



Evaluation Summary



International
Labour
Office

Evaluation Unit

Protecting and Promoting the Rights of China's Vulnerable Migrants - Mid Term Joint Evaluation

Quick Facts

Countries: *China*

Mid-Term Evaluation: *January 2011*

Mode of Evaluation: *Independent - Joint*

ILO Administrative responsibility:
MIGRANT

Technical Area: *. migration, workers' rights*

Evaluation Management: *MDG AF*

Evaluation Team: *Bob Boase*

Project Code: *CPR/09/50/UND*

Donor: *MDG AF (US\$ 6, 600,000)*

UNESCO: 1,298,140 UNDP: 1,285,226

UNICEF: 1,235,011 UNIDO: 437,630

ILO: 485,480 UNFPA: 521,283

FAO: 240,750 WHO: 496,480

Keywords: *Migrant worker, migration, workers' rights*

Background & Context

This mid-term evaluation of the China Youth & Employment (YEM) programme was carried out in August-September 2010 by Bob Boase of Vancouver CANADA. All MDGF mid-term evaluations serve to improve implementation of joint programmes in their second half. Findings and recommendations

from this evaluation will serve to inform the YEM Programme Management Committee, the National Steering Committee for China and the MDGF Secretariat in New York.

The three year MDGF US\$6.6 million Youth Employment Migration (YEM) began February 11, 2009. YEM is premised on the fundamental contribution of the migrant to China's transformation and therefore the logic in providing them with basic public goods and services as their legitimate right. Migrants are at the heart of China's transformation. To the degree they are provided with their legitimate rights and services, they will make an even greater contribution to the country's development. In this sense, provision of goods and services to migrants should be viewed as an investment and not as a cost to the state.

Main Findings & Conclusions

China's migrant workforce of 225 million, often described as 'floating population', represents the largest movement of people in modern history. In the Chinese Government's 11th Five-Year Plan for 2006-2010, internal migration was embraced as essential to the national development strategy. Framed with the right measures, migration can drive urbanization, increase rural incomes, restructure the economy, and level urban-rural and regional disparities. Maximizing the benefits of internal migration, while mitigating

its adverse effects, is a difficult balancing act in a country of large dimensions.

YEM brings together nine UN agencies. This initiative will build on the platform created by the Theme Group on Poverty and Inequality and has provided the impetus for the development of a common strategy to addressing the needs of the most vulnerable migrant workers. It provides an unprecedented opportunity to ensure that the response to the largest movement of people in modern times is rights-based, poverty-focused, and fully informed by international good practice. The Joint Programme will emphasize a results-based approach with sustainable and replicable outcomes, a number of which are clearly innovative in the Chinese context.

China is currently experiencing the largest migration in human history with over two-hundred million rural people having migrated to urban centers where they take on unskilled and low-skilled work that has been an important contributor to China's impressive economic development and in the process, migrants have worked their way out of poverty. So migration has been one of the most powerful levers in China's poverty reduction success. 300 million more migrants are projected over the next twenty years. Migration will remain a critical issue in China's development going forward.

YEM Policy

China's migrants make an essential contribution to China's transformation. Government policy with regard to migrants is still in the formative stage – thus YEM's Outcome 1 on this front is timely and potentially important. Policy for migrants needs to be developed for the following subjects: employment services, wages and earnings, education and training, social security, health, housing, family and children of migrant workers and the protection of rights.

Better Work for Migrants

Better work for migrants is YEM's Outcome 2. YEM has already made good progress on this front. The following are examples of achievements for each of the three outputs under this Outcome as described in the report.

Migrant Access to Social and Labour Services

YEM's third outcome is Migrant Access to Social and Labour Services. Important achievements have been made here including YEM's standard operating procedure for registering migrant children into the urban management system, the establishment of migrant community centers, migrant youth friendly services and UNIFEM's promotion of special laws targeting China's 10 million domestic working women.

YEM Coverage

This project is focused on China's estimated 225 million migrants and the projected 300 million more migrants over the next twenty years. Every successful migrant means a person has lifted him/herself and immediate family out of poverty. Thus the importance of this project if it can show the way to a more effective/sensitive/supportive policy environment toward the migrants. In terms of geographic coverage YEM operates in five migrant sending provinces and eight receiving cities.

Unforeseen Implications of the MDGF Concept

MDGF is an attractive programme both for recipient government agencies and for UN agencies. Since no single authority is in control of the formulation the tendency is for many organizations to enrol. The result is a complex constellation of organizations involved and this complicates implementation. The other feature of these JPs is that they do not operate in a vacuum since recipient governments and other donors are already operating in the subject matter. Complementing and not duplicating ongoing effort then is a challenge for these JPs. Finally,

the fact that there is no single line of authority in these JPs means that implementation is challenging and there is no single authority to hold the different participants accountable. All of this makes these JPs a challenging undertaking to say the least.

An overly ambitious project?

For a thirty-six month effort, YEM is very ambitious and complex in design and implementation. YEM involves nine UN Agencies, more than twenty national partners and more than 100 local partners at pilot sites. UN agencies and national partners work simultaneously on several YEM outputs with multiple partners. Officially there are 122 activities under YEM's ten outputs but in fact more activities as partners break down one activity into smaller activities or add activities to address a changing context, reach established targets and maximize sustainability.

Sustainability

YEM holds good prospects for sustainability for the following reasons:

- The Government of China is strongly committed to the migrants and the migrants have proven their endurance, resourcefulness and tenacity so that changes inspired by YEM will be pursued and institutionalized by the migrants;
- Many YEM pilot localities have been putting their own resources in the form of funding, equipment and human resources, which demonstrates a genuine commitment to the JP, e.g. Hunan Provincial Government allocated 300,000 Yuan to support the five pilot community centers;
- Some YEM localities have been replicating the pilots into their normal programming.

Gender

One of the overarching goals of this project is linked to MDG 3 to empower women. YEM has instituted the practice of gender breakdown in all its research so that differences can be identified. YEM training

tends to have more young women than men migrants because young men find it easier to get work so migrant women are strongly represented in YEM training. Finally, output 3.4 a UNIFEM report argues for adoption of special laws targeting domestic work at national & local levels, which is almost 100 per cent carried out by women – the goal is to establish a regulation on the management of domestic service Industry by the State Council.

Recommendations

Recommendations for YEM

Migrant Policy Advice to Government

The strategic purpose of YEM is to provide migrant policy advice to the Government of China. The YEM team needs to devote time and effort to this task in the second half. This means meetings to discuss, distil and clarify the policy messages YEM wants to make to the government. This should become a formal activity with a budget and plan in YEM's second half. Each of YEM's ten outputs needs to be analyzed for its policy implications and then written up.

A Phase Two for YEM

National policy change in all countries is a long-term ten to twenty year process. In the evaluator's opinion, YEM will not be able to make its full contribution to migration policy in thirty-six months. A more sustained period of policy analysis to support the Government of China is required.

A National Conference

YEM will have important achievements and lessons learned in the fields of migrant policy, employment and services. These achievements should be shared more broadly in China. One way of doing so is to hold a national conference at the JP's conclusion to showcase achievements, techniques and lessons learned.

Additional Suggestions for YEM to consider

In the course of this assignment the consultant observed a number of potential adjustments that the YEM team may be interested to explore as follows:

- Position YEM closer to the migrants
- Strengthen/Expand YEM Training
- Develop a YEM publicity strategy
- Link with CDPF on minority migration issue

Review YEM budget for second-half

After YEM has reviewed and decided on recommendations in this report it should review the remaining budget with a view to making the necessary adjustments since some of the recommendations have budget implications. All options for adjusting the budget should be explored including an across-the-board cut in UN agency budgets to accommodate new activity; re-allocation of funding within a given UN agency; re-allocation from one UN agency to another UN agency; and, eliminating some planned activity to accommodate new activity. A final option, if necessary, would be to seek more funding from the Government of China and/or the donor community.