



<Insert title here Type and timing of evaluation e.g. Child Labour in Lebanon – Independent Midterm evaluation>

QUICK FACTS

Countries: Lebanon

Evaluation date: 25 November 2022

Evaluation type: Joint

Evaluation timing: Final

Administrative Office: RO Arab States

Technical Office: SOCPRO

Evaluation manager: Hideyuki Tsuruoka (in coordination with interagency evaluation management group)

Evaluation consultant(s): Magda Stepanyan

DC Symbol: LBN/19/51/UND

Donor(s) & budget: Multi Partner Trust Fund, US\$2,700,000 (overall, including agencies' contributions)

Key Words: Social Protection

BACKGROUND & CONTEXT

Summary of the project purpose, logic and structure

The programme aimed to achieve the following *outcome*: establishment of a strengthened national SP system, *that is inclusive, integrated, rights based, efficient and effective, with a specific emphasis on gender and people with disabilities (PwD)*. The JP's expected *output* includes the following:

1. An integrated cross-sector national SP policy is developed for Lebanon, and supports the establishment of a rights-based, state-led gender and disability responsive SP system
2. Evidence to assess the fiscal, social and economic impact of gender-responsive SP reforms generated and used
3. Capacity of the GOL in implementing well-performing, scalable and replicable social assistance interventions that equally meet the needs of both women and men is developed building on the basis of the NPTP and related disability social safety nets
4. Equitable and innovative modalities for enhancing the adequacy and coverage of NSSF social insurance schemes amongst the working poor are developed in a gender and disability responsive manner
5. An innovative platform of dialogue for civil society and academia to provide contributions in the development of a national SP system is established

Present situation of the project

The programme ended in September 2022. For the progress, refer to the main findings.

Purpose, scope and clients of the evaluation

Evaluation objectives: (i) to provide systematic and evidence-based review of the progress made towards the realization of the JP outcome; and (ii) provide strategic recommendations for the future programming and planning towards strengthening social protection in Lebanon.

Evaluation scope: The evaluation scope included all the activities managed under the JP programme. Geographically, the scope covered the whole country of Lebanon during the period of 1 January 2020 – 1 September 2022.



	<p>Clients: The primary clients of this evaluation are the Government of Lebanon, particularly Ministry of Social Affairs, and Inter-Ministerial Committee for Social Affairs, programme participating UN organizations, secretariat and donors of the SDG fund. The secondary clients include other major partners in social protection.</p>
<p>Methodology of evaluation</p>	<p>The evaluation was framed under the OECD-DAC evaluation criteria, including relevance, coherence, effectiveness, efficiency and sustainability. A systematic assessment of the long-term impact of the interventions on beneficiaries and their contexts was not part of the evaluation scope. The methodology included secondary data review and individual and group interviews (22 interviews in total with 11 male and 11 female key informants). The data collection was carried out during the period July – September 2022.</p> <p>Special attention was provided to ensure that the evaluation employed gender and disability lenses with specific focus on two dimensions, namely, evaluation process and evaluation findings.</p> <p>The coordination and logistical support was provided by the ILO Evaluation manager, while the Evaluation Management Group was established with the evaluation specialists from each PUNO to support the evaluation and provide high-level quality assurance of the evaluation.</p>
<p>MAIN FINDINGS & CONCLUSIONS</p>	<p>The JP demonstrated partial achievement of its main outcome but achieved a critical milestone for the establishment of the national SP system in Lebanon, namely, the design of the first ever National SP Strategy for Lebanon. The document was only preliminary approved by Cabinet with recommendation to make revisions for its preparation for submission to Parliament. The final approval was expected by the end of the year, in which case this document would serve as the reference point for all stakeholders when implementing any SP-related intervention in Lebanon.</p>



Relevance: The intended results of the Joint Programme were highly relevant for the social protection needs in Lebanon. The relevance of JP has increased over the course of its implementation as the JP triggered a mobilization effect across a range of stakeholders to elevate SP into policy agenda. For the Lebanese stakeholders the outcome of the JP resonated at very personal level.

Coherence and validity of design: The design of the JP was largely coherent with three inadequacies: (i) missing a critical intermediary outcome necessary for the achievement of its more ambitious goal of establishment of social protection system in Lebanon; (ii) disconnect between the output 3 and its indicator 3.2, and (iii) overambitious claim of not only developing but also testing of various social insurance schemes. The JP design found a unique niche in the landscape of the SP-focused initiatives in Lebanon. The JP was unique and truly inclusive in its gender sensitivity and how PWDs contributed to the design of the SP system in Lebanon.

Effectiveness: The JP largely accomplished its expected results. The JP has demonstrated remarkable progress in shaping national vision on SP Strategy, given highly complex and fragmented context it operated in. The attribution of the achievement of the intermediary results of the JP to the output 3 was imperceptible. JP missed the opportunity to learn and inform SP Strategy future implementation by the lessons learned from the cash distribution modality. The JP designed and implemented successful multi-stakeholder consultation process with CSOs and international partners on disability and age-related benefits. Despite all efforts, the consultation process with the national authorities and CSOs for the development of the SP Strategy was perceived insufficient. The development and adoption of a Strategy in a highly fragmented and competing context such as Lebanon was considered possible due to several success factors. The reporting process was organized very smoothly however, the reports did not fully fit-for-purpose: it provided insufficient and often incorrect information on what, when, by whom. The JP managed to reasonably adjust its implementation during the COVID-19.



Efficiency: Limited information was available on the financial management of the JP to conclude about cost-effectiveness of its implementation. Efficiency of internal coordination mechanism among PUNOs was high. The design of the JP provided several win factors such as (i) mobilizing the advantages of various implementing organizations, (ii) delivering a bigger result which might not be possible if approached individually, (iii) additional political dimension with the engagement of the RC through common packaging and shared narrative.

Impact Orientation: Long-term effect on equitable gender relations and SDGs acceleration was conditioned to the adoption and quality implementation of the SP Strategy. Disability inclusion in the JP not only marked a new level of engagement with the PWDs but also created some important preconditions for the disability inclusive social protection in Lebanon.

Sustainability: The JP triggered few spin-offs managed by the PUNOs within their mandates to initiate implementation of the SP Strategy in Lebanon. National ownership and capacity was created. Coherence of UN Development system: Active engagement of the RC was pivotal. The JP ensured largely coherent approach of UN to the national SP priorities. The JP successfully translated equity considerations throughout all its activities and results.

RECOMMENDATIONS, LESSONS LEARNED AND GOOD PRACTICES

Main findings & Conclusions

1. Keep the momentum and continue developing of the Strategy Action Plan, Monitoring Plan and financing and costing for the implementation of the National Social Protection Strategy
2. Ensure the SP Strategy implementation plan is sufficiently integrated into the existing GoL's institutions (e.g. NSSF) and, if necessary, carry out feasibility analysis to identify optimal solutions for institutionalization of SP Strategy



	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 3. Raise awareness of the CSOs to explain that shifting narrative from aid distribution to SP would not lose their benefits, creating thereby stronger push towards SP system in Lebanon 4. Raise public awareness to strengthen their role as right holders and create avenues for them to call duty bearers accountable in delivering SP Strategy. 5. Strengthen the SP platform by creating community and proactive civic space for policy reflections by the CSOs beyond only OPDs and nurture information transparency and knowledge sharing among SP stakeholders. On a short run, revitalize the dialogues with the CSOs and inform them about the progress of the SP Strategy approval. 6. Consider positioning SP Strategy governance mechanism at the inter-ministerial level to avoid political influence and to have mandate and convening power over ministries. 7. Ensure the momentum with the new RC and continue advocating with the GoL for the SP Strategy implementation. 8. Explore lessons learned from country-wide cash transfer implemented by WFP to define most optimal modalities for social grants and suchlike under the SP Strategy. 9. If considered relevant to partner up with NPTP, consider requesting and supporting the GoL with the evaluation of the institution program and its performance. 10. Consider supporting the GoL to carry out feasibility study to define data governance mechanism based on the IMPACT database and based on the efforts already implemented by the WFP in helping to adapt the IMPACT database to the needs of SP sector
<p>Main lessons learned and good practices</p>	<p><u>Lessons learned:</u></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. If UN is prepared to act as one and is led/represented by the RC, the bargaining power of the PUNOs increased 2. If PUNOs don't wait till the end of the process to start political process and embrace 'endorsement layer by layer' approach,



then the process to negotiate the final product for approval is more smooth

3. If the power of good communication by listening and giving significance well understood and implemented by the PUNOs, then national partners engage in a more meaningful way
4. If the importance of educating and raising awareness of people is understood and implemented by the PUNOs, then additional pressure from the right holders implemented towards duty bearers deliver upon expectations.
5. If inviting representatives from various agencies come with more detailed request of the expertise and role that is expected from those representatives, then right people designated and therefore, meaningful discussions could be implemented.

Good practices:

1. Involvement of OPDs in developing products that are directly related to their needs
2. Instrumental role of RC in reaching out to highest executive level in the country
3. Inter-agency coordination mechanism but introducing more nuanced requirements on representation of the government agencies and more structured consultation process