

PROJECT EVALUATION LEARNING BRIEF

February 2019

This learning brief is a summary of the key findings, conclusions, and recommendations prepared by the evaluator for use by the Government of Belize, IOM Development Fund, IOM project staff and management. Details on all of the findings, conclusions, and recommendations can be found in the full evaluation report.

Evaluation type: Internal independent post evaluation

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Evaluation visit: 14-17 January, 2019

Final report: February 27, 2019

Commissioned by: IOM Mission in Belize

Managed by: Rene Chuc, Project Manager

Evaluation purpose: To determine whether the project has achieved its intended objective and expected results, as described in the results framework, identify lessons learnt from the project's implementation, and provide a set of key recommendations that may inform similar projects in the future.

Evaluation criteria: Relevance, effectiveness, efficiency, impact, and sustainability.

Evaluation methodology: Document review, semi-structured interviews, focus groups.

PROJECT SUMMARY

Belize has seen a drastic and steady increase in immigrants, a large share of them in search of work. The "Diagnostic on Belizean Migration Trends and Migration Management Regulation", produced by IOM Belize in 2013, presented a summary of recommendations, all of which indicating the urgency of comprehensive migration and labor migration policies in Belize.

The absence of labor migration programs and systems to support labor mobility in the country was impeding the country from benefitting from the socio-economic contributions of labor migration and its implications on development. This situation also exposed migrant workers to the risk of discrimination, xenophobia, abuse, exploitation, trafficking, low pay and dangerous working conditions.

Particularly in the area of labor migration, there was no specific program in place supporting the growing demand for farm-hand workers in the most important agriculture sectors of the country: citrus, banana, and sugar. The capacity of national authorities to respond and coordinate actions to manage labor migration was also minimal. Furthermore, the absence of conclusive data on labor market trends and needs in Belize prevented the Government of Belize (GoB) from developing of a program facilitating labour migration.

To answer to the above-mentioned needs, the IOM Development Fund funded project entitled "Improving Labour Migration Management in Belize" aimed at building and strengthening the response capacity of national authorities and stakeholders, through

Improving Labour Migration Management in Belize

Geographical coverage: **Belize**

Project type: **Labour Migration**

Project code: **LM.0262**

Project period: **01 December 2014 to 31 March 2017**

Donor: **IOM Development Fund**

Budget: **USD 150,000**

awareness creation, sensitization and inter-institutional collaboration in the area of labor migration management.

By developing a Labour Market Need Assessment (LMNA) in the agriculture sector and a comprehensive review of the current temporary work-permit system as a basis for a Temporary Work Permit Program (TWPP) framework for the agriculture sector in Belize, the project expected to improve labour migration management in Belize. In addition, the project implemented activities towards improving the capacity of national authorities and stakeholders to manage Labor Migration by conducting a series of trainings on migration policy, social protection of migrant workers, among others.

The main partners of the project were the Department of Immigration & Nationality Services, the Department of Labour, the Agriculture Department and the Social Security Board. Focal points of the four project partners were assigned to participate in a Steering Committee (SC) created for this project, in order to follow-through the implementation of project activities.

KEY FINDINGS/CONCLUSIONS

Stakeholder engagement in the implementation largely secured the project accomplishments: the Steering SC created for this project ensured the accomplishment of project activities and outputs. In addition, by including different industries' representatives in the consultation, it was possible to access data to conduct the LMNA and to ensure that the TWPP framework includes the views and contribution from different stakeholders.

The GoB did not develop a temporary work permit program: the GoB did not commit sufficient resources to this essential need. The Mission, under other initiatives implemented after this project ended, have been able to advance on designing a TWPP, that is expected to be validated and piloted this year.

Limited dissemination of project publications: the main outputs of this project, the TWPP, had limited dissemination, as many key stakeholders and participants involved in this project did not receive a copy. A registry of the dissemination of the outputs could have tracked its distribution.

The project addressed a need, but not necessarily a GoB priority: The project addressed the national need for managing labour migration. It focused on the need (still ongoing) of the selected agricultural sectors to recruit migrant workers seasonally. However, overall, it was not clear to what extent the government was committed to applying the needed resources for improving labor migration.

GOOD PRACTICES

One of the major strengths of this project is the creation of an inter-ministerial SC for the implementation of the project. This has resulted in engagement and cooperation among different government agencies, resulting in regular contact between the government and IOM. The validation of activities and outputs on behalf of the SC, such as the revision and approval of the LMNA reports, ensures that the products generated by the project have the sign-off by the Government. As a lesson learned, for projects that aims at working with the SC during the project implementation, meetings should be scheduled when important decisions need to be made to continue the project's implementation, such as the review of documents.

The participatory approach implemented during this project to elaborate two of its key outputs was very important. The engagement of the different

stakeholders (private sector, civil society, government, migrants) to elaborate the LMNA was important to ensure that information would represent all beneficiaries in the policy options.

LESSONS LEARNED

For projects that aims at working with the SC during the project implementation, meetings should be scheduled when important decisions need to be made to continue the project's implementation, such as the review of documents.

KEY RECOMMENDATIONS

1. *Mission to support the GoB to pilot a TWPP:* based on the policy options document, and the subsequent activities that have been carried out in other programs, current and future projects should build upon it to implement a TWPP.
2. *Update the LMNA:* although the LMNA provides highly important information on the needs of the labour market in the sugar, citrus and banana industries, update to this document should be conducted when the GoB develops a TWPP to secure that the information is up to date. Furthermore, replication of an LMNA could be done in other industries in Belize that are known to employ migrant workers, such as the emerging pineapple industry.
3. *Secure further dissemination of project publications:* for future projects, it is recommended to consider a strategic and efficient distribution plan of project publications, securing that key government officials, as well as stakeholder involved in the development receives one.
4. *Improve the SC Memorandum of Understanding:* to secure that members of the SC are not rotated during the project implementation, a commitment from the representing ministry should be documented to avoid the rotation of staff, when possible. Terms of Reference with roles and responsibilities of member should be developed, including responsibilities of members to regularly communicate to their chief executive officer or director the status of the project.
5. *Strengthen project development and planning capacities:* improving project design is key for the project implementation, as well as for measuring results. Future projects should design a solid budget and adequate to the level of professional consultants required, following IOM and donor standards, preventing from developing ambitious project with the available funds.