



## ILO's FAIRWAY Programme – Independent Midterm Evaluation

### QUICK FACTS

**Countries:** Arab States: Kuwait, Bahrain, Jordan, Lebanon

**Africa:** Uganda, Kenya, Ethiopia, Nigeria, Morocco

**Evaluation date:** 01 August 2022

**Evaluation type:** Project

**Evaluation timing:** Mid-term

**Administrative Office:** MIGRANT

**Technical Office:** MIGRANT

**Evaluation manager:** Sudipta Bhadra

**Evaluation consultant(s):** Michael Drinkwater (Lead), Batul Sadliwala, Gulnar Wakim, Grace Isharaza, Oladela Idowu

**DC Symbol:** GLO/19/06/CHE

**Donor(s) & budget:** SDC - USD 10,972,250 (additional USD 1,500,000 in 2020 to support the COVID-19 response)

**Key Words:** Migration, Fair Recruitment, Migrant workers, Corridor Approach

## BACKGROUND & CONTEXT

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

The FAIRWAY Programme funded by the Swiss Agency for Development and Cooperation (SDC), is a four-year (December 2019 – November 2023) inter-regional development cooperation initiative that ***aims to improve conditions of labour migration across migration pathways from Africa to the Arab States***, thereby enabling migrant workers to contribute more fully to sustainable development in both countries of origin and destination.

The programme addresses underlying causes of decent work deficits at their source through national-level interventions in selected countries of origin (CoO) in East, West and North Africa and four countries of destination (CoD) in the Arab States. Further sub-regional and inter-regional interventions serve to identify areas of common interest and improve understanding of key actors' respective needs, so as to improve cooperation across labour migration corridors. Focusing on two sectors, domestic workers and construction workers, FAIRWAY aims to explore ways to address the interlinked structural, behavioural, and practical barriers to improved labour migration.

The four objectives of FAIRWAY are to engage private sector, employers', and workers' organizations to produce decent work for migrant workers; develop and strengthen gender-responsive policy frameworks to realise fair recruitment and decent work and regulatory compliance; diminished discriminatory attitudes towards women and men migrant workers; and improving migrant workers' access to information and support services throughout the migration cycle.

### Present situation of the project

This is the second phase of the FAIRWAY project and it is in its third year of implementation. This phase has been marked by the expansion of the project to include Africa and cross-regional linkages with the Arab States. In addition, the Covid-19 pandemic took hold just as this phase was starting up, severely disrupting implementation for the first two years. A combination of additional resources from the donor and reallocated resources from planned activities were used to support activities that in particular assisted

	<p>women migrant workers that lost their jobs in the Gulf during their pandemic.</p> <p>In Lebanon, the fall in new and renewed migrant domestic worker permits was from 207,757 in 2018 to 65,825 in 2021, an overall decrease of 68%. In Jordan the decrease between 2019 to 2020 was 42%. Apart from raising a range of workers' rights and protection issues, as women migrant domestic workers were dumped on the streets without their pay, the deteriorating economic situation of many households who previously had had a live in worker, was for a part time live out worker..</p>
<b>Purpose, scope and clients of the evaluation</b>	<p>This MTE serves two main <b>purposes</b>:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"><li>1) To provide an independent assessment of progress to date of the FAIRWAY Programme, assessing performance as per the projected targets and indicators of achievement at outcome and output level; strategies and implementation modalities chosen; partnership arrangements, constraints and opportunities.</li><li>2) To provide recommendations for the remaining period of the Programme in terms of strategies, institutional arrangements, partnership arrangements and any revisions to the results-based framework mid-course and other areas within which the evaluation team may wish to make recommendations.</li></ol> <p>An additional aim for the MTE is for it to contribute to organizational learning by identifying lessons learned and emerging good practices. These will inform the recommendations for the remaining period of the programme, and for the follow up phase for which planning is due to commence in the latter part of 2022.</p>
<b>Methodology of evaluation</b>	<p>The methodology used was qualitative in nature but made use of available data to illustrate and understand trends in order to throw more insight into the issues that the FAIRWAY programme is aiming to tackle, and its own contribution to address these substantial challenges.</p> <p>Methods used have included: Literature and data review; exploratory KIIs (inception phase); analytical KIIs; use of regional and global KIIs to help triangulate = overall KIIs were conducted</p>

with 94 persons; FGDs – a limited number of FGDs (mainly 1 per context); 1-2 case studies per context; excel summaries; OECD DAC criteria review, using a modified set of questions drawn from the ToR and with a colour code to indicate current level of achievement; a review of the Performance Management Plan (PMP) by outcome area and indicator.

One limitation of the methodology was its limited face to face nature, with all project level meetings being held online.

## MAIN FINDINGS & CONCLUSIONS

This section includes an overview of progress in both reasons, and findings related to the OECD-DAC based set of evaluation criteria used for the MTE. A detailed matrix showing progress by indicator in project's Performance Management Plan is included in the main report.

### Arab States: Challenges

The kafala system feeds into a number of deep seated cultural tropes regarding attitudes towards migrants that are resistant to change, and undoubtedly grounded in a fear of their numerical dominance in these societies. Social change of this nature goes beyond a discourse about human rights, since firstly migrant workers have to be de-commodified and socially accepted as being actually human. As such, the tropes resistant to change are rooted in patriarchy, ethnicity, class and religion, and require patience and stamina to address.

With the negative effects of the pandemic on destination country economies, host country governments still tend to see the choices they face as zero-sum, the issue being either about protecting their own citizens, whose incomes are falling, or protecting migrant workers. This is unfortunate as well as erroneous. It led to a situation where governments during the pandemic backtracked on reforms, as was done in Lebanon by rejecting long negotiated reforms to the Standard Unified Contract, as well as in Bahrain, where the National Assembly proposed regressive kafala reforms, and sought to remove already fragile protections and rights for women migrant workers. The ILO has worked to mitigate these



steps back in all the FAIRWAY countries of operation, but it arrests forward reform momentum.

Another challenge for the FAIRWAY project has been how to develop more constructive relationships with employers/organisations and trade unions in the countries of focus, and how to nudge them both towards more recognition of migrant workers, and their rights and protections. In Kuwait this has been especially challenging, but in Bahrain, with the focus more on the construction industry, whilst it was hard to make much progress during the pandemic the GFBTU has followed a more constructive approach, and there is more welcoming of FAIRWAY's engagement.

In this context, the challenge for FAIRWAY and the ILO's migration team, is to find points of traction that can help advance longer term change, understanding that these entry points do not always work out.

#### **Programme Progress and Achievements**

Outcome 1: Employers and workers' organisations actively support decent work for migrant workers.

Work undertaken with global trade unions to facilitate capacity building of local member organisations – International Domestic Workers Federation with Sandigan and MW member organisations in Kuwait and Lebanon, and the Building and Wood Workers International (BWI) with occupational, safety and health (OSH) training to construction workers within private construction companies in Bahrain. Additionally, through the ILO's partnership with ITUC-Africa, SARTUC (South Asian trade unions) and MFA, FAIRWAY mobilized more than 150 representatives of Asian and African trade unions and CSOs which support migrant workers in the Arab States in a three-part webinar series focused on solidarity between unions and CSOs in Asia and Africa, and promoting solutions to common struggles in advocating for migrant workers in the Arab States.

During the pandemic, when migrant workers were losing jobs and not being paid wages and their return tickets, organisations like Eгна Legna in Lebanon, one of the few organisations supporting



migrant domestic workers at this time, was funded by FAIRWAY to assist MDWs who had been left on the streets with legal advice and the process of being able to return to their country of origin.

*Outcome 2: Strengthened gender responsive policy frameworks for recruitment, decent work and regulatory compliance.*

*The potential of energising the African – Arab States corridor* is a huge opportunity for the programme but an underlying issue is the relative lack of leverage of African governments with Arab States. As such, the AUC -ILO dialogue between African and Arab States tripartite actors in November 2021 was a major achievement for the project but is only a first step towards more sustained inter-regional dialogue. The online dialogue included one plenary and five thematic expert panels and allowed for exchanges on: recent trends in labour migration in the Africa-Arab States labour migration corridor, including the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic; opportunities for skills development and recognition; reforms to extend social protection for migrant workers; re-negotiation and implementation of bilateral labour agreements in light of the gaps exposed during the pandemic; innovations to advance fair recruitment, including use of technology; and significant recent reforms to promote internal labour market mobility of migrant workers in the Gulf States.<sup>1</sup> With the online nature of the meeting, however, the value of the meeting was in bringing together the range of tripartite actors from both regions and allowing for joint discussions between them.

With Qatar offering to host a follow-up physical meeting in 2022, the issue will be on how much the full tripartite representation can be sustained, and whether the discussions can serve as more than talking points. This is especially so with respect to the nature of any union representation from the Arab States or Africa and it is unlikely that it would incorporate specific migrant worker representation. For the ILO, an aim of the meeting will be to pave the way for an ongoing process of discussion that leads to improved relationships and labour agreements between the two regions.

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<sup>1</sup> AUC/ILO, 2021, 'Africa-Arab States Inter-regional Tripartite Meeting on Labour Migration (15-16 November 2021, online).

One strength of FAIRWAY that complements also the work of inter-regional programmes such as Work in Freedom, is the research that has been undertaken on different topics. An important recent regional topic covered in a forthcoming thematic brief, produced with three other UN agencies, is that of absconding. Absconding has always been a major challenge for workers, and is currently being used as a means to undermine kafala reforms, including in Qatar and Saudi Arabia. Whilst it remains a tool employers can wield (or threaten to wield) in retaliation to a worker wanting to change employers, it is a block to achieving greater internal labour mobility for MWs.<sup>2</sup> The value of research like this is then how it can lead to policy influencing as well as creative thinking around potential activities – in this instance reducing the vulnerability of employers and not just employees has also to be taken into account. To tackle a subject like absconding will require a systemic approach across all levels of the programme.

Outcome 3: Diminished discriminatory attitudes towards women and men migrant workers.

Across the region, work with media has been undertaken to improve the quality and accuracy of reporting on labour migration issues, and to make journalists aware of ethical, legal and human rights issues with respect to the subject. Online training was conducted in Jordan in particular that was available to journalists from different countries. Whilst the training is unable to address restrictions on how the media reports across the region, it has improved journalists awareness of the negative stereotyping of migrant workers, and more understanding of the rights issues involved,

Outcome 4: Migrant workers have improved access to information and support services throughout the migration cycle.

Funds allocated under this outcome were reallocated to Covid-19 response activities during the Covid-19 pandemic.

**Africa: Challenges**

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<sup>2</sup> FAIRWAY Migration Advisory Group Meeting: 8 November 2021, ILO.



In the context of FAIRWAY's inclusion of Africa and its growing linkages with the Middle East on migration issues, perhaps the most noteworthy starting point is the relative recent attention of most African governments towards this issue. Whilst irregular migration has been happening for some time, many governments have only officially permitted their citizens, especially women, to work in the Gulf relatively recently.

As a result, the process of working on Bilateral Labour Agreements (BLAs) between African and Arab States governments is still in its relative infancy, notwithstanding a few exceptions, for instance in the case of Ethiopia. Owing to the differential power relations those negotiated so far are often weak in their inclusion of basic rights protections and working conditions for migrant workers, as well as in setting of minimum wages. The attraction of African workers for Arab States countries is because they accept lower wages, and thus the need for improved collaboration between African governments to avoid this 'race to the bottom'. In the current economic climate where households in Arab States are looking for cheaper domestic labour options, there has been an uptick in demand for African workers, indicating the importance of improving legal protections and rights for these workers.

In this context, FAIRWAY's work with the African Union is very important, together with other ILO initiatives<sup>3</sup> that are focusing on improving AU capacity and knowledge in this area.

The risks and vulnerabilities faced by women migrant workers to the Arab States are extremely high, as shown in case studies that were collected. Much of the migration that has taken place thus far between Africa and Arab States has been unregulated and uncontrolled, with MWs travelling by unsafe routes with minimal knowledge of what to expect on the journey and upon arrival. As the first ILO initiative to look at these inter-regional linkages, this highlights the importance of FAIRWAY's role in starting to build the basis for more widespread awareness, regulation and protocols to

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<sup>3</sup> See Excel synergies table.



protect MWs. This also requires the aligning of ILO's global and regional technical support to support programme initiatives.

In respect of FAIRWAY's Africa wide and inter-regional work, the effects of the Covid-19 pandemic means that all work undertaken until the last few months has been virtual. FAIRWAY has also been hampered in covering Morocco without the benefit of a full time French speaking national coordinator.

#### **Progress and Achievements**

Outcome 1: Employers and workers' organisations actively support decent work for migrant workers.

One area of progress has been that of *pan-Africa TU cooperation*. In countries of origin, initial consultations have been held with the Nigeria Labour Congress, HTS-Union in Uganda and KUDHEIHA in Kenya to agree on a joint programme of work to foster cross-union cooperation in Africa.<sup>4</sup> COTU-K, the Kenyan TU federation has also held an initial discussion with FENASOL<sup>5</sup>, as has the NLC with the GFBTU in Bahrain. The main overall objective is the improvement of trade union voices, representation and collaboration for promoting effective interregional labour migration governance processes between African origin and Arab States destination countries. To establish a commitment to common courses of action and shared learning to support potential, existing and returnee migrant workers would represent a significant breakthrough achievement for FAIRWAY. Joint actions are essential if African trade unions and governments wish to seek to exercise any form of leverage in the Middle East.

Outcome 2: Strengthened gender responsive policy frameworks for recruitment, decent work and regulatory compliance

The AUC-ILO dialogue that preceded the online inter-regional event in November 2021 has involved regional and global staff in the ILO beyond FAIRWAY, but represents also an achievement for the project. Questions remain for the follow up meeting in Qatar on how especially African tripartite partners will be engaged in this

<sup>4</sup> ILO, 2021, 'Progress Report, 1 July 2020 to 30 June 2021, FAIRWAY Programme'.

<sup>5</sup> Discussion with Theresa Wabuka, focal point for labour migration in COTU-K, 1 April 2022.

meeting, and the extent to which the AUC can start to claim a stronger voice in these discussions with Gulf States.

With respect to BLAs, if countries aim to negotiate individual agreements, it is unlikely that countries of origin will be very effective in securing any real change in the kafala system to protect the rights of their citizens as foreign workers. With FAIRWAY's encouragement of forms of cooperation between African nations, the gendered dimensions of the migration experience also require to be fully incorporated within these BLAs. There is a long way to go towards incorporating a clear focus on the specific risks and vulnerabilities that women migrant workers face within these dialogues, and within national policy framework within Africa too.

Outcome 3: Diminished discriminatory attitudes towards women and men migrant workers

The bulk of the work undertaken so far for this component of the programme in Africa is media related. In Uganda and Kenya media training has been undertaken and radio programmes launched, including in one of the main local languages. The media work is designed to counter negative perceptions of migrants in countries of origin and destination, and to paint a more holistic and experiential picture of the migration process, including potential positives and negatives. This is designed to improve the quality and accuracy of reporting, and so that potential migrants are aware of both the opportunities and possible pitfalls. Whilst the work undertaken is more comprehensive than in the Arab States,

Outcome 4: Migrant workers have improved access to information and support services throughout the migration cycle.

Supporting the reintegration of returnee migrants who have lost their employment during the pandemic. This has been a major focus for FAIRWAY's African based activities, and one for which adjustment had to be made owing to the unplanned effects of the Covid-19 pandemic. Setting up a Kenyan Migrant Welfare Fund in conjunction with the Ministry of Labour, and the establishment of an emergency cash transfer activity in Ethiopia, are two of the activities that have been undertaken. The establishment of well



advertised, migrant resource centres as one-stop advisory centres has also been shown to be effective.

Coordination between ILO programmes and leveraging/ sharing of resources – Cash transfer initiative in Ethiopia for 100+ returnee women migrants, with support from the FCDO funded BRMM project, and also the Migrant Welfare Fund being established in Kenya.

#### Findings by Evaluation Criteria

##### **Relevance and Strategic Fit**

FAIRWAY is an excellent fit for ILO's focus on labour rights, decent work, and the rights and ability for migrant workers to able to travel and work securely and fairly. A timely intervention for African governments and the AUC, whose concern for their migrating citizens has grown in recent years.

In African, tripartite partners have broadly welcomed the programme interventions, and expressed demand for support with capacity and systems building, strengthening relationships with Arab States countries, and development of migrant support resources.

Within Arab States, tripartite partners may view the focus on decent work for migrant workers with less urgency but the scale and relevance of the issue in country contexts dominated by migrant populations, given the dismal status of their rights, demands ILO attention. Given the legal and systemic restrictions on migrants' rights and freedom of association in all the Arab States, supporting bottom-up work through organisations like Sandigan, en.v and EDWA in Kuwait, and Eгна Legna in Lebanon, is an appropriate and relevant means to find ways whereby migrant women DWs are able to articulate their voices and support each other in pushing for improved recognition and labour rights.

*Rating: 4/4*

##### **Coherence and Validity of Design**

Migrant workers are viewed too passively in the Results Framework, and this feeds into the understanding of gender, with a lack of clarity as to what 'gender responsive' means.

Country and regional work needs more coherence, in respect of linkages between different types of activities, and connections between levels, countries and regions. In large part because of the pandemic the programme across both regions has been conducting activities in relative independence of each other, notwithstanding some notable exceptions particularly regarding trade unions in Africa.

*Rating: 3/4*

#### **Effectiveness**

Given the size of the problem and the context of the Covid-19 pandemic, good progress has been made. FAIRWAY has both adapted its activities to meet some of the additional challenges faced by migrant workers who were losing their jobs and to make online modes of working as inclusive as feasible.

Partnerships and collaborations established so far as part of FAIRWAY have been mixed in terms of their effectiveness. Whilst the selection of partners has generally been good, the management of these relationships needs strengthening. With it now possible to resume physical meetings, more inclusive and inter-personal ways of involving partners and collaborating organisations can now be resumed.

FAIRWAY has made significant progress in the area of strengthening national efforts in Africa aimed at enhancing labour migration governance by focusing on capacity building, improving guidance materials, seeking to improve linkages between different tripartite actors. Efforts have been made as well to draw in the media and improve its understanding of migration issues and ability to provide appropriate, ethical guidance to prospective migrant workers. Turnover of staff from national government bodies is a constraint, however, meaning that training needs to be ongoing and involving persons of both genders.



The programme has also started to produce a range of thematic briefs on critical migration topics, which are helping to further understanding of issues and areas where improved regulation and intervention are required.

*Rating 4/4*

#### **Human Rights and Gender Equality**

The commitment to both these components is vital but the work is patchy and requires a clearer strategy and focus. Activities funded through the programme have supported the development of organisations representing migrant workers in the Arab States, and to facilities such as Migrant Resource Centres in Africa. However, although the intervention focuses predominantly on women, it still lacks a broader analysis of how gender inequality manifests itself throughout the migration cycle, and is clearer on a coherent, overall strategy to address issues at each point.

*Rating: 3/4*

#### **Efficiency**

Generally, *resource and budget management* within FAIRWAY appears competent, and adjustments made during the pandemic both to shift activities to support returnee migrant workers and to leverage additional resources from other programmes, as with the cash transfer scheme in Ethiopia, were timely and laudable. Fundund disbursement processes in Africa are somewhat challenging, however, and reported delays have affected tripartite partner activities and schedules.

*Rating: 3/4*

#### **Sustainability**

Sustainability requires addressing a range of capacity building and relational skills amongst tripartite and CSOs. This will take more time than this project phase. What FAIRWAY has allowed is an expansion of the ILO's work to take place in Africa, focused on the issue of migrant worker rights and the migration cycle linkages with the Arab States. To develop this holistic approach is not sustainable yet, given the levels of capacity and relational strengthening required, as well as development of the kinds of guidance templates and information needed at all levels.

Most of all though the development of sustainability also requires the evolution of organisations representing migrant voices in countries of origin and destination. In this way migrant workers can ensure their voice is heard, that it is incorporated into guidance materials and policy processes, and to ensure that protection and livelihood services to migrants are improved. In Asia, organisations such as Eгна Legna In Lebanon and SKDWA in Kuwait and similar organisations in Africa, as well as migrant resource centres, will need will need further capacity strengthening to reach, involve and support migrant workers, their communities and their leaders, and to improve knowledge and skills.

Tripartite institutions in both regions also present their own issues, including capacity building, knowledge guidance, and support in building appropriate support and protection resources for MWs.

*Rating: 3/4*

### **Impact**

Overall, it is premature to make a statement around FAIRWAY's likely longer term impact. Given the long term nature of the policy and behavioural change work, and that the Africa national and regional work has only been started in this phase, there is no doubt that a follow on phase is needed to extend the likelihood of the programme being able to contribute to more significant longer term change.

In the Arab States the work with the most impact thus far has been with migrant organisations like Sandigan, EDWA and Eгна Legna. At the same time the more challenging work with tripartite organisations is essential at the minimum to seek to prevent the further erosion of migrant work rights.

In Africa, although the initiatives are more recent in nature, FAIRWAY has a more receptive audience in its tripartite partners. However, to achieve the kinds of policy and regulatory reforms, improved understanding of women MW issues, development of adequate support services in scope and scale, and alignment of tripartite activities, will all require a further 3-5 years to have an impact on

more than a small handful of migrant workers, who so far have benefited from FAIRWAY activities

*Rating: 2/4*

## RECOMMENDATIONS, LESSONS LEARNED AND GOOD PRACTICES

### Main findings & Conclusions

The substantive programme recommendations for the next 18 months concentrate on developing more of a coherent focus for FAIRWAY. These recommendations should also contribute to planning for the next phase of FAIRWAY.

#### Substantive Recommendations

1. *Revisions to Theory of Change and Results Framework.*  
A series of recommendations have been made to the Impact and Outcome statements to strengthen the focus and coherency of the project. The existing impact statement focuses on 'improved conditions of labour migration', but one of the most important additional requirements for labour migration is that potential, existing and returnee migrants have more *choices*. This has been found to be one of the most important requirements of informing and empowering migrant workers, so that they have the freedom to choose if they wish to migrate, how, and have other alternative choices too. As case studies illustrate, the susceptibility of migrants to forms of forced migration and to serious abuse, is owing often to the perceived urgency with which they are seeking additional income, and their inability to make an informed choice of whether and how to migrate. Unscrupulous recruiters thrive in such circumstances.

With the project's focus on women migrants, the special risks and vulnerabilities they face and forms of protection, security and rights they need also require more highlighting.

2. *Clarify the gender strategy* through the undertaking of three main shifts.
- Add women's empowerment dimensions to shift focus on women migrant workers from a passive to active nature.
  - *Embed work on gender inequality within local contexts and align across locations*

- *Use case studies and research focused on women migrants to evolve the programme strategy and improve choices and protections for women*
- 3. *Promote the principle of solidarity* to address the need to bridge the barriers between migrant workers and nationals, which is important in both countries of origin and destination.
- 4. *Strengthen the inter-regional dimensions* including the Pan-African collaboration through the AUC, so that Arab States acknowledge they need to engage with African countries to a greater extent, and the latter are organized and willing to collaborate together to increase their chances of securing legally back agreements to protect and enforce migrant labour rights
- 5. The *post-pandemic recovery phase* and the comparative increase in demand for migrant workers from Africa compared with Asia, requires a focus on four elements:
  - Establishment of consistent gender sensitive guidance, including in local languages, for all potential migrant workers.
  - Establishment of migrant resource centres in major urban centres in countries of origin. These centres should be linked to places where citizens will go to submit passport applications. Anyone applying for a passport for migration purposes should automatically be referred to such a centre.
  - As part of the orientation guidance provide potential migrant workers with a full range of livelihood options available to them, including alternative opportunities for earning income.
  - The full involvement of trade unions and employers' organisations in this work, and for unions to continue to be supported in establishing bilateral relations with other unions in Arab States
- 6. *Reinforce and continue the role of the Migration Advisory Group (MAG)*, extending the activities of the group to cover Africa too.
- 7. *Coordination and strengthening of capacity building approaches across particularly African countries*, including training of trainers and ensuring staff of both genders are involved..



### Procedural Recommendations

8. *Add a learning dimension to the MEL work.* An annual programme review should incorporate a lessons learned component and these should feed into reflection on the programme strategy and whether adjustments should be made. This function should be added to the role of the consultant MEL advisor. We would recommend that as part of a two day annual planning process, a programme review and lessons learned component be incorporated.
9. *Simplify the complexity of the financial management arrangements for Africa.*
10. *Strengthen and cohere migration specialist teams at regional level.*
11. *Strengthen partnership management* to overcome effects of online relationship management during the pandemic and organisations feeling of peripheral involvement.
12. *Strengthen and collaborate with other migration programmes on internal and external communications.*

### Main lessons learned and good practices

The lessons learned drawn out here attempt to highlight where relevant some of FAIRWAY's emerging good practices. Many of these lessons though point also to learning about the challenges that FAIRWAY has faced, especially in working with tripartite partners, and how drawing on this experience has the potential to improve the programme's future effectiveness. Some of these lessons are structural or systemic to the ILO, so addressing them requires some wider conversations too.

- *Long term nature of change and need for a programmatic approach within ILO.*

In the Arab States especially, the process of kafala reform and behavioural change requires a long term approach that requires huge patience and stamina to make a real difference. In spite of difficulties, it also requires seeking to maintain points of contact and communication with Ministries of Labour, TU federations, and Recruitment Agency syndicates, though not at the cost of the ILO's key principles around the protection of workers' rights.

For the ILO more broadly, there is *need for a more coherent, long-term 10-15 years programmatic approach including the use of overarching theories of change*, in order to support ongoing programme learning, building on good practices, increasing synergies between project activities, and facilitate match funding. This goes beyond the current ILO programme and budget planned so far for the 2023-24 biennium. To preserve, consolidate further, and build upon the collective experience of migration projects requires more than lessons learned documents, since these often remain relatively undigested beyond the project itself. Detailed theories of change built upon these lessons and spanning across all projects within the migration field, do preserve this learning, more profoundly however, and ensure that it continues to evolve. The role of longer term regional and global staff is also vital in developing these frameworks, since they provide also a knowledge management function in the ILO and work across projects and on new designs.

- *African collaboration in African-Arab States inter-regional linkages.*

This is the ground-breaking work of the FAIRWAY programme, and is an area that needs further strengthening in the future. African countries are on a steep learning curve in respect of how to engage with Arab States to improve the conditions under which their citizens travel and work in these countries. Existing power relations are imbalanced, and Arab States are rarely committed to conditions in BLA's that are not backed by existing legislation or regulations in the country concerned. In this respect, involving the AUC is an essential element of this work as African governments must collaborate if they wish to improve their voice and well-being of their citizens in Arab States. There is a great deal of capacity building that is required, however, within the AUC, within national governments, and amongst their consular staff in the limited number of countries where African governments do have representation in the Middle East.

- *Gender approach needs rethinking and women treated as active agents of change*

The importance of an agency oriented approach and how it shifts the nature of programming activities has been amply demonstrated by Work in Freedom. FAIRWAY has growing experience and understanding of the nature of the risks and vulnerabilities faced by women at different parts of the migration cycle. But a lens or framework to shape a more systemic analysis is lacking, and the addition of this will enable the programme to make its analysis of how gender issues play out at different points in the migration cycle more systemic and powerful, and aid in the search for creative opportunities. Case studies are illustrative and provide a check on the identification of issue across the cycle.

- *Challenges of ILO's tripartite structure and use of local civil society organisations to curate safe spaces for dialogue.*

Given the challenging and complex nature of achieving reform of migrant labour policies and legislation particularly in Arab States, it is impossible to achieve this working only with the tripartite structure. The lesson is how to create space for representation to be built and boundaries bridged. In the Arab States this issue is particularly acute, but for instance the work in Kuwait reveals both some of the problems and also creative ways of opening up new such spaces. FAIRWAY's lessons are around how to manage the tension involved in a) staying engaged with patriarchal union structures and b) fostering more directly local membership based structures, as with the IDWF affiliates of SKDWA and potentially EDWA in Kuwait, and Eгна Legna in Lebanon.

In Kuwait, Sandigan has developed localised knowledge of how to build trust with and organise different national groups, as has the Anti-Racism Movement, a civil society organization in Lebanon that works with various domestic migrant worker groups, including Eгна Legna. This experience can be used to inform further work in both countries, as is already being done to organise other African communities. It could perhaps also strengthen migrant community organisers in Bahrain.



- *Role of the Migration Advisory Group as a forum for discussion of technical issues and review of thematic publications*