



Evaluation Summary



International
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Promoting the Effective Governance of Labour Migration from South Asia through Actions on Labour Market Information, Protection during Recruitment and Employment, Skills, and Development Impact – Final evaluation

Quick Facts

Countries: Nepal, India, Pakistan with some activities in Kuwait, Qatar and UAE

Final Evaluation: September 2016

Evaluation Mode: Independent

Administrative Office: CO-Kathmandu

Technical Office: MIGRANT

Evaluation Manager: Pamornrat Pringsulaka

Evaluation Consultants: Katerina Stolyarenko

Project Code: RAS/12/07/EEC

Donor & Budget: European Commission (80%) and ILO (20%), EUR 2,407,186

Keywords: safe migration, labour migration, GCC countries, Nepal, India, Pakistan

Background & Context

Summary of the project purpose, logic and structure

The project 'Promoting the Effective Governance of Labour Migration from South Asia through Actions on Labour Market Information, Protection during Recruitment and Employment, Skills, and Development Impact' (SALM project) seeks to support governments, industry, and labour migrants from South Asia to the GCC to improve labour practices and compliance with labour standards for low-skilled migrant workers from India,

Nepal and Pakistan which migrate to Kuwait, Qatar and the UAE.

The immediate objectives of the SALM project are three-fold: (1) 'Providing reliable information on overseas employment opportunities, and build capacity for matching qualified job seekers with the demand from foreign employers', further aided through five outputs, (2) 'Improving recruitment services and increasing the protection of migrant workers during employment to reduce migration costs and recruitment abuses in origin and destination countries', further aided through eight outputs and (3) 'Expanding training opportunities and providing a system to enable the portability of skills for outgoing and returning migrant workers', supported by six outputs.

Present Situation of the Project

The SALM project duration was revised twice, i.e. from 40 months (June 2013-May 2016) to 45 months (June 2013-October 2016). The project was a subject of the internal midterm evaluation conducted in early 2015. The project budget utilization rate constitutes 96 per cent as of September 30, 2016.

Purpose, scope and clients of the evaluation

Purpose: The final project evaluation focused on relevance and validity of the project design, achievements related to the immediate objectives, emerging impact of the key activities implemented, assess the potential for the sustainability of project interventions and lessons learned.

Scope: The final evaluation covers the SALM project implementation starting from June 2013 to October 2016.

Clients: The principle audiences for this evaluation are the management team of the SALM project, the ILO technical unit (MIGRANT), the administrative unit (ROAP) and the donor (EU), tripartite constituents and civil society organizations who have partnered with the project, as well as other agencies working on labour migration and human trafficking at national and regional levels.

Methodology of evaluation

The evaluation had a participatory character and was based on a qualitative approach. Data collection procedures included:

- a) desk review of relevant documents related to the Project and other sources (more than 70 documents have been reviewed).
- b) field visits to Pakistan, India and Nepal during September 5-23, 2016.
- c) interviews with key informants from executing agency, Government representatives, employers and workers' organizations, national implementing partners, development partners and donor (in total, 89 interviews (46-m/43-f) were conducted).
- d) focus group discussions with direct program beneficiaries in two out of three project's target countries (in total, 2 focus groups were conducted with 30 (25-m/5-f) project's direct beneficiaries in Pakistan and India).

One of the major limitations to the methodological approach identified by the evaluator is attribution of project's results. All of the medium and long-term outcomes of the Project are quite broad and the achievement of the goals is not solely the responsibility of the Project. In order to achieve many of its objectives the Project cooperates actively with other international agencies present in the country, civil society partners and state authorities. Consequently, it is not possible to attribute results solely to the Project. At best, it is possible to point to Project's contribution towards achieving the goals.

Main Findings & Conclusions

Relevance and strategic fit: The Project design and implementational priorities are strongly aligned with the

national priorities of the target countries and fits with the ILO global, regional and national strategic priorities and programming on labour migration and regional consultative processes. Indeed, the Project's responsiveness to ongoing contextual changes is to be commended. The SALM project has a high importance for the ILO as it contributed to strengthening of ILO's reputation in Nepal in the area of labour migration, assisted in keeping the issue on migration on agenda in India and opened a door for starting up the discussion on labour migration on regional level. In addition, it was the first ILO project on labour migration in Pakistan. The added value of the SALM project is focus on broader migration flows and closing of the knowledge gaps.

Validity of project design: The project design was generally valid, accompanied by the interlinked project's components represented by five strategic pillars and based on rights-based, partnership and inclusive approaches. The positive side of the project is a "light" design in order to allow fine-tuning during implementation. The SALM project was designed taking into account the priorities/framework of the Abu Dhabi Dialogue, the Colombo Process, and the Fair Migration Agenda process lead by ROAP. However, the project would benefit from incorporation of regional approach in addition to corridor approach.

Project progress and effectiveness: Despite delays in project implementation and challenging environment, the Project has effectively delivered upon all key activities and demonstrated good achievements towards reaching the anticipated results. The project achieved most of the set targets under Outcome 3, while the expected results mostly exceeded the set targets under Outcome 1 and Outcome 2.

Efficiency of resource use: In spite of having limited resources, the Project was very successful in complementing the project's resources through cost-sharing and in-kind contributions from partners and used very efficient implementation modality for reaching the anticipated number of beneficiaries in targeted countries of origin and destination.

Effectiveness of management arrangements: Relevant and accountable management mechanisms were put in place and ILO has successfully recruited a competent team in each target country, with relevant technical skill and credibility and a strong rights orientation. This has been supported by strong relationships between the

Project team and stakeholders at all levels as well as the development of strategic partnerships and alliances with key agencies.

Impact orientation: The Project has shown positive short-term and medium-term impacts at individual, institutional and policy levels through the provision of access to reliable information by MWs, establishing of the centres for effective delivery of service support to women and men migrant MWs, promotion of ethical recruitment and protection of migrant workers during employment, encouraging tripartite participation on formulation and implementation of recommendations on Migrant Labour, strengthening of complaints mechanisms, pre-departure orientation and institutionalization of tripartite consultation in developing protection policies and practices for MWs.

Sustainability: The SALM Project undertook all necessary steps, which are under its control and within its mandate to promote sustainable project's outcomes. The project team was quite successful in securing funding for continuation of the work on labour migration issues in Nepal and India as well as on regional level; nevertheless, no resources have been secured for continuation of work in Pakistan, except securing of 9 months funding for operation of MRCs. In addition, for the national governments and project partners, sustainability is very much dependent on their ability to mobilize resources and still for the majority of them the external support is required to ensure follow up.

Gender equality The Project promoted and took into account gender mainstreaming aspects whenever possible; however, due to the low level of female migrant workers in the targeted countries of origin and destination, it was difficult for the ILO to ensure equal representation of male and female in all project's activities.

Conclusions

The SALM Project has made a sound contribution to promoting the management of labour migration from India, Nepal and Pakistan to the countries of the Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC), ensuring effective protection of the rights of vulnerable migrant workers, enhancing the development impact of labour migration and reducing unregulated migration. It has further encouraged joint planning and action between governments, social partners, private recruitment

agencies, NGOs, migrant associations, embassies, and researchers and strengthened the capacities of them to deliver more effective and protective services to Nepali, Indian and Pakistani migrant workers. While these represent a considerable contribution to the sector, the process of reforms is ongoing in targeted countries of origin and destination and there is a clearly identified need for a broadened scope of support to this area into the future.

Recommendations

Main recommendations and follow-up

The main recommendations are summarized as follows:

General recommendations

1. The project duration was too short and requires continuation for at least 3 more years to ensure lasting impact of activities carried out and/or initiated by the project.
2. The design of any subsequent Phase of the Project should carefully consider how and where ILO and its partners in each target country can have strongest impact and extend both the sphere of influence of both itself and its partners.
3. In any subsequent phase of the Project to ensure that it builds upon existing capacity building activities, and that monitoring and evaluation efforts enable effective monitoring and evaluation of the long-term impacts of these efforts.
4. The design of any future Project should pay further attention to articulating an outcome-based strategy towards gender mainstreaming in order to strengthen the gender orientation of activities undertaken by its partners, as well as impact of the Project.
5. To introduce a practice of conduction of needs assessments and baseline studies in order to have evidence-based and tailor-made project designs and monitoring tools.
6. To ensure that the ILO national project staff are able to carry out their M&E responsibilities.
7. In future projects, identify strategies at the planning phase that will lead to sustainability of core project outputs and outcomes within the project timeframe.

Specific recommendations

1. ILO as a standard-setting organization should continue to play further a leading role in the dialogue with the Government of Nepal, Government of India and Government of Pakistan on the legal and policy reviews pertaining to the issues of labour migration.
2. ILO Nepal, ILO India and ILO Pakistan should share the good practices emerged within the SALM project with other countries and share with tripartite partners and development partners in Nepal, India and Pakistan.
3. ILO Nepal, ILO India and ILO Pakistan should develop appropriate dissemination strategies for all research studies developed by the SALM project and use them as advocacy tool for communication of relevant findings to policy-makers.
4. ILO Nepal and ILO Pakistan should improve tracking system at the Information Center at the Labour Village and MRCs in Pakistan to prepare better for financial audit of the EU in April 2017.
5. ILO Nepal should explore further the possibility of securing EU funding for migration under focus area rural development within Rural Development Programme planned to be signed between the EU and Nepal by the end of 2016.
6. ILO Nepal should continue support the GoN with the development of bilateral agreements with the GCC countries and further support required with implementation of Free Visa Free Ticket policy.
7. ILO Pakistan should continue support the GoP with replication of MRCs in other regions of Pakistan, further improving of pre-departure orientation; implementation of safe migration curriculum at TVET institutions, capacity building of teachers and creation of good quality assessment system; strengthening access to justice interventions.
8. ILO India should continue support the organizational strengthening of the newly established All India Federation of Recruitment Association in partnership with the Federation of Indian Chambers of Commerce and Industry.

Important lessons learned

The important lessons learnt is the importance of the adapting interventions to the local situation in the country and plan them in early stage in the process together with constituents. To some extent, the SALM Project showed that it allows for experimentation and exploration, followed only then by implementation.

Regular and sustained communication between Project Management, and the tripartite partners can prevent misunderstandings. Through regular communication the building of trust is substantially enhanced. Regular communication could typically include PAC meetings; regular bilateral meetings with the Government, the trade union and the employers' organizations and recruitment agencies by the Project staff in target countries.

Good Practices

As a result of ignorance, migrants might face exploitation and abuse during the recruitment and employment stages of labour migration or may choose irregular channels of migration, which may result in loss of money and even lives. The SALM project supported the establishment of Migrant Resource Centers (MRCs) in countries of origin, which provide accurate and timely information on safe and legal migration, referral and counselling, as well as raising awareness on irregular migration and the related serious risks.

In today's globalized economy, workers are increasingly looking for job opportunities beyond their home country that will provide a better livelihood and decent work. Strengthening governance of labour migration requires knowledge and information critical to formulate and implement policies and practice. The SALM Project supported improving information on labour migration for evidence based decision-making including labour market needs assessments and the generation of labour migration statistics.

In view of the importance of migration related statistics for policy formulation, planning, better governance and protection of migrant workers, and the absence of a proper system of tracking data of migrant workers (leaving and returning to the countries of origin), the SALM Project initiated the strengthening the online database and information systems for migrant workers' complaints mechanism in some targeted countries of origin (Nepal and Pakistan).

See the full report for all recommendations, lessons learned and good practices.