



IOM Development Fund
DEVELOPING CAPACITIES IN MIGRATION MANAGEMENT

Ex-post Evaluation Report

**Project: “Upholding the Rights of Migrant Workers in Special Economic Zones (SEZs) by Ensuring Supply Chains are Exploitation Free: Viet Nam, Cambodia and Lao People’s Democratic Republic”
(01 December 2015 – 31 May 2018)**

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(I). Executive summary

The intervention was well designed to address the needs of the targeted population. In term of intervention logic, the project was well focused as it extended its efforts especially in the Special Economic Zones (SEZs); yet it reached out to governmental institutions and organized several high-level meetings and events. This was an important added value that contributed not only in addressing the target groups' needs but also in enhancing IOM's visibility as one of the major factors supporting these needs.

The project's final goal was a challenging one as it aimed at promoting social responsibilities of Multi-National Companies (MNCs) and Small Medium Enterprises (SMEs) which, by their very nature, are profit oriented ones. Despite this challenge in term of context, the project succeeded in promoting good practices of ethical recruitment which are still valid and in use by various factors involved in the supply chain. Its relevance and feasibility remain confirmed even after the project ended. Overall the project has achieved its goals as there is an evident better understanding and increased awareness on ethical recruitment from those companies and institutions which attended the activities.

Keeping in mind its small scale, the project has managed to give its contribution to gradually start changing the mind set of local companies on the concepts of migrant workers' rights. There are some improvements at least in terms of understanding some key principles of social responsibilities from the private sector side and especially from the MNCs, which due also to increasing pressure from various institutions, organizations, and governments worldwide, are gradually taking steps to reduce exploitation in their supply chains.

The absorption capacities of the stakeholders and key interested parties were relatively good. Keeping in mind the dynamics of the target groups and the volatile and unstable nature of migrant issues, the project has demonstrated good flexibility level. The implementing team took sufficient steps to ensure synergy and to avoid overlaps with other projects and organizations.

The project helped to improve SEZs authorities' understanding of work exploitation issues in the Vietnamese context, and on the related international standards.

The development of CREST Framework is undoubtedly the most important outcome. It helped public authorities and the private sector to further absorb ethical recruitment principles and to adopt various tools; CREST also enabled IOM in securing funding for other larger interventions.

There are concrete examples of active measures undertaken by the public institutions/MNCs which illustrate the impact at the Outcome Level. They include but are not limited to: The Code of Conduct updated by the Viet Nam Association of Manpower and Supply (VAMAS) and supported by the project, as well as the training delivered by the ADIDAS sustainability to their suppliers in Vietnam and Indonesia, following the ToT delivered by the project.

Other positive impact signs were noticed. For instance, other IOM missions in the region, as well as in China and Japan adopted and used the outputs delivered by the project. Another illustrative example of the project's impact is the wide promotion of CREST which evolved from a piloting stage within this project into a wide scale initiative that enabled IOM to secure further funding based on the CREST framework.

The following are five best practices which can be reiterated in future interventions.

Project mechanism: (1) CREST and IRIS; (2) Multi-stakeholder workshops and the training sessions; and (3) Job fairs which facilitated direct recruitment.

Implementation strategies: (4) the collaborative approach adapted by the project with the governmental agencies and especially with the private sector where by pointing out the “win-win” perspective, or in other words what would the private sector benefit from complying with social corporate responsibilities, the project succeeded in establishing fruitful relations with the private sector; and (5) the good level of coordination with other similar interventions and international actors. This level of coordination avoided substantial overlaps and created basis for synergies among different organizations.

Despite this good performance, few aspects could have been tackled better by the project (although they did not overshadow the overall performance):

- a) The geographical reach of the outcomes is somehow unevenly distributed as the project has been more efficient in Vietnam than in Laos.
- b) Underachieved targets for the Indicator “Nr of companies and/or their suppliers publicly supporting ethical recruitment principles” (two vs. five-envisaged) and for the number of job fairs organised (six vs. nine envisaged).
- c) There is no insufficient recognition of those private recruitment agencies that have attended IOM training (and presumably adhere more to the ethical recruitment principles), in order to distinguish from those which were not active during this project or other interventions aiming to promote ethical recruitment.
- d) While in some cases the project cooperated with local and international NGOs, it could have cooperated more extensively with local NGOs (or community- based organizations) in order to reach out to the final beneficiaries-the migrant workers. Although the NGOs have limited capacities, they can play a role in addressing the challenge of changing the mind-set, especially as concerns the migrant workers.

Overall the context has been conducive for enabling the good performance of the project. There is an increasing trend from various sides (governments, MNCs, international organizations) to exert positive pressure on the private sector in order for the latter to improve workers conditions. Yet there are various pressing issues affecting the efforts undertaken by this project as well as by other donors, governments, and organizations. These existing issues include migrant workers’ inadequate awareness of their rights, insufficient implementation of the legal framework, and limited steps undertaken by MCNs and SMEs to fulfil their social responsibilities.

Sustainability prospects are somehow good as concerns the increased capacities of the local beneficiaries and stakeholders. However, it would be erroneous and unrealistic to expect that the governmental institutions, private sectors, and the migrant workers would independently and efficiently cooperate to tackle these issues in absence of external factors and forces, such as international organizations and high-level commitments. From this perspective, in order to ensure a mid to long-term access of migrant workers to the benefits delivered by the project it is necessary that other projects/programmes continue to be implemented in the future.

Should IOM implement similar intervention in the future, it is advised to consider these recommendations: a) Engage more with local NGOs, b) Focus on increasing the understanding and awareness of the i) final beneficiaries, and ii) small local companies (which have not previously attended/participated in any activities of this and other projects), and c) Cooperate with Ministries and SEZs authorities in jointly organising safe migration campaigns and job fairs.

List of acronyms

Cambodia, Laos, Vietnam	CLV
Corporate Responsibility in Eliminating Slavery and Trafficking	CREST
Corporate Social Responsibilities	CSR
Development Assistance Committee	DAC
Dong Nai Industrial Zones Authority	DIZA
Evaluation Questions	EQs
European Union	EU
International Development Fund	IDF
International Labour Organizations	ILO
International Organization for Migration	IOM
Final Report	FR
Key Informant Interviews	KIIs
Multi-National Companies	MNCs
Non-Governmental Organizations	NGOs
Participatory Impact Assessment and Learning Approach	PIALA
Special Economic Zones	SEZs
Special Economic Zones Promotion and Management Office	SEZO
Small Medium Enterprises	SMEs
Sources of Verification	SoV
Theory of Change	ToC
Terms of Reference	ToR
United Nations	UN

(II). Introduction

Project title: Ex-post Evaluation of 'Upholding the rights of migrant workers in SEZs by ensuring supply chains are exploitation free: Cambodia, Laos, and Viet Nam (CLV).

Implementing Agency: IOM

Geographical coverage: Cambodia, Laos, and Viet Nam.

Project Duration: 1 December 2015-31 May 2018.

Target groups: (1) Migrant workers in the three targeted countries, 2) SMEs and MNCs, and 3) Public institutions responsible for labour inspection, anti-trafficking portfolio and welfare support.

Stakeholders: Dong Nai Industrial Zones Authority (DIZA) in Dong Nai Province, Viet Nam; National Employment Agency/Job Center (NEA/JC) in Battambang and Siem Reap, Cambodia; Special Economic Zone Promotion and Management Office (SEZO), Lao People's Democratic Republic, Ministries, SMEs and MNCs, Recruitment Agencies.

Total project budget: 300,000 USD

Assignment / Duration: Ex-post evaluation of the project / 10 April 2019-17 May 2019.

(III). Context and purpose of the evaluation:

3.1. Context

Global supply chains have become a common way of organizing investment, production and trade in Viet Nam, Cambodia, and Laos, however there is evidence that these developments can have negative implications for working conditions. Weak implementation of labour laws and monitoring in the SEZs is inclined to give free reign to companies to exploit their workers with a high level of disregard for health and safety. The workers, mostly rural migrant, endure substandard working conditions and long hours, often working seven days a week, with no legal protection, and are exposed to health hazards - with no access to health services.

The project tackled the problem of forced labour in SEZs in the three countries by adopting ethical recruitment practices SMEs and MNCs. The project duration was initially foreseen from 1 December 2015 till 30 November 2017, but it was extended until 31 May 2018.

The project aimed at the promotion of ethical recruitment principles in order to achieve the following outcomes: 1) Government agencies and SMEs in CLV are actively engaged in preventing and mitigating risks of exploitation and trafficking in their supply chains, including abuse of female migrant workers; and 2) Private companies and/or their suppliers including Private Recruitment Agencies (PRA) operating in SEZs in Cambodia and Viet Nam and the broader region effectively practice ethical recruitment.

The mechanisms foreseen to initiate the expected change included: a) The CREST framework, and b) A network of private sector actors supporting the implementation of the CREST initiative. The targeted groups included: 1) Migrant workers in the three targeted countries, 2) SMEs and MNCs, and 3) Public institutions responsible for labour inspection, anti-trafficking portfolio and welfare support. Stakeholders: DIZA Viet Nam, National Employment Agency/Job Centre (NEA/JC) Cambodia, and SEZO Laos.

3.2. Evaluation scope

The scope of this evaluation was focusing on the outcome and objective level of the results and covering the whole project implementation until the time of the evaluation. Outputs were assessed as a mean towards the achievement of the project's outcomes and objectives to identify the project impact. The project stakeholders were consulted on the project implementation, results, and their perception, including IOM staff managing the project, relevant representatives of different stakeholders, including government agencies, business associations, companies, and recruitment agencies.

3.3. Evaluation purpose

This evaluation was intended to generate findings, conclusions and recommendations to be used by IDF, IOM missions in Viet Nam, Cambodia and Lao People's Democratic Republic, as well as project to improve future programming and strengthen stakeholder's ability to deliver high results. This evaluation was carried out in line with IDF's guidelines whose recommended timeline is between 6 months to 12 months after the project completion.

3.4. Evaluation criteria

In response to the evaluation purpose, the evaluation looked into the five DAC main evaluation criteria, which are relevance, effectiveness, efficiency, impacts and sustainability, plus two cross-cutting ones such as human rights and gender equality, which are incorporated into relevant DAC criteria.

(IV). Evaluation Design and Methodology:

4.1. Project Theory of Chain

The ToC is a key and useful conceptual tool to understand the causal claims and to enable IOM and various stakeholders to engage in debating the evidence. Summarised, the ToC describes a logical flow where in the context in which the project operates, the activities are well implemented, and outputs/or mechanisms of change are efficiently produced, where all assumptions hold true, risks are successfully mitigated, and positive externalities occur. Consequently, the project would achieve the foreseen outcome thus the expected change should materialise.

Expressed synthetically, the ToC would be: **C+M(Ac—Op)+As-Rs+Extp---Oc=Ch**

Where C=Context, M=Mechanism, Ac=Activities, Op=Outputs, As=Assumptions, Rs=Risks, Extp=Positive externalities, Oc=Outcomes, and Ch=Change.

The Theory of Change is developed on the basis of the project's Logframe. In other words, it is a more descriptive illustration of how, what, and under what circumstances the project is supposed to make a difference (if that was the case).

In a context (A): where the SMEs/MNCs in the targeted SEZs in CLV generally do not strongly oppose efforts to tackle exploitation of migrant workers, undertaken by IOM, other donors, government agencies; **if (B):** 1) tools like CREST are shared with the target groups, 2) ethical recruitment and related CRS principles to eliminate abuse and exploitation in supply chain in CLV are promoted, 3) partnership agreements between IOM and SMEs are established, **and presuming that (C):** 1) particular SMEs and public authorities are a) willing to address the beneficiaries needs and b) interested and available to participate in the activities, **then it is highly likely that (D):** Recruitment agencies near the SEZs will engage in preventing and mitigating risks of exploitation and abuse of female migrant workers and that companies in SEZs in Cambodia and Viet Nam will practice ethical recruitment, **all to the benefit of (E):** Ethical labour supply chains in the targeted SEZs.

Assigning the counter-factual value is an important evaluation feature for comparative analysis of evidence from treated and non-treated groups. Time constraint and difficulties in identifying and interviewing a non-treated comparison group leads the Consultant to adapt another approach which envisaged assessing the counter-factual situation with the treated groups. The latter were asked to describe how the situation would have been if there was no IOM's assistance in place.

4.2. Evaluation Design

The scale and scope of evaluation is the "Full scope-limited scale" where scale is intended as the size of the beneficiaries, while scope referred to the span and complexity of the areas of intervention which were object of this evaluation, and to the intervention mechanisms foreseen by the project. Noting the available resources

(time and financial ones) the Consultant opted for a full scope-limited scale approach where the emphasis was on learning on the effectiveness and current contribution of all major interventions. This approach allowed for drawing generalising conclusions and recommendations.

The Consultant adapted PIALA which views impact from a systemic perspective, as the system of interactions between various actors involved in the project and external influences, rather than just isolated relationship between intervention and effect. This systemic view combines quantitative and qualitative assessments and seeks to move beyond assessing “what has changed” to also answer the more difficult “how” and “why” questions and evaluate the likely sustainability of the observed change.

Based on the ToR, this ex-post evaluation was based on the five DAC Criteria: Relevance/Design, Efficiency, Effectiveness, Impact and Sustainability, including cross cutting issues (gender, human rights, as well as donor coordination).

For this purpose, the Consultant focused on: a) **the Design and on testing the means-end link** between the activities with the outputs and ultimately with the expected outcomes, b) the extent to which the targeted groups have demonstrated changes at the **institutional/managerial procedures** which would indicate i) if government agencies related the SEZs are **actively engaged in preventing and mitigating** risks of exploitation and abuse of female migrant workers in SEZ, ii) if Companies and Recruitment Agencies in SEZs in Cambodia and Viet Nam **demonstrate** changes in practices towards ethical recruitment and iii) the **reach of the impact** (positive or negative), i.e. whether the project initiated and/or supported processes or efforts to tackle the target groups’ needs.

Key features in Methodology:

- ✓ Non-Experimental Evaluation
- ✓ Participatory Impact Assessment and Learning Approach
- ✓ Theory of Change
- ✓ Full Scope-Limited Scale
- ✓ 19 Evaluation Questions
- ✓ Insights from 17 project implementers, partners, and beneficiaries

EVALUATION QUESTIONS:

A. Relevance and Appropriateness of Design

1. Is the project consistent with the objective and in line with the needs of target beneficiaries?
2. What is the level of absorption capacities of the project partners?
3. Are there any complementarity issues with other ongoing projects that need to be addressed?
4. How flexible has the project been to adapt to changes and implementation challenges?
5. Are the indicators well defined and relevant to measure the achievement of the results?

B. Efficiency

1. How well are the resources (funds, expertise and time) being converted into results
2. Have the chosen implementation mechanisms proved to be conducive for achieving the results?
3. Have the beneficiaries and stakeholders provided their share of contributions as inputs (human, financial, in-kind) for the implementation of the project?
4. If there are delays, how drastically they affect the project, what are the reasons and to what extent have appropriate corrective measures been implemented?

C. Effectiveness

1. To what extent project outputs are achieved?

2. Is the progress of each main outcome conforming to plan and what are the most evident signs of impact at the Specific Objective and Overall Objective levels?
3. Are there any unexpected positive (or negative) impact both intended or un-intended ones deriving from the interventions?
4. Were there any external factors, related to the context, which facilitated or hindered the implementation and the potential impact of the intervention?
5. What are the key lessons learnt and how can they be reiterated in similar interventions in the future?

D. Sustainability

1. Are the results supported by the institutions and have the beneficiaries acquired the necessary capacities to ensure the benefits?
2. Is access to the benefits affordable for target groups on the long term?

E. Gender and migrants' rights

1. Have practical gender needs, strategic gender interests and other gender-related issues been adequately considered in the project design and implementation?

4.3. Sampling and related limitations

Initially the Consultant aimed at using a cluster sampling in the three countries. Given the difficulties in arranging meetings in Vietnam and the remote approach where interviews are conducted via Skype and by sending the questionnaire by email, it was impossible for the Consultant to conduct the evaluation on the basis of cluster sampling.

4.4. Data collection

The Consultant relied on the following methods for data collection: a) Desk review of relevant project documents, project reports, meeting minutes, publications and other materials identified, and b) KIIs with the project stakeholders to document both qualitative and quantitative information.

In order to capture the experiences, perspectives, and potential benefits of various groups involved in the project, namely a) implementers, b) target groups and beneficiaries, and c) partners involved somehow in this project and/or in similar interventions targeting the same beneficiaries, the Consultant prepared two different yet complementary lists of open questions and topics to be explored during Key Informant Interviews.

The first set incorporated questions for IOM staff involved in the implementation while the second set included questions and topics of discussions for beneficiaries and partners in order to capture any potential positive/negative changes at the outcome level. Both sets are attached to this Report.

Desk Review

Desk review and data collection during desk review: The Consultant reviewed reports and data produced by the project such as the proposal, the three interim reports and the final one. The Consultant noticed some inconsistencies in terms of design and several aspects during the implementation which were discussed in more details with the team in Ho Chi Ming City. A list of topics of discussion with IOM staff is attached to this Inception Report.

Contextual data: Part of understanding the project’s background was related to obtaining a picture of the context in which the project has operated. In this regard, focus was given to assess, based on the project reports, the willingness of two main target groups: government institutions and SMEs/MNCs to cooperate with the project. Theoretically, the absence of such willingness would render the project’ efforts futile, this assessing this willingness and commitment was key.

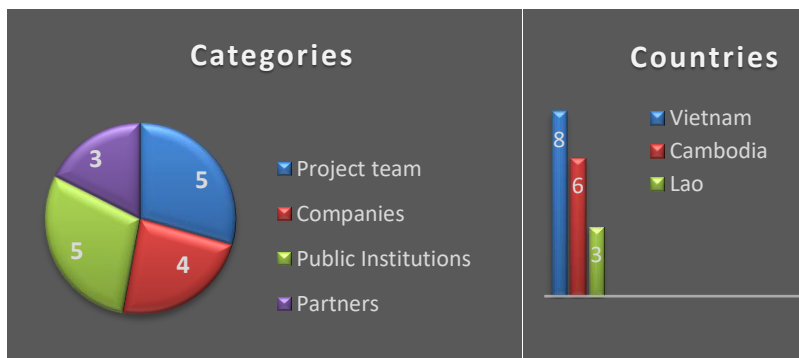
Field-Data collection

Opting for the most suitable approach given these circumstances, and in agreement with the IOM team, the Consultant conducted KIIs through Skype and phone calls which were supported and organised by the IOM VN team. KIIs were conducted with the project team in Viet Nam and Cambodia, IOM high level officials, and representatives of UK Embassy in VN, World Vision, and ILO.

Thanks to IOM staff’s support, the second set of questions were emailed to various SMEs, recruiting agencies, national employment agencies, and SEZs in the three countries. IOM staff translated the responses and consequently submitted the filled forms to the Consultant for analysis. Furthermore, IOM staff in the three countries reached out via phone calls to several SEZ Management offices and officials in order to complete the questionnaire prepared for target groups. This approach served to triangulate the evidence reported in the FR and to consolidate the findings.

A total of 17 individuals from the three countries (IOM staff involved in the implementation, beneficiaries, stakeholders, and partners) were reached out using the above-mentioned instruments. Five of the interviewed individuals (IOM staff) were directly involved in implementing the activities, seven of the interviewed individuals were project beneficiaries, while the remaining five were representatives of partners and stakeholders which were somehow involved in the activities or have been active in addressing similar issues through other interventions.

Recruiting companies, SMEs, public authorities related to SEZs expressed their views by responding to the questionnaire sent to them. A list of interviewed individuals is provided in the Table 1 attached to this Report. The following charts illustrate the categories and the countries of interviewed individuals.



4.5. Data analysis

During the third phase, the Consultant assessed the observed changes and causality for each of the intervention areas and drew conclusions about the distribution and magnitude of impact. More concretely, the Consultant 1) Aggregated and collated all field data and relevant data from secondary sources, including project M&E, compared current progress with the indicators targets and with the milestones, and zipped up the findings

against the ToC to draw conclusions about the distribution and magnitude of how the project has contributed to the impact.

In the debriefing with IOM officials the Consultant provided feedback on the mission, and presented key observations, recommendations and lessons learnt. The debriefing served to clarify issues and correct factual errors and to fine tune the findings and the lessons learnt.

Assessing each of the EQs: The EQs presented in the ToR and the additional EQs are a reflection of the five DAC Criteria: Relevance/Design, Efficiency, Effectiveness, Impact and Sustainability. Based on the data and evidence gathered using the above-mentioned triangulations and instruments, a four-scale grade is used for each of the EQs which allows for the aggregation of overall schemes performance data, more specifically:

Table 3. Grading Matrix for EQs Assessment			
Grading	Numerical	Qualitative	Rationale
A	4	Very good	The situation is considered highly satisfactory. Recommendations focus on adopting these good practices in other operations.
B	3	Good	The situation was considered satisfactory, but there was room for improvements.
C	2	Problems	There were issues which needed to be addressed which negatively affected the schemes performance.
D	1	Serious deficiencies	There were serious deficiencies that led to failure of the operation. Major adjustments were necessary.

As concerns the EQs pertinent to Design/Relevance, and to Efficiency, the grading is conducted based on the Consultant' assessment of the project documents and on the beneficiaries' feedback as concern the intervention's relevance to their needs and its efficiency in implementing the foreseen activities.

Project reports also served as an important source of data for the Effectiveness (and to a good extent for the Impact), however data from the interviewed individuals and from external sources were the most crucial source of information for these two criteria as well for Impact and Sustainability.

(V). Findings for each DAC Criterion

5.1. Relevance of Design **Grade B**

1. Is the overall strategy consistent with the objective and in line with the needs of target beneficiaries? Grade: **B**

The intervention is overall well designed to address the needs of the targeted population. These needs were initially identified in the project proposal and an assessment was conducted after the project commencement through the Situation Assessment Reports. The activities, outputs and outcomes planned were appropriate to achieve the Specific Objectives and overall the intervention logic held true.

The final aim of the project was a challenging one as it aimed at promoting social responsibilities of those entities (i.e. MNCs and SMEs) which, by their very nature, are profit oriented ones. Therefore, positive changes in the understanding and attitudes of the SMEs/MNCs as concerns their social responsibilities would require significant time to occur, much beyond the project lifetime.

Key findings for Relevance/Design:

- ✓ Small scale project with piloting features.
- ✓ Relevant to the beneficiaries needs.
- ✓ Overall adequate intervention mechanism, indicators, and time-span.
- ✓ Builds local capacities, expands horizontally and vertically.
- ✓ Addresses complementary layers: Local needs- policy level.
- ✓ Supported by main stakeholders with relatively good absorption capacities.
- ✓ Overall flexible to circumstances.

From this perspective, the project was not expected to drastically affect the way how SMEs/MNCs and their supply chains deal with forced labour but rather to enhance MNCs/SMEs awareness and understanding of protecting and promoting labour and human rights. Ultimately the project promoted improved understanding of the targeted companies and positively influenced several pro-active actions taken by SMEs/MNCs to adapt ethical recruitment practices. More details are provided in the Effectiveness Section with concrete supporting evidence.

The project had a piloting aspect as it aimed at introducing mechanisms for self-assessment such as the CREST framework. By doing so, the project contributed to previous and ongoing efforts conducted by several actors, including international organizations, in addressing migrant workers' rights.

The project was well focused because it extended its efforts especially in the SEZs where labour laws are not duly enforced thus providing fertile terrain for forced labour conditions. More specifically the activities were focused in three SEZs in Cambodia, three in Vietnam, and one in Lao. The criteria for selecting the sectors and the SEZs were clearly described in the project proposal.

However, the project was not centred only on the SEZs. On the contrary it reached out also to central institutions and organized high level meetings and events, which is an important added value of the project that contributed not only in addressing the target groups' needs but also in enhancing IOM's visibility as one of the major actors supporting these needs.

2. What is the level of absorption capacities of the project partners? Grade: A

The capacities of the stakeholders to absorb and to take part in the project activities were relatively good.

The concepts and the goals promoted by the project are not entirely new to the target groups which have been exposed to these concepts even prior to the project start. For instance, according to the Situational Assessment Reports (SARs), forced labour did not appear to be a major problem in Vietnam and the legal framework on recruitment related services and fees is in place, although its level of implementation varies from one country to another.

To ensure a satisfactory level of interest and support during the initial phase, IOM conducted series of meetings in CLV to better understand and adequately assess the current status of affairs in the recruitment practices, the readiness of the targeted groups to embrace the project goals, and to draft a strategy for engaging with the private sector. Some key actions conducted during this phase were the SARs which provided IOM with insights, and the approvals obtained from government authorities as concerns the implementation of activities in the targeted areas.

3. Are there complementarity issues with other ongoing projects that need to be addressed? Grade: A

Several international organizations and donors have continuously undertaken efforts to tackle migrant workers' rights in South East Asia. There were no major complementary issues of this project with other donor-funded projects. The implementing team identified other similar interventions and took steps to ensure synergy with other projects and to avoid overlaps.

Some examples of cooperation with other similar interventions and donors are the joint activities and efforts conducted with ILO, World Vision, and other organizations. The workshop on "Sustainable Sourcing and Ethical Labour Practices in Supply Chain" co-hosted by IOM, British Embassy in Viet Nam, and the Viet Nam Chamber of Commerce and Industry is a clear illustration of successful steps taken together with other relevant actors.

Another example which enabled synergies among various IDF projects was the third multi-stakeholders workshop with VAMAS that was carried out as a cross-cutting activity with the other IDF-funded project "Enhancing industry capacity to implement ethical recruitment models in Viet Nam and Nepal".

4. How flexible has the project been to adapt to contextual changes and implementation challenges? Grade: **A**
Keeping in mind the dynamics of the target groups and the volatile and unstable nature of migrant issues, the project demonstrated a good flexibility level. The two revisions of the intervention logic indicate that the project was successful in adapting to the context within which it operated.

Based on the SARs findings, it became clear for the implementing team that SEZs provide a relatively safe working environment with good recruitment practices, no incidence of forced labour reported, and labour regulations generally are well reinforced. The project adapted its approach by focusing more on improving the job counselling and services provided by job centres with the aim to empower potential migrants in remote rural areas with better provision of job opportunity related information.

The inclusion of the Output 2.3 “Establishment of new partnership....” - focused on organization of job fairs- proved to be an added value as these job fairs enabled direct recruitment and facilitated sharing of relevant information among participants.

The project’s flexibility was also shown in adapting the engagement approach with DIZA where instead of an MoU, the two sides agreed on a more practical use of letters of support in order to facilitate the implementation of particular activities. Furthermore, the removal of Output 2.2 “Support to develop mapping, risk assessment, and action plan” indicates that IOM has duly assessed local actors’ absorption capacities for this particular activity and has amended the intervention logic accordingly.

5. Are the indicators well defined and relevant to measure the achievement? Grade: **B**

The Log Frame Matrix (LFM) included 17 indicators at the Outcome and Output levels, out of which five were foreseen at the Outcome level while the rest at the Output level. The Outcome indicators were adequate to illustrate the change expected at this particular level, while the Output indicators were adequate to track the key milestones achieved by the project during its implementation.

Some indicators listed under Outputs can be considered as Outcome indicators, such as the 2nd indicators for Outputs 1.2, 1.3, 1.4, and 2.4 as they are related to the increased awareness and understanding of the target groups.

SoVs, Baselines, and Targets were identified. The SOVs include mainly data obtained through internal means; the targets are sex-disaggregated where possible, and most of the targets are realistically set. There is an inconsistency on the unit of measurement for the 2nd indicator of Output 2.4 where the indicator foresees private recruitment agencies, private companies and supplier representatives who endorse the tools as an effective method for supporting ethical recruitment while the final value reflects the only the number of recruitment agencies.

5.2. Efficiency **Grade B**

6. How well are the resources (funds, expertise and time) being converted into results? Grade: **A**

Overall the envisaged human and financial resources are reported to have been timely deployed, thereby allowing the activities to commence smoothly. There are no indications of any delay/implementation issues caused by untimely or insufficient resources made available.

The project’s budget was not put into the Consultant’s disposal therefore it is not possible to comment on whether the major budget headings corresponded to the needs of the action, but given that the activities were

implemented with no need of additional financial allocations, it is safe to assume that the project was efficiently implemented.

An indication of efficiency is the underspending of approximately 40.000 USD, as reported in the FR, which occurred because some activities were conducted in coordination with other donors and organizations and some costs were therefore reduced. These saving did not negatively affect the attainment of the envisaged outcomes.

7. Have the implementation mechanisms proved to be conducive for achieving the results? Grade: A

The project is funded as a grant agreement between IOM and IDF. The provisions of the grant contract did not overburden the grantee with procedural and reporting requirements. The project was jointly implemented by the staff of IOM Vietnam, Cambodia, and Lao. The main implementation responsibilities relied within IOM Vietnam where the project management site was located. The Project Manager, tasked with for ensuring the successful completion of the project and related activities, was supported by the local staff in Vietnam as well as by the focal points in Cambodia and Laos.

The first monitoring layer on day to day implementation of activities was conducted by the Project Manager while a second layer of strategic guidance and overall oversight was provided by the IOM high-level staff in Vietnam and by the Regional Office for Asia-Pacific in Bangkok.

IOM enjoys good reputation in the region as a recognised international organisation working with migrant related issues. This has enabled the creation of a sound and efficient working relationship between the project and the target groups.

8. Have the beneficiaries and stakeholders provided their share of contributions as inputs (human, financial, in-kind) for the implementation of the project? Grade: A

The project goals were in principle embraced by all stakeholders and beneficiaries. Overall, the level of commitment has been satisfactory, especially from the SEZs authorities, Ministries, and MNCs. There are several indications for illustrating this overall satisfactory commitment, such as the approval provided by governmental authorities to implement the project, the participation of SEZ authorities, MNCs, and recruitment agencies in the training sessions and high-level workshops, as well as in co-organising and in attending the job fairs. The appointment of DIZA as focal point for the project implementation in Vietnam is a further illustration of the institutions' commitment.

As concerns the private sectors, the MNCs has overall demonstrated a good level of commitment and this particular layer of the target groups, as well as recruiting agencies and Chambers of Commerce, have been active in the activities. In general, the local companies have shown interested towards the projects by attending training sessions and other activities.

9.If there are delays, how drastically they affect the project, what are the reasons and to what extent have appropriate corrective measures been implemented? Grade: B

The implementation of the project and of the activities did not encounter substantial challenges which could disrupt the implementation or drastically affect it. The major challenge was the mapping of supply chain and risks assessment given that most of internal migrants are directly hired. In agreement with DIZA, IOM decided to divert resources to other additional activities, following the IDF's approval. The project was granted six months no cost extension but this must not be considered as poor efficiency but rather as indicator of adaptability to new circumstances.

The key completed activities include but are not limited to 16 multi-stakeholder meetings in the three countries, consultation meetings, distribution of the report on good practice to SMEs and government agencies, information campaigns on human trafficking in supply chain, and outreaching activities to promote CREST.

5.3. Effectiveness **Grade B**

10. To what extent outputs are achieved? **Grade B**

According to the Final Report, the majority of the foreseen outputs have been fully produced. The most key ones include: the set of materials including a business case for the private sector to adopt ethical recruitment practices; factsheets and training modules; documentation of good practices in promoting ethical recruitment and related CSR; the series of training sessions with the beneficiaries, 37 public events and training workshops for the private sector related to ethical recruitment and fair labour practices.

There are two setbacks in terms of outputs. The first is the partially achieved target for the job fairs where in total six job fairs instead of the foreseen 10 were organised. The second underachieved target (30% vs. 80%) is the one for the 2nd indicator of Output 2.4 “Number of private recruitment agencies, private companies and supplier representatives who endorse the tools as an effective method for supporting ethical recruitment”.

11. Is the progress of each main outcome conforming to plan and what are the most evident signs of impact at the Outcome levels? **Grade B**

To a good extent the project has been able to deliver the expected outcomes (achieved its goals) as there is evidence of:

- a) Concrete steps taken by various private recruitment agencies and by five MCNs and their suppliers in incorporating ethical recruitment practices in their daily operations,
- b) Active engagement of SEZs in facilitating cooperation with the private sector to support direct recruitment and promote safe migration information
- c) Better understanding and increased awareness on ethical recruitment from those companies which attended the project activities.

Overall more companies refer to direct recruitment. This is due to the efforts undertaken by multiple stakeholders and donors and not just to this project. It is also reported that workers’ transport and accommodation conditions are also improving as big companies are requiring more standards in term of recruitment and labour conditions.

Another important outcome of the project is its assistance to SEZs authorities in better fulfilling their roles thanks to the collaboration with the project. For instance, DIZA joined forces IOM on the CREST training and for the job fairs. The project helped to improve SEZs authorities’ understanding of work exploitation issues in the Vietnamese context, and on the related international standards. Post training evaluation forms were used to capture the improved understanding of the public authorities attending the training sessions. For example, as concerns the training modules for “Business case for ethical recruitment and supply chain” and “Trafficking and slavery in specific industry”, in the post training evaluation assessments the participants pointed out that prevention strategies, how to eliminate slavery and human trafficking, and the role of the private sector and public authorities in SEZ were of particular importance to them.

The development of CREST Framework is undoubtedly the most important outcome of the project. Not only it helped public authorities and private sector to further absorb ethical recruitment principles and to adopt various tools, but it also served IOM to secure funding for other larger interventions. CREST together with IRIS is being promoted in other countries-which is an unexpected positive impact of the project.

Thanks to CREST, governments in the region are gradually embracing its concepts yet they are slower in undertaking concrete actions to address migrant workers' rights.

There are several concrete examples of active measures undertaken by the public institutions/MNCs, thanks to the project efforts. These examples (just to mention a few) are an illustration of the project's impact at the Outcome Level.

Firstly, the Code of Conduct (updated by VAMAS) and the related monitoring tools that were developed within the framework of ILO's TRIANGLE in ASEAN programme and IOM's CREST programme.

Secondly, the Department of Labour, Invalids and Social Affairs (DOLISA) of Ho Chi Minh City, supported by IOM, integrated IOM safe migration brochure into its regular information campaign on human trafficking.

Keeping in mind its small scale, the project has managed to give its modest contribution to gradually start changing the mind set of local companies on the concepts of migrant workers' rights. There are some improvements at least in terms of understanding some key principles of social responsibilities from the private sector side and especially from the MNCs, which due also to increasing pressure from various institutions, organizations and governments worldwide, are gradually taking steps to reduce exploitation in their supply chains.

The project had good counterfactual effects. Most of the interviewed beneficiaries pointed out that in absence of this project some improvements in ethical recruitment could still have taken place. However, it is clear that IOM support was crucial in speeding up the process and in delivering the necessary self-assessment instruments to the private sectors, recruiters, and public agencies.

Despite this good performance and tangible outcomes, there are few aspects which could have been tackled better by the project, although they do not overshadow the overall successful implementation.

1. The geographical reach of the outcomes is somehow unevenly distributed as the project has been more efficient in Vietnam than in Laos.
2. According to the Final Report, the target of five companies for the Outcome Indicator "Nr of companies and/or their suppliers publicly supporting ethical recruitment principles in their policies" is underachieved as only two companies (H&M and Adidas) are mentioned.
3. There is insufficient recognition of those private recruitment agencies that have attended IOM training (and presumably adhere more to the ethical recruitment principles), in order to distinguish from those which were not active during this project or other interventions aiming to promote ethical recruitment.
4. While in some cases the project cooperated with local and international NGOs, the project could have relied more and cooperated with local NGOs (or community-based organizations) in order to reach out to the final beneficiaries-the migrant workers. Although they are in a weak position with limited capacities, and only few of them are active in ethical labour issues, the local NGOs can play a role in addressing the challenge of changing the mind-set, especially as concerns the migrant workers.

12. Are there any unexpected positive (or negative) impact both intended or un-intended ones deriving from the interventions? How did the project react to these developments (if this was the case)? Grade **B**

No negative impact (both expected or unexpected) are noticed. The project has managed to mitigate the risks.

Several positive impacts (somehow unexpected) did occur. Other IOM missions in the region, as well as in China and Japan adopted and made use of the outputs delivered by the project, as for example the ethical recruitment practices, factsheets, and training modules.

A key example which illustrates well the magnitude of the project's impact is the wide promotion of the CREST Framework which evolved from a piloting stage within this project into a wide scale initiative encompassing concrete tools. It is reported that the Japanese NGO on labour issues Energetic Green promoted the CREST initiative through its network. Furthermore, this evolution enabled IOM to secure further funding (5.8 Million USD for a five-year project as well as 300,000 USD from the IOM International Development Fund for a 2-year project LM.0331: Enhancing Industry Capacity to Implement Ethical Recruitment Models in Viet Nam and Nepal to Protect Migrant Workers in South Korean Businesses' Supply Chains).

Another positive example of unexpected outcome is the training delivered by the ADIDAS sustainability to their suppliers in Vietnam and Indonesia, following the ToT delivered by the project.

The project positively affected both private recruitment agencies as well as international brands and local suppliers in pushing both sides for adapting ethical recruitment principles. In Cambodia for example, it is reported that most of the 47 private recruitment agencies that attended the training had already adopted the ethical recruitment tool in their working system.

On the MCN side, there are cases of the so-called "champions", i.e. companies who have good practices/policies in place, leading the sector in ethical recruitment practices that have identified unethical recruitment practices by using a 'Red Flag' concept. For instance, the Nike's Sustainable Manufacturing and Sourcing Regional Directorate considers this concept as a suitable way to improve the adaption of ethical recruitment principles.

As concerns the suppliers, another example are the two Dong Nai Province-based companies Eclat Viet Nam Textile and Hwaseung Vina which, thanks to this project, have established cooperation with DIZA for the latter to support factories' direct recruitment of migrant workers while promoting ethical recruitment practices.

13. Were there any external factors, related to the context, which facilitated or hindered the implementation and the potential impact of the intervention? Grade B

Overall the context has been conducive for enabling the good performance of the project. There is an increasing trend from various sides (governments, MNCs, international organizations) to exert positive pressure on the private sector in order for the latter to improve workers conditions.

At the global level, in 2017 several intergovernmental consultations took place as part of the development of the UN led Global Compact for Migration to strengthen state cooperation in ensuring safe, regular and orderly migration between countries. In the same year, the Bali Process on People Smuggling, Trafficking in Persons and Related Transnational Crime launched a new collaboration platform between business and governments to combat labour exploitation in supply chains.

During the last years, the governments in the region (i.e. 10 Member States of the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN) took promising actions on this regard with the signing of the Consensus on the Protection and Promotion of the Rights of Migrant Workers. The parties committed to ensure migrant workers' access to healthcare, legal rights, fair pay and decent living conditions, as well as protecting them against discrimination based on gender and origin. The deal is not binding yet but it represents a significant step forward.

Despite this positive trend, there are various factors which are still negatively affecting the efforts undertaken by this project as well as by other donors, governments, and organizations.

Firstly, the migrant workers' awareness as concerns their rights is not considered to be at the adequate level.

Secondly, while in most cases the legal framework is in place, its implementation is far from being satisfactory. While governments in the targeted countries have introduced labour legislation aimed at securing a certain level of welfare and security for workers, they also used their public commitment to trade liberalisation and growth to increase their countries' competitiveness. According to studies prepared by various international organizations, government regulated recruitment practices for migrant workers and private recruiters are frequently supervised by different divisions within governments, which may create confusion and accountability issues.

Thirdly, the social responsibilities of the MNCs and SMEs (both international and local ones) need to be better understood and concrete actions need to be taken by the private sector to adhere to such principles. Due to consumers' pressure and domestic legislation, such as California's Transparency in Supply Chain Act in the US and other developed countries, MNCs increasingly have requirements in their supplier codes of conduct to ensure there is no forced labour, trafficking or child labour. However, smaller SMEs are often unaware of these requirements and see little value in adopting such practices for the fear of being priced out of market. These are still major challenges and areas where potential projects should focus on in the future.

14. What are the key lessons learnt and how can they be reiterated in similar interventions in the future? Grade B

The following are five best practices which can be reiterated in future interventions. These best practices are in fact mechanisms and strategies implemented by the project which proved to contribute to the positive outcomes. They proved to be successful tools in enabling the target groups to undertake concrete actions, furthermore they served as catalysts for changes in the performance and in the awareness of the beneficiaries.

1) CREST and IRIS, 2) Multi-stakeholder workshops and the training sessions, and 3) Job fairs which facilitated direct recruitment.

The main preconditions under which these tools can be reiterated in other interventions are the following:

- a. Trust building as the key element for any potential cooperation with the government institutions.
- b. Involvement of target groups during all stages from the conceptualisation of the intervention till the finalisation of the activities. It is key that the beneficiaries and stakeholders feel and act as being active factors for change rather than just passive receivers of assistance.
- c. Focusing of the approaches for engaging the private sector on the 'win-win' perspective, which implies that the private sector must see at least a minimum of business interest from any kind of involvement in donor-funded activities.

In terms of approaches or implementation strategies, it is worth mentioning two best practices:

1) The collaborative approach adapted by the project with the governmental agencies and especially with the private sector where pointing out the "win-win" perspective, or in other words what would the private sector benefit from complying with social corporate responsibilities, the project succeeded in establishing fruitful relations with the private sector.

2) The good level of coordination with other similar interventions and international actors providing support in the same areas. This level of coordination avoided substantial overlaps and created basis for synergies among different organizations.

5.4. Sustainability Grade C

15. Are the results supported by the institutions and have the beneficiaries acquired the necessary capacities to ensure the benefits? Grade A

Overall the public officials support the results due to the obvious benefit of the project; however, this support and their capacities are far from being sufficient to continue delivering such services to the target groups.

The project has performed well in terms of increasing local capacities both those of the governmental agencies as well as of the private sector. During its activities the project has provided technical assistance to develop corporates policies and to training and monitoring of supply chains. Thanks to this assistance, the capacities of the beneficiaries can be considered as improved when compared to the period prior to the project's implementation.

Especially the auditors and the sustainability teams of those MCNs and SMEs that cooperated with the project avail of appropriate self-assessment and monitoring tools which were developed by the project.

Furthermore, the advocacy action which were undertaken by the project, have increased the general awareness of various stakeholders, which is not likely to diminish in the short term.

16. Is access to the benefits affordable for target groups on the long term? Grade **C**

As mentioned above, sustainability prospects are somehow good as concerns the increased capacities of the local partners. However, it would be erroneous and unrealistic to expect that the governmental institutions, private sectors, and the migrant workers would independently and efficiently cooperate to tackle these issues in absence of external factors and forces, such as international organizations and high-level commitments.

From this perspective, in order to ensure a mid to long-term access of migrant workers to the benefits delivered by the project it is necessary that other projects/programmes continue to be implemented in the future.

5.5. Gender and migrants' rights **Grade B**

17. Are practical/strategic gender needs considered in the design and implementation? Grade **B**

The cornerstone of the project was the promotion of migrants' rights and this was quite visible in all its activities. Gender aspects were well considered in many aspects of the project, starting from selecting the target sector and in involving female migrants in the activities. The design gave proper attention to gender aspects as the intervention targeted those business sectors that had a high level of women recruited.

(VI). Conclusions and Recommendations

6.1. Conclusions

- 1) The intervention is overall well designed to address the needs of the targeted population and the relevance of the intervention is fully confirmed.
- 2) The project demonstrated a good flexibility level and coordination with other interventions.
- 3) To a good extend the project has delivered the expected outcomes; apart from few targets, most of them have been met.
- 4) There is better understanding and increased awareness on ethical recruitment from those companies which attended the activities. In various occasions private companies and government authorities took active steps to improve their performance on this regard.
- 5) IOM support was crucial in delivering the necessary self-assessment instruments such as CREST to the private sectors, recruiters, and public agencies.
- 6) The project has contributed to enhance local capacities however the latter are not yet fully sufficient and mature enough to continue delivering the services to the target groups in absence of international development projects.

- 7) Some issues could have been addressed better by the project: a) Uneven reach of the impact in Laos when compared to Vietnam, b) insufficient recognition of those recruitment agencies involved in the training, c) and limited cooperation with local NGOs.

6.2. Recommendations

Should IOM implement similar intervention in the future the design should consider the following topics:

- 1) Engage more with local NGOs, in order to reach out to the migrant workers and ultimately to establish strategic alliance and cooperation with these local actors.
- 2) Particular focus to increase the understanding and awareness of the final beneficiaries i.e. migrant workers as concerns their rights. Training and awareness-raising activities should be provided to this target group with regard to health issues, risks of illegal cross border migration, human trafficking, etc.,
- 3) Particular focus to increase the understanding and awareness of small local companies (which have not previously attended/participated in any activities of this and other projects) as concerns the migrant workers' rights, and
- 4) Cooperation with Ministries and SEZs authorities in jointly organising safe migration campaigns and job fairs.

(VII). Annexes



Annex A.



Annex



Table 1 List of



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