



# Evaluation Summary



International  
Labour  
Office

Evaluation Unit

## *Tripartite Action to Protect Migrants within and from the GMS from Labour Exploitation (TRIANGLE) project*

### Quick Facts

**Countries:** Cambodia, Lao PDR, Malaysia, Thailand and Vietnam (Greater Mekong Sub-region GMS)

**Mid-Term Evaluation:** 12/2012-03/2013

**Mode of Evaluation:** Independent

**ILO Administrative responsibility:** Regional Office for Asia & Pacific

**Technical Area:** Migration

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**Project End:** June 2015

**Project Code:** RAS/10/01/AUS

**Donor:** AusAID - \$AUD 10 million

**Keywords:** Labour migration, migrant workers, recruitment, protection, Mekong Sub-region

the recruitment and protection of women and men migrant workers.

- To protect the rights of women and men migrants and potential migrants through increased access to support services.

### Present Situation of the Project

The TRIANGLE project was formally launched in June 2010 and is now 2½ years in operation in Cambodia, Lao PDR, Malaysia, Thailand and Vietnam. China was originally part of the countries targeted by the project, but activities were delayed and eventually priority was given to extending activities to Myanmar, where activities will start in 2013.

In all countries, the project is cooperating with the respective governments and social partners on legislative issues, providing capacity development support at national, regional and local levels to authorities, trade unions, employers' organizations and others, reaching out to potential migrant workers to better prepare them for migration and raise their awareness on their rights and protection means, and develops mechanisms to provide legal support to migrant workers in situations of labour exploitation, or support to those at risk of rights abuses.

As of December 2012, 13,044 direct beneficiaries have received assistance through the project. Of the beneficiaries for whom sex-disaggregated data was collected, 46 % were women.

### Purpose, scope and clients of the evaluation

The scope of the mid-term evaluation is from the project start until the time of this MTE, and it covers the five countries in which the project is implementing activities.

### Background & Context

#### Summary of the project purpose, logic and structure

With the overall objective to increase labour rights protection and decent work opportunities for women and men migrant workers in the GMS countries and Malaysia, TRIANGLE was designed with three major objectives:

- To strengthen migrant recruitment and labour protection policies and practices, reflecting the interests of tripartite constituents and gender-specific concerns.
- To enhance the capacity of tripartite constituents to close the gap between intention and implementation of national policy, bilateral agreements & regional commitments related to

The MTE examines whether the project is on track to deliver expected outcomes with respect to time and budget; it aims to assess the efficacy, sustainability, relevance, impact and effectiveness of the project, and to inform approaches or strategy shifts for the second half of the planned implementation period and to inform related interventions.

### **Methodology of evaluation**

The tools employed were documentary analysis, identification of relevant evaluation questions and sub-questions, semi-structured interviews to elicit the facts relevant to the evaluation questions and synthesis of findings, conclusions and recommendations.

## **Main Findings & Conclusions**

### ***Relevance***

TRIANGLE was designed to link to a number of outcomes of the ILO Global Programme and Budget 2010-2011, to tie in closely with national development priorities and with the Decent Work Country Programmes, and is in line with a number of partnership commitments outlined in the Partnership Agreement between the Australian Government and the ILO (2010-2015), in particular the encouragement of tripartite constituents to be equal participants in labour, employment and social protection dialogue, as well as the promotion of gender focussed activities.

The overall strategy of the project is based on supporting the development of legal, safe and orderly recruitment channels and improved labour protection mechanisms. The project is coherent with national policies and development plans and has developed a rational approach in line with the respective plans in each country where migration was specifically referred to.

The objectives of TRIANGLE, determined after a comprehensive problem and country situation analysis are consistent with the overall objective to increase labour rights protection and promote decent work opportunities while addressing priorities and concerns of migrants as well as the need of partners to improve the situation of migrants.

Objectives 1 and 2 of TRIANGLE and the proposed strategy suggesting the promotion of social dialogue and tripartism to improve working conditions of migrant workers are very relevant.

ILO's Regional Outcome on migration based on the Multilateral Framework for Labour Migration

“improved capacities of governments and social partners to manage labour migration” has also been considered in the project design, in particular in suggesting increased tripartite engagement, fair and ethical recruitment policies and practices as well as advocacy for better social protection.

### ***Effectiveness***

Overall, good progress has been made by the project. At the institutional level, TRIANGLE has adapted activities to prevailing circumstances and requirements in a resourceful way, taking into account the priorities given by governments and providing support to policy adjustments and policy formulation within the developments taking place in each country. Major achievements relate to the drafting of legislative tools to strengthen the regulation of recruitment practices in Cambodia and Vietnam, the input on the Employment Decree in Lao PDR and on the Ministerial Regulation on Domestic Work in Thailand in line with elements of ILO Convention 189, as well as on the preparation of the Draft Ministerial Regulation on Fishing in line with elements of ILO Convention 188. At the highest level of ministries where the project has provided support on legislative issues, the expertise of ILO has been well received and is considered to be very useful; the project's advocacy efforts are leading to real improvements of legal frameworks. Benefits have also been taken on board by implementing partners through exposure to new tools and approaches of dealing with migration and protection issues.

TRIANGLE provided capacity development support where it was needed, both at central and provincial levels to authorities and to trade unions. It has provided an efficient platform to involve all tripartite constituents and other stakeholders. Due to its regional approach, it also allowed the sharing of information on the situation in the countries of destination and the countries of origin, and the sharing of practices and tools between countries.

With regard to direct support services, Migrant Worker Resource Centres (MRCs) set up under different management arrangements have made good progress in most of the 19 locations (all MRCs in Cambodia, Thailand and Vietnam, Penang in Malaysia). Most of the MRCs started within the past year and the coming months will allow improving the delivery of support services and the outreach to the migrant workers community.

The support provided through the project on legal cases has been well received, both in sending and receiving countries. Information provided to potential migrants in sending countries is found to be useful and provides the workers planning to work abroad with more confidence. In receiving countries the migrant workers similarly acknowledge the value of information provided to them, but face difficulties to make best use of it in dealing with their problems. The value of regional approach in the cross-country case referrals and in the provision of end-to-end support is apparent and has proven to have even greater potential.

### **Efficiency**

The operational planning of the project is made by means of successive annual work plans in which activities are agreed between all stakeholders and corresponding budgets defined. Budgeted resources have been correctly managed according to ILO procedures; corrective actions have been taken when required. In order to implement the TRIANGLE project, the team worked with and through 21 key implementing partners to provide services to (potential) migrant workers and their families. While the project works with the different partners individually, the project has been able to develop some cooperation between all stakeholders involved in each country in order to mainstream efforts to achieve better results.

### **Impact and sustainability**

At the policy/legislative level, the project is providing support to governments in revising existing labour laws and regulations or in helping to define new ones in line with national policies and priorities. This is expected to provide a significant contribution to the positive long-term effects of better policies. The TRIANGLE project and ILO's involvement with governments and tripartite constituents beyond the project itself secures a better alignment of national policies with international conventions.

The practical tools developed by the project (e.g. Codes of Conduct, Good Labour Practice Guidelines, Training modules on OSH) are likely to produce a direct impact if their use is extensively promoted, or even better enforced.

The legal training provided in all countries aims at a better implementation of laws and regulations, which will lead to better outcomes for migrant workers.

Capacity development activities (training, workshops) implemented by the project are essential but face a

lack of knowledge management in benefiting organizations. The project could promote basic knowledge management tools and techniques, like e.g. setting up IT or non-IT based libraries, suggesting the formal nomination of a "knowledge manager" in receiving organizations who could develop learning reviews or IT-based Knowledge Bases, blogs or search tools offering access to all staff to resources acquired from capacity development activities.

Direct support to migrant workers facing difficult situations in receiving countries and to potential migrants and their family members in countries of origin provides a direct short-term impact for the beneficiaries and a potential longer-term impact through the reporting mechanisms feeding into advocacy campaigns, media coverage and policy dialogue. Improvements in policy and policy implementation have been observed when the project has been able to reference individual cases and trends observed within the target sites. The project provides a good platform to develop the necessary linkages.

## **Recommendations**

### **For GMS TRIANGLE**

#### **1) Consolidate results & define priorities (for ILO and constituents to address).**

In order to maximize the impact and sustainability of activities undertaken and/or initiated by the project, priorities need to be defined to concentrate staff time and resources in a limited number of areas where significant results are likely to be achieved, particularly in:

- Focus on areas in which ILO see as ripe for policy and legislative change
- Training of local level authorities, while ensuring the sustainability of training materials and tools (knowledge management)
- Cross-border cooperation between trade unions
- Involvement of trade unions in policy issues and legislative development
- Monitoring, coaching and providing support to the MRCs

#### **2) Address management weaknesses (For ILO to address):**

- Reinforce the Lao PDR project office by means of a temporary re-assignment of the Technical Officer to Vientiane.

- Strengthen the overall follow-up of activities (**monitoring**) in all countries and develop a methodology aiming at **results measurement** of activities.

### **3). Adapt Migrant Workers Resource Centre (MRC) set-up where problems are observed (For ILO to address with implementing partners)**

Several MRCs need particular attention in order to improve the outreach activities and delivery of services.

- MRC Savannakhet: develop outreach activities beyond the 5 districts.
- MRC Penang: review contractual arrangements and improve reporting.
- MRC Kuala Lumpur/Selangor: request the designation of a new Coordinator, develop a focused action plan and foster better commitment with MTUC.
- MRC Johor: request stricter and more accurate reporting as well as the appointment of a new coordinator.
- MRCs Champasak and Xaiyaboury: request a full report of activities and provide intensive coaching.

### **4) Improve Reporting (and monitoring) (For ILO to address)**

As a result of a better follow-up of activities and the introduction of a results measurement system, the project should be able to report more specifically about the **potential and/or expected direct and indirect impact of activities**, with a more precise indication of the **project outreach** in relation to the three main objectives. Evaluating impact, not outputs, could include measuring the potential impact of e.g. a ministerial regulation, a communications campaign or the training of peer leaders.

### **5) Communication & networking (For ILO to address)**

Internal communication between implementing partners should be given a higher degree of attention in order to reinforce linkages between implementing partners of the project who have expressed their interest for more networking initiatives; e.g. sharing of resources and approaches in dealing with similar problems.

### **6) Prepare a comprehensive Sustainability Plan (For ILO to address with the constituents)**

It is important for the project to define a comprehensive sustainability plan clearly pointing out what needs to be done, where, when and by whom in the months to come in order to maintain the benefits of all interventions, further advance the impact of all activities undertaken and suggest options for longer-term sustainability.

**7) For the Myanmar extension (for ILO to address)- Based on the difficulties faced by the GMS project, the definition of priorities for Myanmar should take into consideration the political, economic and social developments of the country. The project** should restrain the ambition at institutional level considering the fact that the government of Myanmar has to deal with many other challenges and priorities, even though labour migration is considered as a major priority. This includes limiting the number of MRCs to one or two and ensuring of the results monitoring.

**For ASEAN TRIANGLE:** The main areas in which the project can support and sustain the results of the GMS project are in:

- **exposing the implementing partners of the GMS project to the “Filipino model”** as already planned by the project under the specific programmes for the CLMV countries;
- **networking trade unions** in sending and receiving countries;
- **further supporting the participation of tripartite constituents in international forums** in the framework of ASEAN integration;
- **lessons learned from the GMS project and recommendations** in particular related to the definition of priorities, monitoring of activities, results measurement and reporting **should also be taken on board.**

Lessons learned are available in the full report.