

► *i-eval* THINK Piece, No. 20

The ILO contribution to SDG 8 in the time of COVID-19

By Aitor Pérez

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► Introduction

1. The COVID-19 pandemic presents a multitude of challenges for achievement of Sustainable Development Goal 8 on inclusive and sustainable economic growth, full and productive employment and decent work for all. In this context, the ILO's Evaluation Office (EVAL) recent SDG 8 synthesis review¹ looked to identify project features that favour alignment and positive contributions to the SDGs and related goals. It also considered how the projects were in some cases adapted to the conditions created by the pandemic in order to mitigate its socioeconomic impact. The review came ahead of the UN's 2021 High Level Political Forum on Sustainable Development (HLPF), where the central theme was sustainable and resilient recovery from the pandemic. At the forum, the negative impact of the health crisis on livelihoods and safe and secure working environments, and the increased levels of vulnerability to abusive labour practices, including child labour and forced labour, were highlighted. The need to continue working towards goals such as creating decent work, protecting labour rights and supporting entrepreneurship was emphasized.²
2. This think piece, written by the author of the aforementioned SDG 8 synthesis review, presents the main findings of the review and offers additional analysis. In particular, it compares projects that were assessed as being highly aligned to the SDGs, and therefore featured in the synthesis review report, with those that had low levels of alignment. The piece is structured as follows. Section I describes the methodology of the review, including inclusion and exclusion criteria, and presents the reports selected. Section II reviews the best aligned projects and Section III enquires on why some projects align better than others. The piece ends with a series of conclusions and recommendations to enhance ILO's project alignment to the 2030 Agenda.

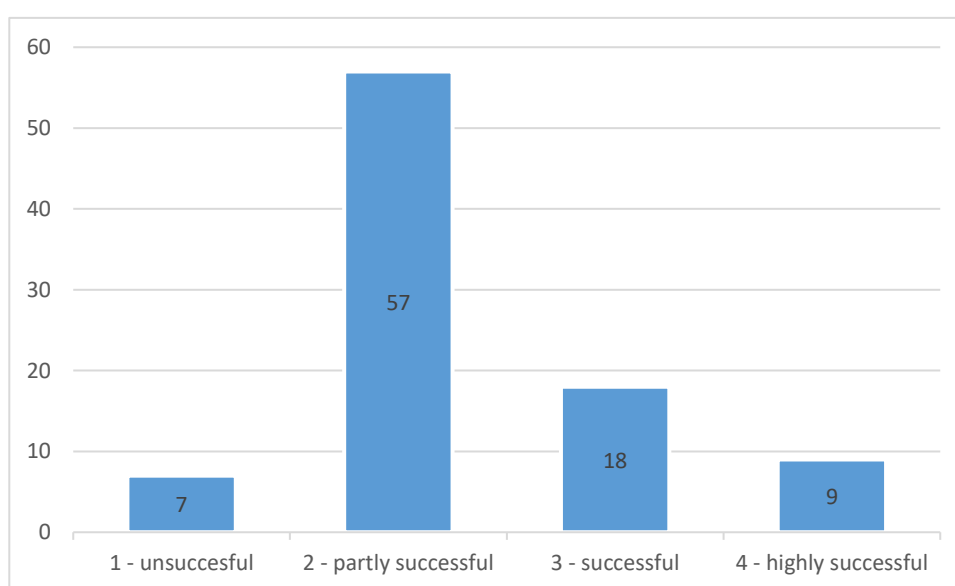
¹ ILO (2021). The ILO contribution to SDG 8 in the time of COVID-19: A synthesis review of 2019-20 evaluation reports. Unpublished.

² UN (2021). Draft Ministerial Declaration of the HLS Of the 2021 Session of ECOSOC and the HLPF, On the Theme "Sustainable And Resilient Recovery From The Covid-19 Pandemic That Promotes the Economic, Social and Environmental Dimensions of Sustainable Development". Retrieved from High-Level Political Forum 2021 (HLPF 2021):. Sustainable Development Knowledge Platform (un.org)

► Methodology

3. The purpose of the synthesis review was to show different ways in which ILO projects contribute to the SDGs. Consequently, it focused on evaluation reports revealing high alignment and contribution to the SDGs. This criterion is measured in ILO EVAL's regular [Decent Work Results meta-studies](#) (ILO, 2020)³.
4. The synthesis review screened 91 reports against the aforementioned SDG alignment criterion. For 2019, this study drew on EVAL's Decent Work results meta-study results for the SDG performance criterion (ILO, 2020), leading to a purposive sample of thirty reports with relevant evidence on the alignment and contribution of ILO's work to SDGs. A similar rating process was conducted by the author on an ad-hoc basis over a universe of sixty-one reports⁴ for 2020 available at the ILO online database, [i-eval Discovery](#). Graph 1 provides an overview of ratings for 2019-20.

Graph 1. ILO 2019-20 evaluation reports rated in terms of their alignment and contribution to SDGs
N = 91



5. The final sample of reports reviewed in depth was 13⁵. From this, nine reports were rated four, that is to say as being highly successful, and four reports were rated three, successful. In addition, the

³ In the Decent Work Results meta-studies projects are rated as being unsuccessful (1) if objectives were not linked to SDG targets at all; partly successful (2) if some linkages were evident with SDG targets but without them being well-defined or well-reflected at an operational level; successful (3) if objectives were linked to SDG targets at strategic and operational levels; or highly successful (4) if there were clear linkages between objectives and SDG targets, translated into a concrete set of operational goals and priorities, with evidence of contribution.

⁴ The author followed the performance criterion and rubric used in EVAL's Decent Work results meta-study to rate reports for 2020, as the meta-study ratings were not available at the time the SDG 8 synthesis review assessment was conducted.

⁵ The sample size is in line with other synthesis review reports conducted by the ILO Evaluation Office.

thirteen evaluation reports were of interventions distributed across all regions except for the Americas. They refer to all the thematic areas considered, with “capacity strengthening at policy level” as the most salient theme.

6. The best-rated reports were reviewed in-depth to identify common features and good practices that may inspire further action towards SDG 8 by the ILO, Member States and development partners.
7. The review of the thirteen reports was guided by the following research questions:
 - How are ILO projects aligned to the SDGs and, when influenced by the pandemic, how have they been redesigned to ensure their contribution?
 - How do ILO projects aligning with the SDGs meet constituents needs, and how do they respond to changing needs resulting from the pandemic?
 - How do ILO projects aligning with the SDGs also align to national policies and strategies, and how do the projects adapt to changing national frameworks affected by the pandemic?
 - How did the projects contribute to the achievement of the SDG targets and what was the influence of COVID-19?
 - How did the projects contribute to the impact of the SDGs and what was the influence of COVID-19?
 - How did the projects contribute to the sustainability of the SDGs and what was the influence of COVID-19?
8. Following the review, further analytical work was conducted for this piece; reports that scored low on SDG alignment were compared with those that scored high in order to better understand why some projects align better than others, and whether there are some alignment factors that determine ILO projects’ contribution to the SDGs.
9. This comparative analysis followed two different methods. First, the projects were classified by thematic and geographical region, and both features were tested as possible determinants of SDG alignment by means of linear regression.
10. The thematic classification was done according to the categories used in ILO annual evaluation reports: Employment promotion and increased productivity, capacity strengthening at policy level, child labour, labour inclusion, social dialogue, and skills development. Secondly, thirteen additional reports scoring low in terms of SDG alignment were reviewed and the conclusions of the first review were further elaborated.
11. The inclusion criterion that resulted in the selection of the 13 highly aligned projects did not consider the projects’ exposure to the COVID-19 crisis but rather their alignment and contribution to the SDGs. Most of the selected evaluation reports were completed before or shortly after the outbreak of the pandemic. Only seven were concluded after the pandemic had begun and, of these, only five identified negative impacts of the health crises on the projects. Therefore, the review did not fully capture the influence of COVID-19 and its socioeconomic effects. A similar review conducted in the coming years will probably provide very different findings. See Annex 1 for additional details on the methodology.

► Review of best-aligned projects

How are ILO projects aligned to the SDGs?

12. ILO projects that were best aligned to SDGs tended to include specific SDG targets in their design, while operating in traditional fields of ILO action. A good example of this alignment is found in the ILO-SIDA Partnership Programme Support for Outcome 1-2018-2020 (see Annex, Evaluation 9). This programme incorporated SDG 8 targets in its theory of change (ToC). It was shared with stakeholders to ensure a common understanding of how the project would produce immediate and intermediate outcomes, with the impact being the achievement of SDG 8. A project on human resources development and employment policies in Moldova (E7) went even further. Not only did it commit to five specific SDG 8 targets in the project design, it also incorporated a reporting system with specific SDG targets and indicators. When reporting on project effectiveness, each identified target was reported individually and the activities and outputs which contributed to each one was described.
13. Most of the projects analysed were found to be aligned to SDG 8, with Target 8.5 on full and decent employment; 8.2 on labour productivity; and 8.3 on labour-oriented policies being cited targets, while references to child labour, occupational health and safety, and NEETS were also found in several reports. One was concentrated on Technical and Vocational Education and Training (TVET) and was more specifically oriented to SDG 4 than SDG 8, while others establish direct and explicit connections with SDGs 1, 3, 5 and 9. The Better Work (BW) Global project (E8), which aimed to improve working conditions and boost competitiveness in the global garment industry, is an example of one which had SDG 8 as its main focus, but which also identified clear linkages between its activities and SDG 5 Targets 5.2, 5.5 and 5.6. Several reports also connected projects with SDG 17, but these connections refer to the spirit of the sustainable development partnerships rather than specific targets and elements of SDG 17. This said, a global project on labour impact assessments of trade and sector policies (E11) was found to provide valuable and concrete inputs to SDG 17, as it was oriented towards informing the European Union and other cooperation practitioners on employment opportunities and challenges resulting from development planning and trade agreements.

How do ILO projects aligning with the SDGs meet constituents' needs?

14. In general terms, the analysed projects were assessed as relevant to constituents' knowledge needs related to the 2030 Agenda. Most of the projects addressed the needs of labour-related government departments. Indeed, several evaluations highlighted the relevance of addressing the decent work agenda by strengthening capacities of labour inspection, and contributing to the enforcement of labour legislation. This was the case for an agriculture sector project in the Dominican Republic, which aimed to reinforce the application of labour laws by the Ministry of Labour (MoL) (E10). This project provides an example of how government departments may face additional challenges, such as those related to health and safety, requiring additional training and regulations.

15. In many cases, evaluators assessed the capacity building activities as also responding to other constituents' needs. In the project "Improving social dialogue in working life" in Turkey (E4), the unions and employers' organizations involved in the training declared that it was the first time that they had been exposed to knowledge about social dialogue mechanisms and practical examples from other countries, where mechanisms for boosting and coordinating social dialogue are operational.

How do ILO projects aligning with the SDGs also align to national policies?

16. The ILO projects that were best aligned with the SDGs tended to tap into national sustainable development agendas. Some were designed in connection with national plans that had already been adopted, while others collaborated with national governments in the elaboration of such plans and reinforce the alignment and sustainability of the projects. This was the case for the 2019 assessment of a project on capacity building in employment policies in Viet Nam (E5), where it was noted that the project was designed to be aligned with the National Social Economic Development Strategy 2011-2020 and National Social Economic Development Plan 2016-2020 in the first place. Moreover, the SIDA-ILO Partnership, which aimed to improve policy analysis capacities, selected beneficiary countries based on countries' requests for assistance in adopting and launching key national policies; the Moroccan government was in the process of operationalizing its National Employment Strategies; the Guatemalan government launching of National Employment Policy; and the Uganda government launching the country's Employment Diagnostic Analysis Report. Furthermore, the aforementioned intervention in Moldova reflected the threefold alignment that could be found at the national level.
17. The United Nations Sustainable Development Partnership Framework often contributes to the alignment of ILO projects with both the 2030 Agenda and national plans and strategies. An example of this is provided by the ARISE II project (E3), which aimed to reduce the worst forms of child labour (WFCL) in tobacco growing communities in Zambia, as child labour was integrated in the annual work plans of the United Nations Sustainable Development Partnership Framework 2016–2021 in this country (report #3).

How did the projects contribute to the achievement of the SDG targets?

18. Information on the projects' actual effects on SDGs was not as well developed as information on the projects' design alignment to the goals. Effectiveness was found in projects which aimed to improve policy capacities related to the SDG Agenda, including the design of plans and monitoring systems explicitly related to the Agenda. This was the case for the above-mentioned project in Viet Nam", which sought to support the development, implementation and monitoring of labour and employment related SDG targets and indicators in the country. This, according to the evaluator, resulted in Viet Nam today being one of the first countries in the world to have a nationally-owned, comprehensive tool to monitor progress on the SDGs. A project to support Azerbaijan in decent work (E6) was also found to be very effective in building SDG-related capacities in policy design and implementation, including analytical and reporting capacities of the government to identify the progress and gaps in areas related to decent work agenda and

SDG 8. Likewise, a project with similar goals in Kyrgyzstan and Tajikistan (E2), was found to be effective in reinforcing some institutional capacities, including those related to labour market information analysis based on ILO standards; labour inspections, and the reporting of occupational accidents according to ILO occupational health and safety (OHS) standards.

How did the projects contribute to the impact of the SDGs?

19. In most cases, evaluators found that the projects were not impact-oriented in the sense that they did not assess or monitor the socio-economic effects of the projects, such as changes in employment, even at a small or pilot scale. This said, some evaluations found a qualitative and positive impact of projects on broader policy changes and societal changes related to a shift in mind-sets.
20. Some of the positive impacts related to improvements in statistical systems went beyond the scope of the project. Concrete examples were found in the “Bangladesh skills for Employment and Productivity (B-SEP)” project (E1), which aimed to create a better-trained workforce in five target sectors. The evaluator highlighted a significant improvement in the national skills systems, as a result of the project. This was achieved through skills programmes and employment opportunities for disadvantaged groups in the target sectors. The impact of the ARISE II programme in Zambia was similar. The evaluation highlighted the change in the national skills system and the new approach to education policy.
21. Positive impacts were also associated with the position of beneficiary countries in the international cooperation system, including cooperation with the ILO and the HLPF on sustainable development. In this sense, the Viet Nam capacity strengthening project evaluation highlighted the country's efforts and the intervention to modernise statistical systems, among other achievements. As a result of the project, Viet Nam became one of the first countries to embrace and institutionalize the Sustainable Development framework and a comprehensive list of ILO custodian indicators. In the case of the decent work project in Azerbaijan, according to the evaluator, the project outputs directly contributed to the priority areas of cooperation between the ILO and the country, making the achievement of the targets set by SDG 8 more feasible.
22. Several evaluations also referred to impacts on the mentality of the target populations and groups. Through the projects' activities, a change in these paradigms would have been achieved, which would be positive for job creation, improvement of labour policies or the eradication of child labour, among other goals. The Viet Nam decent work project also provided a good example here, as the intervention provided specific training and continuous technical assistance, which, according to the evaluator, allowed a change in the mentality of key actors, who have replaced traditional statistical standards with more advanced standards. In the case of the ARISE II project in Zambia, part of the training and capacity building provided to beneficiary groups aimed at and achieving a change in the mind-set of beneficiaries in terms of their understanding and approach to savings and lending. In the case of the social dialogue project in Turkey, meanwhile, it was precisely the failure to achieve a change in mentality that led to a reduction of the expected impact, according to the evaluation.

How did the projects contribute to the sustainability of the SDGs?

23. In general terms, the selected reports were found to be sustainable with regards to their main objectives, which were mostly aligned to SDG 8. The reports identified some commonalities in ILO projects regarding their sustainability elements. These included the capacity built in Ministries of Labour (MoL), the design of assessment tools that can be disseminated beyond the timeframe of the project, and the set-up of multi-stakeholder partnerships.
24. Partnerships were often found by evaluators to be a sustainability factor. These partnerships often went beyond the tripartite nature of the ILO constituency and the reviewed projects provided several examples. The ARISE II project brought different stakeholders together. These included ILO constituents, such as the OHS inspection, which was not only connected to unions to better address site inspections likely to contribute to the enforcement of child labour prohibition, but also to NGOs and faith-based organization that contributed to awareness raising and social engagement in these issues. Another example was provided by the project on social dialogue in Turkey, which actively supported and stimulated partnerships with both the garment industry's private sector (including Inditex and H&M) and other important actors at global level (the global union federation IndustriALL and the UN Global Compact Turkey network). This was considered to contribute to examples of excellence and advanced practices for the debate on social dialogue. In the Dominican project on working conditions in the agriculture sector, the evaluator also found that the project's sustainability was reinforced with capacity building in several areas at the MoL, a multi-stakeholder partnership against child labour and a tool for decent work assessment in companies.

How did the COVID-19 Pandemic affect progress on the SDGs?

25. As explained earlier, only seven of the reviewed evaluations were concluded after the official declaration of the pandemic in March 2020. Five of these referred to the impact or potential impacts of COVID-19 on project outcomes.
26. The Better Work Global project did adapt to COVID-19. At its outset, the project responded by supporting workers, employers and government partners in the garment industry and issued a Call to Action for the Garment Industry. This was assessed by stakeholders as a positive, fast and innovative response. New priorities for the continuation of the project were also identified, which included increased productivity to make factories more financially resilient, and social protection to support workers who may lose jobs. The pandemic also affected plans to expand the Better Work project into new countries. To achieve its targets, only one more country would have to be added by 2022. However, this target is now threatened due to the complex and investment-intensive nature of the expansion process. The evaluation concluded that COVID-19 increased the need for a fifth phase of the programme and that many of the profound changes taking place in the garment industry will be accelerated due to the pandemic, placing jobs at risk.
27. With around 50% of the activities on hold, the project on work conditions in the Dominican agriculture sector was hampered by the COVID-19 crisis at the time of its interim evaluation (the project was to be finalized in August 2021). According to its evaluator, the pandemic also brought in new challenges for the application of the ILO agendas, including health and safety challenges requiring additional training and regulation at the MoL, informal workers accepting lower

salaries due to the new socio-economic context, and poor households affected by the pandemic seeking to compensate revenue falls through child labour.

28. Although capacity building activities changed to a virtual mode, the project had not been significantly redesigned at the time of the evaluation. It was recommended that this be done by considering the new, pandemic-related health challenges to workplaces; adjusting the training contents on health and safety; adjusting a working conditions assessment tool for companies; concentrating activities for tackling child labour in the provinces most affected by the pandemic, and therefore at higher risk; and identifying and focusing on sectors with higher growth potential as a result of the pandemic.
29. The remaining three evaluations noted little or no impact on project implementation and outcomes at the time of the evaluation but included assessments of how the pandemic may affect outcomes going forward. A cluster of six projects to support the decent work agenda in Guatemala (E13) were minimally affected during their implementation period, with only one still to be finalised following the declaration of the pandemic. Reference to the impact of COVID-19 on the intervention outcomes was limited to highlighting that new priorities concerning vulnerable groups must be identified. Similarly, a second project in Bangladesh, which aimed to support better work conditions in the country's garment industry (E12), did not apparently undergo delays or changes due to the pandemic, though the evaluator noted that the conditions created by the pandemic would put the remediation component of the project at risk. Likewise, the global project "Strengthening the impact of sector and trade policies", which aimed at employment creation, was unaffected during implementation. However, it was acknowledged that new employment challenges created by the pandemic would have to be taken into account to sustain the project's effects. The small number of references made to the impact of COVID-19 on the projects included in this review did not allow conclusions to be drawn on the overall impact of the health crisis on the ILO's work and on global progress towards the SDGs.

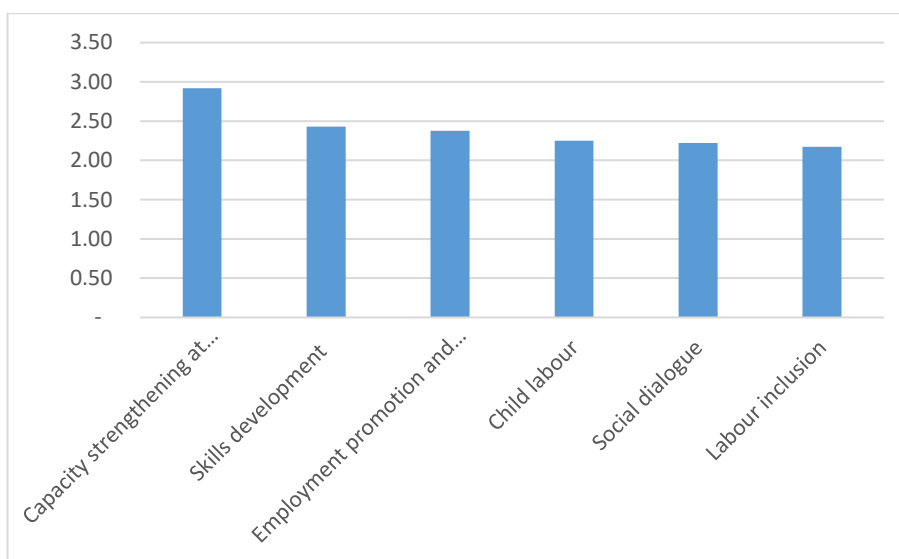
► Why some projects align better than others

Quantitative analysis

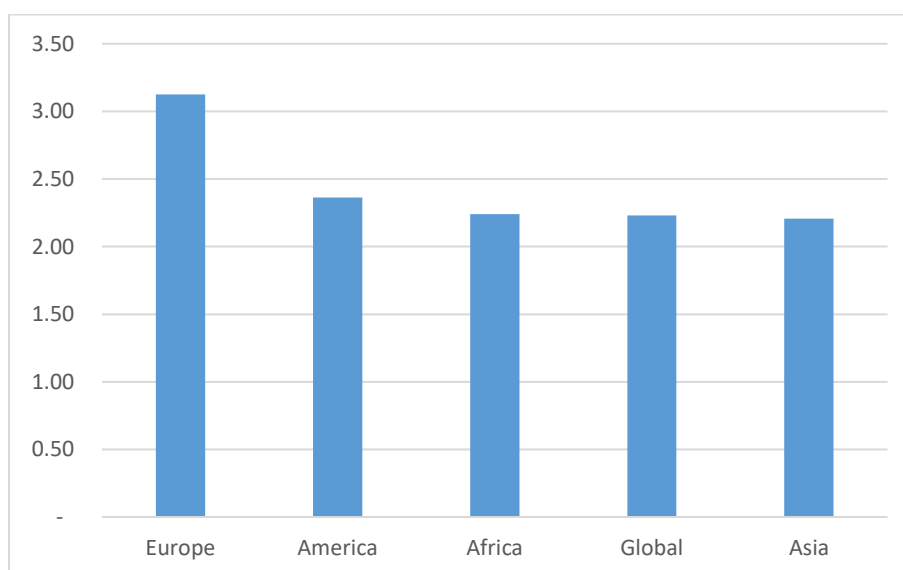
30. As previously mentioned, some topics and regions are more salient among best aligned projects. The average SDG alignment of each country and region is shown in the following graphs.

Graph 2. Average SDG alignment (1-4 scale)

By topic:



By region:



31. By means of linear regression, correlation was sought between the SDG alignment score given to the 91 evaluation reports available and their geographic and thematic scope (considering only the main topics of the best-aligned reports). The results of this analysis (see Annex II) revealed that the geographic and thematic scope of the project mattered.

32. The concentration of well-aligned projects in Europe was statistically significant, and the importance of the project theme was confirmed in two topics out of six: capacity strengthening at policy level and skills development. Projects on child labour and labour inclusion were not statistically significant despite their logical connection with the 2030 Agenda.

Qualitative analysis

33. The statistical model outlined in Annex II explains the alignment of ILO projects to the SDG Agenda only in part ($R^2=0.23$). By reviewing and comparing the evaluation reports of the top thirteen and the bottom thirteen projects, three additional explanations can be found. These refer to some limitations of the project design that could be considered as alignment obstacles.

Project design

34. The first of these obstacles was lack of precision in project design. The majority of the projects (58 representing 63% of the reports available) were considered to be connected to the SDGs only in broad terms.
35. In many of these cases, references to more than one SDG were made in the assessment of the project against the relevance criterion. For instance, the evaluation report of a project on strengthening TVET systems in Bolivia (E76) (rating 2) was found aligned to SDG 4, 5, 8, 9 and 10, but the evaluation report did not describe connections of the project outcomes with targets and indicators contained in such goals. Similarly, the project “The Way Forward after the Revolution: Decent Work for Women: in Egypt and Tunisia” (E56) was found to be aligned to SDGs 1, 5, 8 and 10, with numbers 5 and 8 identified as “key reference points with their accompanying indicators” but the evaluator did not enter into more details of this alignment while describing the project performance. On the contrary, projects that were well aligned to the 2030 Agenda tended to refer to one SDG target instead of several goals and the corresponding evaluation reports referred to very specific connections with the target when describing the project implementation.
36. Imprecision was often related to a broad intervention scope, as in the project “Empower: Building peace through the economic empowerment of women in northern Sri Lanka” (E90) (rating 2) which was related to the following topics according to the evaluation report: agro-centric, local economic development, jobs for peace, cooperatives, conflict affected areas, final evaluation, agro-processing, value chain, livelihood restoration, SMEs and fragility. The project was led by ILO and the World Food Programme (WFP) and the only explicit reference to the SDGs in the evaluation report was on WFP contributions to SDG 2. No other reference was made to other SDGs and none were connected to the ILO’s efforts, despite the broad scope of the project. Indeed, projects with a narrow focus may be easier to align to specific SDG targets, as in the case of the Zambian programme on child labour in tobacco-growing communities (rating 4).

Policy focus

37. Secondly, specific connections with the 2030 Agenda might be further complicated by the policy focus of much of the ILO’s work. Projects with a focus on decent work often materialized in capacity-building initiatives in government departments which did not produce socioeconomic

outcomes in the timeframe of the project and did not directly connect with SDG targets. For instance, the project “Support the Micro, Small and Medium Enterprise Development Agency” (E54) in Egypt (rating 2), with several references to SDG 8, did not relate to the 2030 Agenda at the operational level. It built government capacities to analyze and address business development services needs of micro, small and medium-sized enterprises (MSMEs) but did not foresee any specific result related to 2030 Agenda. On the contrary, a well-aligned capacity building project such as the aforementioned one in Viet Nam (rating 4) included the design and implementation of an indicator framework covering several labour-related SDG targets.

Monitoring and evaluation

38. A third obstacle to alignment concerned the linking of project objectives with SDG targets in project monitoring and evaluation (M&E). For example, the incorporation of indicators could clearly help in assessing the extent of a project’s contribution to SDGs. The vast majority of projects did not incorporate measures to assess SDG contribution in their M&E, based on the evaluation reports. Eighteen reports (20% of the sample) did not obtain the maximum alignment score due to this shortcoming, despite being clearly linked to SDG targets at both strategic and operational level. In several reports, the evaluators related this problem to a deficit in the project design and its M&E system, while in other cases the evaluators questioned the relevance of this requirement, arguing that this kind of assessment was not feasible.

► Conclusions

39. ILO development cooperation projects aligned with the 2030 Agenda in general terms. Nine projects finalized in 2019-20, representing around 10% of the evaluation reports submitted in that period, were assessed as highly successful projects from the perspective of the SDGs (rating 4). This is to say that they demonstrated a clear linkage of project objectives with the 2030 Agenda goals resulting in a concrete set of goals and priorities at the operational level, and that evidence of actual contribution to such goals was provided.
40. An in-depth review of these nine projects (plus four additional projects rated 3) was conducted in order to identify common patterns in these success cases. It was found that SDG-aligned projects tended to be very specific on the SDG targets they contributed to and, in some cases, they included such targets in their ToC and in their indicators. An additional review of thirteen reports scoring low in terms of SDG alignment confirmed this idea and identified three alignment obstacles: imprecision about SDG connections in project design (with references to several SDGs instead of focusing in one specific target); policy focus; and limitations in project M&E systems. That said, difficulties in M&E had a limited impact on the assessment of SDG alignment according to the ILO methodology and some evaluators were critical of the ILO's expectation of finding evidence of impact on SDG in an evaluation report.
41. In general terms, the projects that aligned well to the SDGs were found to be relevant to constituents' needs, mostly knowledge needs. In all cases, governments' needs were addressed and involved not only training activities, but also different strategies aimed at enhancing their inspection and enforcement capacities in key ILO issues, such as OHS and labour rights protection. Several projects also highlighted basic knowledge needs in workers' and employers' organizations that were effectively addressed by the projects and contributed to their engagement in the 2030 Agenda.
42. Similarly, projects that were aligned with the global 2030 Agenda tended to also align with national plans, including MoL strategies, UN National Cooperation Frameworks and action plans elaborated by each national government for the implementation of the 2030 Agenda. Moreover, these plans were often elaborated with ILO support through activities funded by the projects under review. In particular, there seems to be an opportunity for the ILO's contribution to the SDGs in national government's needs to adapt their statistical capacities and analytical tools to the follow-up of the SDGs at the national level.
43. The review of successful projects suggested that the ILO tended to be more aligned to the 2030 Agenda in certain areas of work such as child labour, social dialogue and skills development which corresponded to specific targets, reinforcing the idea that best-aligned projects had a narrow focus. However, the analysis of all 91 projects revealed that projects on social dialogue, child labour and labour inclusion obtained a relatively low average score despite their logical connection to the Agenda. On the contrary, projects that fell under the topic "policy design and implementation" showed a statistically significant and positive alignment to the SDGs despite their broad definition. According to the document review this was related to a few concrete projects developing national statistical capacities that improved the implementation of the Agenda at the national level.

44. Finally, it must be noted that the COVID-19 crisis did not significantly influence the sample of projects under review as most of them were finalized before the outbreak of the 2019 crisis. Seven of the highly aligned reports evaluated projects with end dates which fell after the declaration of the pandemic. However, only two of these reports referred to direct impacts of COVID-19 on project implementation and outcomes, while a further three included references to the disease with respect to project sustainability. The affected projects responded to the crisis by only adapting some activities, which was positively assessed by the evaluators as they found the general logic of the projects even more relevant in the context of the crisis. Regarding COVID-19 related risks affecting the sustainability of some of the finalized interventions and the relevance of new ones, two context-specific conclusions can be drawn. Firstly, the crisis strongly hampered some regions and sectors in which risks of unacceptable work conditions and child labour were increased. New government and ILO priorities should consider these changes. Secondly, the economic crisis moved policymakers' attention towards quantitative employment goals and hindered prevention and mitigation actions that would address such risks, which might increase the relevance of the ILO's strategic support if updated with information on the COVID-19 socioeconomic impact. In more general terms, the limited number of references to COVID-19 in the reviewed evaluations did not permit the broader impact of COVID-19 on the ILO's work and its progress towards achieving the SDG to be assessed.

► **Annex****Methodological annex****Evaluation reports under analysis (2019-20)**

#	Title	Country	Topic	SDG alignment	In-depth review
E1	Skills for employment and productivity in Bangladesh - Final Evaluation	Bangladesh	Skills development	4	Y
E2	From the crisis towards decent and safe jobs in Kyrgyzstan and Tajikistan, Phase II (DW II project) - Final Evaluation	Europe, regional	Capacity strengthening at policy level	4	Y
E3	A programme to reduce WFCL in tobacco-growing communities in Zambia (ARISE II) - Final Evaluation	Zambia	Child labour	4	Y
E4	Improving social dialogue in working life - Final evaluation	Turkey	Social dialogue	4	Y
E5	Capacity of government and the social partners to develop and implement employment policies and programmes that are well suited to Vietnam's dynamic ... - RBSA independent evaluation	Viet Nam	Capacity strengthening at policy level	4	Y
E6	Increased progress in attaining SDGs through the promotion of Decent Work and inclusive economic growth in rural and urban areas in Azerbaijan - RBSA independent evaluation	Azerbaijan	Employment promotion and increased productivity	4	Y
E7	Improved human resources development and employment policies, with particular attention to youth, women and migrants - RBSA independent evaluation	Moldova, Republic of	Labour inclusion	4	Y
E8	Better Work Global - Stage IV - Midterm evaluation	Global	unclassified	4	Y
E9	Clustered Evaluation of the Sida-Funded Interventions under Outcome 1 (2018-2019), Phase I ILO-SIDA Partnership Programme, 2018-2021 - Final evaluation	Global	Capacity strengthening at policy level	4	Y
E10	Strengthening the Capacities of the Ministry of Labour to Improve Working Conditions in Agriculture	Dominican Republic	Capacity strengthening at policy level	3	Y
E11	Strengthening the impact on employment of sector and trade policies - Final Evaluation	Global	Capacity strengthening at policy level	3	Y
E12	Cluster Independent Mid-term Evaluation of RMGP II and BWB and its affiliated projects - Midterm evaluation	Bangladesh	Capacity strengthening at policy level	3	Y
E13	Independent cluster evaluation of ILO operations in support of decent work in Guatemala, 2018-19	Guatemala	unclassified	3	Y
E14	Improved compliance with labour laws in the Republic of Georgia - Final evaluation	Georgia, Republic of	unclassified	3	
E15	Support to the Child Labour Free Latin America and the Caribbean Regional Initiative (Initiative Project) and Strategies to Accelerate the Pace of Elimination of Child Labour in Latin America and the ... - Final cluster evaluation	Latin America, regional	Child labour	3	

#	Title	Country	Topic	SDG alignment	In-depth review
E16	Shan State: Peace reconciliation and development through community empowerment - Final evaluation	Myanmar	Social dialogue	3	
E17	Support the reintegration of returnees in Ethiopia - Final Independent Evaluation	Ethiopia	Labour inclusion	3	
E18	Strengthening Labour Inspection system for Promoting Labour Standards and ensuring workplace compliance in Pakistan - Final evaluation	Pakistan	Capacity strengthening at policy level	3	
E19	Support to the finalisation of the national employment policy and the labour market and training information system (PNE-SIMEF-Mauritania) - Final evaluation	Mauritania	Skills development	3	
E20	Fair migration in the Middle East (FAIRWAY) - Final Evaluation	Middle East, regional	Labour inclusion	3	
E21	Improving industrial relations for decent work and sustainable development of textile and garment industries in Ethiopia - Final Cluster Evaluation	Ethiopia	Capacity strengthening at policy level	3	
E22	Enhance the resilience and self-reliance of crisis-affected rural communities (...) - Final evaluation	Yemen	Employment promotion and increased productivity	3	
E23	Strengthening Human Talent for Industry in Colombia - Final evaluation	Colombia	Skills development	3	
E24	Labour Standards in Global Supply Chains - Programme of Action for Asia and the Garment Sector	Asia, regional	unclassified	3	
E25	Formalisation technical support in Mexico - Final independent evaluation	Mexico	Skills development	3	
E26	Education for all Madagascar - Final evaluation	Madagascar	Skills development	3	
E27	Strengthening of Social Protection Systems in the PALOP and Timor-Leste - Final evaluation	Indonesia	Capacity strengthening at policy level	3	
E28	Support to the National Department of Public Works on the implementation of the Expanded Public Works Programme (EPWP) in the Limpopo Province	South Africa	Employment promotion and increased productivity	2	
E29	Strengthening the role of financial institutions for micro-insurance development in Africa - Final evaluation	Africa, regional	unclassified	2	
E30	Strengthening gender monitoring and evaluation in rural employment in the Near East and North Africa - Final evaluation	Africa, regional	Labour inclusion	2	
E31	Youth4OSH: OSH for young workers and employers in global supply chains: Building a culture of prevention - Final Independent Evaluation	Asia, regional	Skills development	2	
E32	Youth and employability - Final evaluation	Tunisia	Skills development	2	
E33	Supporting prosperity and economic development in Algeria by supporting skills and labour market insertion of university graduates (2nd and 3rd phases) - Final evaluation	Algeria	Skills development	2	
E34	Job creation for Syrian refugees and Jordanian host communities through green works and agricultural industry - Final evaluation	Jordania	Labour inclusion	2	

#	Title	Country	Topic	SDG alignment	In-depth review
E35	Decent employment for youth project in Egypt - Final Evaluation	Egypt	Labour inclusion	2	
E36	Labour Force and Household's Living Conditions Survey 2014 (LFLCS) in Lebanon - Final Evaluation	Lebanon	Labour inclusion	2	
E37	Promoting micro- and small enterprises through improved entrepreneurs' access to financial services - Final Evaluation	Indonesia	Employment promotion and increased productivity	2	
E38	Combatting unacceptable forms of work in the Thai fishing and seafood industry (Better Fisheries Programme) - Final evaluation	Thailand	Labour inclusion	2	
E39	Employment and Social Affairs Platform (ESAP) - Final evaluation	Europe, regional	unclassified	2	
E40	Addressing Education and Skills Gaps for Vulnerable Youths in Haiti: Promoting rural socio-economic development in South and Grande Anse Departments - Final Evaluation	Haiti	Skills development	2	
E41	Improving labour relations for decent work and sustainable development in the Myanmar garment industry - Final evaluation	Myanmar	Social dialogue	2	
E42	PROMESSE: Promotion of social economy organisations and mechanisms - Final evaluation	Tunisia	unclassified	2	
E43	Promoting decent work through good governance, protection and empowerment of migrant workers: Ensuring the effective implementation of the Sri Lanka National Labour Migration Policy - Final evaluation	Sri Lanka	Labour inclusion	2	
E44	Amélioration de l'environnement pour le développement de l'entrepreneuriat agropastoral et renforcement des capacités entrepreneuriales des jeunes (PEA-JEUNES) - Final evaluation	Cameroon	Labour inclusion	2	
E45	Decent work for sustainable and inclusive economic transformation in Mozambique - Midterm Evaluation	Mozambique	Employment promotion and increased productivity	2	
E46	Employment Intensive Infrastructure Programmes (EIIPs) in Jordan and Lebanon - Final cluster evaluation	Middle East, regional	Employment promotion and increased productivity	2	
E47	Employment for youth in Egypt (EYE): Working together in Qalyoubia and Menoufia - Final Evaluation	Egypt	Labour inclusion	2	
E48	Sea Fisheries: Strengthened Coordination to Combat Labour Exploitation and Trafficking in Fisheries in Southeast Asia - Final evaluation	Asia, regional	Labour inclusion	2	
E49	Enhancing the labour administration capacity to improve working conditions and tackle undeclared work - Final evaluation	Ukraine	Labour inclusion	2	
E50	Towards fair and sustainable global supply chains: Promoting formalization and decent work for invisible workers in South Asia - Final evaluation	Asia, regional	Labour inclusion	2	
E51	Promoting Decent Work Opportunities for Non-Syrian Refugees and Asylum Seekers in Turkey - Final cluster evaluation	Turkey	Labour inclusion	2	
E52	Decent jobs for youth and women (a local employment development approach) - Midterm evaluation	Tunisia	Labour inclusion	2	
E53	Promoting Decent Work in Rwanda's Informal Economy - Midterm evaluation	Rwanda	unclassified	2	

#	Title	Country	Topic	SDG alignment	In-depth review
E54	BDS4GROWTH - Support the Micro, Small and Medium Enterprise Development Agency and affiliates by developing their capacity to analyse and address business development services - Midterm evaluation	Egypt	Employment promotion and increased productivity	2	
E55	Win-Win Gender Equality Means Good Business (in co-delegation with UN WOMEN) - Midterm joint evaluation	America, regional	Labour inclusion	2	
E56	The Way Forward after the Revolution: Decent Work for Women in Egypt and Tunisia (DWW) - Phase II - Midterm evaluation	North Africa, regional	Labour inclusion	2	
E57	Sida-ILO Partnership Programme 2018-2019 Outcome-based funding to Outcome 7 with a focus on Social Dialogue, Industrial Relations and Collective Bargaining (Phase I) - Final evaluation	Global	Social dialogue	2	
E58	Clustered Evaluation of Policy Outcome 8: Protecting workers from unacceptable forms of work and Cross-cutting policy driver: Gender equality and non-discrimination - Final clustered evaluation	Global	Labour inclusion	2	
E59	SIDA-ILO Partnership Programme (phase I) - Cross cutting policy driver environmental sustainability and the Partnership for Action on Green Economy - Clustered evaluation	Global	unclassified	2	
E60	Skills 21 - Empowering citizens for inclusive and sustainable growth - Midterm evaluation	Bangladesh	Skills development	2	
E61	Jobs for Peace and Resilience (RBSA) - Independent evaluation	Sri Lanka	Social dialogue	2	
E62	More and Quality jobs are created through better policies and frameworks and strengthened labour market information systems - RBSA independent evaluation	Myanmar	Capacity strengthening at policy level	2	
E63	Promoting youth employment opportunities for refugees and host community with employment-intensive construction works in Mauritania - Final evaluation	Mauritania	Labour inclusion	2	
E64	Improving labour laws and labour administration for new industrial relations framework in full respect of the ILO Declaration on Fundamental Principles and Rights at work - Final evaluation	Malaysia	Social dialogue	2	
E65	Promoting decent work and competitiveness through capacity building for the victim population... - Final evaluation	Colombia	Labour inclusion	2	
E66	ILO's Technical Assistance on Labour Law Reform in Pacific Island Countries (2012-2018) - Thematic independent evaluation	Asia, regional	unclassified	2	
E67	MMR 801: Strengthened Institutional Capacity of Employers' Organizations - Final evaluation	Myanmar	Skills development	2	
E68	Promoting Social Dialogue and Strengthening Labour Governance in Tunisia (Phase III) - Internal evaluation	Tunisia	Social dialogue	2	
E69	Moving out of fragility through effective national social protection floors in times of continuing conflict and austerity - Final evaluation	Ukraine	unclassified	2	
E70	Inclusive Growth, Social Protection and Jobs Programme: An ILO-IRISH-Aid Partnership Programme 2016-2021 - Midterm evaluation	Global	Employment promotion and increased productivity	2	

#	Title	Country	Topic	SDG alignment	In-depth review
E71	Sustaining Competitive and Responsible Enterprises (SCORE) programme, Phase III - Midterm evaluation	Global	unclassified	2	
E72	Nigeria Decent Work Country Programme Review	Nigeria	unclassified	2	
E73	Extending social protection access and portability to migrant workers and their families through selected RECs in Africa (EC through ICMPD) - Final evaluation	Africa, regional	Labour inclusion	2	
E74	Development of a Social Economy Policy for South Africa - Midterm evaluation	South Africa	Capacity strengthening at policy level	2	
E75	Independent Review of the ILO/Flanders Technical Cooperation Fund	Global	Social dialogue	2	
E76	Strengthening of the technical vocational training system with elements of relevance, quality and equity in access and linked to employment policies and ... - final independent evaluation	Bolivia	Skills development	2	
E77	Promoting Decent Work for People in Vulnerable Situations - Interim Internal Evaluation	Brazil	Labour inclusion	2	
E78	Change Management to achieve impact with insurance - Phase II - Final evaluation	Africa, regional	unclassified	2	
E79	Skills Development for the Renewable Energy Sector (SkiDRES) Public-Private Development Partnership - Final evaluation	Zambia	Skills development	2	
E80	2018-2020 ILO/Korea Partnership Programme funded projects in ASEAN, Thailand, Cambodia, Lao PDR, Myanmar and Vietnam - Final evaluation	Asia, regional	Skills development	2	
E81	Market systems development for Decent Work: the Lab - Phase II - Final evaluation	Global	unclassified	2	
E82	Vision Zero Fund - Collective Action for Safe and Healthy Supply Chains - Cluster midterm evaluation	Global	unclassified	2	
E83	Addressing Decent Work Deficits in the Tobacco Sector of Zambia and Tanzania Projects (DWiT) - Final cluster evaluation	Africa, regional	unclassified	2	
E84	Cameroon - Final Review of the Decent Work Country Programme (DWCP)	Cameroon	unclassified	2	
E85	Consolidating and disseminating efforts to combat forced labour in Brazil and Peru -	Latin America, regional	unclassified	1	
E86	Implementation of the national employment injury insurance scheme of Bangladesh - Final Independent Evaluation	Bangladesh	unclassified	1	
E87	PHASE II Ending Worst Forms of Child Labour (WFCL) amongst Syrian Refugees and Lebanese Host Communities - Final evaluation	Lebanon	Child labour	1	
E88	Convening stakeholders to develop and implement strategies to reduce child labor in artisanal and small-scale gold mining - Final Evaluation	Global	Child labour	1	
E89	Support to the extension of Social Health Protection in South-East Asia - Midterm evaluation	Asia, regional	unclassified	1	

#	Title	Country	Topic	SDG alignment	In-depth review
E90	Empower:Building peace through the economic empowerment of women in northern Sri Lanka - Final evaluation	Sri Lanka	Social dialogue	1	
E91	LEGOSH database - Final evaluation	Global	Capacity strengthening at policy level	1	

- Statistical analysis

Exploring the drivers of SDG alignment (independent variable) with linear regression

Observations 1-96 (n = 93)

Missing or incomplete observations dropped: 3

Independent variables	Coefficient	Std. Error	t-ratio	p-value	
<i>Constant:</i> const	1.93873	0.225901	8.582	<0.0001	***
<i>Geography:</i> Africa	0.0527627	0.249491	0.2115	0.8330	
America	0.118136	0.302609	0.3904	0.6973	
Asia	-0.0397201	0.235268	-0.1688	0.8664	
Europe	0.977502	0.316129	3.092	0.0027	***
<i>Topic:</i> Employmentpromotion	0.320756	0.292658	1.096	0.2764	
Capacitystrengthening	0.894394	0.253877	3.523	0.0007	***
Childlabour	0.278479	0.383074	0.7270	0.4694	
Labourinclusion	0.131968	0.215519	0.6123	0.5421	
Socialdialogue	0.191089	0.282089	0.6774	0.5001	
Skillsdevelopment	0.451434	0.252428	1.788	0.0775	*
Mean dependent var	2.318681	S.D. dependent var		0.758348	
Sum squared resid	38.77061	S.E. of regression		0.696156	
R-squared	0.250929	Adjusted R-squared		0.157295	
F(10, 82)	2.679891	P-value(F)		0.007018	
Log-likelihood	-90.30295	Akaike criterion		202.6059	
Schwarz criterion	230.2253	Hannan-Quinn		213.7486	

The model above is built with the ordinary least squares (OLS) method, a type of linear least squares method that estimates the unknown coefficients by minimizing the sum of the squares of the differences between the observed dependent variable (values of the variable being observed) in the given dataset and those predicted by the linear function of the independent variable. The model results are indicated with *:

* indicates that the probability of obtaining a coefficient at least as extreme as the given one, under the assumption that the coefficient is null, is 5% (p-value < 0.05).

** corresponds to a 1% probability (p-value < 0.01).

*** indicates a probability of 0.1% (p-value < 0.001).

The overall explanatory capacity of the model is measured with R-squared, the percentage of the variance in the dependent variable that the independent variables explain collectively.