



Evaluation Summary



International
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Tripartite Action to Protect the Rights of Migrant Workers within and from the Greater Mekong Sub-region (GSM TRIANGLE Project) – Final Evaluation

Quick Facts

Countries: Cambodia, Lao PDR, Malaysia, Myanmar, Thailand, Viet Nam

Final Evaluation: July 2015

Mode of Evaluation: Independent

Administrative Office: ILO Regional Office for Asia and the Pacific (ILO ROAP)

Technical Office: MIGRANT ILO HQ

Evaluation Manager: Ms. Ivanka Mamic/
Pamornrat Pringsulaka

Evaluation Consultant: Ms. Chantelle McCabe

Project End: August 2015

Project Code: RAS/10/01/AUS and
MMR/13/52/AUS

Donor & Project Budget: Australia,
USD\$9,400,000

Keywords: Labour migration, Trafficking in Persons, South East Asia, Fishing, Domestic Workers, Migrant Workers

Migrants Workers from Labour Exploitation (the GMS TRIANGLE) project, funded by the Australian Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade (DFAT) aid programme. The project has been implemented in Cambodia, Lao PDR, Malaysia, Thailand and Viet Nam, with activities in Myanmar also initiated in 2013.

The project aimed to strengthen the formulation and implementation of recruitment and labour protection policies and practices in the GMS to ensure safer migration that results in decent work.

Immediate objectives:

1. Migrant recruitment and labour protection policies strengthened, reflecting the interests of tripartite constituents and gender-specific concerns.
2. Capacity of tripartite constituents enhanced to close the gap between intention and implementation of national policy, bilateral agreements and regional commitments related to the recruitment and protection of women and men migrant workers.
3. The rights of women and men migrants and potential migrants are protected through increased access to support services.

Present Situation of the Project

This evaluation was carried out over 56 working days from early April to end July 2015. It looked at project activities

Background & Context

Summary of the project purpose, logic and structure

From 2010-2015, the ILO has been implementing the Tripartite Action to Protect

implemented from June 2010 to June 2015. The geographical scope covered six project countries – Cambodia, Lao PDR, Malaysia, Myanmar, Thailand, and Viet Nam – both capitals and provinces where project activities have been carried out in each country.

Purpose, scope and clients of the evaluation

The primary clients of the evaluation are the management team of the GMS TRIANGLE project, the ILO technical unit (MIGRANT), the administrative unit (ILO ROAP) and the donor DFAT.

Secondary parties making use of the results will include tripartite constituents and civil society organizations who have partnered with the project, as well as other agencies working on labour migration and human trafficking at national and regional levels.

Its purpose is to document key achievements, challenges, lessons learned and good practices for future programmes and projects.

Methodology of evaluation

The evaluation methodology involved a desk review of project documents and reports, as well as in depth interviews and focus group discussions with a range of stakeholders at regional and headquarters level, and in the six project countries. Primary and secondary data were analysed and compiled into a draft report into which various stakeholders provided input.

Main Findings & Conclusions

The evaluation found that the project was relevant because it responded to prevalent forms of exploitation, including withholding of wages/passports, accident compensation, and trafficking. Importantly, it recognized that exploitation of migrants must be addressed more broadly than just trafficking.

The project also addressed the major causes of vulnerability, such as irregular migration, inadequate awareness of the risks involved in

migration, and a limited understanding among migrants of their rights at work and how to protect those rights.

The project was evidence based, taking into account the results of baseline studies, research studies and the mid-term evaluation. Project activities aligned with and influenced government policies and planning on labour migration in all project countries, assisted with the drafting of six trade union action plans, and influenced employer organisation/industry association priorities in Malaysia, Thailand and Viet Nam.

The project was consistent with ILO national strategic priorities as expressed in Decent Work Country Programmes, and with ILO regional and global strategic priorities and programming on labour migration as contained in the ILO Global Programme and Budget and the Multi Lateral Framework for Labour Migration. Moreover, it made effective use of ILO's comparative advantages, including its normative framework and technical expertise to promote rights at work, its unique mandate in addressing labour migration, and its promotion of social dialogue and tripartism.

The project design was appropriate for achieving its intended development impact, viz. the reduction of exploitation of labour migrants in GMS and Malaysia.

Furthermore, the project was effective in many ways, with clear and realistic objectives that were mutually reinforcing due to their interdependent nature and connectivity.

The project largely achieved all activities under the three immediate objectives, except for some discrete activities such as the recruitment agency association Code of Conduct in Cambodia and Lao PDR - due to the capacity and priorities of the national partners.

Recommendations & Lessons Learned

1. Expand the gender sensitive, sectoral approach to addressing labour migration to other sectors, which are particularly

vulnerable for women and men migrant workers, including construction, seafood processing, agriculture and manufacturing.

2. Support in-depth research reports to fill a knowledge gap, use for advocacy and generate media attention. Explore areas that stakeholders determine as ripe for policy and legislative change to increase influence and uptake of reform.
3. Engage more with the private sector on international labour migration. Explore possibilities to leverage funding from private sector or guide corporate social responsibility funds or programs.
4. It is important to adequately staff an international labour migration project with a regional management unit and six country components, including 23 MRC locations that require support.
5. To ensure the sustainability of the interventions related to capacity building, consider:
 - Systems to better communicate ILO technical comments on labour migration law and policy to social partners and CSOs.
 - Developing strategies to better measure long-term institutional changes in a more objective manner.
 - Increasing instances of ‘on the job’ coaching to influence working styles and problem solving initiative by implementing partners.
6. Explore options for sustainable MRC models. This could include government funding of CSO or trade union run MRCs, in addition to mainstreaming migrant worker services into existing job centres or NGO services.
7. Define a simple and robust M&E and Results Assessment Framework at the start of the project to ensure continuation of the results measurement system.
8. To ensure systematic achievement of positive gender equality outputs and outcomes in the project from its inception, the project would have benefited from:
 - a specific gender equality strategy
 - more targeted gender equality training for implementing partners

- systematic collection of sex disaggregated data
- allocation of specific expertise (e.g. local gender consultants who speak local languages and have good awareness of cultural issues); and,
- dedicated budget for gender outcomes.

Lessons Learned

1. To ensure systematic achievement of positive gender equality outputs and outcomes in the project from its inception, it would have been good to have:
 - a specific gender equality strategy
 - targeted gender equality training for implementing partners
 - systematic collection of sex disaggregated data
 - allocation of specific expertise (e.g. local gender consultants who speak local languages and have good awareness of cultural issues); and
 - a gender budget.
2. A more robust M&E framework should have been defined at the start of the project, rather than at the midway point. Once a dedicated M&E staff was on board, each MRC was provided with coaching according to their knowledge gaps and the services provided. Although time consuming and more costly, it reaped benefits in the provision of more quality reporting and a shift from focusing on activities to focusing on impact.
3. The project invested significant time and resources training implementing partners where required. However, capacity building was affected by frequent staff turnover and efforts to manage knowledge acquired in training workshops to offset this had limited effect in many instances.
4. It is important to adequately staff an international labour migration project with a regional management unit and six country components, including 23 MRC locations.