because they are party of larger programmes or value chain development efforts, but not all individual technologies might sustain. For instance, home gardening and new rice varieties results might be more vulnerable as results are small or still unknown and they are not part of sustained post-project efforts in that area yet. Because some of the results (for rice, Kithul, tea) will only materialise after the project end, the sustainability is also hard to guess.

The sustainability of institutional results is most difficult to assess, as the results are so far only vaguely defined, while related capacity building efforts will at most be of short duration.

## Recommendations

### Recommendations for the ongoing project:

1. Conduct as yet joint DAD-ILO review of project results and approach for mutual learning
2. Increase as yet efforts for community baseline (recall-style), monitoring and learning during the last project months, especially in the Southwest for end of project reviews and learning.
3. Give the guidelines and strategy a chance to mature and be owned by government, target CBOs and agencies, by continued improvement through feedback from the workshops and monitoring of application
4. Increase the usefulness of the November-December strategy and guidelines dissemination workshop by having the participants plan how they will apply the new insights.

### Recommendations for future programming:

5. Keep considering tank renovation for substantial immediate impacts and peace dividend and linkage to LEED, preferably using the so-called cascade approach to tanks (interlinking tanks)
6. In flood-affected rural areas focus on adjusting to floods rather than on flood control. Continue to monitor success and replicability of flood-resilient rice varieties and home gardening, tea garden management, Kithul plantation in disaster-prone areas, and also explore disaster resilience improvement for e.g. quarry

management, gem mining and small scale industries.

7. In support of Kithul, conduct detailed value chain assessments, and support safety and processing equipment development and supply chains; ensure that equipment is paid for by either the farmers or the private sector
8. It is recommended that project documents and monitoring systems put the needs and priorities of women and marginalised groups systematically centre stage during consultations and design

### Partnership and Strategy Recommendations

9. Focus efforts on contributing to implementation of partners' long-term flood resilience strategies
10. Base strengthening of partners like DAD, SEDD and NRMC on adequate joint assessments and reviews of past cooperation.
11. Increase organisational learning from RBSA projects by systematically incorporating of results frameworks, target group baseline, and M&E in project design, regardless of whether ILO systems require that.
12. It is recommended that ILO continue considering working in the covered sectors, either by mainstreaming lessons learnt in regular programming or by mainstreaming decent work approaches in disaster resilience programmes.

