



Evaluation Summary



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ILO Action Plan for Gender Equality 2010-15 – Independent Final evaluation

Quick Facts

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Administrative Office: GED

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Background & Context

Action Plan purpose

The ILO's policy on equality between women and men, calls for mutually reinforcing action to promote gender equality in ILO. The ILO Action Plan for Gender Equality 2010-15 (Action Plan) operationalizes this ILO policy. The Action Plan was divided into three phases aligning and following the ILO P&B biennium periods between 2010 and 2015. The Action Plan has two main components:

- i) enabling institutional mechanisms for gender equality in the ILO Office
- ii) gender-related programmatic outcomes.

As mandated by the Action Plan, and agreed with the Governing Body, this independent evaluation of the Action Plan required at the end of 2015, is to facilitate internal management learning and decision making in the ILO as well as for guidance on the next action plan for gender equality. This evaluation covers six years, and includes an assessment of

progress on results broadly set in 2010, including an analysis of information contained in ILO implementation reports. Also assessed is whether feedback given by the Governing Body on the mid-term stock-taking on the Action Plan was acted upon. The summarized report will be submitted to the Governing Body in March 2016.

Methodology

Based on the questions outlined in the Terms of Reference, the Action Plan was evaluated via interviews with 62 persons (57 ILO staff); a document review and; a survey with 76 random ILO professional staff respondents. The methodology included an analysis of progress in achieving the results recorded against targets. Quantitative data comprised an analysis of components of the Action Plan (baselines, targets and performance figures) and multiple choice survey results. Qualitative information, obtained through 62 interviews and open survey questions to 76 ILO staff, was content analyzed to determine trends and themes. A limitation was time allocated (45 days in total) to evaluate gender equality across the ILO over six years, with less time /opportunities for interviewing constituents or field level staff.

Main Findings & Conclusions

The ILO Action Plan for Gender Equality 2010-15 is fully aligned with the ILO Strategic Policy Framework 2010-15 and continues to operationalize the ILO policy on gender equality and mainstreaming. The Action Plan clearly calls for a gender responsive

delivery of the Decent Work Agenda. It cleverly links to *2009 International Labour Conference conclusions on gender equality*; and to the P&B outcomes statements requiring accompanying text to include strategies on 'gender equality and non-discrimination'. The Action Plan notes corresponding indicators in the UN System Wide Action Plan for gender equality and women's empowerment (the UN-SWAP, see Box 2), but in practice only those within ILO who report on the UN-SWAP are aware of this.

Although the majority of ILO staff interviewed and surveyed are aware of the Action Plan, many do not see it as an important document – the document itself is complicated to use. Yet, ILO staff require an Action Plan as they need to be reminded that gender equality is part of ILO's social justice mandate, reinforced by related Resolutions adopted by ILO's highest decision-making body. Staff can sometimes be confused as to what or where they are going with a gender mainstreaming process in their work, and how to measure it. Some of the 18 institutional indicators are appropriate and have facilitated progress in gender mainstreaming, others were somewhat limiting or obsolete. An Action Plan must be accompanied by other measures such as a strong focus on attitude change within an institution, a capacity amongst staff to be able to choose the appropriate response in a given situation and perhaps incentive structures (rewards and sanctions).

ILO calls for mutually reinforcing action to promote gender equality in staffing, substance and structure in the policy. Progress was made for some of the staffing indicators in the Action Plan, although more can probably be done with regard to training for management, given that many ILO staff mention management can be a bottleneck to moving forward. Much progress has been made with regard to a focus on gender equality in ILO's substantive work. For example even though targets were not met, systems are in place and improving to appraise whether gender equality is included in DWCPs as the main vehicle for delivery of ILO support to countries. On the negative side, the number of ILO projects that include gender equality in outcomes, outputs and

activities has decreased over the Action Plan period. Nearly three quarters of projects are classified with no or only few objectives, outcomes, outputs or activities to promote gender equality. Gender equality can sometimes be viewed as optional in technical cooperation or DWCPs (i.e. proposals are not rejected if gender equality is not addressed). Apart from appraising DWCP documents and planning technical cooperation projects, what the implementation of ILO initiatives matters. In this regard, evaluation is really important to demonstrate results. Although the Evaluation Office did not reach the target of 100 percent of evaluation terms of reference to include an assessment of gender dimensions, from 2016 a strong gender equality clause will be included in all evaluation terms of reference. Thus more information will be forthcoming in the next biennium, with the improved emphasis on addressing gender equality in evaluations. The results of an independent evaluation on how gender equality is addressed across a range of ILO evaluations should be available in early 2016.

There is some confusion regarding the status of the gender audit tool amongst ILO staff – whether ILO is still promoting this product, which appears to be well known and effective where applied. Improved dissemination of the many excellent ILO gender guidelines and tools is required, with better exploitation of research institution linkages for quality knowledge generation (using more sex disaggregated data). Within the ILO and when supporting constituents, there should be less use of vague terms such as 'gender responsive' or 'gender inclusive', and more specific questions posed to find out what actually are equality and non-discrimination issues that require attention. Gender equality may not always be the most pressing issue in a programme of support, but a non-discrimination emphasis can be strongly linked to ILO's social justice agenda and poverty reduction focus.

Regarding structural priorities, a number of issues have been addressed with regard to gender focal points, the ILO Gender Network, and the role of GED, many of which were raised at the last ILO *Inter-Regional Gender Learning Forum* in October 2015.

However more resources are required to implement some of these changes. The majority of staff in the survey conducted for this evaluation reported that ILO is doing well on addressing enabling institutional mechanisms for gender equality.

The evaluation found that ILO is making progress in ensuring gender equality issues are part of many initiatives ILO undertakes towards the P&B outcomes, but this process is uneven. Clearly some strategies were effective, such as support to develop programmes that address the different impacts of HIV and AIDS on women and men; or the resource guide on gender issues in employment and labour market policies developed following a 24 country review analyzing national employment policies. Some country based examples include: in India, the state has now agreed to introduce a gender balance in social dialogue, (following support from and collaboration with gender and also social dialogue ILO specialists). Another positive example from the Philippines illustrates how the Domestic Labour Act was enforced.

Amongst many constituents gender equality issues are not often raised as a priority so it can be difficult for a typical ILO technical specialist to put the issue on the agenda, particularly in patriarchal institutions and societies. Those who do not focus on gender equality are worried that attention to gender equality will be an extra 'burden' to their workload. Gender equality concerns should thus be seen as very concrete and linked to poverty reduction and ILO's fair globalization mandate. ILO probably requires an updated vision on gender equality, outlining where the ILO is going with gender equality and what is expected and why.

It is difficult to assess the extent the ILO Action Plan has been an effective instrument to help ensure gender is integrated across each of the four ILO strategic objectives, because reporting is mainly limited to how important gender equality is for a particular outcome or output, without an emphasis on the impact. ILO should improve its measurement of how ILO actually informs or influences policy and supports changes in attitudes amongst constituents involved in policy dialogue, including for gender

equality. Some suggestions are included in the evaluation report (Box 5).

The 2016-17 P&B lacks of an outcome on gender equality and non-discrimination, which many ILO staff are anxious about. Although gender equality is a 'policy driver' in the next biennium, many do not fully understand how resources for policy drivers will be allocated; and it is likely that outcome teams will primarily focus on the core area of the outcome without necessarily paying enough attention to gender equality. The formulation of gender equality and non-discrimination markers for the 2016-17 P&B is important and requires in-house collaboration as well as a review of good practices from other UN agencies.

Other UN agencies look to ILO for guidance around gender and work related areas. The launch of the forthcoming *Women at Work centenary* initiative is important as it will allow a focus on particular areas in which ILO should lead amongst other UN specialised agencies. However this initiative requires a funding assessment to ensure the office can carry out what is required to ensure ILO's lead in these matters.

Because no specific funding was allocated for the Action Plan, the evaluation could not conclude on efficiency of resource use. More sharing of relevant information on innovative initiatives and new publications/tools is a cost efficient measure that could be improved via the ILO electronic gateway particularly through the gateway policy section.

Very clearly, accountability must be addressed in further ILO work on gender equality with management leading the way with their respective portfolios and ensuring adequate resources for gender equality. GED as a branch requires more resources to be able to fully implement the plethora of demands placed on them from ILO staff and constituents.

Conclusions

The Action Plan fits well with ILO's Social Justice and a Fair Globalization mandate. An Action Plan is necessary as it reminds and convinces ILO staff that

gender equality is an inherent value of ILO and should remain high up on all agendas. Some progress has been made within ILO. ILO, gender specialists and some ILO staff (working on other projects) were instrumental in gender related work undertaken in-country.

The next Action Plan should be deeply ingrained in and linked to the ten P&B outcomes. Gaps that remain to be addressed in the next Action Plan include linking to the SDGs, adopting a broader empowerment approach and a better focus on rural women, particularly with two out of ten ILO P&B outcomes both very much linked to rural areas. The operationalizing of gender equality and non-discrimination as a cross-cutting 'policy driver' must be explained and funding allocated. A new policy statement on gender equality in the ILO might create a new momentum towards gender equality. Some type of gender analysis framework is required across the ILO.

Recommendations

- High level leadership on gender equality is required.
- The indicators from the UN-SWAP will form the bulk of the next Action Plan for Gender Equality.
- Clarify what is meant by gender equality as a policy driver and whether a budget will be allocated to ensure gender equality really drives policy.
- Consider the implementation of gender budgeting.
- Work towards changes at many levels, for example the attitude and mind sets of many groups of stakeholders who do not accept the strategy of gender mainstreaming. Focus on what enables constituents to become champions of gender equality, as well as review what support they require.
- Try to devise indicators that can improve the measurement of progress (see Boxes 6) and improve measurement on how ILO informs /influences policy (see Box 5).
- Clarify to all what gender mainstreaming actually means; outlining that specific action can take place to redress inequalities. Avoid language and jargon that confuses stakeholders.
- Disseminate ILO resources on gender equality particularly those that focus on gender and policy.

Develop and use a simple gender analysis framework for all gender related work.

- Focus on the implementation of the *Collective Agreement and Anti-Harassment Policy* and ensure there is broader awareness of it.
- Review how GED is resourced and types of competencies required to support other ILO units. Discuss and decide whether support can be provided for the gender audit tool and communicate what is happening regarding this tool.
- Communicate to all ILO staff, why ILO in line with UN policy should be more focused on the appointment of women in management positions.

Lessons learned or good practices

A lesson learned was the need for a simple gender analysis framework for ILO. The broader linkages ILOAIDS have maintained outside ILO was identified as an emerging good practice in terms of collaboration. Another emerging good practice is the collaboration between GED and EVAL (ILO Evaluation Office).