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DECENT WORK RESULTS AND EFFECTIVENESS OF ILO OPERATIONS

Ex-post meta-analysis of development
cooperation evaluations, 2017–2018



DECENT WORK RESULTS AND
EFFECTIVENESS OF ILO OPERATIONS:
EX-POST META-ANALYSIS OF DEVELOPMENT
COOPERATION EVALUATIONS,
2017-18

October, 2019

EVALUATION OFFICE

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ABBREVIATIONS

ACI	Area of critical importance
AER	Annual evaluation report
BEAM	Building Effective & Accessible Markets
BW	Better Work
CPO	Country programme outcome
CTA	Chief Technical Adviser
DCED	The Donor Committee for Enterprise Development
DW	Decent work
DWCP	Decent Work Country Programme
EVAL	ILO Evaluation Office
FAO	Food and Agricultural Organization
GIZ	Deutsche Gesellschaft für Internationale Zusammenarbeit GmbH
HQ	ILO headquarters
ILO	International Labour Organization
ILS	International labour standards
IOM	International Organization for Migration
M&E	Monitoring and evaluation
MDW	Migrant domestic worker
NAP	National action plan
NEP	National employment policy
NGO	Non-governmental organization
OBF	Outcome-based funding
OSH	Occupational safety and health
P&B	ILO Programme and Budget
RBSA	Regular Budget Supplementary Account
SCREAM	Supporting Children's Rights through Education, Arts and Media Programme, IPEC/ILO
SDG	Sustainable Development Goal

SEEP	Skills enhancement for employment project
SPF	Social Protection Floor
TC/DC	Technical cooperation / development cooperation
TOR	Terms of reference
UN	United Nations
UNDAF	United Nations Development Assistance Framework
UNDP	United Nations Development Fund
UNICEF	United Nations Children's Fund
USAID	United States Agency for International Development
WFP	World Food Programme

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

As part of its strategy, the Evaluation Office (EVAL) regularly assesses development cooperation initiatives to obtain quality, timely and reliable information on the Office's effectiveness and operational performance.

Since 2011, EVAL has undertaken analyses of such initiatives on a biannual basis using independent project evaluations as a starting point. Building on experience accumulated over the years, the methodology has been adjusted and fine-tuned without compromising comparability.

This latest study in the series provides an independent analysis of the ILO's decent work results and is based on project evaluations completed between 2017 and 2018. It also presents findings that emanated from comparing decent work results and effectiveness retrospectively.

A team composed of Magali Bonne-Moreau (team leader) and Agustina Bayley carried out the meta-analysis. Patricia Vidal Hurtado, Evaluation Officer in EVAL, was the task manager, while Guy Thijs, Director of EVAL, and Peter Wichmand, Senior Evaluation Officer in EVAL, provided oversight and guidance to ensure the independence and quality of the meta-analysis.

Any errors and omissions are the responsibility of EVAL.

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Since 2011, the ILO Evaluation Office (EVAL) has commissioned a series of biennial meta-analyses of independent project evaluations, to assess the ILO's effectiveness in the delivery of decent work results through its development cooperation projects, and to provide evidence-based recommendations for improved performance and organizational learning.

This meta-analysis, which is the latest in this series, examined a sample of 40 final, independent project evaluations conducted in the period 2017–18. It focuses on: strategic relevance and alignment; effectiveness, sustainability and impact; implementation performance and efficiency of management and resource use; and availability of performance information (i.e. “coverage”). The projects' technical cooperation performance was thus assessed through an ex-post performance rating related to a list of 26 criteria, using a four-point scoring system. Qualitative information was obtained from each evaluation report to present evidence and justification for the score of each performance criterion and to allow for more in-depth analysis based on key themes. A comparison of the 2017–18 meta-analysis results with those of the previous studies, the 2013–16 Decent Work Review (herein after 2013–16 DW Review) and the RBSA Effectiveness Review (2013–17) (herein after RBSA Effectiveness Review), was conducted, examining performance criteria results and the extent of coverage for each criterion. A team of two reviewers assessed the reports independently for methodological robustness and quality assurance purposes.

SUMMARY OF FINDINGS

There were common areas of strengths and weaknesses with the previous meta-analyses, revealing similar patterns in the performance of ILO projects over time. These related to: strategic relevance and alignment; effectiveness, sustainability and impact; implementation performance and efficiency of management and resource use. Each of these issues are discussed in the sections below.

Strategic relevance and alignment

The majority of projects demonstrated a clear link between their objectives and purposes, and Decent Work Country Programme (DWCP) outcomes (and country programme outcomes – CPOs), as well as Programme & Budget (P&B) outcomes. These findings were in line with findings from previous effectiveness reviews, even though coverage was low for the latter criterion in the current study. Only half of the projects had involved constituents during project design and implementation, and reflected national decent work needs, showing an area where progress is needed, even though it has been established that these are important factors in ensuring development effectiveness and sustainability. Constituents' support had shown mixed results in previous studies, but fared better overall in this study. The validity of project design was also an important area of weakness, with lower performance compared to previous years. A

limited understanding of local realities and unrealistic objectives, as well as lack of clarity regarding the stakeholders' endorsement of the projects reflected these limitations. Pro-poor focus was another challenging area, even though many projects were found to have some effect on poverty, due to the nature of the interventions or the contexts in which they operated.

In contrast to results from previous studies, the gender sensitivity component was an area of improvement, both in terms of performance and coverage, with certain projects having a targeted, strategic approach to gender, with specific gender analyses and indicators. Apart from this area of progress, overall performance scores for this category were lower in the current study in comparison to previous meta-analyses.

Effectiveness, sustainability and impact

This was the strongest category in terms of overall performance, in line with previous meta-analyses, but results were mixed. Planned outputs were completed and deemed to be of good quality in the majority of projects, although the achievement of immediate objectives was limited, with only half of projects performing well. When results were achieved, significant progress was made in capacity building, knowledge development, and the development of strategic relationships, by projects at local, national, regional and global levels. The ILO's expertise was also positively acknowledged in a large number of projects, revealing appreciation for the work done on the ground.

In contrast to the very positive scores achieved in previous studies relating to the criteria of policy influence, normative work and the strategic importance of results, the current study obtained slightly lower scores. There was variability in project performance and coverage, revealing that despite mixed results, the promotion and inclusion of international labour standards (ILS) in ILO interventions and the use of project results in a strategic context obtained more "Highly successful" scores than other criteria in this category. One of the weakest areas of development cooperation projects reviewed in 2017–18 was the tripartite dimension of ILO's work, with only one third of projects effectively integrating tripartite processes in their approach and implementation. This was often due to missed opportunities, and previous meta-analyses had also identified that this was an area where progress was needed. Prospects for sustainability, while positive overall, remained an area of concern in many evaluation reports, and were similar to findings from past studies, despite the fact that two-thirds of the projects were able to leverage resources to further their results, which was an improvement compared to earlier years.

Implementation performance and efficiency of management and resource use

Performance in this category was low overall, revealing that managing and implementing ILO development cooperation projects was often a challenge, in line with findings from previous meta-analyses. One area of success was the presence of a strategy to document and disseminate knowledge, with over two-thirds of projects having positive scores, in line with the results from the 2013–16 DW Review, but unlike findings from the RBSA Effectiveness Review, where this was an element of low performance for a majority of projects. While most projects were found to be cost-efficient over the years, for instance, through resource leveraging and cost sharing, project resources were often insufficient to deliver project outputs and objectives. This was due to poor design and inadequate resource planning and management, as well as delays in funding, constraints that were echoed in findings from previous years. Implementation management was also an area where further progress was required in a majority of cases. Performance was lower in terms of the quality and extent of ILO's support to projects and internal coordination, in contrast to previous studies.

An important area of low performance in all three studies related to the ILO's ability to capture and report on its achievements. Projects had major shortcomings in terms of the development and use of baselines, indicators, targets, milestones, and outcomes, with limited use of logical frameworks and theories of change. There was poor alignment and confusion between indicators and outcomes, leading to report-

ing challenges. Monitoring and evaluation frameworks and reporting mechanisms were found to be inadequate or missing in many reports, revealing important obstacles to assessing and improving project effectiveness.

Availability of performance information

There was uneven availability of performance information in the evaluation reports, yet coverage has improved in many instances in comparison to the 2013–16 DW review. Most criteria were covered by at least 80 per cent of reports, with only five being under this threshold. The link between project objectives and P&B outcomes was the least covered, with only half of the evaluations providing information on the topic. Sixty per cent of the evaluations addressed internal ILO coordination, and over 70 per cent covered the promotion of standards, goal orientation and resource leveraging.

RECOMMENDATIONS

A number of recommendations for a way forward, based on identified challenges in the evaluation reports reviewed are presented below. Some of these are aligned with recommendations made in the previous meta-analyses.

Recommendation 1: Involve stakeholders from the onset, so that ILO projects can better respond to stakeholder needs, be designed in a context-appropriate manner, and benefit from a long-term perspective, including the co-development of an exit strategy to promote sustainability and ownership.

Recommendation 2: Introduce or reinforce the focus on results at the design stage, through the use of adequate logical frameworks, Theory of Change, and other structured monitoring documents to address the shortcomings associated with low validity of design, lack of goal orientation, and inadequate monitoring and reporting of ILO interventions.

Recommendation 3: When planning complex projects, a realistic approach should be taken, so that human and financial resources are adequately identified and sourced, and timelines allow for contingency plans and flexibility without compromising results. Sound management, communication, and coordination processes should also be defined at this stage to facilitate implementation.

Recommendation 4: Make it a mandatory requirement that project designs reflect as appropriate the ILO's specific mandate and take a tripartite approach, promote ILS and social dialogue, address poverty concerns, and gender equality and non-discrimination to ensure that these key issues are properly addressed in future projects. While indicators disaggregated by sex, age and socio-economic background are useful when available, further work and a stronger focus on gender analysis, poverty targeting, and the inclusion of vulnerable groups in the project strategy would enhance impact on these topics.

Recommendation 5: When developing TOR questions for evaluations, include systematically performance criteria specific to ILO's mandate (gender equality and equal opportunities and treatment for all in the world of work, pro-poor focus, tripartism, ILS), as well as others with less coverage in the effectiveness reviews, so that they are systematically addressed in evaluation reports.

Recommendation 6: When assessing the effectiveness of multi-country evaluations (cluster, regional, or thematic), introduce a sub-criterion to capture the extent to which there are disparities in the findings based on individual country/project results.

1. INTRODUCTION

1.1. BACKGROUND AND PURPOSE

In response to the growing recognition that evaluations provide credible and useful feedback to the ILO on its effectiveness in advancing decent work, the ILO Evaluation Office (EVAL) has commissioned a series of biennial meta-analyses of project evaluations since 2011. To date, there are several of these studies covering the periods 2009–2010,¹ 2011–2012,² and 2013–16,³ respectively. A meta-study of RBSA-supported interventions covering the period 2013–17 was also conducted.⁴

This meta-analysis covers independent project evaluations for the period 2017–18, using a comparable approach and methodology to the 2013–16 DW Review. It aims to promote organizational learning in terms of development effectiveness in the delivery of decent work results, by providing an evidence-based overview of overall development cooperation results for 2017–18: trends related to strategic relevance and alignment; effectiveness, sustainability and impact; implementation performance and efficiency of management and resource use. This analysis takes a comparative approach, based on the findings from the last study as well as the RBSA Effectiveness Review, thus covering the years 2013–2018.

As noted in the Terms of Reference (TOR), the objectives of this study are to:

- a) Summarize the findings of independent evaluations in the context of the Decent Work Agenda (DWA) and the Strategic Policy Framework outcomes through pre-specified performance indicators;
- b) Identify aspects and trends in ILO operational performance linked to implementation of development cooperation, comparing results with previous studies;
- c) Synthesize key issues and insights from the analysis and make recommendations to guide future operations based on identified challenges.

¹ [Decent work results and effectiveness of ILO technical cooperation: A meta-analysis of project evaluations, 2009–2010.](#)

² [Decent work results and effectiveness of ILO technical cooperation: A meta-analysis of project evaluations, 2011–2012.](#)

³ [Decent work results and effectiveness of ILO technical cooperation: A meta-analysis of project evaluations, 2013–2016;](#) referred to in this report as the “2013–16 DW Review”

⁴ Independent review of effectiveness of Regular Budget Supplementary Account (RBSA) supported interventions in delivering Decent Work Results, 2013–17; referred to in this report as the “RBSA Effectiveness Review”. The results of this study are presented in a Think Piece, which can be consulted at: <https://www.ilo.org/eval/newsletter-and-think-pieces/lang--en/index.htm>.

1.2. STRUCTURE OF THE REPORT

The report is structured as follows:

- The current section provides background information, presents the purpose of the study, the structure of the report and the methodology used, and the limitations.
- Section 2 presents the results of the meta-analysis, including an overview of results and main contributing factors; findings of individual performance criteria related to strategic relevance and alignment; to effectiveness, sustainability and impact; and to implementation performance and efficiency of management and resource use. It also examines factors contributing to the most successful projects.
- Section 3 presents a comparison over time with the previous studies, as relevant.
- Section 4 outlines the conclusions.
- Section 5 presents recommendations based on the findings.

1.3. METHODOLOGY

The approach and methodology for the meta-analysis are built on the 2013–16 DW Review, in particular the “Documentation of Existing Approach” document from September 2017 to rate and synthesize findings related to performance from a sample of 40 final evaluation reports covering the period 2017–2018. Consistency in the approach and methodology allowed for comparison with the results from the previous 2013–16 DW Review, as well as from the RBSA Effectiveness Review.

The key question addressed was: “**How effective are ILO projects in delivering Decent Work results?**”

1.3.1. Sampling frame

The total universe of ILO evaluations for 2017–18 was 210 evaluation reports, as generated by EVAL staff from the [i-eval Discovery](#) Database and imported into Excel spreadsheets. A total of 59 internal evaluations were removed from the sampling list, as well as one external, two cancelled, 55 repeated evaluations and 21 interim evaluations. The sample of 40 reports was drawn from the remaining list of 72 evaluations. This represents a proportion of 55 per cent of evaluations covered, including activities funded by the ILO’s Regular Budget Supplementary Allocation (RBSA).

In the database, evaluation reports are tagged by a number of descriptors: evaluation type, evaluation timing, manager, administrative unit (which indicates region), country, technical unit, funding source, and technical/development cooperation (TC/DC) symbol. EVAL added meta-data regarding the year, associated P&B outcomes, policy outcomes, as well as budgetary information for each report. Whenever possible, quality ratings from ILO’s external quality appraisal process were added to the sample list.

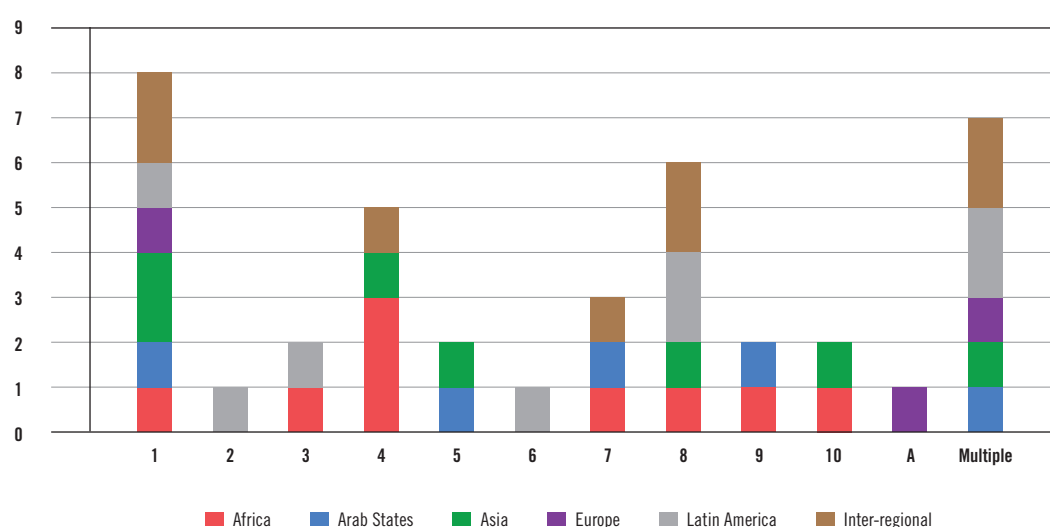
1.3.2. Considerations in the sample selection

A stratified, intentional sampling strategy was used, with the considerations below.

The sample of 40 was selected to ensure proportional coverage of **P&B outcomes, region and year**, based on the pre-selected list of 72 evaluation reports. The proportional numbers were calculated for each P&B outcome, region and year, and reports were selected according to these numbers. In order to address the imbalance between the high number of reports from Africa, and the low number of reports from Europe, in coordination with EVAL, the evaluation team replaced one of the reports from the over-represented region with one from the under-represented one.

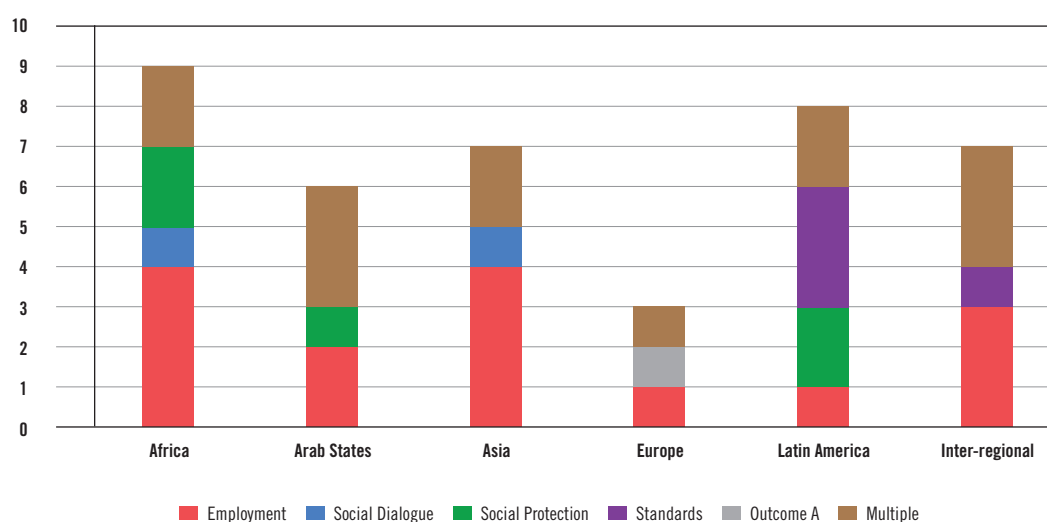
A basic overview of the selected sample by P&B Outcome and region is presented in figure 1 below, while figure 2 presents the sample by Strategic Objective and region. Figure 3 presents the breakdown by Strategic Objective. Eighteen of the reports dated from 2017 and 22 reports from 2018.

Figure 1. Evaluations in the selected sample by P&B Outcome and Region



The distribution in figure 1 shows that the vast majority of evaluations in the sample of interventions examined linked to P&B outcomes 1, 4, and 8, or to several P&B outcomes.⁵ Figure 2 below shows the geographical distribution of the interventions, as well as their links to specific strategic objectives. The highest number of reports focused on interventions in Africa, followed by Latin America and interregional projects.

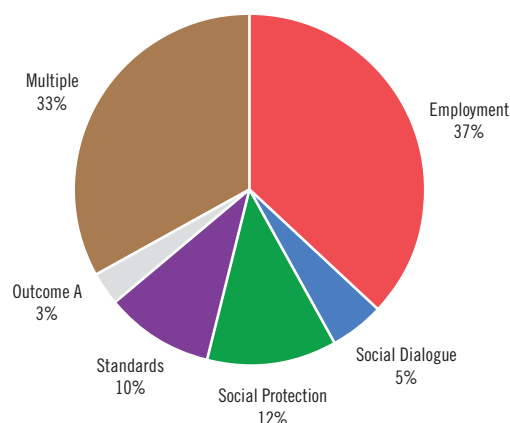
Figure 2. Evaluations in the selected sample by Strategic Objective and region



With regards to strategic objectives, the majority of evaluation reports focused on employment-related interventions, as well as interventions covering multiple objectives, as shown in figure 3.

⁵ P&B outcomes: Outcome 1 – More and better jobs for inclusive growth and improved youth employment prospects; Outcome 2 – Ratification and application of International Labour Standards; Outcome 3 – Creating and extending social protection floors; Outcome 4: Promoting sustainable enterprises; Outcome 5: Decent work in the rural economy; Outcome 6: Formalization of the informal economy; Outcome 7: Promoting workplace compliance through labour inspection; Outcome 8: Protecting workers from unacceptable forms of work; Outcome 9: Promoting fair and effective labour migration policies; Outcome 10: Strong and representative employers' and workers' organizations; Outcome A: Effective advocacy for decent work.

Figure 3. Evaluations in the selected sample by Strategic Objective



A table presenting the distribution of the sample by strategic objective, region, year, funding amount and modality is provided in Annex 1.

1.3.3. Review and scoring process

The ILO's technical cooperation performance was assessed through an ex-post performance rating based on the findings of the evaluation reports. Performance related to a list of 26 criteria (see table 1) and was assessed using a pre-defined scoring system.

Table 1. Meta-analysis framework

Performance area	Criteria	
1. Strategic relevance and alignment	1.1 Link between project purpose and/or objectives with P&B outcome	1.4 Validity of design/approach
	1.2 Causal link between project objectives and DWCP outcome(s)	1.5 Pro-poor focus
	1.3 Constituent support	1.6 Gender responsive
2. Effectiveness, sustainability and impact	2.1 Quality and completeness of outputs	2.7 Strategic importance of results achieved
	2.2 Achievement of immediate objectives	2.8 Strategic relationships
	2.3 Knowledge development	2.9 Tripartite processes being embedded in approach
	2.4 Capacity building	2.10 Sustainability of policies, knowledge & capacities
	2.5 Normative work / standards promotion	2.11 Acknowledgement and use of ILO expertise and involvement
	2.6 Policy influence	2.12 Resource leveraging
3. Implementation performance and efficiency of management and resource use	3.1 Goal orientation	3.5 Monitoring and reporting
	3.2 Implementation management	3.6 Visibility and accessibility to knowledge and information
	3.3 ILO support to project	3.7 Cost efficiency
	3.4 Internal ILO coordination	3.8 Adequacy of resources

A matrix containing detailed descriptions of each level of scoring for each criterion was used for this meta-analysis (see Annex 2). Technical cooperation project performance information related to strategic relevance and alignment; effectiveness, sustainability and impact; and implementation performance and efficiency of management and resources used, was thus obtained from the evaluation reports. A four-point scoring system (see table 2) was applied to the findings.

Table 2. Four-point scoring system

Unsuccessful 1	Partly successful 2	Successful 3	Highly successful 4
Highly deficient performance	Basic level of performance but stated need for improvement	Adequate level of performance and results	Very good level of performance and results

Criteria with insufficient evidence received a score of “0”, and were excluded in the quantitative analysis of performance.⁶ To achieve the top score (4), evidence needed to justify all aspects of the criterion description.

Qualitative information was obtained from each evaluation report to present evidence and justification for the score of each performance criterion and to allow for more in-depth analysis. Both quantitative and qualitative results were entered in a master table in the form of an Excel spreadsheet. This allowed for the information to be centralized and facilitated subsequent analysis.

1.3.4. Analysis

The data generated was analysed and presented visually, in the form of key summary tables and graphs, to allow for comparison with the results from the previous Decent Work effectiveness reviews. Quantitative data were used to provide information on project performance by criteria, by highlighting the percentage of projects having adequate to very good levels of performance and results (“more successful scores”, as well as the availability of performance information (“coverage”). Median scores were also calculated as a measure of central tendency to take into account ratings for the entire sample of reports, including projects where certain criteria were not addressed, and to identify projects that were most successful. As projects are rated on a scale of 1 to 4, a median score of 3 or above means that projects were successful in meeting the criterion, while a score below that scale meant that they were “Partly successful” or completely “Unsuccessful”. Further analysis based on median score of the different performance areas in this study and over the years is available in Annex 3.

The qualitative data was used to provide narratives to support and explain the quantitative findings, and to deepen the thematic synthesis of lessons learned and good practices from the meta-analysis. As such, all findings are backed by evidence and analysis. In-depth analysis was conducted based on key themes. A comparison of the 2017–18 meta-analysis results with those of the previous studies, the 2013–16 DW Review and the RBSA Effectiveness Review, was conducted to examine performance criteria results and the extent of coverage of the performance criteria.

For methodological robustness and quality assurance purposes, a team of reviewers assessed the reports independently, and any issues were addressed with EVAL. This ensured a shared understanding of the concepts defined in the rubrics, and promoted inter-observer consistency. The team then worked independently, scoring the reports individually, making comments in a column when relevant, and comparing

⁶ To take into account these limitations, the results sections provide information on the extent of coverage (i.e. proportion of reports with scores from 1–4, excluding those with a score of 0), and on performance for each criterion.

and discussing scores afterwards. More difficult cases were subjected to a double-appraisal and were discussed with EVAL, as deemed appropriate.

1.3.5. Limitations

The main limitation related to the extent and depth of information provided in the evaluation reports, as this had a direct influence on the ability of the reviewers to score them. In certain cases, this meant that reports were given a score of 0, thus affecting the extent of coverage associated with a criterion, and possibly influencing the interpretation of performance as well, especially in a comparative context. It is thus important to be careful when comparing criteria with similar performance levels, but with a different extent of coverage. Moreover, there was sometimes insufficient detail regarding certain criteria to be able to attribute a positive score, even though the reality on the ground may be different.

Related to this, despite initial plans to examine the effects on effectiveness of the presence of ILO country offices, as well as inclusion in an ILO Flagship Programme, these elements were not consistently covered in reports, so the analysis was not possible.

The scoring of thematic, cluster or regional evaluations proved to be problematic in cases where the results differed from one country or area to the next. While it was possible to highlight variations qualitatively, it was difficult to represent these differences quantitatively, leading to possible misrepresentations of effectiveness in the scores. Furthermore, certain elements had overlapping criteria within a rubric, and while one could be met, others could be absent, thus also influencing the results.

Some of the limitations discussed in the 2013–16 DW Review also applied here, namely regarding comparisons to previous meta-analyses; differences in the interpretation of the rubrics may have led to variations in the coverage and scoring of certain criteria.

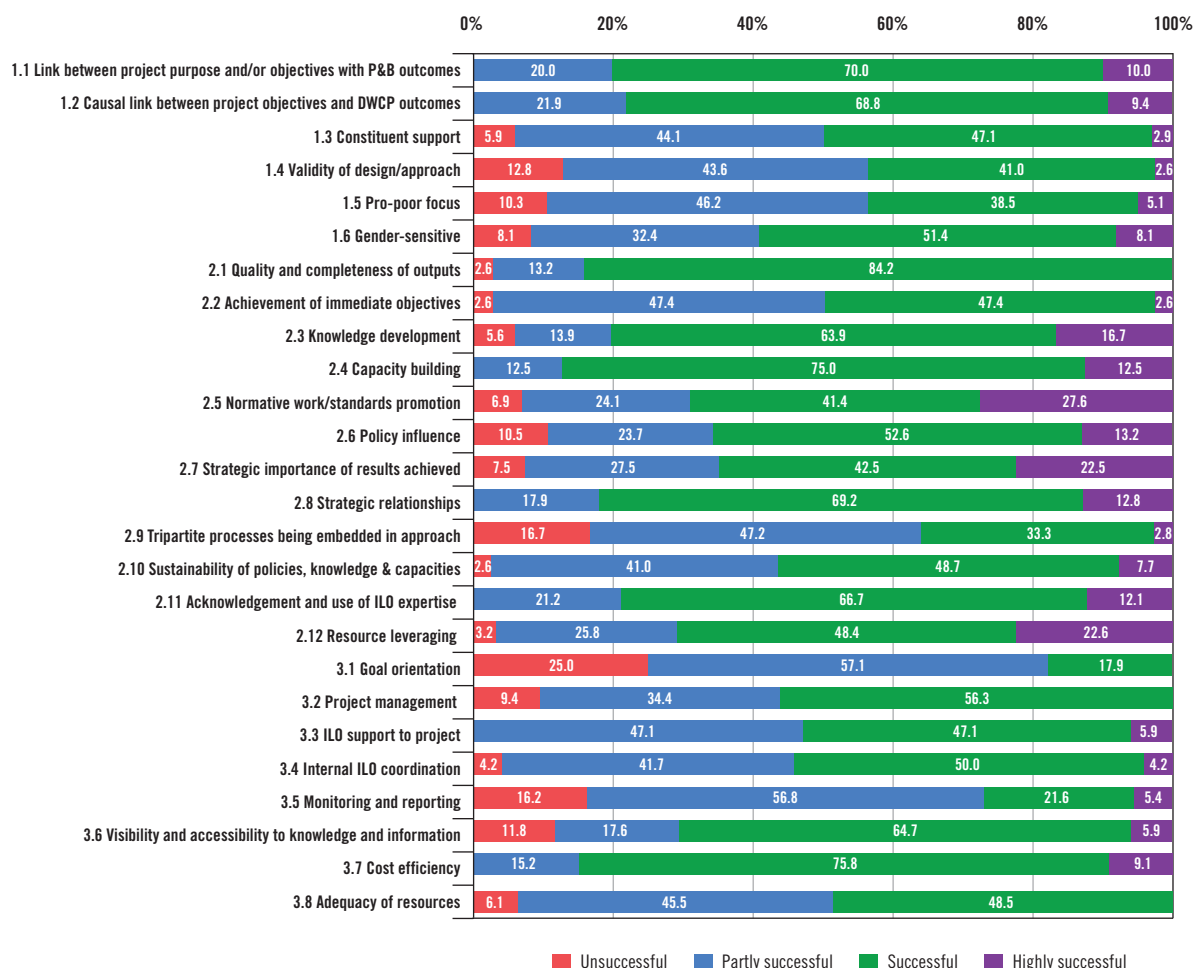
Finally, another limitation was the under-representation of evaluation reports from Europe in the initial database.

2. FINDINGS

2.1. OVERVIEW OF RESULTS AND MAIN CONTRIBUTING FACTORS

The meta-analysis found that projects evaluated in 2017–18 had positive results for the most part, with particular strengths in the areas of capacity building, knowledge development and the development of strategic relationships. Projects and country programme outcomes (CPOs) were mostly aligned with strategic priorities, and responded to stakeholder needs, but only half of them involved constituents at different stages of the project cycle, reflecting an area where further progress is required.

Figure 4. Distribution of scores by performance criteria, 2017–18



There were also some important weaknesses, such as the low validity of project design and approach, challenges in goal orientation, and significant shortcomings in monitoring and reporting mechanisms. There were many missed opportunities to promote tripartism and to take a strategic approach in addressing poverty. Project management, and ILO internal coordination and support were also areas of low performance.

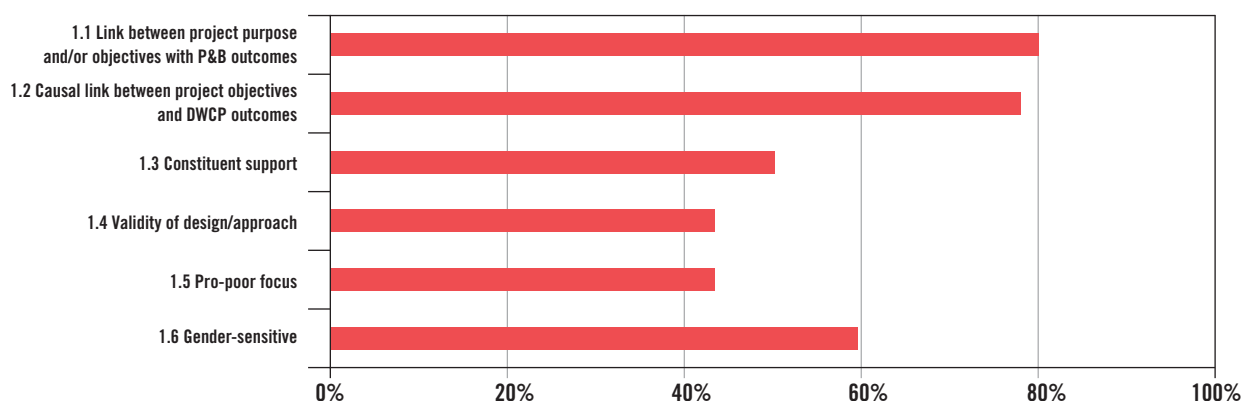
The distribution of scores by performance criteria is presented in figure 4, in which the colour red represents an “Unsuccessful” rating, orange represents a “Partly successful” rating, light green represents a “Successful” rating, and dark green represents a “Highly successful” rating.

2.2. STRATEGIC RELEVANCE AND ALIGNMENT

Both the projects’ strategic relevance and alignment were assessed through six performance criteria covering: the links between project objectives and P&B outcomes, and DWCP outcomes or CPOs; the extent to which stakeholders were involved in project formulation and implementation; the extent to which the projects responded to constituent needs; the validity of project design and technical approach; and the extent to which poverty reduction and gender concerns were addressed in project design and implementation.

Overall, there was strong coverage of the criteria, except for the criterion related to the link between project objectives and P&B outcomes, which was only assessed in half of the reports. When this criterion was covered in the reports, a majority of projects demonstrated clear relevance to P&B outcomes. The highest score was related to the relevance of projects to DWCPs (or CPOs) and this criterion was also well covered overall. Nearly two-thirds of the projects were found to be gender-sensitive, with some planning and focus on gender issues in their strategy, as well as the use of specific gender-sensitive indicators. Other aspects were much weaker, such as constituent involvement, which was only successful in half of the projects, due to the lack of interest or inputs from key stakeholder groups. The weakest scores in the category were attributed to the validity of project design, which was often associated with a lack of clarity relating to endorsement by stakeholders, poor alignment of strategies and services with project objectives, or a lack of integration into a clear strategy. The extent to which poverty reduction was addressed in design and implementation was also rated negatively in a majority of projects, with few projects explicitly specifying poverty effects or applying measures specifically targeting poverty. More often than not, no poverty effect was explicitly stated, but these were probably due to the localities chosen, target groups and nature of the interventions (figure 5).

Figure 5. Strategic relevance and alignment: Percentage of more successful scores by performance criteria



2.2.1. Link between project purpose and/or objectives with P&B outcome

Coverage:⁷ 50 per cent

The link between project purpose/objectives with P&B outcomes was mentioned in only half of the reports. The analysis showed that a majority of projects (80 per cent), which covered this criterion, were aligned with high-level outcomes from the P&B. In one case, a project was also associated with an Area of Critical Importance (ACI): *SIDA's support to ILO projects in the field of employment promotion with an emphasis on youth employment* (Evaluation 31) was linked to *ACI2 - Jobs and skills for youth*. Successful projects had a direct link to the P&B, and had included partners in the definition of the project objectives, so they had a clear understanding of what the project aimed to achieve. In one case, while the project was not linked to the P&B, it was part of the ILO's efforts to support Syrian refugees, and the interventions directly supported the Regional Refugee Response and Resilience Plan (3RP) and the Jordan Response Plan to the Syria Crisis (Evaluation 30).

When projects were "Partly successful", it was either because it was difficult to assess whether partners had a clear understanding of the project's purpose due to the lack of information, or because the project supported a P&B outcome, but the link was not reflected at the operational level and was found to be unsustainable (Evaluation 37).

2.2.2. Causal link between project objectives and DWCP outcomes

Coverage: 80 per cent

A majority of projects (78 per cent), had objectives clearly linked to DWCPs or CPOs and responded to demands from stakeholders.

Some projects operating at regional and global levels were linked to several DWCPs and CPOs, with interventions adapted to the needs of the different countries in which they operated. Successful examples were the Global Action Programme on child labour issues (Evaluation 27), the *Global Action Programme on migrant domestic workers and their families (GAP-MDW)* (Evaluation 5), and the *Building national floors of social protection in Southern Africa* Project (Evaluation 13). The evaluation of the latter report provided a good example of this criterion's strength:

Social protection systems represent a key component of all three countries' national development plans. (...) Generally, there are very strong synergies between the project and other ILO initiatives in the country (and indeed at regional level). By virtue of covering a broad spectrum of interventions through the umbrella concept of the social protection floor, the project usually encompasses comfortably within its scope any more specific activities being undertaken by the ILO country office, whether this be the development of employment injury insurance in Malawi, engagement of civil society in Mozambique, or Green Jobs and the introduction of maternity benefits in Zambia. Finally, the regional project is fully consistent with ILO's global Flagship Programme on Social Protection Floors.

Similarly, many projects were relevant to DWCPs and CPOs, while complementing other ILO projects, and were also aligned with other national or regional strategies, as well as United Nations Development Assistance Framework (UNDAF) priorities.

Projects that were rated as "Partly successful" often showed a weak relationship between objectives and DWCP outcomes, or there was lack of clarity regarding the extent to which the project was based on

⁷ As mentioned in the methodology for the study, coverage includes reports with scores of 1–4, but excludes those with a score of 0 (insufficient evidence available to be scored).

demand. In several cases, there were discussions on the extent to which ILO interventions actually supported the DWCP, due to missed opportunities to promote decent work (Evaluations 18, 30).

2.2.3. Constituent support

Coverage: 85 per cent

Only half (50 per cent) of projects were found to be successful in involving constituents in project planning, design and implementation.

Different means were used to involve stakeholders and ensure that project design and implementation responded to their needs, often through a participatory approach and the promotion of dialogue. For instance, needs assessments were conducted with different constituent groups, and key objectives were included that reflected a tripartite approach and constituents' concerns. Some projects created Project Advisory Committees and/or Steering Committees composed of all relevant stakeholders; organized consultations and discussions at different points in the project cycle; and involved the social partners in Regional Cooperation Network meetings, in the conduct of peer reviews, in the commissioning of research and publications, and in different capacity-building activities.

Projects were more successful when the ILO supported its partners to revise activities and plans due to changes in their respective contexts, which enabled better alignment with country situations, and promoted ownership of the results achieved (Evaluations 9, 27).

There were notable differences in levels of involvement, interest and commitment in multi-country projects. Stakeholders were not consistently consulted at the design stage; this major limitation was identified in several evaluation reports. Furthermore, a tripartite approach was not always used for these consultations, and certain constituent groups were given more weight than others, leading to a decreased sense of ownership as the projects only partially reflected stakeholders' decent work needs.

A positive example of a project involving constituents at all stages of the project cycle was the *ARISE II* Project in Malawi, where it was noted, "the project approach and strategy mirrored the needs of all project beneficiaries" (Evaluation 33). The project design was shared with social partners and implementing partners for review and comments, and it built on work previously carried out by the ILO, to which some partners had already contributed. Partners and stakeholders had an opportunity to develop and implement Action Programmes in the context of the project, so that the design was aligned with their work and objectives.

In a few cases, projects did not reflect the core concerns of the constituents involved, as national priorities differed from those of the ILO (Evaluation 32). In others, projects were more relevant at local government level than at the national level, leading to challenges in implementation due to resistance from government representatives (Evaluation 6). However, in one instance, a project responded to emergency requests from a government, and all stakeholders found the project relevant (Evaluation 11).

2.2.4. Validity of design/approach

Coverage: 98 per cent

Project design was an area of weakness in this review, with under half of the projects (44 per cent) having a sound design that was endorsed by stakeholders, and only 5 per cent scoring as "Highly successful".

Successful cases took a participatory design approach, including key stakeholders, and project objectives were consistent in addressing the needs of tripartite constituents. There was clear alignment between immediate objectives, outcomes, outputs and activities, with coherent links between the different project

components. An example of this was the *Partnerships for Youth Employment in the CIS* Project: “This well-designed project responded to regional, national and sub-national needs in the field of youth employment policy and programmes. It built on past support provided by the ILO, delivered in line with its strategies and programming frameworks. The intervention logic was sound and its quite complex array of outputs and activities cohered well in practice. The project document detailed 11 separate outputs and 73 discrete activities that would contribute to the achievement of the Immediate Objectives. In practice these were often intertwined, reinforcing each other and enhancing overall effectiveness” (Evaluation 8).

There were some examples of cluster or multi-country evaluations where the outcomes of different projects complemented each other and were interlinked. However, in several other cases, the links between the different projects were unclear, and could have benefited from an overall guiding strategy, as described in Evaluation 27, for instance:

While GAP11 has had significant successes, greater coherence and sustainability may have been derived by better articulation of the mini-theories of change inherent in the different strands of work. This could have been done during the initial stages of project implementation. GAP11 comprised of three components, with the intended linkages between different components remaining unspecified in the project design. At the beginning of the project, the project team could have come together to discuss, and strategically position all the activities in each country. As the project comprised of small activities scattered over 46 countries, the project team concentrated on implementation with the expectations of long-term impact being relatively low. Further, the activities of GAP11 were not embedded into a process whereby the country’s history of work on issues of child labour or forced labour, or the presence of ILO offices and staff were considered for project design.

For the most part, the design of the projects reviewed was weak and the focus somewhat dispersed. Many did not have a results framework or Theory of Change to link the different strategies and services with project objectives, or to link different components together in an explicit manner. Furthermore, in many cases, project design was overly ambitious and unrealistic, and assumptions were not properly verified at project inception stage. Less successful scores were also given due to the lack of information in the evaluation report regarding endorsement by stakeholders, or on the alignment of strategies and services with project objectives.

In some instances, however, the lack of cohesion in the results framework was described as a positive aspect for project implementation, for example, in a project undertaken in Egypt and Tunisia, as it allowed the project to adapt to the changing contexts in these counties: “At so many levels, the broadness of the results framework allowed the project to continue its activities in a logical and coherent way. As noted by the mid-term evaluation, and the findings of the final evaluation concurs, although the results framework as written could indicate a lack of coherence, the implementation of the project itself was coherent, complimentary and well designed.” (Evaluation 35). Another programme was an emergency response designed very rapidly, with many design flaws at the outset. Nevertheless, the evaluation noted that it had shown “a great deal of flexibility in having addressed all of these shortcomings in later phases” (Evaluation 11).

2.2.5. Pro-poor focus

Coverage: 98 per cent

Just under half of projects (44 per cent) were found to have successfully addressed poverty issues, making this criterion the weakest in this category, along with validity of design. While not all projects focused on pro-poor, those that addressed vulnerable populations or were implemented in areas with high levels of poverty were expected to reference how this criterion was addressed, especially as it is part of the Sustain-

able Development Goals (SDGs). However, in a majority of projects, no poverty effects were explicitly stated, although effects were probably based on the nature of interventions and chosen localities. This limitation might have been due to the fact that this variable was not specifically included in the evaluation questions.

Successful projects had immediate objectives that were directly linked to improving livelihoods and reducing poverty through a range of interventions and inclusive strategies. They targeted vulnerable groups, including children and youth, refugees, migrant workers, and informal workers, among others. Furthermore, there was a certain degree of relevant analysis presented in the evaluation reports.

A pro-poor perspective was effectively integrated into the design and implementation of the *Work in Freedom (WIF)* Project, which focused on women migrant workers in South Asia and the Middle East, by addressing and targeting some of the poorest and most discriminated workers, both in their communities of origin and destinations, through different processes. It was found to be highly relevant in addressing vulnerabilities: “It addresses prevention of distress migration, enables the building of networks for workers and stakeholders, and influences policy change in the field of migration and human trafficking. WIF has met the needs of the target groups by following adaptive programming, responding to the emerging needs of the target group, partners and governments.” (Evaluation 39). Another successful example of pro-poor focus was the *Global Action Programme (GAP)* on *Child Labour Issues*, where policies to reduce the vulnerability of poor households were developed in several countries (Evaluation 27).

2.2.6. Gender sensitive

Coverage: 93 per cent

Gender sensitivity was fairly successful overall with 60 per cent of projects having more successful scores. Several projects specifically focused on issues of gender equality and women’s empowerment. Successful projects took an inclusive approach to gender, with some of the projects targeting women also including men, as direct and indirect beneficiaries, although this was introduced at a later stage, as there were cultural reservations that men would dominate discussions and activities if involved at the outset. Projects with high scores included those that: had gender-specific objectives, and gender equity targets and indicators; required the collection and analysis of gender-disaggregated data; aimed for the equitable participation of women and men in activities and training, as well as in consultations and decision-making (e.g. through the modification of board compositions to include women representatives); and had women as target groups of specific policy interventions. Certain projects also expanded their reach to include vulnerable groups – indigenous peoples, youth, and persons with disabilities.

There were different approaches to interventions promoting gender-responsiveness, for example: awareness campaigns and dialogue about gender inequalities in the world of work; the elaboration of Action Plans on Women’s Employment; the implementation of labour market analyses using a gender perspective and the development of related courses; thematic workshops; the inclusion of gender issues in the development of legal and regulatory frameworks, guidelines, training, research and other materials; awareness raising on Rights at Work for young women and men, which included issues of gender as well as non-discrimination; the development of women’s network at different levels; and providing support for the ratification process of ILO Convention 189.

Some successful and less successful examples are highlighted below, reflecting the complexities of successfully integrating gender into projects.

Gender issues and non-discrimination were at the core of all activities planned in the *GAP-MDW* Project, as it aimed to support the empowerment of migrant domestic workers. While these workers are predominantly women, the project also acknowledged that men and boys were also represented among migrant domestic workers. It aimed to move beyond disaggregating between women and men, and tried to high-

light how domestic workers are subject to discrimination in labour legislation when compared to other occupations, and isolated compared to other migrants. It postulated the idea that domestic workers are not vulnerable just because they are women, but because of their occupation, their lack of protection under labour legislation, and because they are migrants (Evaluation 5).

The *Better Work (BW) Programme* has:

...a generic approach implemented across all countries to avoid women worker's discrimination in various ways: access to jobs, promotion and wages and sexual harassment. This approach has also been integrated in all aspects of its work, including staff recruitment, compliance assessments, training, information resources, monitoring and evaluation. In addition, BW interventions developed specific interventions in order to make sure that women's needs are being addressed. However, there are important issues in the area of gender equality, beyond the area of women empowerment, that are not being treated with a 'programmatic' focus. Based on interviews and direct observation, the evaluators believe that there is insufficient investment in specific training on gender issues.

Additionally, the evaluation found that the projects did not incorporate gender-sensitive indicators, that BW lacked a clear strategy for mainstreaming policies to promote gender equality in factories, and there were missed opportunities to create synergies with projects and use relevant tools developed by ILO (Evaluation 3).

In the context of interventions promoting Social Protection Floors (SPF) in Latin America, the ILO provided technical support "to create conditions for the development of specific protection and social security policies aimed at working women: maternity protection (in Peru), early childhood care for working women (El Salvador and Peru), and women Domestic workers (in Argentina and Colombia)". Studies on inclusive social protection and gender were also conducted in four countries, and a subregional training workshop on SPF and gender guarantees was held, with support from the regional Gender Specialist. Furthermore, joint collaboration with UN Women in Peru led to a triptych on gender, decent work and SDGs (Evaluation 26).

Also in Latin America, courses were offered on collective bargaining with a gender perspective, and on organization and management for women entrepreneurs, leading to the creation of specific committees on gender, and actions to combat gender discrimination in human resource management. ILO interventions also supported childcare centres in factories (*Better Work Programme*). However, the evaluation noted that these actions are not part of a clear strategy to incorporate the gender approach and promote gender equality in companies: "Despite these advances (and others in terms of labor regulations, on gender-based violence and women's political participation), there is still no significant progress in terms of women's participation in the professional and business field, especially in the sectors with lower income and lower level of education, where gender differentiated roles that assign women their primary responsibility for household chores are more entrenched" (Evaluation 28), thus revealing that changing attitudes and behaviours is a long-term process.

Projects with low scores regarding gender sensitivity did not include gender-specific objectives or use gender strategies in their design, and the gender dimension in results frameworks was generic, with indicators only mentioning the number of women participants in activities or in trainings. Few or no gender-sensitive indicators were incorporated, which limited the ability to assess gender-related changes and progress over time. Gender plans or gender-related tools, when present, were not always used and explicitly linked, and gender focal points were not consulted systematically. In one case, the evaluator noted that the scope of their mission did not include a particular focus on gender aspects, thus limiting the depth of information provided; this may explain the limitations of other project evaluations.

Despite the lack of systematic incorporation of a gender mainstreaming approach in project design, and lack of specific gender-sensitive indicators, some projects had specific activities and actions that included a gender focus and that led to progress towards gender equality. For instance, Evaluation 37 notes that:

The global component [of the *Skills for employment and productivity in low-income countries* project] paid attention to gender mainstreaming through (1) increasing visibility on the issue of gender equality and skills development, in addition to an expansion in the number of gender-sensitive knowledge products on the website; (2) hosting e-discussion focusing on gender differences in skills development and effective strategies for promoting gender equality in employment and access to training while also highlighting effective strategies that support women's economic empowerment; and (3) featuring stories on the theme of women and skills development on the Global KSP homepage.

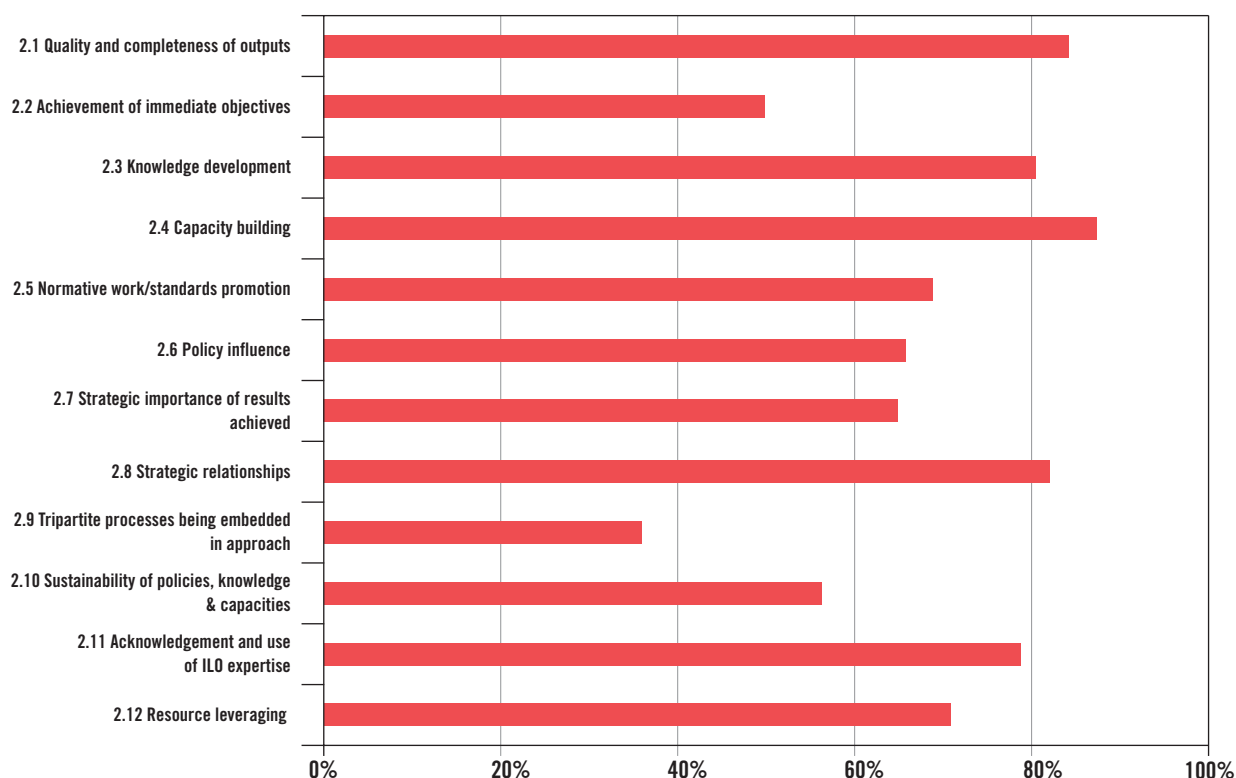
Similarly, specific activities aimed to improve women's livelihoods were included in work on national social protection floors, such as promoting the introduction of maternity benefits in Zambia, and a study on *Maternity Protection, Gender and Nutrition* in Mozambique (Evaluation 13).

In contrast, there were examples of project designs including gender components such as Gender Analyses, yet these were never implemented, and evaluators were not able to ascertain the existence of planned studies with gender components. In another case, attention was given to gender equity in the planning and implementation of activities, but results were uneven, and it was noted that future phases would need additional support for gender inclusiveness. There were also missed opportunities to promote gender equality and non-discrimination in interventions.

2.3. EFFECTIVENESS, SUSTAINABILITY AND IMPACT

Effectiveness, sustainability and impact is addressed through 12 criteria: quality and completeness of outputs; achievement of immediate objectives; knowledge development; capacity building; normative work and the promotion of standards; policy influence; strategic importance of achieved results; strategic relationships; tripartite processes being embedded in the approach; the sustainability of policies, knowledge and capacities; acknowledgement and use of ILO expertise; and resource leveraging.

Figure 6. Effectiveness, sustainability and impact: Percentage of more successful scores by performance criteria



Most projects were rated positively in terms of their overall performance in development cooperation. Areas of strength included the quality and completeness of outputs; knowledge development; and the development of strategic relationships. Capacity development at individual and institutional levels was the most highly scored (88 per cent) and fully covered elements in the study. The ILO's expertise was often acknowledged and used, and projects were able to leverage resources through fund raising, co-financing, cost sharing and collaborating with partners. Mixed levels of performance related to the promotion of relevant labour standards; policy influence, and the strategic importance of results achieved. Just over half of the projects evaluated had some tangible possibilities for sustainability, with some not having an exit strategy, but having assured a next phase of funding by the donor.

Half of the projects under review had met their immediate objectives, with many making progress towards overall outcomes, but showing mixed results. This was often due to the reports being thematic or regional in nature, covering multiple countries, with different levels and stages of progress, and making it difficult to provide a complete picture of achievements, while concealing particular successes in terms of the extent to which progress had been made. The main area of weakness in this category was the integration of tripartism, with just over one third of projects including tripartism in their design and implementation, with many missed opportunities to use and strengthen tripartite processes (figure 6).

2.3.1. Quality and completeness of outputs

Coverage: 95 per cent

A large majority of projects had completed outputs that were considered to be of good quality and were, thus, put into use by stakeholders (84 per cent).

Many projects were able to deliver most of their planned outputs, sometimes surpassing targets for certain components, and often while facing implementation difficulties and delays. For instance, Evaluation 19 found that the project had delivered most of the planned outputs, despite challenges in certain countries, and noted that the flexibility given to the ILO through outcome-based funding (OBF) was an important factor in the delivery of results, as it gave the project the ability to provide a timely response to stakeholders' most pressing priorities, and motivate them to fully engage as project partners.

When confronted with external and internal obstacles, the *SKILLED* Project was able to put in place a number of effective strategies to mitigate some of these factors, and was expected to meet or surpass most of its quantitative targets by the end of the project (Evaluation 15). Similarly, the *Partnerships for Youth Employment in the CIS* Project completed most of its planned activities, along with additional elements implemented in response to participant requests. Many outputs were being used: "the Regional Cooperation Network established through the project is now proving to be an effective mechanism for cooperation, peer-to-peer learning, the sharing of international good practice, the commissioning of comparative research on topics prioritized by the constituents, and the improvement of youth employment policies and programmes. The Network is task-oriented and has played an important role in highlighting the need for reforms in the youth employment approaches taken by its member countries." (Evaluation 8).

The Global Knowledge-sharing Component of the *Skills for employment and productivity in low-income countries* Project either achieved or exceeded the set targets under two of its outputs, while results were underachieved in another, due to difficulties with outreach to the private sector. Nevertheless, the stakeholders found the knowledge products to be of high quality, and most were used in their day-to-day work (Evaluation 37).

Projects that received low scores had not reached the intended beneficiaries (e.g. Evaluation 38); had succeeded in conducting short-term actions, but did not achieve more significant outputs, and had results of mixed quality (e.g. Evaluations 11, 32); or had significant differences between locations regarding the

achievement of expected results. Many had experienced delays in start-up or during implementation, thus affecting the achievement of outputs.

2.3.2. Achievement of immediate objectives

Coverage: 95 per cent

Only half (50 per cent) of the projects were found to have met their immediate objectives. Many projects had made progress towards their objectives, but had mixed results. In several cases, the lack of monitoring systems and indicators made it difficult for evaluators to assess progress towards outcomes. There were only a few cases where little or no progress had been made.

In general, projects that were designed with a realistic scope in terms of number and type of outcomes and resources to achieve results within the available timeframe were more successful in making progress than others. In some cases, they were able to achieve their intended outcomes despite implementation difficulties and delays, due to flexible designs and funding. Progress was made in terms of capacity building, knowledge development and dissemination, policy changes, and the creation of positive enabling environments. Multi-country evaluations, cluster evaluations, and regional evaluations, found disparities in the degree of implementation and progress in achieving overall outcomes in different countries. Scores for these evaluations are thus not completely representative of specific situations on the ground, and may obscure the successes or obstacles faced by some projects.

One positive example was a project that provided support to the Latin America and Caribbean initiative to ban child labour. The evaluation found that it “achieved results that transcended its objectives”. Through the integration of 28 countries, it allowed the development of personal and institutional links between countries and participating stakeholders, while allowing them to have a more powerful collective voice against child labour, both in international forums and at national level (Evaluation 21). The *FORLAC* Program was also found to be successful in meeting its immediate objectives, and was deemed to be “a determining factor for the design of the Global Formalization Strategy”. Project contributions, based on studies, statistics and technical advice in several countries of the region, made it possible to identify a set of strategies and policies that promoted the transition to formality, and supported tripartite constituents in making progress towards the adoption of Recommendation 204 concerning the transition from informal to the formal economy (Evaluation 36).

Some projects achieved their planned outputs, but this did not always translate into fully meeting their immediate objectives, often due to time limitations. For instance, several evaluations noted that projects that have the ambition of changing attitudes and mindsets require longer timeframes than other types of projects. Others found that achieving outcomes related to the official adoption of legal and regulatory frameworks was challenging because these were processes that were beyond a project’s direct control.

Nevertheless, these challenges were manageable, as demonstrated by the evaluation of a project on women domestic migrant workers (MDW) from Ethiopia, which found that the project’s greatest achievements related to changing the mindset of all types of stakeholders, from government staff to MDW and their communities, and strengthening the migrant domestic workers’ capacity to empower and protect themselves while overseas. The project also acted at different levels of governance, emphasizing actions at the federal level, while providing technical and resource support for the decentralized enabling environment in regions with high identified levels of out-migration by MDW (Evaluation 7).

Multi-country evaluations, cluster evaluations, and regional evaluations, found disparities in the degree of implementation and progress in achieving overall outcomes in different countries. Scores for these evaluations are thus not completely representative of specific situations on the ground, and may obscure successes or obstacles faced by some projects.

2.3.3. Knowledge development

Coverage: 90 per cent

In line with the previous meta-analyses, a majority of projects (81 per cent) succeeded in generating or bringing together relevant, good quality knowledge to address knowledge gaps and support decision-making. This was one of the strongest elements of the review.

Knowledge development products and activities included the development and launch of several global knowledge-sharing platforms; thematic workshops and consultations; south-south exchanges; creation of bipartite, tripartite and specialist working groups; organization of regional dialogues; baseline studies and surveys; research on substantive and technical topics; development of knowledge management strategies; electronic tools and databases; development and dissemination of guidelines, manuals, publications, and compilations of good practices; and awareness-raising activities using information guides, newsletters, booklets, videos, and social media, sometimes with the engagement of advocacy networks and specialist groups at national, regional and global levels. Few projects had limited or failed actions to promote knowledge-generation and exchange.

Several examples of projects with successful knowledge development are presented below.

The *ARISE II* Project built on the existing SCREAM methodologies in schools and empowered children with knowledge on child labour, by encouraging them to take part in awareness creation and to act against child labour. It targeted both children and the community in general, while also sensitizing agricultural professionals and other stakeholders, and promoted a draft Child Labour agenda, and research and position papers to influence policy (Evaluation 33).

Specific knowledge-sharing tools were developed in the projects reviewed, such as the Global Knowledge-Sharing Platform (Global KSP), a collaborative platform that pools knowledge products on skills for employment from international organizations, governments, and employers' and workers' organizations on what works in linking skills development to productive and decent work. Products included research outcomes, analytical case studies, project evaluations, reports on tool development and some 2,200 skills-related items, primarily in English, French and Spanish. Targets in terms of numbers of visits to Global KSP were exceeded (Evaluation 37).

The *Market Systems Development for Decent Work* ("The Lab") Project was a knowledge-generation project that aimed to add value to the work of other knowledge hubs on market systems development, through its niche role as practitioner-driven and decent work-focused knowledge project. *The Lab* actively disseminated knowledge products to internal and external stakeholders through a variety of face-to-face and online platforms, including a series of webinars, blogs and conference presentations attended by over 1,000 policy-makers and practitioners. *The Lab* staff participated in key networks and events outside the ILO (such as BEAM, DCED and SEEP) in order to raise the visibility of *their* work and reach out to a wider practitioner audience. The evaluation found that the emphasis on decent work in the development of market system approaches to job creation gave *The Lab* a comparative advantage over other knowledge-generation initiatives (Evaluation 12).

Finally, another project to support and protect women domestic migrant workers from Ethiopia contributed to the development of a web-based Migrants Data Management System in the country, and to the construction and launch of Migrant Resource Centres. This was in addition to organizing interregional forums and study tours, and commissioning research and impact studies on a range of topics related to migration and domestic workers, as well as sharing knowledge on best practices (Evaluation 7).

2.3.4. Capacity building

Coverage: 100 per cent

Capacity development at individual and institutional levels was one of the most highly scored (88 per cent) and fully covered elements in the study. Capacity building focused on stakeholders at all levels, including

governments, workers' and employers' organizations, civil society, and final beneficiaries, leading to a positive enabling environment in many instances, and generally responded to the expressed needs of constituents.

Activities included training workshops and seminars, tripartite dialogue processes, mentoring, training-of-trainers, curriculum revision and teacher/instructor training; and the facilitation of networks, study tours, and language courses. There were also Flagship events, such as the Youth Academy in collaboration with ILC/ILO in Turin. ILO tools were used and built on, such as Generate Your Business Idea (GYBI), Start and Improve Your Business (SIYB), and training packages were developed or modified and translated into different languages and adapted to local contexts. This improved their use and ownership by stakeholders, and promoted sustainability. In several instances, capacity-building activities and training courses increased awareness of important policy issues related to gender, leading to discussion around gender discrimination and potential reforms.

Particularly successful projects targeted capacity-building activities and directly involved the social partners in programme development and implementation, so they could further build capacity through their involvement. For instance, in one project "technical staff worked alongside government counterparts, rather than in isolation. This not only had the benefit of making its interventions more inclusive, but it also meant that government staff capacity was built through on-the-job training and mentoring." (Evaluation 13)

BOX 1

WIF Project, South Asia and the Middle East (Evaluation 39)

A project on women migrant workers in South Asia and the Middle East (*Work in Freedom or WIF*) focused on a range of capacity-building approaches and targeted partners at different levels. For instance, WIF helped partners in countries of origin to understand the actual working conditions at destination, and made them aware of the rules and regulations for safe migration, as well as connected them to relevant migrant workers' networks.

WIF's capacity building efforts included, but were not limited to, the following:

- On the topic of pre-decision training, *WIF* built a tool and conducted training-of-trainers, undertook state and cross-country visits to implementing NGOs and trade unions. The NGO management and trainers interviewed for the evaluation reported that they had acquired significant knowledge from the various training initiatives and that they had been using the training materials, thus improving their capacities in the subsequent training programmes that they had conducted.
- Concerning formalizing employment relationships, *WIF* built the capacities of 192 trade union leaders and domestic workers from five central trade unions and the National Domestic Workers' Movement (NDWM).
- On issues related to migration, trafficking, and forced and bonded labour, *WIF* worked with labour inspectors and police officers. It conducted trainings on the roles and responsibilities of both the police and labour officers, e.g. in the state of Chhattisgarh in India; conducted a workshop in Jordan on wage protection practices; and organized a study visit for labour inspectors to the United Arab Emirates (UAE).
- *WIF* supported the Government of Bangladesh in decentralizing training programmes, and making them more accessible to a wider range of women. Furthermore, language classes were held in basic communication for women domestic workers, which reduced their vulnerability at destination countries.
- *WIF* has facilitated networking among gender networks, labour networks and migrant networks, in order to build their capacity to connect, support and learn from each other. Various partners participated in national and regional workshops on such diverse issues as recruitment practices in the garment sector, women, work and migration, etc.
- Civil society participants developed the capacity to articulate the interconnected challenges of patriarchy, mobility and work among migrating women of low-income households, often of indigenous or minority origin, into a common policy advocacy discourse tailored to national contexts and focused on reducing vulnerability to forced labour. The focus of *WIF's* work in this respect has been on connecting different parties so that they can better support each other, as well as awareness raising for government officials to help them better shape regional and global advocacy efforts in the area of women's migration.
- *WIF* engaged with over 22 advocacy networks at national, regional and global levels to raise awareness among policy-makers.

In some instances, such as *Phase II of the Better Work Jordan Project*, the training and advisory services provided were considered to be high quality, well contextualized, and encouraged the application of new skills and knowledge. However, access was problematic, with limited to no participation from factories with the greatest number of non-compliances (Evaluation 18).

2.3.5. Normative work/standards promotion

Coverage: 73 per cent

The integration of International Labour Standards into projects was good overall (69 per cent), with one fifth of projects being highly successful.

Constituents received different types of support from ILO projects, including:

- Data collection, studies and analyses on compliance of legislation with ILS, and recommendations for the implementation of ILS;
- Translation of key materials for the social partners;
- Technical and policy support to draft legislation in line with ILS;
- Advice and expertise to improve national legal instruments (labour codes, and legislation on employers' and workers' organizations, etc.);
- Training for the media to increase awareness of different ILO conventions and recommendations;
- Awareness raising through workshops, and different types of media.

Different conventions were ratified as a result of ILO interventions, and progress was made in different ways. For instance, projects sought to ensure that national regulations were aligned with C138 and C182 in Panama (Evaluation 17). There was increased awareness and dialogue on ratification of C189 in Ethiopia, and trainings with components on C189 in the United Arab Emirates, Lebanon, Qatar, Saudi Arabia and Kuwait (Evaluation 7). Awareness-raising activities on R202 were held in Malawi and Zambia (Evaluation 13), and work was done towards the ratification of C184 in Malawi (Evaluation 33), on C100, C87, C98 in Ethiopia (Evaluation 39), and on C182 and C189 in Indonesia (Evaluation 6). In the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, an ILO project on Social Dialogue contributed to the implementation of C87, C98, C135, C151, and C154 (Evaluation 25). In Latin America, projects contributed to achievements related to C189 and C169 (Evaluation 21), and actions were taken for the ratification of C102, in Argentina and Honduras, the ratification of other conventions such as C189 in Argentina and Colombia, and C183 in Peru (Evaluation 26). Finally, there was also an international campaign on C189 (Evaluation 27).

A few reports noted that there were missed opportunities to mainstream ILS in project design and implementation (e.g. Evaluation 15).

2.3.6. Policy influence

Coverage: 95 per cent

Two-thirds of projects (66 per cent) were successful in raising stakeholders' awareness of the possibilities of influencing policy, and engaging in policy-discussions at different levels, with some direct results on policy-making.

ILO interventions supported constituents to strengthen policy coordination mechanisms, to formulate laws and policy, and to ensure they were in line with ILS. Spaces were created for bipartite and tripartite social dialogue, for consultation processes and for fostering discussions and debate on how best to go forward. Furthermore, specific knowledge products developed in the context of the projects reviewed were used as inputs for the design of policies and norms at different levels and for advocacy purposes.

For instance, in Ecuador and Panama, ILO support through various actions and intercultural dialogue led to improved public policies on child labour for children at local level, and both countries developed procedures, protocols and mechanisms that allowed a more comprehensive approach to the eradication of child labour (Evaluation 17).

All of the countries involved in the *Thematic Evaluation of Social Protection Floors* (Evaluation 26) achieved products that focused on contributing to the development of policies to create, strengthen and expand social protection floors, while taking into account issues of gender, exclusion and/or discrimination.

Social partners involved in a Regional Coordination Network related to youth employment in CIS countries, launched with ILO assistance, were directly involved in the design and implementation of pro-employment macroeconomic policies, and improved their capacity to support the implementation of successful pilot programmes, while taking gender considerations into account (Evaluation 8).

In some cases, external factors such as political instability limited the impact of the ILO's work and the possibility to influence policy (Evaluations 16, 25, 35), while in others, poor design associated with over-ambitious objectives did not allow for progress regarding policy influence (Evaluations 18, 24).

2.3.7. Strategic importance of results achieved

Coverage: 100 per cent

The strategic importance of the results achieved was an area of good performance for 65 per cent of projects and CPOs, with over one-fifth of projects rated as "Highly successful". Several projects achieved results of high strategic importance and were used by stakeholders to realize national development outcomes.

Examples of high-performing projects are provided below.

- In Egypt, a project aiming to promote workers' rights and competitiveness in export industries used the results of a needs assessment to launch:

...the development of a strategic plan and budget for an inspection program and the creation of a specialized inspection unit, resulting ultimately in the development and subsequent approval by the MOM of a three-year strategic plan in 2015. As a result of improvements made in strategic planning at the inspection unit-level, the project's interventions were found to bring about greater engagement in areas previously less focused on among inspection offices. Over the course of conducting data collection for this evaluation, the evaluation team found that inspection offices were organizing additional awareness sessions, were more committed to adhering to the 5% guideline for hiring of persons with disabilities and were more knowledgeable on the provision of social insurance for employees as a result of training conducted by the project (Evaluation 4).

- A regional project on building national social protection floors supported the enabling environment, with several successes highlighted, including policy work in Malawi, Mozambique and Zambia, and work on legislation in the latter two countries. It also positively influenced the attitudes of key stakeholders (Evaluation 13).
- Similarly, the *ARISE II* Project in Malawi led to an improved regulatory framework and institutional development for the elimination of child labour. The project contributed to the development of the National Action Plan (NAP) on Trafficking in Persons in collaboration with the Ministry of Home Affairs and Internal Security. It continued to support the adoption of the Child Labour Policy; contributed to and participated in the development of the National Employment and Labour Policy (NELP), the HIV/AIDS Workplace Policy which was adopted and ready for submission to the cabinet committee, United Nations Development Assistance Framework (UNDAF) for Malawi, and DWCP, all of which feed into the NAP on the Elimination of Child Labour (Evaluation 33).

- The immediate objectives of the *Partnerships for Youth Employment in the CIS* Project focused on both the development of effective youth employment policies and strategies in the region and support for the implementation of action plans and programmes in Azerbaijan, Kazakhstan and the Russian Federation. Project achievements in Azerbaijan included contributions to the creation of a permanent tripartite Commission on Labour, Economic and Social Affairs, the finalization of a new National Employment Policy, and capacity building and reform of the PES (Evaluation 8).

In other cases, there was little evidence that project results were used in a strategic context. For instance, while the ILO designed and implemented innovative approaches to allow Syrian refugees to access work permits in Jordan, there was no indication that permits had been issued. In addition, research on opportunities for growth, employment and business development was sound, yet implementing the research and following up on recommendations failed, most likely because this was not part of a broader strategic framework that was being implemented for the agricultural sector (Evaluation 30). A different project in Jordan also fell short, as the objective was to create decent jobs for Syrian refugees and Jordanian host communities through green works in agriculture and forestry. However, the evaluation found that the work generated by the project did not lead any of the workers to move into more regular employment, regardless of their category: women, men, Syrian refugees and Jordanians (Evaluation 32).

2.3.8. Strategic relationships

Coverage: 98 per cent

Building and leveraging relationships with different organizations, and internal and external stakeholders, was an area of strong performance for many projects (82 per cent). The evaluation reports provided many examples of successful relationships built and leveraged with different groups at local, national, regional and international levels, including with government ministries, donors, UN agencies, NGOs, research institutions, as well as the private sector. The ILO was commended in several evaluations for its willingness to work with heterogeneous groups of actors.

BOX 2

ARISE II, Malawi (Evaluation 33)

A good example of a project which created and maintained strong, high impact relationships was the ARISE II Project in Malawi:

The project was implemented by several organizations, each playing specific roles. ILO was the lead organization responsible for the implementation of upstream activities especially on issues relating to Pillar 3 on improved regulatory framework and institutional development. At the district level, Youth Empowerment and Civic Education (YECE) were responsible for downstream interventions in Lilongwe District while Circle for Integrated Community Development (CICOD) was in charge of Ntcheu District. Others were the Ministry of Education, Science and Technology (MoEST), which supported mainstreaming of child labour into the curriculum; the anchor MoLYSMD, which supports community self-help groups; Malawi Congress of Trade Unions (MCTU), charged with social mobilization of tobacco growing communities; Teachers Union of Malawi (TUM), which implemented the SCREAM methodologies in schools, Employers Consultative Association of Malawi (ECAM), Lilongwe University of Agriculture and Natural Resources (LUANAR), which sought to sensitize agricultural professionals that pass through the University on child labour issues and mainstream child labour as a research agenda in the university, and the respective DCLCs.

The mix of partners was not only comprehensive but strategic given that each partner took up roles they were conversant with. It was for this reason that many of the gains in the project were achieved. Partnerships with the government ministries for example resulted in the achievement of several long-term gains for example in curriculum mainstreaming and in linkages established between the IGA groups and the line ministry. The partnership with TUM made access to teachers involved in SCREAM methodologies easier, and so was the case with MCTU and workers. ECAM easily facilitated opportunities for older children that had graduated with vocational skills to access internship in established enterprises in the private sector, where they gained additional skills and business experiences. ECAM further continued to support resource mobilization for schools through the adopt a school concept.

Partnerships aimed to complement the ILO's field of competency, promote the development of social dialogue among social partners, and foster the exchange of knowledge and experience between different groups. It also contributed to pushing forward policy agendas and reforms, facilitating capacity building and the development of specific studies and tools, promoting advocacy on different areas of work, linking the private sector with stakeholders in the context of business development schemes, or creating entry points for employment between learners and industry, among others. Partnerships also enabled cost sharing of certain activities and interventions.

In the selection of project partners, specific roles and responsibilities were attributed strategically by recognizing and using the strengths of each partner, often leading to strong progress towards intended immediate objectives. Some projects built on existing ILO work and capitalized on established relationships with previous partners.

The establishment partnerships gave a strategic advantage to the ILO, for instance in Jordan, where ILO's different interventions in response to the Syrian Crisis positioned the Organization as a competent partner trusted by both government and donors (Evaluation 30).

Synergies were created with external partners in several instances, thus building on a strong collaborative relationship to progress towards intended outcomes. For instance, in Turkey, the *More and better jobs for women* Project complemented and generated synergies with the work of other development agencies such as UNDP and UN Women, through the UN Gender Result Group composed of the gender focal points of all UN agencies, while avoiding duplication and overlap of effort (Evaluation 9).

The *Building national floors of social protection in Southern Africa* Project also worked closely with partner agencies from national UN Joint Programmes in Mozambique and Zambia, including FAO, IOM, UNICEF and WFP. In Malawi, despite the absence of a formal Joint Programme, a significant number of the main activities in the social protection arena were undertaken either jointly or in close consultation with UNICEF, GIZ, WFP and other development partners. There is a broad recognition within the UN family that different agencies have different comparative advantages in the social protection sector: WFP and FAO at operational level; UNICEF at systems level; and ILO at policy level, and that this allowed for synergies in inter-agency collaboration. Beyond the UN Joint Programmes, collaboration was also strong through established development partner working groups on social protection: the task force for the review and re-design of the Malawi National Social Support Programme; the social assistance working group in Mozambique; and the social protection group in Zambia (Evaluation 13).

The *WIF* Project operated with over 96 partners; these partnerships were built upon a variety of formats including close collaboration on programmes, different types of financial agreements, joint advocacy, etc. This allowed the programme to leverage not only partners' expertise but also their networks and financial resources. Partners at origin and destination countries had expertise in gender, labour issues and safe migration, and could innovate on solutions. The programme broadened the scope of the outreach beyond the tripartite partners of the ILO to recruitment agencies, embassies and ministries (e.g. Ministry of Labour/Ministry of Justice/Ministry of Interior) as well as other civil society organizations, many of which are now willing to engage in formal dialogue on professional practices (Evaluation 39).

Projects also fostered the creation of partnerships to ensure sustainability of interventions, such as the Youth Employment Partnerships in different regions of the CIS, which became platforms for the delivery of pilot initiatives (Evaluation 8), or the development of Steering Committees made up of members from different organizations, thus increasing ownership of project results.

There were several examples of missed opportunities to strategically link to other projects or organizations. There were also challenges when reaching out to the private sector, or when there was limited national support for projects, thus curbing opportunities for collaboration. In some cases, the administrative weight of collaborating and coordinating with large UN agencies meant that potentially fruitful relationships were not established.

2.3.9. Tripartite processes being embedded in approach

Coverage: 90 per cent

Integrating tripartism in the projects' approach was an important area of weakness, with just over one third (36 per cent) of projects rating as successful.

Successful projects worked inclusively with government, and representatives of employers' and workers' organizations, and there were instances where bipartite and tripartite dialogue provided a bridge between the different groups. Several projects mentioned that the ILO's tripartite approach, involving social dialogue, was its main comparative advantage. Tripartite partners were involved in the design and implementation of interventions, thus increasing national ownership of interventions. Certain interventions focused on building the capacities of the tripartite social partners, through several modalities including training seminars, workshops, tripartite dialogue processes, and the dissemination of research. ILO projects also supported the creation of tripartite commissions, tripartite councils and the development of tripartite action plans. Tripartite consultations led to the development of national strategies and the promotion of ILO conventions.

In situations where tripartite dialogue was difficult, the ILO found ways to bring the social partners to the table by uniting them around a single issue, for instance in a project on decent work for women in Egypt and Tunisia, as described in the box below.

BOX 3

Decent work for women, Egypt and Tunisia (Evaluation 35)

The work in a tripartite fashion in Egypt was very challenging for a number of reasons. On the one hand, the ILO Cairo office between 2013 and 2015 had ceased collaboration with the Egyptian Trade Union Federation (ETUF). There was a high level of contention between employers' and workers' organizations in the years following the revolution in Egypt. It is worth pointing out that the Federation of Egyptian Industries (FEI) only started collaborating with the ILO in 2014 and required time for the organizations to build trust and partnership. Last but not least, the polarization around independent trade unions was very high and it was hard in the midst of all these changes and conflicts to work in a tripartite approach in Egypt. Hence, the project managed to engage with each social partner independently using gender as a less contentious issue to bring the different stakeholders around a topic that they can agree upon. This proved a successful implementation strategy as the project managed to engage with employers, workers and government represented by NCW in specific activities aiming to bridge the gap in understanding and collaboration between the ILO and the social partners. This strategic decision is applauded by the evaluation, which concludes that the development of strategic partnerships with the social partners is the cornerstone for future work on perhaps more difficult topics in the future.

Missed opportunities to involve tripartite institutions and strengthen processes were found in many of the projects reviewed. Depending on the area of focus of the project, there were more interactions with some groups and limited involvement with others, with no justification in the strategy. For instance, the *PROMOTE* Project involved a wide range of domestic workers' organizations, and other civil society partners, yet government stakeholders and employers' organizations were largely left out (Evaluation 6). In some situations, while the ILO aimed to take a multi-stakeholder, tripartite approach, certain groups were less involved than others, or there was distrust between groups. For instance, in Bangladesh, there were strong ties between government and employers' organizations, but there was little trust between employers' and workers' organizations, leading to difficulties in tripartite dialogue (Evaluation 11). There were also cultural hurdles, as one evaluation noted that "Tripartism, in terms of dialogue between the three actors in the labor market; governments, employers and workers, is not common in the Middle East." (Evaluation 32)

In several cases, evaluators were not able to determine the extent to which ILO interventions supported employers' and workers' organizations, or to what extent tripartite partners were engaged.

2.3.10. Sustainability of policies, knowledge and capacities

Coverage: 98 per cent

Just over half of the projects (56 per cent) demonstrated possibilities for maintaining, advancing, or scaling up interventions, with some consideration to an exit strategy.

Successful projects aimed to strengthen the enabling environment by supporting the development of legal and policy frameworks; strengthening coordination around issues of interest; providing advocacy, awareness raising and capacity strengthening to stakeholders, including government structures at different levels. Important factors promoting sustainability included: mainstreaming specific topics into national policy and legal frameworks; implementation of policies; passing of laws; adoption of ILO conventions; strengthening of implementation structures; creation of ownership of stakeholders through participation in working groups, as well as in trainings (especially when training programmes were incorporated into pre-existing curricula); integration of monitoring and evaluation mechanisms in partner institutions; and development of roadmaps and exit strategies, including exit workshops and consultations.

The creation of strong partnerships with different stakeholders, and with other development agencies was also found to be an important foundation in ensuring the continuation of future interventions, as were strategies to link projects to a wider network of projects in place, or to partner institutions having the capacity to build on the projects' results. In some cases, tripartite steering committees or project advisory groups were created to endorse country strategies and ensure ownership and the sustainability of results, which were also ensured by anchoring them in DWCPs and national development strategies. Replication of project strategies and tools was also seen as a positive step towards increased ownership and sustainability in several reports.

For instance, the training strategy of a project in Southern Africa on building social protection floors, was highlighted as a positive factor in ensuring sustainability:

The project, even while the modules have been under preparation, has already begun the process of ensuring this. At national, regional and continental levels, the design process has been very inclusive of potential partners who have the ability to take the modules forward independently of project support. And, as well as being innovative in their transformational approach, the training modules are also innovative in that the project wants to institutionalize them with other partners, rather than to guard them jealously as an internal resource. During 2016, ownership of the training package development process has been broadened to other UN agencies, including UNICEF, UNDP and FAO, so as to bring the initiative forward in a One-UN inter-agency spirit and increase opportunities for replication and institutionalization. The package has also received some initial endorsement and support from the African Union. If it can identify training establishments such as universities (initial contact has been made with the University of Zambia), other development partners (such as the EU's Social Protection Systems project) or independent trainers (discussions are in train with the Southern Africa Social Protection Experts Network (SASPEN)), then the training component will be sustainable beyond the life even of the next phase of the project. (Evaluation 13)

Several reports noted that results were sustainable because of the long time that the ILO had been working on certain issues, such as child labour in the Philippines. Some projects obtained government commitments to provide the necessary technical and financial resources to build on work carried out by the ILO, while others were able to mobilize funds from other sources. In a few cases, there was no explicit exit strategy because the project had already received funding for a next phase.

Funding modalities were also found to play a role in the sustainability of projects:

The nature of the Outcome-Based Funding provided through the partnership lends itself to the attainment of more sustainable results and longer-term impact. This is because the activities that are supported have generally been identified with a view to maintaining continuity. They were all built on previous interventions and were designed to take the next steps in the achievement of agreed policy reforms and long-term plans. Furthermore, the country-level activities all offer good prospects for a sustainable effect because they all focus on systemic reform. This contrasts with projects that fund training delivery in a one-off exercise – an approach which offers an immediate and observable result, but no sustainability at all. Though the pace of progress will be influenced by the continued availability of funds and technical support provided in the future, the project has at least built pathways for reform in the target countries. Its global component has complemented this effort and extended the message of reform to a global audience. (Evaluation 19)

Areas of weakness included: lack of exit strategies; dependence on external funding to continue work; political and economic uncertainty; lack of enabling environments; high staff turnover so that capacity building had limited impact; low capacity of institutions to follow through with work initiated through the projects; and limited time to consolidate results when new phases did not obtain funding, among others.

2.3.11. Acknowledgement and use of ILO expertise

Coverage: 83 per cent

The technical and managerial expertise of the ILO was recognized by a majority of projects (79 per cent). The ILO was found to have provided significant added value through its extensive resources base, technical expertise, project management backstopping, and training inputs, making good use of its comparative advantage.

The ILO's focus on fostering tripartite social dialogue and support to the adoption and implementation of ILO conventions was well regarded, as was its capacity to develop appropriate methodologies and tools to address topics related to decent work, and to work with a variety of stakeholders. ILO's expertise in skills development and its ability to provide expert inputs and deliver training programmes and workshops tailored to the operational needs of participating countries was also positively acknowledged, as was the delivery of workshops and the quality of knowledge products. The strong focus on knowledge exchange and good practices at national, regional and global levels was also seen as a positive point, as well as its capacity to adapt to national contexts.

Below are several examples of the appreciation for the ILO's work and expertise found in the reports reviewed.

Through its direct interventions and advocacy ILO is now recognized as a key player in livelihoods support for Syrian refugee workers and host communities in Jordan. As a result of the interventions implemented under RBSA, ILO expanded its implementation quickly following the 2016 London Conference. Another strength of ILO's work in Jordan has been the combination of advocacy and policy engagement with interventions on the ground, supported by involvement in high-level engagement with the MoL and other government counterparts making ILO's position unique compared with other actors in the livelihoods sector. (Evaluation 30)

The project received high levels of appreciation from employers and workers on its interventions at the factory-level among factories which fully participated in the project, and has achieved demonstrable results from these interventions. It should be highlighted that it was revealed during interviews with MOM representatives that the project is seen in high regard by ministry officials, with one mentioning to the interviewer that it is the best project they have seen. The project is

currently seen as a potential model and success story and is being studied for potential replication in Iraq, particularly with regards to raising the capacities of the labor & OSH inspectors through the development of an electronic data base as implemented by this project. (Evaluation 4)

ILO has produced guidance notes, manuals and guidelines, which have proven useful for many stakeholders. The ILO plays an important role as knowledge hub within the UN and other development partners, and also with government. The ILO acts as a central focal point, through which information and resources are shared and accessed by a wide range of partners. The ILO is the leading UN agency working on Child labour with an extensive global programme (International Programme for the Elimination of Child Labour), also bringing in accumulated experience and knowledge of CL within a range of sectors including agriculture, working street children, industries and supply chains. (Evaluation 34)

Being housed within the ILO also provided the Lab with some key strategic advantages. In addition to access to a portfolio of projects, ILO has provided the Lab with credibility and authenticity to establish itself as one of the few main knowledge hubs working in market system development space. This credibility is of significant value especially for niche and upcoming technical approaches such as market systems development. This institutional affiliation may also have enabled the Lab to be effectively plugged into the wider network of donors and funding entities that are increasingly adopting systemic approaches in private sector development programmes. (Evaluation 12)

The beneficiaries at the level of cooperative societies and federations reported that the field officers have been in frequent contact and provide excellent support to them. Government officers from NAQDA and the Cooperatives Department/district also informed the evaluation team that the field officers have established a strong relationship of trust and respect in the communities. Representatives of Taprobane Sea Foods (TSF) and the National Chamber of Exporters (NCE) interviewed praised the ILO approach, its contribution to strengthening their business partnerships and their awareness of labour standards. According to the representative, TSF is proud to be associated with ILO as the international authority on labour standards. Individual cooperative board members eloquently expressed the value of EGLR's support at the Evaluation Stakeholder Workshop. "We struggle for our survival in the sea. The ILO was like a catamaran when we were drowning" Poonakary Fisheries Federation member. Stakeholder workshop. (Evaluation 20)

2.3.12. Resource leveraging

Coverage: 78 per cent

A majority (71 per cent) of projects was found to be successful in leveraging financial and human resources from governments, donors and other partners.

Factors of success included engaging in cost sharing, co-financing, and collaborating with partners through the joint development of tools, and organizing donor workshops to obtain donor commitments, among others. Implementing partners often actively contributed their own human, technical and financial resources to the projects. One project was described as having broken new ground through the involvement of a major Russian company, LUKOIL, as the development cooperation partner, thus demonstrating how the private sector could support global development goals.

One example of significant resource leveraging was provided in Evaluation 13: "In addition to its own strategically judicious activities, it has been highly effective as a catalyst to build partnerships, mobilize resources and leverage collaboration with others. As just one example of this, its work on developing the regional training modules required significant project commitment and an investment of about USD100,000. Yet it was able to mobilize an impressive range of partners, and to elicit contributions worth a further USD150,000 from different ILO sources and other collaborators."

Another successful example was described in Evaluation 27:

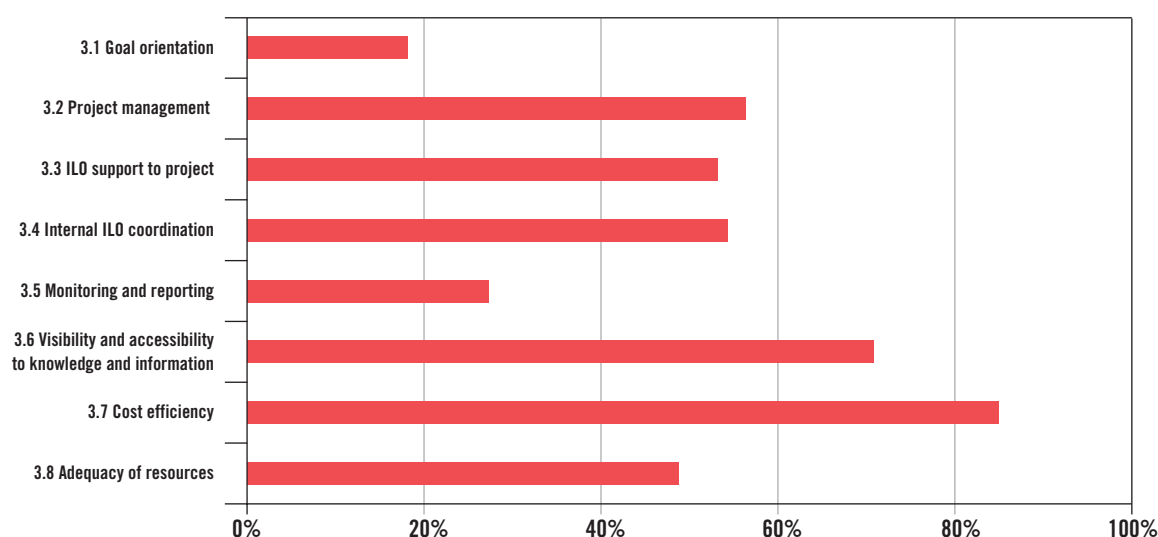
GAP11 was different from an in-depth country programme; it offered a few activities and limited funds per country. Knowing this, the project team leveraged other funds, collaborating with other ILO colleagues and projects, some of which were funded by USDOL, e.g. Philippines, Ecuador and Indonesia. This was not possible in some countries where there were no projects to leverage, e.g. in the African region, and where all earlier child labour projects had stopped. (...) There were some examples of staff or information sharing across projects, or of re-hiring the staff of an earlier project, which proved to be efficient. For instance, in Mali the work of GAP11 was focused on agriculture, and though Mali has a high incidence of child labour, the ILO office had another project that was focused on education. GAP11 shared information, and the NPC of the project also worked on GAP11, allowing the contacts made by the NPC for the education project to be useful for the capacity building activities of GAP11.

Some evaluators noted that it was likely that resources had been leveraged, yet it was difficult to provide details and be precise regarding the extent of the leverage, due to lack of information available to the team.

2.4. IMPLEMENTATION PERFORMANCE AND EFFICIENCY OF MANAGEMENT AND RESOURCE USE

Implementation performance is addressed through eight criteria: goal orientation; implementation management; ILO support to project; internal ILO coordination; monitoring and reporting; visibility and accessibility to knowledge and information; cost efficiency; and adequacy of resources.

Figure 7. Implementation performance and efficiency of management and resource use: Percentage of more successful scores by performance criteria



The majority of projects had low to average ratings in terms of their implementation and efficiency, as presented in Figure 7. The cost of achieving results was reasonable for most ILO projects and this criterion received the highest rating for the category, yet the information and level of detail provided in the reports varied. There were strategies in place and good efforts to document and disseminate knowledge generated by interventions in over two-thirds of the projects; this was another area of relative strength. Project management was positive for just over half of the reports. The support provided by the ILO, internal coordination, and adequacy of human and financial resources were rated as “Partly successful” or of mixed quality, reflecting many opportunities for improvement. One criterion with low ratings was

monitoring and reporting, with just over one quarter of projects having satisfactory frameworks and mechanisms in place. Related to this area of weakness was the project's goal orientation, which had the lowest rating of all the criteria, with over one quarter of the projects being "Unsuccessful". Weaknesses frequently noted included poor alignment of indicators with objectives and a lack of clarity in the definition of and differentiation between indicators, targets, activities, milestones and results, when present, were found to be unrealistic, both in terms of resources and capacity. In many cases, some of these elements were absent.

2.4.1. Goal orientation

Coverage: 70 per cent

This criterion was one of the weakest ones in the study, with only 18 per cent of the projects being "Successful", and none scoring as "Highly successful". Evaluations faced challenges in assessing the outcomes achieved due to the absence of outcome statements, performance indicators, targets and base-line data. When present, these different elements were often misunderstood and misused, with multiple examples of confusion between indicators, targets, milestones, activities, outputs and outcomes, leading to low relevance. In some cases, the projects' overall goals and objectives were clearly stated, yet details regarding the intervention logic framework and indicators were unclear, and targets were overambitious.

In a regional project on *Social Protection Floors*, despite very ambitious targets for the resources of the programme, the flexibility of project design allowed for the adaptation of workplans to their goals based on the changing contexts in the countries where the project was operating, while remaining linked to the overall strategy. Although priorities sometimes changed, the majority of targets were achieved, and there was a logical fit between indicators and outcomes (Evaluation 13).

In some cases, progress was noted over different phases:

Coming back to the Results Framework, it is clearly a substantial improvement over the earlier versions in the programme, with a more balanced division among outputs and output indicators. Baselines and means of verification (data sources and responsibility) have been formulated as well as targets for the end of the programme (although they should logically be located towards the right end of the matrix). There is further room for improvement as clear Milestones (planned and achieved) for each project year are not clearly indicated, and the Assumptions (usually the very last column after the end targets) are lacking altogether. (Evaluation 11)

In contrast, another evaluation of a multi-phase project found that "each phase was developed differently without consistency in the use of outcome and output descriptions." (Evaluation 30)

2.4.2. Project management

Coverage: 80 per cent

Sound management processes, known and used by most staff, were found to be in place in just over half of projects and CPOs (56 per cent), with no project receiving a top score.

Project management performance was enhanced by teams that were task-oriented and that accepted flexibility in implementation and task allocation, with staff members taking initiatives (e.g. Evaluations 6, 20, 25). Success was often associated with the presence of project steering/advisory committees and strong links between project staff and national counterparts, as well as staff located at country level and systems of regular monitoring and meetings.

An example of a successful project was described in Evaluation 9:

The management structures and approaches used by ILO were on the balance appropriate and, together with the technical competence and personal dedication of the project team, contributed to the effective implementation of the project. The project was managed by a lean project team that was initially divided between Ankara and Istanbul and later concentrated in Ankara. As of the time of the evaluation, roles and responsibilities of individual members within the team were clearly defined and focused on providing ongoing and, if needed, hands-on support to project partners.

Evaluation 5 described challenges in management arrangements that led to decreased efficiency:

...the rather complex “chain of command” in place meant the processes for making certain decisions or necessary adjustments to project plans were anything but straightforward. Decision-making could involve national project officers asking their Country Office supervisor or director who might in turn need to go to the HQ Project Officer and “onwards and upwards” to HQ Technical Specialists or, ultimately, the Skills Branch Director. Given the time pressures on every person in this chain, delays in resolving some problems were inevitable [...] and given the decentralized nature of the project, no one person had the authority to make these broader decisions – at least not easily. As the ultimate responsibility of the partnership remains with SKILLS HQ, stronger managerial responsibility at this level may be needed. While completely centralizing management would not be desirable (especially in terms of managing local funds), there should at least be a clear protocol established that improves the efficiency of these important management responses.

Aside from complex bureaucratic and institutional procedures, weak performance was also due to high levels of personnel turnover, leading to vacant positions during project implementation, lack of local expertise and the departure of staff with institutional memory. Management structures in countries that did not have permanent national or subregional ILO offices were found to be highly dependent on technical cooperation, thus limiting the scope for the ILO to ensure consistency in the structure of projects (e.g. Evaluation 29). Joint UN projects also faced inefficiencies in administrative arrangements and challenges due to differences in organizational sub-cultures and working procedures that were not harmonized.

2.4.3. ILO support to project

Coverage: 85 per cent

The level and quality of ILO support to projects was satisfactory for only half of projects reviewed (53 per cent), but no project was rated as “Unsuccessful”. Many reports mentioned technical and operational support, as well as financial and administrative support, with some also referring to political support from ILO. When support from the ILO was found to be of mixed quality, it was often due to resources being spread too thinly, leading to high dependence on a few key people, or due to staff shortages or turnover, with staff from other projects having to work to compensate for unfilled positions.

The significant value of the ILO’s comparative advantage in terms of its technical expertise and resource base was highlighted in Evaluation 25:

The Budapest Office provided technical backstop and overall project management support from the Officer for Social Dialogue and Labour Law who acted as Team Leader. Given the significant external problems the project faced, this support was essential in keeping the project on track. Additional support for the employers’ organisations was provided by the ACT/EMP Officer who was fully involved in providing technical support and training inputs. An ACTRAV Officer was also involved in the earlier stages of the project. Administrative support was also provided by the Budapest office which was highly valued by the country team. The ILO made use of in-house

expertise, for example by making use of training experts from the International Training Centre in Turin to provide additional educational support for six conciliators. In addition, the ITC provided tutor input on project cycle management training. Further, the ILO made use of its experts in gender, social security, social protection and ILS for training on those topics.

The decentralization of the ILO's operational structure was identified as having positive and negative consequences regarding ILO support to projects.

The decentralization of the ILO's structure of operation, although it has given greater flexibility for the allocation of resources from the regional offices, has also meant a decrease in the resources of the Departments in the Geneva Office, which has resulted in limitation for respond to requests for support from the Specialists and therefore in an important effort of resource management that has fallen largely to them, which means distraction from technical efforts towards the attainment of resources and, therefore, limits the possibility of addressing constituent requests in a timely and sufficient manner. (Evaluation 26)

2.4.4. Internal ILO coordination

Coverage: 60 per cent

Internal coordination was “Partly successful” for just over half of the projects reviewed (54 per cent). Strong performance was associated with project teams coordinating with other ILO programmes and involving specialists from other ILO thematic areas, sometimes cost-sharing project staff across programmes, and with situations where Chief Technical Advisers (CTAs) were well-supported from colleagues from national and regional offices, and HQ. Shortcomings were identified where projects could have drawn more extensively from the ILO's existing infrastructure and expertise on thematic issues. This was sometimes due to project management hesitating to reach out and include others, or to a lack of teamwork among specialists and technical experts at different levels. In one case, a regional office was completely left out of implementation discussions while HQ took the lead in producing the original project document and preparing implementation guidelines.

An example of a project's successful internal coordination was described in Evaluation 27:

The project has been excellent at coordination with the ILOs country offices. This was needed, as activities implemented without the involvement of the country office would have been less efficient and effective. The country offices were able to make use of the activities under GAP11, to advance the work on child labour and forced labour that they had done earlier, and fill in the gaps. [...] The processes that enabled the stakeholders to draft and adopt NAP-CL and NAP-FL added to the achievements of the country offices. The work under component 2 built research and statistical capacities of the country level government, and academic institutions. All these activities served to strengthen the relationships between the HQ, regional and country offices of the ILO.

In other cases, findings from evaluations underlined the need for improved coordination and collaboration at different levels: “Although ILO HQ, BWG and the different Branches/ Departments collaborate well, at country level there is still much room to improve this collaboration. Furthermore, a systemic approach to BW within the ILO, in which all relevant regional Offices, Branches/Departments collaborated in a coordinated and strategic way to contribute to the BW country objectives, would enhance efficiency and effectiveness.” (Evaluation 3)

Budgeting issues were also seen as a contributing factor to the presence of a silo mentality, which limited internal coordination, as noted in Evaluation 5: “Coordination at headquarters level, with partners and consultation mechanisms at different levels was challenging. Advancing an integrated approach within ILO can be difficult and must be reflected in how budgets are organized. Within ILO, this often brings up the issue of who reports to whom, at different levels. Differences in opinion on where to spend funds

on MDW programs could relate to which ILO P&B outcome officials must report to through their work-plans.” Nevertheless, the project succeeded in breaking down some of these silos, but this depended on individual motivations, rather than an institutionalized approach: “Within ILO, this GAP-MDW project moved beyond working only with migrant specialists, bringing labour specialists and those working on the implementation of C189 to the same table to come up with ideas on how they can all address MDWs. Some individuals within ILO headquarters (SAP-FL, INWORK, MIGRANT) who had a passion for working on domestic workers felt that the project cut across institutional boundaries and they got the chance to really work closely together, on some occasions. The GAP-MDW project did its best to maximize synergies with other ILO interventions in the countries of focus.”

2.4.5. Monitoring and reporting

Coverage: 93 per cent

This performance criterion was one of the weakest areas of the study, with just over a quarter of projects (27 per cent) rated as “Successful”, or “Highly successful”. A majority of projects did not have established M&E frameworks, and reporting mechanisms were either inadequate or absent, often focusing on activities and outputs, rather than outcome-level results. For the rest, some M&E framework components were noted, but indicators and baselines were not used or not appropriate, and little was done in terms of planning and monitoring the cost of resources.

Successful projects: had regular progress reviews and team meetings (weekly or monthly); held debriefings after specific events or activities; collected and analyzed qualitative and quantitative data, including gender-disaggregated data; developed baselines and used them as a reference to assess annual progress; had appropriate indicators to measure progress at different levels; organized field visits; kept ongoing communication with donors and project partners, as well as beneficiaries; and took into account recommendations from mid-term evaluations. In some cases, improvements to M&E systems and results frameworks were made based on findings and recommendations from mid-term evaluations (e.g. Evaluations 2, 9, 11, 15). There was also an example of the development of a new results framework with an updated set of target indicators, in response to donor recommendations after a joint mission with the ILO (Evaluation 4).

The limited M&E requirements in RBSA-funded projects were highlighted as a major limitation in several reports: “The main concern with the RBSA funded phases is that they were not underpinned by a clear programme logic or Theory of Change defining the goal and results which the programme was working towards. Each phase was differently designed, with no consistency between setting of goals, results to be achieved or performance indicators against which to monitor.” (Evaluation 30). This weakness was also addressed in Evaluation 29, as the report compared M&E mechanisms associated with different funding modalities: “Projects with XBTC funds are those that have the most functional monitoring and evaluation mechanisms, which operate primarily for accountability to donors and internally within the ILO, and to a lesser extent to be accountable to constituents. The RBSA and RBTC funds have insufficient monitoring and evaluation systems to provide and document substantive evidence of progress towards results. In the case of DWCPs, there is a generalized lack, with few exceptions, of solid tripartite monitoring mechanisms.”

2.4.6. Visibility and accessibility to knowledge and information

Coverage: 85 per cent

A majority of projects (71 per cent) had approaches in place to document and disseminate knowledge. Projects used a variety of activities to increase visibility and accessibility to knowledge, including:

awareness-raising seminars; media campaigns; printing and dissemination of publications and training materials; trade fairs; field days open to the public and the use of local radio and television to share information and promote messages to reach a broader public. Successful projects had clear communication plans and dissemination strategies developed and implemented for national, regional and social media, focusing on both internal and external users. Using appropriate language for target audiences and the translation of documents was an important component of many of these projects.

Evaluation 11 noted that the visit of ILO Director-General, Guy Ryder, to Bangladesh during the course of the project was an effective approach to increasing its visibility: “It included a joint media conference with the State Minister of MOLE, a photo and information session for the media on the signing of the letter of intent by the Netherlands and the UK to continue funding the RMGP, and a visit to an RMG factory when a short video was made of the ILO DG speaking on the improvements made in the RMG sector.” This complemented the associated OSH media campaign and project publications.

Similarly, presentations at different forums ensured the visibility of *The Lab’s (M4DW)* work and revealed the extent of its contributions in debates on job creation through market systems development approach, and through its participation in the DCED’s Global Seminar on Results Measurement, UN’s Value Chain Development Group, Committee on Sustainability Assessment (COSA), USAID’s Leveraging Economic Opportunities Project and the Sustainable Trade Initiative (Evaluation 12).

Social media and new technologies were also included in information-sharing strategies, for instance in the Youth @ Work Project in Morocco, which used Facebook to connect with potential final beneficiaries as well as others interested in the project. YouTube was also used to promote project outputs to a general audience, while an e-newsletter and websites in Arabic and French were produced for different groups (Evaluation 2).

In a few cases, although some approaches to document and disseminate knowledge were planned, they were not implemented, such as the construction of virtual communities of knowledge that aimed to promote the exchange of experiences in the eradication of child labour between countries (Evaluation 17). Evaluators identified the need for the dissemination and sharing of publications with target groups (Evaluation 24) and discussed the under-resourced documentation of the achievements of an employment generation and livelihoods project, despite having supported “outstanding interventions models and emerging innovative practices” (Evaluation 20).

2.4.7. Cost efficiency

Coverage: 83 per cent

The cost of achieving results was found to be reasonable for most ILO projects (85 per cent), but there were wide variations in the level of detail provided in the evaluation reports regarding this criterion. Some provided a general qualitative assessment, while others provided information on execution rates, financial project data and narrative reports. The time taken for delivery and implementation, the number of outputs produced, and the balance between different outputs and activities, as well as the distribution of administrative costs versus implementation costs, which were also used to assess cost efficiency.

Several reports noted that they were not able to assess the accuracy of information regarding resource allocation due to a lack of information or data, yet the delivery of activities over the timeframe of the project, the partnerships developed and the leveraging of funds through other sources and projects or cost sharing with project partners were all seen as efficient approaches (Evaluations 4, 5, 12, 27). The presence of staff in the field was also found to be effective from a delivery point of view, especially when offices were shared with other UN agencies (e.g. Evaluation 20).

A successful example of resource optimization is provided in Evaluation 13: “As has been explained earlier, the outcomes of the project were ambitious, and the resources available to it to achieve them were relatively limited. The fact that, in spite of this, it has attained the vast majority of its outcomes is clear evidence of its cost-effectiveness. Despite comparatively limited resources, the project has identified and nimbly exploited a number of strategic opportunities which have allowed it to have an impact greater than its scale would normally warrant.”

Challenges to efficiency included having to operate in complicated socio-political contexts; delays in disbursement of funds; inadequate design or planning of project activities; and changes in project staff.

2.4.8. Adequacy of resources

Coverage: 83 per cent

Just under half of the projects (49 per cent) had sufficient human and financial resources available to deliver project outputs, with project funds delivered in a timely manner, but no project was rated as “Highly successful”.

The commitment of project staff was a factor of success, and often enabled projects to implement activities and deliver outputs in a timely fashion despite very short timeframes, but this was done at the expense of individuals, who were often stretched and at the limit of their capacity (Evaluations 9, 35). Inadequate staffing allocations and staff turnover were recurrent limitations identified in the reports, especially when there were unfilled positions, and insufficient human capacity to undertake activities led to negative impacts on the delivery of project activities.

The importance of staff was highlighted in Evaluation 34: “With the available budget, the projects have certainly contributed greatly towards the development goal and have been considered very successful given the narrow time frame and the several resource constraints. Even though a substantial part of these three projects’ budget has been spent on human resources and on training staff, recruiting and keeping competent and highly specialized personnel has been key for the success of both capacity building and direct education services activities, and the level of competency of the recruited staff has helped to change the perception on child labor of the stakeholders involved.”

Relying on ILO’s capacity to provide backstopping and technical support at different stages of the project was seen as a strength in the delivery of project outputs when facing time constraints in several evaluations, including Evaluation 16: “The budget relies mainly on technical inputs from ILO technical experts to develop and deliver the different training inputs (SIYB, VCA, SCORE, micro finance etc.) in the initial phases. While this approach is no doubt less cost-effective than an approach delivered through regional or national experts, it is also considerably quicker. In other words, with the time-frame given, the approach adopted was the most efficient one.”

Other projects chose to engage external human resources: “In terms of human resources, the project was efficiently coordinated by a small team in Moscow (CTA, a Youth Employment Officer and two assistants) with an assistant in Kazakhstan. External human resources – expert advisors, trainers, researchers, consultants – were engaged to undertake specific tasks and, judging by the quality of their finished work and feedback from those consulted, these seem to have been performed very well.” (Evaluation 8)

In many cases, evaluators noted that while resources were adequate, the intervention timeframes were too short, or delays in project implementation meant that there were limited opportunities for consolidation of gains made in the projects, or for social partners to derive maximum benefits from ILO activities. In such cases, cost and no-cost extensions were useful in allowing projects to continue or follow-up on their activities.

The ILO financial disbursement process was seen as a weakness in several evaluations, as it was found to be complicated and slow. Joint UN administrative arrangements were also prone to inefficiencies, and caused delays in the transfer of funds, leading to delays in implementation. Finally, foreign exchange fluctuations had positive and negative consequences for ILO projects, depending on the area and implementation timeframe. While several projects were able to gain from these fluctuations, others had to drop planned activities and components, as this risk had not been factored into project designs.

2.5. FACTORS CONTRIBUTING TO THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE MOST SUCCESSFUL PROJECTS

The most successful projects of the sample were examined to see if there were any distinctive contributing factors in achieving development outcomes effectively. This group of projects consists of the top overall median scores, further refined to have achieved “Highly successful” and/or “Successful” scores on each of the following performance criteria: 2.2 (achievement of immediate objectives); 2.3 (knowledge development); 2.4 (capacity building); 2.5 (normative work/standards promotion); and 2.6 (policy influence). This resulted in eight projects being selected.⁸

The examination was able to identify several specific factors that consistently contributed to the success of the selected projects, although all projects had one or two areas of weakness, and coverage of performance criteria was uneven.

- Successful projects demonstrated **clear links between their objectives and P&B outcomes** (50% coverage), **as well as DWCP and CPOs**, thus responding to national decent work priorities. Furthermore, **all of the most successful projects achieved their main outputs**, which were of good quality, with evidence of use by stakeholders.
- **Relationship-building was a strength for all projects in this group.** These projects built and leveraged important relationships with various organizations, from NGOs, universities and research centres, government institutions, parliamentarians, representatives of employers’ and workers’ organizations, and United Nations agencies and donors to recruitment agencies, embassies, the media and civil society organizations. These partnerships took on different formats, including collaboration on programmes, the establishment of task forces and working groups, joint advocacy, cost sharing of activities, dissemination of information, and widening of networks.
- **A majority of projects demonstrated a strong commitment to the ILO’s tripartite approach,**⁹ in contrast with the overall findings. The involvement of tripartite constituents in project implementation was found to be a key positive aspect of project design, and project results led to improved social dialogue among constituents. Certain projects were seen as a bridge between government, and representatives of employers’ and workers’ organizations, giving them opportunities and tools to work together effectively towards common goals.
- **There were well-designed management processes in place, and all parties involved clearly understood their roles and responsibilities.** Successful project managers were found to have excellent interpersonal and communication skills, context-specific knowledge, as well as good technical expertise. Project teams were praised for their dedication, creativity and flexibility, as well as their work in developing partnerships. When faced with setbacks, including changing political contexts, they were able to make proposals to adapt the project design to continue progressing towards project goals. These teams often engaged in regular reporting, reflecting good communication and communication.
- **Projects had good visibility and knowledge dissemination strategies** – they were able to document and disseminate knowledge in relevant areas both internally and externally through various means,

⁸ EGY/11/06/USA; RAF/12/09/EEC; RER/12/01/LUK; TUR/13/02/SID; RAF/13/04/IRL; GLO/11/11/USA; RAS/13/55/UKM, and a cluster evaluation of ILO initiatives to promote the transition to formality.

⁹ Two of the reports did not cover this performance criterion.

including the use of workshops to present reports, comparative studies and good practices, brown-bag seminars, films, print media, television, radio and social media, as well as user-friendly websites and milestone project events. Certain teams had a dedicated communications manager, reflecting the importance of knowledge dissemination and visibility in their approach.

- **The projects provided good value-for-money** – despite important variations in resources, project teams were able to identify and use different strategic opportunities in order to attain the majority of their outcomes, leading to cost-effective results. This included leveraging funds, collaborating with other projects, and obtaining inputs from ILO technical specialists.

3. COMPARISON OF META-ANALYSIS FINDINGS OVER TIME

This section presents a comparison of performance based on results from the current review, as well as the 2013–16 DW Review and the RBSA Effectiveness Review, based on a comparative overview of more successful scores and coverage by effectiveness criteria, for each meta-analysis.

A summary of coverage and performance criteria for all three meta-analyses is provided in table 3. This is followed by a discussion of the three main components of the effectiveness review, comparing and contrasting results from the different studies. The comparison between the current study and the results from previous studies reveal that projects evaluated in 2017–18 were generally rated as having a lower performance than those assessed by the other meta-analyses, with a few exceptions.

Table 3. Summary of performance criteria and coverage by meta-analysis, percentage

	2017–2018		2013–2016		RBSA (2013–2017)	
Performance criteria	Successful and Highly successful* %	Coverage %	Successful and Highly successful %	Coverage %	Successful and Highly successful %	Coverage %
1.1 Link between project purpose and/or objectives with P&B outcome	80	50	96	68	95	91
1.2 Causal link between project objectives and DWCP outcome(s)	78	80	94	83	85	95
1.3 Constituent support	50	85	62	93	63	90
1.4 Validity of design/approach	44	98	58	95	62	100
1.5 Pro-poor focus	44	98	70	25	32	90
1.6 Gender-sensitive	59	93	27	83	56	86
2.1 Quality and completeness of outputs	84	95	86	93	68	90
2.2 Achievement of immediate objectives	50	95	79	95	53	81
2.3 Knowledge development	81	90	76	73	72	86
2.4 Capacity building	88	100	95	98	81	100
2.5 Normative work/standards promotion	69	73	88	63	86	67

(Table 3 continued)

Performance criteria	2017–2018		2013–2016		RBSA (2013–2017)	
	Successful and Highly successful*	Coverage %	Successful and Highly successful	Coverage %	Successful and Highly successful	Coverage %
	%		%		%	
2.6 Policy influence	66	95	83	90	82	81
2.7 Strategic importance of results achieved	65	100	94	43	81	100
2.8 Strategic relationships	82	98	83	88	70	95
2.9 Tripartite processes being embedded in approach	36	90	69	73	55	95
2.10 Sustainability of policies, knowledge & capacities	56	98	67	98	50	95
2.11 Acknowledgement and use of ILO expertise	79	83	88	43	68	90
2.12 Resource leveraging	71	78	67	60	53	81
3.1 Goal orientation	18	70	19	80	25	76
3.2 Implementation management	56	80	54	88	56	86
3.3 ILO support to project	53	85	79	70	74	90
3.4 Internal ILO coordination	54	60	71	85	67	86
3.5 Monitoring and reporting	27	93	36	90	0	90
3.6 Visibility and accessibility to knowledge and information	71	85	79	73	47	81
3.7 Cost efficiency	85	83	79	73	80	71
3.8 Adequacy of resources	49	83	47	85	42	90

* 2013–2016, RBSA (2013–17) and current study: 2017–2018: scores 3 and 4.

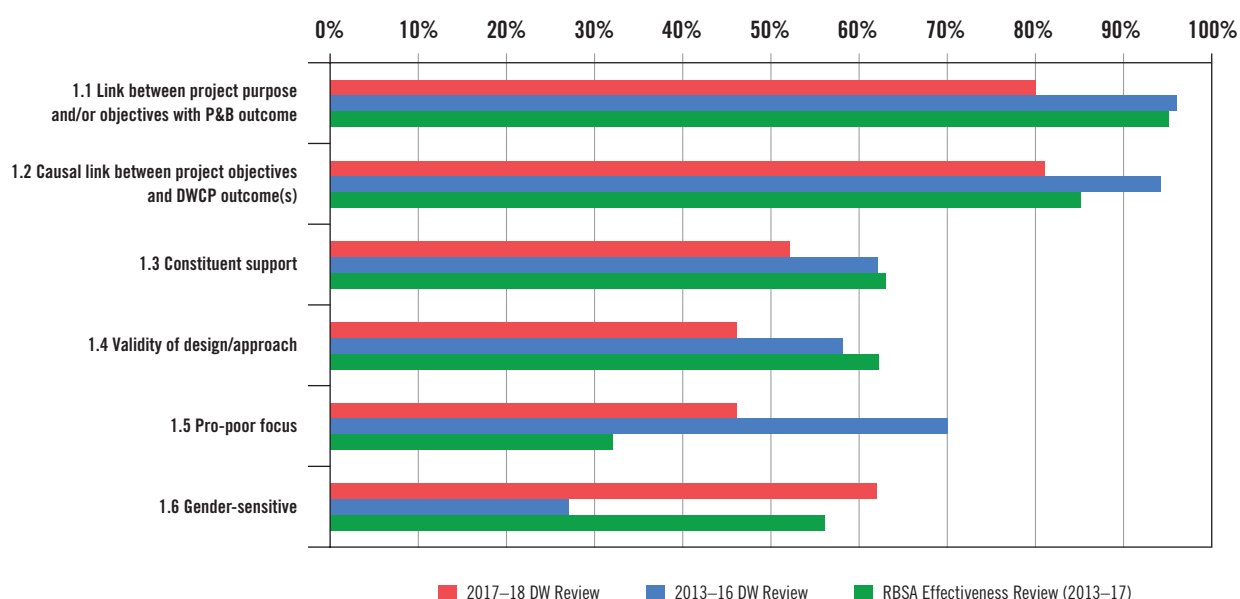
3.1. STRATEGIC RELEVANCE AND ALIGNMENT

In terms of strategic relevance and alignment, the different studies had variability in the range of results, as shown in figure 8. Common areas of strength were in the alignment of project purpose with P&B outcomes, and project objectives with DWCP outcomes or CPOs, although coverage was limited for the former criterion in this review.

Gender sensitivity improved in the current study in comparison to both the RBSA Effectiveness Review and the 2013–2016 DW Review, with good to very good coverage in all cases. The important improvement in comparison to the 2013–16 DW Review may be due to certain projects focusing particularly on gender equality and empowerment in the 2017–18 sample. It may also be due to different interpretation of the rubric, as reports were given a score of 3 when there was some planning and focus on gender issues in the strategy at both the design and implementation stages (even when there was limited coverage of gender-sensitive indicators or sex-disaggregated data, in contrast to the 2013–16 DW Review), which states that scores were given based on “the extent to which project design considered gender sensitivity” (p. 8).

Results were moderately successful in all cases for constituent support, although they were slightly lower in the current study. There was also a decrease in performance related to validity of design, and pro-poor

Figure 8. Percentage of Successful and Highly successful scores by performance criteria and by Effectiveness Review: Strategic Relevance and Alignment



focus in the current study, with both of these criteria having mixed results overall, and there were disparities in coverage for the latter criterion.¹⁰

3.2. EFFECTIVENESS, SUSTAINABILITY AND IMPACT

Effectiveness results were strong overall in all studies, regardless of the years. Coverage was usually higher in the current study (apart from criterion 2.1) and the RBSA Effectiveness Review than in studies from previous years, so the findings presented in figure 9 should be examined taking this into consideration.

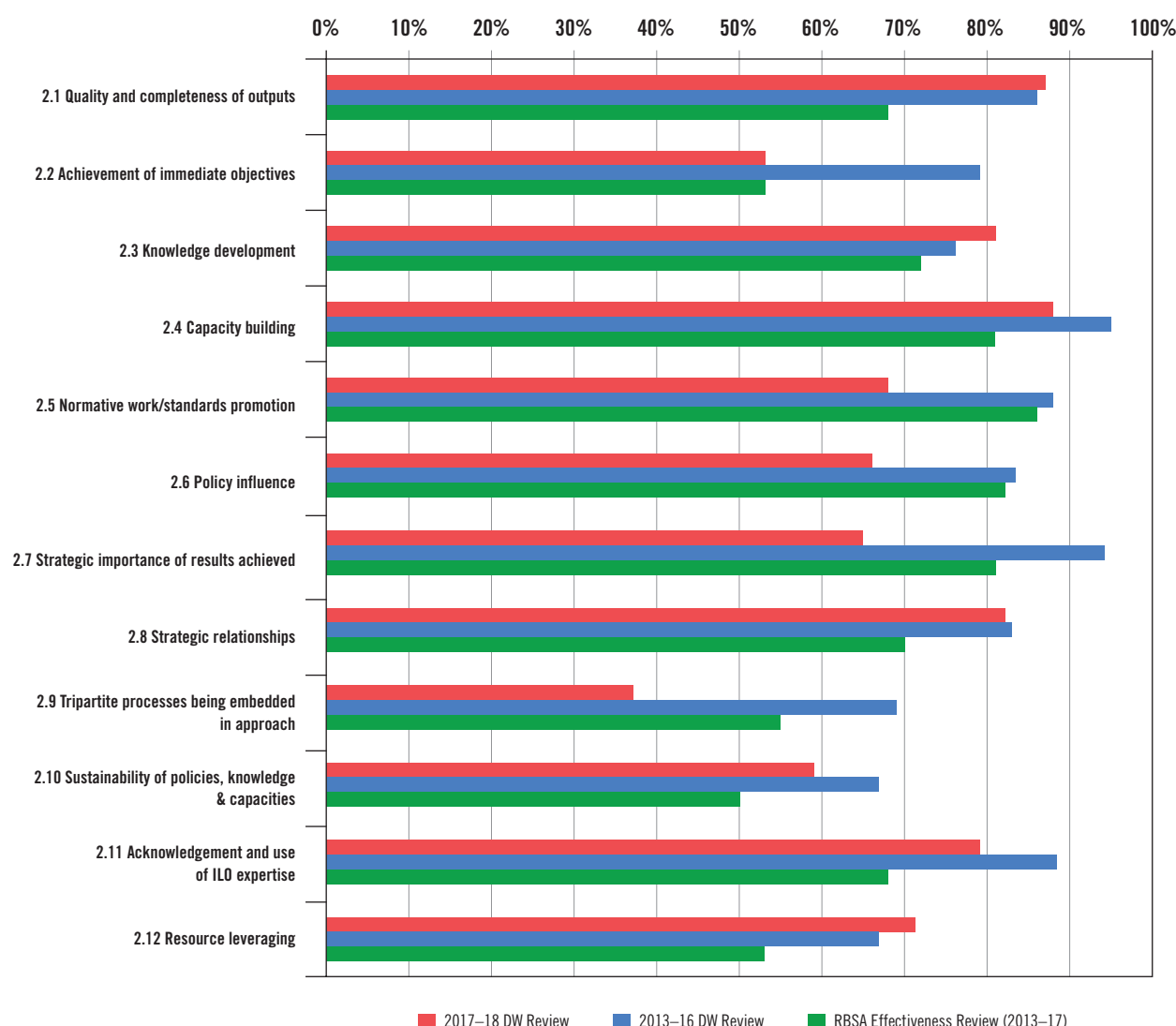
Overall, there was strong performance regarding the achievement and use of project outputs. Areas of strength in all cases included capacity building, knowledge development and the fostering of strategic relationships, although results from the RBSA Effectiveness Review were not as strong. Progress towards immediate objectives was mixed, with only half of the projects from the current study and the RBSA Effectiveness Review receiving positive scores. In some instances, this may have been due to the evaluative approach taken to assess the RBSA-funded projects, as interventions were sometimes grouped together, either regionally or thematically, with scores not always reflecting all realities on the ground.

Overall results from the current study were weaker regarding standards promotion, policy influence and the strategic importance of the results achieved, and an important comparative shortcoming was the extent to which tripartism was integrated into project approach and implementation. This was the only score from the current study to obtain a score below 50 per cent in this category.

Average to good performance was found for sustainability, acknowledgement and use of ILO expertise, and resource leveraging. Results for this last criterion were stronger than for the RBSA Effectiveness Review and the 2013–16 DW Review.

¹⁰ The interpretation of the rubrics differed in the current study and the RBSA Effectiveness Review, versus the 2013–16 DW Review, as the latter states: “many of the projects that could not be scored due to a lack of analysis in the evaluation reports had probably aimed to improve the living conditions of the poorest”, thus leading to very low coverage. In the case of the current study and the RBSA Effectiveness Review, and in line with the matrix provided by EVAL, any project that had “no poverty effect explicitly stated but some effect likely based on nature of interventions and localities chosen” was included in the sample and given a score of 2 (“Partly successful”), thus coverage was over 90%.

Figure 9. Percentage of Successful and Highly successful scores by performance criteria and by Effectiveness Review: Effectiveness, Sustainability and Impact



3.3. IMPLEMENTATION PERFORMANCE AND EFFICIENCY OF MANAGEMENT AND RESOURCE USE

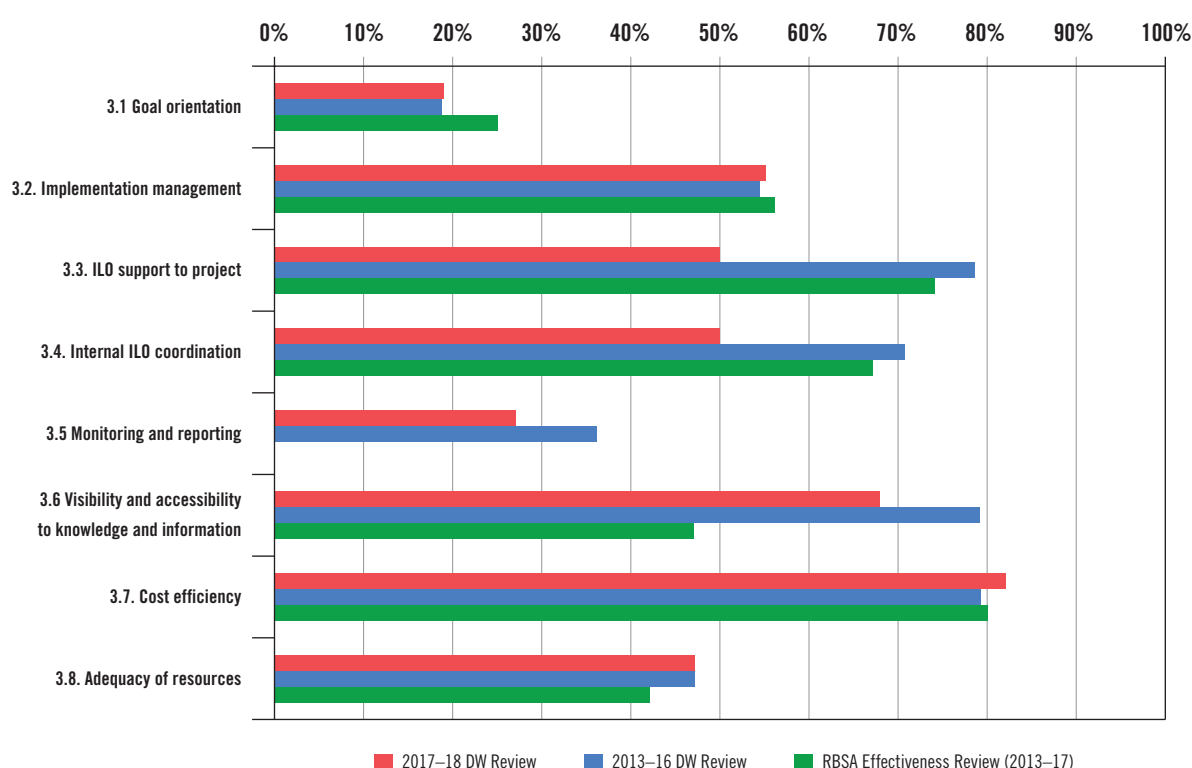
There was variation in terms of success in the different elements related to implementation performance and efficiency of management and resource use in all studies, with several found to be inadequate, as shown in figure 10. Overall, despite a few areas of strength, this category was the weakest area for projects evaluated from 2013 onwards.

Cost efficiency of ILO interventions was an area of success in all cases, yet there were wide disparities in the type of information and details provided in the reports evaluated.

Another strength for most studies, apart from the RBSA Effectiveness Review, was the presence of a strategy for the dissemination of knowledge and accessibility of information.

While implementation management was just about adequate overall, further progress was required in the majority of cases, and the results of the current study were similar to the RBSA Effectiveness Review and 2013-16 DW Review, as well as 2009-10 studies. The current study showed weaker results regarding the quality and extent of ILO support to projects and ILO internal coordination.

Figure 10. Percentage of Successful and Highly successful scores by performance criteria and by Effectiveness Review: Implementation Performance and Efficiency of Management, and Resource Use



Further progress was needed regarding the provision of human and financial resources, which was inadequate for the current study as well as the 2013–16 DW Review and the RBSA Effectiveness Review.

The major weaknesses found in this study as well as the previous two related to goal orientation, and monitoring and reporting. These last two areas are closely linked, and reveal a recurring challenge identified in meta-analyses of ILO evaluation reports. There was frequently confusion between indicators, activities, outputs, results, milestones, baselines and targets. Further, indicators were often not well defined, or absent, or focused on the wrong areas, and there was poor alignment between indicators and outcomes, leading to difficulties in reporting.

This also had an impact on monitoring and reporting. Shortcomings noted included a lack of basic information to build an effective M&E framework, such as a lack of indicators, targets, baselines, or a Theory of Change. In other cases, an M&E framework was present, but the intended activities were not consistently carried out, or were not implemented properly (e.g. monitoring and reporting focused on the implementation of activities rather than progress towards achieving objectives), while in a few cases, there was no project M&E framework at all. In the case of the RBSA Effectiveness Review, low scores were mostly due to lack of formal monitoring and reporting mechanisms for RBSA-supported projects and CPOs. In light of these results, further work needs to be done to encourage the design and use of appropriate M&E frameworks so that the ILO can better capture and report on its achievements.

4. CONCLUSIONS

The following sections summarize key points related to the three main components of the effectiveness review and their different elements. There were positive achievements in many areas of relevance and effectiveness, despite recurrent challenges in several performance criteria. Implementation performance was a weaker area that needs to be reinforced to increase development effectiveness and impact.

4.1. STRATEGIC RELEVANCE AND ALIGNMENT

The majority of development cooperation projects were aligned with P&B outcomes, CPOs and DWCPs, thus reflecting their relevance and alignment with country or regional priorities and national decent work needs. It is important to note, however, that only half of the evaluations reported on the link between project purpose/objective and P&B outcomes.¹¹ Involving constituents in project design and implementation was only successful in just over half of cases. Further progress is required to address this limitation, to ensure that projects are designed with a strong understanding of local realities, thus developing realistic objectives, targets, and milestones, and to encourage stakeholders' ownership of the results and thus improve prospects for sustainability. This may also strengthen project design, which was an area of weakness, with less than 50 per cent of cases having well-defined strategies and services linking to project objectives, and endorsed by a majority of stakeholders.

Gender-responsiveness was well covered and was successful overall. This was an improvement compared to the previous two effectiveness reviews, with nearly two-thirds of projects including gender in their strategies, sometimes with evidence of gender analysis at the design stage, and with specific gender-sensitive indicators. Successful projects often focused on decent work for women in different contexts, including migrant domestic workers, the majority of who are women. In contrast, a majority of projects lacked a pro-poor perspective, with limited poverty targeting integrated into planning and implementation, revealing that this is an area for improvement – this was also an identified weakness in the previous studies. Nevertheless, it is likely that about 40 per cent of projects had some poverty effect due to the nature of the interventions, as well as the country contexts in which they operated, especially in the context of joint UN programmes targeting refugees and host populations in the Middle East.

4.2. EFFECTIVENESS, SUSTAINABILITY AND IMPACT

There were varied results for this category. The majority of projects were successful in completing most planned outputs, yet only half of projects had met their immediate objectives and made progress towards overall outcomes; the rest obtained mixed results. When results were achieved, they were found to be highly strategic by stakeholders, and key effectiveness areas were highly rated.

¹¹ Many of the reports that did not address criteria 1.1 did not have a specific question related to it in their TOR.

Overall, projects performed strongly in the areas of knowledge development, capacity building, and the development of strategic relationships. Areas of relative strength were policy influence and the promotion of norms and standards, although there were many missed opportunities to incorporate ILS into the projects. There were wide disparities in the extent to which tripartite processes were integrated into project approach and implementation, and this criterion received the lowest score of the category, with just over one third of the projects performing well, in contrast to findings from previous reviews, where projects generally had positive results.

Sustainability prospects scored positively overall, yet it remained an area of concern in many cases, similar to findings from previous meta-analyses, as exit strategies were often missing, and it was sometimes difficult to ascertain how the results from ILO interventions could be maintained or scaled up, especially when faced with a lack of enabling environments and political instability. ILO's expertise was appreciated and used by stakeholders in many instances, and more than two-thirds of projects were able to leverage resources in different forms.

4.3. IMPLEMENTATION PERFORMANCE AND EFFICIENCY OF MANAGEMENT AND RESOURCE USE

The management and implementation of development projects was found to be an important challenge in terms of performance efficiency, and this category received the lowest scores. This was also the case in previous effectiveness reviews.

Most projects were found to be cost-efficient, with resource leveraging, cost sharing, and RBSA funds sometimes being used to boost projects, although most reports did not provide detailed financial information. Approaches to document and disseminate knowledge were found to be effective overall, with various strategies to ensure that relevant information generated through projects is available internally and externally. In contrast, implementation management processes in place had limited success, as they were often of mixed quality or not known by users, and there were particular challenges in joint projects. The level of ILO support and adequacy of internal coordination were also areas where further progress is needed.

Human and financial resources were found to be inadequate to deliver project outputs and objectives for the majority of the projects, due to overambitious project designs and timeframes, high staff turnover and unfilled positions, challenges in identifying and recruiting qualified staff, as well as delays in the delivery of funds and in implementation. This was also an issue identified as a persistent weakness in previous studies. In some cases, however, the motivation and hard work of ILO teams allowed projects to meet their objectives despite the challenges they faced.

Goal orientation was the lowest rated area of this effectiveness review, closely followed by monitoring and reporting. The absence or unsatisfactory development of logical frameworks and theories of change, and the lack of appropriate indicators, outcomes, baselines, targets and milestones were major limitations, as was the lack of suitable reporting mechanisms in a majority of the projects. These are areas where significant efforts need to be directed, and are similar to findings presented in the previous effectiveness reviews. This has significant implications for the ILO's results-oriented management approach, as it hinders the Office's ability to design, capture, adjust and report on its achievements, and also reduces the ILO's potential for impact.

4.4. COMMON STRENGTHS OF THE MOST SUCCESSFUL PROJECTS

The most successful projects demonstrated clear links between their objectives and P&B outcomes (50 per cent coverage), as well as DWCP and CPOs, thus responding to national decent work priorities. Furthermore, all of the most successful projects achieved their main outputs. Relationship building was strong in all projects in this group, and a majority of them demonstrated a strong commitment to the ILO's

tripartite approach. There were well-designed management processes in place, and all parties involved clearly understood their roles and responsibilities for regular reporting. Projects had good visibility and knowledge dissemination strategies. Finally, the most successful projects used different strategic opportunities in order to attain the majority of their outcomes, leading to cost-effective results.

4.5. COMPARISONS OVER TIME

There were common areas of strengths and weaknesses with the previous meta-analyses, revealing similar patterns in the performance of ILO projects over time in terms of strategic relevance and alignment; effectiveness sustainability and impact; and implementation performance and efficiency of management, and resource use.

The majority of the projects covered in the three studies demonstrated a clear link between their objectives and DWCP outcomes (and CPOs), as well as P&B outcomes. Involving constituents in project design and implementation obtained mixed results, with this study having lower overall performance in comparison to the other two meta-analyses. Project design and pro-poor focus were both challenging areas over the years. In contrast to previous studies, the gender-sensitive component was an area of improvement in 2017–18. Aside from this area of progress, overall performance scores for this category were lower in the current study in comparison to previous meta-analyses.

The strongest category was effectiveness, sustainability and impact in terms of overall performance, in line with previous meta-analyses, but the results were mixed. Planned outputs were completed and deemed to be of good quality in the majority of projects, although achievement of immediate objectives was limited. When results were achieved, significant progress was made in capacity building, knowledge development, and the development of strategic relationships. In contrast to the positive scores related to policy influence, normative work and the strategic importance of the results achieved in the previous studies, results were not as strong in 2017–18 and often showed large variability in performance. Another area of weak performance was in the integration of tripartism into project design and implementation, and this was also identified as a shortcoming in previous years. While positive overall, prospects for sustainability remained an area of concern in many evaluations, similar to findings from past studies. Nevertheless, projects were able to leverage resources effectively and the ILO's expertise was widely appreciated.

Performance in this category was low overall for all meta-analyses, revealing that managing and implementing ILO development cooperation projects was often a challenge. While most projects were found to be cost-efficient over the years, human and financial resources were often insufficient to deliver project outputs and objectives. One area of success in the current study was the dissemination of knowledge, in line with results from the 2013–16 DW Review, but unlike findings from the RBSA Effectiveness Review, where this was an element of low performance for a majority of the projects. Areas where projects reviewed in 2017–18 did not do as well as in previous years were in implementation management, the quality and extent of ILO's support to projects, as well as ILO's internal coordination. An important area of low performance in all three studies was related to the ILO's ability to capture and report on its achievements, which was due to poor goal orientation and inadequate or missing monitoring and evaluation frameworks and reporting mechanisms.

5. RECOMMENDATIONS

The recommendations below focus on areas where progress is needed, as identified in this Effectiveness Review. Some of these are similar to those made in the 2013–16 DW Review and the RBSA Effectiveness Review.

Recommendation 1: Involve stakeholders from the onset, so that ILO projects can better respond to stakeholder needs, be designed in a context-appropriate manner, and benefit from a long-term perspective, including the co-development of an exit-strategy to promote sustainability and ownership.

Recommendation 2: Introduce or reinforce the focus on results at the design stage, through the use of adequate logical frameworks, Theory of Change, and other structured monitoring documents to address the shortcomings associated with low validity of design, lack of goal orientation, and inadequate monitoring and reporting of ILO interventions.

Recommendation 3: When planning complex projects, a realistic approach should be taken, so that human and financial resources are adequately identified and sourced, and timelines allow for contingency plans and flexibility without compromising results. Sound management, communication, and coordination processes should also be defined at this stage, to facilitate implementation.

Recommendation 4: Make it a mandatory requirement that project designs reflect as appropriate the ILO's specific mandate and take a tripartite approach, promote ILS and social dialogue, address poverty concerns, and gender equality and non-discrimination to ensure that these key issues are properly addressed in future projects. While indicators disaggregated by sex, age and socio-economic background are useful when available, further work and a stronger focus on gender analysis, poverty targeting, and the inclusion of vulnerable groups in the project strategy would enhance impact on these topics.

Recommendation 5: When developing TOR questions for evaluations, include systematically performance criteria specific to ILO's mandate (gender equality and equal opportunities and treatment for all in the world of work, pro-poor focus, tripartism, ILS), as well as others with less coverage in the effectiveness reviews, so that they are systematically addressed in evaluation reports.

Recommendation 6: When assessing the effectiveness of multi-country evaluations (cluster, regional, or thematic), introduce a sub-criterion to capture the extent to which there are disparities in the findings based on individual country/project results.

ANNEX 1: SELECTED SAMPLE OF EVALUATION REPORTS

EM: Employment; SD: Social Dialogue; SP: Social Protection; ST: Standards; P&B Outcome A

#	Evaluation title	TC Symbol	Region	Year	P&B outcome	Strategic objective	Funding amount (USD)/ Modality
1	Roads for Development (R4D) - Final Evaluation	TIM/12/01/AUS	Asia	2018	1	EM	>10 million; DC
2	Youth at work: partnership for employment of young women and men in Morocco - Final Evaluation	MOR/12/03/CAN	Africa	2018	1	EM	Between 5-10 million; DC
3	Better Work Lesotho, Better Work Nicaragua, Better Work Haiti - Final cluster evaluation	HAI/12/01/USA cluster	Inter-Regional	2018	7	SP, EM	>10 million; DC
4	Promoting workers' rights and competitiveness in Egyptian exports industries - Final Evaluation	EGY/11/06/USA	Africa	2018	8	ST, SP	Between 5-10 million; DC
5	Global action programme on migrant domestic workers and their families - Final Evaluation	GLO/12/28/EEC	Inter-Regional	2018	Multiple	SP, P&B Outcome A	Between 1-5 million; DC
6	PROMOTE: Decent work for domestic workers to end child domestic work - Final Joint Evaluation	INS/12/12/USA	Asia	2017	8	ST, SP	Between 1-5 million; DC
7	Development of a tripartite framework for Ethiopian and Somali women domestic migrant workers to the GCC states, Lebanon and Sudan - Final Evaluation	RAF/12/09/EEC	Africa	2017	9	SP	Between 1-5 million; DC
8	Partnerships for youth employment in the Commonwealth of Independent States (CIS) - Final evaluation	RER/12/01/LUK	Europe	2017	A	P&B Outcome A	Between 5-10 million; Private
9	More and better jobs for women: women's empowerment through decent work in Turkey - Final Evaluation	TUR/13/02/SID	Europe	2018	1	EM	Between 1-5 million; DC
10	UN Green Jobs Programme: Enhancing competitiveness and sustainable business among MMEs in the building construction industry (phase II) ILO Component - Final evaluation	ZAM/13/01/FIN	Africa	2017	4	EM	Between 5-10 million; DC
11	Improving Working Conditions in the Ready-made Garment Sector in Bangladesh - Multiple donors - Final Evaluation	BGD/13/09/MUL	Asia	2017	Multiple	ST, SP, SD, EM	>10 million; DC
12	Inclusive Market Development for Decent Work Á- the Lab (MADW) - Final Evaluation Report	GLO/13/15/SWI	Inter-Regional	2018	4	EM	Between 1-5 million; DC
13	Building national floors of social protection in Southern Africa - Final Evaluation	RAF/13/04/IRL	Africa	2017	3	SP	Between 1-5 million; DC

#	Evaluation title	TC Symbol	Region	Year	P & B outcome	Strategic objective	Funding amount (USD)/ Modality
14	Country Level Engagement and Assistance to Reduce Child Labor (CLEAR) – Final Evaluation	GLO/13/22/USA	Inter-Regional	2017	Multiple	ST, SP, SD	Between 5-10 million; DC
15	Skills for local economic development (SKILLED) in Sri Lanka – Final evaluation	SRU/12/01/EEC	Asia	2017	1	EM	Between 1-5 million; DC
16	Entrepreneurship development and SME support in Myanmar and Supporting Tourism in Myanmar through Business Management Training – Final Cluster Evaluation	MMR/13/13/NAD	Asia	2018	4	EM	Between 5-10 million; DC
17	Building effective policies against child labor in Ecuador and Panama – Final evaluation	RLW/12/07/USA	Latin America	2017	8	ST	Between 1-5 million; DC
18	Better work Jordan – Phase II – Final Evaluation	JOR/14/50/USA	Arab States	2017	7	SD, SP, EM	Between 1-5 million; DC
19	Outcome-based funding component in support of P&B Outcome 1 A – Focus on skills development, including on vocational and professional training and education – Final Evaluation	GLO/16/14/NOR	Africa	2018	1	EM	>10 million; OBF
20	Employment generation and livelihoods through reconciliation in Sri Lanka – Final independent evaluation	LKW/16/02/NOR	Asia	2018	5	EM	Between 1-5 million; DC
21	Proyecto de apoyo a la iniciativa Regional America Latina y el Caribe Libre de Trabajo Infantil (Fase III) – Evaluación final cluster independiente (cluster)	RLA/14/04/SPA	Latin America	2018	8	ST	Between 1-5 million; DC
22	Outcome evaluation of MMR801, Strengthened capacity of employers' organizations – Independent evaluation	MMR/14/01/RBS	Asia	2018	10	SD	Between 1-5 million; RBBSA
23	Capacidades laborales para el trabajo decente ... para la población víctima del conflicto armado en Colombia – Evaluación final	COL/16/03/COL	Latin America	2018	1	EM	Between 1-5 million; direct trust fund
24	Cluster evaluation: Improved and market-based provision of vocational training for Lebanese and refugees and Towards improved formal and non-formal technical and vocational education and training...	LBN/16/07/ITA	Arab States	2017	5	EM	Between 1-5 million; DC
25	Promoting Social Dialogue – Final Independent Evaluation	MKD/13/02/MKD	Europe	2018	Multiple	SP, SD, EM	Between 1-5 million; DC
26	Evaluation Temática Regional sobre Pisos de Protección Social – Thematic evaluation (RBSA components)	RBSA_Americas	Latin America	2017	3	SP	>10 million; RBBSA, XBTC
27	Global Action Program (GAP) on child labour issues – Final evaluation	GLO/11/11/USA	Inter-Regional	2018	8	ST	>10 million; DC
28	Efectividad de la asistencia técnica de OIT en la promoción de entornos propicios para las empresas sostenibles – Thematic evaluation (RBSA)	BOL/16/01/RBSA	Latin America	2018	Multiple	EM, SD	Between 1-5 million; RBBSA, RBTC
29	Evaluación regional independiente sobre los modelos de implementación de asistencia técnica de la OIT financiada con fondos RBBSA – Final independent evaluation (RBSA)	2843_RBBSA	Latin America	2017	Multiple	All	>10 million; RBBSA, XBTC

#	Evaluation title	TC Symbol	Region	Year	P & B outcome	Strategic objective	Funding amount (USD)/ Modality
30	Promoting a decent work approach for syrian refugees and host communities – Final evaluation (RBSA)	JOR/14/01/RBSA	Arab States	2018	Multiple	Multiple	Between 1-5 million; RBSA
31	SIDA's support to ILO projects in the field of employment promotion with an emphasis on youth employment with particular focus on Phase II of the ILO-SIDA Partnership Agreement on Outcome 1...	GLO/16/50/SWE	Inter-Regional	2017	1	EM	Between 1-5 million; OBF
32	Job creation for Syrian refugees and Jordanian host communities through green works in agriculture and forestry – Final Evaluation	JOR/16/10/NOR	Arab States	2017	1	EM	Between 1-5 million; DC
33	ARISE II: Eliminating child labour in tobacco growing communities in Malawi – Final Evaluation	MLW/14/01/JTI	Africa	2018	7	SP, SD, EM	Between 1-5 million; PPP
34	Child labour projects in Arab States – Final cluster evaluation (RBSA component)	SYR/16/01/RBS	Arab States	2017	8	SP, SD, ST	Between 1-5 million; DC, RBSA
35	The way forward after the revolution – decent work for women in Egypt and Tunisia – Final Evaluation	RAF/12/01/FIN	Africa	2018	10	SD	Between 1-5 million; DC
36	Cluster Evaluation of ILO Initiatives to Promote the Transition to Formality – Independent cluster evaluation (RBSA)	2800_ENGLISH	Latin America	2017	6	SP	Between 5-10 million; RBSA, XBTC
37	Skills for employment and productivity in low-income countries (Global component) – Final Evaluation	GLO/15/52/ROK	Inter-Regional	2018	1	EM	< 1 million; DC
38	Decent jobs for youth and improved food security through the development of sustainable rural enterprises – Final Evaluation	ZAM/13/04/SID	Africa	2018	4	EM	Between 5-10 million; DC
39	Work in Freedom: Fair recruitment and decent work for women migrant workers in South Asia and the Middle East – Regional Component – Final Evaluation	RAS/13/55/UKM	Arab States	2018	9	SP	>10 million; DC
40	Promoting compliance with international labour standards in Colombia – Final Evaluation	COL/11/04/USA	Latin America	2018	2	ST	>10 million; DC

ANNEX 2: SCORING MATRIX

Criteria	1 Unsuccessful		2 Partly successful	3 Successful	4 Highly successful
1. Strategic relevance and alignment					
1.1 Link between project purpose and/or objectives with P&B outcome	Project objectives do not demonstrate a clear link with the P&B framework. Partners do not have a clear understanding of what the project aspires to achieve.	Some evidence of linking to the P&B outcomes, but the relationship remains vague and loose. The link is not well reflected at the operational level. Some partners do not share the same understanding of what the project aspires to achieve.	Clear and specific correlation between project objectives and P&B outcomes at both strategic and operational levels. Link reflected and translated into actions, and an understanding of what the project aspires to achieve is broadly shared.	Clear and compelling link to the P&B outcomes, translated into a concrete set of goals and priorities at the operational level. Causal link broadly held among partners and project aspires to achieve.	
1.2 Causal link between project objectives and DWCP outcome(s)	DWCP outcome (and/or Country Programme Outcomes) is not reflected in the project objectives. Project was not clearly based on demand.	Some actions are linked to the DWCP outcome and/or Country Programme Outcomes, but the relation remains unclear and loose. Some demand for project is evident.	Project objectives are clearly linked to the DWCP outcome and translated into actions. Project is based on demand, and responds to national decent work priorities/ Country Programme Outcomes.	Clear and compelling linking to the DWCP outcome(s), translated into a concrete set of actions and priorities at the operational level. Project forms part of a strategic framework for ILO's interventions in the country and responds to national decent work priorities or Country Programme Outcomes.	
1.3 Constituent support	Lack of interest and demand from constituents to participate and provide input in the project formulation. Project does not reflect national decent work needs of constituents. Recognition of ILO's presence and contribution either low or not positive.	Some constituents are eager to be constructively engaged in the project, but not all constituents involved in project formulation. Lack of inputs from the missing constituents biases the successful project implementation and ensuring future ownership. Project partially reflects national decent work needs of constituents.	ILO considered as responsive to national needs and constituents actively involved in project formulation. Inputs provided and active participation in the project formulation and implementation. Project reflects national decent work needs as expressed by constituents.	ILO constituents involved in the project formulation, providing inputs and comments, and contributing to the project design and implementation. Project reflects national decent work needs as expressed by constituents, and there is clear evidence of demand and intended use of project by constituents.	
1.4 Validity of design/approach	The objectives and technical approach of the project are not endorsed by stakeholders. Core strategies and services vaguely defined and lack clear alignment with project objectives; seem scattered and largely unrelated to each other.	Lack of clarity as to whether objectives and technical approach are endorsed by stakeholders. Core strategies and services defined and largely aligned with objectives; strategies and services may be somewhat scattered and not fully integrated into clear strategy.	The objectives and technical approach of the project are sound and are endorsed by a majority of stakeholders. Most strategies and services well defined and can be solidly linked to project objectives; offerings fit together well as part of clear strategy.	The objectives and technical approach of the project are endorsed by stakeholders. Strategies and services well defined and fully aligned with project objectives; clearly linked to one another and to overall strategy; synergies across programmes were captured.	
1.5 Pro-poor focus	No poverty effect intended or specified; no poverty effect likely based on design, target groups and operational areas.	No poverty effect explicitly stated but some effects likely based on nature of interventions and localities chosen.	Project aims at improving the living conditions of the poorest of the population; sound logic for addressing poverty through project actions; some poverty targeting.	A pro-poor perspective is integrated into the design and implementation; poverty reduction effects logical and well specified; systematic targeting to reach the poorest.	

Criteria	1 Unsuccessful		2 Partly successful		3 Successful		4 Highly successful	
1.6 Gender-sensitive	No gender analysis at design or during implementation; no strategy addressing gender. No gender-sensitive indicators; no indicators disaggregated by sex, age and socio-economic background.	Limited evidence of gender analysis; little focus on gender issues in strategy. Very limited coverage of gender-sensitive indicators; indicators rarely disaggregated by sex, age and socio-economic background.	Fair amount of evidence of gender analysis; some planning and focus on gender issues in strategy. Some gender-sensitive indicators and some disaggregated by sex, age and socio-economic background.	Gender analysis part of the situational assessments; strategies to address gender inequality issues effectively implemented. Gender-sensitive indicators are disaggregated by sex, age and socio-economic background.				
2. Effectiveness, Sustainability and Impact								
2.1 Quality and completeness of outputs	The main outputs of the project were not achieved or of poor quality and relevance to stakeholders.	Only a few of the main outputs of the project were achieved, and/or of mixed quality and usefulness such that use by stakeholders has been minimal.	The main outputs of the project achieved; results achieved are considered of good technical quality and thus put into use by at least some ILO stakeholders.	All outputs of the project achieved; are considered of high technical quality and thus are being put into use by ILO stakeholders.				
2.2 Achievement of immediate objectives	Little or no progress has been made on immediate objectives, and it appears unlikely that further significant progress will be made.	Project has made some progress on the immediate objectives, but has mixed results.	Project has mostly met immediate objectives, with strong progress having been made towards overall outcomes.	Project has fully met or exceeded immediate objectives overall.				
2.3 Knowledge development	Little or no plan of action to generate new knowledge or consolidate existing knowledge; knowledge either not disseminated to policy and decision makers, or considered irrelevant and/or of poor quality.	Some attention to knowledge generation and dissemination to policy and decision makers as a means of supporting national dialogue and/or international knowledge base; knowledge considered of mixed quality.	Project strategy brings together dispersed knowledge and/or generates new knowledge that supports policy dialogue at global, national or local level; knowledge generated considered of good quality and relevant to decision-makers.	Targeted, high-quality research and knowledge development generates creative ideas and solutions; project effectively translates these ideas into workable concepts; strategic dissemination of knowledge raises awareness and supports key decisions.				
2.4 Capacity building	Negligible or ineffectual building of capacities of constituents and other national entities.	Minimal building of individual capacities within constituents and other entities.	Effectively targeted, built and leveraged individual capacities in order to institutionalize capacities at the organizational level.	Built, leveraged, and maintained strong, high-impact, capacity building at individual and institutional levels with variety of relevant parties; capacities anchored in organizational operations, for longer term capacities.				
2.5 Normative work/standards promotion	Project does not integrate international labour standards (ILS) as part of approach; highly limited and/or ineffective efforts to link project work to normative instruments and ILS mechanisms.	Some design linkages and a few activities to support adoption and/or application of relevant ILS, but opportunities missed to further incorporate ILS into project.	Project design includes some elaboration and promotion of relevant international labour standards (ILS). The application of ILS is part of the results framework and supported through project actions. Although ILS incorporated into the project, the project does not necessarily demonstrate strong results in this area.	Project design includes the elaboration and promotion of relevant international labour standards (ILS). The application of ILS is part of the results framework and supported through project actions. The implementation of the project has effectively contributed to ILS.				
2.6 Policy influence	As a result of the project, stakeholders have not increased their awareness of possibilities for influencing policy-making; have not increased their policy influencing activities, and have not achieved results in policy influence in general.	As a result of the project, stakeholders have increased their awareness of possibilities in influencing policy-making; and are making initial steps in increasing their policy-influencing activities.	As a result of the project, stakeholders are well aware of possibilities in influencing policy-making, and have significantly increased their activities in policy-discussions on state or national level. May be beginning to see policy influencing results.	As a result of the project, stakeholders are fully aware of possibilities in influencing policy-making, and carry out effective policy-influencing. The project has influenced policy-making on local, national, or global levels.				

Criteria	1 Unsuccessful	2 Partly successful	3 Successful	4 Highly successful
2.7 Strategic importance of results achieved	Results achieved have little or no strategic importance to national partners; no evidence of use of results in a strategic context.	Results achieved are considered useful to stakeholders but of moderate strategic importance; little evidence of use of results in a strategic context.	Results achieved are considered by stakeholders of strategic importance to achieving national development outcomes; some movement on use of results to forward national development plans of action.	Results achieved are considered by stakeholders of high strategic importance to achieving national development outcomes; evidence of strategic use of results by stakeholders.
2.8 Strategic relationships	The project made negligible or no use of partnerships and alliances with constituents and organizations such as the UN, relevant government ministries, donors, or other relevant institutions or entities.	The project involved minimal building of relationships and collaborating with constituents and organizations such as the UN, relevant government ministries, donors, or other relevant institutions or entities.	The project effectively built and leveraged some key relationships with a few types of organizations such as the UN, relevant government ministries, donors, or other relevant institutions or entities; some relations may be precarious or not fully "win-win".	The project built, leveraged, and maintained strong, high-impact, relationships with variety of organizations such as the UN, relevant government ministries, donors, or other relevant institutions or entities; relationships deeply anchored in stable, long term, mutually beneficial collaboration.
2.9 Tripartite processes being embedded in approach	Negligible attention to and involvement of tripartite institutions and processes in design, implementation and intended results of project.	Some attention to tripartite processes in project approach, but opportunities missed in design or implementation to strengthen tripartite processes.	Tripartism integrated in to project approach and implementation; some capacity development to support effective tripartite involvement and some strengthening of tripartite processes.	Tripartism fundamental to project approach and as a strategy for implementation; addressing targeted capacity gaps of tripartite constituents in order to strengthen tripartite processes, institutionalization of tripartite process to ensure sustainability following project completion.
2.10 Sustainability of policies, knowledge & capacities	No possibility of maintaining existing interventions or insights; no ability to scale up or sustain advancements achieved by project. No exit strategy.	Limited possibility of maintaining insights or scaling up interventions. Partners have some ability either to maintain, scale up or innovate existing programs. Weak exit strategy, if any.	Some tangible possibilities of maintaining, advancing or scaling up existing interventions/ insights. Partners able to maintain, scale up or innovate existing programs. Some thought to an exit strategy.	Good possibility of maintaining or scaling up existing interventions. Partners efficiently and effectively able to grow existing programs to meet evolving needs. Preparation of exit strategy.
2.11 Acknowledgement and use of ILO expertise	ILO's expertise either not recognized or generally not regarded as positive; few constructively engage with the ILO.	ILO's expertise somewhat recognized, and generally regarded as positive. Some key organizations are constructively engaged with ILO.	ILO seen to have reasonable expertise and perceived as open and responsive to national needs; prominent organizations constructively involved with ILO.	ILO expertise widely acknowledged, and perceived as actively engaged with and constructively involved at national and/or international (as relevant to project).
2.12 Resource leveraging	No government or donor resources leveraged from outside the ILO to boost project results.	A small amount of government and donor resources (financial or other types of resources) leveraged from outside the ILO to boost project results.	A reasonable quantity of government and donor resources (financial or other types of resources) leveraged from outside the ILO to boost project results.	Significant government and donor resources (financial or other types of resources) leveraged from outside the ILO to boost project results.

Criteria	1 Unsuccessful		2 Partly successful		3 Successful		4 Highly successful	
3. Implementation performance and efficiency of management and resource use								
3.1 Goal orientation	Targets are non-existent or few, vague, or confusing, or too easy or impossible to achieve. Not clearly linked to aspirations and strategy, and may change from year to year. Indicators a poor fit for outcomes.		Realistic targets exist in some key areas, and are mostly aligned with aspirations and strategy; may not be demanding, or are short-term, lack milestones, or mostly focused on “inputs” (things to do. Not all indicators are a logical fit to outcomes.		Quantified, demanding targets in most areas; linked to aspirations and strategy; though may lack milestones. Logical fit between indicators and outcomes.		Clear set of quantified, demanding performance targets in all areas; targets are tightly linked to aspirations and strategy, have annual milestones. Logical fit between indicators and outcomes. Time frame practicable.	
3.2 Implementation management	Highly limited or no management processes (e.g., decision making, planning, reviews) for ensuring effective functioning of the group; processes are little used by staff.		Basic set of management processes in core areas for ensuring efficient functioning of group; processes known, used, and truly accepted by only portion of staff.		Solid, well designed set of management processes in place in core areas to ensure smooth, effective functioning of group; processes known and accepted by many and often used.		Robust, lean, and well-designed set of management processes (e.g., decision making, planning, reviews) in place in all areas to ensure effective and efficient functioning; processes are widely known, used and accepted.	
3.3 ILO support to project	Technical, programmatic, administrative and financial support by ILO was poor overall.		Technical, programmatic, administrative and financial support by ILO was of mixed quality.		Technical, programmatic, administrative and financial support by ILO was satisfactory.		Technical, programmatic, administrative and financial support by ILO was consistently high quality.	
3.4 Internal ILO coordination	Different programs and group units function in silos; little or dysfunctional coordination between them. Roles and responsibilities are unclear.		Interactions between different programs and group units are generally good, though significant coordination issues do exist; minimal pooling of resources. Roles and responsibilities may not be entirely clear.		All programs and units function together with sharing of information and resources and pooling of resources; few coordination issues.		Regular and effective integration between different projects and group units with few coordination issues; there is evidence that this integration has enhanced the project.	
3.5 Monitoring and reporting	No M&E framework was established. Evaluation activities may not have been planned. Information for monitoring the performance and results indicators were not well identified; baselines were not developed. Reporting largely absent or not based on outcomes or indicators. Recommendations of mid-term review, if any, not acted upon. Planning or monitoring of cost of resources used for activities is inadequate.		Components of an M&E framework were established but some aspects were missing or information for monitoring performance was not identified. Information for monitoring the performance and results indicators were not fully identified; baselines were not well developed or were not used. Reporting mechanism present but not well implemented. Recommendations of mid-term review may or may not have been acted upon. Some planning and monitoring of cost of resources used for activities.		M&E framework was established to measure progress and evaluation activities were identified. Information for monitoring the performance and results indicators were identified; though information may not have been collected on all. Baselines developed though may not have been fully used. Reporting mechanism present and based on indicators. Some recommendations of mid-term review acted upon.		M&E framework was established to measure progress (including the identification of evaluation activities). Information for monitoring the performance and results indicators was identified; baselines developed and have been used. Reporting mechanism applied and based on outcome-level results or indicators. Recommendations of mid-term review acted upon. Ongoing planning and monitoring of cost of resources used for activities and adaptations to improve cost efficiency made as necessary.	

Criteria	1 Unsuccessful	2 Partly successful	3 Successful	4 Highly successful
3.6 Visibility and accessibility to knowledge and information	No formal approach or strategy to document and disseminate knowledge; project has been weak in knowledge sharing (for example, disseminating project outputs to global or national stakeholders).	Some approaches to document and disseminate knowledge exist but are either not comprehensive or only partially carried out. Website, if present, is basic and contains general information, but is updated only occasionally or solely maintained for internal project use.	Approaches or a strategy in place to document and disseminate knowledge internally and externally in some relevant areas. Good efforts have been made to disseminate knowledge from the project. Web site, if present, contains relevant information and is periodically updated.	Comprehensive strategy to document and disseminate knowledge internally and externally in all relevant areas. Knowledge sharing has been effective. A website, if present, is regularly maintained and kept up to date on latest developments; user-friendliness and depth of information.
3.7 Cost efficiency	Costs of achieving results are excessive compared to similar activities.	Cost of achieved results are somewhat unreasonable for the cost.	Achieved results are reasonable for the costs.	Resources used strategically and effectively. Achieved results justify the costs. A system for reporting and monitoring on costs provides evidence that supports this conclusion.
3.8 Adequacy of resources	Human and financial resources clearly insufficient to deliver project outputs and objectives. Project funds not delivered in a timely manner.	Human and financial resources are sufficient to deliver most of the project outputs and objectives. Project funds inconsistently delivered.	Human and financial resources are sufficient to deliver the vast majority of project outputs and objectives. Most project funds delivered in a timely manner.	Human and financial resources sufficient to deliver project outputs and objective. Project funds delivered in a timely manner.

ANNEX 3: MEDIAN SCORES

This section provides a more nuanced perspective of the ILO's effectiveness in promoting decent work through its development cooperation projects, by examining performance criteria based on their median ratings. The use of a four-point scale to rate the success of projects to meet pre-defined criteria means that data is assessed on an ordinal scale. Median ratings provide an indication of the level of success of projects, taking account the entire sample, even projects where a criterion was not addressed. As projects are rated on a scale of 1 to 4, a median score of 2.5 or above means that projects were successful in meeting the criterion, while a score below means they were partly or completely unsuccessful.

Figure 11. Median ratings on strategic relevance and alignment performance criteria

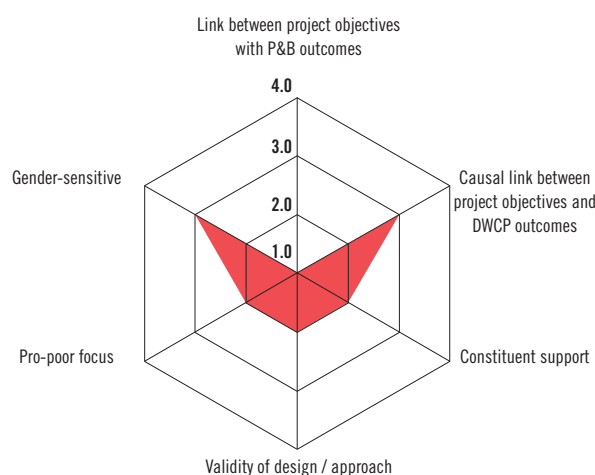
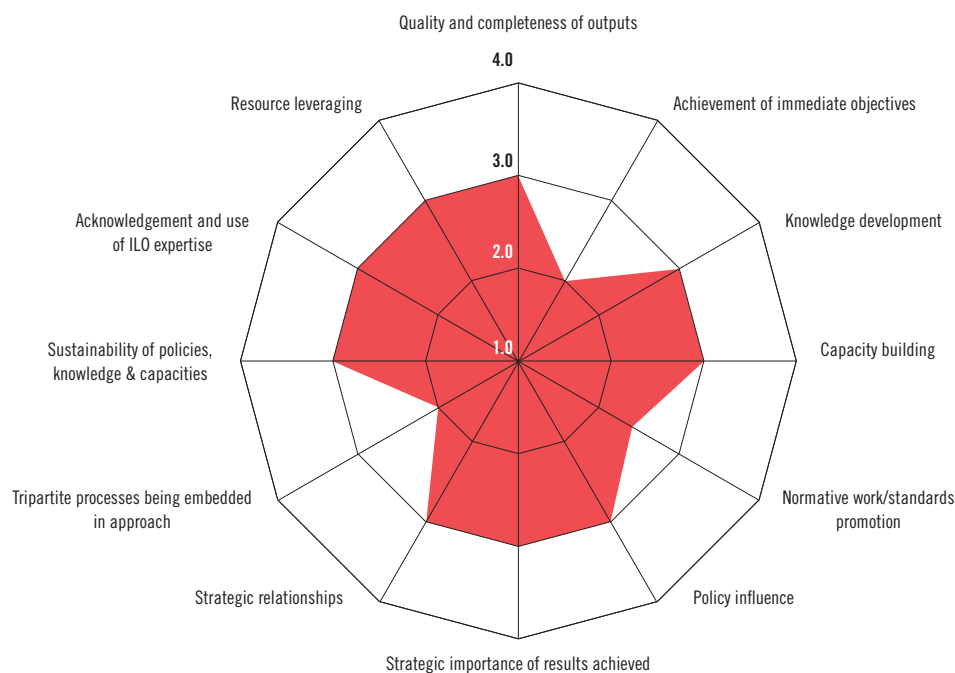


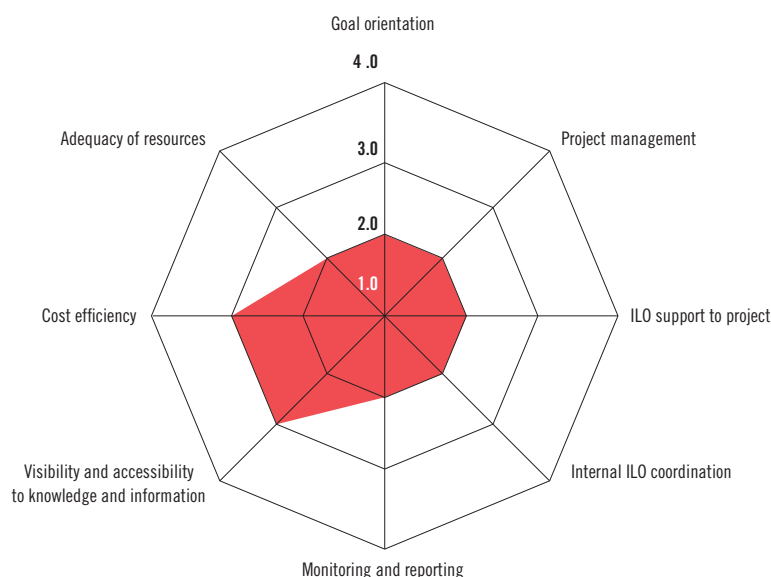
Figure 11 above shows that there were disparities in the median ratings for this performance area, with project performance faring better for some criteria than others. Overall, the median scores reveal that the majority of projects performed well in establishing a causal link between their objectives and DWCP outcomes, and that they were gender-sensitive for the most part, with a median score of 3. Projects did not perform as well in involving constituents, in having a valid design, or in having poverty reduction strategies in place to target the most vulnerable groups. These three criteria had a median score of 2, meaning projects were either rated as partly successful for this criteria, or there was low coverage. Finally, the weakest aspect according to median ratings was the link between project objectives and P&B outcomes, which obtained a median rating of 1. To explain this score, it is important to take both extent of coverage, and performance rating into account. Although performance was successful overall when these projects addressed the link between project purpose with P&B Outcomes, lack of coverage for this criteria in half of the projects led to a low median score.

Figure 12. Median ratings on effectiveness, sustainability and impact performance criteria (2017-18)



Most projects were rated positively in this performance area. A median score of 3 was obtained for the various criteria, meaning that most projects were successful in promoting knowledge development, capacity-building, influencing policy, achieving results of strategic importance, and developing strategic relationships. There were prospects for sustainability, and projects had been able to leverage resources. The ILO's expertise was also acknowledged and appreciated. In contrast, the promotion of standards was only moderately successful, with a median score of 2.5, with half of projects performing well and the other half performing poorly. The two major identified weaknesses were related to the achievement of immediate objectives, and to the integration of tripartism in the project approach, which obtained a median score of 2, meaning that while coverage was high for these criteria, most projects did not perform well.

Figure 13. Median ratings on implementation performance and efficiency of management and resource use performance criteria (2017-18)



The majority of projects had low to average ratings in terms of their implementation performance and efficiency of management and resource use, with six out of eight criteria in this performance area having a median score of 2. The strongest performance was for cost-efficiency and the dissemination of knowledge, which obtained median scores of 3. The rest of the criteria had median scores of 2, meaning that there were weaknesses overall in terms of goal orientation, project management, the quality and extent of ILO support to projects, coordination at the internal level, in monitoring and reporting processes, and there were inadequate resources for the most part.

A comparison of median scores over time is presented in Table 4 below, using the same categories as the previous effectiveness reviews. When contrasting scores between the three studies, we see that median scores were lower for this study than the 2013-16 DW Review and the RBSA Effectiveness Review for the performance areas of Strategic relevance and alignment and Efficiency. Median scores were equally strong (3) for the Effectiveness and impact performance area, and equally low (2) for the M&E framework criterion, revealing an area where progress is still needed. For the remaining two criteria, cost efficiency and prospects for sustainability, the current study did as well as the 2013-16 DW Review (3), and better than the RBSA Effectiveness Review.

Table 4. Median ratings on performance criteria by meta-analysis (all on a 4-point scale)

Meta-Analysis	Strategic relevance and alignment	Effectiveness and impact	Efficiency	M&E framework	Financial/cost efficiency	Sustainability
2017–2018	2	3	2	2	3	3
2013–2016	3	3	3	2	3	3
RBSA (2013–2017)	3	3	3	2	2	2

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