



Evaluation Summaries

Evaluation: Technical Support and Knowledge Sharing on Gender Mainstreaming in the Netherlands/ILO Cooperation Programme 2006-10

Quick Facts

Countries: Inter-regional

Final Evaluation: 17 February-18 March 2010

Mode of Evaluation: Independent

Technical Area: Gender equality

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Project Start: 1 November 2006

Project End: 30 April 2010

Project Code: INT/06/61/NET

Donor: the Netherlands

Keywords: Gender equality, gender mainstreaming, gender auditing, Decent Work

Background & Context

The project Technical Support and Knowledge Sharing on Gender Mainstreaming in the Netherlands/ILO Cooperation Programme 2006-10 (INT/06/61/NET) (Gender Mainstreaming Project) was established to support an integrated and consistent way of mainstreaming gender in the Netherlands/ILO Cooperation Programme (NICP).

The 'Gender Mainstreaming Project' was built upon and benefited from previous Netherlands/ILO collaboration under the

project Technical Coordination and Knowledge Sharing on the theme 'Gender equality in the world of work' (INT/04/53/NET) which was implemented from March 2004 to December 2005.

The project is managed by the Bureau for Gender Equality (GENDER) at ILO Headquarters, Geneva. Under the management of GENDER, the project has worked to build the gender mainstreaming capacity of ILO staff in Headquarters and in the field, as well as of ILO constituents and other implementing partners involved in NICP projects.

At ILO Headquarters the project strategy has involved particularly close collaboration with three Headquarters units, namely the Partnerships and Development Cooperation Department (PARDEV), the Bureau of Employers' Activities (ACT/EMP) and the Bureau of Workers' Activities (ACTRAV) which also receive funding from the Netherlands under this partnership.

In addition the Gender Mainstreaming Project also provided technical assistance to eleven field-based NICP projects across Africa, Asia and the Pacific, the Arab States and Latin America. This support is aimed at the development and implementation of gender mainstreaming strategies within individual field projects and to knowledge-sharing between them.

The field-based projects address specific priorities within ILO's Decent Work

Country Programmes (DWCPs), namely employment-creation, youth employment, local economic development, and bonded labour. The aim is therefore that the gender mainstreaming activities undertaken in these eleven projects will be carried into the respective DWCPs in those countries.

The Gender Mainstreaming Project is also expected to strengthen tripartism and social dialogue aspects of the DWCPs by involving ILO's constituents (government, employers, workers) in capacity-building, training and knowledge-sharing activities.

The main activities of the Gender Mainstreaming Project included offering technical guidance and providing tools for gender mainstreaming, organizing targeted training, and participatory gender auditing (PGA), and supporting knowledge-sharing on gender equality mainstreaming through events, publications, communication campaigns and the establishment of easily accessible and user-friendly data-bases.

The Chief Technical Advisor (CTA) of the project and other GENDER staff who have provided specific technical assistance worked with and through ILO's Gender Specialists and other members of the global Network of Gender Focal Points (GFP); and with project CTAs and staff of individual projects in reaching out to ILO's constituents and other partners in-country (e.g. national institutions, UN and other donors).

Two main outcomes were proposed for the project:

Outcome 1: ILO staff, constituents and other partners involved in the implementation of NICP have increased capacity to support poverty alleviation through designing and implementing gender-sensitive Decent Work Country Programmes.

Outcome 2: ILO staff and constituents have access to and apply an expanded knowledge-base of gender equality strategies thereby contributing to the organization's mainstreamed strategy on gender equality.

Present situation of project

The project closes in April 2010.

Purpose, scope and clients of the evaluation

The Final Evaluation addressed:

- The project's effectiveness in contributing to the planned outcomes, bearing in mind the difficulties of isolating the effects of activities aimed at mainstreaming
- The project's likelihood to have an impact beyond the current phase of implementation

The clients of the Evaluation are the donor and the ILO.

Methodology of evaluation

The Evaluator reviewed progress reports, reports from consultants, and evaluations available from Headquarters sources. Important sources were the Progress Reports provided by GENDER (2006/2007/2008) and the Integrated Progress Report of PARDEV (2008).

Valuable additional information and comments were obtained through face-to-face or telephone interviews with key persons in GENDER and related ILO Headquarters Units; with members of the ILO global Gender Network including staff of ITC/ILO Turin, and Gender Specialists in Regional and Sub-Regional Offices; with project CTAs and project staff and with ILO constituents (government, employers, and trades unions). A telephone interview also took place between the Evaluator and the responsible official in the Netherlands Ministry of Foreign Affairs.

In addition, a brief questionnaire survey was prepared, translated and circulated to constituents involved in projects in Indonesia, Mozambique and Bolivia, to try to obtain additional feedback as to their reaction to and utilization of tools, and their participation in training, knowledge-sharing and other activities under the project. No field visits were scheduled.

The eleven field-based projects are conducting their own final evaluations whose findings will complement the findings of the present evaluation by providing more detailed information from the 'demand' or beneficiary side as to the extent to which the project achieved planned outcomes.

Main Findings & Conclusions

1. The project has good achievements under Outcome 1, namely, that 'ILO staff, constituents and other partners involved in the implementation of NICP have increased capacity to support poverty alleviation through designing and implementing gender-sensitive Decent Work Country Programmes'. It appears indeed that in some aspects such as the in the collaboration with the UN Country Teams, individual UN agencies, as well as with national partners outside the project borders (e.g. parliamentarians in Kyrgyzstan) the original expectations have been exceeded. With regard to Outcome 2, that 'ILO staff and constituents have access to and apply an expanded knowledge base of gender equality strategies thereby contributing to the organization's mainstreamed strategy on gender equality', it is also clear that many useful tools and approaches have been supplied by the project through distribution of bibliographies, through capacity-building and training, the Participatory Gender Audit, knowledge-sharing events, study tours etc, it is less clear that knowledge generated through application of these tools and approaches at field project level is tracked, captured stored and disseminated efficiently.
2. The project has made good use of previous experience, is clearly in line with ILO's organizational gender equality goals and has contributed to achieving them through mainstreaming gender in DWCPs in the project countries. Experience derived from the project has also contributed to ILO's evolving policies and strengthened the organization's profile with respect to gender equality.
3. The Gender Mainstreaming Project has been very effective in compiling and distributing tried and tested 'tools', in developing new sector or sub-sector specific mainstreaming guidelines, and in translating effective materials into other languages.
4. The tools compiled have been validated by the global Gender Network and it would be important now to have more data on their utilization and adaptation at field level.
5. The project has supported a large number of training and capacity-building events under various rubrics such as knowledge-sharing and Participatory Gender Audit. It appears that whilst the "knowledge-sharing" events were highly appreciated and could be transformational on a personal basis, the work plans generated at these events could not always be implemented as implementation required resources other than the informed enthusiasm of individual participants. Implementation of individual work plans required at a minimum that supervisors and other senior staff were also 'on board' and often also pointed to the need for additional financial resources.
6. Whilst there is a lot of knowledge being disseminated and shared, there appears to be considerable scope for more strategic thinking in order to develop a systematic knowledge-sharing strategy. A knowledge-sharing strategy is built on the same principles which underlie a communication strategy, being built upon the answers to the basic questions who needs what information, from whom, through what media and materials and in what sequence in order to achieve the goals of the project. The emphasis in a knowledge-sharing strategy, as in a communication strategy, is on two-way communication, which is to say real sharing as opposed to dissemination or distribution. Such an approach would, inter alia, result in the optimal use of knowledge being generated within the system particularly coming from the field level. More attention needs to be given to between project knowledge-sharing which is not just event based through, for example, better use of Internet capacity.
7. Financial resources have been concentrated where they could be best used. The human resources for technical assistance available to the project have also been used efficiently to the extent that they are also modest in number but high in quality and therefore a great deal has been achieved. There are several areas where additional staff resources would appear to have been required notably in the areas of knowledge sharing and information management. As

concerns resources of information and knowledge generated by the project this could be optimized by a more strategic and systematic approach to monitoring, recording and sharing information generated within the project.

8. It seems to be clear that as the project is totally aligned with this organizational policy and has also contributed to its evolution its effects and effectiveness will be sustained.

Recommendations & Lessons Learned

1. Design of evaluations of similar service-delivery projects in the future should give equal emphasis to input from the demand or beneficiary side as from the service-provider.
2. In this type of project, a relatively broad brush-stroke approach to planning needs to be complemented by more detailed monitoring and evaluation mechanisms. It is recommended that in future projects a more comprehensive Logical Framework, which is more in line with Results-Based Management, is used.
3. Information needs be obtained either from the final NICP evaluations or through special surveys from project staff and constituents on utilization of tools and their adaptation. Tools which have been effectively used and/or adapted and new tools developed either at HQ or field level need to be recorded and shared with potential users in-country, as well as added to the organization's data-base at HQ and field levels.
4. More thought needs to be given as to how to handle the action plans developed during the training which at the very least require, for their implementation management approval and perhaps other resources which lie outside the remit of the Gender Mainstreaming Project.
5. It would also be essential to keep a data-base of those trained which is disaggregated not only by sex but also by job function and other categories (ILO/non-ILO; region/country; constituent; NGO; UN or other donor etc.). This would not only provide a concrete demonstration of project activities relevant to both project Outcomes but would also enable ILO staff in other projects and in different countries and regions to identify trained people in order to put that training to use, or to provide follow-up and refresher training if necessary. And of course to avoid training the same people in the same courses. This data should be available at HQ and field levels.
6. Whilst a lot of knowledge and information is disseminated and shared, it is less clear that this is done in a strategic way which would for example prevent opportunities such as that presented by the project progress reports being missed as currently seems to be the case. In terms of real knowledge-sharing, there are lessons to be learned from the communication campaign of 2008-09 for which the Gender Mainstreaming Project made an allocation.
7. Case studies and examples of good practice, as well as more routine information on numbers trained etc. needs to be captured and shared, including being shared amongst the projects themselves.
8. The existing web-sites need to be used in a more interactive way as has been done by the communication campaign.
9. In order to make optimize the activities of such a project, sufficient human resources need to be made available particularly in the area of monitoring, analyzing, recording and sharing in a strategic manner knowledge and information generated by the project.
10. Whilst it is understandable that in this relatively short time-frame more attention has been given to acting, rather than to recording the effects and impact of those actions this is an important dimension of sustainability, and will ensure that the project's good experiences are of lasting benefit. It is understood by the Evaluator that in addition to the Final Evaluations of NICP projects which are now underway, a study is now being conducted by PARDEV of lessons learned and good practices which could form the basis for the NICP data-base.