



Evaluation Summary



International
Labour
Office

Evaluation Unit

Integrated programme for empowering conflict-affected countries (Sri Lanka) - Mid-Term Joint Evaluation

Quick Facts

Countries: Sri Lanka

Mid-Term Evaluation: August 2012

Mode of Evaluation: Independent

ILO Administrative responsibility: CO-Colombo

Technical Area: EMP/SKILLS

Evaluation Management: Joint evaluation

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Project End: September 2013

Project Code: SRL/10/03/HSF

Donor: UNDP, UNICEF and ILO
(US\$ 967,815)

Keywords: economic reconstruction, skills
development

Executive summary of the joint evaluation report

1. The Integrated Program for empowering Conflict Affected Communities in North East Sri Lanka (ECAC) had a solid reputation and was well regarded among all stakeholders interviewed in the course of the Mid Term Review that covered the Vavuniya and Batticaloa Districts. The ECAC program is more advanced and running relatively smoothly in Batticaloa District. This is in large part due to the fact that Batticaloa in the Eastern Province

saw the end of armed conflict almost two years before Vavuniya district in the Northern Province, and the recovery phase is more advanced into the development phase in Batticaloa, although there are pockets of need in areas where social indicators and civil society capacities are relatively weak and protection needs high.

2. ECAC which prioritizes a human security approach to recovery and development had generated new networks and synergies among beneficiaries, partners, local government institutions and service providers, NGOs and CSOs and opened new spaces for information and knowledge sharing on protection and rights based development. This in turn has aided beneficiary, family and social empowerment and trust building. It has also helped create a sense of security, particularly for women and children, which is visible where inter-agency coordination and partnership with GoSL is strong as expressed by state officials and partners.

3. There is good coverage of vulnerable communities from the different ethno-religious communities in both districts, which serves to promote social integration and harmony in a fragile post-war context, and a good balance and distribution in terms of partnerships with State agencies and civil society groups (CBOs

and NGOs), that is generating a wide protection structure and awareness of human security issues and needs in line with HSTF objectives of a bottom up and top down programme approach by working directly with beneficiaries, CSOs, local government authorities and service providers.

4. The UNDP project of computerizing the District Registries to provide beneficiaries with essential documentation throughout the North-East conflict affected region is a highly valuable exercise that being these two project dimensions together and seems to demonstrate forward thinking for project sustainability and a good exit strategy. There was a request for similar assistance from UNDP by LGA stakeholders to computerise and modernize the land registry in Vavuniya as land disputes are high as IDPs return and the land registry books are old and falling apart.

5. As the recovery phase draws to an end and longer-term sustainable development and needs for livelihoods become apparent a clear focus on *poverty alleviation*, savings, loans and micro-credit schemes for small group enterprises would need to be prioritized and programs and funds provided and targeted for poverty alleviation among beneficiary communities.

6. The extension of the HSTF program to Kilinochchi and Mullaitheevu districts beyond the original two indicates flexibility and responsiveness to a changing transitional context; where HSTF has helped bridge a protection and recovery gap. At the same time, in Vavuniya where the transition from recovery to development is less advanced and needs are high (and IDPs would be moving to Kilinochchi and Mullaitheevu), program co-ordination and the Vavuniya team requires strengthening for improved results.

7. Currently inter-agency coordination is best at the level of individual beneficiaries who have recorded heartening success stories of personal and family empowerment as a result of

assistance from the three UN agencies, while joint programming may require strengthening at district level though integrated program design in consultation with partners, as well as development of an integrated beneficiary identification and M&E framework. One of the apparent constraints to joint programming at district level is that staffs work on multiple programs and are not attached only to HSTF-ECAC project, except in case of the ILO program which has dedicated staff. In the context rebalancing of human resources between Batticaloa, Colombo and Vavuniya, as well as, more concerted support from Colombo to Vavuniya programs may be appropriate.

8. Likewise, training of program partners, both government and non-state actors in M&E and managing for results is a priority, both for ECAC program strengthening, as well as, for partner capacity building.

9. Going forward it would be important to ensure knowledge management, including sustaining, retaining and expanding the new knowledge and networks generated within partner organizations; both local governance institutions and service providers, as well as CSOs working with beneficiary communities by working out a ECAC program exit strategy that provides for capacity building of partner organizations, particularly in programme reporting M&E for results based management.

10. A district level platform for protection and poverty alleviation via livelihoods in Vavuniya that builds on the existing HSTF program and inter-agency collaboration and extends to Kilinochchi and Mullaitheevu may well maximize strategic impacts and spaces for empowerment though livelihoods generated thus far. Such a platform could be achieved by partnering with the Samurdhi/ Divineguma program in livelihood projects.