



Evaluation Summary



International
Labour
Office

Evaluation Unit

Monitoring and Assessing Progress on Decent Work: Final Independent Evaluation – V1: Report, V2: Country Reports

Quick Facts

Countries: Armenia, Bangladesh, Brazil, Cambodia, Cameroon, Indonesia, Niger, Peru, Philippines, Ukraine, Zambia

Final Evaluation: April 2014

Mode of Evaluation: Independent

ILO Office Administrative and

Technical Backstopping Office: Department of Multilateral Cooperation

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Project Code: INT/07/15/EEC

Donor & Project Budget: European Commission; 4 199 997 Euros

Keywords: Decent Work, Monitoring, Organizational Coordination, Results-based Management

Background & Context

Decent work is defined as productive work in conditions of freedom, equity, security and human dignity and is a widely shared goal. This was reflected in 2008 when the Millennium Development Goals (MDG) were expanded with the addition of a new target to “achieve full and productive employment and decent work for all including women and young people”, with five indicators.

Many developing and transition countries were developing decent work strategies to complement or supplement their poverty reduction strategies prior to the start of the ILO-EC project “Monitoring and Assessing Progress on Decent Work” (MAP). Promoting Decent Work has been a principal objective of the International Labour Organization (ILO) since 1999 and has been consistently highlighted in European Union (EU) and European Commission (EC) policy statements. It was therefore essential to develop means for monitoring it, and particularly for countries to be able to monitor it for themselves. Hitherto most monitoring of employment issues lacked the “decent” element, concentrating mainly on quantitative employment data. An integrated view including qualitative factors was needed, not only to provide a measure of progress, but also to enable policy making to be based on appropriate information. Against this background, the 2008 *ILO Declaration on Social Justice for a Fair Globalization* details that Member States may consider “the establishment of appropriate indicators or statistics, if necessary with the assistance of the ILO, to monitor and evaluate the progress made”.

The MAP Project became the means to pilot test a new framework on measuring decent work (in parallel with other initiatives and funding) and the project was financed by the EC under the *Investing in People (2007-13)* Thematic Programme. It responded to Pillar 4 “Other aspects of human and social development”, particularly in terms of the advancement of employment, decent work and social cohesion in EC partner countries. It was

implemented by the ILO's Policy Integration Department (INTEGRATION) in close collaboration with the Department of Statistics (STATISTICS) and other technical units; regional, sub-regional and country offices; and the ILO's International Training Centre (ITC) in Turin. It became part of larger programming at both country and ILO levels.

The early conceptualisation of the MAP project was based on discussions of the ILO Governing Body on the measurement of decent work on several occasions. Discussion papers were prepared for meetings of experts at national and regional workshops and consultations were held by the ILO with its tripartite constituents (governments and employers' and workers' organizations). This process was started well prior to project formulation. It provided the framework for the subsequent design of the project, including: appropriate guidance on the main principles and methodology; the use of statistical and legal framework indicators of decent work; the development of Decent Work Country Profiles; a clear and precise definition of Decent Work that underpins the project rationale; and the integration of the ILO's four strategic objectives contained in the Decent Work Agenda. The likelihood of a joint ILO–European Commission (EC) project on “monitoring and assessing progress on decent work in developing countries” was highlighted.

Subsequent to the *Tripartite Meeting of Experts on the Measurement of Decent Work (September 2008)*, a proposal for the measurement of Decent Work was prepared by the ILO in October 2008 and discussed at the Governing Body meetings in 2008 and 2009.

The MAP project was implemented during five years (02.2009 to 12.2013). It worked with government agencies, national statistical offices, workers' and employers' organisations and research institutions to strengthen the capacity of developing and transition countries to self-monitor and self-assess progress towards decent work. *Decent Work Country Profiles* were the principal products used to monitor and assess progress toward decent work at the national and sometimes sub-national level. Profiles covered ten thematic areas of decent work. The project covered countries in all major regions including:

Africa (Niger and Zambia); Asia (Bangladesh, Cambodia, Indonesia and the Philippines); Europe (Ukraine); and Latin America (Brazil and Peru). Through the regional activities, the global methodology for monitoring and assessing progress toward decent work developed by the project was disseminated beyond the project countries, thus extending its global reach

Evaluation Methodology: The final independent evaluation was conducted to analyze the efficiency, effectiveness, relevance, impact and sustainability of the project and to examine whether the project achieved its stated objectives, produced the desired outputs, and the extent to which it realized the proposed outcomes. The evaluation was also to identify strengths and weaknesses in the project design, strategy, and management as well as lessons learned with recommendations for the ILO's considerations for future technical cooperation and other country-level work related to measuring progress on decent work. The evaluators reviewed project documents, developed data collection instruments, and interviewed representatives from the ILO, the EC, and national stakeholders located in all MAP countries and in two non-MAP countries. A total of 120 stakeholders were interviewed, of which 45 were women.

Main Findings & Conclusions

The findings and conclusions address the key questions listed in the terms of reference and are presented according to the major evaluation categories: relevance; project design; effectiveness; efficiency; project management; impact and sustainability. Key lessons learned have also been included in this section.

Relevance

The MAP Project's objectives, strategies and methodologies proved relevant to address the challenges identified by the ILO and its constituents regarding the promotion and measurement of Decent Work. However, although the project generated a large degree of ownership among workers' organizations and officials at the Ministries of Labour and National Statistical Offices (NSO), in several countries the political establishment and employers' organizations were

not fully committed to measuring decent work. Their involvement with the project also varied from country to country. It was relatively high in Brazil, Indonesia, the Philippines, and Ukraine and low in Peru and Cambodia.

The project remained highly relevant during implementation and remains relevant after the completion of MAP. The vast majority of national partners interviewed during the evaluation stressed the ongoing need for capacity building and strongly requested further technical (and financial) support to consolidate achievements to date.

Project design

The Project Document was developed through a long process of consultation and negotiation between ILO Headquarters (ILO-HQ) and the services of the European Commission. The early conceptualisation of the programme, including consultation by the ILO with its tripartite constituents, comprised a substantial and thorough level of intellectual input into the process of project formulation and provided a sound and informed input for the methodology to be used for measuring and assessing progress on Decent Work.

The evaluators found that the project design followed a top-down approach. ILO regional and country offices as well as national stakeholders were not adequately consulted on the design of the project. The Logical Framework contained a number of weaknesses, despite a revised and improved version in 2010 following the EC's Results Oriented Monitoring (ROM) evaluation. Regarding gender issues, the project document ("Contribution Agreement") was surprisingly "gender blind". Although there was a cursory mention of the need for the collection of sex-disaggregated statistics, there were no references to the importance of promoting gender balance in the project's numerous activities, including participatory workshops. The revised Logframe completely lacked a gender lens. This said, the project logic was sound and both the strategy (proposed interventions at the country-region-global levels) and intervention methodology (development of DWI-templates, data collection and analysis, elaboration of country profiles, and

global methodology) logically addressed the needs identified by the ILO and its constituents.

Effectiveness

Primary and secondary data gathered by the evaluators showed that all activities planned at the Global, Regional and National levels were carried out satisfactorily and produced high quality products. The project largely achieved the expected outputs and outcomes. In general terms, National Partners improved and *increased their capacities regarding all aspects of Decent Work* (specific Objective), despite the absence of an enabling environment in some countries. In countries where the initial situation was less favourable, the MAP project had to engage in promoting the principles of decent work before engaging in the actual project activities.

Regarding MAP's contribution to the ILO Programme and Budget (P&B) 2012-2013 Outcome 19, the Project achieved significant added value in terms of raising awareness. With regard to ownership there were considerable variations between countries and the different groups of stakeholders. Generally speaking there was limited ownership at the political level in countries such as Cambodia and Peru, whilst in countries such as Brazil, Indonesia, the Philippines, Ukraine and Zambia there is a growing sense of ownership by constituents. The project strongly contributed to placing Decent Work issues and measurement in the Social and Economic Agendas of most "pilot" countries.

Efficiency

All project activities were carried out to a high standard and delivered in a timely manner. The immediate outputs were achieved in all countries, except Peru. Technical standards were very high at all levels (National, Regional and Global) and all of the ILO offices and experts (HQ, Regional and National Offices) were fully engaged. The relationship between the financial resources invested and the results obtained was satisfactory and the Project delivered good "value for money".

Project Management

There were negative factors for implementation, including inadequate provision of human resources to manage and coordinate the MAP Project and burdensome administrative ILO-EC

requirements. Despite these constraints, project management at ILO HQ, Regional Offices and Country Offices managed to achieve the intended outputs through a commendable level of dedication and professionalism. Flexibility allowed for necessary adjustments to project implementation. All planned activities were delivered on time¹ and the evaluators conclude that the project was managed in a satisfactory manner.

Impact

The MAP Project generated substantial impact at:

- i) the Global level through pilot testing of the Framework for Decent Work Indicators; production of manuals and databases; adoption of decent work indicators; mainstreaming of decent work in the international community; international workshops leading to a better global understanding of the objectives and methodology of MAP, dissemination of information, presentation of case studies and exchanges of best practice, and discussions regarding the future of the measurement of decent work;
- ii) the Regional level through awareness raising and technical training to a large number of participants from MAP and non-MAP countries and coordination with regional organizations;
- iii) and the Country Level through a better understanding of the Decent Work Agenda and implementation of its measurement; greater awareness of workers' and employers' needs; improvement of the *enabling environment through advocacy and other measures*; improvement of technical capacities of national partners; improvement of national statistics and strengthened national capacities (to different extents) to

¹ During the Draft Evaluation report revision process, the EC informed that "Global project outputs were delivered at the very end of the project and with limited time for revision within the project duration, more specifically the manual on the "global methodology to self-monitor and self-assess progress towards decent work" (for which the EC has not received a draft before the final reporting) and to a lesser extent EC toolkit for mainstreaming decent work in development cooperation.

self-monitor and self-assess progress towards decent work. The MAP project also contributed a significant added value relative to social dialogue in the countries.

Sustainability

Globally, the basis for sustainability was established to a large extent through high quality technical capacity building; awareness raising; stakeholder support for the principles of Decent Work, including among policy-making bodies in some of the countries; positive changes to legislation; and the strengthening of a Decent Work "community" at national, regional and global levels.

The main constraints to sustainability are insufficient national resources in low-income countries and the absence of a fully conducive enabling environment in some countries, including lack of complete ownership by the political establishment.

In most countries the continuation of a programme to measure and monitor decent work will greatly depend on national budget allocations, and staff resources. It is likely that further external financial support will be necessary in most of the low-income countries, although there is less need in middle-income countries such as Indonesia or Brazil. In countries such as these further assistance (technical collaboration from the ILO and financial resources) needs to be targeted.

Recommendations & Lessons Learned

Recommendations²

Recommendation 1: Maintaining support to national efforts in promoting the monitoring and assessment of progress on Decent Work in current "MAP Countries" and to extend the activities to additional countries where assistance is requested and beneficial. Further development of a programme to measure and monitor decent work is recommended.

Recommendation 2: A greater degree of anchoring in the countries is required. This involves taking into account the specific contexts

² The full recommendations are presented in Chapter 5, p.60

and needs of countries in order to fine tune the interventions.

Recommendation 3: The ILO should have an integrated policy on DW Country Profile production and analysis of progress made towards DW, focused on the needs of the constituents. It should tap into the knowledge and expertise of the constituents, fully integrate existing knowledge and experience in the Country Offices, Regional Offices as well as in HQ and other development partners to deliver a high quality, integrated and coherent product.

Recommendation 4: Monitoring and assessing progress on Decent Work should be integrated in a single ILO programme, with independence of funding arrangements of its actions at the different levels.

Recommendation 5: The ILO and the EC should collaborate in mainstreaming Decent Work into the national and international policy framework.

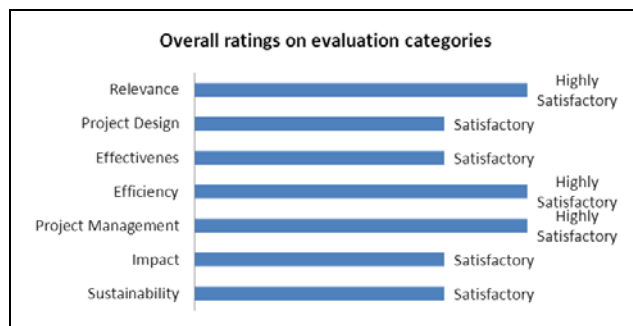
Recommendation 6: The ILO should reinforce the alignment and linkages made between various ILO country level studies and the development of the DWCP/UNDAF.

Recommendation 7: It may be useful for countries to update Country Profiles on a regular basis according to data availability and make them useful to policy makers with wide dissemination. Country Profiles could be fully updated on a biennial basis and published and disseminated electronically.

Recommendation 8: Decent Work indicators and country profiles may be developed at various levels: local, provincial, regional, where appropriate. The added value of producing such profiles is significant.

Recommendation 9: The ILO could assist countries to regularly and voluntarily report on progress towards decent work, especially within the DW Country Programme cycle. This will provide tripartite partners with accurate information and will have the added advantage of maintaining and improving decent work statistical and legal framework information systems.

Important lessons learned



Specific factors proved to be crucial for creating an enabling environment for the successful implementation of the MAP Project in the pilot countries, including:

- The context and the status of the economies of the MAP countries, including the ability to adequately fund MAP activities and improve the capacity of institutions: In this regard Brazil, for example, has made significantly greater progress than most countries because of its greater economic and institutional strength.
- The situation of pilot countries at the beginning of the project with regard to decent work statistics, which varied greatly: Accordingly the pace of implementation and the outputs produced were different from country to country – for example in the Philippines progress was swift as national statistical capacity was at a high level prior to the start of implementation (thanks to a previous ILO project on labour market and statistics). The strengthening of capacity and depth of the support to National Statistical Offices varied among the different pilot countries under the project.
- The level of stakeholders' participation: The ILO involved and worked closely with the key stakeholders and institutions in all countries, however the degree of participation was constrained by various factors such as resource constraints – for example in Zambia the degree of follow-up of workers organisations after project implementation was limited.

- The degree of political commitment, which varied: In Brazil, the process is very well advanced given the high national capacities and political commitment. In Peru, statistical capacities are high, but the process has been slowed down by the absence of tripartite consensus.
- The overall cooperative environment. In some countries which favoured MAP's implementation and catalyzed its results the cooperative environment was satisfactory. In other countries the initial enabling environment was less favourable. This was the case for instance in Bangladesh and Cambodia, where the concept of the tripartite approach took some time to establish.

adapt the original project concept to local situations and needs.

Building on existing ILO experience, programmes and resources (departments, experts, Regional and National Offices) and collaboration and coordination with them were proven to be essential to successful implementation. The high level of collaboration and coordination was a key element of achieving impact and making MAP models viable.

The consensus building tripartite process used by MAP was an important factor in its success. Tripartite consultations were used to identify an agreed set of decent work indicators and to approve drafts of Decent Work Country Profiles, and have: (a) helped build national ownership of the decent work indicators as well as the Profiles (to varying degrees); (b) helped increase interest and advocacy of decent work; (c) helped provide a detailed check of the Profiles; and (d) provided a fact-based basis for social dialogue.

Availability of staff was one key aspect of project performance. Countries in which designated MAP project personnel were fully available (for example in Brazil), or where there was strong support to countries from ILO regional offices were able to implement the project more efficiently than those countries in which the ILO focal points were given the MAP responsibility in addition to other duties. To some extent the work overload existed in most of the MAP countries.

Flexibility to adapt the budget and the activities is essential to address varying country needs and to support project implementation. Significant changes ³ required long and complicated administrative processes. This made it difficult to

³ The EC informed that project activities reallocations were conducted within the 15% margin foreseen in article 9.2 of the General Conditions and only subject to notification to the EC (and appropriate justification). The position of the EC in this regard has always been to accept any changes that were justified because of the reality and needs of the specific context of pilot countries.