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Decent work results and effectiveness of ILO operations:

An ex-post meta-analysis of development cooperation evaluations, 2021 and 2022 (partial)

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ABBREVIATIONS

ACTEMP	ILO Bureau for Employers' Activities
ACTRAV	ILO Bureau for Workers' Activities
ASEAN	Association of Southeast Asian Nations
BDS	business development services
CPO	Country Programme Outcome
CSR	corporate social responsibility
CTA	Chief Technical Advisor
DAC	ILO Inter-American Centre for Knowledge Development in Vocational Training
DJY	Development Assistance Committee
Decent Jobs for Youth	Coronavirus disease 2019
DWCP	Decent Work Country Programme
EIIP	Employment Intensive Investment Programme
EMPLOYMENT	ILO Employment Policy Department
ENTERPRISES	ILO Enterprises Department
EU	European Union
EVAL	ILO Evaluation Office
FAO	Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations
FCDO	United Kingdom Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Office
FUNDAMENTALS	ILO Fundamental Principles and Rights at Work Branch
G7	Group of Seven
G20	Group of Twenty
GEDI	ILO Gender, Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Branch
GiZ	Deutsche Gesellschaft für Internationale Zusammenarbeit GmbH
GOVERNANCE	ILO Governance and Tripartism Department
GSP+	EU Generalized Scheme of Preferences Plus
ILO	International Labour Organization
IOM	International Organization for Migration
ITCILO	International Training Centre of the ILO
JORISS	Jordan Response Information System for the Syrian Crisis
M&E	monitoring and evaluation
MIGRANT	ILO Labour Migration Branch
MRA	Migrant Recruitment Advisor
MULTI	ILO Multinational Enterprises and Enterprise Engagement Unit
NGO	non-governmental organization
NORMES	ILO International Labour Standards Department
OECD	Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development
OSH	occupational safety and health

P&B	ILO Programme and Budget
PWD	persons with disabilities
R4D	Roads for Development
RBM	results-based management
RBSA	Regular Budget Supplementary Account
RSCA	Responsible Supply Chains in Asia
SCORE	Sustaining Competitive and Responsible Enterprises
SCREAM	Supporting Children's Rights through Education, the Arts and the Media
SDGs	Sustainable Development Goals
SIYB	Start and Improve Your Business
SMART	Specific, Measurable, Attainable, Realistic (or Relevant) and Time-bound
SMEs	small and medium-sized enterprises
SOCPRO	ILO Social Protection Department
STED	Skills for Trade and Economic Diversification
SURAR	Support to Resettlement and Reconciliation
TAF	The Asia Foundation
TC/DC	Technical cooperation/development cooperation
TIP	Trafficking in persons
TVET	Technical and vocational education and training
UN	United Nations
UN WOMEN	United Nations Entity for Gender Equality and the Empowerment of Women
UNDP	United Nations Development Programme
UNESCO	United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization
UNHCR	Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees
UNICEF	United Nations Children’s Fund
UNIDO	United Nations Industrial Development Organization
UNODC	United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime
UNSDCF	United Nations Sustainable Development Cooperation Framework
VCD	Value chain development
WORKQUALITY	ILO Conditions of Work and Equality Department

Acknowledgements

As part of the 2018–21 ILO Evaluation Strategy, the Evaluation Office (EVAL) regularly assesses development cooperation initiatives to obtain quality and reliable information on the Office's effectiveness and operational performance.

Since 2011, EVAL has undertaken biennial effectiveness assessments based on independent project evaluations. This latest study provides an independent analysis of the ILO's decent work results, and is based on project evaluations completed in 2021, and a sample of reports from 2022. It also presents findings that emanated from comparing decent work results and effectiveness retrospectively, and by the ILO's technical intervention area.

A team composed of Magali Bonne-Moreau (team leader) and Nuria Moya Guzman carried out the meta analysis. Patricia Vidal Hurtado, Evaluation Officer in EVAL, was the task manager; Guy Thijs, Director of EVAL, provided oversight and guidance to ensure the independence and quality of the meta-analysis.

Any errors and omissions are the responsibility of EVAL.

01 Executive Summary

Executive Summary

This review is one of several meta-analyses of project evaluations commissioned by EVAL since 2011, as part of its efforts to provide regular feedback to the ILO on its effectiveness in advancing decent work. Previous studies covered the periods 2009–10,[1] 2011–12,[2] 2013–16,[3] 2017–18,[4] 2019–20[5] and 2020–21 (partial)[6]; a meta-study of Regular Budget Supplementary Account (RBSA)-supported interventions covering the period 2013–17 was also conducted.[7] Since 2020, a rolling approach has been taken to include all evaluations conducted within a year, as well as a selection from the following year.

The current review is conducted within a wider meta-analysis covering all independent project evaluations produced in 2021 and a selection of evaluations completed in 2022. It aims to promote organizational learning regarding development effectiveness in the delivery of decent work results, by focusing on relevance, effectiveness, efficiency, evidence of results supporting achievement of decent work outcomes, and projected sustainability of obtained results. A comparative approach is taken, drawing on findings from previous metaanalyses, to assess recent performance trends. Findings and recommendations aim to guide the ILO's operational approach to development cooperation interventions, and will inform EVAL's Annual Evaluation Report. Below is a summary of the review's contents.

Introduction

METHODOLOGY

Presentation of the sample

The total universe of ILO evaluations for 2021 was 39 final evaluation reports,[8] as generated by EVAL staff from the i-eval Discovery database and imported into Excel spreadsheets. All final independent evaluation reports provided to the consulting team before June 2022 were included in the partial sample for 2022, increasing the total sample by ten.

In the database, evaluation reports are tagged by a number of descriptors: evaluation type, evaluation timing, manager, administrative unit, technical unit, country, region, funding source and technical cooperation/development cooperation (TC/DC) code. Meta-data regarding the year the evaluations were conducted, and associated departments, were added for the 2021 reports.

1 Decent work results and effectiveness of ILO technical cooperation: a meta-analysis of project evaluations, 2009-2010.
2 ILO, 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.
4 ILO, Decent work results and effectiveness of ILO operations: Ex-post meta-analysis of development cooperation evaluations, 2017–2018.
5 ILO, Decent work results and effectiveness of ILO operations: An ex-post meta-analysis of development cooperation evaluations, 2019–2020. Since 2020, the sampling approach to project evaluations has been modified to include all evaluations conducted within a year, as well as a selection from the following year.
6 ILO, Decent work results and effectiveness of ILO operations: Ex-post meta-analysis of development cooperation evaluations, 2020 and 2021 (partial).
7 ILO, Independent Review of Effectiveness of Regular Budget Supplementary Accounts (RBSA) supported interventions in delivering Decent Work Results, 2013–2017.
8 These include 13 evaluation reports previously assessed in the 2020–21 decent work results meta-analysis.

The distribution shows that the highest number of evaluation reports focused on Africa (12) and Asia (10), followed by Latin America and the Caribbean (8), multiple regions (6), Europe (2) and the Arab States (1). As for the 2022 sample by region, the highest number of evaluation reports focused on Africa (3) and the Arab States (3), followed by Asia (2) and interregional projects (2). There were no reports covering ILO interventions in Europe or Latin America and the Caribbean.

The ILO's technical cooperation performance was assessed through an ex-post performance rating based on the findings of evaluation reports. Performance information of technical cooperation related to a list of predefined criteria (aligned with evaluation parameters recommended by the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD)–Development Assistance Committee (DAC)) – categorized under strategic relevance and alignment; effectiveness, sustainability and impact; and implementation performance and efficiency of management and resource use – was thus obtained from the evaluation reports and rated according to a four-point scoring system. A matrix containing detailed descriptions of each level of scoring for each criterion was used for this meta-analysis (see Annex 1). Three new criteria were piloted in 2019 and 2020, to better capture the work done by the ILO related to current development cooperation concerns – such as the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, United Nations (UN) Cooperation Frameworks, the recently launched UN systemwide Disability Inclusion Strategy, and efforts towards a just transition to environmental sustainability.

FINDINGS: EFFECTIVENESS REVIEW

Overview of results for 2021

The meta-analysis found that projects evaluated in 2021 had mixed results. Overall, ILO interventions were well-aligned with ILO Programme and Budget (P&B) strategic objectives, as well as Decent Work Country Programmes (DWCPs) and Country Programme Outcomes (CPOs). Most projects focused on pro-poor objectives, and the rest likely had some effects on the improvement of living standards, due to the nature of the intervention. Most interventions were gender-responsive to some extent. Constituent support was partly successful, as not all groups were systematically involved in project design and implementation. The weakest area was the validity of project design/approach.

There were weaknesses in the extent to which outputs and immediate objectives were achieved, often due to challenges related to the coronavirus disease (COVID-19). Results were variable as to policy influence and sustainability, and there were missed opportunities to promote tripartism, social dialogue and international labour standards, while fund leveraging was another area of limited success. Despite this, performance was strong in knowledge development and capacity-building; results achieved had strategic importance; and ILO expertise was appreciated and used.

Areas of strength included ILO support to projects and internal coordination, while implementation management had more mixed results. Overall, results-based management (RBM) frameworks and monitoring and reporting mechanisms were inadequate, and there were limited strategies to disseminate knowledge from ILO interventions. While there was evidence of cost-efficiency, human and financial resources were often found to be insufficient, or not delivered in a timely manner.

Overview of results for the 2022 sample

As shown in figure 4, the sample of projects evaluated in 2022 had mixed results overall, and it is important to take into consideration the small size of the sample when interpreting these findings. Good performance was found in most areas related to strategic relevance and alignment. Interventions had a strong link to P&B outcomes, and were aligned with DWCPs and CPOs, as well as with constituent needs and national priorities. The majority of projects integrated a pro-poor, decent work perspective, and were gender-responsive. However, validity of design was an important weakness, with less than one third of reports obtaining a successful rating. Performance was generally positive in the category of effectiveness, sustainability and impact. Despite the global COVID-19 pandemic, most projects achieved good quality outputs, leading to the achievement of their immediate objectives. Particular strengths were related to policy influence, the achievement of strategic objectives, knowledge development and capacity-building, and the promotion of international labour standards. In addition, there was ample evidence of strong strategic relationships and acknowledgement of and use of ILO expertise, as well as good prospects for sustainability. Areas of weakness included the promotion of tripartism and social dialogue, despite some significant results, and resource-leveraging. There was variability in results associated with implementation performance and efficiency of management and use of resources. A large majority of projects were found to be cost-efficient and have good value for money. ILO support to projects and internal coordination, as well as visibility and accessibility to knowledge and information, were successful overall. There were major challenges related to goal orientation, monitoring and reporting, and weaknesses in adequacy of resources.

RESULTS FROM THE NEW CRITERIA

Consistency and contribution to SDG targets

There was 95 per cent coverage of this criterion in reports for 2021 and 90 per cent coverage in the 2022 sample. There was mixed but positive performance in 2021, with nearly 60 per cent of projects performing well, while over half the reports had good ratings in 2022. While many projects had objectives linked to specific targets of the UN Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), evidence of implementation in coordination with other initiatives under a common UN system of work was sometimes limited, thus achieving “partly successful” ratings, despite good results on the ground. Strong performance was associated with projects that had clear links between their national development strategies and SDGs, and where there was evidence of close coordination with other UN agencies to achieve progress towards SDG targets.

Disability inclusion

There was full coverage in 2021 and in the 2022 sample. This was an area of significant weakness overall; less than one quarter of projects in 2021, and only 10 per cent of projects in the 2022 sample, incorporated elements of a disability inclusion perspective in their design and implementation.

Just transition to environmental sustainability

This was another area of poor performance overall, with weaker performance in 2021. While there were some elements promoting environmental sustainability in certain projects, most interventions did not take this cross-cutting policy driver into account in their design and implementation.

CONCLUSIONS

While there is variability in performance in the three main categories (strategic relevance and alignment; effectiveness, sustainability and impact; and implementation performance and efficiency of management and resource use), certain trends emerge based on the review of evidence provided in evaluation reports from 2021 and the sample of reports from 2022, revealing key strengths and weaknesses in the ILO’s work.

The objectives of ILO interventions were aligned with ILO P&B outcomes and DWCPs/CPOs. This was an area of successful performance for most projects. Strong performance was also noted in the relationships built and leveraged by ILO interventions, the strategic importance of results achieved, the ability to generate or bring together new knowledge to inform decision-making, capacity-building at individual and institutional levels, and the recognition and appreciation of the ILO’s expertise. Overall, ILO interventions were found to provide good value for money, and the support provided by the ILO to projects, as well as internal coordination, led to successful ratings for these criteria.

Other areas, such as pro-poor focus and gender-responsiveness, had more mixed yet overall positive results, with stronger performance found in the 2022 sample than in the 2021 reports. There was more success in 2021 in terms of ratings for the contribution of ILO projects to SDG targets and coordination with other agencies under a common UN system of work, although progress is also needed in this area.

There were disparities in performance for certain criteria between the two years. For instance, implementation management obtained higher ratings in 2021 than in the 2022 sample, with poor results in 2022. Constituent support, the achievement and quality of outputs and immediate objectives, the promotion of international labour standards and normative work, sustainability, and visibility and dissemination of information were more variable in performance, with successful ratings for the 2022 sample, but clear shortcomings for 2021.

There were also weaknesses in both years. Most interventions regarding validity of design did not perform well, as they were often overambitious in time and scope, and did not consistently involve stakeholders at all stages. The promotion of tripartism and social dialogue had limited success. Performance ratings related to the RBM approach and goal orientation of ILO interventions, and the existence and use of monitoring and reporting frameworks, revealed important weaknesses. Adequacy of resources and the ability to leverage external resources through ILO interventions were both areas of poor performance. Mainstreaming disability inclusion and a just transition to environmental sustainability in the ILO's work is not taking place systematically, and for the most part, these have not been adopted as priority areas in designing and implementing ILO interventions.

Finally, the effects of the ILO's response to the global COVID-19 pandemic were visible in the evidence provided in evaluations of projects conducted in 2021 and 2022. It seems that ILO teams and their partners are adapting to the COVID-19 pandemic, and that the strategies put in place by the ILO are improving the delivery of results in uncertain times.

THE WAY FORWARD

The following suggestions to improve the effectiveness of ILO projects are based on the meta-study of evaluation reports from 2021 and the 2022 sample.[9]

Areas where further work is needed	Recurrent reference in previous Decent Work results studies
Strategic relevance and alignment	
Ensure that all constituent groups can be involved in project formulation and implementation through participatory tripartite social dialogue, despite possible limitations caused by crises such as the global COVID-19 pandemic, to promote ownership and sustainability of results.	2017–18, 2019–20 and 2020–21.
Take a realistic approach to intervention design, to ensure that implementation and achievement of outputs and immediate objectives is feasible given the scope, timing and resources available, and include local partners, to have a better contextual understanding of feasibility.	2017–18, 2019–20 and 2020–21.
Adapt to challenges associated with complex projects, or in the context of the COVID-19 crisis and other socio-economic-political crises. It is essential to clearly define assumptions and risks; develop adequate, flexible contingency plans; and have flexibility in the allocation of resources to address emerging challenges.	2017–18, 2019–20 and 2020–21.

9 Some of these recommendations reiterate those made in previous years, thus identifying key areas where further work is required. A table showing the recommendations for this meta-analysis and identifying the years where similar recommendations were made in past meta-analyses is presented in Annex 4.

Effectiveness, sustainability and impact	
Focus on sustainability aspects at the design stage, and involve stakeholders in the co-development of exit strategies, to ensure that the groundwork for maintaining or advancing results from ILO interventions is laid out, to promote ownership and better identify challenges downstream.	2017–18, 2019–20 and 2020–21.
Promote the use of existing guidance to explicitly include all ILO cross-cutting policy drivers in project design and implementation, and develop specific guidance to address disability inclusion and environmental sustainability in ILO interventions and their evaluations.	2017–18, 2019–20 and 2020–21.
Continue to identify and act upon opportunities to make progress towards the promotion and ratification of international labour standards systematically throughout the project cycle.	2017–18, 2019–20 and 2020–21.
During project implementation, ensure that the initial target groups are the primary beneficiaries of results, and allow for sufficient flexibility to modify interventions if this is no longer the case	
Implementation performance and efficiency	
In order to promote synergies and limit duplication of efforts, establish good lines of communication and coordination with other projects and partners on the ground, especially within the UN system, and ensure that a common language and approach are used to foster complementarities.	2020–21.
Strengthen capacities to improve the goal orientation of ILO interventions at the project design stage, and foster Office-wide understanding of why the development and use of RBM approaches and monitoring and reporting frameworks are important to deliver results effectively. Ensure that both intended and unintended consequences of interventions can be reflected in these frameworks, and that they can be shared to promote deeper organizational learning.	2017–18, 2019–20 and 2020–21.
Ensure that adequate human and financial resources and related administrative processes are available to support projects throughout the project cycle, particularly when it relates to RBM and monitoring and reporting activities, and establishing clear communications strategies to promote the visibility and dissemination of results among internal and external stakeholders.	2017–18 and 2020–21.
Considerations for future ILO evaluations and meta-analysis of ILO's performance	
Further explore the merits and, if justified, refine the disaggregated comparative assessment by technical intervention areas and regions of performance ratings of evaluations of development cooperation projects.	2020–21.
If travel restrictions are in force, it is important to allocate sufficient time for international and national evaluation consultants to organize and conduct evaluative work, preferably on the ground rather than remotely. Contracting national consultants, rather than international consultants, also strengthens local evaluative capacity.	2020–21.

02

Introduction

Introduction

This review is one of several meta-analyses of project evaluations commissioned by EVAL since 2011, as part of its efforts to provide regular feedback to the ILO on its effectiveness in advancing decent work. Previous studies covered the periods 2009–10,[10] 2011–12,[11] 2013–16,[12] 2017–18,[13] 2019–20[14] and 2020–21 (partial)[15]; a metastudy of RBSA-supported interventions covering the period 2013–17 was also conducted.[16] Since 2020, a rolling approach has been introduced to assess and score all evaluations as they come in, and to conduct an annual aggregated review of reports produced within a year, as well as a selection from the following year.

The current review is conducted within a wider meta-analysis covering all independent project evaluations produced in 2021 and a selection of evaluations completed in 2022. It aims to promote accountability and organizational learning regarding development effectiveness in the delivery of decent work results, by focusing on relevance, effectiveness, efficiency, evidence of results supporting achievement of decent work outcomes, and projected sustainability of obtained results. A comparative approach is taken, drawing on findings from previous meta-analyses, to assess recent trends in performance; this includes a comparative review by technical intervention (departments) and geographical distribution (regions).

The findings and recommendations aim to guide the ILO's operational approach to development cooperation interventions, and will inform EVAL's Annual Evaluation Report.

METHODOLOGY

Presentation of the sample

The total universe of ILO evaluations for 2021 was 39 final evaluation reports,[17] as generated by EVAL staff from the i-eval Discovery database and imported into Excel spreadsheets. All final independent evaluation reports provided to the team before June 2022 were included in the partial sample for 2022, increasing the total sample by ten.

In the database, evaluation reports are tagged by several descriptors: evaluation type, evaluation timing, manager, administrative unit, technical unit, country, region, funding source and TC/DC code. Meta-data regarding the year the evaluation was conducted and associated department were added for the 2021 reports.

10 Decent work results and effectiveness of ILO technical cooperation: a meta-analysis of project evaluations, 2009-2010.

11 ILO, Decent work results and effectiveness of ILO technical cooperation: A meta-analysis of project evaluations, 2011–2012.

12 Decent work results and effectiveness of ILO technical cooperation: a meta-analysis of project evaluations, 2013-2016.

13 ILO, Decent work results and effectiveness of ILO operations: Ex-post meta-analysis of development cooperation evaluations, 2017–2018.

14 ILO, Decent work results and effectiveness of ILO operations: An ex-post meta-analysis of development cooperation evaluations, 2019–2020. Since 2020, the sampling approach to project evaluations has been modified to include all evaluations conducted within a year, as well as a selection from the following year.

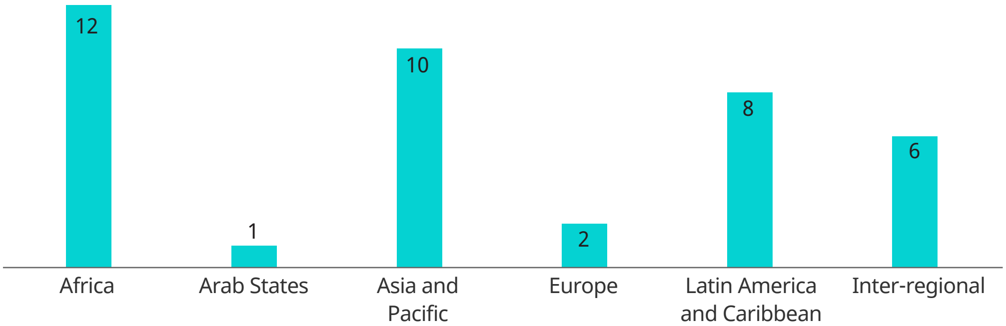
15 ILO, Decent work results and effectiveness of ILO operations: Ex-post meta-analysis of development cooperation evaluations, 2020 and 2021 (partial).

16 ILO, Independent Review of Effectiveness of Regular Budget Supplementary Accounts (RBSA) supported interventions in delivering Decent Work Results, 2013–2017.

17 These include 13 evaluation reports previously assessed in the 2020–21 decent work results meta-analysis.

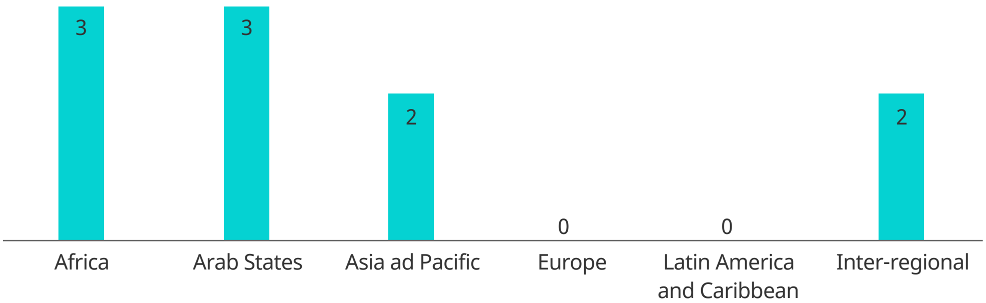
An overview of the 2021 reports by region is presented in figure 1. The distribution shows that the highest number of evaluation reports covered Africa (12) and Asia (10), followed by Latin America and the Caribbean (8), multiple regions (6), Europe (2) and the Arab States (1).

FIGURE 1. 2021 EVALUATION REPORTS BY REGION (N=39)



The 2022 sample by region is presented in figure 2. The highest number of evaluation reports focused on Africa (3) and the Arab States (3), followed by Asia (2) and interregional projects (2). There were no reports covering ILO interventions in Europe or Latin America and the Caribbean.

FIGURE 2. SELECTED EVALUATION REPORTS FOR 2022 BY REGION (N=10)



Review and scoring process

The ILO's technical cooperation performance was assessed through an ex-post performance rating based on findings of evaluation reports. Performance information of technical cooperation related to a list of predefined criteria (aligned with evaluation parameters recommended by OECD–DAC) – categorized under strategic relevance and alignment; effectiveness, sustainability and impact; and implementation performance and efficiency of management and resource use (see table 1) – was thus obtained from the evaluation reports and rated according to a four-point scoring system (see table 2). The rubrics associated with the ratings for each criterion are presented in Annex 1.

Three new criteria were piloted in 2019 and 2020, to better capture the work done by the ILO related to current development cooperation concerns – such as the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, UN Cooperation Frameworks, the recently launched UN systemwide Disability Inclusion Strategy, and efforts towards a just transition to environmental sustainability.

Based on limitations identified by the review team in the previous exercise, some of the rubrics associated with certain performance criteria18 were slightly modified in 2020 following a review of EVAL's Effectiveness Review methodology, and again in 2022, to make them more understandable for assessors, keeping in mind that comparability with previous years would be essential. The current review process confirmed that these changes did not impact the comparability of scores from previous years.

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 1.2 Causal link between project objectives and DWCP outcome(s) 1.3 Constituent support 1.4 Validity of design/approach 1.5 Pro-poor focus 1.6 Gender-responsive
2. Effectiveness, sustainability and impact	2.1 Quality and completeness of outputs 2.2 Achievement of immediate objectives 2.3 Knowledge development 2.4 Capacity-building 2.5 Normative work/standards promotion 2.6 Policy influence 2.7 Strategic importance of results achieved 2.8 Strategic relationships 2.9 Tripartite processes and social dialogue 2.10 Sustainability of policies, knowledge and capacities 2.11 Acknowledgement and use of ILO expertise and involvement 2.12 Resource-leveraging
3. Implementation performance and efficiency of management and resource use	3.1 Results-based management approach and goal orientation 3.2 Implementation management 3.3 ILO support to project 3.4 Internal ILO coordination 3.5 Monitoring and reporting 3.6 Visibility and accessibility to knowledge and information 3.7 Cost-efficiency 3.8 Adequacy of resources
4. Current development cooperation concerns	4.1 Consistency and contribution of the intervention to SDGs 4.2 Disability inclusion 4.3 Integration of just transition to environmental sustainability

TABLE 2. FOUR-POINT SCORING SYSTEM

Unsuccessful	Partly successful	Successful	Highly successful
1	**2**	**3**	**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

18 See Annex 1.

Criteria with insufficient evidence received a score of zero and were excluded in the quantitative analysis of performance.[19] 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.

Analysis

The data generated were 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 (see Chapter 3). As projects are rated on a scale of 1 ("unsuccessful") to 4 ("highly successful"), a median score of 2.5 or above means that projects were successful in meeting the criterion, while a score below that level means they were partly or completely unsuccessful.

Qualitative data were used to provide evidence to support and explain the quantitative findings, and to deepen the thematic synthesis of trends, 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.

For methodological robustness and quality assurance purposes, the members of the review team piloted the Performance Criteria Matrix using the same report, to determine shared understanding of the concepts defined in the rubrics, and to ensure inter-observer consistency. The reviewers then worked independently, scoring the reports, making comments in a column when relevant, and comparing and discussing scores afterwards. Evaluations that were complex to score went through double appraisals and a validation exercise, as deemed appropriate, with the consultant who conducted the evaluation.

A comparison was conducted of the meta-analysis results from 2020 and 2021, as well as the partial results from 2022, examining performance criteria results and extent of coverage (see Chapter 4).

Finally, an examination of effectiveness results by region and department over the past five years was conducted, using median ratings (see Chapter 5). This is the first time that the results of a comparative assessment of performance ratings of development cooperation projects have been disaggregated by technical intervention areas and region, and presented in a meta-analysis. A total of 139 assessments of final independent evaluation reports completed from 2017 to 2021 were used for this comparative review. While the assessment is based on an overall robust sample, the results need to be interpreted with caution.[20] Nevertheless, several interesting trends emerge, which should be analysed further.

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

20 The comparative assessment covers technical interventions at the centralized and decentralized levels, as linked to relevant departments. The proportion of interventions by technical department is as follows: ILO Employment Policy Department (EMPLOYMENT) – 37 per cent, ILO Enterprises Department (ENTERPRISES) – 15 per cent, ILO Governance and Tripartism Department (GOVERNANCE) – 22 per cent, ILO International Labour Standards Department (NORMES) – 3 per cent, ILO Social Protection Department (SOCPRO) – 5 per cent, and ILO Conditions of Work and Equality Department (WORKQUALITY) – 18 per cent. Given the small size of the sample, the results for NORMES and to a lesser extent SOCPRO have lower validity.

LIMITATIONS

The main limitation was 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; this was also a key limitation in previous metaanalyses. There was sometimes insufficient detail regarding certain criteria to make it possible to attribute a positive score, even though the reality on the ground may have been different. It is therefore important to be cautious and understand the limitations when comparing criteria with similar performance levels, but with a different extent of coverage.

When providing qualitative evidence for illustration purposes in this report, it was decided to put more focus on evidence from evaluation reports that were recently assessed. Because of this, some of the achievements from evaluation reports completed in 2021 that were already highlighted in the previous meta-analysis may not obtain as much coverage in this report. However, this does not diminish the importance of the results achieved.

Scoring of thematic, cluster or regional evaluations proved to be problematic in cases where results differed from one country/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.

It is important to take into account that the sample for 2022 is comprised of ten independent evaluation reports when comparing percentage results with those previous years with larger sample sizes, as these partial findings may be misleading and may change as the sample increases.

The global COVID-19 pandemic has affected the way evaluations have been conducted since 2020, and limitations in accessing the field, collecting data and contacting stakeholders and beneficiaries may have influenced evidence provided in evaluation reports for 2021 and 2022. However, evidence from the ex-post quality appraisal for 2021 shows increased quality ratings for this period, revealing a positive trend.

STRUCTURE OF THE REPORT

The report is structured as follows:

- The current chapter provides background information, presents the purpose of the study, the structure of the report and the methodology used and the limitations.
- Chapter 3 presents the results of the meta-analysis for 2021, and partial results for 2022, including an overview of results and main contributing factors. It also includes findings of individual performance criteria related to strategic relevance and alignment; effectiveness, sustainability and impact; and implementation performance and efficiency of management and resource use. The results associated with the two pilot criteria of linkages with SDGs and disability inclusion, as well as a just transition to environmental sustainability, are also presented.
- Chapter 4 examines factors contributing to the most successful projects.
- Chapter 5 presents a comparison of performance for 2020, 2021 and 2022 (partial sample).
- Chapter 6 presents a comparison of performance by technical department and region for the period 2017–21.
- Chapter 7 outlines conclusions.
- Chapter 8 presents recommendations based on key findings.

03

Findings: Effectiveness Review

Findings: Effectiveness Review

The distribution of scores by performance criteria for 2021 and for the 2022 partial sample are presented in figures 3 and 4. The lightest shade of blue represents an "unsuccessful" rating, light blue represents a "partly successful" rating, medium blue represents a "successful" rating, and dark blue represents a "highly successful" rating.

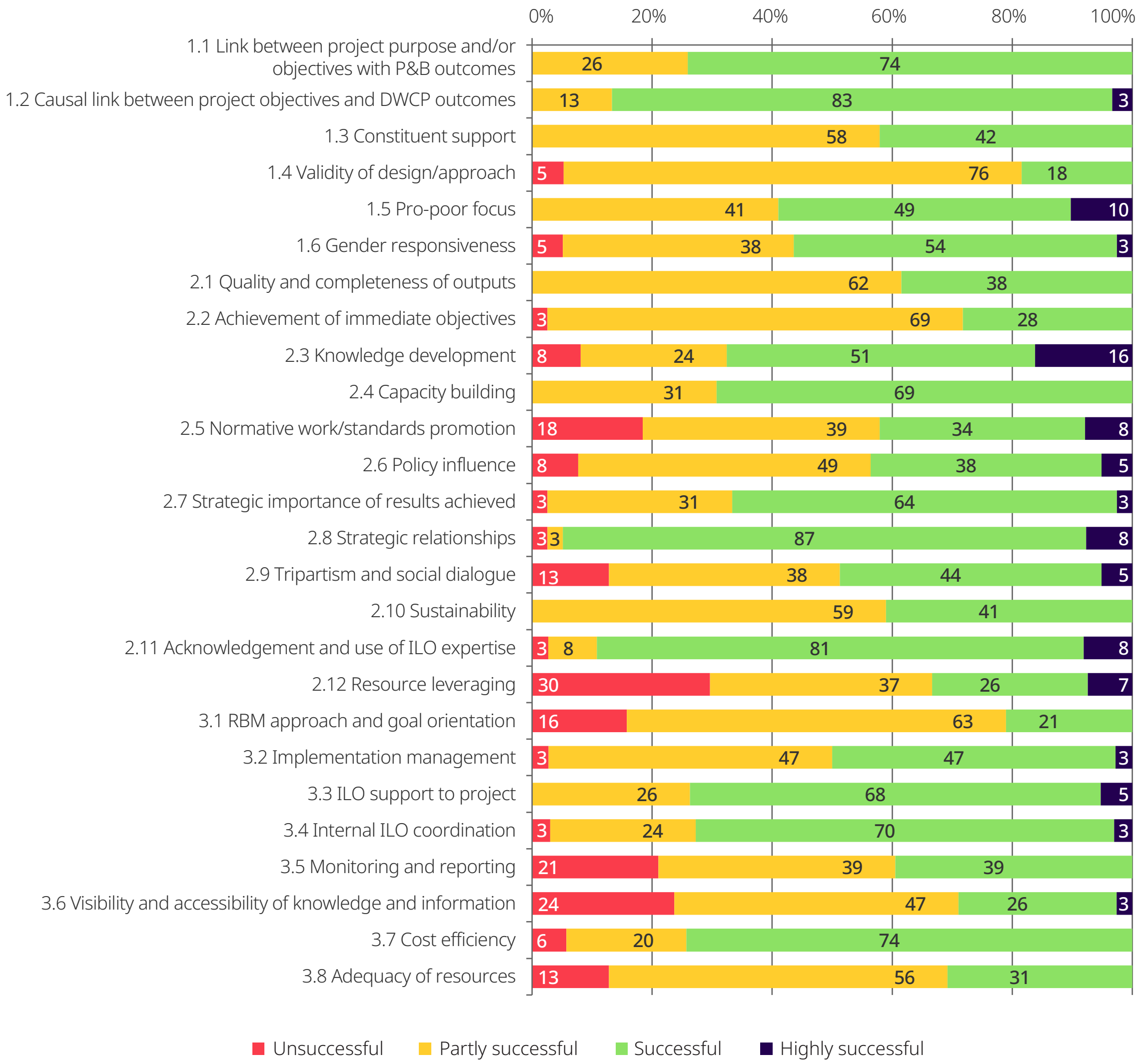
OVERVIEW OF RESULTS FOR 2021

The meta-analysis found that projects evaluated in 2021 had mixed results. Overall, ILO interventions were well-aligned with P&B strategic objectives, as well as with DWCPs and CPOs. The majority of projects focused on propoor objectives, and the rest had some likely effects on the improvement of living standards, due to the nature of the intervention. Most interventions were gender-responsive to some extent. Constituent support was partly successful, as not all groups were systematically involved in project design and implementation. The weakest area was the validity of project design/approach.

There were weaknesses in the extent to which outputs and immediate objectives were achieved, often due to challenges related to COVID-19. Results were variable regarding policy influence and sustainability, and there were missed opportunities to promote tripartism, social dialogue and international labour standards. Fund leveraging was another area of limited success. Despite this, performance was strong in knowledge development and capacity-building, results achieved had strategic importance, and ILO expertise was appreciated and used.

ILO support to projects, and internal coordination, were areas of strength, although implementation management had more mixed results. Overall, RBM frameworks and monitoring and reporting mechanisms were inadequate, and there were limited strategies to disseminate knowledge from ILO interventions. While there was evidence of cost-efficiency, human and financial resources were often found to be insufficient, or were not delivered in a timely manner.

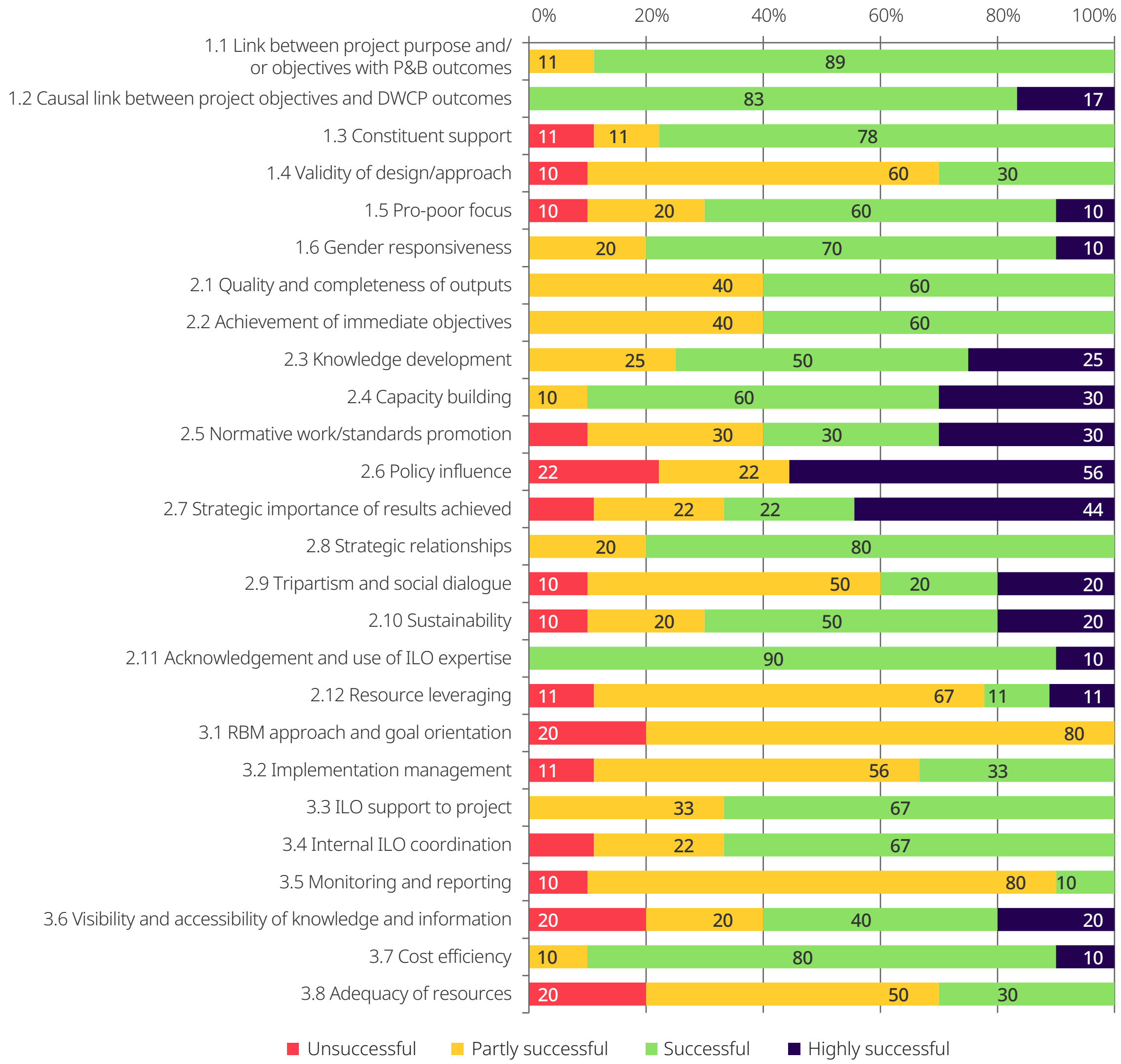
FIGURE 3. DISTRIBUTION OF SCORES BY PERFORMANCE CRITERIA – 2021 EVALUATION REPORTS (N=39)



OVERVIEW OF RESULTS FOR THE 2022 SAMPLE

As shown in figure 4, the sample of projects evaluated in 2022 had mixed results overall. Good performance was found in most areas related to strategic relevance and alignment. Interventions had a strong link to P&B outcomes, and were aligned with DWCPs and CPOs, as well as to constituent needs and national priorities. The majority of projects integrated a pro-poor, decent work perspective, and were gender-responsive. However, validity of design was an important weakness, with less than one third of reports obtaining a successful rating. Performance was generally positive in the effectiveness, sustainability and impact category. Despite the global COVID-19 pandemic, most projects achieved good quality outputs, leading to the achievement of their immediate objectives. Strengths were related to policy influence, the achievement of strategic objectives, knowledge development, capacity-building and the promotion of international labour standards. In addition, there was ample evidence of strong strategic relationships and acknowledgement of and use of ILO expertise, as well as good prospects for sustainability. Areas of weakness included the promotion of tripartism and social dialogue, despite some significant results, and resource-leveraging. There was variability in results associated with implementation performance and efficiency of management and resource use. A large majority of projects were found to be costefficient and have good value for money. ILO support to projects and internal coordination, as well as visibility and accessibility to knowledge and information, were successful overall. There were major challenges related to goal orientation, monitoring and reporting, and weaknesses in the adequacy of resources.

FIGURE 4. DISTRIBUTION OF SCORES BY PERFORMANCE CRITERIA – 2022 EVALUATION REPORTS (N=10)



STRATEGIC RELEVANCE AND ALIGNMENT

Six performance criteria were used to assess the strategic relevance and alignment of projects under review. These covered the links between intervention objectives and P&B outcomes; links with DWCP outcomes or CPOs; the extent to which projects responded to constituent needs and involved stakeholders in project design and implementation; the validity of the project design and technical approach and their endorsement by stakeholders; and the extent to which poverty reduction and gender concerns were addressed in project design and implementation.

Results for 2021

Overall, there was strong coverage of the criteria, aside from the criterion related to the link between project objectives and P&B outcomes, which was only assessed in 69 per cent of reports. When this criterion was covered, a large majority of projects demonstrated relevance to P&B outcomes. The highest scores were related to this criterion and to the relevance of project objectives to DWCPs (or CPOs). This criterion was well covered overall.

There were positive yet mixed results regarding pro-poor focus and gender-responsiveness, with over half of projects performing well, and strong coverage overall. Most projects included a gender-sensitive approach to design and implementation, with progress made towards gender-related objectives; and more than half of interventions integrated a pro-poor perspective and promoted decent work, identifying specific target groups from vulnerable populations, with 10 per cent of projects obtaining "very successful" ratings. Effects were often likely in the remaining projects, due to localities chosen, target groups and nature of interventions. As to constituent support, less than half of the projects evaluated obtained positive results, mostly due to the uneven involvement of social partners, and the extent to which interventions responded to national decent work needs.

Validity of design was an important weakness in this performance category, with less than one fifth of projects having good performance, and 5 per cent obtaining unsuccessful results. This was often due to overambitious scopes, with limited contextual analysis, and limitations in involving stakeholders in the design process.

FIGURE 5. STRATEGIC RELEVANCE AND ALIGNMENT: PERCENTAGE OF MORE SUCCESSFUL SCORES BY PERFORMANCE CRITERIA (2021)

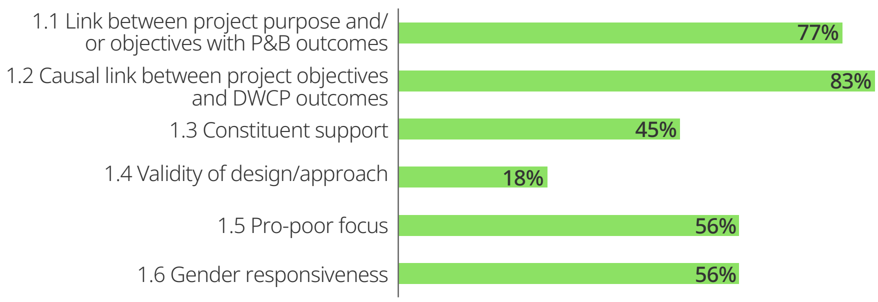


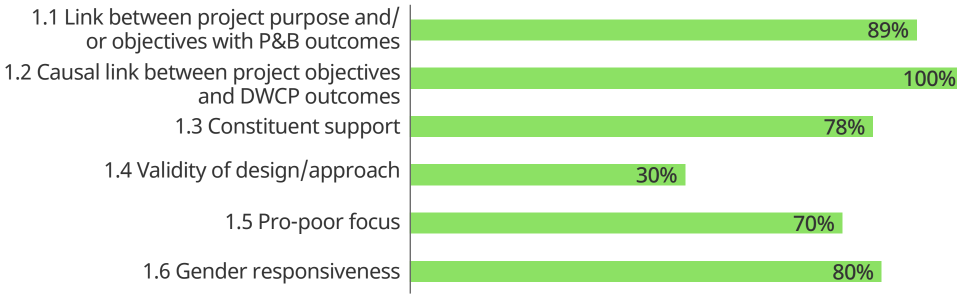
Figure 6 highlights disparities in median ratings related to strategic relevance and alignment. The majority of projects performed well in establishing a causal link between their objectives, P&B outcomes and DWCP outcomes; pro-poor perspectives were included, and gender issues were considered in ILO projects, with a median score of 3. The validity of design of interventions and the involvement of constituents did not perform as well, with median scores of 2.

Partial results for 2022

Coverage for the 2022 sample was good for most criteria in this category, except for relevance of projects to DWCP/CPOs, which was addressed in just under two thirds of reports.

There was variability in this performance area, with links to P&B outcomes and DWCPs/CPOs being the most highly rated criteria. Gender-responsiveness was another area of high performance, as was constituent support. Most projects took a pro-poor perspective and promoted decent work, although this criterion obtained mixed results. The weakest area was validity of design/approach, where successful performance was found for less than one third of reports.

FIGURE 6. STRATEGIC RELEVANCE AND ALIGNMENT: PERCENTAGE OF MORE SUCCESSFUL SCORES BY PERFORMANCE CRITERIA (2022 SAMPLE)



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

Coverage[21]: 69 per cent

Project objectives were aligned with P&B policy outcomes for three quarters of reports (74 per cent) that covered this criterion, and no reports obtained "unsuccessful" or "highly successful" ratings. Overall, there were clear links between interventions and ILO P&B outcomes, and there was a common understanding of these objectives by relevant stakeholders. In several cases, however, there was evidence of a lack of understanding of project objectives by some stakeholders and partners; lack of a shared vision; and lack of awareness of project by some stakeholders, despite alignment with P&B outcomes, leading to "partly successful" ratings (see evaluation reports 2021–10, 2021–18, 2021–22, 2021–23 and 2021–31). There was also one instance where there was debate over target beneficiaries, as the initial objective was to target refugee workers, yet political pressure led to a transition where national workers were favoured, leading to a change in alignment with P&B outcomes over time (2021–21).

▶ Box 1. Criterion 1.1. Results for 2022 sample

Coverage: 90 per cent

A majority (89 per cent) of evaluation reports that addressed this criterion found that there was a strong link between project purpose and objectives and P&B outcomes, and a shared understanding of these objectives by constituents. The report that obtained a "partly successful" rating noted that there was a lack of clarity regarding shared understanding of project objectives by stakeholders. Some interventions were also aligned with other ILO strategic initiatives, such as the ILO's Strategic Plan (2019–21) and the Women at Work initiative (2022–2).

21 As mentioned in the methodology, coverage includes reports with scores of 1 to 4, but excludes those with scores of zero (insufficient evidence available to be scored).

Causal link between project objectives and DWCP outcomes

Coverage: 77 per cent

A majority of reports (87 per cent) had objectives clearly linked to DWCPs or CPOs that responded to stakeholder demands. This was the most highly rated criterion in this category, and no report had an "unsuccessful" rating.

Strong performance was found for a multicountry intervention supporting the extension of social health protection in South-East Asia, as its objectives were firmly embedded within the DWCPs of the target countries, as well as the Regional Outcome and the ILO Global Flagship Programme on Building Social Protection Floors for All (2021–35). In several cases, although links to DWCPs or CPOs were not explicit, and reports thus obtained a "partly successful" rating, there was evidence of alignment with wider, or parallel, frameworks. This was the case for a project focusing on Syrian refugee women and host communities in Turkey, which was clearly aligned with the Regional Refugee and Resilience Plan (3RP) and the ILO's response to the Syrian refugee crisis, and created synergies with the ILO's strategic plan, as well as various related international initiatives (2021–2). In another instance, alignment with the ILO Decent Work Agenda was put forward, thus reflecting coherence, even though specific ties to DWCP outcomes were not explicit (2021–13).

▶ Box 2. Criterion 1.2. Results for 2022 sample

Coverage: 60 per cent

All reports in the 2022 sample (100 per cent) where this criterion was covered found that project objectives responded to demands from stakeholders, with clear links to DWCP priorities and/or CPOs, and almost one fifth (17 per cent) of reports obtained "highly successful" ratings. The strongest performance was noted when reports showed the interlinkages and contributions of interventions to DWCPs.

Constituent support

Coverage: 97 per cent

Constituent support was an area of weakness: good performance regarding response to national needs and constituent involvement in the planning, design and implementation of interventions was found in less than half the projects (42 per cent), with no report obtaining a "highly successful" rating.

Successful projects responded to national needs and requests for assistance, and involved constituents and other partners at the global, regional, national and local levels in their design and implementation. Significant efforts were made to ensure that they were aligned with strategic priorities and needs. There was also evidence of interventions addressing the needs of beneficiaries at the local level. Some successful projects had pilot or planning phases that facilitated broad stakeholder consultations and inclusion (for example, 2021–28, 2021–29 and 2021–33).

While some "partly successful" projects responded to national needs, they did not systematically include all constituent groups – with some groups expressing their desire to be more involved in project design, implementation and monitoring – and there was evidence of some outputs receiving more support than others. Similarly, some interventions were aligned with the priorities of national governments, but the extent to which objectives were in line with the priorities of other social partners was unclear, and their involvement in some cases was minimal or non-existent (2021–5, 2021–6, 2021–14, 2021–19, 2021–21, 2021–31). There was also evidence of high constituent support, but limited space for them to provide inputs (2021–10). In some cases, reports noted that the lack of involvement of direct beneficiaries at the design stage compromised project success, due to limited ownership as well as partial relevance during implementation, and in one case, limiting possibilities for further funding (2021–34).

Furthermore, there were also examples of interventions being "supply-driven" rather than responding to demands, as noted in one report: "ILO specialists offer the 'menu' of interventions and partners and constituents may simply confirm what is being offered because they are aware that they need support and do not feel equipped to question what the ILO offers to them" (2021–18). In Peru, local governments refused to participate in a regional ILO intervention for political reasons, while in the Plurinational State of Bolivia, there was variability over time regarding national priorities, due to changes in the political context (2021–36, 2021–39). In contrast, evaluators noted that the objectives of an ILO intervention in Sri Lanka aiming to counter trafficking in persons (TIP) was not a policy priority for the Government, but "the threat of economic sanctions, vis-à-vis being downgraded to Tier 3 on the US TIP Report, compelled the Government to support the efforts made through the project" (2021–26).

▶ Box 3. Criterion 1.3. Results for 2022 sample

Coverage: 90 per cent

Most projects (78 per cent) responded well to national needs and involved constituents in different stages of the project cycle. Strong performance was associated with projects that responded to priorities identified in national and/or regional policies and strategies, and whose objectives were consistent with beneficiaries' requirements and country needs. There was evidence of consultation with main stakeholders and partners who participated in inception phases, through meetings, events and seminars. There was one instance where work plans were adjusted after a midterm evaluation to better respond to strategic needs of stakeholders (2022–9). In Jordan, while the objectives of a project aiming to formalize access to the legal labour market for refugees and host communities clearly fit with national priorities and the Jordan Response plan, the evaluation found limited involvement of employer representatives, even though their participation was planned in project documents (2022–10).

One intervention that performed poorly was the European Union (EU)-funded WE-EMPOWER-G7 project. Although the intervention was relevant and contributed to the strategic missions and plans of ILO constituents, it was designed based on consultations between the United Nations Entity for Gender Equality and the Empowerment of Women (UN Women), the main implementing partner, and the EU (donor), who insisted that the ILO be a key partner, without ILO design inputs. The proposal was rejected by many departments before being taken on by the ILO Multinational Enterprises and Enterprise Engagement Unit (MULTI). Lack of interest was due to limitations in influencing the design of a predefined intervention, and a lack of opportunities to ensure it responded to constituent needs and incorporated ILO cross-cutting issues, leading to challenges in implementation and ownership:

> **All interviewed informants from [the ILO Bureau for Workers' Activities (ACTRAV)] and [the ILO Bureau for Employers' Activities (ACTEMP)] agreed on the fact that how the project was conceived without the ILO's involvement had negative consequences on the participation of ILO constituents and on project implementation overall.**

Box 3. Criterion 1.3. Results for 2022 sample (cont'd.)

As one of the key informants said:

> **Under normal circumstances, MULTI branch should have come forward with a proposal and requested our consultations, our feedback to the proposal. However, even ILO was not on board during the inception of the project, the project design was already completed without taking ILO's opinions, perspectives, feedback into attention. As constituents, we also couldn't find a chance to contribute to the design of the project by sharing our needs, priorities, etc. When we were consulted, the project was already approved, the countries and themes, issues were already selected (2022–2).**

Validity of design/approach

Coverage: 97 per cent

Project design was an important area of weakness in this review, with less than one fifth of projects (18 per cent) having a sound technical approach and objectives endorsed by a majority of stakeholders, and none obtaining a "highly successful" rating.

Good performance was found when intervention design was based on comprehensive needs assessments and research evidence, the use of lessons learned and best practices, and good coordination among partners (2021–2, 2021–32). Interventions that scored well also had conducted contextual analysis, had adequate assumptions and risk assessments, had measures put in place to mitigate and manage these risks, and their internal logic was coherent. Interventions were designed through consultative approaches to promote participation from relevant actors throughout the project cycle, to ensure this and promote adaptation and flexibility to intervention contexts. In some cases, the active participation of beneficiaries, stakeholders and partners in co-designing interventions at different levels and moments in the project cycle was noted as a very positive element (2021–15, 2021–24). Another element of success was related to realistic design within the given time frame and resources, as well as project context.

Unsuccessful ratings were associated with interventions with a lack of logic in their design, which most stakeholders, including ILO officials, did not understand. There was no continuation between intervention phases, and there was a lack of attention to risks and risk management, and resources that were spread too thin. A lack of theory of change and results frameworks – compounded with limited stakeholder consultations; overly complex design; and a mismatch between the implementation approach, methodology and tools developed by projects – also led to weak performance. There was one instance where an RBSA project was developed in a first stage, and was completely redesigned in a second stage, due to changes in its relevance: "It should be noted that the original version of the project lost relevance due to the passage of time and the change of context – a situation generated, in turn, by a significant delay in the beginning of its implementation" (2021–36).

Box 4. Criterion 1.4. Results for 2022 sample

Coverage: 100 per cent

Less than one third (30 per cent) of interventions from the 2022 sample had positive ratings, and none had "highly successful" ratings; this was a clear weakness in the study.

Good performance was noted when (a) the project design was logically put together; (b) relationships between different levels were sound, with the presence of theories of change and results frameworks; (c) they were adaptable and flexible enough to adapt to new priorities; and (d) expected outputs were realistic and in line with existing resources and capacities of stakeholders. Active participation of stakeholders and thorough needs assessments at the inception phase were also factors of success; there was also evidence of an intervention launching a tracer study to feed into the design of its next phase.

While there were positive aspects to designing interventions based on previous work, using existing structures and relationships with partners to ensure smooth implementation, there were also instances in which carrying over outputs and activities from previous phases, without considering changing contexts, led to challenges downstream. A key limitation, noted in several reports, was inadequate, unrealistic time frames, especially when these interventions were related to policy work or took place in refugee-hosting situations. Overambitious scopes and complex designs were noted as challenges in several instances. There was also evidence of discrepancies between the time planned in project design and the time for which they were actually approved, leading to limited time available for implementation. Furthermore, lack of contextual analysis, and inadequate assumptions and risk analyses, led to challenges that could have been avoided in many instances, such as in a project for refugees and host communities in Jordan (2022–10). Inadequate design was also associated with RBSA-funded projects, mostly due to the RBSA template requirements, which do not include important design elements (2022–1).

In the context of a multiregional intervention, evaluators noted that it did not include a strong regional component in its design, which led to missed opportunities to enhance cross-country dialogue and sharing of experiences, to map labour issues in supply chains across countries, and to design interventions in countries with interlinked supply chains (2022–8). Evaluators of the Sustaining Competitive and Responsible Enterprises (SCORE) Phase II also noted discrepancies in its design:

> **The intervention design needs to be revised to better respond to the problem at hand. Since 2009, SCORE achieved impressive results at the output level thanks to the dedication and hard work of its teams. The issue is that the programme is not designed at the outcome level to tackle the root causes of the problem [...] The intervention design needs to be revised to better respond to the problem at hand. (2022–5).**

As mentioned earlier, one intervention was conceived without the involvement of the ILO or ILO constituents, which led to issues during implementation and limited ownership:

> **Different ILO departments were reached out to by UN Women and the EU, which did not progress further. By the time when the ENTERPRISES department engaged in the project, the idea of the project was advanced on the side of the EU and UN Women, the project proposal was already formulated and written, so that ILO had limited margin to influence the project design. (2022–2).**

Pro-poor focus

Coverage: 100 per cent

Most projects (59 per cent) aimed to improve the living standards of the poorest of the population, had a sound logic to address poverty and promote decent work, and identified key target groups, often in the context of the commitment to "leave no one behind". A total of 10 per cent had "highly successful" ratings, and none were rated as "unsuccessful". For interventions that performed well, ILO support led to improvements in beneficiary lives and promoted inclusion.

The interventions with the strongest performance had explicit aims to improve the living conditions of very vulnerable groups, such as (a) the poorest of the youth population in Haiti, living in extreme poverty and prone to taking part in violent and illegal activities, due to lack of options (2021–9); (b) victims of the internal armed conflict in Colombia (2021–10); and (c) children and adolescents who work below the legal minimum age for employment and/or in hazardous jobs, as well as children and adolescents at risk of being linked to child labour, such as adolescents, indigenous peoples and Afrodescendants, and populations vulnerable to natural disasters in Latin America (2021–13).

The beneficiaries of an intervention in Turkey were one of the most vulnerable populations: uneducated, Syrian refugee women who had young babies had been subjected to violence, and were least likely to access the labour market (2021–2).

Poor and vulnerable rural households and low-income earners were the targets of another intervention, where companies that wanted to participate in the project had to explicitly explain how their business models would impact disadvantaged groups, and cross-cutting interventions were designed for specific vulnerable groups, namely women and youth and the forcibly displaced, to enhance financial inclusion and combat child labour, leading to inclusive growth and poverty reduction (2021–12).

In Sri Lanka, the selection of locations for implementation of the Support to Resettlement and Reconciliation (SURAR) project ensured effective targeting of most vulnerable communities and the most vulnerable members of the resettled communities – with priority being given to persons with disabilities, female-headed households and elderly persons – with the aim of providing them with specific livelihood support to ensure inclusiveness when engaging in livelihood activities (2021–28). Other target groups included women victims of slavery and their children, migrant workers in the construction and other sectors, workers in the mining industry, returnee workers, and refugees and host communities.

Successful projects had strategies to identify beneficiary groups and their specific needs, through research studies, surveys and stakeholder consultations. The Emprende Segur@ project used different strategies and criteria for each country, including a vulnerability assessment (2021–36), while in Tunisia, the project aimed to launch pilots in four target regions based on vulnerability criteria, in consultation with social partners (2021–38). Several projects aimed to extend social protection, social security and unemployment insurance, to formal and informal workers and their families.

For reports rated as "partly successful", there was no explicit mention of pro-poor focus in project design, but some effects were likely based on the nature of the interventions. In some instances, interventions did not necessarily target the most vulnerable groups in the community, but still aimed to promote decent work and address poverty, as was the case for a project where the ultimate beneficiaries were graduates of technical and vocational education and training (TVET) and universities, in an urban area where youth unemployment levels were very high (2021–5). There were also examples of institutions as direct beneficiaries, with expected impacts on different worker categories, such as youth or informal workers (2021–6, 2021–22).

Box 5. Criterion 1.5. Results for 2022 sample

Coverage: 100 per cent

Performance was strong overall for this criterion, with over two thirds of projects (70 per cent) obtaining successful ratings.

Interventions aimed to (a) address the incidence and impact of child labour in the Syrian Arab Republic and improve the lives of workers and their families; (b) promote decent work and provide access to clean and safe water, through Employment Intensive Investment Programme (EIIP) works, and contribute to building peace in a conflict-prone region of the Philippines; (c) support poor and vulnerable groups making the transition into the formal labour market; (d) promote decent work for women who live in poverty and are excluded from the labour market, women from female-headed households who face high workloads, women who are engaged in economic activities through informal enterprises operating without security, and women who are working in formal employment but who lack access to decent working conditions; (e) develop legal and policy frameworks in Saudi Arabia to prevent discrimination and promote equality and inclusion, including the promotion of the participation of women and disadvantaged groups in the labour force; and (f) promote access to the formal labour market to informal workers – mainly women and poor youth in Cabo Verde (2022–1, 2022–3, 2022–4, 2022–6, 2022–7, 2022–9 and 2022–10).

In one instance, however, although refugee women were included as ultimate beneficiaries in the project document, the evaluation found that this wasn't the case in practice, as national and social partners of the project did not consider that addressing refugee issues was part of their mandate, as they only served nationals of their respective countries (2022–4).

Several interventions did not have specific aims to address the living standards of the poorest of the population, but some poverty effects were implied, given the nature of the programme.

Gender-responsiveness

Coverage: 100 per cent

Gender-responsiveness was an area of mixed performance, with just over half (56 per cent) of projects having successful scores. Good performance was found for projects that (a) had integrated gender issues in the design and implementation process; (b) had women as their main target groups and empowered them; and (c) promoted activities that challenged gender stereotypes through campaigns, advocacy materials and trainings, where monitoring and reporting data were gender-disaggregated, and where initial results were visible.

There was evidence of comprehensive gender assessments and diagnostic studies conducted to inform project design and implementation in several projects, and gender-sensitive strategies were developed. Certain interventions had specific objectives focusing on gender and empowering women, as was the case for a project aiming to strengthen rural trade union organization in Colombia:

> **One of the objectives was to generate economic empowerment for rural women through the development of skills and technical capacities, strengthening of their productive units through inputs and technical assistance, and socio-political visibility of the challenges they face […] The rural women interviewed state that their union involvement is a highly effective means to acquire participation, visibility, representation, empower themselves economically and participate in socio-political spheres, improving in such a way, the possibilities of social equality and the conditions of gender equality […] There has been progress in: i) the consolidation of the gender approach in the Centrals and Organizations Participating Rural Trade Unions; ii) the empowerment of women in the trade union movement through self-recognition as 'workers' even if they are unpaid people; iii) the economic empowerment of rural women, indigenous victims of the armed conflict and reintegrated" (2021–15).**

Access to activities was promoted through (a) providing childcare for women with children; (b) providing transportation allowance; and (c) conducting trainings in centres that were known and accessible to women. In addition, gender-sensitive services were provided, such as conducting health, legal, sexual and gender-based violence counselling, protection services and referrals to local service providers. Several projects promoted the participation of women in traditionally "male" sectors, and provided evidence that adoption of inclusive recruitment policies and flexible working arrangements helped women overcome socio-cultural barriers they faced to enter the labour market, and changed mentalities around the employment of women and forcibly displaced people.

Specific tools were used to improve gender-responsiveness – such as "Gender and Entrepreneurship Together" or the "[Roads for Development] R4D Social Safeguards Framework", which establish specific mechanisms for gender equality – and there was evidence of changes in attitudes and incorporation of gender issues and the specific needs of women in training curricula and the drafting policies. For instance, one evaluation noted: "The issues of gender have been catered for in the draft white paper policy document and this evaluation analysis of the white paper indicates that gender aspects are emphasized in the legal framework as well institutional framework provided in the policy document" (2021–29). There were also references to specific frameworks used by evaluators to assess gender-responsiveness, such as the "Gender Results Effectiveness Scale" used in the REFRAME evaluation, which found that REFRAME's work at all levels – macro, meso and micro – was gender-responsive, with all countries conducting gender-specific situation analyses and putting in place monitoring and reporting mechanisms that captured relevant gender concerns (2021–30).

Partnerships with key stakeholders working to promote gender equality and advocacy for women's rights demonstrated a willingness to bring a gender lens to the interventions, and in one instance, UN Women was requested to review thematic plans to ensure that gender was properly integrated. Another project worked closely with other UN agencies and inter-agency networks on gender equality, including UN Women and the United Nations Industrial Development Organization (UNIDO), and community-based organizations such as the American Public Works Association and Care International, in supporting the implementation of national legislation and actions under national and international commitments (2021–16). The Global Flagship Programme on Building Social Protection Floors for All also designed policy and technical assistance on areas covering gender and developed knowledge products related to gender and non-discrimination in collaboration with other UN agencies (2021–33). There was also evidence that publications on women and specific topics were produced to influence gender norms, attitudes and practices (2021–13).

One evaluation noted the need to conduct comprehensive gendered analyses of trafficking in persons, and underlined the difficulty of finding shelters and specialized services/protection services for male victims of abuse and trafficking in Sri Lanka (2021–26).

"Partly successful" performance was noted when project designs were gender-neutral, and did not conduct gender assessments or power analyses, yet women were included as beneficiaries, or when results were disaggregated by sex, but the gender dimension was not considered otherwise during implementation. This latter situation was noted for a project in Colombia, where the evaluators made reference to the ILO's Gender Equality Action Plan 2018–21, and highlighted that the ILO Country Office for the Andean Countries does not have a Gender Specialist assigned to the region, which limits the ILO's ability to provide technical support in this area of work (2021–10). In other instances, evaluators found the involvement of regional gender specialists to be suboptimal and not systematic. In some cases, project documents included gender equality as an objective, but this was not reflected in their results framework; in others, gender was a component at the design stage, but there was no reporting on gender-related issues or progress. In Ethiopia, a gender audit of a project aiming to improve labour migration governance and protecting migrant workers was planned, but not implemented, because it was not given priority among staff and partners, even though there was a trained gender audit facilitator in the ILO Country Office and the Project Manager was a former gender focal point (2021–31). Several reports noted the lack of resources allocated to gender-responsive activities.

One evaluation of an interregional project to strengthen national capacities to improve international labour standards compliance and reporting generated a gender-related lesson learned:

Women and vulnerable groups need to be included in the focus on international labour standards, or at least their issues have to be represented in social dialogues and within Trade Unions. While the project experience has shown that identifying, engaging and organizing these groups can be challenging given that many tend to be part of the informal economy, this also presents an opportunity to engage relevant [civil society organizations] to play a crucial role, especially in countries where the informal sector thrives. The project work in Mongolia has, for example, provided learning and emerging good practice in this respect" (2021–17).

The weakest performance was noted when projects were "gender-blind by design" and did not aim to empower women or address the root causes of gender disparities, as was the case for the "Applying the G20 training strategy" project (2021–37). This was compounded by a lack of gender-sensitive targets and indicators, and limited gender-disaggregated data.

Box 6. Criterion 1.6. Results for 2022 sample

Coverage: 100 per cent

The criterion of gender-responsiveness obtained strong results, with most projects (80 per cent) performing well, and 10 per cent of reports in the sample obtaining “very successful” ratings, while there was no “unsuccessful” rating.

Many interventions specifically targeted women and promoted their inclusion. This was done by considering gender-specific concerns at all stages of the project cycle, and engaging in consultations with stakeholders and beneficiaries. Gender assessments and studies on the specificities of women in various aspects of the world of work were conducted, and gender equality modules were developed, such as the global SCORE Gender Equality Module. Technical assistance and workshops were organized on parental leave, inclusive organizations and work–life balance. Gender mainstreaming strategies were developed, along with gender-related indicators, and gender-responsive tools were developed. Gender-inclusive criteria were also applied during implementation of activities in terms of participants and contents.

Several projects focused on helping women to transition from the informal to the formal economy, and to address barriers they face in accessing the labour market (2022–3, 2022–4, 2022–9, 2022–10). This was done through various means, including policy advocacy/policy development, capacity and skills development, participatory gender audits, collection of data on the presence of women in the labour market, specific analyses of labour markets from a gender perspective, and awareness-raising campaigns to challenge conventional gender stereotypes in the workplace.

Another project aimed to promote women’s economic empowerment in the public and private sectors in G7 countries, through the facilitation of dialogue and exchanges among G7 and EU countries, and engagement with the private sector in the elimination of gender inequality faced by working women (2022–2).

Despite a lack of gender strategy in the design of the Responsible Supply Chains in Asia programme (RSCA), the evaluation found that it integrated gender equality in practice, as “women in Global Supply Chains are also a priority group for the ILO”, and there was evidence that the project team was gender-sensitive (2022–8). A project in Saudi Arabia aimed to promote an inclusive labour market and increase women’s employment. One of the key achievements was the development of a National Policy on Equality in Employment and Occupation, in line with international labour standards, as well as several studies focusing on the status of women in the labour market, and women were represented in workers’ committees (2022–7).

Efforts to be gender-responsive did not consistently translate into expected outcomes. One of the three pillars of a project in Jordan targeted women exclusively, and a gender analysis was incorporated into the design of the project. While there were several positive outcomes, the evaluation also identified a negative unintended outcome, which was facilitating the establishment of female-led informal businesses: “Despite the main goal of the project being to enhance Jordanian and refugee beneficiaries’ access to the formal labour market, the project has unintentionally financed and facilitated informal self-employment and the establishment of informal businesses, under the women component of the project (i.e. outcome 2), as well as in some other trainings conducted under this project” (2022–10). In an EIIP project in the Philippines, although women were participants in trainings, they were often overlooked for work (2022–6).

Weaknesses were found when gender analysis was limited or absent, or when there was a lack of specific gender-disaggregated data or gender-responsive outcomes. This was mostly the case for a project aiming to reduce child labour and improve occupational safety and health (OSH) in the Syrian Arab Republic, where important weaknesses regarding the child labour component were noted by the evaluators: “The RBSA child labour concept note and progress report are both gender-blind. There is no gender-responsive situation analysis, no sex-disaggregated data, no gender-responsive objectives, outcomes, outputs, activities or gender-specific indicators” (2022–1).

EFFECTIVENESS, SUSTAINABILITY AND IMPACT

Effectiveness, sustainability and impact are 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.

▶ Box 7. The effects of the COVID-19 crisis on project effectiveness, sustainability and impact

Evidence from the 2021 reports and the 2022 sample indicate that many ILO interventions were able to adapt to the COVID-19 pandemic, and perform relatively well in many areas, despite some delays and setbacks.

There was some evidence of operations being cancelled or postponed, with marked delays in implementation, thus limiting the achievement of outputs and progress towards immediate objectives. There were, however, instances where the ILO and its implementing partners showed flexibility and response capacity to allow, as far as possible, the continuity of activities. In many cases, projects obtained no-cost extensions from donors, who kept a flexible approach. There were also examples of adaptation strategies to address limitations due to the global pandemic, and to build on interest related to the consequences of the pandemic – for instance, to improve social security mechanisms, or to provide beneficiaries with new skills. In many cases, field offices were able to quickly adapt to online means of communication and, in later stages, rely on the support of the International Training Centre of the ILO (ITCILO), also to move capacity development and training to online formats, although this depended on national capacities and infrastructure. Clear communication, strong partnerships and networks, and a targeted approach to support by the ILO in coordination with donors to adapt interventions to changing priorities were all elements of success.

There was also evidence that the ILO's COVID-19 response allowed teams to adapt programmes so that they could continue under COVID-19 circumstances (for instance, by providing online trainings or through mobile phones and WhatsApp), as well as adaptation of the activities to assist beneficiaries to cope with the consequences of the pandemic. For instance, opportunities were also seized to highlight the ILO COVID-19 response policy framework to promote social dialogue. In Jordan, an intervention supported the national vaccination campaign to have fully vaccinated trainees and trainers.

In Colombia, the ILO and its partners reviewed and adapted work plans to respond to COVID-19 challenges, through (a) campaigns on the labour rights of rural workers in the context of the pandemic; (b) communications actions to promote food and nutritional sovereignty; (c) radio training programmes for rural non-salaried workers, and virtual courses for plantation workers; (d) legal support for union organizations to mitigate the impact on employment; (e) radio training programmes for union promoters located in scattered rural areas; (f) purchase and distribution of biosafety kits for RBAs; (g) training provided on measures to prevent and mitigate the effects of COVID19 in the workplace; (h) development of campaigns to promote the use of personal protection elements; and (i) compliance with biosafety protocols.

However, despite strong efforts to adapt, it was also noted that certain activities relied more on face-to-face encounters and building up relations, and creating trust is much more difficult online. Furthermore, in some countries, public priorities and funding were redirected, thus having an impact on ILO interventions.

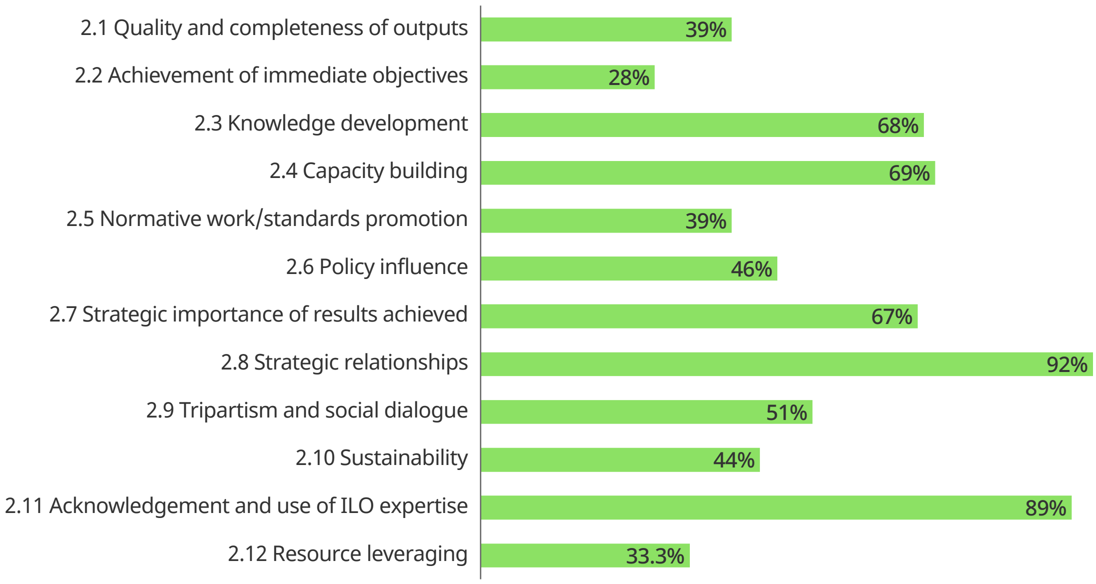
Results for 2021

Performance was mixed in this category for interventions evaluated in 2021, as shown in figure 7. The most highly scored and fully covered element in this review was the development of strategic relationships. Other key areas of strength included capacity-building, knowledge development and recognition of the ILO's expertise, with over 80 per cent of projects performing well. The promotion of tripartism and social dialogue in design and implementation was relatively successful, with evidence that more than half of projects performed well, and stakeholders realized the importance of social dialogue in the context of the global pandemic faced since 2020.

There were mixed results in relation to the achievement of quality outputs, due to delays in implementation, partly due to COVID-19 restrictions; these limitations also led to over half the projects being rated as "partially successful" in making progress towards immediate objectives, although there were no "unsuccessful" ratings. Performance results for policy influence and strategic importance of results achieved were heterogeneous, similarly to the ability to leverage resources.

The main area of weakness was the sustainability of interventions, with just over one third of projects having some prospects of maintaining, advancing or scaling up existing interventions, with few having prepared exit strategies. Another area with significant shortcomings was the promotion of international labour standards and normative work, with less than half of reports rated successfully.

FIGURE 7. EFFECTIVENESS, SUSTAINABILITY AND IMPACT: PERCENTAGE OF MORE SUCCESSFUL SCORES BY PERFORMANCE CRITERIA (2021)



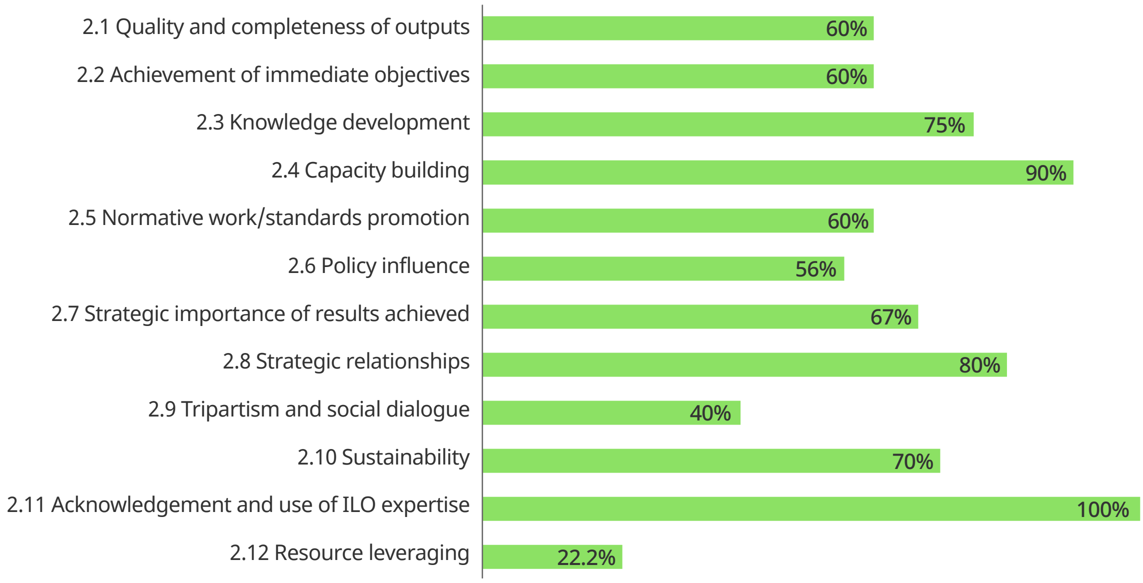
Partial results for 2022

There was variability in performance related to most criteria in this category for interventions in the 2022 sample, as shown in figure 8. Acknowledgement and use of the ILO's expertise was an area of strong performance across all interventions assessed, with full coverage. Capacity-building was also a key strength in the 2022 sample, with only one project obtaining a "partly successful" rating, and one third obtaining "very successful" ratings, with strong progress achieved at the individual and institutional levels. Strong strategic relationships were noted in a large majority of projects. Other areas of good performance overall, despite some heterogeneity in results, included knowledge development, the achievement of results of strategic importance, and sustainability.

There were mixed yet positive results regarding the achievement of quality outputs and immediate objectives, and the promotion of international labour standards, with successful scores for 60 per cent of reports. Although good performance for policy influence was noted for just over half the projects, it is important to highlight that all of these obtained "highly successful" ratings.

Areas of weakness were the promotion of tripartism and social dialogue, where only 40 per cent of reports obtained successful ratings, and resource-leveraging, where less than one quarter of projects were able to leverage resources from external sources.

FIGURE 8. EFFECTIVENESS, SUSTAINABILITY AND IMPACT: PERCENTAGE OF MORE SUCCESSFUL SCORES BY PERFORMANCE CRITERIA (2022 SAMPLE)



Quality and completeness of outputs

Coverage: 100 per cent

There was mixed yet weak performance overall for this criterion, with evidence of good quality outputs completed and used by stakeholders in just over one third of projects reviewed (38 per cent). Projects with successful performance met and sometimes exceeded their targets in a timely manner, while adapting to contextual changes, especially due to the COVID-19 pandemic. In several instances, the flexibility and response capacity of the ILO and its implementing partners was highlighted as a positive factor in allowing continuity of activities and achievement of outputs, despite the challenges due to COVID-19 (2021–15, 2021–17).

The global COVID-19 pandemic, as well as other socio-political challenges, led many interventions to be delayed or modified:

> **There were few critical delays encountered during the implementation of the project in the beneficiary countries caused by various factors including the COVID-19 pandemic. In Viet Nam it took about one year to approve the project implementation plan, which delayed the whole implementation of the project. In Armenia, due to strong disagreements between the ILO's National Project Coordinator and the Republican Union of Employers of Armenia over the course of the project implementation, there was a delay of about 1.5 years on one activity. The situation was resolved after giving up on the pilot to carry out the labour market analysis, as initially envisaged, and to apply an employers' skills demand assessment methodology. Further to this, the project implementation was affected by the military conflict with Azerbaijan over the Republic of Artsakh/Nagorno Karabakh. In Tajikistan, it took about two years to decide not to hire a national coordinator but to hire national lead consultant for the project implementation (2021–37).**

Delays due to COVID-19 sometimes happened despite flexible approaches to project design and implementation, and willingness of donors to allow for this, leading to partial achievement of outputs. In a few instances, certain activities associated with specific outputs were taken out, and the funds were reallocated to COVID-19 humanitarian initiatives (for example, 2021–31). Other hurdles included overambitious scopes, limited time frames and inadequate human or financial resources to generate expected outputs.

There were also cases where activities were reprogrammed, and some projects focused more on supporting processes than on achieving outputs (for example, 2021–39). In a few instances, it was not possible to assess achievement of outputs, due to lack of adequate indicators and monitoring frameworks.

▶ Box 8. Criterion 2.1. Results for 2022 sample

Coverage: 100 per cent

Over half the projects (60 per cent) achieved good quality outputs that were put into use by stakeholders, with no reports obtaining "highly successful" or "unsuccessful" ratings.

Most reports noted some challenges and delays in the delivery of outputs, mostly due to the COVID19 pandemic. In projects with successful performance, key outputs were delivered on time, and their quality and usefulness were good overall, with evidence of innovation, flexibility and adaptability to these changing circumstances by project teams.

In some cases, planned outputs were cancelled and replaced by new ones, due to the relocation of funds and the fact that certain projects obtained no-cost extensions. Besides the global pandemic, difficulties in getting timely government approvals to carry out activities and working in fragile States (2022–1), one report noted that the lack of appropriate monitoring frameworks did not make it possible to assess if the activities realized led to solid results, and that field activities had not been implemented due to COVID-19, yet deliverables were delayed (2022–2).

Achievement of immediate objectives

Coverage: 100 per cent

This was another area of poor performance overall, with successful ratings for just over one quarter (28 per cent) of reports reviewed. The majority of interventions had variable progress towards immediate outcomes and achieving their objectives, with progress towards some outcomes but not others, and this was sometimes exacerbated in evaluations covering multicountry interventions, as there were differences in execution and achievement of outcomes among countries.

Good performance was associated with (a) high visibility of initiatives and endorsement at the highest level within the UN and/or ILO constituent groups; (b) intervention design and implementation that included a broad range of relevant stakeholders and promoted a consultative approach; (c) a flexible approach to implementation, with specific focus and scope of actions based on different country contexts and priorities; (d) good local and interregional cooperation between the ILO and its partners; and (e) institutional capacity-building.

In one instance, immediate objectives were added through an addendum to the intervention; as such, the initial outcomes were reached, while further progress was needed for the new additions, due to limited time for implementation. In contrast, certain interventions cancelled certain outcome targets, due to lack of interest from constituent groups, political resistance and disagreement on priorities by stakeholders (for example, 2021–18). Other factors related to limited progress included a lack of legal and regulatory frameworks, insufficient institutional capacity, heterogeneity of contexts in multicountry interventions, lengthy administrative procedures and delays in implementation, and inadequate resources and time frames. The COVID-19 pandemic also affected the achievement of immediate objectives due to delays and restrictions.

Issues of attribution were noted as challenges, and there was evidence of a lack of data to verify progress towards immediate outcomes, due to inadequate results frameworks and monitoring mechanisms (2021–7, 2021–11, 2021–35).

▶ Box 9. Criterion 2.2. Results for 2022 sample.

Coverage: 100 per cent

Progress towards immediate objectives was an area of relatively good performance in the 2022 sample, which was low overall, with a majority of projects (60 per cent) performing well, and no report rated as “highly successful” or “unsuccessful”.

There was good collaboration with and participation of key actors – such as constituents, partners and Decent Work Technical Support Team specialists – and coordination with similar projects led to the achievement of expected outcomes in several projects (2022–4, 2022–7).

The evaluation of SCORE Phase III found that “While the SCORE Programme is aligned with longer-term development goals, the evaluation did not find evidence that the programme made significant contribution to broader and longer-term development. The scale of the programme is still too small and change is not yet ‘solidified’ at both country and [small and medium-sized enterprise (SME)] levels. As mentioned earlier, the design of the intervention is primarily output oriented rather than impact-oriented” (2022–5).

The lack of appropriate indicators and reporting was noted in several reports as posing a challenge to analyse which outcomes/results areas had been achieved. In one instance, although there was no reporting on medium-term results, one evaluation found that certain outcomes had been achieved due to the formulation of policies (2022–7). Pandemic-related challenges were noted in many reports.

Knowledge development

Coverage: 95 per cent

This criterion had good performance overall, with many projects (68 per cent) bringing together or generating relevant, good quality knowledge that supported policy dialogue at different levels. "Highly successful" ratings were attributed to one sixth of reports reviewed.

The strongest performance was associated with clear evidence of use of knowledge products to support policy and strategic decisions, and progress towards ratification of ILO Conventions, as well as legal reform; this was the case for many products generated by the ILO Global Flagship Programme on Building Social Protection Floors for All, the Regional Initiative against Child Labour in Latin America and the Caribbean, and through the technical support provided to the Employees' State Insurance Scheme in India, among others (2021–33, 2021–13, 2021–22). Another example of an intervention with strong results was REFRAME, which (a) promoted the exchange of knowledge and experience across regions, and between the country and global levels; (b) filled knowledge gaps in the field of fair recruitment; (c) built common standards and tools; (d) pushed the agenda of fair recruitment at global and national levels; and (e) brought tripartite constituents together based on a consolidated approach. Outputs redefined benchmarks in the field and were used and discussed by stakeholders at the global level. The tools developed by the project were used at the Global Compact for Safe, Orderly and Regular Migration (December 2017), and the Global Forum on Migration and Development in 2020. They have been used by the ITC outside the context of the project. The establishment of a Knowledge Hub on Fair Recruitment drawing from REFRAME research was also a success factor (2021–30).

There was evidence of use of the outputs of research and knowledge production activities at all stages of the project cycle – from project design to implementation, awareness-raising and improved decision-making – often through social dialogue. Knowledge development activities and outputs included (a) data collection and background research; (b) diagnostic studies; (c) sectoral studies; (d) tracer studies; (e) feasibility and technical studies; (f) gender-related studies; (g) documentation and publication of good practices at the regional and country levels, in both online and paper formats; (h) toolkits on various topics, including ratification of ILO standards and design of specific policies; (i) scoping exercises; (j) gaps analyses; (k) mapping exercises; (l) needs assessments; (m) assessments of social protection systems; (n) labour market analyses; (o) actuarial studies; (p) compilation of regulations at national level; (q) surveys; (r) participation in workshops, conferences and summits for information-sharing and learning purposes; (s) practical guides and manuals; (t) technical documents; (u) the development of protocols, guidelines, trainings and information materials; (v) awareness-raising materials and campaigns; (w) street drama performances; (x) webinars; (y) websites and databases such as EmPol and YouthPol; (z) Migrant Data Management Systems; and (aa) videos. Some of the outputs were translated into multiple languages. In some cases, language barriers hindered knowledge transfer.

Successful interventions put in place effective mechanisms to collect and disseminate knowledge, through (a) national, regional and global events; (b) the development of partnerships to create and launch courses and knowledge products; (c) the establishment of knowledge-sharing platforms; and (d) publication of research products and guidelines. A good practice was identified related to the use of research to create awareness on international labour standards among tripartite stakeholders and promote change. The findings of a study on the situation of international labour standards in SMEs carried out by the National Human Rights Commission of Mongolia served as the catalyst for the participation of workers' and employers' organizations, and raised the awareness of policymakers about decent work deficits (2022–16). Several other knowledge-related outputs were also highlighted as good practices in evaluation reports, such as the development of a multicountry Regional Compendium on Social Health Protection in South-East Asia, which allowed different countries to learn from each other, and could be replicated elsewhere (2022–22, 2021–35). There were also a few studies and a survey related to the COVID-19 pandemic.

The implementation of the Migrant Recruitment Advisor (MRA) in Sri Lanka through the EQUIP project was considered to be a notable achievement by the evaluators:

> **The MRA functions as a web platform for migrant workers which provides peer-to-peer reviews of recruitment agencies in their country of origin and destination. Its implementation was executed by the [International Trade Union Confederation], through three national affiliates. The purpose of the MRA is to collate worker reviews of destination experiences and also accept complaints of migrant workers, if any. Its operation is now solely being managed by [the Sri Lanka National Social Service Organization]. A key benefit of its implementation, and the trainings that were attached to it on technical operations, fair recruitment, and safe migration, is the increased levels of interest among worker organizations in TIP-related issues, which was not given due attention or high priority prior to the project. However, the evaluators assessed that there are a few shortcomings in the implementation and maintenance of the MRA in Sri Lanka. It is clear that engagement levels are low and the MRA needs to be further popularized among workers. (2021–26).**

Poor performance was noted when knowledge was inaccurate or inadequate, and products commissioned lacked quality control (for example, 2021–10), or when knowledge produced had limited use at the policy or institutional level, despite its usefulness for beneficiaries (for example, 2021–2, 2021–3).

▶ Box 10. Criterion 2.3. Results for 2022 sample

Coverage: 80 per cent

Performance was strong for this criterion in the 2022 sample, with three quarters of the projects (75 per cent) generating good quality knowledge products that were used by stakeholders to support policy dialogue, including one quarter of reports with "highly successful" ratings.

Different knowledge products were produced, with evidence of their use for decision-making. Examples include, among others: (a) a tracer study that was used to feed into a training component (2022–10); (b) position papers; (c) market systems analyses of value chains; (d) analyses and studies related to OSH, including a Gender Assessment of the Mozambican Labour Market; (e) Enabling Environment for Sustainable Enterprises assessments of the business environment, which led to the elaboration of proposals to improve the business environment; (f) gap analyses in relation to the Violence and Harassment Convention, 2019 (No. 190), which supported the subsequent adoption of the Convention in Egypt; (g) an assessment of labour administration and inspection needs assessments, which provided a basis for further engagement and support regarding OSH compliance and training; (h) a Labour Market Inclusiveness report, which provided the knowledge base for the development of an evidence-based national equality policy; and (i) a one-stop-shop established in Cabo Verde to provide better access to market information.

There was also evidence of knowledge generation and transfer through exchanges of good practice, virtual conferences, subregional experts' workshops, multi-stakeholder policy dialogues, and various multimedia resources, such as Facebook pages, YouTube channels and web portals.

Several observatories related to the labour market were set up. Moztrabalha has played an instrumental role in setting up the Labour Market Observatory, a collaboration between the ILO and the African Development Bank, which is widely perceived as a key service for the purpose of planning and acting strategically, through the collection and integration of data from different sources, and the dissemination of regular information and statistics about the labour market (2022–3). Labour Market Information Systems were also established in Saudi Arabia and Cabo Verde.

Box 11. COVID-19-related knowledge outputs

Specific knowledge outputs were produced in the context of the COVID-19 pandemic, including:

- Revision of the National Employment Plan to address the COVID-19 pandemic;
- A rapid evaluation study on the impacts of COVID-19 on workers and informal economy units;
- Impact of COVID-19 on the beneficiaries of the initiative "Jov@Emprego - insérés sur le marché du travail";
- A consultancy project entitled "Proposal for a tripartite policy and National OSH Plan for Bolivia in the context of the COVID-19 pandemic", aimed to compile OSH regulations and identify the State's resources in relation to OSH (2021–39);
- A policy brief titled "Family friendly policies and other good workplaces practices in the context of COVID-19: Key Steps employers can take" (2022–2).

Capacity-building

Coverage: 100 per cent

Capacity-building was an area of good overall performance for a majority of projects (69 per cent), and no report obtained an "unsuccessful" rating. Positive performance was noted when there was strong evidence of capacity-building at the individual and institutional levels through various means, contributing to strengthened enabling environments as well as changing attitudes.

Different groups of stakeholders benefited from ILO capacity-building initiatives, through targeted measures that took into account existing capacities to adapt to their needs. Beneficiaries of ILO support included unemployed youth and apprentices, women, indigenous victims of armed conflict, migrant workers, refugees and returnees, workers in the informal and formal sectors, members of cooperatives, trainers, entrepreneurs, managers, labour inspectors, judges, statisticians, research institutes, TVET managers and stakeholders, tripartite delegations, diplomatic missions, overseas private employment agencies, government structures at different levels, trade unions, employers' federations, non-governmental organization (NGOs), community leaders and journalists, among others.

Capacity-building activities included classroom-based and virtual teaching, mentoring, team-building, facilitation of bipartite and tripartite consultations, development and adaptation of training manuals, technical consultation workshops, working groups, seminars, expert coaching, and the development of new modules and their integration into curricula of higher education and vocational institutions. There were (a) interregional training events; (b) e-conferences and virtual exchanges between countries; (c) translation of guides and other training manuals; (d) development of media toolkits; and (e) hands-on training on infrastructure, such as data management systems and tools, training on soft skills, establishment of communities of practice, overseas training and social dialogue platforms. Certain interventions embedded long-term advisors into government structures, in addition to providing short-term technical assistance, which increased ownership and chances of sustainability. In some cases, participants in training courses obtained scholarships (for example, 2021–26).

Various ILO tools and methodologies were used or adapted to build capacities in interventions, including Start Coop and Think Coop, Start and Improve Your Business (SIYB), Get Ahead, Skills for Trade and Economic Diversification (STED) and training on TVET system management. Stakeholders were trained in Teampreneurship, basic literacy, financial literacy, specific skills for trades, business development services (BDS), value chain development (VCD) and market systems analysis. The Training of Trainers model was widely used, including for Master Trainers. The ITC was often involved in the development and delivery of training for tripartite delegations.

The ILO was able to tap into NGOs to expand geographic coverage of training, creating a multiplier effect in terms of raising awareness and capacity-building (2021–17), and collaborated with other agencies and organizations to develop and deliver capacity-building. For instance, the Social Security Without Borders campaign was designed and implemented to raise awareness and teach about the access and benefits of the Social Security System in Colombia for the migrant population and host communities. The campaign is hosted on the Employment Without Borders portal, and there are more than 40 partner organizations for its dissemination (2021–20). In Honduras, institutional capacities of key actors were strengthened to promote social protection. An inter-agency course on care and gender was promoted by the ILO with the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) and UN Women for the Americas, to raise awareness of social protection policies for women and for other challenges (2021–11). In Latin America, the Regional Initiative Against Child Labour organized virtual training such as the online course “Putting an End to Child Labour in Agriculture” within the framework of the global alliance ILO/Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO)/International Fund for Agricultural Development. In addition, toolboxes on child labour and vulnerable groups were developed to improve public policies for the protection of these groups’ rights, and methodological guides and systematization of good practices (2021–13).

Targeting of different groups through capacity-building and awareness-raising was also done in the REFRAME project, which participated in multiple training and awareness-raising activities with government institutions, and supported the participation of constituents on fair recruitment training with the ITC in Mexico, Guatemala and Madagascar, as well as online. Consulted stakeholders who participated in the training events mentioned that the training allowed them to exchange fair recruitment experience and knowledge with actors from different regions. Journalists who had participated in the training on using the media toolkit developed by the REFRAME project found that the training helped them improve their reporting on labour migration issues such as forced labour and fair recruitment (2021–30).

In the “Improved labour migration governance to protect migrant workers and combat irregular migration” project, important elements in the project’s implementation have been building the institutional capacity and outreach of various stakeholders, utilizing existing infrastructures (such as the migrant data management system) and good labour governance. These stakeholders include (a) the Government (Ethiopian Ministry of Labour and Social Affairs, Bureau of Labour and Social Affairs, and Ministry of Foreign Affairs; TVET; and diplomatic missions in destination countries, among others); (b) overseas private employment agencies; and (c) trade unions and employers’ federations. A major achievement of the project is that the entrepreneurship and financial literacy training was included in the national curriculum for domestic work and caregiving TVET. This meant that many more than the targeted 1,000 migrants and potential migrants were reached (2021–31). Awareness-training on TIP and safe labour migration was also conducted with members and constituents from different worker and civil society organizations, to make them obtain the required knowledge to advocate for and assist migrant workers, and putting forward the role of workers’ organizations in countering TIP in the country, and creating another means through which migrant workers receive information (2021–26).

There were instances of ILO interventions providing support for the development of academic degrees. For instance, in Nepal, the United Kingdom Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Office (FCDO)–SEP project facilitated an agreement between Tribhuvan University and the ITC to develop a Diploma on Social Dialogue and Industrial Relations (2021–27). With support from the ILO, the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN) Health Institute for Health Development at Mahidol University, Thailand, developed and launched an innovative one-year master’s degree in Primary Health Care Management and Social Health Protection to enhance the capacity of practitioners in the region. Expert-led e-seminars also took place in this context (2021–35). In coordination with the Universidad del Norte in Colombia, a diploma was designed and implemented for the training of tripartite constituents in international labour migration (2021–20).

There were several examples of new courses being developed and validated:

- Within the framework of the Emprende Segur@ programme, an important achievement was the validation of a new ILO course called "Gender and Entrepreneurship". This is an entrepreneurial training course with a gender focus and a target audience of women. Another important achievement was the testing and validation of a model of entrepreneurship for migrants that, by adapting different ILO tools, allowed the transition from a humanitarian aid approach to a new socio-economic integration approach (2021–36).
- At a global level, SKILL-UP contributed to the development of a guide and digital assessment tool on making TVET inclusive for all. The guide and tool built the basis for a new ITC course on Skills for Social Inclusion, implemented in 2020 with 60 participants. The course has already been implemented a second time, in 2021 (in English and French) (2021–18).
- The establishment of the value chain assessment facilitators course as a certified course has now led to its adoption as a course that will be regularly given at the ITC in Turin, which enhances the sustainability of the intervention being integrated in longer-term training programmes (2021–14).

Capacity-building around international labour standards was an area of success in several interventions. In the context of an interregional intervention on "Sustaining Strengthened National Capacities to Improve International Labour Standards Compliance and Reporting", based on recommendations and observations of the ILO supervisory bodies inviting governments to improve and strengthen processes, the Government of Guatemala was eligible to receive training and capacity development support from the ILO, resulting in enhanced capacity in terms of better understanding of international labour standards and enhanced trust coordination and consultation among social partners, through the promotion of social dialogue; similar results were noted for the other countries covered by the project (2021–17). In each country of another interregional project to support the EU Generalized Scheme of Preferences Plus (GSP+) beneficiary countries to implement international labour standards, stakeholders that were likely to bring about positive change regarding labour standards were selected to receive technical assistance and training, and were made aware of the issues that affected their countries. As a result of the project's capacity-building efforts, relevant improvements in the quality of reporting were observed in Cabo Verde, Mongolia and Pakistan. Panama, Paraguay and Thailand also submitted their reports on time. In the case of Panama, timely compliance has been positively appraised by ILO constituents and other organizations. In Cabo Verde, during its second year of reporting on international labour standards, the project also focused on other reports that were pending in the country (such as social security conventions) and brought experts to these workshops to highlight the reporting needs on social security. Likewise, it included experts from UN Women and the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC) in the discussion on forced labour Conventions (2021–16).

Other positive examples included TRANSFORM, an initiative launched in the context of the ILO Global Flagship Programme on Building Social Protection Floors for All in Africa by the ILO and its partners:

> **Its prime objective is to build critical thinking and capacities of policymakers and practitioners at national and decentralized levels to improve the design, effectiveness and efficiency of social protection systems. The initiative combines innovative adult pedagogical approaches with top-level technical expertise and local knowledge on social protection. This methodology was found successful, and efforts are underway to replicate the model in other regions (2021–33).**

At a different level, the capacity of a cooperative and large-scale buyer of dry fish in Sri Lanka was significantly developed through the SURAR project. As a result, they were able to obtain the Sri Lanka Standards (SLS) certification. Furthermore, the government-owned Cooperative Development Department and the institutes under the Department have institutionalized the training courses promoted and sponsored by SURAR during the project period, and two cooperatives were created as a result of the project, one of which was exclusively for women (2021–28).

“Partly successful” performance was noted when capacities were not institutionalized systematically, and when capacity-building events were more of an awareness-raising nature and did not provide participants with opportunities to apply acquired knowledge and skills afterwards (2021–23). In some instances, evaluators noted that it was not possible to ascertain the impact of trainings and other capacity-building activities on better practices, improved institutional systems, and better policy and regulatory frameworks. In Pakistan, the approach taken by the ILO to enhance the capacity of the Sindh Employees Social Security Institution and other partners to reach international standards in project delivery was found to be unrealistic by the evaluators, especially due to limited local capacities exacerbated by staff turnover and changes in leadership, which limited institutional capacity-building. A revised approach to capacity-building interventions was recommended, with realistic time frames and specific targets, taking into account existing skills and experience (2021–3).

Shortcomings were also noted regarding several aspects, including (a) when capacities of key institutions were not adequately strengthened through ILO support, and participants were not able to implement the training received and gain relevant experience (for example, 2021–31); (b) when certain capacity development events were more of an awareness-raising nature, and participants did not acquire sufficient knowledge and skills to use them effectively (2021-37); (c) when too many issues were addressed at once across beneficiary countries, leading to overstretched resources and limited progress towards expected outcomes (for example, 2021-37), or when lack of funds were not made available to deliver additional training, thus limiting impact (2021-5); and (d) when capacity-building plans were missing. In a cluster evaluation of EIIP projects in Jordan, it was not possible to ascertain from available evidence how capacity-building efforts were expected to lead to improved institutional systems and better policy and regulatory frameworks for decent work for refugees (2021–21), while in the R4D project in Timor-Leste, although the number of target participants had been reached, there was limited evidence to suggest changes in knowledge and overall performance; even if training had occurred, training materials such as manuals and guidelines were incomplete, not standardized, and in some cases were non-existent (2021–7). Several evaluation reports highlighted the need to conduct post-monitoring training and assessments to better understand the impact of trainings. Finally, while some interventions effectively targeted, built and leveraged individual capacities, they did not succeed in institutionalizing them (for example, 2021–2).

Box 12. Criterion 2.4. Results for 2022 sample

Coverage: 100 per cent

All but one of the projects (90 per cent) performed successfully in regard to building the institutional capacities of stakeholders, with nearly one third obtaining "highly successful" ratings.

Positive results were noted when national constituents used knowledge from trainings to develop policies, and when training contents were viewed to be of good quality, practical and replicable. Capacity-building activities were conducted at different levels, from community level to national or regional levels. In several instances, needs assessments were conducted to effectively target support and tailor contents.

There was also evidence of effective capacity-building for labour inspectors in several interventions, as well as the capacity of tripartite stakeholders to engage in social dialogue and have better understanding of international labour standards:

> **It is notable that [the Syrian Arab Republic] is one of two countries in the Arab States region in which labour inspection is permitted to be conducted on a tripartite basis. The tripartite capacity-building workshops emphasized the possibility of social partners participating in labour inspection in [the Syrian Arab Republic], and have been the impetus for potential tripartite labour inspection going forward. In addition, the workshops built the technical capacity of tripartite stakeholders to contribute to the realization of international labour standards in [the Syrian Arab Republic], particularly regarding the fundamental Conventions relating to child labour and international labour standards relating to occupational safety and health (2022–1).**

ILO support led to improved and institutionalized capacities through in-person and online trainings, workshops, participation in conferences, study tours, internships and work experience placements, training of trainers, technical and material support, the establishment of start-up challenges and incubators, development and delivery of university modules, and the establishment of academies (such as the Academy for Women Business Leaders and the Human resources Academy in Tunisia – 2022-4). There was also evidence of initiatives that used ILO tools such as Get Ahead, SIYB, Financial Education, and Supporting Children's Rights through Education, the Arts and the Media (SCREAM), while others developed new training materials; in one case, the materials were subsequently used by other non-ILO projects, due to their good quality and appreciation by the donor (2022–2).

Weaker performance was noted when stakeholders had diverging views regarding the extent to which their capacities had improved as a result of ILO support, or the extent to which contents were relevant to their needs. In a project aiming to formalize access to the legal labour market for refugees and host communities in Jordan, evaluators found a weak overarching framework for the project, which used nine different training providers with different approaches, methodologies and selection of occupations, some of which had low market value or demand, while others were aligned with skills demanded in the labour market, thus creating wide differences for participants. Furthermore, there was evidence of beneficiaries participating due solely to generous financial incentives, and indications that many of the trainings had been rushed due to short time frames allocated to implementing partners (2022–10). There were also divergent statements regarding the outcomes of the SCORE certification process and quality control, with different levels of skills and commitment among experts. However, there was also evidence of SCORE training methodologies and tools being embedded in national strategies and programmes in China, Indonesia, Peru and Viet Nam (2022-5).

Box 13. Capacity-building initiatives and COVID-19

There was ample evidence of ILO interventions adapting to the COVID-19 pandemic in 2021 and 2022, with specific initiatives and outputs to address the global outbreak and associated restrictive measures.

Contingency plans were prepared and implemented. Working methods were adapted, leading to new virtual work modalities, including converting face-to-face trainings to remote online training, the creation of online work platforms for training and education, online seminars and conferences, and the provision of training resources such as manuals in digital format. In some cases, training group numbers were lowered to conform to government restrictions, and follow-up and coordination with beneficiaries were done through WhatsApp in certain countries. Furthermore, many interventions were granted no-cost extensions, which provided valuable time to achieve all planned deliverables related to capacity-building.

There were some challenges to these new methods, including barriers to participation, due to problems with internet connections, electricity, or access to devices such as tablets, laptops or computers required for remote learning. The ILO responded to these hurdles by providing connectivity assistance, paying for participants' internet use, providing electronic devices (tablets) to participants, promoting the use of cell phones, the development of videos or recorded training sessions that participants could access in their own time, and virtual scenarios for training and digitalization of training courses. These challenges showed the importance of close and active coordination with the ILO's field offices, which could complement online activities and resolve technical challenges when they arose.

Examples of adaptive responses are presented below:

- In a project supporting Decent Work for Youth in the Sahel, training activities were ongoing when COVID-19 restrictions were put in place, and these had to be temporarily halted. When they resumed, certain training courses were delivered with fewer participants and through social media. Apprentices who did not have smartphones were able to obtain hard copies of training content, and although training centres were shut down, certain apprentices were still able to access training at the workplace. A regional Forum on Decent Work for Youth, planned in collaboration with FAO, had to be cancelled, and funds were reallocated to an ITC online training on the same topic (2021–34).
- In Peru and Ecuador, virtual platforms were chosen for the delivery of ILO training modules, while follow-up and coordination were mainly done through WhatsApp. Although it was not the initial assumption, it was recognized that most entrepreneurs could not use various media devices (tablets, laptops and computers) to carry out training activities, so flexibility and adaptability of training partners were very important, and mobile phones ended up being the main tool for instruction. To respond to internet connectivity issues, the SIYB methodology consultant in Ecuador developed the methodology in videos that could be accessed by beneficiaries as their projects progressed. Virtual scenarios were also created for training and digitalization of training courses, and a Moodle platform was generated for a local development agency.
- The RBSA OSH project focused on mitigating the workplace effects of the pandemic, including by developing specific COVID-19-adapted labour inspection tools, and guidelines on COVID-19 preventive and protective measures (2022–1).
- Blended learning was used as a strategy in Colombia, and adjustment of the curriculum design to meet the challenges posed by the pandemic was carried out. The ILO contributed with advisory workshops on soft skills content and psychosocial support. Evaluators found that final beneficiaries showed a high degree of satisfaction with the blended learning training offer. Among the reasons given were: (a) opportunity to study, (b) existence of connectivity support, (c) flexible timetable, and (d) support with software and network management. The impact of such an approach was noted:

Box 13. Capacity-building initiatives and COVID-19 (cont'd.)

> **It is notable that [the Syrian Arab Republic] is one of two countries in the Arab States region in which labour inspection is permitted to be conducted on a tripartite basis. The tripartite capacity-building workshops emphasized the possibility of social partners participating in labour inspection in [the Syrian Arab Republic], and have been the impetus for potential tripartite labour inspection going forward. In addition, the workshops built the technical capacity of tripartite stakeholders to contribute to the realization of international labour standards in [the Syrian Arab Republic], particularly regarding the fundamental Conventions relating to child labour and international labour standards relating to occupational safety and health (2022–1).**

- The adaptation of ILO training methodologies (SIYB, SCORE and others) to a non-classroom context, which required revising content to limit teaching hours and the use of alternative means, was noted as an important achievement of the Emprede Segur@ intervention (2022–36).
- Innovative approaches were used in Egypt and Tunisia to adapt to the challenging circumstances of COVID-19. This is manifested through, for instance, preparing trainers for digitalized (online) training using the ILO modules "Get Ahead for Women Entrepreneurs" in 2020 and "Financial Education" rolled out in 2021. Having the training online meant that more beneficiaries could attend than if it had been a face-to-face training. The project also assisted the Chambre Nationale des Femmes Chefs d'Entreprises in Tunisia, in the design of its relief programme to provide legal, financial, fiscal and coaching support to women-led enterprises affected by COVID-19, and technical assistance to form a new Academy curriculum adapted to the new context. The project has supported this unit's work to help the 25 most affected women-led enterprises to recover from the effects of the pandemic (2022–4).
- The SCORE programme also developed two additional modules. One module integrated COVID-19-related issues into "COVID-19 Safety and Health at Work" on sanitary measures aimed at long-term preparation for future health crises. The module "COVID-19 Business Continuity Planning" aimed at helping SMEs implement the best control measures and ensure continuity of their activities. The SCORE Programme implemented a global enterprise-level COVID-19 survey of enterprises that previously participated in SCORE training to assess the impact of the pandemic on SMEs. Evidence shows that the SCORE programme used appropriate tools for online training, and provided practical guidance to SMEs to navigate the COVID-19 crisis (2022–5).
- Outreach activities tailored to the current context were organized in various countries to provide a platform to discuss and learn from peers and corporate social responsibility (CSR) networks concerning COVID-19-resilient recovery, mandatory human rights due diligence and free trade agreements. Furthermore, many activities have been repurposed to better reflect the necessities of businesses under COVID-19, such as the need for more information on OSH (2022–6).
- SMEs were provided access to the ITC course "Supporting SMEs during the COVID-19 crisis" (2021–6).

There were specific project capacity-building components developed as a response to COVID-19:

- The RBSA feature of the Country Programme Outcome "BOL112" in Bolivia was key to the process of adaptation and support to the new context due to its flexibility, starting with the definition of the policy framework to mitigate the economic and social impact of the crisis caused by COVID-19. The project worked with flexibility, meeting the information, training and education requirements of different groups of stakeholders. The OSH work focused on supporting the development of protocols, training and information, among others, for the manufacturing and mining sectors (2021–39).
- The "Healthy Socio-Economic Recovery of the Micro and Small Enterprise Sector of Sri Lanka" project was a timely crisis response, which started with the implementation of the first objective on OSH training, including components on COVID-19 health issues (2021–19).

Box 13. Capacity-building initiatives and COVID-19 (cont'd.)

- ILO and ITC, in cooperation with the WorkLife HUB, held a learning webinar entitled “Work-life integration: Successful workplace practices in the ‘new normal’”. The learning webinar aimed to showcase workplace practices implemented during the pandemic to support workers to balance their work and family responsibilities during the COVID-19 pandemic (2022–2).
- Outcome 3 of the Moztrabalha was added upon the COVID-19 outbreak in 2020, and enabled the project to deliver various analyses related to OHS and pro-employment proposals to tackle the effects of COVID-19 in the labour market. Under this component, a package of support was designed and implemented to support operators in the informal sector, mainly vendors in peri-urban markets (2022–3).

Positive unintended results also emerged through the response to the pandemic, such as formalization of the work of musicians and entrepreneurial innovation, through the creation of online shops, as well as skills development to produce new products (for example, masks and gowns). For instance, in Mauritania, with the onset of COVID-19, projects implemented new activities, including training of local tailors to produce masks and work gowns, based on World Health Organization standards (2021–1, 2021–32).

Despite efforts to tackle challenges, some activities and planned outputs had to be postponed or cancelled, and there were delays in delivery. In certain cases, attendance and participation in online workshops were limited, and engagement was low. ILO and ITC, in cooperation with the WorkLife HUB, held a learning webinar entitled “Work-life integration: Successful workplace practices in the ‘new normal’”. The learning webinar aimed to showcase workplace practices implemented during the pandemic to support workers to balance their work and family responsibilities during the COVID-19 pandemic (2022–2).

Normative work/standards promotion

Coverage: 97 per cent

Normative work and the elaboration and promotion of relevant international labour standards into projects was an area of heterogeneous performance, with less than half of projects performing well (42 per cent), three rated as “very successful” and nearly one fifth rated as “unsuccessful” (18 per cent).

The strongest performance was noted in two interventions that specifically aimed to improve target countries’ application and reporting of the eight fundamental ILO Conventions in beneficiary countries of the GSP+ scheme (2021–16, 2021–17). Normative integration and normative implementation work to improve the application of international labour standards and remove barriers to their effective implementation was approached through several means: (a) research; (b) gap analyses; (c) technical support to formulate draft regulations, as well as the strengthening of data collection and reporting capacity of tripartite constituents; (d) development and publication of materials on international labour standards; (e) awareness-raising on specific topics as relevant to each country context; (f) capacity-building of stakeholder institutions; (g) awareness-raising workshops; and (h) training. Several interventions also helped to promote international labour standards and advance normative elements in new DWCPs.

Successful projects were found to integrate the promotion of international labour standards in their design and implementation – and to be effective in building awareness, understanding, and capacity on international labour standards – with evidence of concrete results, including:

- In Thailand, a Ratification Committee for the Protocol of 2014 to the Forced Labour Convention, 1930 (No. 29) was established, and technical consultations were organized. The Government of Thailand ratified the Protocol in May 2018, and in April 2019 it amended the Anti-Human Trafficking Act, B.E. 2551 (2008) to include the ILO’s comments in line with the Protocol No. 29. Sri Lanka also ratified Protocol No. 29 as a result of ILO project activities.

- In Paraguay, the Council of Ministers adopted a resolution to ratify the Tripartite Consultation (International Labour Standards) Convention, 1976 (No. 144) in March 2019, which institutionalizes tripartite dialogue on issues related to international labour standards.
- Based on synergies with another ILO project, Cabo Verde ratified the Social Security (Minimum Standards) Convention, 1952 (No. 102).
- In Indonesia, the Government requested a review of the overall social protection system to assess compatibility with Convention No. 102.
- In Pakistan, an intervention implemented the Employment Injury Benefits Convention, 1964 [Schedule I amended in 1980] (No. 121), and aimed to emphasize compliance with international labour standards through effective social dialogue among ILO constituents; labour inspections based on OSH principles were instrumental in raising the standard and profile of OSH (2021–3).
- El Salvador adopted the "Analysis of the compatibility of Salvadoran social security legislation with Convention No. 102" (2021–11).
- In Colombia, international labour standards were addressed by promoting application and compliance with the Freedom of Association and Protection of the Right to Organise Convention, 1948 (No. 87). Convention No. 87 recognizes rural workers' right to organize, and protects their participation in rural development, in accordance with the criteria established by the ILO regulatory bodies. It also calls for improvement of working conditions, in particular with regard to safety and health at work, taking into account the principles of the Safety and Health in Agriculture Convention, 2001 (No. 184), for collective bargaining and dialogue with social agents. The evaluation also noted that the project design and implementation, as well as the technical support provided by the ILO, were based on and (in variable measures) provided inputs based on the principles and guidelines established in the Plantations Convention, 1958 (No. 110); the Social Policy (Basic Aims and Standards) Convention, 1962 (No. 117); the Employment Policy Convention, 1964 (No. 122); the Rural Workers' Organisations Convention, 1975 (No. 141); and Convention No. 184; as well as international labour Conventions that Colombia has not yet ratified. It also takes into account the Rural Workers' Organisations Recommendation, 1975 (No. 149); the Social Protection Floors Recommendation, 2012 (No. 202); the Transition from the Informal to the Formal Economy Recommendation, 2015 (No. 204); and the Employment and Decent Work for Peace and Resilience Recommendation, 2017 (No. 205) (2021–15).
- In a multicountry intervention, the ILO ensured that the new Labour Code in Somalia firmly builds on international labour standards, through (a) the first tripartite training course on "International Labour Standards and Reporting" requirements; (b) support to the Government of Somalia to produce first-ever reports on three ratified ILO Conventions; and (c) support to the Somali National Tripartite Consultative Committee to review the country's "ratification portfolio". Subsequently, the Federal Government decided to consider three new ILO Conventions for ratification (2021–23).
- In Guatemala and Madagascar, REFRAME's legislative and normative work was a major impetus in the ratification of some international Conventions (such as the Migrant Workers (Supplementary Provisions) Convention, 1975 (No. 143); and the Domestic Workers Convention, 2011 (No. 189)). Furthermore, at a global level, REFRAME contributed to defining common standards with the general principles and operational guidelines for fair recruitment and defining recruitment fees and related costs, a key document that redefined benchmarks in the field, and is now discussed by most stakeholders at the global level (2021–30).
- Knowledge products developed by the ILO Global Flagship Programme on Building Social Protection Floors for All (2016-2020) and associated projects have fostered the application of ILO standards, notably ILO Recommendation No. 202 and Convention No. 102 (2021–33).

In several cases, reports stated that interventions incorporated international labour standards in their design and implementation, yet it was not possible to ascertain how this was done, or what specific results were achieved, leading to "partly successful" ratings. Political resistance to enforcing labour rights and working standards was an important barrier to achieving decent work outcomes and promoting international labour standards in the Roads to Jobs project (2021–12). Certain reports noted that international labour standards were not addressed, and stakeholders did not see their relation to project objectives, such as in the Business Development Services for Growth project in Sri Lanka (2021–14). In some instances, there were clear missed opportunities to include international labour standards in interventions (2021–19, 2021–22, 2021–29); in others, normative work was included in planned outputs, yet activities did not take place (2021–21), reflecting poor performance for this criterion.

▶ Box 14. Criterion 2.5. Results for 2022 sample

Coverage: 100 per cent

Performance was good overall for this criterion, with nearly two thirds of reports (60 per cent) in the 2022 sample having successful ratings, including one third (30 per cent) with "highly successful" ratings, and only one report obtaining an "unsuccessful" score.

Strong performance was found when international labour standards were at the core of intervention designs and strategies, with specific actions in place to promote knowledge of and institutionalize normative work and the application of international labour standards through research, awareness-raising, policy advocacy and capacity-building, and through the promotion of social dialogue. In a project focusing on social justice in Tunisia and Egypt, workshops were organized with a wide range of stakeholders to discuss gender-related Conventions, such as the Equal Remuneration Convention, 1951 (No. 100); the Discrimination (Employment and Occupation) Convention, 1958 (No. 111); the Workers with Family Responsibilities Convention, 1981 (No. 156); the Maternity Protection Convention, 2000 (No. 183); the Violence and Harassment Convention, 2019 (No. 190); and gap analyses in relation to Convention No. 190. These were conducted in both countries, eventually leading to the adoption of Convention No. 190 in Egypt. Important progress towards ratification of Convention No. 190 was made in Tunisia, and the project also contributed to the drafting of a new law on domestic workers in Tunisia, which was adopted in 2021 (2022–4). Another project supported the development of national policies in line with international labour standards, and a key priority area was to explore the ratification of social dialogue-related Conventions – such as Convention No. 144 and the Right to Organise and Collective Bargaining Convention, 1949 (No. 98) – while the recommendations of the Multinational Enterprises Declaration were implemented in another project (2022–7, 2022–8).

Weaker performance was found when there were missed opportunities to effectively integrate international labour standards in interventions, and one project did not consider international labour standards and normative aspects in its design, despite focusing on formalizing the work of Jordanians and Syrian refugees, which should contribute to improved adherence to labour standards. However, the evaluation noted a negative unintended consequence of the project, as it financed and facilitated informal self-employment and the establishment of informal businesses (2022–10).

Policy influence

Coverage: 100 per cent

Performance for this criterion was mixed, but poor overall, with under half (44 per cent) of reports obtaining successful results.

Examples of activities fostering progress towards policy influence included capacity-building and training for social partners, awareness-raising to inform regulations and practice, evidence-based research, drafting and dissemination of policy briefs, consultations at various levels, the development of tripartite dialogue spaces, the development of research partnerships, and contributions to international debate and discussions.

The highest performance was found when there was extensive evidence of policy action due to ILO support, and engagement of stakeholders at different levels. This was the case for the ILO Global Flagship Programme on Building Social Protection Floors for All, an umbrella programme covering many projects. For instance: "Overall, 10 out of 21 priority countries have adopted a national social protection strategy; 13 countries have designed or reformed their social protection schemes, close to the initial target of 14; and 16 countries have improved the operations of their social protection system, more than double the original target" (2021–33).

Specific achievements linked to the projects under the ILO Global Flagship Programme on Building Social Protection Floors for All are highlighted in box 15.

▶ Box 15. Policy results based on support of the ILO Global Flagship Programme on Building Social Protection Floors for All

Coverage: 100 per cent

This box presents national strategies adopted by national partners and legislatives acts passed with support from the ILO Global Flagship Programme on Building Social Protection Floors for All:

1. Cabo Verde, 2018: Regulatory law establishing the Single Social Registry.
2. Cabo Verde, 2019: Social Security (Minimum Standards) Convention, 1952 (No. 102) approved by the National Assembly.
3. Cambodia, 2016: Sub-Decree on the establishment of the Social Health Insurance endorsed by the Prime Minister.
4. Cambodia, 2017: National Social Protection Framework 2016–2025 approved by the Council of Ministers and launched by the Prime Minister.
5. Cambodia, 2019: Law on social security adopted.
6. Cameroon, 2018: National Strategy for Social Protection adopted by the Government.
7. Cameroon, 2019: Characteristics of the national universal coverage system approved by the National Committee.
8. El Salvador, 2017: Régimen de Salvadoreños en el Exterior (SALVEX) approved by the tripartite board of directors of the Salvadorian institute of social security.
9. India, 2016: Maternity Benefit (Amendment) Bill passed, raising maternity leave for women from 12 to 26 weeks.
10. India, 2018: National policy framework on TB-HIV in the world of work adopted, with social protection linkages.
11. Indonesia, 2018: Ministerial Decree (No. 18/2018) on Social Security for Migrant Workers issued.
12. Indonesia, 2020: Law concerning Job Creation signed by the President, establishing inter alia an unemployment benefit scheme.
13. Kyrgyzstan, 2018: Government decrees revising the State pension scheme.
14. Lao People's Democratic Republic, 2019: Adoption of the Health Insurance Law.
15. Lao People's Democratic Republic: National Social Protection Strategy adopted.
16. Malawi, 2018: Malawi National Social Support Programme (MNSSP II) adopted and launched.
17. Malawi, 2019: Universal Social Old Age Pension Bill passed.
18. Mozambique, 2016: Law regulating the payment of the social security contributions by independent workers approved by the Council of Ministers.
19. Mozambique, 2016: National Strategy for Basic Social Security (ENSSB-II) 2016-24 approved by the Council of Ministers.

▶ Box 15. Policy results based on support of the ILO Global Flagship Programme on Building Social Protection Floors for All (Cont'd.)

20. Niger, 2019: Social security legal framework consolidated into a unique code.
21. Occupied Palestinian Territory, 2016: Social Security Law and its revision adopted.
22. Pakistan, 2016: National Social Protection Framework adopted by the Technical Advisory Committee.
23. Pakistan, 2019: National Poverty Alleviation policy framework launched.
24. Timor-Leste, 2016: Law of the Contributory Regime of the Social Security passed by the Parliament.
25. Timor-Leste, 2017: General Social Security Law (Law12/2016) approved by the Parliament.
26. Viet Nam, 2017: Master Plan on Social Assistance Reform (MPSAR) (2016–2025) adopted by the Government.
27. Zambia, 2017: Integrated Framework for Basic Social Protection Programmes (IFBSPP) launched.

The evaluation report for the Quality Assistance for Workers Affected by Labour Adjustments project, which aimed to bring unemployment protection to Indonesia, presented a lesson learned in relation to policy influence: "The main lesson learned from this project is that a well-designed and timely project focusing on policy which responds to the priority needs of the national stakeholders makes best use of the ILO's comparative advantage. Given the limited resources available to ILO (compared to some other development partners) a focus on policy is likely to provide most effective use of resources." Through the project, unemployment insurance was designed, put on a legal basis, and is in the process of being implemented (2021–25). A project aiming to develop a social economy policy in South Africa demonstrated that a consultative and inclusive policymaking process was key for buy-in and legitimacy of the policy implementation process, and included a range of stakeholders, including cooperatives and NGOs, among others (2021–29). Other successful examples include contributions to the legislative reform to extend the age of care for children of Salvadoran Social Security Institute contributors in El Salvador and a change of conception on social protection and social security to influence related policies, and a draft law for the protection of informal workers in Honduras (2021–11). In Paraguay, Argentina, Brazil, Colombia, Suriname and Guyana, ILO support promoted the design and improvement of public policies in a tripartite framework, and led to the development/update of national policies, plans or strategies for the prevention and eradication of child labour, and protection of adolescent labour (2021–13). In another project, normative integration work focused on promoting labour law reform and regulations and policy development in various countries, as well as the harmonization of regulations at different levels; the SURAR project in Sri Lanka enabled cooperatives to amend by-laws to be more inclusive. In Ethiopia, an ILO project contributed to and supported lifting the government ban on labour migration to the Middle East, through a shift in perspective from viewing migration as a negative phenomenon to seeing it as a means to create employment opportunities and reduce national unemployment, and generating foreign currencies via remittances. This was done through various means, including coordination with major destination countries and updating the legislative framework required for securing safe migration, as well as various awareness-raising campaigns of legal and policy frameworks for migrants and potential migrants (2021–31).

In several cases, the unstable political context and political resistance, compounded by COVID-19 restrictions, did not allow for any progress to be made at the policy level (for example, 2021–9, 2021–12), while in another case, there was no evidence of policy-influencing activities, reflecting weak performance for this criterion (2021–2). There were also several instances of evidence of progress of stakeholders in regard to policy formulation due to ILO support, but limited results in terms of actual changes, as draft documents needed to be approved and put into practice.

▶ Box 16. Criterion 2.6. Results for 2022 sample

Coverage: 90 per cent

There were mixed results regarding performance related to policy influence, with over half of projects in the sample (56 per cent) obtaining "highly successful" ratings, nearly one quarter obtaining "partly successful" ratings, and the rest rated as "unsuccessful".

Evidence of strong performance regarding contributions to formulating and supporting policy work was found when interventions provided assistance in elaborating and supporting the adoption of national action plans and the drafting and revision of legal frameworks and decrees, and when national institutions were more capable of implementing policies due to effective capacity-building and the promotion of discussions of key stakeholders regarding national legal and policy developments. Important successes included (a) the adoption of the Child Labour Policy by the Government of Saudi Arabia in 2021 and the development of a national policy on Equality in Employment and Occupation in line with international labour standards; (b) the development of national action plans on business and human rights in Thailand and Japan; (c) the creation of a CSR think tank for the seafood sector in Viet Nam, to convert policy dialogues into real activities; (d) the development of a national strategy for the promotion of decent work, a national employment plan and regulations for distance learning in Cabo Verde; (e) the elaboration and approval of employment policy action plans in Mozambique; (f) a decree establishing a Gender Equality and Non-Discrimination Unit within the Egyptian Ministry of Manpower; and (g) the adoption of a new law on domestic workers in Tunisia.

Weak scores were attributed in cases where projects did not focus on providing support related to policy dialogue and processes, such as SCORE (2022–5), or where there was little or no evidence of policy influence. In one instance, the time frame and design were not realistic to accomplish quality policy work, especially due to weaknesses in local capacities, leading to partially successful results.

Strategic importance of results achieved

Coverage: 100 per cent

There was good performance for this criterion, with two thirds of reports (67 per cent) having positive results considered to be of strategic importance by stakeholders.

There was evidence of achievement of strategic results through the promotion of social dialogue among tripartite constituents, implementation of international labour standards, strengthened good governance, public sector/labour law reform and human rights in different countries, with ratification of ILO Conventions, or strong progress made towards this goal (for example, 2022–16).

Policy change and adoption were a key area of success. In Somalia, in a fully consultative process, the ILO supported the development of the first-ever labour law, as well as the country's employment policy, both of which were subsequently approved. Furthermore, progress was made on a social protection policy, in collaboration with the United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF) and the World Food Programme (2021–22). The Social and Solidarity Economic Policy project in South Africa contributed towards changing the landscape in policy formulation, and has been highlighted as a reference point (2021–29). In Indonesia, support mechanisms for unemployed people were strengthened through the design of an unemployment insurance scheme and the adoption of a Government Regulation, in line with Recommendation No. 202 (2021–25).

The ILO Global Flagship Programme on Building Social Protection Floors for All led to various strategic achievements, including contributions to national strategies and improving policy frameworks and operationalization. There was evidence of the adoption of (a) a Master Plan on Social Assistance Reform in Viet Nam; (b) the implementation of a new social security system in Timor-Leste; (c) a pension scheme to be rolled out in Malawi; (d) the extension of social security coverage to dependents of workers in El Salvador; (e) the extension of social insurance coverage to workers in the informal and rural economy in Cameroon; and (f) the operationalization of a health insurance, maternity and sickness branch in Cambodia, which extended coverage to 2.5 million workers in the formal private and public sectors (2021–33). ILO support also contributed to the consolidation of social protection regimes and the creation of social protection reforms in El Salvador and Honduras (2021–11). Furthermore, the project supporting the extension of social health protection in South-East Asia strengthened the enabling environment for social health protection through support to the development of laws and policies, such as such as the merger into one national health insurance scheme in the Lao People's Democratic Republic, and the revision of the Social Health Insurance Law in Viet Nam (2021–35).

There was evidence of legislative amendments to promote inclusion (2021–28): in Nepal, a groundbreaking agreement on wages for workers affected by COVID-19 closures was facilitated by the ILO through a series of online negotiations (2021-27); in Sri Lanka, the ratification of Protocol No. 29 was influenced through project activities, and ensures the commitment of the Government of Sri Lanka to anti-human trafficking, and a new Counter Trafficking Division was established with 800 officers to be stationed at different ports across the country (2021-26).

There were important results related to the eradication of child labour, with evidence of achievements related to the design and implementation of public policies, plans and strategies aimed at its prevention and eradication:

In the period 2017–2020, some countries that make up the regional initiative (such as Paraguay, Argentina, Brazil, Colombia, Suriname and Guyana) have developed/updated their national policies, plans or strategies for the prevention and eradication of child labour and protection of adolescent labour, usually for a period of five years. Likewise, in the same period, some countries have prepared/updated/reformed their lists of hazardous work (Uruguay, Chile and Colombia) or are immersed in said process (Panama, Honduras, Dominican Republic and Peru) [...] There are also countries that have adjusted their regulatory frameworks related to child labour, such as Peru with a Supreme Order in 2020 regarding the administrative procedure for prior authorization of adolescents who work; [the Plurinational State of] Bolivia with a Law in 2018 that modifies the Code of Girls, Boys and Adolescents, and prohibits the work of minors under 14 years of age in any circumstance; [the Bolivarian Republic of] Venezuela incorporating aspects of working conditions and education of children and adolescents in agricultural family work in inspection instruments; Honduras with the regulation of adolescent work allowed" (2021–13).

Progress was made on labour migration through several interventions. For instance, a project in Ethiopia contributed to and supported the lifting of a government ban that was imposed on labour migration to the Middle East in 2013, and lifted in 2018. A consultative workshop on lifting the ban on regular migration led by the project was instrumental in developing policy inputs that led to the lifting of the ban on migration. Furthermore, the project contributed significantly to promoting the process of updating the legislative framework, required for securing safe migration and minimizing the decent work deficit (2021–31). At the global level, REFRAME widely contributed to defining common standards with the General Principles and Operational Guidelines for Fair Recruitment, and defining recruitment fees and related costs (2019), a key document that redefined benchmarks in the field (2021–30).

Other examples of successful results were noted in Colombia, where notable progress was made in the field of unionization of rural workers and the extension of collective bargaining coverage (2021–15); and in Pakistan, where ILO support set the precedent for the injured workers to access compensation and benefits, and promoted the establishment of better and safe working conditions, leading to the development and adoption of a Joint Tripartite Action Plan (2021–3).

Burkina Faso, through the regional project on decent work for youth, developed a national employment strategy, and the national plan for economic and social development also integrated the question of quality skills (2021–34). Strategic plans for labour inspection were adopted and implemented in several African countries (2021–8). In their contributions to a Rural Roads Policy in Timor-Leste (2021–7), workers' and employers' organizations included rural youth employment in their priorities, and associated legislation was enacted in Mali (2021–6). Commitments to act upon concrete actions to tackle barriers to youth employment were also made through the Decent Jobs for Youth (DJY) programme (2021–4). The institutionalization of recognition of prior learning was an important achievement in Tunisia, and progress in this area was also noted in Mauritania (2021–38, 2021–32). The ILO's mandate on decent work and sustainable jobs was included in the National Plan of Action on Jobs in Ethiopia (2021–5). The project, Applying the G20 Training Strategy, had a number of deliverables at the policy level that are expected to have a positive impact on national TVET systems, including contributions to national action plans related to education development and TVET in certain countries (2021–37).

The activities undertaken in the BDS4GROWTH project in Egypt increased the national capacity to develop a national programme for the development and upgrading of micro, small and medium-sized enterprises (2021–14). In Zimbabwe, the 2021–2025 National Micro Small Medium Enterprise Policy framework, under the Ministry of Small and Medium-sized Enterprises, was produced during the lifetime of the project, and incorporates green jobs into the agenda (2021–24).

Challenges were also noted in some cases, such as in Jordan, where although EIIP projects made tangible contributions to improvements in job creation and broader capacity development support with contractors and government officials, the short-term nature of work and contracts, as well as hurdles regarding the issuance of work permits, meant that strategic results were limited (2021–21). Political resistance and insufficient engagement with social partners led to poor performance (for example, 2021–12). In some instances, results were found to be useful by stakeholders, but were not used in a strategic context, thus obtaining partially successful ratings (for example, 2021–2).

Box 17. Criterion 2.7. Results for 2022 sample

Coverage: 90 per cent

Results achieved were found to be of strategic importance for stakeholders for two thirds of projects (67 per cent), and ratings were mixed, with over one fifth of reports obtaining "partly successful" and "successful" ratings, respectively, and over two fifths of reports rated as "highly successful".

Good performance was reflected in several ways, especially when there was evidence of strategic use of results by stakeholders to advance national development plans of action, the development of policies and programmes, and contributions to enabling environments. For instance, the formulation and approval of the national Employment Policy Implementation Plan in Mozambique was one of the main milestones to strengthen the policy and institutional framework, especially as it integrated 21 sectors into a single plan. The same project supported the development of different national institutes, centres and observatories related to employment, and supported the development of national strategies. In Cabo Verde, the ILO supported the revision of the National Employment Plan to integrate COVID-19 considerations, and promoted an enabling legal framework to establish distance learning. In Saudi Arabia, the Government adopted the national child labour policy and working plan. Progress was made towards finalizing a National Action Plan on Combatting Child Labour in the Syrian Arab Republic, and the SCREAM training was effective in raising awareness of children and their parents, as well as building the capacities of NGOs and business owners concerning child labour and the importance of going to school. In addition, the ILO's projects on OSH and child labour provided neutral entry points for the ILO to lay the foundations for longer-term development work, and position itself within the Humanitarian–Development–Peace Nexus in the Syrian Arab Republic (2022–1). There was evidence that different governments embedded SCORE into their national strategies, and that institutional partners embedded SCORE into their business development services.

Interventions with weaker results often achieved results that were not institutionalized, although they were considered useful by stakeholders.

Strategic relationships

Coverage: 100 per cent

Overall, there was strong performance related to building and leveraging relationships with different stakeholder groups and organizations: all but one of the projects (95 per cent) evaluated in 2021 obtained successful ratings; this was the most highly rated criterion in this meta-analysis.

ILO interventions developed and built on various strategic partnerships and alliances with constituent groups and institutions to achieve results, often taking a tripartite approach to include governments, workers' and employers' organizations, as well as other actors, such as development partners and UN agencies, embassies, community-based organizations, international and local NGOs, academic institutions and research centres.

Taking an inclusive approach to partnerships, involving partners from the early stages of an intervention, regular updates about project implementation, and defining clear roles and responsibilities were important to foster good working relationships.

Historically positive relationships encouraged trust and the achievement of results. The close and trustful relationship established with the Ethiopian Ministry of Labour and Social Affairs at the highest level was noted as the most successful factor for the success of an intervention to protect migrant workers and combat irregular migration (2021–31). Similarly, the ILO's continued relationships with key partners in Nepal contributed to results, even on a number of sensitive issues (2021–27). On the contrary, the ILO was not a recognized agency in the field of migration in Colombia, and had to earn its place among other agencies to implement its project; the project coordinator had to dedicate a significant amount of time and effort to build relationships and trust in order to achieve this (2021–20). The importance of finding local partners with suitable capacity was highlighted in several reports, both in terms of implementation capacity, and in terms of local networks and contextual understanding. In some instances, cooperation took time to establish, while in others, the ILO built on existing partnerships.

The ILO Global Flagship Programme on Building Social Protection Floors for All had a specific objective related to the development of strategic partnerships: at the global level, the programme established partnerships with more than 30 bilateral and multilateral institutions, foundations and private sector actors, as well as with the ITC (2021–33). A Development Partner Forum brought together organizations and donor groups working on trafficking in persons, providing an opportunity for partners to share updates and ensure that overlap between projects was reduced/avoided (2021–26).

There was evidence of programmatic synergies to ensure a common approach to issues addressed by interventions, and the establishment of cooperation mechanisms between different development partners and consolidation of inter-agency action facilitated implementation and avoided duplication of efforts and/or resources. In some cases, ILO participation was requested by other partner agencies, such as the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) in Mauritania (2021–1, 2021–32). In this context, the ILO's collaborative framework was broadened to include other international organizations and NGOs active in relevant fields, such as UNDP, UNICEF, the International Organization for Migration (IOM) and FAO. This collaboration aimed to maximize the results of projects led by these agencies, through consultations and regular meetings, as well as synergy in the use of financial resources and the conduct of national policies (2021–1). An important achievement of REFRAME was the strengthened coordination between the ILO and the World Bank, as the project helped to align agendas to some extent, overcome institutional differences, and produce joint methodologies within the framework of cooperation of the Global Knowledge Partnership on Migration and Development (KNOMAD) (2021–30). The creation of synergies between trade union organizations, international cooperation agencies and territorial public entities was noted as a good practice that broadened the scope of a project in Colombia and laid the foundation for its sustainability (2021–15).

Collaboration and cooperation took place in many forms, including face-to-face and virtually, through (a) working groups and task forces; (b) alliances; (c) networks; (d) workshops and panel discussions; (e) the joint production of knowledge documents and delivery of capacity-building events; (f) academic partnerships; (g) platforms for social dialogue; (h) advocacy work; (i) formalized agreements with the private sector to facilitate market linkages; (j) sharing of financial resources; and (k) taking part in institutional processes. The DJY project allowed the Initiative to organize annual conferences to bring a wide range of stakeholders working on or having stakes in youth employment. These conferences allowed participants to exchange knowledge on what works in youth employment, connect with new partners, and create new alliances to jointly address youth employment issues. Stakeholders found that these annual conferences played a key role in creating relationships with others working in different fields related to youth employment (2021–4). In El Salvador, the permanent collaboration of ILO staff with constituents during project implementation made it possible to achieve unexpected results, such as the universalization of pensions for older adults; while in Honduras, stakeholder and partner involvement guaranteed the possibility of replicating and scaling up the ILO's work (2021–11).

Collaboration was facilitated when there was an ILO country office, as it was easier for different agencies to coordinate on the ground, and adequate representation influenced the ILO's leverage in a country. In the Central African Republic, an RBSA-funded project cooperated with an FAO project on rural youth capacity; both organizations shared office space and FAO provided transportation to the ILO through a cost-sharing agreement. A similar set-up was found in Sierra Leone, where the RBSA-funded project was also housed in FAO offices, as there was no country office, and evaluators noted that this engagement set the stage for future inter-agency collaboration (2021–23).

Some reports noted the challenges of maintaining a balance between different ministries, instances of weak communications channels leading to misunderstanding between the ILO and its partners, and there were instances where engagement was mostly with one constituent group. An unemployment insurance project in Indonesia did not work closely with other actors on social protection and security, but stakeholders found the ILO to have its own niche and did not see the lack of coordination as being an issue (2021–25). In one case, an evaluation noted that institutional partnerships should have been developed at the regional level among target countries (2021–8).

Box 18: Criterion 2.8. Results for 2022 sample

Coverage: 100 per cent

A large majority of projects (80 per cent) effectively built and leveraged key relationships, with no project in the sample rated as "unsuccessful".

There was ample evidence of ILO interventions capitalizing on pre-existing relationships, developing new partnerships, and collaborating with a range of stakeholders, including public and private institutions, local and international NGOs, donors, UN agencies, implementing partners, universities and government departments, as well as the private sector and civil society. This took the form of joint or shared research, capacity-building and outreach activities, conferences and workshops, and multi-stakeholder platforms, among others.

For instance, the RSCA Programme partnered with the ASEAN CSR Network to produce a white paper targeted at governments, which maps the state of CSR in ASEAN, especially in relation to the labour dimension of CSR, and which identifies good practices and provides recommendations (2022–8). In the case of SCORE, prominent multinational enterprises such as Apple and Amazon proactively approached SCORE and applied the SCORE methodology in China.

A good practice related to partnerships with private actors was noted in Mozambique: "Alliances of this nature formed within the framework of the project with private actors acting as services providers and even financial contributors, allowed greater flexibility in the use of resources, fostered channels of innovation, favoured adaptation to the context, and broadened the prospects for expansion and replication of applied experiences" (2022–3).

Partnerships were also established at the local level, for instance with implementing partners in the Philippines, who had strong local knowledge and facilitated local engagement and working relationships with local community leaders and contractors, improving trust and access that would have been more challenging under other implementation arrangements (2022–6).

Certain interventions had weaker results, with national governments distancing themselves from projects, and evaluators noting that there were collaboration challenges with partner UN agencies in some contexts. Furthermore, while some partnerships were not influential during implementation of interventions, further collaboration opportunities were explored for future phases.

Tripartite processes and social dialogue

Coverage: 100 per cent

The integration of social dialogue and tripartism in project design and implementation was successful in just under half (49 per cent) of the projects.

Good performance was found when projects promoted social dialogue and tripartism through targeted training and orientation, supporting the establishment of structures, and building trust among constituents, with representatives from all constituent groups actively involved, leading to improved capacity and commitment to social dialogue. Social dialogue and its mechanisms were thus successfully established due to high-quality technical assistance from ILO experts, trust from tripartite partners, and a common interest in the issues addressed, among others. Several interventions successfully built in tripartism and social dialogue in their design and theories of change:

- In the FCDO-SEP project, a tripartite mechanism for dialogue and dispute resolution was required by the Labour Law, and ILO interventions promoted the establishment of such mechanisms through the work of an expert in social dialogue, who (a) facilitated consultations with social partners; (b) shared best practices from other countries; (c) helped draft by-laws and guidelines; and (d) supported employers' organizations and trade unions in understanding and complying with the new laws, and adjusting their structures, leading to progress on social dialogue at all levels in Nepal (2021–27).
- An interregional project to improve international labour standards compliance and reporting contributed to strengthening social dialogue across the project countries, nurturing a culture of social dialogue and tripartism around international labour standards requirements, and application and reporting requirements, namely through the institutionalization of tripartite committees. This was a particularly important achievement in national contexts such as El Salvador and Guatemala, which are characterized by low trust levels, tension and very weak capacities (2021–17).
- Social dialogue was also at the core of the Social and Solidarity Economy Policy project, as it aimed to promote consensus-building and involvement of the main stakeholders in the world of social economy (implementing partners, private sector, academia and social enterprises, among others) through stakeholder consultative workshops, as well as more informal processes, using social media. Successful social dialogue structures and processes were found to be critical to resolve important social and economic issues during the project (2021–29).
- Tripartism was embedded in the SKILL-UP programme through its support for tripartism at the systems level, as well as through directly assisting institutions to implement more practical aspects of tripartite governance, such as the Skills for Trade and Economic Diversification (STED) methodology, with different levels of involvement of social actors according to country components, and good participation overall (2021–18).

Other mechanisms to promote social dialogue and tripartism included tripartite stakeholder consultations, leading to the adoption of a Joint Tripartite Action Plan (2021–3), the implementation of Assessment-Based National Dialogues (2021–33), a study in collaboration with ACTRAV and ACTEMP to assess the status of social dialogue in Togo, and various workshops for workers and employers (2021–8).

The ability of the REFRAME project to convene a multitude of migration and labour migration actors around the table in accordance with the ILO's mandate and its tripartite structure was highlighted as a major added value of the project (2021–30). In Sri Lanka, although the EQUIP project was able to create and sustain social dialogue in relation to the labour migration sector and TIP, through the mainstreaming of the Tripartite Consultation Convention, there were difficulties in convincing trade unions to represent migrant workers, as they are not considered as legally representative of migrant workers, who cannot be paying members of trade unions, but solutions were found (2021–26). The intervention strategy of a project in Colombia promoted the progressive implementation of a national tripartite mechanism "to follow up on the implementation of the labour chapter of the national migration policy, and build the capacities of employers' and workers' organizations and of relevant public institutions to promote decent work opportunities for migrant workers" (2021–20).

The importance of bringing together actors from different groups for constructive dialogue was noted in several reports. For instance, workers, employers and the Government in Colombia, who participated in the Cochabamba Summit, highlighted the opportunity for social dialogue in a proactive environment, where workers' organizations of different sectors and sizes from the formal and informal sectors also participated. Participants highlighted the openness to dialogue and the opportunity to build together in a meeting where issues were addressed from a technical and not a political perspective:

> **It was an unprecedented process in [the Plurinational State of] Bolivia to be able to reach a meeting where the development actors sat down to dialogue, without ideological charges, trying to find consensual work axes. This activity marks a milestone in the development agenda, because even though we have not yet seen progress in the implementation of the agreed measures, for the first time we sat down to dialogue without trade union or sectoral interests (2021–39).**

Similarly, also in the Latin America and Caribbean region, the Regional Initiative to Combat Child Labour was both a cooperation instrument with a tripartite governance structure and a mechanism to strengthen social dialogue by promoting the design and/or improvement of public policies in a tripartite framework and generating consensus among governments, and employers' and workers' organizations, based on a shared vision of child labour. One person interviewed stated: "The greatest contribution is having been able to unite actors that have not normally been allies: employers, workers, civil society and public institutions, actors that the governments themselves cannot bring together" (2021–13).

While various efforts were made to enhance social dialogue and tripartite engagement – such as trainings, the development of the Tripartite Policy Forum and other platforms – these were not always successful (for example, 2021–12, 2021–35, 2021–37). Two global initiatives were launched by the ILO Global Flagship Programme on Building Social Protection Floors for All to reflect its tripartite nature, and to build capacities of constituents, while increasing their engagement in the development of national social protection floors; however, these were found to have limited reach and impact (2021–33).

The consultation and involvement of tripartite constituents varied significantly in several interventions, and there were noted missed opportunities to foster synergies among social partners (2021–4, 2021–10, 2021–14, 2021–19, 2021–23, 2021–28, 2021–31, 2021–34, 2021–35). In some cases, the involvement of social partners was more procedural than genuinely engaging, and there were several instances of limited or stagnant social dialogue, due to distrust between tripartite constituents or weak capacity of social partners, where projects were not able to make progress in this area (2021–11, 2021–22, 2021–23). The short-term nature of certain interventions was sometimes noted to be a limitation for appropriate levels of social dialogue, as was the case in the context of EIIP projects in Jordan (2021–21).

In one instance, while an RBSA project was initially designed to focus on the tripartite mandate of the ILO through advocacy work with different social partners at the macro-institutional level, the project was redesigned, and this aspect was put to the side (2021–36).

▶ Box 19. Criterion 2.9. Results for 2022 sample

Coverage: 100 per cent

Only two fifths of projects (40 per cent) successfully integrated social dialogue and tripartism into their design and implementation, and results were mixed overall.

Good performance was noted when projects included and empowered tripartite constituents to engage in social dialogue, through capacity-building, the establishment of tripartite and "tripartite-plus" multi stakeholder social dialogue structures, and processes that promoted consensus-building. There was evidence of tripartite Project Advisory Committees, national tripartite (and tripartite-plus) consultations at different stages of the project cycle, which allowed comprehensive needs analyses and adaptive measures during implementation.

In Saudi Arabia, a social dialogue assessment led by the ILO resulted in recommendations that led to commitment from the Ministry of Labour to establish a social dialogue unit within its structure, as well as to establish a tripartite council and conduct tripartite consultations to promote a culture of dialogue and negotiation, and a social dialogue capacity-building plan was developed by the project. Since there are no full fledged trade unions in Saudi Arabia, the project worked with workers' committees (2022–7).

Some reports noted that there were missed opportunities to promote social dialogue, and in one case, lack of employers' and workers' organizations meant that the project did not have a complete tripartite model arrangement, yet social dialogue was encouraged at all stages of project implementation and at different levels (2022–6). There were a few instances where one constituent group was less involved than other groups, and addressing this could have improved ownership and impact of results. For instance, in Jordan, a project formalizing access to the legal labour market for refugees and host communities was designed with a tripartite approach, yet there was limited involvement of employer representatives (2022–10).

Poor performance was noted for the WE-EMPOWER-G7 project, due to several factors, including (a) late involvement of the ILO in the design of the project; (b) lack of tripartite consultations during the design phase, which led to reticence from ACTEMP to be fully involved in project implementation; and (c) lack of interest from employers' organizations in some of the target countries, and lack of specific guidance regarding governance requirements meant that the governance structure was not composed of ILO tripartite constituents (2022–2).

Sustainability

Coverage: 100 per cent

Just over two fifths of projects (41 per cent) demonstrated some tangible possibilities of maintaining, advancing or scaling up intervention results, with some ownership and commitment from stakeholders, and some thought to an exit strategy.

Some interventions had strategies in place for sustainability of results at country and regional levels, which resulted in strengthening of individual and institutional capacities, evidence-based policy design, incorporation of project content into national curricula, the adoption of national strategies, policy and legislative frameworks, ratification of protocols and conventions, and increased awareness and understanding of key issues to inform future debates and discussions. Sustainability was fostered through the transfer of good practices and experiences between countries, as well as when outputs have the potential to be easily replicated in other contexts and regions. Embedding project objectives into wider frameworks, such as the United Nations Development Assistance Framework, or linking the follow-up of project achievements to other ongoing ILO or UN projects and initiatives, were seen as factors of success to promote sustainability (2021–17, 2021–26). The setting up of committees, technical working groups and communities of practice, with established working modalities and responsibilities, also promoted sustainability of results (2021–28). The willingness of donors to agree to no-cost extensions and to fund subsequent phases, as well as leveraged funds from other sources of projects, was another element of success (for example, 2021–26).

Interventions laid a strong foundation for sustainability through creating a conducive environment, through (a) positive relations with key stakeholders and institutions; (b) the promotion of tripartism and social dialogue, and the establishment of institutionalized mechanisms and units within existing frameworks (for example, the Training of Trainers Unit in Sri Lanka, in collaboration with REFRAME (2021–26)); (c) local appropriation of project results; (d) alignment with work priorities of project countries; (e) strong, positive links with other institutions; and (f) the creation or strengthening of partnerships. Involvement of key stakeholders throughout the project cycle also fostered ownership. For instance, the CONNECT intervention aimed to develop full ownership at national level and build capacities through a strategy of "doing together" (as opposed to "doing for them") with national partners. Although this meant that project activities took longer to be completed, it resulted in substantial national ownership of outputs among the two ministries of health in the Lao People's Democratic Republic and Viet Nam in particular, even though ownership among social partners was not as successful (2021–35), while another project in Sri Lanka included trade unions in its implementation, creating an interest and prioritizing the issue of TIP in their advocacy and lobbying (2021–26).

Clear, well thought-out exit strategies were found to foster sustainability of results in certain interventions by guaranteeing that the beneficiary institutions would continue their actions or enhance the results generated by the project (for example, 2021–20, 2021–24), but the majority of reports did not mention this aspect.

Concrete achievements included improvements (in terms of quality and timeliness) in reporting to supervisory bodies regarding international labour standards in all GSP+ beneficiary countries (2021–16), the ratification of Conventions, and the development of studies and research, as well as databases of information, which led to evidence-based policymaking. Documentation generated by projects was found to be an important legacy that could support replication in other contexts, and contribute to sustainability. Similarly, knowledge retention and continued skills development, through accessibility of online training resources, and the provision of printed materials to relevant stakeholders and beneficiaries, were also found to contribute to sustained impact, beyond the project period, and there was evidence of developed training courses and related products being used and upscaled. The establishment of formal study programmes in collaboration and through memoranda of understanding with universities, research and training institutions, and the development of training programmes by the ITC based on outputs from interventions, were other factors of sustainability.

There was a distinction in reports between prospects for uptake and replicability, and financial sustainability; the latter aspect was often found to be a challenge as, despite the creation of ownership, in many cases, financial resources had not been allocated or raised to facilitate sustainability (2021–21, 2021–22). Some interventions had positive demand regarding implementation of their outputs, including tools and sharing of good practices, with clear intention for implementation on a wider scale by local stakeholders, and interest from other initiatives (for example, 2021–14, 2021–30). Work done in Peru and Ecuador allowed for the replication of experience in other regions, through the development of other phases (2021–36). At times, there was evidence that constituents had made a political commitment to sustain results, yet this was not translated in the allocation of specific financial resources (2021–18). In Indonesia, the unemployment insurance scheme was established on a statutory basis, so it was likely to continue, but although legislation had been adopted, there was still significant work needed to support implementation of the project. The funder agreed to a no-cost extension, and the ILO would co-finance staff costs with other relevant projects; this was found to form a de facto exit strategy by the evaluators (2021–25).

In some cases, evaluators noted the need for continued support from the ILO to institutionalize project achievements and scale up or replicate results, such as for the regional initiative for a Latin America and Caribbean free of child labour, as resource mobilization was the main challenge for their sustainability (2021–13). In other cases, interventions had a clear strategy, such as BDS4GROWTH, where training beneficiaries would eventually be expected to contribute to a large part of their training costs through mixed funding models (2021–14). The Social and Solidarity Economy Policy project in South Africa demonstrated a commitment to undertake research into the funding opportunities to sustain the results of the project:

> **Funding opportunities were the social employment fund that will enable contracting the non State actors to create and deliver part-time work that will serve a common good purpose. The Social Employment Fund is a proposed employment fund valued at approximately 1 billion rand, which is closely aligned to the social and solidarity economy. [The Industrial Development Corporation of South Africa] has been identified as the home of the fund. […] placement of the project to [the Corporation] as its home is key to financial sustainability, given its already guaranteed funding from government and donor support (2021–29).**

There were different examples of ownership by stakeholders and beneficiary groups, such as in Mongolia, where three NGOs that had participated in ILO project activities delivered training on the topics of child rights, child labour and human trafficking in schools and to teachers, on their own initiative (2021–17). In Ethiopia, the Migrant Information Centres were fully taken over by the Government, and will be financed from its regular budget (2021–31).

Factors that negatively affected prospects for sustainability included (a) short time frames (especially for projects focusing on normative work and social dialogue); (b) low institutional capacity and limited human resources, as well as weak inter-institutional coordination; (c) lack of commitment, prioritization and interest; (d) frequent changes in government and socio-political instability; and (e) low involvement from the private sector, and limited presence of the ILO, as well as limited knowledge management and reporting frameworks that did not allow for institutional learning and sharing of information produced. The COVID-19 pandemic also disrupted priorities and required refocusing of attention and programmes in different countries.

A cluster evaluation of RBSA projects in Africa noted: "While the sustainability of the projects failed in the Central African Republic and Comoros, the ILO's risk-taking to engage in post-conflict environment was worthwhile, with the RBSA project in Somalia alone contributing to leveraging significant follow-up funding, which amortized the entire investment in the four projects" (2021–23).

▶ Box 20. Criterion 2.10. Results for 2022 sample

Coverage: 100 per cent

Most projects in the sample (70 per cent) had good prospects for sustainability, including one fifth that had "highly successful" ratings, despite the fact that exit strategies were rarely mentioned in reports.

There was evidence of strategies and actions promoting sustainability, including sustainability plans, for instance in Cabo Verde, where a sustainability strategy was developed following the midterm evaluation of the project, to ensure institutionalization of results and methods into public services; this strategy defined roles, responsibilities and resources for relevant partners in a participatory manner, thus promoting ownership (2022–9).

Factors of good performance to promote sustainability and ownership included (a) the development of multi stakeholder platforms for dialogue; (b) the establishment of specific units within ministries; (c) the development and adoption of laws, action plans and policies; (d) the ratification of ILO Conventions; (e) research outputs to inform policy decisions, awareness-raising and policy advocacy activities; (f) capacity-building efforts and training of trainers; (g) incorporation of project-generated content into the curricula of higher education institutions; (h) technical and financial support of intervention components by other organizations to continue or build on existing work; (i) the development of networks and project advisory committees that could continue advocating for policy changes; and (j) the creation of web portals, databases and information systems. The use of social dialogue was also found to be an important strategy to sustain intervention benefits:

▶ Box 20. Criterion 2.10. Results for 2022 sample (cont'd.)

> **"Many of the dynamics initiated by the project have self-replicating potential or can be easily embedded into institutional routines. This would be the case of several processes related to capacity development, awareness-raising, social dialogue, etc. It is believed that once they have been appropriated, as is mostly the case, they can continue as part of institutional routines. There are also examples of processes being continued (or can be continued) by other international cooperation partners: [Japan International Cooperation Agency], [the Deutsche Gesellschaft für Internationale Zusammenarbeit GmbH (GIZ)], Italian Cooperation. There is, however, a need for institutions to continue some processes and make new investments" (2022–3).**

Weak performance was noted in a project in the Syrian Arab Republic that used a significant portion of its funds to finance unsustainable activities – such as human capital, rents and other running costs for guidance and support offices – that were to issue permits to Syrian refugees. However, implementing partners mentioned that they were unwilling to build on existing work without external funding, and would not be able to issue permits beyond the project lifespan; this was said to be due to the project's lack of strategic sustainability features. Furthermore, there was little national ownership of project results, although this was mainly due to the humanitarian operating context, rather than to the ILO intervention itself (2022–10). Mixed performance was found related to SCORE III, where the evaluation noted inadequate time frames to achieve results, low commitment of senior management and governments, and uncertainty with regard to financial sustainability, especially in situations where SMEs were unwilling to pay for SCORE training. Nevertheless, there was also evidence of SCORE components being embedded in some national programmes and strategies (2022–5). Other challenges included low capacity of stakeholders, limited time frames and competing priorities.

Acknowledgement and use of ILO expertise

Coverage: 95 per cent

Most projects (89 per cent) positively acknowledged the ILO's expertise and its engagement with prominent organizations at the national and international levels. The ILO's expertise on decent work, labour and youth employment, and social dialogue, its experience and partnerships with multiple stakeholders, including UN agencies, local and national partners, were noted as contributing to project outcomes, and were motivating factors for stakeholders to engage in ILO projects. The ILO's tripartite structure served as evidence of its influence among governments, employers' and workers' organizations, and its capacity to convene a broad range of actors around a common issue was appreciated. Stakeholders and partners were positive about the value added by the ILO; its comparative advantages, including international labour standards, social dialogue and tripartism; and the quality of outputs generated.

The ILO was commended for its involvement in supporting the Government of Pakistan following the Ali Enterprises fire, where a model was set up to serve the needs of beneficiaries in the event of other tragedies (2021–3). In Ethiopia, the ILO's long-standing focus on labour migration played an important role in contributing to setting the agenda; this was compounded by the long and close cooperation between the Government of Ethiopia and the ILO, leading to the successful implementation of joint initiatives on labour migration, and contributing to important reforms in migration governance (2021–31). Strong collaboration efforts with government entities, social partners, implementing agencies and humanitarian organizations were noted in another report, which also highlighted that a representative from another UN agency explained that, by seeing the project's impact with his own eyes, he was encouraged to build synergies with the project and its donors (2021–12). In a different context, the UNHCR sought ILO expertise for a project in refugee-hosting areas of Mauritania (2021–32). There were several instances where the ILO took a leadership role and called for consultations with different actors, and/or coordinated with key international initiatives and partnerships. Its reputation and convening power helped to improve relationships between different constituent groups.

The ILO's technical expertise was also recognized by the widespread adoption of tools – such as SIYB, VCD and BDS (2021–5, 2021–14) – and other existing courses, curricula and manuals, which were sometimes adapted to the local context, with evidence of outputs being used beyond the project period, reflecting appreciation of the ILO's work. There was only one instance where limited ILO expertise in a project on TVET led to the outsourcing of technical support to a subcontractor (who was himself a former ILO staff member) (2021–37).

Box 21. Criterion 2.11. Results for 2022 sample

Coverage: 100 per cent

Recognition of the ILO's expertise was noted in all reports in the 2022 sample; this was the most highly rated criterion in the study, and there was evidence of prominent organizations engaging with ILO projects, including UN agencies, Amazon, Apple and the Asian Development Bank, for instance.

There was positive feedback regarding the positioning of the ILO's child labour and occupational safety and health projects within the overall Humanitarian–Development–Peace Nexus in the Syrian Arab Republic. The UNHCR was pleased to partner with the ILO in the area of child labour, given its child protection mandate, which complements the ILO's child labour mandate, and UNDP – after noting the ILO's input in the areas of child labour and occupational safety and health – invited the ILO to do more in the wider area of livelihoods creation in the context of Jobs for Peace and Resilience, an ILO flagship programme (2022–1).

Appreciation for the ILO's work, comparative advantage and expertise was highlighted in all reports, as highlighted below:

- "The project under evaluation also benefited from ILO's strong expertise on providing decent work opportunities, facilitating the access of women into labour market, taking specific measures to promote women's access to employment, and its experience of having partnerships and work experience with other UN agencies, UN Women particularly" (2022–2).
- "Stakeholders appreciate that ILO projects seek to marry this goal with the consolidation of fundamental rights at work and the progressive incorporation of international labour standards. In this sense, the tripartite model is regarded as a very valuable proposal to facilitate dialogue and enhance participation of the different stakeholders, and through this ensure their engagement and ownership" (2022–3).
- "In the eyes of many key stakeholders and partners, the Project's awareness-raising activities and policy level work is perceived as important and relevant" (2022–4).
- "SCORE unique features of working specifically on productivity and working conditions is perceived as one of a kind compared to other ILO programmes. The high quality of the concise and practical training – including the digital training package developed during COVID-19 – is fully recognized and appreciated by constituents" (2022–5).
- "Trainings were provided under the management of the ILO, and therefore reputation on quality and standards are a lifetime gains for workers. One local contractor shared that he got hired without even applying because he was known to have undergone training under ILO" (2022–6).
- "The ILO was particularly valued for its international experience and the high level of knowledge and technical capacities that proves beneficial to [Saudi Arabia]" (2022–7).
- "The combined legitimacy and credibility of the three international partners (EU, OECD and ILO) convinced high-level public decision-makers to be involved actively in the RSCA programme" (2022–8).
- "This pilot project was a major contribution to ILO's work on the informal economy, which can be replicated in other contexts and shared with other donors, such as the Donor Committee for Enterprise Development" (2022–9).
- "According to all interviewed implementing partners, the level of support provided by the project team was consistent and frequent, where project team members were always ready to support implementing partners in implementing their part of the project. As one implementing partner put it: 'We've worked with other international organizations before, and I can tell you from experience, the working relationship developed with the ILO was the most effective. They are always there to support'" (2022–10).

Resource-leveraging

Coverage: 69 per cent

Only one third (33 per cent) of projects were able to leverage resources from governments, donors and other partners. Evidence regarding this criterion was mixed, and reports did not systematically include the actual financial amounts leveraged in their reports.

Interventions with strong performance were able to leverage financial resources for the implementation of activities, and generate in-kind support, often to boost project results and develop follow-on projects or activities. Support was generated by creating partnerships with project partners and donors willing to pool resources through co-financing or cost-sharing activities and outputs, as well as sharing of staff for technical support.

High performance was found for the DJY Global Initiative and its partners, as they were able to mobilize substantial resources for DJY secretariat operations and country-level actions, even though the resource mobilization strategy had not been drafted, including US$2 million from the Government of Luxembourg to support work in the Sahel region, US$3 million for a competitive bid to conduct studies in Africa by the Governments of Canada and the Netherlands, US$250,000 from the PROSPECTS project financed by the Dutch Government, and US$373, 000 from the UN Department of Economic and Social Affairs, while the private sector and foundations also contributed financially and sponsored associates to support the work of the DJY (2021–4). In Mauritania, several agencies of the UN system mobilized technically and financially for the implementation of the project, with the UNHCR providing technical expertise to mobilize refugees, UNICEF funding equipment for the extension of a school, and others sharing their expertise during training sessions (2021–1). In Cabo Verde, the One UN Fund provided additional funding to cover the salary of a full-time national coordinator for the project (2021–16). In Sri Lanka, Japanese funding was leveraged for another project.

Some reports provided evidence of in-kind contributions from beneficiaries (raw materials, training space and time), and cost-sharing of trainings (for example, 2021–14), and some funds were committed by governments, such as in Togo, where labour inspection services received CFA10 million in the annual budget to continue their work in the area of the informal economy (2021–8).

Results from RBSA projects as seed funding were mixed, and evaluators in one report noted that "the concept of the RBSA projects as seed funding instruments is only partly valid and most likely to succeed in countries where the ILO has a country presence with a leadership role in the [United Nations Country Team] or with a strong donor presence" (2021–23). Nevertheless, there were positive examples of RBSA interventions being catalysts for new cooperation funds: a migration project in Colombia leveraged more than US$220,000; and in Somalia and Sierra Leone, where there was high donor interest (2021–20), amounts leveraged from inkind contributions were about US$14.5 million and US$10.15 million, respectively. Other projects in the same cluster did not leverage any funds (2021–23). In Ecuador and Peru, RBSA funding to respond to the social situation generated by Venezuelan migration to countries in the Andean region was used to attract additional funds for a United States Agency for International Development (USAID) project, which was designed to complement the initial objectives of the RBSA project and increase its geographic and population scope (2021–36). In El Salvador and Honduras, new projects were to be funded through a trust fund modality, for the development of actuarial studies (2021–11).

There was also evidence of project proposals being formulated to complement existing funds, and some reports noted that funds were in the process of being committed/allocated, such as in Ethiopia, where different donors wanted to fund pilot employment centres based on the YES Centre model (2021–5). There was one instance of an appeal for voluntary donations from private households to support social protection floors through the ILO/King Baudouin Foundation Social Protection Floors Fund (2021–33). Some evaluation reports noted that projects did not leverage financial resources from other institutions, but contributed financially to activities of other interventions (2021–22).

Box 22. Criterion 2.12. Results for 2022 sample

Coverage: 90 per cent

There was poor performance overall regarding resource-leveraging to boost project results, with positive performance for just over one fifth of reports (22 per cent) that addressed this criterion.

Evidence of leveraging resources through joint activities with other projects and partners was noted in several reports, and positive benefits were found when projects made specific contributions to align and engage with other development and government programmes. Specific budgets were pledged by governments to maintain ILO project outputs, including US$17 million from the Tunisian Government budget for a period of five years (2022–4, 2022–9).

EU funding was leveraged in Tunisia for a gender-responsive social security programme with a budget of €8 million, and project management played an active role in attracting support for three new gender-specific projects (2022–4). The SCORE programme used a "freemium" model, where 30 per cent of training fees were subsidized by the programme and 70 per cent needed to be covered by participating enterprises, lead buyers and other donors. The programme also helped individual trainers to form trainers' groups to apply for public subsidies and external funding, with funding from Amazon, Apple and H&M, among others, to deliver SCORE training (2022–5).

There was evidence of innovative repurposing of financial resources by implementing partners contracted before the COVID-19 pandemic, with some funds coming from the implementing agencies (2022–10), as well as contributions from project partners and stakeholders in the form of human resources, infrastructure, know how and other intangible assets in Mozambique (2022–3). Implementing partners in a joint ILO–UNHCR project followed UNHCR requirements whereby they had to integrate specific services if they received UNHCR funds. As a result, implementing partners integrated child labour case management into their pre-existing child protection budgets. Moreover, implementing partners adopted SCREAM, which continues to be implemented in child-friendly spaces by child protection facilitators, using their own budgets (2022–1).

IMPLEMENTATION PERFORMANCE AND EFFICIENCY OF MANAGEMENT AND RESOURCE USE

Implementation performance was addressed through eight criteria: RBM approach and 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.

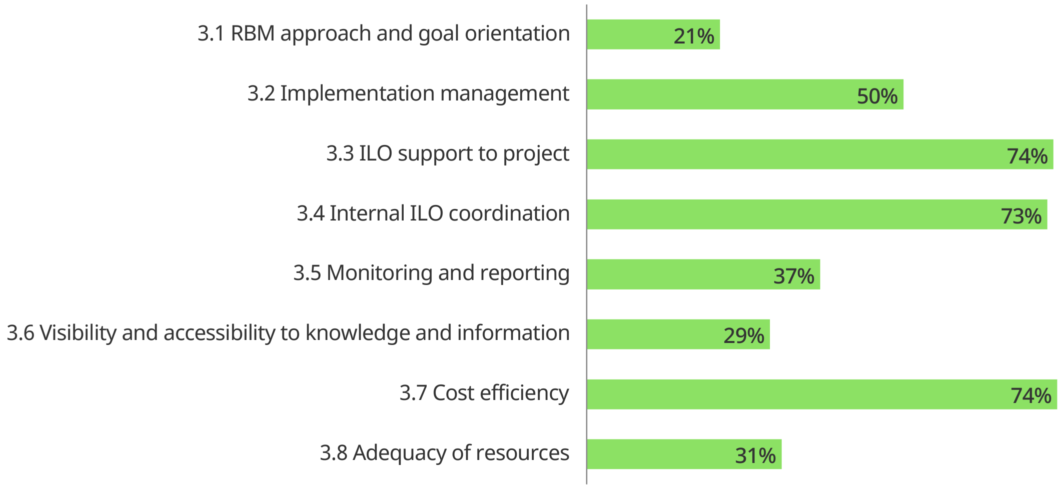
Results for 2021

The majority of projects had low-to-average ratings in terms of their implementation and efficiency, with good coverage for most criteria, as presented in figure 9.

Areas of relative strength were related to the technical, programmatic, administrative and financial support by the ILO to projects, as well as coordination within the ILO. The cost of achieving results was reasonable for most ILO projects, yet the information and level of detail provided in reports varied. Project management was positive for just over half of the reports, and there were limited strategies in place and efforts to document and disseminate knowledge generated by interventions, with less than half the projects performing well.

One main area of weakness was related to the results-based management approach and goal orientation of interventions, which had the lowest rating of all the criteria, with only one quarter of projects performing well. Project monitoring and reporting was another area where progress was required, with only 30 per cent of interventions rating successfully. Results frameworks were often present but had weaknesses limiting their use, especially in terms of the logical fit between indicators and outcomes, and with unrealistic targets; similarly, challenges due to inadequate indicators and missing baselines limited the usefulness of monitoring frameworks, and reporting mechanisms were not always well implemented. In many cases, some of these elements were absent. Human and financial resources were for the most part inadequate to deliver project outputs and objectives, with good performance in only one quarter of reports; this is to be interpreted in light of the many COVID-19 restrictions that limited movement and often constrained access to resources.

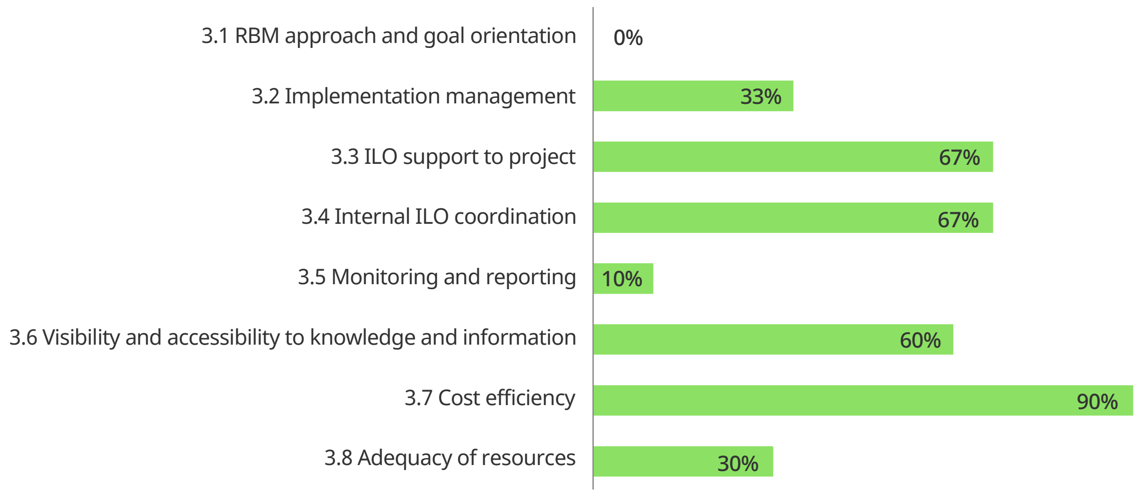
FIGURE 9. IMPLEMENTATION PERFORMANCE AND EFFICIENCY OF MANAGEMENT AND RESOURCE USE: PERCENTAGE OF MORE SUCCESSFUL SCORES BY PERFORMANCE CRITERIA (2021)



Partial results for 2022

Performance results for this category were mixed for reports in the 2022 sample. There were successful results regarding the quality of ILO support to projects, internal ILO coordination and cost-efficiency, and the majority of reports obtained good results for the dissemination of knowledge and information. However, there were marked weaknesses in the quality and efficiency of implementation management and the adequacy of human and financial resources. The main weaknesses were related to the RBM approach and goal orientation of projects, where no successful ratings were obtained, and monitoring and reporting, where only one report had good performance (figure 10).

FIGURE 10. IMPLEMENTATION PERFORMANCE AND EFFICIENCY OF MANAGEMENT AND RESOURCE USE: PERCENTAGE OF MORE SUCCESSFUL SCORES BY PERFORMANCE CRITERIA (2022 SAMPLE)



RBM approach and goal orientation

Coverage: 97 per cent

There was weak performance overall, with only one fifth (21 per cent) of interventions having an existing results framework with logical fit between indicators and outcomes, which allowed for regular monitoring of performance, with quantified, realistic performance targets in most areas linked to the project strategy. An inadequate or missing theory of change was noted as a challenge in several reports.

Nevertheless, good performance was found in several reports, with evidence of logical flow of the intervention design; simple, streamlined project results framework, aligned to priority work areas and reflecting the needs of target groups; and clear linkages between outcomes and outputs, with complementarities between immediate objectives. Indicators were relevant and had clear targets and baselines. One report noted that the framework had been designed to be SMART-G[22] (2021–9). A global project used country-specific logical frameworks to ensure that outcomes and activities were tailored to the needs of target groups in each country, while tripartism and social dialogue were at the heart of the project's theory of change (2021–16). Another based its approach on the Donor Committee for Enterprise Development Standard for Measuring Results in Private Sector Development and combined three frameworks: the project's theory of change, its logframe, and the results chains that reflected intervention activities and causal linkages (2021–12). In a few cases, results frameworks were adjusted to reflect the inclusion of additional outputs and activities.

There were many instances of poorly designed results frameworks, as was the case for a G20 Training Strategy project, for instance:

> **The project results framework was designed around objectives, outputs and activities and maintained predominant focus on outputs and activities. The major problem of the results framework is that it has obscured logic – the output targets didn't match their indicators, indicators didn't match their outputs, and outputs didn't contribute to the outcomes, while outcomes have no targets […] The poor-quality project document caused a mismatch between the project result framework and the project implementation on the ground, whereby the actual implementation was not guided and supported by the project results framework. It could not, as the project logic was understood by few people internally and less by ILO's national level representatives or the external stakeholders (2021–37).**

In other cases, while a results framework existed, definitions of outputs varied according to the logframe used, the frameworks went through multiple changes over the course of the project, and there was no reference to project outcomes. While some output indicators were measurable, some hadn't been measured at all, and no targets had been defined, with baselines missing as well, leading to significant challenges (2021–27). Weaknesses were also noted in several RBSA-funded projects, which were found not to have sound results orientation. For instance, one evaluation noted that components of frameworks existed, yet the logical sequence between goals, expected results and milestones and outputs were unrealistic or did not properly relate to each other. A cluster evaluation on employment and sustainable enterprise development in Africa found that the results chain of the different projects was weak; the link between activities, outputs and impacts was unclear; performance indicators were not systematically used and, when present, their quality was inadequate. This was compounded by the fact that the cluster was activity-driven, rather than results-based, and important project assumptions did not hold (2021–23).

22 Specific, Measurable, Attainable, Realistic, Timely and Gendered.

▶ Box 23. Criterion 3.1. Results for 2022 sample

Coverage: 100 per cent

RBM approach and goal orientation was an area of important weakness, with no report in the sample obtaining successful ratings.

Challenges noted included the lack of adequate results frameworks; overly complex, inappropriate indicators; missing baselines and means of verification and unrealistic targets; and inconsistent horizontal and vertical logic linking different levels indicators. There were also noted overlaps between output and outcome indicators, with unclear definitions.

In one instance, the theory of change of an intervention covered two phases, although they included different outcomes and outputs, with no clear demarcation between them. Critical assumptions outside of the control of the project's influence were not identified, and outputs were very broadly formulated and not tangible, or SMART (2022-4). Shortcomings were also identified for SCORE Phase III, in terms of outcome and impact orientation, although the programme's output orientation and output indicators were well-defined (2022-5). In another case, there was a discrepancy between the project design, which was logical and coherent in terms of results-based management, with objectives and expected results clearly defined, and the logframe in the original project document, which was an extensive listing of activities and was used to monitor implementation of the programme (2022-8).

Project (implementation) management

Coverage: 92 per cent

Only half of the projects (50 per cent) had well-designed management procedures for implementation of interventions that were reasonably efficient and effective.

The strongest performance was found when management had good institutional arrangements that allowed for interactivity with stakeholders and flexibility in planning and executing project activities; and when staff had strong technical expertise and experience, as well as existing trust/understanding with different stakeholder groups, and access to adequate financial and human resources. Good coordination and communication between project teams and stakeholders, and the establishment of participatory management processes, were found to "avoid duplication of work, allow the participatory identification of progress, facilitate the approval of products and appropriation of recommendations, and generate greater credibility in the ILO's actions" (2021–11). Clear roles and responsibilities, established and reviewed as needed, were also positive factors. Fluid and efficient communication between different parties was also highlighted as an important point in several evaluations, with some highlighting the use of social media and online technologies, such as WhatsApp and Zoom, as a positive factor (2021-13, 2021-25).

A project in South Africa had very successful performance:

> **The institutional arrangements put in place to coordinate and manage the project were well suited to successfully drive the Social and Solidarity Economy Policy process agenda. For example, the housing of the project under [the South Africa Department of Economic Development] and establishment of the Inter-Governmental Advisory Committee (IGAC) in 2019 and creation of the Office of the deputy minister were in essence indented to create infrastructural framework through which the project is properly coordinated, and all stakeholders mobilized to share their views in the consultative process. In addition, the ILO recruited a South African [Chief Technical Advisor (CTA)] with expertise in the Social and Solidarity Economy space and deep knowledge of history, context and the critical importance of stakeholder management in a contested society. This appointment of a local CTA with international expertise was further reinforced by the appointment of a government counterpart who was equally invaluable. He proved to be a problem solver and solution seeker given that he had deep knowledge of internal and external government process. Thus, a combination of such qualities possessed by CTA and government counterpart synergized the smooth roll-out of the project. Both being a good match, they were able to jointly address problems technically and procedurally [...] All the people in the key positions were able to relate to and appreciate each other and their various levels of expertise, and everyone liked each other and could have fun together [...] The open relationship with Flanders – the donor and the management team ensured the funds provided were well spent during project implementation. The management structures are reputed to have also been very strong and supportive to the partnership (2021–29).**

This was enhanced by the establishment and presence of technical working groups and project steering committees, which provided oversight, direction and lobbying. Good working relationships with donors and implementing partners were also an asset.

There were also positive examples of cross-departmental knowledge and expertise, such as in the REFRAME project, coordinated by the ILO Labour Migration Branch (MIGRANT) and jointly implemented by MIGRANT and the ILO Fundamental Principles and Rights at Work Branch (FUNDAMENTALS), where some team members had overlapping responsibilities across both departments, which was considered to be an advantage in terms of project coordination and communication (2021–30).

Challenges occurred when there were (a) limited staff resources to manage projects, compounded by difficulties in recruiting staff and staff turnover; (b) a siloed approach to implementation, lack of clear reporting lines, and lack of structured consultation processes; (c) no coordination meetings between different implementing bodies and overall inadequate communication with implementing partners; (d) challenges in understanding responsibilities among stakeholders; and (e) the onset of the COVID-19 pandemic, which led to challenges in communication, coordination and the promotion of good relationships, so that practical implementation was limited. Furthermore, difficulties arose when projects had both centralized and decentralized management structures, and/or when implementation management and financial management were undertaken in separate locations, leading to inefficiencies.

▶ Box 24.Criterion 3.2. Results for 2022 sample

Coverage: 90 per cent

Performance results related to implementation management were weak, with only one third of projects (33 per cent) obtaining successful ratings, and no report rated as "highly successful".

Good performance was noted when the division of work among project team members was clear, and each member was responsible for their area of expertise. Regular reporting and communication supported effective project implementation. The use of local expertise was also a positive factor, as local consultants and staff were very knowledgeable about the context and had access to strong networks, allowing for the development of partnerships with implementing partners in a short amount of time.

In the Philippines, the project management team was locally engaged, which was found to provide a distinct advantage in gaining access to and working with government counterparts and access community sites. The management team decided to recruit implementing partners:

> **The rationale is that the ILO project team cannot implement and supervise simultaneous implementation and engage the [community-based organizations] directly. While this approach had the potential to add another 'layer of management' on the project, it actually served as a useful model which was highly effective. The approach enabled work to continue, and meant that the project team, particularly the engineers, took a more oversight and guiding role as opposed to a direct technical role" (2022–6).**

Complex project design was associated with complex management arrangements. The decentralized structure of the ILO was also noted as a factor in making programme management complex, due to the different lines of supervision.

ILO support to project

Coverage: 97 per cent

ILO technical, programmatic, administrative and financial support was satisfactory in nearly three quarters of reports (74 per cent), with no project rated as "unsuccessful".

There was ample evidence of teams at headquarters and in field offices being committed to mutually supporting each other operationally and administratively. Project location within an ILO country office facilitated exchanges between project stakeholders, as well as cooperation and coordination between the ILO and other agencies. The appointment of specific ILO focal points to support initiatives and programmes, and leveraging of expertise from relevant Decent Work Country Teams, ILO departments and branches were found to be efficient overall (and especially when staff were paid through project budgets), although there was some evidence that in certain interventions, ILO support was not structural and proactive, but rather a response to specific demands for assistance, which was seen as a limitation in some reports, and as sufficient in others. Teams at ILO headquarters and regional and country levels provided invaluable support to certain projects, including in terms of quality control and resource mobilization (for example, 2021–9), and some projects with high performance were also able to garner high-level political support, such as the DJY project, which launched the Global Initiative on Decent Jobs for Youth through the participation of the Director-General of the ILO at the United Nations Economic and Social Council Youth Forum in 2016 and in other events (2021–4). Some projects also benefited from support and expertise from the ITC.

There were nevertheless variable results regarding this criterion, with interventions obtaining good support in some areas, and limited support in others, often varying from one country to the other, and several evaluations noted that a lack of ILO country offices negatively impacted support and created delays, although this was not always the case. Despite support from different ILO departments and the establishment of a Global Technical Team and a global Technical Support Facility in the ILO Global Flagship Programme on Building Social Protection Floors for All, evidence showed that there were perceived differences with regard to ILO support to projects at national, regional and global levels, with evidence of insufficient staffing to provide adequate support (2021–33). In some instances, lengthy internal procedures and administrative bottlenecks prevented interventions from achieving outputs and objectives in a timely manner.

▶ Box 25. Criterion 3.3. Results for 2022 sample

Coverage: 90 per cent

ILO support to the project was successful overall, with two thirds (67 per cent) of the projects obtaining positive ratings.

Strong performance was noted through effective collaboration, as was the case for a project in Cabo Verde, where weekly meetings took place between the project team in Praia and the technical, financial and administrative teams in Dakar, and regular support was provided from ILO headquarters (2022–9). Similar findings were found for another project, where the Decent Work Technical Support Team (DWT)/Country Office (CO)-Cairo managed sharing of knowledge and results of the project (administratively and technically) and provided technical backstopping. The project received support and technical advice (upon request) from the ILO Country Office for Algeria, Libya, Mauritania, Morocco and Tunisia (CO-Algiers); the Regional Office for Africa; ACTRAV; ACTEMP; the ILO Gender, Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Branch (GEDI); the Employment, Labour Markets and Youth Branch (EMPLAB) (EMPLOYMENT); ENTERPRISE; and the ILO Skills and Employability Branch (SKILLS) (2022–4).

Difficulties were noted when there was little communication with the ILO’s technical backstopping functions, and technical experts were not sufficiently consulted during the design and implementation of interventions. The absence of ILO country offices was sometimes a challenge, as this sometimes led to bottlenecks in decision-making and the efficiency and effectiveness of projects. The WE-EMPOWER-G7 project faced many difficulties obtaining administrative, technical and political support with the ILO, as the project had been rejected by many ILO divisions at the conception phase (2022-2). In one case, retention of administrative staff was an issue (2022–1).

Internal ILO coordination

Coverage: 85 per cent

Internal coordination was an area of success for nearly three quarters of projects reviewed (73 per cent), with evidence of positive interactions, clear roles and responsibilities, and sharing of information and resources. Strong performance was found in interventions that were firmly embedded in the past and ongoing work of ILO country offices, and were linked to DWCPs, created synergies and joined efforts to work on similar goals and issues, as was the case in the project below:

> **It was the joint action of the three then-existing projects at the Cochabamba Summit that allowed the ILO's work in [the Plurinational State of] Bolivia to be positioned and strengthened: BOL112 which assumed the role of organization, logistical support and support in the systematization of contents and analysis, BOL113 whose results in relation to the need to strengthen technical education and training especially in medium-sized enterprise workers resulted in the inclusion of the technical training axis in the 'Cochabamba Declaration' and in the resulting strategy document, and the support of the SCORE Project in improving the productivity of large and medium-sized enterprises." [Evaluation interviewee:] "The project had a small component related to OSH. The ILO also had no experience in dealing with an emergency like COVID 19, so we joined forces and began to collaborate between projects, between countries, to achieve synergies that would allow us to respond appropriately. In this sense, working groups were created with OSH specialists and we worked mainly on providing guidance for the labour sector and workers. The key was the development of protocols, training of social actors, getting to know the challenges of COVID-19 and joining efforts (2021–39).**

There was also evidence of synergies through the joint production and publication of knowledge products and training materials, and building on existing ILO work to do so; the replication of good practices, sharing of human and financial resources and mobilization of RBSA funds; coordination of activities to avoid duplication of efforts; and building on previous phases to maximize the use of resources:

> **The project was also coherent with other work being carried out by the ILO country office. In general, the project worked closely with other ILO country office projects to support overall ILO objectives. These included the ILO/Japan Project Industry Skills for Inclusive Growth (InSIGHT Phase 2) on Output 2.1. By doing so, the Quality Assistance for Workers Affected by Labour Adjustments project was able to reduce staff costs while the Insight 2 project was able to gain additional activity budget to deliver more activities. The ILO country office was, therefore, able to deliver more outputs to support the country more efficiently in terms of finance and administration. The project also contributed to the ILO– German Federal Ministry for Economic Cooperation and Development project (Protecting Garment Sector Workers: Occupational Safety and Health and Income Support in Response to the COVID-19 Pandemic) in collaboration with the Better Work Indonesia project (2021–25).**

In Ethiopia, when several migration projects were being implemented, a Migration Forum was put in place for the coordination and establishment of synergies, and the ILO Country Office Project Management Team (heads of different ongoing projects) meets monthly to share new information, good practices, lessons learned and upcoming changes (2021–31).

There was evidence of several departments co-funding activities through the REFRAME and FAIR projects, and one example provided was the addition of a budget line for the creation of a global platform on fair recruitment, which would remain online at the end of the project, and could be taken over by the departments involved to build on progress made by REFRAME (2021–30), and evidence was provided on how the REFRAME team collaborated with and supported other departments in different activities and the production of joint outputs. However, in one case, the creation of synergies between projects led to a concerning situation regarding resources: "ILO had pooled resources and coordinated between the REFRAME and EQUIP projects, and in certain instances, the resource persons engaged by these two projects stated that they were unaware of the resource boundaries between the two projects given that they merged seamlessly in providing support for project delivery" (2021–26).

In some cases, while synergies and cooperation existed, evaluators noted that this could be taken further, and that there had been missed opportunities to do so, such as for the ILO Global Flagship Programme on Building Social Protection Floors for All (2021–33). Weaker performance was noted (a) when there were different understandings and interpretations of intervention objectives by different ILO teams (for example, 2021–10); (b) when lack of information and ownership limited participation in wider initiatives (for example, 2021–4); (c) when there was a lack of strategic use of available resources at the regional level in favour of country-level work; (d) in the absence of regional or subregional mechanisms to prioritize interventions and align implementation strategies (for example, 2021–11); (e) when there was poorly articulated work among specialists; and (f) when there was limited or lack of engagement with ACTRAV, ACTEMP and/or gender specialists (for example, 2021–23) .

Box 26. Criterion 3.4. Results for 2022 sample.

Coverage: 90 per cent

Two thirds (67 per cent) of reports that addressed ILO internal coordination were rated as successful.

Good performance was found when there was clear division of work tasks and good coordination between different teams, units, departments and offices at headquarters, regional and country levels. There was evidence of significant synergies between previous and ongoing ILO projects, as well as collaboration with ITC.

An example of strong internal coordination was found in Saudi Arabia, where the project was managed by a Senior Employment Policy Specialist at the ILO Regional Office for Arab States, with the support of a national project coordinator in Beirut, and some specific activities were overseen by specialists from the Decent Work Team in Beirut. Components were managed at headquarters, while technical coordination included ACTEMP and ACTRAV, as well as ITC, and coordination of reporting was done in coordination with the ILO Partnerships and Field Support Department (PARDEV) (2022–7).

Insufficient communication and coordination between programme teams and ILO units and departments were noted in some instances (2022–8, 2022–10). Challenges were also noted when there were frictions between ILO teams, leading to less efficient technical and administrative backstopping

Monitoring and reporting

Coverage: 97 per cent

Interventions performed poorly in regard to monitoring and reporting, with less than two fifths of reports (39 per cent) having successful monitoring and reporting systems in place, one fifth of reports rated as “unsuccessful”, and no project rating as “highly successful”.

Successful results were obtained when monitoring and reporting frameworks were developed and applied using both qualitative and quantitative data to track achievements at different levels of the results chain. Relevant indicators and baseline studies were conducted as needed, and midterm recommendations were followed up, with gender-disaggregated reports prepared by staff at regular intervals to feed into decision-making:

> **The thorough qualitative and quantitative reporting has fed into the decision-making process of the project, which has yielded effective results. Despite drawbacks in communication and coordination between ILO and project partners, the monitoring mechanism of the project contributed to the tracking of outcome level achievements […] Similarly, the data collected by monitoring the progress of activities while keeping tabs on the external environment and political dynamics within the government, has effectively fed into the decision-making process of the project (2021–26)**

There were also results-oriented monitoring reviews for EU-funded projects (for example, 2021–16), and in one instance, there was evidence of the ILO and the donor monitoring project performance and results through an annual results framework and tracker, which included financial monitoring and reporting (2021–22). Some technical teams were given specific monitoring and evaluation (M&E) tasks, which ensured that data were collected regularly. The ILO Global Flagship Programme on Building Social Protection Floors for All put in place various monitoring instruments and modalities to assess performance and results, including progress reports and a final independent evaluation, that were not prescribed by the ILO's policies (2021–33).

While some interventions developed monitoring and reporting frameworks, in certain cases, evaluators recommended they be reviewed to better capture results (for example, 2021–7, 2021–8). In other cases, the means for data collection and sources of verification of indicators were not consistently defined, leading to challenges. Some projects used a variety of methods for monitoring and reporting, some of which were not consistently used, such as a Geographic Information System and a Wikiflow in Mauritania (2021–32). Often, reporting was done on the achievement of activities, but there was little information on output and outcome achievement, thus limiting their strategic use, and while some projects monitored country-level components, there were no indicators for the global and regional components. Furthermore, the lack of dedicated budgets and/or personnel for monitoring and reporting were limitations noted in evaluation reports, and there was sometimes evidence of dependence on implementing partners to collect data (for example, 2021–6). In some cases, there was no monitoring, evaluation and reporting plan in the project document, and no associated budget line to allocate to monitoring in the field, while in others this information was in the project document, yet nothing was implemented:

> **Without a guiding framework, the project relied on a series of logframes, outcomes and milestones that were adjusted over the course of the project. Adjustments were made in response to changing requirements of the FCDO, changing priorities, and the COVID-19 context. By and large, the objectives lacked numerical or time targets. The result is that it is possible to inventory activities and an impressive volume of knowledge products. But assessing whether these contributed to measurable, intended change is more problematic [...] Furthermore, even when targets were set, the activities changed. Since the logframe and milestones were revised multiple times, it seems like the programme was not reaching the milestones set, but bringing the milestones towards it to justify achievements (2021–27).**

RBSA-funded interventions were noted to have less stringent requirements, yet one project used monitoring tools, such as a semi-annual progress report and a dashboard, to monitor progress in the execution of activities and products (for example, 2021–20). Another evaluation noted that project logframes did not systematically contain performance indicators, and where available, their quality was inadequate, lacking SMART criteria, with missing targets and baselines. While each project took a different approach to results reporting, the evaluators found that, overall, the project designs of the RBSA projects were "M&E blind", and highlighted that a recent review of RBSA projects in the ILO had described monitoring and reporting as "inappropriate" (2021–23).

When projects had undergone midterm evaluations, many reports noted that the recommendations were not all fully addressed (for example, 2021–5). In 20 per cent of cases, there were no functioning mechanisms for monitoring and reporting of project results, or indicators were so poorly designed that the frameworks could not be used, which made it difficult to assess progress or use data for organizational learning purposes, leading to unsuccessful performance.

Box 27. Criterion 3.5. Results for 2022 sample

Coverage: 100 per cent

Only one project (10 per cent) obtained successful ratings regarding the presence and use of monitoring and reporting frameworks.

While some interventions planned on preparing M&E plans at the inception phase, this never materialized in practice, leading to challenges in assessing progress. Some projects relied on the reporting of implementing partners, with the quality of monitoring depending on external M&E practices and frameworks (for example, 2022–10). Weaknesses noted in reports included (a) the absence of baselines and targets; (b) inappropriate, poorly defined or missing indicators; (c) lack of human resources for M&E activities; (d) a focus on activity/output-based monitoring, rather than monitoring of outcomes; and (e) overly complex M&E systems and databases. Several recommendations in reports noted the need to develop well-structured monitoring and reporting systems; this was also the case in midterm evaluations, such as the one for SCORE, which highlighted that indicators used did not capture impact-related evidence (2022–5), while several other reports noted that there was little awareness of midterm evaluation recommendations among stakeholders.

Various types of reporting were done – including interim reports, periodic reports to programme management teams and country-level reports for DWCPs and UN frameworks; yearly performance reports; and progress reports to donors – however, one report noted that reporting was only done partially, with one project having a midterm progress report but no final report, while another had no midterm progress report and the final progress report had been submitted after the evaluation had been conducted (2022–1). In one intervention, the monitoring mechanism was set up by UN Women as leading agency, and the ILO also closely monitored activities under its responsibility through an internal monitoring system. Furthermore, EU Partnership Instrument Monitoring systems (PIMs) were developed and implemented by the ILO for monitoring outputs (2022–2). The lack of formal requirements for M&E frameworks in RBSA project design was noted as a weakness.

Visibility and accessibility of knowledge and information

Coverage: 97 per cent

Less than one third of interventions (29 per cent) had strategies and approaches in place to document and disseminate knowledge and information internally and externally, and nearly one quarter of reports were rated as "unsuccessful".

Dissemination of information was done in various ways, including (a) the use of social media; (b) radio shows; (c) visual materials such as posters and infographics; (d) booklets; (e) media applications; (f) videos; (g) movies; (h) publications; (i) online education platforms; (j) topic-specific web platforms providing access to project reports and studies; (k) workshop programmes and project-related news; (l) visits by the press and donor delegations; (m) training of journalists and development of media toolkits; (n) competitions; (o) public endorsement of initiatives by the UN Secretary General and the ILO Director-General at different events; (p) participation of project staff in different events and initiatives for outreach and to raise visibility; (q) organization of workshops, summits and other international forums; (r) the development of websites; and (s) access to online translation services, campaigns and street dramas, among others.

The [Asia Foundation (TAF)] initiated the Development Partner Forum in 2018, which brought together organizations and donor groups working on TIP, such as the US Embassy, IOM, British High Commission, Save the Children, Canadian Embassy, Swiss Embassy and UNODC. As per project partners, this forum achieved the objectives of assessing the needs in the field of TIP, information sharing in order to avoid overlap, and continuing the discourses and discussions on TIP (TAF, 2021). More specifically for EQUIP, the forum has provided an opportunity for the partners to share updates on the project, provide valuable insights on areas of intervention, and establish their TIP presence among the donor agencies. The project-related documents and discussions with project partners revealed that this forum to a large extent ensured that overlap between projects was avoided/reduced […] The implementation of the Migrant Recruitment Advisor (MRA) in Sri Lanka through the project is another notable achievement. The MRA functions as a web platform for migrant workers which provides peer-to-peer reviews of recruitment agencies in their country of origin and destination" (2021–26).

There was evidence of strategic communication and visibility plans in some instances, although these were sometimes led by partner agencies (for example, 2021–2, 2021–20). Projects worked with external partners and consultants, as well as project stakeholders and partner organizations, for graphic design and content adaptation, and developing appropriate communications tools. In countries with connection or technological problems, some interventions, such as the Regional Initiative to Combat Child Labour in Latin America and the Caribbean, made an effort to ensure that they could participate in monthly meetings, trainings and other online spaces (2021–13). There was sometimes a gap between the visibility of interventions at international/global levels and at country levels, with evaluators noting that beneficiaries were not aware of specific initiatives.

Poor performance was associated with interventions that did not share their outputs with project stakeholders and did not organize stakeholder knowledge-sharing or restitution workshops or trainings to facilitate their understanding; there were inadequate strategies for the dissemination of results achieved and missed opportunities to position key intervention issues in the national, regional and global cooperation agendas. There was evidence of low interest in promoting knowledge management; lack of visibility of the ILO's technical inputs and lessons learned were not captured or shared. In some cases, websites existed, but were not updated, thus limiting their usefulness. Finally, several evaluation reports noted the need for projects to develop a communications strategy at the inception phase and ensure visibility of outputs as soon as implementation began. In one instance, communications tools were planned, but related activities were cancelled following the midterm evaluation (2021–8).

Box 28. Criterion 3.6. Results for 2022 sample

Coverage: 100 per cent

There were mixed yet positive results regarding visibility and accessibility of knowledge and information, with nearly two thirds of reports providing evidence of successful performance (60 per cent).

Knowledge and information were shared through various means – including webpages in multiple languages, social media campaigns adapted to country contexts, impact stories, position papers and reports shared at key events and through partner websites, press releases, radio programmes, videos, local and international publication platforms, event materials, conferences and workshops – with specific visual identity.

Certain interventions had comprehensive communications and visibility strategies. This was the case for the RSCA in Asia and the Moztabalha project in Mozambique, where specific human and financial resources were allocated to lead and coordinate efforts to share relevant knowledge management tools, as well as promotional materials, to various audiences (2022–3, 2022–8). This allowed the intervention to acquire a high-profile presence in the public domain, which in turn led to improved appropriation and replication of the national employment policy and implementation plan (2022–3). High visibility and communication during implementation also provided opportunities to solicit funds from other donors and leverage other existing interventions (for example, 2022–6).

There were also instances where interventions could have done more to reach out and promote their work, as they had low visibility locally and globally, which had an effect on sustainability. When final outputs were not shared, social partners did not engage as much, thus limiting ownership. Finally, certain interventions did not have a formal approach or strategy to document and disseminate knowledge.

Cost-efficiency

Coverage: 90 per cent

Results were achieved efficiently for nearly three quarters of projects reviewed (74 per cent), but no report obtained a “highly successful” rating. Many were noted as having delivered good value for money, and there was evidence of resources spent having catalytic effects, which made it possible to mobilize funding from new donors, as well as the establishment of coordination and synergies with other ILO and UN projects, leading to cost-sharing. Other strategies were to share administrative staff and collaborate with local consultants and firms, as well as regional ILO experts and consultants, who also came for other programmes, joint work-planning, and the use of cluster evaluations. There were several examples of no-cost extensions, often related to the COVID-19 pandemic, and some interventions reduced their costs due to limited travel, in-person meetings and other related expenses during this time.

In some cases, expenses were not seen as fully justified by evaluators. For instance, the Road to Jobs project relied on local capacities for the provision of skills development and entrepreneurship training, and training local staff if needed, thus aiming to free up resources for other activities. However, available evidence led the evaluators to question whether this recruitment strategy was actually efficient in terms of using internal resources (2021–12). In Ethiopia, several expenses were flagged as being expensive solutions, including the use of project staff to supervise capacity-building training sessions, and there were significant travel expenditures, with some that were found to be justified, as they created a solid platform for future cooperation; yet others were not as strategically important, and other, cheaper alternatives could have been used (2021–31). This was also found in a different evaluation, where there was disproportionate attendance of representatives from a single country in regional events (2021–37). Weak results were noted when financial resources were not allocated strategically, with budgets that were not results-based, and the quality and quantity of outputs were inadequate in relation to the financial resources used (2021–8, 2021–9). In Haiti, the application of COVID-19 safety measures used one fifth of the project budget (2021–9).

Box 29. Criterion 3.6. Results for 2022 sample

Coverage: 100 per cent

A large majority of projects (90 per cent) were found to be cost-effective, with none rated as unsuccessful.

Several projects were successful in leveraging new financial resources, and participating in cost-sharing activities, leading to economies of scale. Because of COVID-19 restrictions, many interventions obtained no cost extensions, and in some cases, reduction in expenditures – such as costs of field missions, travel, logistics and venues, among others – were reallocated to expenditures for enhanced training, research, workshops, and staff and equipment costs.

The use of locally hired implementation and management teams helped maintain costs at a reasonable level in the Philippines (2022–6). There was one instance where an intervention in Jordan financed operating expenses, including salaries and rents, thus limiting their sustainability and cost-effectiveness (2022–10).

Adequacy of resources

Coverage: 100 per cent

Less than one third of projects (31 per cent) had sufficient human and financial resources available to deliver project outputs, with project funds delivered in a timely manner, and no project was rated as "highly successful", revealing another important area of weakness.

Projects with good performance were found to have strategically planned, well-managed resources, both in terms of financial resources, and in terms of human resources, which were sufficient to deliver expected outputs and outcomes in a timely manner. In some cases, specific positions were included in grant applications, to ensure that the project would not be understaffed (for example, 2021–14). In some cases, country directors and Decent Work Technical Support Teams had to support projects while project team members were being recruited. The recruitment of highly qualified staff with good networks, as well as interns, also contributed to efficiency.

A majority of evaluations noted that the financial and human resources available were not fully adequate or sufficient to meet project objectives and requests for ILO assistance, one report noting a mismatch between available resources and stakeholder expectations (2021–16). In one intervention, the project team in one country did not have access to the ILO Integrated Resource Information System (IRIS), and depended on a different country for financial issues, leading to delays in implementation (2021–34). Challenges were also found in the Plurinational State of Bolivia:

> **The Project team in [the Plurinational State of] Bolivia consisted of a coordinator and intermittent administrative support; there was no technical support, despite the fact that the Project budget, according to the characteristics of the funds and the size of the budget, would have allowed the hiring of this person. This aspect has compromised aspects related to the monitoring of activities, ordering and reporting of information, knowledge management and socialization of activities (2021–39).**

Regarding human resources, there were several instances of ILO staff having competing priorities, and finding they did not have the requisite human resources to carry out the tasks expected of them, leading to delays in implementation. Furthermore, high staff turnover led to challenges in different projects.

Inadequate staffing and lack of dedicated capacity were also noted as an important challenge for the ILO Global Flagship Programme on Building Social Protection Floors for All, especially related to programme management and coordination-related functions such as partnerships, communications, knowledge management and reporting. Over the years, support was expanded from 21 to more than 50 countries, yet staffing was not adapted accordingly, leading to important limitations in capacities; this constraint was perceived across the entire programme, but especially at country level (2021–33).

Certain evaluations noted that projects did not have sufficient financial resources to implement planned activities. There were often delays observed related to disbursements, recruiting staff and planning activities. While COVID19 contributed to a slowdown in implementation of certain interventions, there were also other delays due to management and implementation arrangements that could have been addressed; and in one case, delays in financial disbursements led to the revision of work plans, which led to additional work for ILO staff, while in another, this led to expedited repurposing of existing staff to avoid time-consuming recruitment procedures (2021–19). In a project in Mali, participants were invited to Bamako to attend trainings, but participants had to cover their own room and board expenses, and were only reimbursed several months later, leading to tensions with government stakeholders (2021–6).

The combination of ILO and external procedures related to finances negatively affected EIIP projects in Jordan:

> **The application of finance forms (ILO tools for municipalities to complete), which are often not understood or utilized, exacerbates delays and requires a significant amount of time to follow up [...] The short duration of phases coupled with overlaps has caused significant challenges for finance and administration. This is primarily due to the fact the expenditures are often not realized in a linear fashion and work is generally realized towards the end of implementation phases. When coupled with a need to acquit budgets and expenditures by different Phase, this places significant pressure on the finance and administration teams [...] Once a project document for a phase has been signed, it is mandatory to register it with the Jordan Response Information System for the Syria Crisis (JORISS) for approval. Without JORISS approval, no progress could be made because no implementation agreement could be signed with any government ministries or administrations to initiate the process of project selection and preparation (2021–21).**

Box 30. Criterion 3.8. Results for 2022 sample

Coverage: 100 per cent

The majority of projects had inadequate resources available, with fewer than one third (30 per cent) performing successfully.

Good performance was noted when interventions had adequate human resources, with a good balance and distribution of experience across project teams, and when there were sufficient financial resources, which were made available in a timely and appropriate manner.

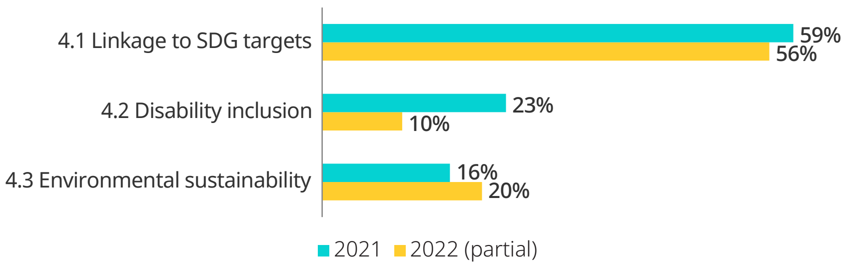
Insufficient staff was a concern for many interventions, and in one case, no project coordinator had been specifically hired (2022–2); in others, there was clear evidence of project teams being overstretched, leading to management and implementation issues. There were also examples of staff departures and delays in recruitment to replace them.

There was evidence of activities being cancelled due to budget constraints and initial delays in implementation due to COVID-19 restrictions, leading to missed opportunities to produce expected outputs. Inefficiencies were also noted regarding payment delays to partners, which were in part explained due to complicated bureaucratic processes, as well as finances having to be processed through a regional office, rather than locally. This was the case in the Syrian Arab Republic, due to the non-operation of the ILO's financial system in the country (2022–1). ILO procurement and payment systems were also found to be key factors impeding implementation of interventions. Some reports noted that there were no budget allocations for integrating certain cross-cutting policy drivers, such as gender.

RESULTS FROM THE NEW CRITERIA

Results for the new criteria related to the ILO's development cooperation concerns are presented in figure 11.

FIGURE 11. THE ILO'S DEVELOPMENT COOPERATION CONCERNS: PERCENTAGE OF MORE SUCCESSFUL SCORES BY PERFORMANCE CRITERIA (2021 AND 2022 PARTIAL)



Consistency and contribution to SDG targets

Coverage: 95 per cent

There was mixed but positive performance overall for this criterion, with nearly three fifths of projects performing well (59 per cent). Evaluation reports provided evidence of alignment of interventions with the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) laid out in the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, specific contributions to SDG targets, as well as collaborations and complementarities with different UN organizations. The level of detail provided for this criterion was heterogeneous, with some reports noting the link to SDG targets, while others provided extensive information.

There were partnerships with a range of UN agencies, including the FAO, UNDP, UNICEF, IOM, UNHCR, World Health Organization, World Food Programme, United Nations Population Fund, UNIDO, United Nations Office for Project Services, UNODC, United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) and UN Women. Certain countries had a UN resident coordinator, and the ILO was also involved in coordination platforms, such as the Regional Interagency Coordination Platform established by the IOM and UNHCR in Latin America, where it was asked to take the lead at the regional level on UN responses to the socio-economic alternatives component of the regional inter-agency plan (2021–36), while there was also evidence of the ILO participating in ONE-UN activities in several countries.

Highly successful projects had clear alignment between their objectives and those of the United Nations Development Assistance Framework and other UN development frameworks, as well as with SDGs. Good coordination under a common UN system programme of work led to complementarities and consolidated the ILO's position in certain areas (for example, 2021–2, 2021–3, 2021–36). There were joint thematic working groups; common workplans; multipartner events; joint activities; joint statements/policy papers; joint applications for funding opportunities from the UN's Multi-Partner Trust Fund; inter-agency work at the country, regional and global levels; and links to various international initiatives and partnerships. Coordination and cooperation were facilitated when projects were based in country offices, and even more so when offices were shared between different UN agencies.

The evaluation of the ILO Global Flagship Programme on Building Social Protection Floors for All noted that close coordination and communication did not always lead to systematic coherence on social protection:

> **The recent midterm review of the UN SDG Fund's portfolio on social protection noted, for example, different social protection models across UN partners at global level requiring participating UN organizations at national level to repeatedly reconcile perspectives. Similarly, the SOCPRO Department reported that the UN Social Protection Floors Initiative helped mainstream the ILO's Social Protection Floors Recommendation across the UN system and to disseminate some of the ILO's values and principles. However, many of the ILO's guiding principles (such as solidarity in financing) and 'two-pronged' staircase approach for the extension of social protection are still far from being understood by many agencies that limit social protection to '(targeted) cash transfers'. Evaluation interviews highlighted persisting differences in the social protection approaches of the ILO and other development partners, including [international financial institutions] (2021–33).**

A similar limitation regarding differences in approach and conception of social protection in the framework of decent work was noted in a cluster evaluation of social protection projects in El Salvador and Honduras (2022–11).

In other cases, there were contributions to SDGs, but coordination between projects and UN agencies was variable. This was due to several factors, such as the ILO's weak institutional framework in the Plurinational State of Bolivia (2021–39), or independent working modalities (for example, 2021–28), while in a project in Mongolia, coordination was limited to information-sharing with other UN initiatives (2021–17).

There was also evidence of lack of coordination with other UN agencies, despite their presence in beneficiary countries and UN-led donor coordination platforms, yet there were no mechanisms in place to coordinate specific efforts linked to ILO projects (for example, 2021–37). One example was the REFRAME project, where there was clear potential for synergies, yet the two organizations did not agree on a joint approach to fair recruitment, and were somewhat in competition, thus leading to duplication of efforts, and confusion regarding which tools and norms should be used to promote fair recruitment, as well as a sentiment from stakeholders that the IOM interfered with the ILO's mandate in terms of norms on fair recruitment (2022–30). Another example was the DJY Global Initiative, where the evaluation found that, despite mechanisms in place to foster collaboration and synergies, the system still incentivized UN agencies to work in silos:

> **While the project enabled the above-mentioned mechanisms to increase coherence and collaboration between partners around youth employment issues, the evidence currently at hand shows that other major actors also launched their own initiatives on youth employment. A notable example cited by consulted stakeholders from both the ILO and other UN agencies is the Generation Unlimited (GenU) launched by UNICEF in 2018 (2022–4).**

▶ Box 31. Criterion 4.1. Results for 2022 sample

Coverage: 90 per cent

Performance regarding coordination and contribution to SDGs was mixed, with over one half of reports obtaining successful ratings (54 per cent), and no report in the sample obtaining an unsuccessful rating.

Positive performance was noted when there were clear links between project objectives and SDG targets, and when there was evidence of strong coordination and cooperation with other UN agencies, thus limiting duplication of efforts and promoting efficiency of resources, as well as "cross-fertilization" through learning and sharing across project lines. The ILO actively participated in multi-agency working groups, and interventions complemented other UN initiatives at the country and regional levels. UN partners included UN Women, UNHCR, the United Nations Human Settlements Programme (UN-HABITAT), UNICEF, UNDP, UNIDO, IOM, UN Global Compat and UNESCO. Division of work tasks and roles and responsibilities for collaboration were sometimes outlined through Concept Notes and memoranda of understanding. In several instances, there were references to alignment to UN strategic development assistance frameworks.

Challenges were found when interventions were implemented in collaboration with other UN agencies, yet there were hurdles due to different working procedures and financial management systems, or when coordination mechanisms were unclear. There was also evidence of inadequate communication between an ILO project and UN Women, and limited efforts to address this issue, even though it had been flagged in a midterm evaluation (2022–2). In several cases, it was noted that synergies could have been further developed with other UN programmes.

Disability inclusion

Coverage: 100 per cent

Less than one quarter (21 per cent) of projects evaluated in 2021 incorporated elements of a disability-inclusion perspective in project design and implementation, with only one report rated as “highly successful”, and over half of reports obtaining “unsuccessful” ratings.

Successful projects included disability inclusion in their strategies, design and implementation, and targeted specific beneficiary groups with disabilities, sometimes with associated indicators, targets and baselines. Examples include (a) a project in Pakistan that had a specific intermediate objective including persons with disabilities (PWDs), to include them in disbursement of employment injury benefits (2021–3); and (b) the Global Initiative, which aimed to promote advocacy and knowledge-sharing to support PWD (2021-4), and which made an effort to increase employment and participation of PWDs, with a specific target, thus aligning to the ILO’s inclusive approach to decent work. PWDs indicated their satisfaction with the job opportunities offered by the Jordan EIIP (2021–21).

The ILO Global Flagship Programme on Building Social Protection Floors for All, jointly with UNICEF and the International Disability Alliance, also supported the implementation of a project on disability-inclusive social protection financed by the United Nations Partnership on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities; and in 2019, the Flagship Programme also contributed with other partners (such as the German Federal Ministry for Economic Cooperation and Development, GIZ, the International Disability Alliance, UNICEF, the United Nations Research Institute for Social Development, and UN Women, among others) to the development of a “Joint statement towards inclusive social protection systems supporting the full and effective participation of persons with disabilities” (2021–33).

Reports noted that projects could have given more importance to disability in terms of implementation and providing access to beneficiaries with disabilities, especially when resources were readily available. In some instances, while people living with disabilities were initially included as priority target groups, evaluators noted that they were left out of project design and implementation. Nevertheless, there was evidence that PWDs were at times included in consultations, diagnostic reports, case studies and surveys, in technical recommendations for implementation of specific policies, or through ad hoc inclusion measures, such as the selection of a TVET college with a focus on youth with disabilities, or the creation of a competition challenge with a category of Best Entrepreneur with a Disability. One evaluation report provided a lesson learned related to disability inclusion in RBSA projects:

> **Disability issues seem insufficiently mainstreamed among ILO staff with responsibility for project design. ILO staff showed a lack of awareness. RBSA project would benefit from a systematic inclusion of the disability dimension in needs assessments, stakeholder analysis and the project implementation (2021–23).**

Box 32. Criterion 4.2. Results for 2022 sample

Coverage: 100 per cent

Disability inclusion was an area of poor performance for most projects, with only one report in the sample rated as "Successful" (10 per cent), and nearly two thirds obtaining "Unsuccessful" ratings.

Good performance was found in a project in Saudi Arabia, where ILO support led to the drafting of a National Equality Policy, including a section on people with disabilities (2022–7). In other cases, there was some evidence of outputs and activities promoting disability inclusion, such as the production or revision of documents to mainstream disability inclusion (2022–4, 2022–8), training on addressing how to mainstream how to provide employment and employability advice tailored to women with disabilities (2022-4), and awareness-raising on social inclusion and equality of work for persons with disabilities in an EIIP project (2022–6).

The evaluation of SCORE III noted that many interviewees mentioned that much more needed to be done regarding inclusion of people with disabilities (2022-5).

Just transition to environmental sustainability

Coverage: 97 per cent

Performance regarding integration of just transition to environmental sustainability in ILO interventions evaluated in 2021 was very poor, with only one sixth (16 per cent) of projects obtaining a successful rating, and two thirds not considering environmental issues in their design or implementation.

Projects with good performance addressed this cross-cutting policy driver in different ways:

- A project in Haiti aimed to promote green jobs, urban agriculture and sustainable waste management for disadvantaged youths, yet external constraints limited possibilities of project implementation (2021–9).
- A conscious decision was made to include environmental safeguards in the BDS4GROWTH programme, and the BDS, VCD and SIYB trainings were revised from a green perspective to ensure that all training interventions would be environmentally responsive; these concerns were also integrated in the market system analysis, through attention for the risks of land degradation, aggravating deforestation or other environmental factors (2021–14).
- The EIIP programme in Jordan sought to seek active engagement and promotion of women through the finalization of the Environmental and Social Safeguards strategy and plan, and appointed an Environmental and Social Safeguards officer. A specific indicator on public events related to environmental sustainability was proposed for an activity to be conducted in a future phase (2021–21).
- A project in Zimbabwe aimed to create green and decent jobs for women and men through sustainable enterprises. The first component aimed to expand access to skills for green jobs and markets for green products and services. The second component was the Green enterPRIZE challenge, which supported green, growth-oriented SMEs through an Innovation Challenge and Business Development Programme. This led to new awareness and knowledge around green skills, green economy and environmental sustainability (2021–24).
- The promotion of the green economy was a primary objective of the Social Solidarity Economy Policy project in South Africa, and the project has identified and brought to the fore enterprises promoting environment protection through relevant product chains. Furthermore, the Social and Solidarity Economy policy is linked to several policy and strategy initiatives in South Africa that are aligned with environmental sustainability (2021–29).

- In Mauritania, the evaluation noted important awareness-raising of local and refugee populations regarding environmental protection, waste management, deforestation and reforestation, and the promotion of local materials, among others. Several environmentally-related diagnostic studies also took place in this context (2021–32).

Several reports noted that there were missed opportunities to incorporate environmental concerns as part of the scope of the intervention, while a few noted that the intervention could partially link to green jobs, although no further evidence was provided. The objective of a project in the Plurinational State of Bolivia (2021–39) was to promote more productive, environmentally, socially and economically sustainable regional development, with better safety and health conditions for workers, especially in the regions of Cochabamba (manufacturing) and Potosi (mining). Yet, despite the project having environmental sustainability as an objective, there was no evidence that this was included in project design and implementation, and the evaluation revealed several missed opportunities to integrate environmental sustainability issues in the project.

Box 33. Criterion 4.3. Results for 2022 sample

Coverage: 100 per cent

The integration of a just transition to environmental sustainability was an area of very poor performance, with only two reports (20 per cent) in the 2022 sample obtaining a “successful” rating, and a large majority of reports obtaining an “unsuccessful” rating (70 per cent).

Good performance was found for the SCORE III project, as it raised awareness on the link between good environmental practices and improved SME business performance, and the training includes a module on Resource Efficiency, which focuses on cost savings through cleaner production methods (2022–5). An EIIP project in the Philippines focused on the creation of green jobs, and environmental concerns were built into project design, implementation and management (2022–6).

There was one case where an intervention had included environmental concerns in the initial design and results framework, yet related activities were not implemented and the outputs were dropped, leading to “partially successful” ratings (2022-3). The remaining interventions in the sample did not take into account environmental sustainability in their design or implementation.

04

Factors contributing to the effectiveness of the most successful projects

Factors contributing to the effectiveness of the most successful projects

The most successful projects 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 four projects being selected for 2021.[23] In three other cases,[24] although the achievement of immediate objectives (criterion 2.2) was partially successful, due to the effects of the COVID-19 pandemic, ratings of 3 and 4 were achieved for the other performance criteria.

Four projects[25] were selected in the 2022 sample with ratings of 3 and 4 for all above-mentioned performance criteria, with another project[26] that obtained a rating of 2 for criterion 2.2, but high ratings elsewhere.

Specific factors that consistently contributed to the success of the selected projects were identified, although all projects had one or two areas of weakness, and coverage of performance criteria was uneven.

- High-performing projects in 2022 had objectives clearly linked to ILO P&B outcomes.
- Successful projects in 2021 had clear links to DWCP outcomes and/or CPOs, and responded to national development frameworks and priorities. In some cases, interventions were also embedded in regional outcomes, and linked to other ILO and international or regional strategic frameworks. In the 2022 sample, this criterion was less well covered, but obtained high ratings when available.
- All projects in the 2022 sample were in line with national priorities and constituent needs, with evidence of stakeholder consultation and active involvement by different constituent groups, as well as clear links to national strategic documents.
- A majority of projects in 2021 and the 2022 sample took a pro-poor perspective, focusing on vulnerable target groups, including victims of human trafficking, informal workers, domestic workers, youth, child and elderly workers, migrant workers, persons with disabilities, refugees and host community members, and aiming to promote decent living standards and promoting their inclusion of disadvantaged groups. Most of the reports in 2021 and all reports from the 2022 sample showed that ILO interventions were gender-responsive, with evidence of policy change promoting gender equality and non-discrimination, and gender-specific strategies and target groups.
- All of the most successful projects in 2021, and a majority of the most successful projects in 2022 achieved their main outputs, which were of good quality for the most part, with indication of use by stakeholders. Substantial work was done in many instances, with projects meeting their expectations in terms of the quantity, timeliness and quality of deliverables, despite the global COVID-19 pandemic.

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23 ETH/16/02/GBR, IDN/19/02/FRU, GLO/15/41/EUR and GLO/15/69/EUR (cluster), COL/17/01/NOR.
24 LKA/17/01/USA, RAS/17/09/LUX, and Independent evaluation of the first phase of the ILO Global Flagship Programme on Building Social Protection Floors for All (2016 – 2020).
25 RAF/17/05/FIN, SAU/18/01/SAU, RAS/16/13/EUR, CPV/16/01/OUF.
26 MOZ/16/01/SWE.

- All of the high-performing projects from the 2022 sample obtained "very successful" ratings for policy influence, with project stakeholders carrying out effective policymaking at local, national and global levels.
- Results were considered to be of high-to-very-high strategic importance, and included ratification of ILO Conventions, the development of policies and adoption of national policy action plans, drafting and implementation of laws and decrees, and changes and discussion of ILO policy issues at national, regional and global levels.
- Strategic relationship-building was an important component of project success, with all projects obtaining "successful" and "very successful" ratings, revealing strong links at all levels with tripartite constituents, implementing partners, international agencies and civil society, among others. These relationships allowed constituents to build synergies and promote sustainability of results.
- Sustainability was a strength for all projects, and was closely linked to good results in policy influence, and institutionalized national capacities, with evidence of stakeholder ownership, to ensure that outputs achieved would be built upon.
- The ILO's expertise was widely acknowledged and appreciated, and there was strong evidence of engagement with prominent organizations.
- Implementation management, ILO support and internal ILO coordination were positively assessed for the most successful projects in 2021, with more variability for the second group of reports. For the 2022 sample, strengths were also found related to the quality of ILO support and internal ILO coordination, but implementation management was variable. There was evidence of collaboration at different levels within the ILO and with the ITC, and technical backstopping from ILO experts at headquarters and in the field fostered successful outcomes.
- Overall, successful projects in 2021 had good monitoring and reporting frameworks in place, which allowed project teams to adapt to changing circumstances, and plan ahead.
- Projects in the 2022 sample were efficient financially, with a majority providing good value for money. There were various examples of collaborations and cost-sharing with other ILO projects to increase efficiency and to allow execution of project activities that would otherwise require increased financial and human resources.
- The majority of projects that performed well in 2021 had objectives clearly linked to SDG targets, with evidence of coordination with other UN partners to maximize results.

05

Comparison of meta-analysis findings

Comparison of meta-analysis findings

A comparison of median scores over time is presented in table 3, using the same categories as the previous Effectiveness Reviews. This shows that projects generally do well in the Effectiveness and impact category (median scores of 3) and face recurrent challenges in the RBM/M&E framework category (median scores of 2), revealing an area of weakness throughout the years. Median scores were higher for Sustainability in the 2022 sample than in other years. There were variations in strategic relevance and alignment, efficiency and financial/cost-efficiency over time.

TABLE 3. MEDIAN RATING ON PERFORMANCE CRITERIA BY META-ANALYSIS (ALL ON A 4-POINT SCALE)

Meta-analysis	Strategic relevance & alignment	Effectiveness and impact	Efficiency	RBM/M&E framework	Financial/ costefficiency	Sustainability
2022 (partial)	3	3	2	2	3	3
2021	2	3	3	2	2	2
2020	3	3	2	2	3	2

A discussion of the three main performance areas of the Effectiveness Review, comparing and contrasting results from different years, is presented below. A summary of coverage and performance criteria for the meta-analyses is provided in Annex 3.

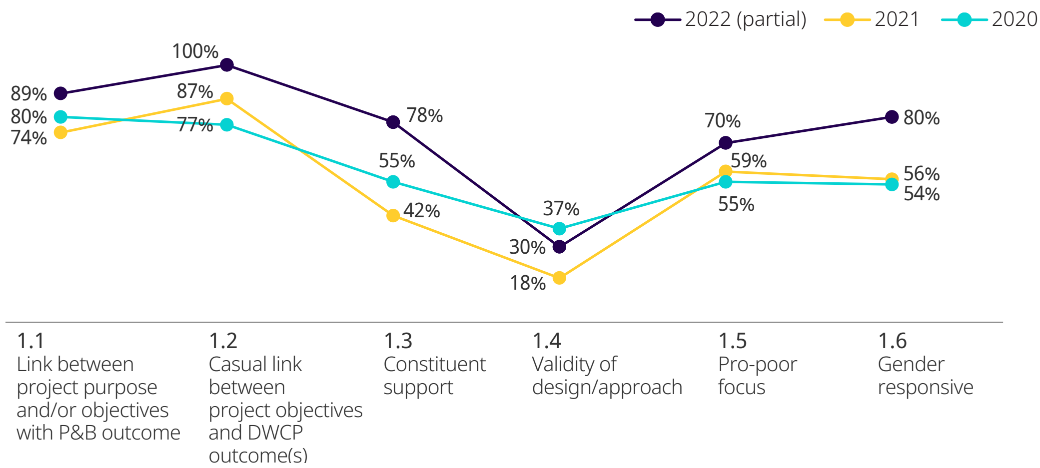
STRATEGIC RELEVANCE AND ALIGNMENT

Criteria related to relevance and alignment showed variable results over time, as shown in figure 12, with similar trends over time, and stronger performance in the 2022 sample overall. A consistent area of strength was the alignment of project objectives with DWCP outcomes and CPOs. The presence of links between project objectives with P&B outcomes was another criterion where overall performance was successful. Other areas where performance was higher in the 2022 sample, yet still good overall, were pro-poor focus and gender-responsiveness.

Constituent support was strongest in the 2022 sample, and weakest in 2021, where over half of the projects did not perform well, revealing highly variable results, depending on the year.

One key area of weakness in all years was the validity of design and approach, with poor performance related to unrealistic expectations and timelines, which were exacerbated by the global COVID-19 pandemic.

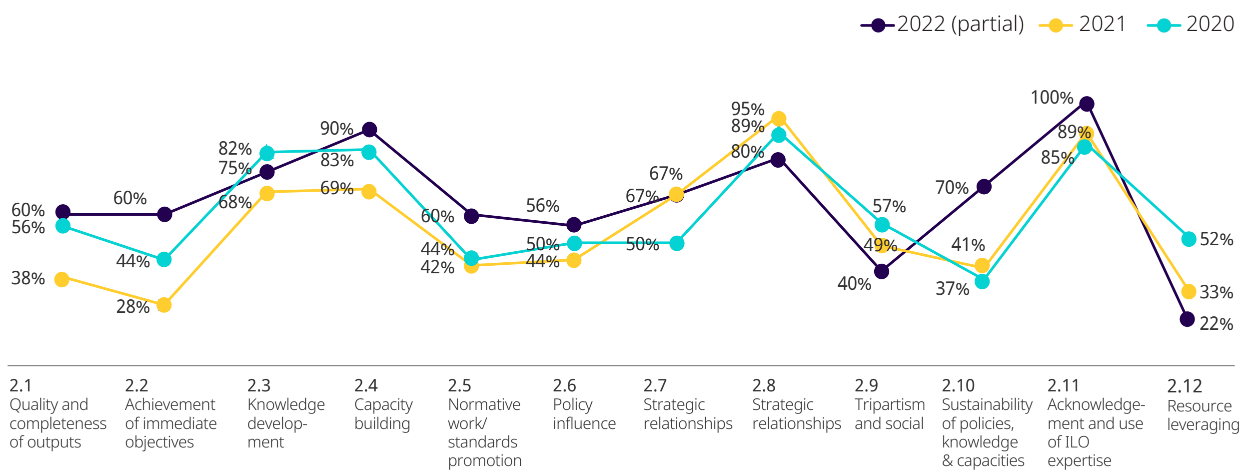
FIGURE 12. PERCENTAGE OF "SUCCESSFUL" AND "HIGHLY SUCCESSFUL" SCORES BY PERFORMANCE CRITERIA AND BY YEAR: STRATEGIC RELEVANCE AND ALIGNMENT



EFFECTIVENESS, SUSTAINABILITY AND IMPACT

Effectiveness results were heterogeneous for this category throughout all years, as shown in figure 13, with good coverage overall.

FIGURE 13. PERCENTAGE OF "SUCCESSFUL" AND "HIGHLY SUCCESSFUL" SCORES BY PERFORMANCE CRITERIA AND BY YEAR: EFFECTIVENESS, SUSTAINABILITY AND IMPACT



Similar trends in performance by year were found for the most part. The development of strategic relationships was an area of strong performance overall, with the strongest ratings in 2021, while good performance overall was found for capacity-building and knowledge development, as well as appreciation and use of the ILO's expertise.

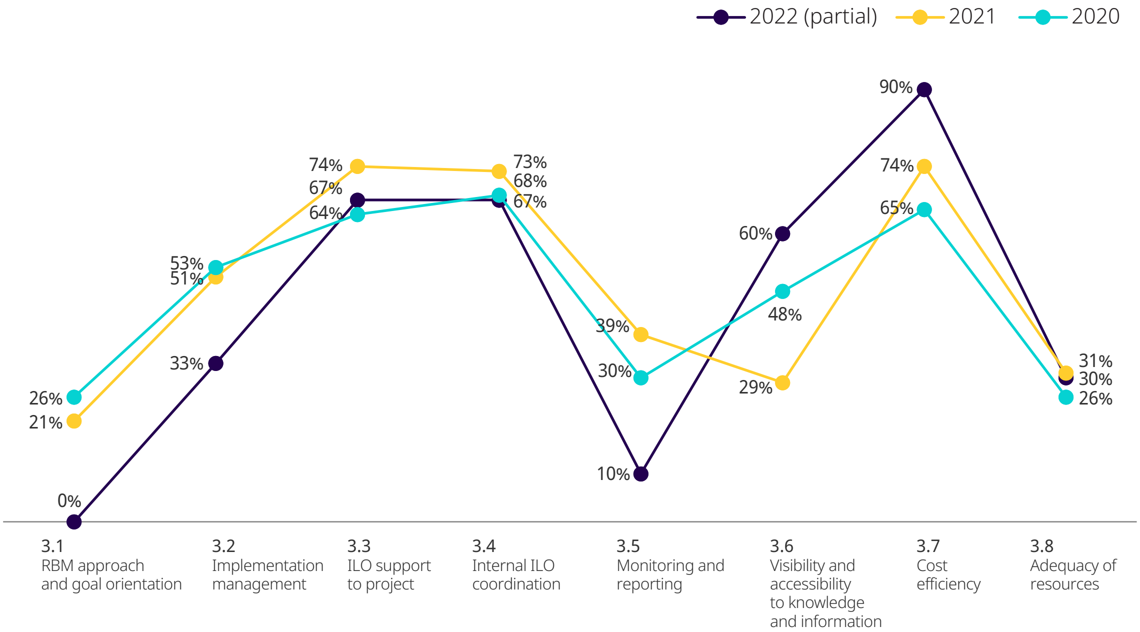
In 2021, a noticeable drop in ratings can be seen related to the quality and completeness of outputs, and the achievement of immediate objectives, revealing an important weakness in comparison to other years, yet ratings were positive in the 2022 sample. Areas of better performance in 2022 compared with the other years were the promotion of international labour standards, policy influence and sustainability, while results were the same in 2021 and in the 2022 sample for the achievement of results of strategic importance, where two thirds of cases obtained successful ratings.

Performance was variable regarding the integration of tripartism and social dialogue in project design and implementation, where projects in the 2022 sample obtained lower ratings than in previous years. Resource leveraging was also lowest in the 2022 sample.

IMPLEMENTATION PERFORMANCE AND EFFICIENCY OF MANAGEMENT AND RESOURCE USE

Success was mixed for the different criteria associated with implementation performance and efficiency of management and resource use, with some important strengths and weaknesses; this was a trend found in all years, as shown in figure 14. Overall, there was good coverage of these elements.

FIGURE 14. PERCENTAGE OF "SUCCESSFUL" AND "HIGHLY SUCCESSFUL" SCORES BY PERFORMANCE CRITERIA AND BY YEAR: IMPLEMENTATION PERFORMANCE AND EFFICIENCY OF MANAGEMENT AND RESOURCE USE



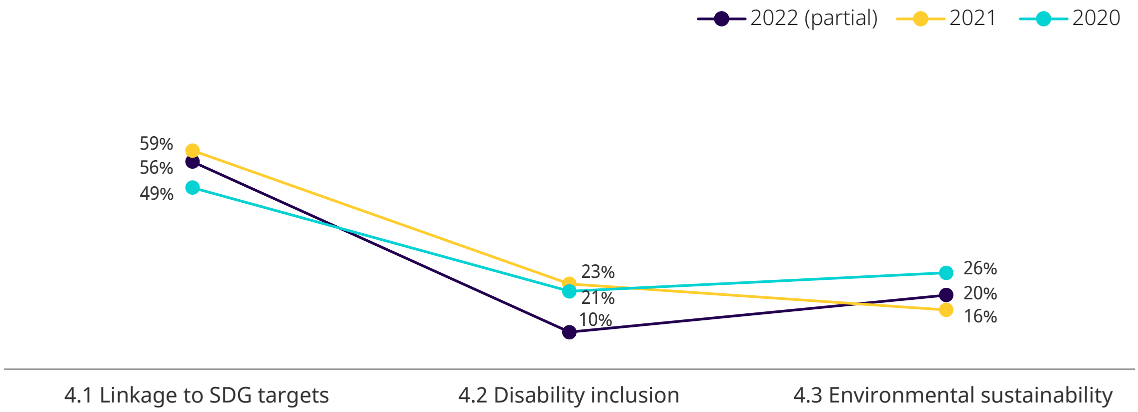
ILO support to project and internal ILO coordination were two areas of good performance in this category for all years. Cost-efficiency of ILO interventions was another area of overall success, with its highest ratings in the 2022 sample.

Implementation management obtained variable ratings, with about half of the reports in 2020 and 2021, and about a quarter of reports in the 2022 sample obtaining successful scores. Performance regarding dissemination of knowledge and accessibility of information produced by ILO interventions was an area of weakness in 2020 and 2021, but improved in the 2022 sample.

Availability and timely access to human and financial resources was an area of poor performance overall. The major weaknesses found in this study, as well as the previous ones, were related to goal orientation and monitoring and reporting. These have been important limitations in ILO interventions across all years.

NEW PERFORMANCE CRITERIA

FIGURE 15. PERCENTAGE OF "SUCCESSFUL" AND "HIGHLY SUCCESSFUL" SCORES BY PERFORMANCE CRITERIA AND BY YEAR: NEW PERFORMANCE CRITERIA



There were similar trends related to the three new performance criteria over time, with better performance related to the links to SDG targets and inter-agency coordination, although progress is still needed, and there is weak performance related to disability inclusion and measures to promote environmental sustainability.

This chapter examines performance through median results of projects assessed using effectiveness criteria over the past five years, by technical intervention area and region.

06

Key highlights from the comparison of effectiveness results, by technical intervention area and region, over the past five years

Key highlights from the comparison of effectiveness results, by technical intervention area and region, over the past five years

A total of 139 assessments of final independent evaluation reports completed from 2017 to 2021 were used for this comparative review.

Reports were categorized by ILO department/technical intervention area, as presented in table 4.

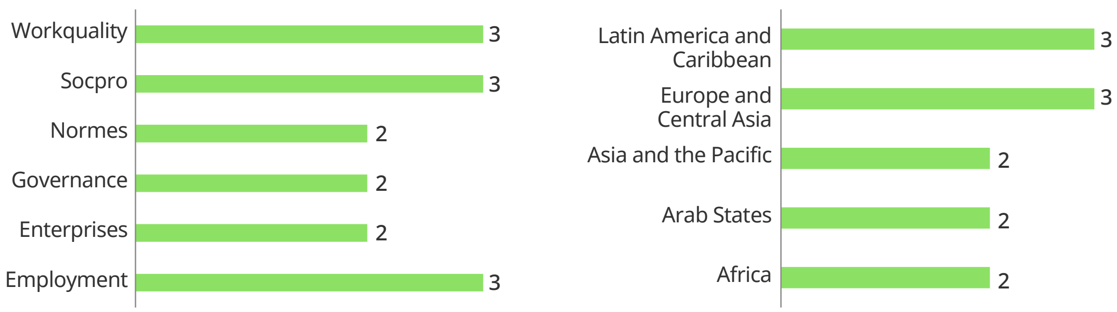
TABLE 4. REPORTS CATEGORIZED BY ILO DEPARTMENT/TECHNICAL INTERVENTION AREA

Technical intervention area	No reports	Proportion
EMPLOYMENT	51	37%
ENTERPRISES	21	15%
GOVERNANCE	31	22%
NORMES	4	3%
SOCPRO	7	5%
WORKQUALITY	25	18%
Total	139	

PERFORMANCE TRENDS FOR THE CATEGORY OF STRATEGIC RELEVANCE AND ALIGNMENT, 2017–21

Development cooperation interventions technically backstopped or implemented directly by EMPLOYMENT, WORKQUALITY and SOCPRO presented high "strategic relevance and alignment" with programmatic objectives and country needs. High average median performance ratings in this category were found for decentralized operations in the regions of Europe and Central Asia, and Latin America and the Caribbean (see figure 16).

FIGURE 16. PERFORMANCE TRENDS BY TECHNICAL DEPARTMENT AND REGION FOR STRATEGIC RELEVANCE AND ALIGNMENT, 2017–2021



High-performance results for the category on strategic relevance and alignment were associated with intervention designs that were well aligned with DWCP outcomes and CPOs, and had a strong pro-poor focus and well-developed gender equality strategies. This was strongly present in interventions from EMPLOYMENT.

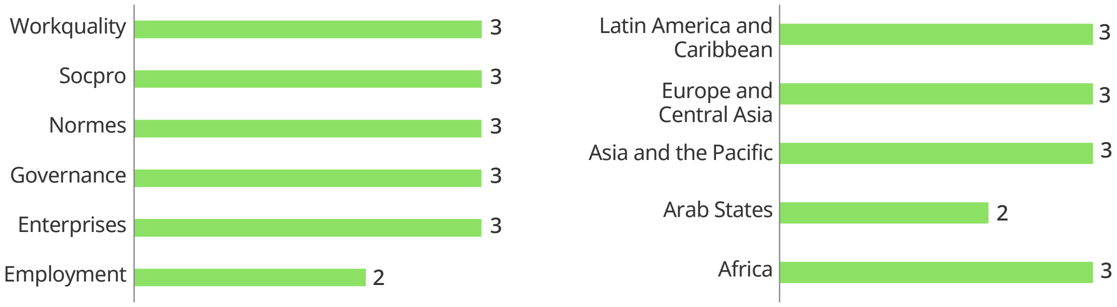
The ILO's work from SOCPRO, ENTERPRISES and NORMES performed "successfully" in responding to national needs, mainly through the active and regular involvement of constituents. Decentralized interventions in Europe and Central Asia presented similar performance results.

Weak performance across all technical areas was found for the design of interventions, a category that received "partly successful" ratings over this period.

PERFORMANCE TRENDS FOR THE CATEGORY OF EFFECTIVENESS, SUSTAINABILITY AND IMPACT

All technical areas performed "successfully" in the category of Effectiveness, sustainability and impact from 2017 to 2021, except for operations from EMPLOYMENT. Results by geographic distribution showed a similar weakness for the Arab States, which obtained "partly successful" performance ratings (see figure 17).

FIGURE 17. PERFORMANCE TRENDS BY TECHNICAL DEPARTMENT AND REGION FOR EFFECTIVENESS, SUSTAINABILITY AND IMPACT, 2017–2021



Strong performance was associated with interventions that were able to deliver planned outputs and build institutional and individual capacities effectively, generate new knowledge and leverage strategic relationships. Interventions from all technical areas presented strong performance with respect to these categories. SOCPRO obtained outstanding performance ratings in their capacity to build strategic relationships over this period, mostly for centralized projects and those in Africa.

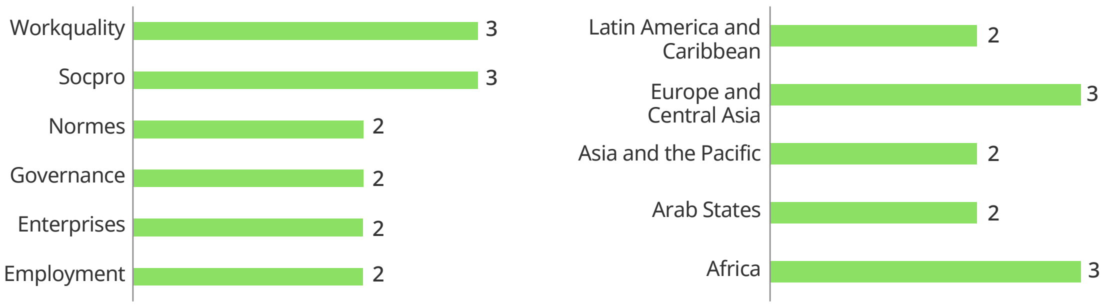
Overall results achieved by the ILO over this period at global and regional levels were found to be of strategic importance. The ILO's operations presented successful average performance results in the extent to which they were able to promote the recognition of the ILO's expertise and influence policies. The strongest performance was obtained across all technical areas for the promotion of relevant international labour standards, normative work, and social dialogue and tripartism, except for EMPLOYMENT and ENTERPRISES.

All technical intervention areas presented recurrent performance weaknesses on resource-leveraging and sustainability of results, with centralized operations performing slightly more strongly. The lowest average performance score was observed in NORMES for the category of resource-leveraging.

PERFORMANCE TRENDS FOR THE CATEGORY OF IMPLEMENTATION PERFORMANCE AND EFFICIENCY OF MANAGEMENT AND RESOURCE USE

Marked weaknesses were observed across technical interventions for the ILO's performance to implement operations and manage and use resources in an efficient manner. Only WORKQUALITY and SOCPRO obtained "successful" average median performance scores for this period. Results from the geographical analysis of ILO decentralized operations evidenced successful average performance for this category in Africa and Europe and Central Asia only (see figure 18).

FIGURE 18. PERFORMANCE TRENDS BY TECHNICAL DEPARTMENT AND REGION FOR IMPLEMENTATION PERFORMANCE AND EFFICIENCY OF MANAGEMENT AND RESOURCE USE, 2017–2021



When present, strong performance was associated with the ILO's capacity to undertake operations in a cost-efficient manner and disseminate knowledge both internally and externally. Technical interventions from EMPLOYMENT and WORKQUALITY received "successful" average performance ratings in their internal coordination with other programmes and units, notably in their decentralized operations.

Recurrent weaknesses were also observed for other performance criteria. For instance, centralized operations across all technical fields faced resource inadequacies in delivering project outputs and objectives in a timely manner. The ILO's efficiency at the level of management arrangements and support to project implementation was weak overall, with major weaknesses observed for EMPLOYMENT and NORMES.

Consistently poor performance was found for the set-up and use of monitoring and reporting systems in centralized operations across all technical areas. Slightly better performance was observed only in decentralized operations in Africa, and Europe was associated with the technical areas of GOVERNANCE, WORKQUALITY and EMPLOYMENT. Another area with consistent poor average performance results for all technical areas was the use of results-based management approaches.

Conclusions

While there is variability in performance in the three main categories – strategic relevance and alignment; effectiveness, sustainability and impact; and implementation performance and efficiency of management and resource use – certain trends emerge based on the review of evidence provided in evaluation reports from 2021 and a small sample of reports from 2022,[27] revealing key strengths and weaknesses in the ILO's work.

The objectives of ILO interventions were aligned with ILO P&B outcomes and DWCP/CPOs. This was an area of successful performance for the majority of projects. Strong performance was also noted in the relationships built and leveraged by ILO interventions, the strategic importance of results achieved, the ability to generate or bring together new knowledge to inform decision-making and capacity-building at individual and institutional levels, and the recognition and appreciation of the ILO's expertise. Overall, ILO interventions were found to provide good value for money, and the support provided by the ILO to projects, as well as internal coordination, led to successful ratings for these criteria.

Other areas, such as pro-poor focus and gender-responsiveness, had more mixed yet overall positive results, with stronger performance found in the 2022 sample than in those from 2021. There was more success in 2021 in terms of ratings for the contribution of ILO projects to SDG targets and coordination with other agencies under a common UN system of work, although progress is also needed in this area.

There were disparities in performance for certain criteria between the two years. For instance, implementation management obtained higher ratings in 2021 than in the 2022 sample, with poor results in 2022. Constituent support, the achievement and quality of outputs and immediate objectives, the promotion of international labour standards and normative work, sustainability, and visibility and dissemination of information were more variable in performance, with successful ratings for the 2022 sample, but clear shortcomings for 2021.

There were also weaknesses in both years. The majority of interventions did not perform well regarding validity of design, as they were often overambitious in time and scope, and did not consistently involve stakeholders at all stages. The promotion of tripartism and social dialogue had limited success. Performance ratings related to the RBM approach, goal orientation of ILO interventions, and the existence and use of monitoring and reporting frameworks revealed important weaknesses. Adequacy of resources and the ability to leverage external resources through ILO interventions were both areas of poor performance. Mainstreaming disability inclusion and a just transition to environmental sustainability in the ILO's work is not taking place systematically, and for the most part, these have not been adopted as priority areas when designing and implementing ILO interventions.

Finally, the effects of the ILO's response to the global COVID-19 pandemic were visible in the evidence provided in evaluations of projects conducted in 2021 and 2022. It seems that ILO teams and their partners are adapting to the COVID-19 pandemic, and that the strategies put in place by the ILO are improving the delivery of results in uncertain times.

27 As noted in the limitations section, it is important to interpret the results from 2022 with caution, due to the small size of the sample.

The way forward

The following suggestions to improve the effectiveness of ILO projects are based on the meta-study of evaluation reports from 2021 and the 2022 sample, as presented in the previous sections.28

Areas where further work is needed	Recurrent reference in previous Decent Work results studies
Strategic relevance and alignment	
1. Ensure that all constituent groups can be involved in project formulation and implementation through participatory tripartite social dialogue, despite possible limitations caused by crises such as the global COVID-19 pandemic, to promote ownership and sustainability of results.	*2017–18, 2019–20 and 2020–21.*
2. Take a realistic approach to intervention design, to ensure that implementation and achievement of outputs and immediate objectives is feasible given the scope, timing and resources available, and include local partners, to have a better contextual understanding of feasibility.	*2017–18, 2019–20 and 2020–21.*
3. Adapt to challenges associated with complex projects, or in the context of the COVID-19 crisis and other socio-economic-political crises. It is essential to clearly define assumptions and risks; develop adequate, flexible contingency plans; and have flexibility in the allocation of resources to address emerging challenges.	*2017–18, 2019–20 and 2020–21.*
Effectiveness, sustainability and impact	
4. Focus on sustainability aspects at the design stage, and involve stakeholders in the co-development of exit strategies, to ensure that the groundwork for maintaining or advancing results from ILO interventions is laid out, to promote ownership and better identify challenges downstream.	*2017–18, 2019–20 and 2020–21.*
5. Promote the use of existing guidance to explicitly include all ILO cross-cutting policy drivers in project design and implementation, and develop specific guidance to address disability inclusion and environmental sustainability in ILO interventions and their evaluations.	*2017–18, 2019–20 and 2020–21.*
6. Continue to identify and act upon opportunities to make progress towards the promotion and ratification of international labour standards systematically throughout the project cycle.	*2017–18, 2019–20 and 2020–21.*
7. During project implementation, ensure that the initial target groups are the primary beneficiaries of results, and allow for sufficient flexibility to modify interventions if this is no longer the case	
Implementation performance and efficiency	
8. In order to promote synergies and limit duplication of efforts, establish good lines of communication and coordination with other projects and partners on the ground, especially within the UN system, and ensure that a common language and approach are used to foster complementarities.	*2020–21.*

28 Some of these recommendations reiterate those made in previous years, thus identifying key areas where further work is required. A table showing the recommendations for this meta-analysis and identifying the years where similar recommendations were made in past meta-analyses is presented in Annex 4.

9. Strengthen capacities to improve the goal orientation of ILO interventions at the project design stage, and foster Office-wide understanding of why the development and use of RBM approaches and monitoring and reporting frameworks are important to deliver results effectively. Ensure that both intended and unintended consequences of interventions can be reflected in these frameworks, and that they can be shared to promote deeper organizational learning.	*2017–18, 2019–20 and 2020–21.*
10. Ensure that adequate human and financial resources and related administrative processes are available to support projects throughout the project cycle, particularly when it relates to RBM and monitoring and reporting activities, and establishing clear communications strategies to promote the visibility and dissemination of results among internal and external stakeholders.	*2017–18 and 2020–21.*
Considerations for future ILO evaluations and meta-analysis of ILO's performance	
11: Further explore the merits and, if justified, refine the disaggregated comparative assessment by technical intervention areas and regions of performance ratings of evaluations of development cooperation projects.	*2020–21.*
12: If travel restrictions are in force, it is important to allocate sufficient time for international and national evaluation consultants to organize and conduct evaluative work, preferably on the ground rather than remotely. Contracting national consultants, rather than international consultants, also strengthens local evaluative capacity.	*2020–21.*

Annex 1: Scoring Matrix

	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	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	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 partners have a clear understanding of what project aspires to achieve.
1.2 Causal link between project objectives and DWCP outcome(s)/ CPOs	DWCP outcomes (and/or Country Programme Outcomes) are 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.

	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	1 Unsuccessful	2 Partly successful	3 Successful	4 Highly successful
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 are 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 aim at improving living standards by the project; no poverty effect resulting from the promotion of decent work likely based on design, target groups and operational areas.	No poverty effect resulting from the promotion of decent work explicitly stated but some effects in the improvement of living standards likely based on the nature of the intervention.	Project aims at improving the living standards of the poorest of the population; sound logic for addressing poverty through project actions on promoting decent work; some key target groups identified.	A pro-poor perspective is integrated into the design and implementation. Systematic targeting to reach the poorest; Adequate monitoring framework allows measuring poverty reduction effects resulting from the promotion of decent work.
1.6 Gender-responsiveness	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.	Gender considerations are included in design and implementation. Fair amount of evidence of gender analysis; some planning and focus on gender issues in strategy, with progress made towards gender-related-objectives. 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 and strong evidence of progress made towards gender-related objectives. Gender-sensitive indicators are disaggregated by sex, age and socio-economic background.

	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	1 Unsuccessful	2 Partly successful	3 Successful	4 Highly successful
2. Effectiveness, Sustainability and Impact				
2.1 Quality and completeness of outputs	The main outputs of the project were not achieved or were delivered too late for their intended use and/or The main outputs were of poor quality and relevance to stakeholders.	Only a few of the main outputs of the intervention were delivered on time; and/or were of mixed quality and usefulness such that use by stakeholders has been minimal.	The main outputs of the project were delivered on time for intended use; results are considered of good technical quality and thus put into use by at least some ILO stakeholders.	All outputs of the project were delivered on time and achieved; and 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.

	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	1 Unsuccessful	2 Partly successful	3 Successful	4 Highly successful
2.5 Normative work/standards promotion	Project does not integrate international labour standards (international labour standards) as part of approach; highly limited and/or ineffective efforts to link project work to normative instruments and international labour standards mechanisms.	Some design linkages and a few activities to support adoption and/or application of relevant international labour standards, but opportunities missed to further incorporate international labour standards into project.	Project design includes some elaboration and promotion of relevant international labour standards (international labour standards). The application of international labour standards is part of the results framework and supported through project actions. Although international labour standards 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 (international labour standards). The application of international labour standards is part of the results framework and supported through project actions. The implementation of the project has effectively contributed to international labour standards.
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.
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 to advance national development plans of action.

	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	1 Unsuccessful	2 Partly successful	3 Successful	4 Highly successful
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 some building of relationships and collaborating with constituents and 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 effectively built and leveraged key relationships with certain constituent groups and organizations such as the UN, relevant government ministries, donors, or other relevant institutions or entities	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 and social dialogue being embedded in the approach	Negligible attention given to social dialogue and involvement of tripartite institutions and processes in design, implementation and intended results of project.	Some attention given to social dialogue and to tripartite processes in design and/or implementation, but progress to strengthen tripartite processes and/or to promote social dialogue is limited.	Social dialogue and tripartism integrated into project approach and implementation; some capacity development to support social dialogue and effective tripartite involvement and some strengthening of tripartite processes and social dialogue mechanisms.	Social dialogue and tripartism are fundamental to intervention design and integrated in implementation strategy; addressing targeted capacity gaps of tripartite constituents in order to strengthen tripartite processes, institutionalization of tripartite process and social dialogue to ensure sustainability following project completion.
2.10 Sustainability	No possibility of maintaining the net benefits of the intervention or insights; no exit strategy; no ability to scale up or sustain advancements achieved by the intervention: 1) No ownership and commitment from stakeholders, 2) Stakeholders have insufficient capacity and resources to maintain or scale up advancements achieved	Limited possibility of maintaining insights or scaling up the net benefits of interventions. Weak exit strategy, if any. Partners have some ability either to maintain, scale up or innovate on the advancements achieved by the intervention. 1) There is limited ownership and commitment from stakeholders, 2) Stakeholders have limited capacity and resources to maintain or scale up advancements achieved	Some tangible possibilities of maintaining, advancing or scaling up existing net benefits/insights. Some thought to an exit strategy. Partners able to maintain, scale up or innovate on the advancements achieved by the intervention: 1) There is some ownership and commitment from stakeholders, 2) Stakeholders have some capacity and resources to maintain or scale up advancements achieved	Good possibility of maintaining or scaling up existing net benefits/insights. Preparation of exit strategy. Partners efficiently and effectively able to grow existing net benefits to meet evolving needs. 1) There is consistent ownership and commitment from stakeholders; 2) Stakeholders have full capacity and resources to maintain or scale up advancements achieved including if there are changes in the socio-political context.

	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	1 Unsuccessful	2 Partly successful	3 Successful	4 Highly successful
2.11 Acknowledgment 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.
3. Implementation performance and efficiency of management and resource use				
3.1 RBM approach an goal orientation	There is no evidence that a results framework exists or is being developed, or the existing results framework is unreliable or irrelevant. 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.	Components of a results framework have been established but some aspects are missing, partially limiting its use. 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.	A results framework exists and allows for regular monitoring of performance. Quantified, demanding targets in most areas; linked to aspirations and strategy; though may lack milestones. Logical fit between indicators and outcomes.	A results framework exists and there is evidence of its use for strategic decision-making and to support responses to contextual changes. 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	There are important deficiencies in management processes. 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.	There are some deficiencies in management procedures for implementation of ILO intervention. There are a basic set of management processes in core areas for ensuring efficient functioning of group; processes are known, used, and truly accepted by only portion of staff.	Management procedures for implementation of the intervention are reasonably efficient and effective. Solid, well designed set of management processes are in place in core areas to ensure smooth, effective functioning of group; processes are known and accepted by many and often used.	Management procedures are efficient, effective and flexible. Management procedures are robust, lean, and well-designed (e.g., decision making, planning, reviews) in all areas to ensure effective and efficient functioning; processes are widely known, used and accepted.

	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	1 Unsuccessful	2 Partly successful	3 Successful	4 Highly successful
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 (Note to review team: see items added in blue which aim to clarify key terms)	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. Clear roles and responsibilities.	All programs and units function together with regular and effective integration with few coordination issues; there is evidence that this integration has enhanced the project. Roles and responsibilities of all involved are clearly defined
3.5 Monitoring and reporting	No M&E framework was established*. Planning or monitoring of cost of resources used for activities is inadequate. Reporting largely absent or not based on outcomes or indicators. Recommendations of mid-term review, if any, not acted upon. Evaluation activities may not have been planned. *Information for monitoring the performance and results indicators were not well identified; baselines were not developed.	Components of an M&E framework were established but some aspects were missing or information for monitoring performance was not identified*. Some planning and monitoring of cost of resources used for activities. Reporting mechanism present but not well implemented. Recommendations of mid-term review may or may not have been acted upon. Some evaluation activities may not have been planned. *Information for monitoring the performance and results indicators were not fully identified; baselines were not well developed or were not used.	M&E framework was established to measure progress and evaluation activities were identified*. Regular planning and monitoring of cost of resources used for activities, and solid efforts made to contain costs and improve efficiencies. Reporting mechanism present and based on indicators. Some recommendations of mid-term review acted upon. *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.	M&E framework was established to measure progress (including the identification of evaluation activities)*. Ongoing planning and monitoring of cost of resources used for activities and adaptations to improve cost efficiency made as necessary. Reporting mechanism applied and based on outcome- level results or indicators. Recommendations of mid-term review acted upon. *Information for monitoring the performance and results indicators was identified; baselines developed and have been used.

	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	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.
Additional performance criteria				
Consistency and contribution of the intervention to sustainable development (SDG targets, UN system- wide and country frameworks) reflecting external coherence in approach	No complementarity and coordination of the intervention with other interventions in a country, sector or institution under a common UNSDCF or similar UN system programme of work. AND Project objectives are not linked to SDG targets.	Complementarity exists but coordination is limited thus leading to duplication of efforts by agencies under a common UNSDCF or similar UN system programme of work. AND Some evidence of linkages of project objectives with SDG targets, but the relation is not well defined, nor well reflected at the operational level.	Some complementarity and or coordination with other initiatives in a same context, linked under a common UNSDCF or similar UN system programme of work. AND Project objectives are linked to SDG targets at both strategic and operational levels and respond to national UNSDCF priorities.	There is consistency and coordination of the intervention with others in the same context, contributing to harmonize UN actions under a common UNSDCF or similar UN system programme of work. AND Clear linkage of project objectives with SDG targets, translated into a concrete set of goals and priorities at the operational level, and evidence of contribution to these targets

	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	1 Unsuccessful	2 Partly successful	3 Successful	4 Highly successful
Disability inclusion	No elements of disability inclusion (specific outcomes, outputs, activity, partnerships, target groups, monitoring indicators) intended or specified in project design or implementation.	Limited evidence of disability inclusion in project design or implementation	Project design and implementation incorporates elements of disability inclusion. Some disability-inclusion indicators and some relevant disaggregated data	A disability-inclusion perspective is integrated into the project design; strategies to address disability issues are effectively implemented. Disability inclusion indicators are available and collected, and specific barriers to disability inclusion, as well as project impact on persons with disabilities are clearly identified.
Integration of just transition to environmental sustainability into the intervention	No elements promoting environmental sustainability (specific outcomes, outputs, activity, partnerships, target groups, monitoring indicators) intended or specified in project design or implementation	Limited evidence of elements promoting environmental sustainability in project design or implementation.	Project design and implementation include elements promoting environmental sustainability, with progress made towards environmental sustainability objectives. Some specific monitoring indicators are included in the monitoring framework.	An environmental sustainability perspective is integrated into the project design; strategies to address environmental sustainability are effectively implemented. Specific indicators are available and collected as part of the monitoring framework.

Annex 2: Evaluation reports reviewed

#	Evaluation title	TC Symbol	Region	Year
2021-1	Promoting youth employment opportunities for refugees and host community with employment-intensive construction works in Mauritania - Final evaluation	MRT/19/01/JPN	Africa	2021
2021-2	Strengthening the Resilience of Syrian Women and Girls and Host Communities in Turkey - Final evaluation	INT/17/03/UNW	Arab States	2021
2021-3	Implementation of the Agreement concerning additional employment injury benefits to the victims of the Ali Enterprises fire and strengthening... - Final evaluation	PAK/16/06/DEU	Asia and the Pacific	2021
2021-4	Support to the preparatory activities of the ILO to launch the Global Initiative on Decent Jobs for Youth - Final evaluation	GLO/16/17/ESP	Inter-regional	2021
2021-5	Addressing the root causes of migration in Ethiopia - Final Evaluation	ETH/16/01/EUR	Africa	2021
2021-6	Projet d'appui à l'amélioration de l'employabilité des jeunes ruraux dans des circuits productifs – Mali PIC III - Evaluation finale	MLI/15/02/LUX	Africa	2021
2021-7	Roads for Development (R4D) Phase II - Final evaluation (NYR)	TLS/16/03/AUS	Asia and the Pacific	2021
2021-8	Améliorer la gouvernance du travail dans les TPE/PME et aider à la sortie de l'économie informelle en Afrique - Final evaluation	RAF/16/53/FRA	Africa	2021
2021-9	Creer des emplois decents et respectueux de l'environnement pour les jeunes (CREER), project-drouillard, commune de Cite-soleil -	HTI/18/01/RBS	Latin America and the Caribbean	2021
2021-10	Ruta de inclusión laboral con enfoque en formación profesional dirigido a víctimas del conflicto armado interno en Colombia - Final evaluation	COL/20/01/COL, COL/19/03/COL	Latin America and the Caribbean	2021
2021-11	Evaluación Agrupada de proyectos de Protección Social en El Salvador y Honduras - Final agrupada independiente (cluster)	SLV/16/03/RBS, HND/18/01/HND	Latin America and the Caribbean	2021
2021-12	Road to Jobs: Bringing decent work to rural households of the Northern Provinces in Afghanistan - Final Evaluation	AFG/14/01/SID	Asia and the Pacific	2021

#	Evaluation title	TC Symbol	Region	Year
2021-13	Proyectos de apoyo a la implementación de la segunda fase de la Iniciativa Regional América Latina y el Caribe Libre de Trabajo Infantil - Final agrupada independiente	RLA/16/03/ESP; RLA/17/07/ESP; RLA/18/12/ESP; RLA/17/01/ESP; RLA/17/11/ESP; RLA/18/11/ESP	Latin America and the Caribbean	2021
2021-14	BDS4GROWTH - Support the Micro, Small and Medium Enterprise Development Agency and Affiliates by Developing their Capacity to analyse and address Business Development Services Needs of MSMEs in Manufacturing and Traded Services	EGY/17/03/EUR	Africa	2021
2021-15	Strengthening of rural trade union organization in post conflict Colombia	COL/17/01/NOR	Latin America and Caribbean	2021
2021-16	Support GSP+ beneficiary countries to effectively implement International Labour Standards and comply with reporting obligations - Final evaluation	GLO/15/27/EUR	Inter-regional	2021
2021-17	Sustaining Strengthened National Capacities to Improve International Labour Standards Compliance and Reporting in Relevant European Union Trading Partners - Final Evaluation	GLO/17/29/EUR	Inter-regional	2021
2021-18	SKILL-UP Global (Upgrading Skills for the changing world of work) - Final Evaluation	GLO/18/54/NOR, RAF/18/50/NOR, MWI/18/50/NOR, ETH/18/50/NOR, SEN/18/50/NOR, TZA/18/52/NOR, GHA/18/50/NOR, LBN/18/07/NOR	Inter-regional	2021
2021-19	Healthy Socio-Economic Recovery of the Micro and Small Enterprise Sector of Sri Lanka	LKA/20/50/UND	Asia	2021
2021-20	Gobernabilidad de las migraciones mejorada en Colombia para promover empleos y trabajo decente	COL/18/02/RBS	Latin America and Caribbean	2021
2021-21	Cluster Independent Project Evaluation of "Employment Intensive Infrastructure Programme" in Jordan	JOR/17/08/DEU (Phase III), JOR/18/05/DEU (Phase IV) and JOR/19/03/DEU (Phase V)	Arab States	2021
2021-22	Final evaluation technical support to Employees' State Insurance Scheme (ESIS) for improving and expanding access to healthcare services in India (Health Financing) – A transition to formality.	IND/18/01/GAT	Asia	2021
2021-23	Final independent cluster evaluation report of four ILO projects on employment and sustainable enterprise development for peace and resilience in Africa	CAF/16/01/RBS, COM/16/01/RBS, SOM/16/01/RBS, SLE/16/01/RBS	Africa	2021

#	Evaluation title	TC Symbol	Region	Year
2021-24	Final Evaluation of the Green enterPRIZE Innovation and Development in Zimbabwe	ZWE/17/01/SWE	Africa	2021
2021-25	Unemployment Protection in Indonesia - Quality Assistance for Workers Affected by Labour Adjustments (UNIQLO)	IDN/19/02/FRU	Asia	2021
2021-26	Equipping Sri Lanka to Counter Trafficking in Persons (EQUIP)	LKA/17/01/USA	Asia	2021
2021-27	ILO Technical Assistance Component – Skills for Employment Program (FCDO-SEP Project)	NPL/17/01/GBR	Asia	2021
2021-28	Support to Resettlement and Reconciliation (SURAR) through the United Nations Joint Programme for Peace Project		Asia	2021
2021-29	Development of a Social Economy Policy in South Africa	ZAF/16/01/FLA	Africa	2021
2021-30	ILO's Global Action to Improve the Recruitment Framework of Labour Migration (REFRAME)	GLO/15/41/EUR and GLO/15/69/EUR	Inter-regional	2021
2021-31	Improved labour migration governance to protect migrant workers and combat irregular migration	ETH/16/02/GBR	Africa	2021
2021-32	Promoting a model for sustainable livelihoods and social cohesion in Bassikounou Moughataa through on-site construction training Phase II/ Amélioration de la résilience des populations hôtes et de la cohésion sociale avec les réfugiés en Mauritanie, à travers la promotion de projets de développement local et la formation en modalité de chantier école	MRT/19/03/USA et MRT/20/01/HCR	Africa	2021
2021-33	Independent evaluation of the first phase of the ILO global flagship programme on building social protection floors for all (2016 – 2020)		Inter-regional	2021
2021-34	Appui à l'initiative mondiale pour l'emploi décent des jeunes dans la région du Sahel	GLO/17/46/LUX	Africa	2021
2021-35	Support to the Extension of Social Health Protection in South East Asia	RAS/17/09/LUX	Asia	2021
2021-36	"Promoción de la integración en el mercado de los migrantes y refugiados venezolanos en los países latinoamericanos y caribeños mediante el trabajo decente y el crecimiento económico inclusivo con equidad" y "Integración Económica de Migrantes y Refugiados Venezolanos en Perú y Ecuador con Trabajo Decente"	RLA/18/01/RBSA; RLA/19/03/USA	Latin America and Caribbean	2021
2021-37	Applying the G20 Training Strategy: A partnership between the ILO and the Russian Federation (Phase 2)	INT/16/01/RUS	Europe	2021

#	Evaluation title	TC Symbol	Region	Year
2021-38	Evaluation de type cluster: Relever les défis du marché de l'emploi pour des opportunités équitables au profit des femmes en Tunisie (ETOFE) ; - Des emplois décents pour les jeunes et les femmes (EDJEF) ; - Rendre les compétences visibles : améliorer l'orientation professionnelle, l'apprentissage et la reconnaissance des compétences en Tunisie (RCV)	TUN/18/50/NOR, TUN/17/02/NOR TUN/18/51/NOR	Africa	2021
2021-39	Productive and sustainable regional development with improved occupational health and safety conditions in mining and manufacturing in Bolivia - Final Independent Evaluation	BOL/18/01/RBS	Latin America and Caribbean	2021
2022-1	Enhanced capacity of government and social partners to reduce child labour and improve occupational safety and health in Syria	SYR/16/01/RBS, SYR/20/01/CEF, SYR/20/01/RBS	Arab States	2022
2022-2	Independent Final Evaluation of the Project "Promoting Economic Empowerment of women at Work through Responsible Business Conduct – G7 countries, WE-EMPOWER-G7"	GLO/17/37/EUR	Inter-regional	2022
2022-3	Final evaluation of the project "Decent Work for a Sustainable and Inclusive transformation in Mozambique (Moztrabalha)"	MOZ/16/01/SWE	Africa	2022
2022-4	Independent final evaluation of "The way forward after the revolution: decent work for women in Egypt and Tunisia" project (Phase II)	RAF/17/05/FIN	Africa	2022
2022-5	SCORE (Sustaining Competitive and Responsible Enterprises) Programme Phase III	GLO/17/54/MUL	Inter-regional	2022
2022-6	Improvement of Water Supply Equipment Management Capacity for the Establishment of Peace in Mindanao (Water Project)	PHL/18/04/JPN	Asia	2022
2022-7	Independent Final Evaluation of "Supporting Ministry of Labour and Social Development in Analysis, Policy and Capacity Development"	SAU/18/01/SAU	Arab States	2022
2022-8	Responsible Supply Chains in Asia (RSCA)	RAS/16/13/EUR	Asia	2022
2022-9	Programme d'appui à l'emploi, l'employabilité et à l'insertion	CPV/16/01/OUF	Africa	2022
2022-10	Formalizing Access to the Legal Labor Market for Refugees and Host Communities in Jordan, Phase II	JOR/19/05/USA	Arab States	2022

Annex 3: Summary of performance criteria and coverage by year

	2022 (partial)		2021		2020	
	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	***89%***	90%	***74%***	69%	**80%**	*57%*
1.2 Causal link between project objectives and DWCP outcome(s)	***100%***	60%	***87%***	77%	**77%**	*86%*
1.3 Constituent support	***78%***	90%	***42%***	97%	**55%**	*94%*
1.4 Validity of design/approach	***30%***	100%	***18%***	97%	**37%**	*100%*
1.5 Pro-poor focus	***70%***	100%	***59%***	100%	**55%**	*94%*
1.6 Gender-sensitive	***80%***	100%	***56%***	100%	**54%**	*100%*
2.1 Quality and completeness of outputs	**60%**	100%	**38%**	100%	**56%**	*97%*
2.2 Achievement of immediate objectives	**60%**	100%	**28%**	100%	**44%**	*97%*
2.3 Knowledge development	**75%**	80%	**68%**	95%	**82%**	*97%*
2.4 Capacity building	**90%**	100%	**69%**	100%	**83%**	*100%*
2.5 Normative work/standards promotion	**60%**	100%	**42%**	97%	**44%**	*95%*
2.6 Policy influence	**56%**	90%	**44%**	100%	**50%**	*97%*
2.7 Strategic importance of results achieved	**67%**	**90%**	**67%**	**100%**	***50%***	***97%***
2.8 Strategic relationships	***80%***	***100%***	***95%***	***100%***	***89%***	***100%***
2.9 Tripartism and social dialogue	***40%***	***100%***	***49%***	***100%***	***57%***	***100%***
2.10 Sustainability of policies, knowledge & capacities	***70%***	***100%***	***41%***	***100%***	***37%***	***100%***
2.11 Acknowledgement and use of ILO expertise	***100%***	***100%***	***89%***	***95%***	***85%***	***94%***
2.12 Resource leveraging	***22%***	***90%***	***33%***	***69%***	***52%***	***94%***
3.1 Goal orientation	***0%***	***100%***	***21%***	***97%***	***26%***	***97%***
3.2 Implementation management	***33%***	***90%***	***50%***	***92%***	***53%***	***91%***
3.3 ILO support to project	***67%***	***90%***	***74%***	***97%***	***64%***	***80%***
3.4 Internal ILO coordination	***67%***	***90%***	***73%***	***85%***	***68%***	***80%***
3.5 Monitoring and reporting	***10%***	***100%***	***39%***	***97%***	***30%***	***94%***

	2022 (partial)		2021		2020	
	Successful and Highly Successful	Coverage	Successful and Highly Successful	Coverage	Successful and Highly Successful	Coverage
3.6 Visibility and accessibility to knowledge and information	***60%***	***100%***	***29%***	***97%***	***48%***	***94%***
3.7 Cost efficiency	***90%***	***100%***	***74%***	***92%***	***65%***	***97%***
3.8 Adequacy of resources	***30%***	***100%***	***31%***	***100%***	***26%***	***97%***
4.1 Linkage to SDG targets	***56%***	***90%***	***59%***	***95%***	***49%***	***100%***
4.2 Disability inclusion	***10%***	***100%***	***23%***	***95%***	***21%***	***94%***
4.3 Environmental sustainability	***20%***	***100%***	***16%***	***97%***	***26%***	

Annex 4: Recommendations for this meta-analysis and identification of similar recommendations in past meta-analyses

Recommendations 2021-22	2020-21	2019-20	2017-18
Recommendation 1: Ensure that all constituent groups can be involved in project formulation and implementation through participatory tripartite social dialogue, despite possible limitations caused by crises such as the global COVID-19 pandemic, to promote ownership and sustainability of results.	✓	✓	✓
Recommendation 2: Take a realistic approach to intervention design, to ensure that implementation and achievement of outputs and immediate objectives is feasible given the scope, timing, and resources available, and include local partners to have a better contextual understanding of feasibility.	✓	✓	✓
Recommendation 3: Focus on sustainability aspects at the design stage and involve stakeholders in the co-development of exit-strategies, to ensure that the groundwork for maintaining or advancing results from ILO interventions is laid out, to promote ownership, and to better identify challenges downstream.	✓	✓	✓
Recommendation 4: To adapt to challenges associated with complex projects, or in the context of the COVID-19 crisis and other socio-economic-political crises, it is essential to clearly define assumptions and risks, develop adequate, flexible contingency plans, and to have flexibility in the allocation of resources to address emerging challenges.	✓	✓	✓
Recommendation 5: To build on synergies and limit duplication of efforts, establish good lines of communication and coordination with other projects and partners on the ground, especially within the UN system, and ensure that a common language and approach is used to the extent possible to foster complementarities.	✓		
Recommendation 6: Promote the use of existing guidance to explicitly include all ILO cross-cutting policy drivers in project design and implementation and develop specific guidance to address disability inclusion and environmental sustainability in ILO interventions and their evaluations, stressing that addressing these issues should not be an afterthought, but part of a strategic approach to promote decent work and social justice.	✓	✓	✓
Recommendation 7: Systematically identify and act upon opportunities to make progress towards the promotion and ratification of International Labour Standards throughout the project cycle.	✓	✓	✓
Recommendation 8: Strengthen capacities to improve the goal orientation of ILO interventions at the project design stage and foster office-wide understanding of why the development and use of results-oriented approaches and monitoring and reporting frameworks is important to effectively deliver results. Ensure that both intended and unintended consequences of interventions can be reflected in these frameworks and shared to promote deeper organisational learning.	✓	✓	✓

Recommendations 2021-22	2020-21	2019-20	2017-18
Recommendation 9: Ensure that adequate human and financial resources and related administrative processes are available to support projects throughout the project cycle, and particularly in implementing RBM and monitoring and reporting activities and establishing clear communication strategies to promote the visibility and dissemination of results among internal and external stakeholders, providing an opportunity to highlight ILO's comparative advantage , and increasing the possibility of leveraging funds from other sources.	✓		✓
Recommendation 10: Take into account the extra time and resources needed to conduct evaluations when there are constraints on travel. It is important to allocate sufficient time for international and national evaluation consultants to organise and conduct evaluative work on the ground when possible, rather than conducting evaluations remotely. Contracting national consultants rather than international consultants also strengthens local evaluative capacity.	✓		
Recommendation 11: Further explore the merits and if justified refine the analysis of results provided by the initial comparative assessment of performance ratings of evaluations of development cooperation projects, disaggregated by technical intervention areas and region over the past five years.	✓		
Recommendation 12: During project implementation, ensure that the initial target groups are the primary beneficiaries of results, and allow for sufficient flexibility to modify interventions if this is no longer the case.			