▶ Social protection (social security) interventions: What works and why?

Lessons learned from a synthesis review, 2012–2018

▶ Social protection (social security) interventions: What works and why?

Lessons learned from a synthesis review, 2012–2018

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▶ Preface

Since 2012, the International Labour Organization Evaluation Office (ILO-EVAL) has regularly contributed to the ILO's recurrent discussions on selected issues by preparing companion pieces to recurrent reports. The aim is to enhance organizational learning by systematically synthesizing information on results, lessons learned and good practices. So far, EVAL has produced synthesis reviews for recurrent discussions on Social Dialogue (2013),[1] Employment (2014),[2] Social Protection (Labour Protection) (2015),[3] and Social Dialogue (2017).[4]

This synthesis review report is prepared in advance of the Recurrent Discussion on Social Protection (Social Security), which is scheduled for discussion at the 109th Session of the International Labour Conference.

The study was carried out by Magali Bonne-Moreau, an independent consultant, under EVAL's supervision. It presents results and lessons learned from selected evaluations and relevant ILO publications in the social protection (social security) domain.

We acknowledge with thanks our colleagues from the Social Protection (SOCPRO) Department for their inputs to the scope and preparation of this report. Specials thanks are also due to Mini Thakur, Senior Evaluation Officer, for her continuous support and inputs throughout the study, and to Maria Audera Bustamante for her assistance.

We hope that the findings from this evaluative study will serve to guide our constituents, colleagues and others who work on the issue of social protection.

Guy Thijs
Director
ILO-EVAL

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[1] www.ilo.org/global/docs/WCMS_212381/lang--en/index.htm
[2] www.ilo.org/global/docs/WCMS_243429/lang--en/index.htm
[3] www.ilo.org/ilc/ILCSessions/previous-sessions/104/committees/social-protection/lang--ja/index.htm
[4] www.ilo.org/eval/synthesis-and-meta/WCMS_584293/lang--en/index.htm

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▶ List of abbreviations

ABND	Assessment-Based National Dialogue (ILO)
ACTRAV	ILO Bureau for Workers Activities
ASEAN	Association of Southeast Asian Nations
DWCP	Decent Work Country Programme
EAC	East African Community
EC	European Commission
ECLAC	Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean
ECOWAS	Economic Community of West African States
ENSSB	Mozambique National Basic Social Security Strategy
EVAL	ILO Evaluation Office
FAO	Food and Agriculture Organisation
GIZ	Deutsche Gesellschaft für Internationale Zusammenarbeit
HLE	High-level Evaluation
ILC	International Labour Conference
ILO	International Labour Organization
IOM	International Organisation for Migration
ITC/ILO	International Training Centre of the ILO
MNSSP	Malawi National Support Programme
PAHO	Pan American Health Organization
PALOP	Países Africanos de Língua Oficial Portuguesa
RBSA	ILO Regular Budget Supplementary Account
SADC	Southern African Development Community
SDG	Sustainable Development Goal
SPF	Social protection floor
TOR	Terms of reference
UN	United Nations
UNDAF	United Nations Development Assistance Framework
UNDP	United Nations Development Programme
UNFPA	United Nations Population Fund
UNICEF	United Nations Children's Fund
USP	Universal social protection
WHO	World Health Organization

Social protection (social security) interventions: What works and why?
Executive summary

9

▶ Executive summary[1]

This report presents the findings of a review of evaluation reports related to ILO interventions in the domain of social protection (social security) in the period 2012–2018. It aims to contribute to organizational learning, to provide guidance to ILO constituents on future work related to social protection (social security), and to strengthen the capacity of the Office to make evidence-based decisions from the findings generated during the analysis of the evaluation reports. Through the systematic analysis of results, lessons learned and good practices of selected evaluation reports, this synthesis review identifies what works, for whom, and why, in the context of ILO's work on social protection (social security).

This report, commissioned by the ILO Evaluation Office (EVAL), has been prepared in advance of the of the International Labour Conference (ILC) Recurrent Discussion on Social Protection (Social Security) in 2020. It is meant to contribute to and complement the Recurrent Report on Social Protection (Social Security) submitted for discussion to the 109th Session of the International Labour Conference.

Social protection, or social security, is defined as "the set of policies and programmes designed to reduce and prevent poverty and vulnerability across the life cycle. Social protection includes nine main areas: child and family benefits, maternity protection, unemployment support, employment injury benefits, sickness benefits, health protection, old-age benefits, disability benefits and survivors' benefits. Social protection systems address all these policy areas by a mix of contributory schemes (social insurance) and non-contributory tax-financed social assistance."[2]

While this synthesis review covers mostly projects and interventions specifically focusing on promoting and extending social protection and social security, it also includes ILO interventions that had a strong social protection (social security) component.

▶ Methodology

This synthesis review aims to answer the following questions: *Based on evaluations of the ILO's efforts to support social protection (social security) between 2012 and 2018: What is being done? What works? For whom? And why?*[3]

It was conducted using the methodology included in the terms of reference (TOR), which ensured a rigorous and systematic analysis and appraisal of the existing evaluation reports on the subject, with transparency regarding inclusion and exclusion criteria, as well as review processes and decisions.

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[1] Executive summaries are also available in French and Spanish on ILO EVAL's website at: http://www.ilo.ch/eval/synthesis-and-meta/lang--en/index.htm
[2] *World Social Protection Report 2017–19*, ILO, 2017, p. 2, www.ilo.org/wcmsp5/groups/public/---dgreports/---dcomm/---publ/documents/publication/wcms_604882.pdf [accessed 24 Jan. 2020].
[3] A set of key sub-questions that aimed to be addressed, granted that sufficient evidence was available, guided the review and are available in Annex 2. These were developed based on the TOR as well as areas of inquiry addressed in previous systematic reviews.

As far as possible, the final selection of reports was purposive to include projects from all regions, as well as global/interregional projects, and covered different areas of focus and thematic scope irrespective of the language in which they were written. Reports not providing relevant/sufficient information on work carried out to support social protection (social security) were excluded, as were reports without recommendations, lessons learned and emerging good practices (when applicable).

The evaluation reports included in the review were interim and final independent project evaluations as well as one high-level strategy evaluation. The final number of documents included in this review was 24 out of 40 documents initially considered and screened.

The reports in the final list were systematically appraised. Information on their key findings, recommendations, lessons learned and emerging good practices related to work on social protection (social security) were extracted and used to conduct a qualitative thematic synthesis.

The main limitations of this review related to the availability of relevant and good quality evaluative evidence to address the initial research questions and, in particular, the lack of lessons learned and good practices. This also limited the possibility to identify the ILO's main challenges in supporting the achievement of Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) on social protection (e.g. UN reform, new forms of employment).

▶ Findings

The initiatives evaluated by the reports considered for this synthesis review covered a range of areas related to social protection, and the establishment and extension of social security schemes, including, inter alia: unemployment protection; social protection for migrant workers and their families; the extension of social protection coverage to those in the informal economy; the establishment of pension systems; and maternity protection.

▶ What works?

The review of ILO projects revealed various conditions that promoted progress towards the development and/or extension of social protection in the project countries. These conditions are summarized below:

▶ Projects that were strategically relevant and responded to stakeholder needs were often more successful than those where there was limited constituent interest in social protection issues.

▶ The ILO has a broad toolbox of capacity-building activities related to social protection and social security, and provided effective platforms for sharing experiences and good practices in this context. Impact was greatest when interventions took into account local needs, capacities and context, and results were anchored in national institutions.

▶ An inclusive approach to capacity building was highlighted as a strength, as was the strategy of peer-to-peer learning and fostering international exchanges of experiences, practices and realities. Capacity building was sometimes used as an entry-point and strategy for maintaining relationships with countries where conditions for the implementation of projects were unfavourable.

▶ Dissemination of good practices on topics related to social security and social protection, including through web-based platforms, regional knowledge-sharing tools, or publications led to positive outcomes.

▶ The use of social dialogue was noted as an essential element for the development of effective social protection policies and programmes in many of the evaluation reports reviewed. Platforms for national and regional dialogue were highlighted as a good practice, as they allowed members to build consensus and combine their efforts and resources to achieve improved social security coverage.

▶ The ILO Assessment-based National Dialogue (ABND) process, which involves a participatory approach, assesses national gaps in coverage, needs and priorities, and whether the social protection floor (SPF) is a reality for the whole population of a country and how it can be extended to all members of society, was a positive component of different projects, and was found to be a useful tool in promoting tripartism.

▶ ILO products provided useful insights into various instruments, practices, norms and laws with the potential to contribute to the extension of social protection, including floors in project countries as well as beyond. This knowledge, along with technical assistance, led to a range of policy developments and implementation measures, as well as the promotion and application of international labour standards.

▶ Projects aiming to build/extend social protection, including floors, and to promote decent work and the formalization of the informal economy, had an inherent focus on the promotion of equal opportunities, and addressed men and women equally by advocating universal and rights-based systems of social protection. However, there were only a few projects that specifically incorporated gender issues and gender-mainstreaming components in their design and implementation.

▶ The ILO effectively collaborated with a range of institutional partners to implement its projects on social protection. In some instances, ILO was able to establish its sphere of influence by creating strong collaborative relationships for change in tripartite partners' policy and practice in target countries, and strategically targeted its partnership arrangements. The focus upon existing partnerships enabled projects to have maximum influence in a short period of time through focused technical assistance and support for pilot activities implemented by these partners.

▶ For whom?

Most evaluation reports made a distinction between the target groups and the expected final beneficiaries of social protection-related interventions. In the majority of cases, target groups were policy-makers responsible for the preparation and implementation of strategies to extend social security coverage. They also included administrators and technical staff responsible for the preparation, application, and monitoring of social security and social protection schemes, and social partners involved in social security issues, trade unions, in particular, as well as relevant civil society organizations. In a number of projects, specific groups were targeted as final beneficiaries including migrant workers and their families, garment workers, lower income households, unemployed and vulnerable groups, including the working poor, women, and people living in rural areas.

▶ Why?

Evaluation reports identified a number of internal and external factors leading to positive outcomes in terms of establishing and extending social protection.

Success factors included:

- ▶ **Adaptability to the local context**, so that interventions took into account national realities and specificities, and responded to the specific needs of beneficiaries, rather than taking a one-size-fits-all approach.
- ▶ **Realistic planning** regarding the time and pace of implementation of interventions on the ground, and a **flexible approach** to the design and execution of project activities and strategies.
- ▶ Adopting a **participatory approach** by involving local actors, governments, institutions, workers' and employers' organizations, as well as beneficiaries, at all stages of design and implementation. This enabled the identification of the most relevant actions and strategies in response to emerging problems or changes, created a sense of ownership, held actors accountable, and promoted a favourable environment to ensure the sustainability of projects' results.
- ▶ **ILO's tripartite approach added value to the process and improved ownership** when planning and implementing interventions related to social protection.
- ▶ The effective use of **project management tools** was highlighted as an important good practice, as was the use of monitoring and accountability mechanisms. Having an experienced coordination team that was able to adapt to local circumstances and create meaningful relationships with different actors was also a success factor.
- ▶ **A local ILO presence was found to be a significant positive factor** for the development of alliances, nationally and internationally. Regular contact with partners and local authorities, fostered trust, and participation in relevant discussions helped to develop collaborative networks and consolidated project results.
- ▶ **Synergy and cooperation between the projects under review and other projects** contributed to effectiveness, efficiency, and to the sustainability of outcomes.
- ▶ **ILO's relationships with partners on the ground and its specialized technical knowledge and expertise were important elements** that led to its strategic advantage when promoting the extension of social protection, and policy development in particular.
- ▶ **ILO's positive reputation in the field of social protection and labour issues helped projects gather support for their implementation**.
- ▶ **Political will and stakeholder ownership are key** to lasting results.

A number of challenges to the successful promotion and extension of social protection were identified in the evaluation reports. In many cases, obstacles faced during the implementation of a project came from various sources, both internal and external; the main ones are presented below:

▶ The **political context** had a direct impact on the possibility of progressing towards expected outputs and outcomes. There were many instances where planned activities were suspended temporarily or indefinitely due **to political instability** and **changing governance and management frameworks.**

▶ **The deteriorating economic situation** in certain countries.

▶ **Low commitment and capacities** of countries and actors' limited ownership of the projects' results and sustainability prospects.

▶ **Policy differences between countries and institutional challenges** were obstacles to the implementation and management of social protection initiatives

▶ **Inadequate project design**, **with overambitious objectives in terms of duration and scope, limited or no risk assessment, weak links between outputs and outcomes**, and **limited contextual analysis** were major weaknesses leading to failure of certain project components.

▶ **Insufficient attention was paid to gender equality**.

▶ **Lack of synergies and complementarities** within and between relevant projects led to missed opportunities for resource optimization and improved results.

▶ Obstacles also stemmed from **inadequate management processes, staffing and funding issues, leading to resource inefficiencies**.

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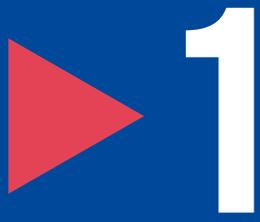
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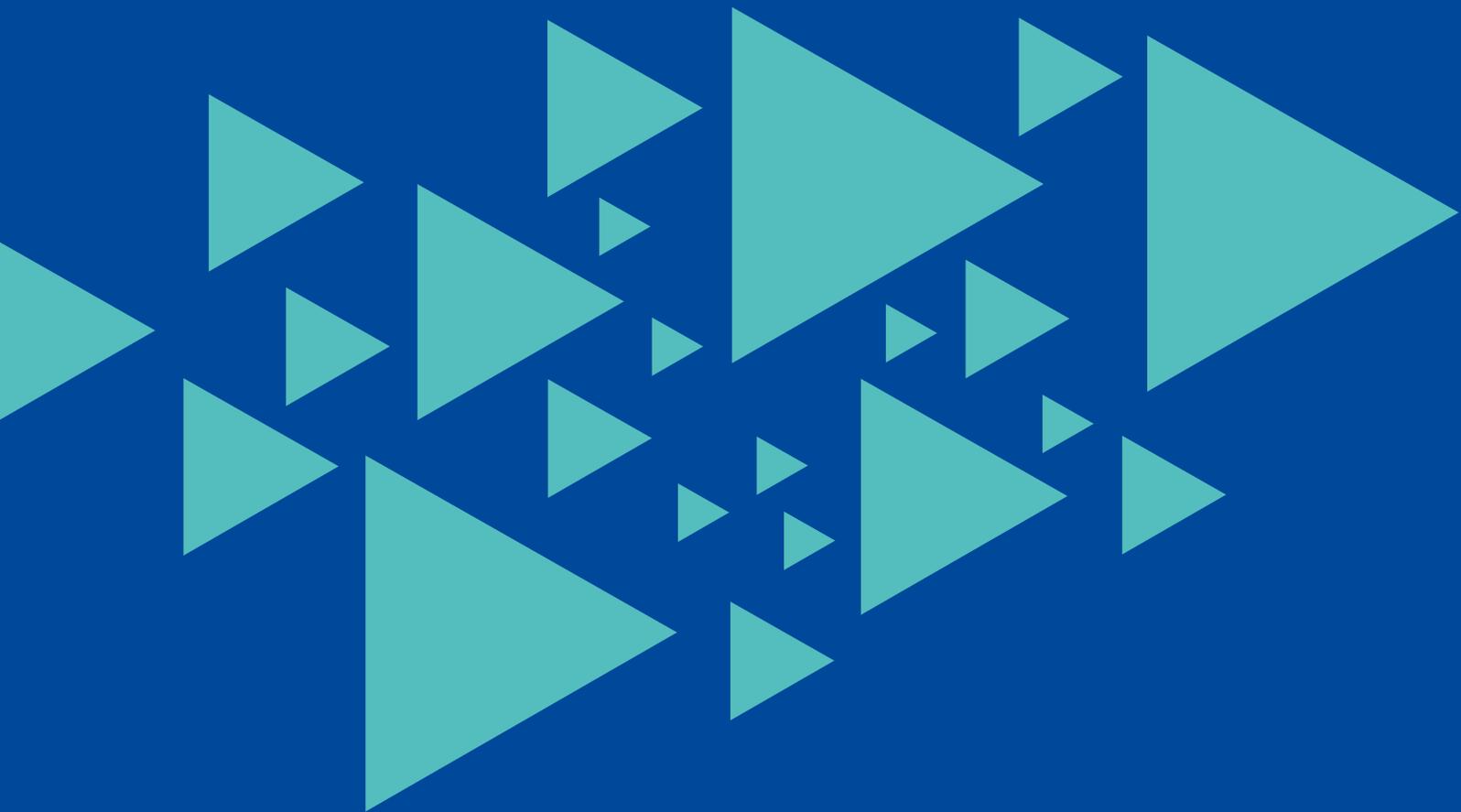
▶ 1.1 The ILO's work on social protection (social security)

The ILO's work on social protection over the last decade has focused on the establishment, development and maintenance of social protection systems across the world, including contributory social insurance and non-contributory (mostly tax-financed) social assistance. Guided by ILO's social security standards, it has promoted the establishment and maintenance of social protection floors (SPFs) as a fundamental element of national social security systems, and pursued strategies for the extension of social security that progressively ensure higher levels of social security to as many people as possible.[1] Together, the two dimensions aim to assist member States to build and maintain comprehensive and adequate social security systems that are coherent with national policy objectives. The key means of delivering this assistance, inter alia, includes: developing a knowledge and information base on the coverage and performance of social security systems; assisting member States in developing policies that could improve social security coverage; and assisting them to improve and implement legal social protection frameworks, strengthen technical and financial management of social security in accordance with International Labour Standards (ILS), and build institutional capacities for governments and social partners.

Ensuring the participation and representation of all stakeholders, and especially tripartite partners in the design, implementation and monitoring of social protection has been a key priority. Strengthening and building partnerships both at global and national levels has also been a focus of the strategy to ensure the political commitment at all levels and joint delivery of intervention to extend social protection. Promoting gender equality, inclusion and tripartism are underlying principles to be followed at all levels and through all means of assistance.

The extension of social protection was identified as one of the four pillars of the ILO's Decent Work Agenda (DWA), which was endorsed during the International Labour Conference (ILC) in 1999, with the aim to deliver sustainable development through an integrated approach with "Promoting jobs", "Guaranteeing rights at work" and "Promoting social dialogue". This was reaffirmed in the Declaration on Social Justice for a Fair Globalization adopted in 2008 by the ILC. The Strategic Policy Framework (SPF) 2010–2015 identified "social protection" as aiming to "Enhance the coverage and effectiveness of social protection for all'. Of the 19 outcomes defined under the SPF 2010–2015, five outcomes fell under the strategic objective (Outcome 4: Social Security; Outcome 5: Working Conditions; Outcome 6: Occupational Safety and Health; Outcome 7: Labour Migration; Outcome 8: HIV/AIDS).

Outcome 4 in particular mandated the ILO to work with its constituents and member States so that "More people have access to better managed and more gender-equitable social security benefits".

The indicators under this outcome were:

▶ Indicator 4.1: Number of member States that, with ILO support, improve the knowledge and information base on the coverage and performance of their social security system.

▶ Indicator 4.2: Number of member States that, with ILO support, develop policies improving social security coverage, notably of excluded groups.

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[1] *Building social protection social systems: International standards and human rights instruments*, ILO, 2019, www.social-protection.org/gimi/gess/RessourcePDF.action?ressource.ressourceId=54434 [accessed 24 Jan. 2020].

▶ Indicator 4.3: Number of member States that, with ILO support, improve the legal framework, general and financial management and/or tripartite governance of social security in line with International Labour Standards.

Under the Transitional Strategic Plan 2016–17, social protection was positioned as "Outcome 3: Creating and extending social protection floors" with the Outcome statement: "Member States implement the Social Protection Floors Recommendation, 2012 (No. 202), and extend social protection systems as a means to accelerate poverty reduction, inclusive growth and social justice." The indicators were:

▶ Indicator 3.1: Number of member States that have improved their social protection policies and financing strategies, the governance of social protection schemes or the coordination of social protection

▶ Indicator 3.2: Member States that have enhanced their knowledge base, analytical capacity, financial management, statistics or means of information dissemination for the delivery of the social protection

▶ Indicator 3.3: Member States that have set up new programmes or improved the existing ones that contribute to extending social protection coverage or improving benefit adequacy.

The Outcome continues under ILO Programme and Budget 2018–19 as "Outcome 3: Creating and extending social protection floors and indicators", with the Outcome statement: "Member States extend social protection and improve the management and sustainability of social protection systems, including social protection floors, in order to prevent and reduce poverty and achieve inclusive growth and social justice". The indicators were:

▶ Indicator 3.1: Number of member States that have adopted new or improved national social protection strategies, policies or legal frameworks to extend coverage or enhance benefit adequacy.

▶ Indicator 3.2: Number of member States that have improved their institutional policies or regulatory frameworks to strengthen governance, financial management or sustainability for the delivery of social protection.

▶ Indicator 3.3: Number of member States in which constituents have enhanced their knowledge and capacity to design, manage or monitor social protection systems.

In 2016, the ILO launched a Global Flagship Programme, "Building Social Protection Floors for All," which aims to make SPFs a national reality in 21 target countries. At the country level, the programme carries out assessments of social protection situations and provides recommendations to build nationally-defined SPFs, supports the design of new schemes or reforms of existing schemes, supports their implementation and improves the operations of social protection systems. A global campaign supports the development and dissemination of cross-country knowledge to inform, train, and convince decision-makers of the importance of implementing social protection systems and developing partnerships to maximize the positive impacts.

The ILO's normative framework today includes 16 up-to-date social security standards. A landmark in international social security was the ILC's adoption of the Social Security (Minimum Standards) Convention, 1952 (No. 102). This Convention has guided the development of social protection systems by defining the nine branches that form the core of social security and establishing, for each branch, a minimum level of protection in terms of the population covered and the benefits guaranteed, together with core financing, organizational and management principles.

The most recently adopted standard, the Social Protection Floors Recommendation, 2012 (No. 202), reflects the global commitment of all ILO member States to make the right to social security a reality for all by guaranteeing at least a basic level of social security to all in the form of a nationally defined SPF, and to ensure a progressively wider scope and higher levels of protection. Social protection floors typically include, but are not limited to, cash transfers for children, maternity benefits, disability pensions, support for those without jobs, old-age pensions and access to essential health care.[2]

Regarding the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), the ILO has been instrumental in positioning social protection as one of the means for ending poverty (SDG 1. No Poverty; Target 1.3 Implement nationally appropriate social protection systems and measures for all, including floors, and by 2030 achieve substantial coverage of the poor and the vulnerable). Since 2017, ILO has been the custodian of SDG 1.3. Social protection is also reflected in several other SDG targets, including 3.8, 5.4, 5.8, 8.5 and 10.4.[3] It also co-chairs with the World Bank the Global Partnership for Universal Social Protection to Achieve the Sustainable Development Goal (USP 2030), co-leads with the World Bank the Social Protection Inter-agency Cooperation Board (SPIAC-B), and co-leads with the WHO the UN Social Protection Floor Initiative (SPF-I).

▶ 1.2 Purpose and scope of the synthesis review

In the context of the Recurrent Discussion on Social Protection (Social Security), scheduled for the 109th session of the ILC, the ILO Evaluation Office (EVAL) is providing a synthesis report that reviews and collates the lessons learned from the evaluation of ILO interventions in social protection (social security) from 2012 to 2018. The objective of this synthesis review is to contribute to organizational learning, provide guidance to ILO constituents on future work related to social protection (social security), and to strengthen the capacity of the Office to make evidence-based decisions originating from the findings of evaluation reports. The review draws on lessons learned, good practices and results from selected evaluation reports to identify what works, for whom, and why, in the context of the ILO's work on social protection (social security).

The methodology used for the synthesis review is described in section 1.3, including the key questions addressed, the selection of reports, the approach to synthesizing the information, and the limitations encountered during the study. The subsequent sections present findings based on evaluation reports of social protection (social security) interventions within the defined timeframe.

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[2] ILO: *100 years of social protection: The road to universal social protection systems and floors: Volume I: 50 country cases* (Geneva, 2019).
[3] *World Protection Report 2017–19: Universal social protection to achieve the Sustainable Development Goals*, ILO, 2017, www.social-protection.org/gimi/gess/ShowWiki.action?id=594 [accessed 27 Jan. 2020].

▶ 1.3 Methodology

This synthesis review consists of a desk-based review of ILO evaluations and studies (both published and unpublished) related to social protection. It covers ILO projects and interventions focusing on social protection (social security), as well as those that have a significant component related to the area under review. To address the risk of bias and ensure quality control, the methods used in this review are presented in an explicit, transparent and reproducible manner.[4]

1.3.1 Key questions to be addressed

This synthesis review aims to answer the following questions:[5]

Based on evaluations of the ILO's efforts to support social protection (social security) between 2012 and 2018:

1) What is being done? (What interventions do we observe?)

2) What works? Or what doesn't work? (What aspects of interventions are particularly effective?)

3) For whom? (Who are the beneficiaries of these interventions?)

4) Why? (What are identified success factors and challenges?)

1.3.2 Selection of reports

As part of the *Independent high-level evaluation (HLE) of the ILO's strategy and actions for creating and extending social protection floors (2012–2017)*, a synthesis review of 24 evaluation reports[6] for the period 2012–2016 was undertaken by EVAL in 2017. The findings from the synthesis review were used as input to the HLE, and the reports identified for the 2017 synthesis review were used as inputs for the current synthesis review.

In addition, 16 reports[7] covering the period 2017–18 were identified by EVAL using a keyword[8] search in i-Eval Discovery, and were included in the short-list, as EVAL considered they were relevant for the synthesis review. This resulted in 40 independent, internal, final and mid-term evaluation reports.

A matrix was then prepared for this review, covering these reports, and providing information on: type, timing and nature of the evaluation; regional coverage; countries covered; thematic coverage; funding source; and year of evaluation completion. A summary of the type, timing and regional coverage of the reports is provided in figure 1.

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[4] This follows the recommendation from the *Campbell systematic reviews: Policies and guidelines, version 1.4.* (Oslo, Campbell Collaboration, Campbell Policies and Guidelines Series No. 1, 2019).

[5] When sufficient evidence was available, a set of key sub-questions also guided the review and is available in Annex 2. The sub-questions were developed based on the TOR as well as areas of inquiry addressed in previous systematic reviews.

[6] Twenty-two Independent evaluation reports, including seven joint programme evaluations, and two out of 10 potential internal evaluations identified by EVAL were used in the 2017 synthesis review. The two internal evaluation reports were included because they were found to be comprehensive, and had been conducted by external consultants.

[7] These comprised 12 Independent evaluation reports, including one joint programme evaluation and four internal evaluation reports.

[8] The key words used were: social protection, social security and social exclusion.

▶ **Figure 1. Number of short-listed evaluation reports by type, timing and region**

Legend:
- Mid-term internal
- Final internal
- Mid-term independent
- Final independent
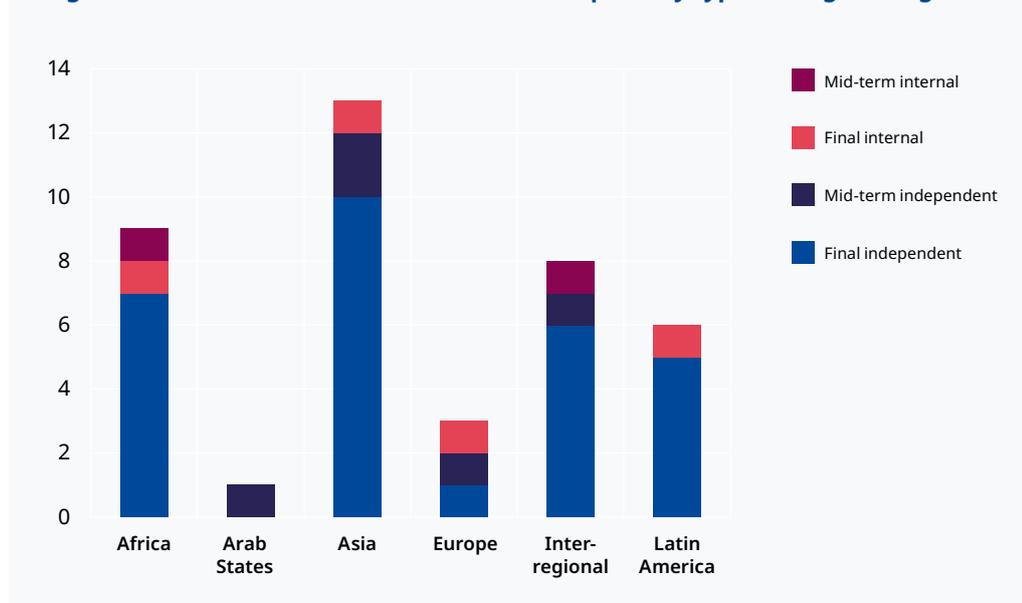
1.3.3 Search strategy and protocol for the review – final selection of reports

Criteria related to content for the inclusion/exclusion of reports to be considered for review are based on the questions specified above, as well as guidance provided by EVAL, and are summarized in figure 2.

Different elements were taken into account in the selection of reports, in line with the TOR specifications:

Type of document: Both mid-term and final internal and independent evaluation reports of ILO interventions were considered. When both mid-term and final evaluation reports existed for the same project, only the latter were included in the final list as they are more likely to have lessons that could be useful for the purpose of this review, and the former were sometimes used to complement the information in the final evaluation reports. High-level evaluations were used to supplement findings from the project-level evaluations.

Time-period: Evaluation reports of interventions that took place between 2012 and 2018.

Area of focus/thematic scope: Reports related to interventions associated with the establishment, development and maintenance of social protection systems (social security), either directly or as significant components of other key thematic areas, as defined by EVAL and the ILO.

Quality of the evaluation reports: In order to achieve robust and reliable results, the quality of the evaluation reports was assessed on the basis of their being comprehensive, complete, evidence-based and providing information relevant to the questions addressed in this synthesis review. Reports not providing relevant/sufficient information regarding work done to support social protection (social security) were excluded, as were reports without recommendations, lessons learned or emerging good practices (as applicable).

▶ **Figure 2. Final inclusion and exclusion criteria – content**

Inclusion	Possible inclusion or exclusion	Exclusion
▶ The establishment, development and maintenance of social protection systems is a stated objective. ▶ Measures towards the establishment, development and maintenance of social protection systems are not stated objectives but are explicitly described in the project strategy. ▶ The establishment or extension of social protection systems is mentioned as one of the direct or indirect achievements. ▶ The report provides relevant and adequate information on aspects related to the establishment, development, maintenance or extension of social protection systems.	▶ The introduction of social protection/extension of social security is a stated objective. ▶ The report provides some relevant information on aspects related to the introduction of social protection systems/ extension of social security. ▶ The report is based on a joint evaluation and there is some attribution to the ILO's work.	▶ The establishment, development and maintenance of social protection systems was not addressed in the project. ▶ The report does not provide relevant/sufficient information on aspects related to social. protection/ social security systems. ▶ The report does not cover the relevant time-period.

▶ **Figure 3. Number of evaluation reports in the final selection by type, timing and region**

Legend: Mid-term internal, Final internal, Mid-term independent, Final independent
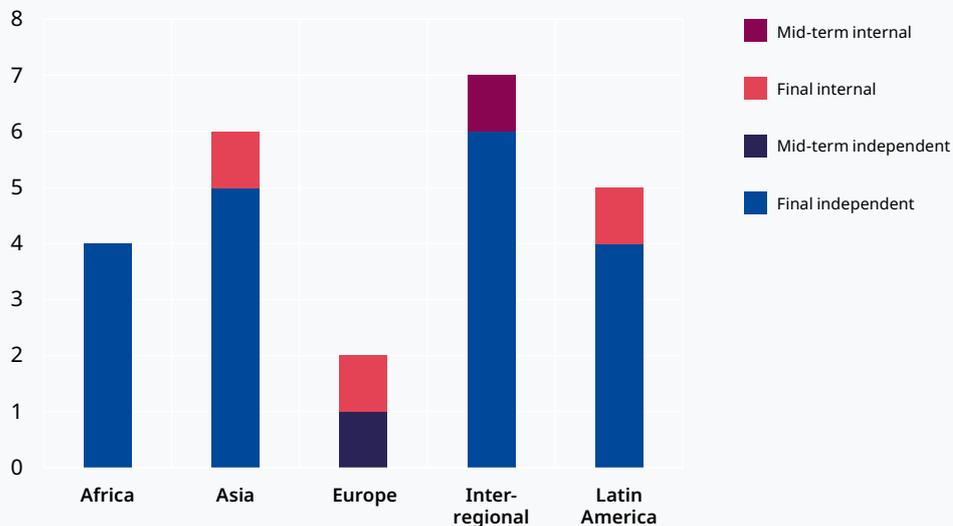
Language: Reports in the ILO's three official languages of English, French and Spanish, as well as reports in Portuguese were considered for review.

The final selection of reports was purposive, to include as far as possible projects from all regions, as well as global/interregional projects, irrespective of the language of the report. Projects representing different areas of focus/thematic scope were also included.

The final selection included 24 reports including a HLE and two mid-term evaluations of projects that also had final evaluation reports in the final selection. These three reports were used to complement the information provided in the final evaluation reports, presented in figure 3.

1.3.4 Collation of findings

The appraisal of the reports in the final list was carried out systematically. Information covering the key findings of the evaluation reports, recommendations, lessons learned and emerging good practices related to work on social protection (social security) were extracted from the reports and presented in a matrix. A qualitative thematic synthesis was conducted and, as far as possible, based on the questions described in the previous section, the topic areas covered, the type of interventions, and geographical area.

▶ 1.4 Limitations

The main constraint during this synthesis review related to the availability of sufficient, good quality evidence in the reports, especially lessons learned and good practices, which limited the depth at which the questions and sub-questions could be addressed. When lessons learned and good practices were present, they often addressed programmatic and management issues that were not specific to projects related to social protection (social security), rather than substantive content. As such, this review does not examine every aspect of the questions in the TOR, but rather highlights a number of recurrent or key issues that emerged from the evaluative evidence, and that can contribute to the Recurrent Discussion on Social Protection (Social Security) 2020.

It was particularly difficult to obtain specific evaluative evidence regarding the contribution of social protection/social security to relevant priorities of the 2030 Agenda (People, Peace, Prosperity, Planet, Partnerships), SDG goals, SDG targets and indicators, as well as to the SDG call of "leaving no one behind". This could be attributed to limitations in the monitoring and reporting systems. As such, these topics have very limited to no coverage in this synthesis review.

Other limitations were the under-representation of Regional Office for Arab States (ROAS) in the initial database, and non-representation in the final database. There were also challenges in attribution in joint programmes.

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What is being done?
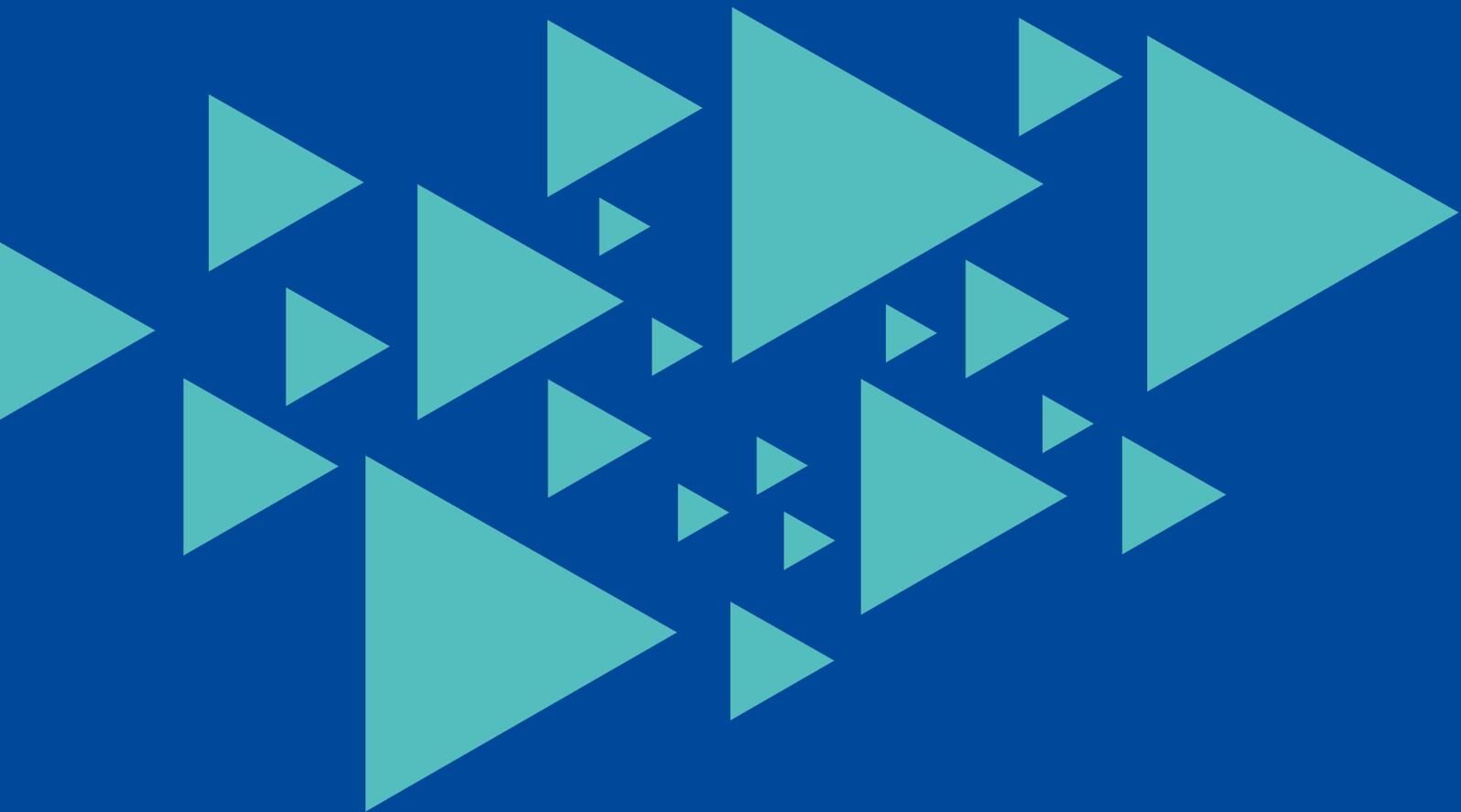
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Social protection (social security) interventions: What works and why?
2. What is being done?

The initiatives evaluated by the reports considered for this synthesis review covered a range of areas related to social protection and the establishment and extension of social security schemes, including, inter alia, unemployment protection, social protection for migrant workers and their families, the extension of social protection coverage to those in the informal economy, the establishment of pension systems, and maternity protection. Highlights of the results achieved by the projects are presented below:

▶ **Drafting, publication and dissemination of legal and technical studies and diagnostic studies** on topics including: the introduction of voluntary insurance schemes for workers abroad and their families; extension of social security to migrant workers and their families through community-based approaches; the expansion of social protection services to informal workers social security provisions in temporary or circular labour migration programs; actuarial studies in public and private sectors on health insurance and on pension scheme reform; financial planning and financial assessments, and costing of policy options.

▶ **Collection of data and identification of relevant indicators, to allow constituents to make evidence-based decisions during policy discussions**, including the Assessment Based National Dialogue (ABND), social protection statistical indicators, indicators related to the informal economy, and the development of integrated information management systems.

▶ **Formulation and implementation of national- and regional-level action plans, strategies and roadmaps through bipartite and tripartite social dialogue**, with areas of focus ranging from integrated approaches to social protection and employment; the extension of coverage to the public sector, with benefits offered to pregnant women, health insurance, work accident compensation, survivor pensions, and health checks and treatments; strategies to extend social protection to migrant workers and to increase old-age pension coverage for vulnerable groups (including herders, self-employed and informal economy workers); a subregional roadmap for the inclusion of social security concerns in subregional integration processes; discussions of inclusion of minimum benefits packages; the establishment of national pension funds and national health insurance schemes; and the development of single registry systems and one-stop-shops/single-window services.

▶ **Adoption of policy and regulatory frameworks at national and regional levels as well as progress towards, and the ratification of ILO conventions:** There were campaigns for the ratification and implementation of ILO Social Security (Minimum Standards) Convention, 1952 (No. 102), Domestic Workers Convention, 2011 (No. 189) and Social Protection Floors Recommendation, 2012 (No. 202), inter alia. Policies were formulated and implemented for access to social security and social protection and extension to the informal sector; and tripartite constituents were encouraged to contribute to the debates on Recommendation No. 202, and supported to consolidate policies and strategies to progress towards its adoption.

▶ **Development/adaptation of capacity-building tools, including training curricula and guidelines and organization of workshops and trainings**: These took the form of training sessions in collaboration with the International Training Centre of the ILO (ITC/ILO); regional workshops; South-South cooperation and knowledge-transfer; training curricula on the implementation of national social protection floors, and disability training, and on the rights of workers living with HIV/AIDS, including in the informal sector, and of migrant workers.

▶ Other important results underlined in the reports included the **promotion of social dialogue** and the **capacity building of trade unions at the regional level**, and **changing of behaviours and practices** due to increased awareness and understanding of key issues.

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While there were variations in the level and extent to which social protection measures could be implemented, depending on specific country conditions, and internal and external factors, the majority of ILO interventions were decisive in bringing about progress towards the establishment of social protection measures.

The interregional projects aimed to help ILO constituents to: strengthen their social protection systems; diagnose national social protection and the employment situation in selected countries; prepare draft national action plans based on the integrated social protection scheme; extend social protection systems; and to improve knowledge on access and the effects of social protection schemes for domestic workers, workers in the informal economy, and people living with HIV/AIDS (PLHIV) households.

In Latin America, the evaluation reports covered regional/subregional projects, focusing on: building the capacity of trade unions to promote social security; the extension of social protection and the promotion of SPFs in the Andean subregion, and on measures to extend social security and social protection to informal economy workers.

In Europe, work in Kyrgyzstan and Tajikistan aimed to improve the capacity of constituents to extend national social protection systems, using the ABND approach as a tool.

In Africa, work was carried out on: the extension of social security to African migrant workers and their families; the establishment of national pension funds and national social protection policies; the promotion of policies and innovative strategies for the implementation of SPF; maternity insurance and protection; HIV/AIDS; financial planning and financial assessments; costing of policy options; integrated management and information systems (MIS); the development of a single registry system; and South-South exchanges.

In Asia, projects addressed the incorporation of unemployment insurance schemes in different Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN) countries, to support: unemployed and underemployed persons; the development and promotion of income security and employability measures for vulnerable groups in ASEAN, and Mongolia in particular; the promotion of rights and responsibilities in Cambodian workers' and employers' organizations, with a particular focus on access to social protection for garment workers, who are predominantly female; the mapping of social protection institutions to strengthen their capacity to deliver quality health care and social protection services; and in the Lao People's Democratic Republic, the establishment of the National Health Insurance Scheme and the extension of coverage to both the formal and informal economy.

3

What works?
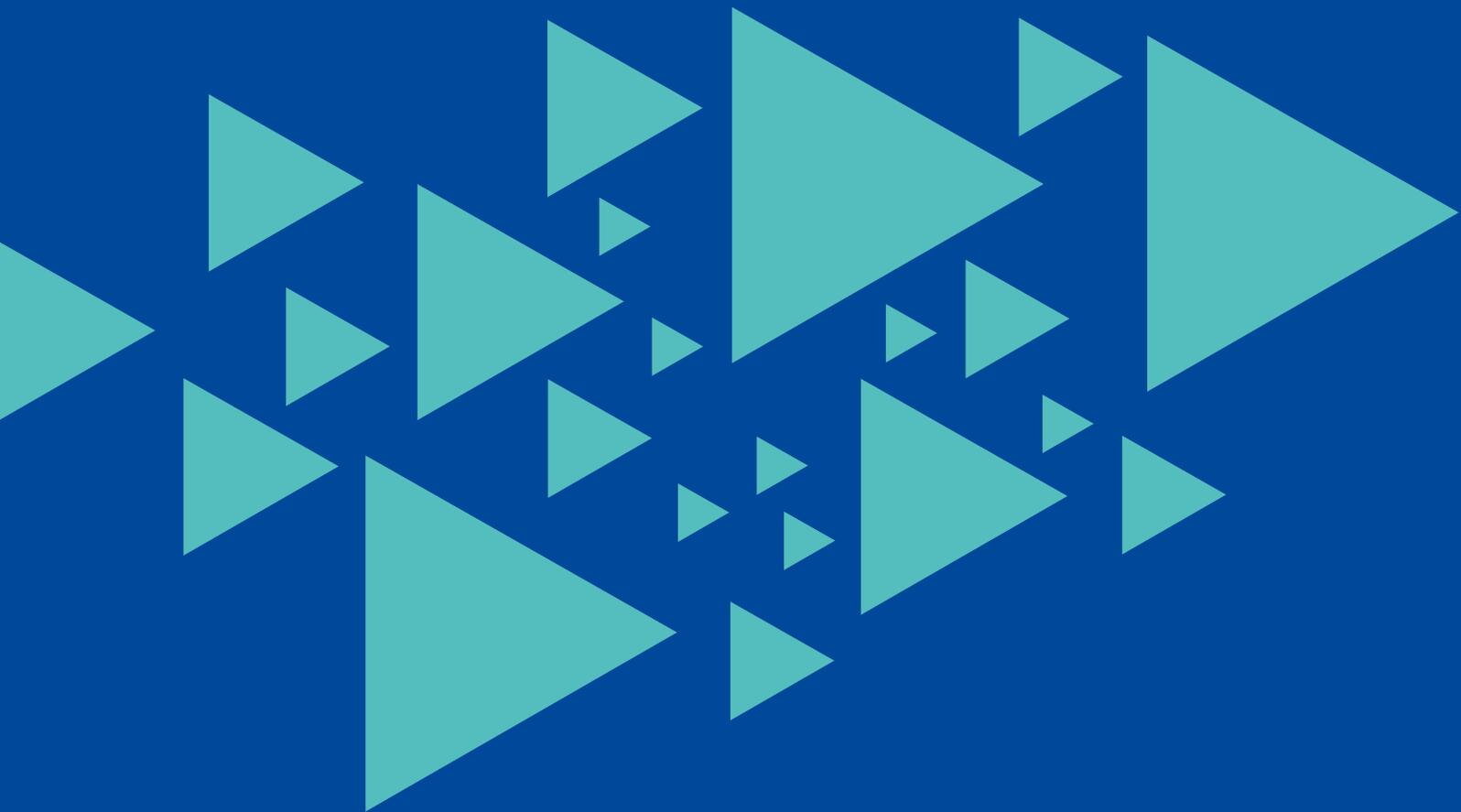
In order to better understand the optimal conditions for the development and extension of social protection (social security), this section focuses on areas of ILO interventions that were particularly successful, based on evaluative evidence from the reports reviewed, drawing in particular from lessons learned and good practices.

Significant contributions were made by the projects to advance social protection, using a range of approaches, including: capacity-building at national, regional and international levels; the provision of technical assistance for policy development and preparation for policy reform; the commissioning and dissemination of studies and knowledge products; and the promotion of South-South exchanges, which also led to the building or strengthening of enabling environments. This was in line with Recommendation No. 202, which provides guidance to member States to "implement social protection floors within strategies for the extension of social security that progressively ensure higher levels of social security to as many people as possible" and was put into practice in various countries and regions, especially those that were part of the ILO Social Protection Floors Flagship Initiative.

▶ 3.1 Projects that are strategically relevant and respond to national/regional needs

ILO initiatives that were a direct response to stakeholder demands and were in line with Decent Work Country Programme (DWCP) and other strategic priorities were often more successful than those where there was limited constituent interest in social protection issues.

For instance, the SPF approach was promoted in the ASEAN member countries, with a particular focus on unemployment insurance schemes in Viet Nam (E19). The project contributed to the achievement of the DWCP outcomes, the National Development Framework and UN development assistance framework (UNDAF) in Viet Nam. Evaluative evidence showed that this influenced the ASEAN Declaration on Strengthening Social Protection, and helped to make key policy-makers aware of the ILO's principles on social protection, which are clearly reflected in the Declaration.

In response to the needs of ILO constituents in four African countries (Malawi, Mozambique, Senegal and Zambia), Outcome 4 on Social security was systematically addressed in an ILO Regular Budget Supplementary Account (RBSA)-funded project, where the project objectives were linked to the ILO SPF, the ILO Programme & Budget 2012–2013, the Decent Work Agenda for Africa (DWAA), and DWCPs (E21). Significant contributions were made to advance social protection in all four countries, including the National Social Protection Policy, which was a key output in Ethiopia.

The evaluation of another project promoting national protection floors in Southern Africa (Malawi, Mozambique and Zambia) also found that it was fully coherent with the relevant DWCPs and that social protection systems represented a key component of all three target countries' national development plans (E24).

The importance of placing specific topics on the agenda and ensuring that objectives were relevant to country contexts also contributed to the effectiveness of the projects. For example, countries in a multi-country programme faced different realities: Cambodia focused on social protection coverage, as it was in the process of discussing a National Social Protection Policy. In Burkina Faso, no social protection policy existed but a National Employment Policy was in

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place, so the focus was on social security wages. Finally, in Honduras, there were no formal employment or social protection policies despite the existence of long-established social institutions, and efforts concentrated on Decent Work. The project's integrated approach led to a shift in the way governments and social partners conceived the design of employment and social protection policies, and this was an opportunity to try this new vision in three different national contexts (E12).

The relevance of the ILO's strategy on SPFs was demonstrated at both country and regional levels in Latin America. For instance, interventions promoting SPFs in the Andean subregion were found to respond to concrete demands from constituents, and project objectives were directly linked to their national priorities. Constituents were also involved in the definition and validation of the design of interventions promoting SPFs, and in the different stages of implementation, thus ensuring that their concerns were addressed (E20).

▶ 3.2 Projects that combine inclusive and targeted capacity building, knowledge development, and technical advisory services

The review of evaluation reports revealed that the ILO had a broad toolbox of capacity-building activities related to social protection and social security, and provided effective platforms for sharing experiences and good practices. Impact was greatest when interventions took into account local needs, capacities and contexts, and results were anchored in national institutions. Capacity building was sometimes used as an entry-point and strategy for maintaining relationships with countries where conditions for the implementation of projects were unfavourable. Knowledge products and trainings developed through ILO assistance were well regarded in a large majority of cases, and often led to improved prospects for sustainability and impact.

A range of activities was implemented to assist ILO stakeholders in making progress towards social protection (social security) outcomes. These included: trainings, the collation of experiences and good practices; the commissioning of studies on specific themes; the production of statistics; the development of national, regional and international partnerships; the publication, translation and dissemination of documents in local languages; and the implementation of workshops for sharing experiences. Topics covered included, but were not limited to: the foundations of social protection and the ILO's normative body in the field of social security; links between social insurance and the non-contributory scheme; creating fiscal space for the extension of social protection; and the extension of social insurance to cover independent or workers in the informal economy, among others. Another important area of work was awareness raising.

In Southern Africa, an inclusive approach to capacity building was highlighted as a strength in a project aiming to build national social protection floors. Here, technical staff worked alongside government counterparts, thus building the capacity of the latter through on-the-job training and mentoring. The strategy of peer-to-peer learning and fostering exchanges of cross-regional experiences also proved to be very relevant. Overall, the project found a good

balance between the regional component and technical assistance at country level, which can be replicable in other regions and can be noted as a good practice (E24).

Capacity building was a critical component in complementing efforts to promote the integrated social protection and employment approach, and to improve the transfer of knowledge to key social participants. Evaluative evidence demonstrated that training activities generally responded well to local concerns and priorities in raising the awareness of national stakeholders about social protection and employment policies (E12).

In ASEAN countries, findings from a project on Training Needs Assessment on Unemployment Insurance supported by the ILO, helped shape a series of awareness-raising, knowledge-sharing and capacity-building workshops, so that activities were relevant to the needs of all participants (E19). These included expert meetings on social security and SPFs, seminars on unemployment insurance, income security measures and active labour market policies, round tables on the design of unemployment insurance, as well as technical workshops and training courses on the delivery of social protection floors.

In Latin America, ILO interventions were able to promote and strengthen a culture of social protection by taking an inclusive approach. In the Andean Region, capacities were successfully developed at national level and in the subregion to promote the development of social protection (inclusive of gender issues) and foster a culture of social security (E20). This inclusive approach was also noted as a good practice in Peru, and was shaped by the participatory creation of the Technical Roundtable on Social Security Culture, through which a multisectoral strategy and a plan for its implementation in the regions were developed, with the participation of the Regional Councils of Labour and Employment Promotion (E29). Culturally adapted communication and pedagogical materials were also drawn up to reach out to different sectors of the population.

Efforts to change mindsets led to potential beneficiaries standing up for their rights. For instance, in Paraguay, there was an increase in the number of domestic workers registering for social protection as a result of a campaign that encouraged them to register with their children and dependent family members for social security, as well as those who could benefit from social protection through them (E13).

Also in Latin America, training and awareness-raising activities on issues related to social security and occupational health and safety were used to build the capacity of members in trade union centres in the various countries involved, as well as at the Regional Trade Union Confederation of the Americas. The aim was to ensure that they had sufficient autonomy and independence to progressively take over project management responsibilities. This led to the creation of Trade Union Technical Teams, specialized in social security issues, who were subsequently able to provide support on social protection, and participate in debates on these issues. This ensured that their position would be taken into account when authorities and institutions at national and local levels debated and led reforms on or expanded coverage of social security. The involvement of different national counterparts in social security topics led to substantive support of the political and institutional environment (E2).

The ILO developed sustainable national, subregional and regional capacities in the area of social protection in Africa through capacity-building workshops and awareness campaigns. Evaluative evidence showed that all of the results of the social protection outcomes were anchored in national institutions. Nevertheless, capacity gaps remained in various areas, such as actuarial science, pensions and social welfare management. In addition, while the tripartite constituents found that building national capacity through trainings and participation on national platforms and working groups on social protection were one of the best ways to achieve sustainability, it was difficult to involve many participants in the trainings at the ITC/ILO. Thus, only a limited number of constituents had access to them (E21).

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However, training programmes held in collaboration with ITC/ILO in Turin and in Dakar helped to strengthen the capacity of tripartite partners and social security policy-makers and administrators in particular, to plan, develop, and implement specific measures to extend social security coverage to migrant workers and their families based on international standards and good practices. This meant that workable social security agreements could be negotiated and introduced between and amongst African countries (E10).

3.2.1 Developing tools and adapting them to other parts of the world

A range of tools were developed, built upon or adapted to different contexts as a result of the projects under review, and different training initiatives were successfully organized in collaboration with ITC/ILO, to allow stakeholders to have access to relevant tools and share experiences in the area of social protection.

Pre-existing tools developed by ILO were used to implement a series of activities related to social protection and employment policies. Another important output was a report on unemployment insurance in 14 countries, which was expected to be translated into Spanish for use in Latin American countries. In addition, a training package and guidelines were developed for the design of unemployment protection schemes in the form of a Social Protection Floor Good Practice Guide on Unemployment Protection in the ASEAN member countries, and was noted as a good practice (E19). These outputs were tested in collaboration with ITC/ILO to ensure that they would be part of the core ILO training programme offered by the ITC, with the possibility of adapting them to other regions of the world. In Asia, several tools and methodologies in the area of social protection and rural capacity building were developed and were to be replicated for other target groups in the informal/private sectors.

Dissemination of good practices on topics related to social security and social protection, including through web-based platforms (E20, I-4), regional knowledge-sharing tools (E9, E34), or publications, such as the good practice guide on unemployment protection mentioned above (I-3, E19), led to positive outcomes in many instances.

> ▶ **Box 1. Southern African regional training modules**
>
> In Southern Africa, the development of regional training modules on the implementation of national SPFs was found to be the most significant output of a regional project, as stated in its evaluation: "The modules represent a ground-breaking and potentially transformational regional resource, that will further burnish the reputation of the project, ILO, Irish Aid, and the other partners involved in what has been a very collaborative process. (…) The project has been effective in building capacity and strengthening the enabling environment, but it now has the platform to do so on a much greater scale."
>
> Ownership of the training package development process was broadened to other UN agencies, including UNICEF, UNDP and FAO, so as to bring the initiative forward in a One-UN inter-agency spirit and increase opportunities for replication and institutionalization. The package also received some initial endorsement and support from the African Union.
>
> **Source:** Annex 1, E24.

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Several electronic platforms for resource-sharing and improved dissemination were developed by the projects under review. For instance, the Information Centre on Social Protection (CIPS) was developed to share knowledge and resources in the field of social protection in Portuguese-speaking countries (PALOP), which was a key output for the PALOP, and has contributed the establishment of a network of focal points in these countries (E9). The web page maintained by the ILO on the ABND in Tajikistan was noted as a good practice (I-4). Other examples included an online platform of good practices related to social security in Latin America (E20), and for migrant workers in Africa (E10), along with a database of African experts on social security for migrant workers. A web-based workspace was also organized for both internal and external use in a regional project on SPFs. The evaluation found that more was needed in this area and activities aimed at information dissemination were planned for a future phase of the project (E24). All of these platforms complemented the dissemination and sharing of experiences through the ILO's Social Protection Platform[1] discussed in the *Independent high-level evaluation (HLE) of ILO's strategy and actions for creating and extending social protection floors for all, 2012–2017* (E27).

▶ 3.3 Facilitating national and regional social dialogue

Social dialogue was noted as an essential element for the development of effective social protection policies and programmes in many of the evaluation reports reviewed. Platforms for national and regional dialogue allowed ILO member States to build consensus and join their efforts and resources to achieve improved social security coverage.

For instance, in Tajikistan, the platform for national dialogue was productive and was expected to play an important role in the expansion of national SPFs (I-4). Another noteworthy example was in ASEAN member countries, where tripartite discussions were held: "Significantly, through such platform, workers and employers were provided an opportunity to be involved in ASEAN discussions related to social protection, because such a tripartite forum does not exist in ASEAN" (E26). Evaluative evidence also showed that multi-stakeholder platforms and joint programmes in Botswana, Ethiopia and Senegal advocated for social protection and supported strategic partnerships and cooperation at national level (E21).

There were several other examples of the role and contribution of social dialogue in making social protection initiatives more effective. This included the Social Security Platform for the Americas (PLACOSS), which was defined and collectively constructed with ILO support. It was described as "the result of a democratic process of reflection, debate and consultation between different perspectives of the trade union movement and experts, in the search to contribute to the elaboration of a proposal for universal access to Social Security as a fundamental human right." (E2)

The development of institutional spaces for dialogue and tripartite consultations for the development of SPFs in Latin America was also noted as a good practice. The ILO's participation legitimized its interventions, and improved constituents' understanding of ILO's concepts

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[1] ILO Social Protection. Available online at: http://www.social-protection.org.

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and strategies when developing social protection policies, models and systems. Several of these platforms and their strategic use were highlighted in the regional thematic evaluation on social protection floors (E29), and are presented below.

▶ **Box 2. Strategic role of social dialogue**

In one of the projects reviewed, **Social dialogue was found to have played a more strategic role than training**, by placing the topic of social protection onto the policy agenda, while bringing together different groups that otherwise had different agendas. This was seen as a "critical intangible asset of the project: the capacity to make social dialogue a recurrent way to discuss about social protection and employment".

The National Steering Committees (NSCs)/Tripartite Commissions put in place through the project were found to be "Excellent bodies as mechanisms to promote social dialogue, to increase the level of information sharing and experiences among participants and to enhance project ownership."

Since countries could decide on the best way to organize their NSCs, this resulted in a better understanding of national conditions and how they should be managed, and the final format of the NSC was a result of the prevailing political conditions governing each country included by the project.

Source: Annex 1, E12.

▶ **Box 3. Latin America social protection and tripartism**

▶ Honduras' Economic and Social Council (CES), is an institutionalized platform for discussion and tripartite policy agreement (includes the peasant workers' unions, the employers, represented by the Honduran Council of Private Enterprises – COHEP – and the Government), where the ILO could promote recommendations in the context of reforms required for the implementation of the Social Protection Framework Law.

▶ The institutional platforms for dialogue and tripartite consultation (such as the Social Security Technical Commission of the National Council for Labour and Employment protection (CNTPE) in Peru, and the Departmental Subcommittees of Labour and Salary Policies in Colombia) for the construction and validation of policy recommendations and management capacity building of public policies on social protection and social security, focusing on SPFs.

▶ The Coordination Committee and Monitoring Group in Argentina is a platform created through tripartite agreement, with support from the ILO, to coordinate and monitor the development of the DWCP and the implementation of the ILO's social protection strategy, and to ensure that the Ministry of Labour Employment and Social Security Strategic Plan was aligned with the DWCP. It is considered that this platform was a determining factor in the achievement of social protection-related results during the period under review, including the extension of social protection to vulnerable groups, the signature of a binational agreement on migrant domestic workers with Paraguay, and the ratification of Convention No. 102 and Convention No. 189, among others.

Source: Annex 1, E29.

The ILO Assessment-Based National Dialogue (ABND), which assesses whether the SPF is a reality for the whole population of a country and how it can be extended to all members of society, was found to be a useful tool in promoting tripartism, and a positive component of different projects.

In particular, the ABND was used as a driving force to enhance participatory multi-stakeholder national dialogue to determine the main national priorities on social protection with mid- to long-term perspectives in Tajikistan. It was found to be "great for mobilizing and consolidating efforts of stakeholders and creating a productive dialogue around social protection issues" and the knowledge and experience gained from the process were presented as a potential good practice to be replicated in Central Asian countries, with similar socio-economic and institutional contexts (I-4). There were comparable findings in Kyrgyzstan where the ABND process was tested for the first time in the Commonwealth of Independent States (CIS) region, and dialogue and cooperation was strengthened between representatives of governments, and employers' and workers' organizations at national level to promote tripartism (E25).

In Mongolia, the ABND process was supported by the UN working group on social protection (currently chaired by the ILO) in which a number of other UN agencies, including UNICEF and WHO, participated actively (E26). In other parts of Asia, the ABND process, carried out in different countries and supported by the ILO, contributed to building capacity and awareness of social protection among tripartite partners (I-3).

▶ 3.4 Promotion of South-South exchanges and networks

Providing stakeholders with the opportunity to form networks and to visit other countries to learn about different approaches to social protection led to strengthened partnerships, knowledge exchange, and improved training experiences related to the development or extension of social protection.

In the Portuguese-speaking countries, a network of stakeholders involved in the area of social protection used and maintained a tool for sharing knowledge and resources (E9). Similarly, the Social Protection Network established for workers in the garment sector was an important output to help members share and learn from experiences of working in this sector through meetings and training opportunities conducted several times a year (E3).

In Southern Africa, the exchange of South-South experiences and knowledge related to the SPF was promoted, and good practices from the Mozambican experience relating to stakeholder participation, the promotion of social dialogue, and contact with the media were replicated in Zambia (E24). South-South exchanges between francophone African countries and the development of bilateral agreements between Algeria and West African countries to strengthen capacity building and training opportunities, supported the extension of social protection in the region and also led to a **change in cultural perceptions** of social protection (E32).

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▶ 3.5 Evidence-informed policy development and implementation

Policy relevance was associated with many of the studies and research outputs related to the legal framework of social protection and priority issues for different countries. ILO products provided useful insights on various instruments, practices, norms and laws that had the potential to contribute to the extension of SPFs in project countries and beyond.

This knowledge, along with the technical assistance described in the previous sections, led to a range of policy developments and implementation measures, as well as the promotion and application of international labour standards (ILS). The evaluation reports reviewed provided numerous examples of effective integration and promotion of ILS and relevant policy-making based on findings from studies and research.

One way to strengthen national and regional strategies for the extension of social security was by working with governments, social security institutes, and the social partners to: map out these strategies; consolidate information and knowledge; build the institutional capacities of relevant entities; implement operational measures to offer social security benefits to target groups; and strengthen national and regional mechanisms to prepare or reinforce compliance of social security conventions.

This approach was found to be very relevant to the policies and efforts of the countries in the East African Community (EAC) to enhance social security coverage in the context of the MIGSEC Project. The Project and the East and Central Africa Social Security Association collaborated in capacity building and preparing draft social security agreements in the EAC (E10). Evaluative evidence shows that action plans prepared and presented by participants during the training programmes and the articulation of national priorities during subsequent missions constituted useful guidelines for the implementation of the Project. This was due to it refocusing on countries that were in a better position to define their national strategy for the extension of social security to migrant workers and their families. The Southern African Development Community (SADC) also showed interest in learning from the MIGSEC experience to address social security coverage challenges amongst its member states.

Awareness raising at different levels was also a way to make progress towards policy outcomes. For instance, one project aimed to provide inputs to the process of integrated national social protection and employment formulation policy based on national consensus. It supported stakeholders in defining their national policies by working with them on the development of national plans, and promoting an international campaign and platform for awareness raising and exchanges of good practice in social protection and employment (E12).

In Asia, awareness-raising work in relation to the importance of social protection included the concept of the SPF, Recommendation No. 202, and promoted the ratification of Convention No. 102 (I2). Through work with both the ASEAN Secretariat and Member States in particular, and as part of the overall ILO work in the region, key policy-makers were made aware of the ILO principles on social protection, which were clearly reflected in the *ASEAN Declaration on Strengthening Social Protection* (E19). Debates were held in Malaysia on the possible introduction of an unemployment insurance scheme, and the Lao People's Democratic Republic, Myanmar, and the Philippines also considered various measures to support unemployed or under-employed persons. In Viet Nam, with ILO technical support, the Vietnamese Unemployment Insurance scheme was able to function effectively, with improved overall management and increased population coverage, revised and new legal guidelines for implementation, and with associated workshops and seminars. Work on the ratification of Convention No. 102 in

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Mongolia raised awareness of the Convention and clarified the legal position so that Mongolia was in a position to ratify the Convention (E26).

> ▶ **Box 4. Policy-level support for social protection strategies in Malawi, Mozambique and Zambia**
>
> A project implemented in Southern Africa provided technical support and lessons from the region in implementing basic social protection guarantees, successfully influencing the particular stage at which each country found itself in the broad direction of a SPF: "the review and design of the MNSSP [Malawi National Support Programme] in Malawi, the formulation of the next phase of the ENSSB [National Basic Social Security Strategy] in Mozambique, and the integrated framework and legislation for social protection in Zambia. All three manifest many more characteristics of a true social protection floor than their respective precursors, due to both policy work and direct legislation."
>
> The project was praised as having:
>
> > Significantly supported evidence-based national debate through the many studies it has undertaken on the extension of social protection coverage, particularly to the informal economy. In terms of issues, perhaps in all three countries the most significant have been the policy-level support of the reviews of social protection strategies. In terms of impact, the project can claim an impressive record in opening up the debates around social protection to a more integrated, more rights-based and more universal, approach, that is fully consistent with ILO's values and vision. The gradual establishment of social protection floors in the three countries is likely to bear fruit over the longer term in reducing poverty, building resilience and improving the quality of employment.
>
> **Source:** Annex 1, E24.

In Indonesia, as a result of research on the access and effects of social protection policies and programmes on workers in informal employment affected by HIV/AIDS, a Ministerial Decree was issued requiring inclusion of HIV in existing health insurance and social protection schemes (E14).

With ILO support, union action had a direct impact on national agendas in Latin America, such as the ratification of Convention No. 102 in countries such as Argentina, Brazil and Uruguay, and the ratification process in the Dominican Republic, Honduras and Paraguay (E2). In the Dominican Republic, for example, the ILO supported efforts to ratify Convention No. 189 (E28) through various means: a legislative harmonization study was conducted on Convention No. 189 and Dominican legislation; awareness-raising workshops were organized with domestic workers; promotional materials were prepared, and technical assistance and coaching was provided during the ratification process through meetings and training activities on the scope, principles and importance of the Convention for the country's social and labour development. When Convention No. 189 was ratified and the law was enacted, social security coverage in the country rose sharply.

The ABND was used in different countries to further work on social protection. For example, in Tajikistan, the Government and the Federation of Independent Trade Unions worked with the ILO to align the National Strategy for Reforming Social Protection System in Tajikistan with the SPFs approach (I-4). Specific trainings were organized for ABND Working Group members on Recommendation No. 202 and Convention No. 102. In Kyrgyzstan, the Resolution on National Priorities was adopted, identifying several priorities through the ABND, as tripartite constituents became aware of, and discussed the necessity to introduce basic social guarantees for the population, as per Recommendation No. 202 (E25).

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▶ 3.6 Including specific gender-mainstreaming components

Projects aiming to build or extend SPFs and promote decent work and the formalization of the informal economy inherently focused on the promotion of equal opportunities, and addressed men and women equally by advocating universal and rights-based systems of social protection. However, there were only a few projects that specifically incorporated gender issues and gender-mainstreaming components in their design and implementation. Several noteworthy approaches or outputs are listed below.

In particular, *Unemployment protection: A good practices guide and training package – experiences from ASEAN2* focused on women, and showcased different schemes specifically targeting women' entrepreneurship and inclusion in Malaysia and Pakistan, as a good practice for setting up active labour market policies. It also highlighted the good practice of NREGA (National Rural Employment Guarantee Act) schemes in India that includes child-care facilities so that women can also participate in the schemes (E26).

Gender mainstreaming was taken into account when designing and implementing the expansion of social protection and social security coverage in different Latin American countries (E29). Conditions for the development of specific social protection and social security policies aimed at working women were put in place, for instance, maternity protection (Peru), early childhood care for working women (El Salvador and Peru), and women domestic workers (Argentina and Colombia).

Several studies focusing on gender were carried out. For instance, studies in the countries of the Andean subregion on inclusive social protection and gender, and on the costs and benefits of maternity, work and income and how are they distributed. A subregional training workshop was held on SPFs and gender guarantees, all supported by the ILO Regional Gender Specialist. Furthermore, joint collaboration with UN Women in Peru led to a triptych on gender, decent work and SDGs (E20).

There were also noteworthy sector policies drawn up in Latin America, with the active participation of women, focusing on domestic work, with several countries ratifying Convention No. 189. In Argentina, a domestic work registry was established introducing an employment card and Law No. 26844, which created a Special Labour Contracting System for domestic workers in private homes as well as partial social security coverage. Other legislation adopted was Law 26476, which provides facilities and reductions to employers paying social security contributions. ILO Recommendation No. 202 was ratified. Colombia implemented an insurance programme with a subsidized component for part-time and multi-employer workers (E28).

In Southern Africa, ILO interventions on building national SPFs promoted discussions, and used ILO conventions and gender analysis to advocate for solutions that support gender equality. This included: taking an inclusive approach to maternity insurance contributions; strengthening access to essential health-care services (including maternal care), and their consideration within comprehensive SPF strategies in Zambia; paying attention to developing forms of social care support through a combination of coordinated nutrition, health and social support services in rural areas in Mozambique; and conducting gender-sensitive analyses in the context of social protection assessments in Malawi (E24).

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[2] Available at: https://www.ilo.org/wcmsp5/groups/public/---asia/---ro-bangkok/documents/publication/wcms_571465.pdf

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The network of women workers' trade unions in Central Asian countries was supported through workshops to strengthen the capacity of workers' organizations to apply the Workers with Family Responsibilities Convention, 1981 (No. 156) and Maternity Protection Convention, 2000 (No. 183) in relation to gender aspects of social protection, the reconciliation of family and employment responsibilities, and trainings on decent employment rights of women and the promotion of equal opportunities (E25). Gender focal points were established in the main trade union confederations in Cambodia.

Maternity protection issues were integrated into the ABND in Kyrgyzstan, and several technical trainings were organized on the Maternity Protection Convention, 2000 (No. 183) and implementation of training on "Maternity protection and Gender mainstreaming in Social Security" in all regions of Kyrgyzstan. The possible ratification of Convention No. 183 was also examined in Mongolia, with ILO providing support by assessing policies on maternity benefits (leave and maternity care), although progress was limited due to the change of Government. This topic was also covered in Cambodia, through a study on maternity protection of garment workers (E25).

In a few instances, projects went beyond the traditional male/female gender divide in data collection to include a category on transgender persons in Guatemala and Indonesia, in relation to the ILO Global Product on Social Protection (E14).

In several cases, gender analysis was not conducted during the design of a project, but data were disaggregated by sex. Alternatively, specific gender indicators were developed to monitor and report on gender results. In other cases, projects focused on ensuring a better gender balance among those participating in the activities, or among certain groups, such as trade unions representatives, or project experts.

▶ 3.7 Building and strengthening partnerships and alliances, and creating synergies

The ILO effectively collaborated with a range of institutional partners to implement its projects on social protection. In some projects, ILO was able to establish its sphere of influence by building strong collaborative relationships to support change in the policies and practices of tripartite partners. The focus on existing partnerships afforded projects maximum influence in a short period of time through technical assistance to pilot activities being implemented by these partners. Projects were also able to leverage technical and financial support through some of the partnerships created.

Inter-agency collaboration was successfully developed to increase the possibilities for the extension of social protection in a selected number of Southern African countries. The prospects for the sustainability of these projects' results were increased by collaborating with potential partners at national, regional and continental levels early in the design process, as described in the box below.

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▶ **Box 5. UN agencies' collaboration in Malawi, Mozambique and Zambia**

In both Mozambique and Zambia, ILO is already a key member of a national UN Joint Programme (with a new phase just being formulated in Mozambique); and it is hoped that this may also soon be the case in Malawi.

Partner UN agencies in the Joint Programme in Mozambique include UNICEF, FAO and WFP; in Zambia they include UNICEF, IOM and WFP, with FAO likely to join soon. In Malawi, despite the absence of a formal Joint Programme, a significant number of the main activities in the social protection arena are undertaken either jointly or in close consultation with UNICEF, GIZ, WFP and other development partners.

Beyond the UN Joint Programmes, collaboration is also strong through established development partner working groups on social protection: the task-force for the review and re-design of the MNSSP in Malawi; the social assistance working group in Mozambique; and the social protection group in Zambia." There was generally very close and productive collaboration with other ILO programmes. At regional level, the project worked directly with the Decent Work team. At national level, the project was often operated in parallel with other ILO programmes, with actual cost-sharing of project staff across programmes.

Source: Annex 1, extracted from report, E24.

Institutional partnerships established in the UN Joint Programme on Social Protection in Mozambique also contributed to the development of improved public policy, programme design and programme implementation for the most vulnerable households. This led to the gradual implementation of a national SPF guaranteeing a minimum standard of living for each citizen in the country (I-1).

Similarly, various actors played essential roles in the development of national plans to extend social protection, promote employment through a basic social protection package, and to coordinate inclusive employment strategies in the context of an ILO/EC project (E12). The ILO played an important role in the overall monitoring of the project, giving technical guid-ance, supporting political liaisons with local stakeholders, and in providing technical and administrative backstopping support from ILO headquarters, and subregional and local offices. Many other actors were also involved in the implementation of the activities and in the discussion of the main results. Evaluative evidence shows that government officials, and representatives of employers' and workers' organizations were critical of social dialogue, and of ILO's analysis of the national situation, the definition of priorities for the national action plan, and the validation of products. Members of a Tripartite Steering Committee were also expected to disseminate knowledge acquired through workshops and training sessions. The project involved a range of other relevant stakeholders in the process of policy dialogue, product development, validation of results and ownership promotion, including civil society organizations, international agencies (especially the World Bank in Burkina Faso and GIZ in Cambodia) and EC delegations.

The lesson learned here was that a good way to overcome national limitations to the social security rights of migrant workers in Africa is to work through and help strengthen existing bilateral and multilateral treaties, such as the East African Community (EAC), the Conférence Interafricaine de la Prévoyance Sociale (CIPRES), SADC and the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS) (E10).

4

For whom?
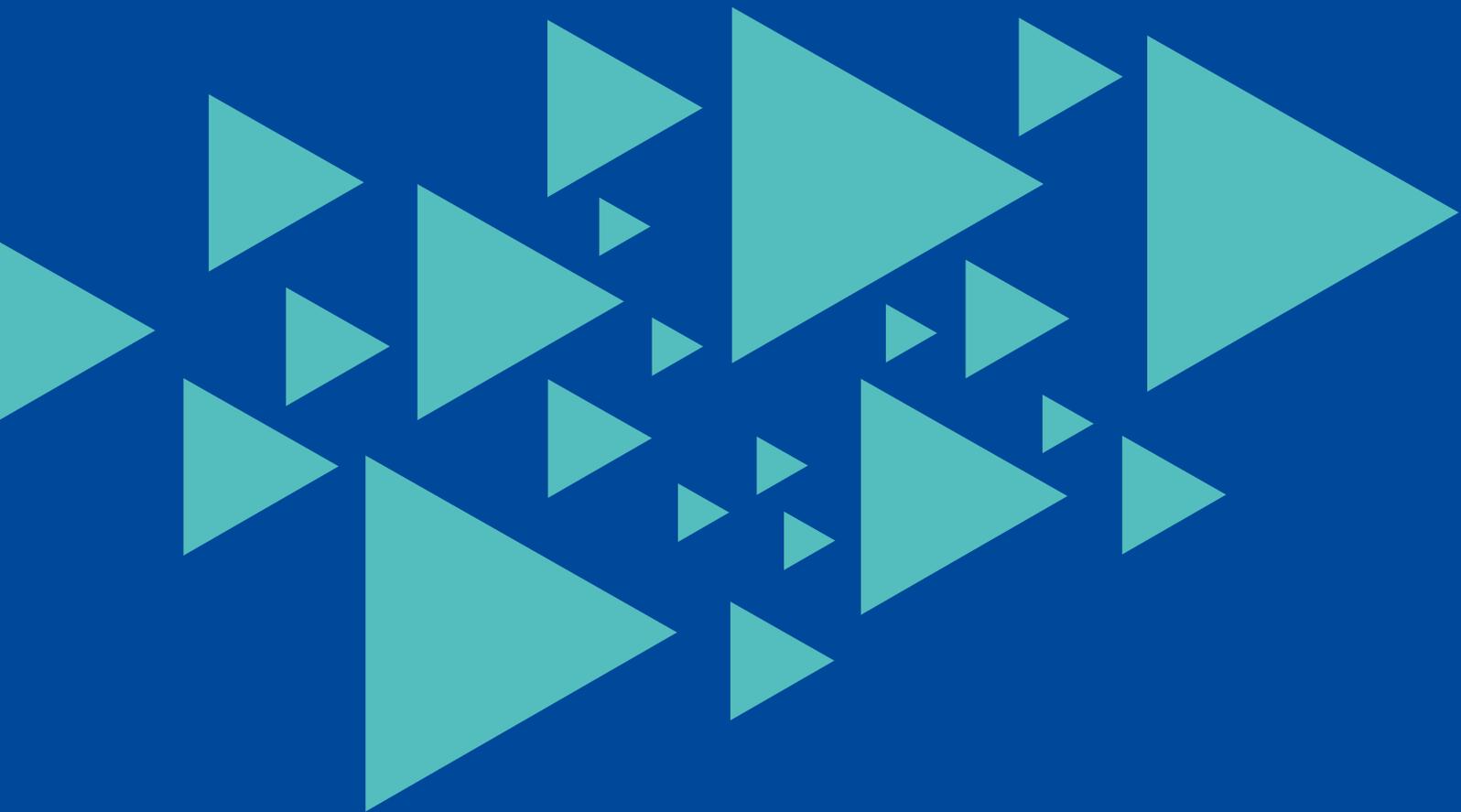
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Most evaluation reports made a distinction between the **target groups** and the expected **final beneficiaries** of social protection-related interventions. In the majority of cases, target groups were policy-makers (responsible for the preparation and implementation of strategies to extend social security coverage), and administrators and technical staff (responsible for the preparation, application, and monitoring of social security and social protection schemes). Social partners involved in social security issues (E10, E12, E19) particularly, representatives of workers' organizations (E2), and relevant civil society organizations (E24) were also considered target groups.

Some projects had a **regional geographical focus**, such as the "Programme de Coopération Sud-Sud pour les Pays d'Afrique dans le domaine du Dialogue Social et de la Protection Sociale" (E32), which targeted specific countries in North Africa and French-speaking countries in Africa. Similarly, the "Promotion and building unemployment insurance and employment services in ASEAN countries" (E19) project supported ASEAN governments, and focused on Viet Nam. The "Programa para la promoción de un Piso de Protección social en la región andina" (E20) focused on Bolivia, Colombia, Ecuador and Peru, while the "Extension of social protection – STEP/Portugal project, Phase II" (E9) targeted Portuguese-speaking countries in Africa, and provided direct assistance to Cape Verde and Mozambique. Other PALOP were included in knowledge development and capacity-building activities.

In a number of projects, **specific groups were targeted as final beneficiaries** including migrant workers and their families (E10), garment workers (E3), lower income households, unemployed and vulnerable groups, including the working poor, women, and people living in rural areas (E12, E19, E20, E34, I2). In other cases, the ultimate beneficiaries were expressed in more general terms, with the objective of inclusive coverage for all: "female and male workers, both in the formal and informal economy" (E25), and "all the present and future insured persons and families of the social health protection schemes in Lao PDR" (E23).

In one case, a project targeting migrant workers was found to be effective in reaching out to its indirect beneficiaries (i.e. government officials and representatives of employers' and workers' organizations), but did not reach its objective of enhancing the social security coverage of migrant workers and their families (direct beneficiaries). This was because none of the project countries had actually signed a bilateral or multilateral social security agreement (E10). In general, however, while target groups and final beneficiaries were often identified in the evaluation reports, there was seldom any evaluative evidence to ascertain whether certain groups benefited more from ILO interventions than others, or the extent to which these interventions reached vulnerable categories of workers.

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▶ **Box 6. Extending social security to vulnerable workers in Central and South America**

Several good practices focusing on the inclusion of groups which were not traditionally covered by social security schemes were presented in the "Evaluación Temática Regional sobre Pisos de Protección Social", with many approaches having the potential to be replicated and/or scaled up in other contexts:

A pilot experience extending social security coverage to the workers of one of the most important markets of Tegucigalpa, Zonal Belén, was carried out in Honduras. This pilot aimed to facilitate the formalization of informal workers, and was part of the project «Promoting respect for the labor rights of informal workers in Costa Rica, El Salvador and Honduras» which was funded by the U.S. Department of State and executed between 2012 and 2016. The approach had a strong social dialogue component, and the plan was carried out jointly with the Ministry of Labour and Social Security, the local government, trade union centres and business organizations. Activities included establishing a Municipal Tripartite Social Dialogue Table for dialogue and consensus building, training participants on labour rights issues, social protection, organization of non-union informal workers, and the elaboration of a preliminary draft of a tripartite consensual law for a differentiated insurance model for self-employed and self-employed workers from the local markets. The results of this experience were presented to the social security authorities of the country, to serve as a basis for the replication and extension of experience in other sectors with a high level of informality.

Technical support provided for the design of a differential and more favourable insurance strategy for workers in the sugar sector in El Salvador (with a Social Protection Floor approach), that was designed based on the specific characteristics of this population, including, for example, a quotation calculated as a percentage of crop earnings. This experience was found to be an important reference to replicate support and extend coverage to other groups of informal rural and urban workers, such as independent workers and domestic workers.

Other examples of targeted marginalized or vulnerable groups included unemployed workers in Colombia; young boys and girls, older adults, domestic and independent workers in Peru; poor children and teenagers, youth, the elderly, domestic workers and migrants in Argentina.

Source: Annex 1, E29.

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Why?
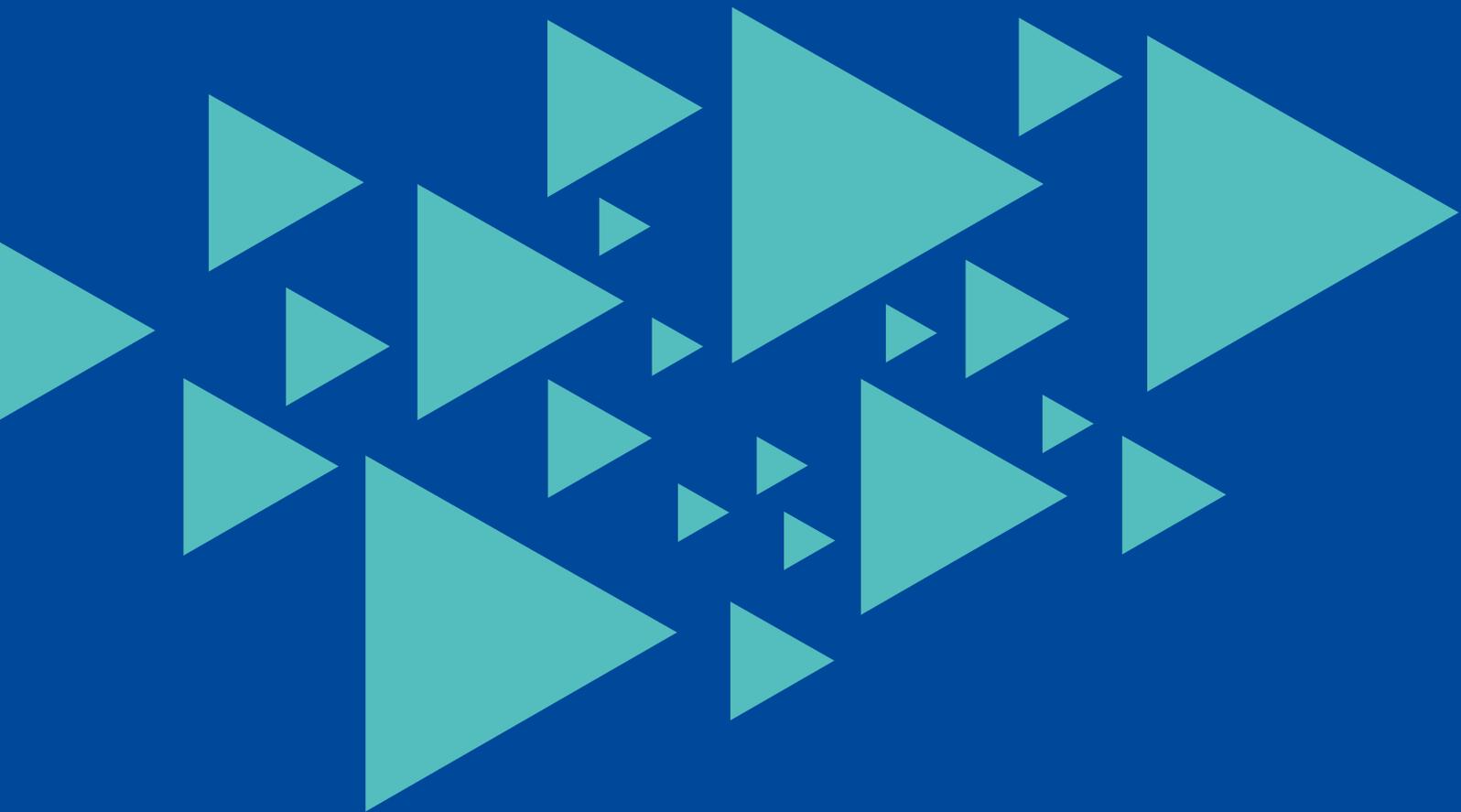
This section presents the main success factors, challenges, and bottlenecks to the successful extension of social protection, based on evaluative evidence from the reports under review.

▶ 5.1 Success factors

The evaluation reports identified a number of internal and external factors leading to positive outcomes in terms of establishing and extending social protection.

▶ **Box 7. Andean region – effectiveness of projects promoting SPF**

Influencing social protection and social security policies to achieve effective changes in coverage requires that projects be designed as part of a chain of actions and changes, which add and aggregate strategic value to achieve complex purposes, rather than as isolated actions.

In this sense, the experience of the Promotion of SPF in the Andean Region determined that projects are most effective if:

i)   They respond to demands that are the result of actions that have been previously developed;

ii) They respond to demands by the tripartite actors;

iii) Mechanisms/institutions for "tripartite dialogue and consultation" are established and recognized institutionally in each country and the activities of the project, such as studies and training, are carried out with the same actors in the same spaces;

iv) The project can complement or expand on actions or projects carried out previously;

v)   The project or its actions specifically interest one or several of the tripartite actors or alliances among them, and are part of their advocacy priorities for the improvement of the living conditions of the sectors or populations they represent;

vi) There is sufficient time for debate, consultation and negotiation of proposals;

vii) Advocacy actions are programmed in each country taking into account sufficient time to synchronize with the administrative cycles of the institutions and entities that incorporate executive or legislative recommendations, in the regimes or systems in each country.

The evaluators highlight that:

> ...these factors are context conditions that determine not only the relevance and validity of the Project, but also its effective realization, with impact and sustainability. The experience of the Project showed the importance of the participatory design or formulation of the programmes and projects with the tripartite actors in each country, and the importance of the formulation of annual operational plans in each country in agreement with the tripartite partners and adapted to external factors that determine the impact on policy decisions of the executive and legislative orders of the countries. (...) If the Project is part of developments in phases, which generate successive and articulated changes with the same Development Objective, it is adapted to the demands and dynamics of the actors, and their actions are operationalized with opportunity and efficiency, the Project will achieve effectively and Effective proposed products and objectives.

Source: Annex 1, E20.

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5.1.1 Adaptability to local needs and context

Adaptability to the local context, so that interventions allowed for national realities and specificities, and responded to the specific needs of beneficiaries, rather than taking a one-size-fits-all approach, was an important factor of success.

For instance, a common goal for all countries included in one of the projects evaluated was to "increase the extent and effectiveness of social protection as an instrument for reducing poverty and social exclusion, promote human development and access to decent work," but also recognized that interventions should focus on different dimensions, and different activities were planned to achieve this objective. As such, in Cape Verde, interventions focused on contributory social security policies, while in Mozambique, they supported non-contributory regimes (E9).

Associated with this, the careful consideration of the political and social context when selecting countries for interventions was found to be a critical element in reducing the risks associated with project implementation: countries with stable political situations favoured an enabling environment conducive to carrying out activities.

Realistic planning relating to the time and pace of the implementation of interventions on the ground, and a **flexible approach** to the execution of project activities and strategies were also found to be important (E2, E9, E21, E34). This finding was echoed in the 2017 Synthesis Review, which found that "project strategies that had the scope to adapt to local contexts of new developments in the projects' environment were found to have worked in favour of the overall results".

The flexible approach adopted in the design and execution of activities and strategies was also found to be a very important element of effectiveness, as it allowed for the interventions to be adapted to the diverse needs of the countries and groups involved in certain projects. This is particularly the case where there were disparities and changes in the political, economic and social contexts, and where these elements and variables could change quickly (E2).

The evaluation findings showed that adaptation to contextual differences, particularly in terms of legal or communication mechanisms, was crucial for the success of another multi-country project on SPFs. In this respect, RBSA-funding was particularly appreciated, as it allowed for flexibility in addressing specific social protection issues.

5.1.2 Taking a participatory approach to project design and implementation

Related to the adaptability to the local context was the importance of adopting a **participatory approach** by involving local actors, governments, institutions, workers' and employers' organizations, and beneficiaries, at all stages of design and implementation. This enabled project teams to identify the most relevant actions and strategies in response to emerging problems or changes, created a sense of ownership, held actors accountable, and promoted a favourable environment to ensure the sustainability of the project's results. This involvement also led to processes to reform social security systems, the ratification of conventions (e.g. Convention No. 102), and the consolidation of social dialogue on these topics.

For instance, the ILO supported the Trade Union Movement in Latin America to prepare for its participation in the 100th Session and 101st Session of the ILC and discussion for the adoption of the Recommendation No. 202. Many of the points and concerns raised, including the importance of work, freedom of association and collective bargaining, and decent wages, were included in the final document, giving the Trade Union Movement in America a leading role and visibility in the work on social protection (E2).

Involving both social partners and ultimate beneficiaries was found to be a good practice, as this provided vulnerable groups with a voice and improved the development and dissemination of knowledge products (E34).

When it came to the universal coverage of social protection (social security), lessons drawn from the project evaluation emphasized that, when including vulnerable groups, it was important to demonstrate immediate impacts that were replicable and scalable. Interventions were more effective when they responded to demands from institutions in charge of social protection, and when they created synergies with other relevant interventions, such as by creating employment formalization programmes, or by strengthening labour inspectorates, and audit and membership systems (E29).

The importance of adapting interventions to local contexts and planning them in the early stages of the design process through discussions with constituents was a lesson noted in the evaluation of projects in Kyrgyzstan and Tajikistan. Allowing for experimentation and exploration, followed only by implementation was underlined as a rare strength of a development project: "The basic assumption is that if labour management systems are facilitated to change from within, rather than through a number of direct and distorting interventions, better and more sustainable results can be achieved." (E25)

Finally, involvement of the social partners and civil society was considered critical in ensuring the understanding and ownership of social protection reforms, as was the dissemination of information through the media at large.

5.1.3 Using a tripartite approach

A valuable lesson learned was the importance of the ILO's tripartite approach when planning and implementing interventions related to social protection.

Evaluative evidence demonstrated that social dialogue or tripartite consultations were conditions for success in the process of the design, and the formulation of strategies and legislative instruments on public policies related to social protection (social security).

The ILO's tripartite model was also highlighted as an enabling factor of success, as it "brought a consultative process that was the right approach to stimulate participation of relevant stakeholders in implementing the to-be strategy." (E12) Strategic components, such as the implementation of national steering committees, led to effective policy dialogues for the formulation of social protection and employment frameworks and outputs from workshops and meetings, were used as resources for further discussion on these topics. Furthermore, the integration of different stakeholders in the process led to better institutional links.

Ensuring the participation of relevant stakeholders helped to strengthen tripartite cooperation in Viet Nam (E19). This led to a participatory working method between the ILO and the key implementing partners and in the project management board, leading to mutual understanding and strong support for project activities, which were designed to be relevant to the needs of beneficiaries.

The **added value of the ILO's tripartite approach** was also appreciated in Southern Africa, as the ILO worked inclusively with the governments, and representatives of employers' and workers' organizations of the three countries involved:

There were a number of instances where it has provided an invaluable bridge between the three: in bringing the civil society platform into the social assistance working group in Mozambique; in supporting the engagement of the Zambia Congress of Trade Unions (ZCTU) in the drafting of the social protection bill in Zambia (if it had not been for ILO they might not even have had

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this opportunity); and in jointly developing a position paper on the social protection floor with the trade unions in Mozambique... The project engaged effectively with a wide range of stakeholders: government, development partners, civil society, parliamentarians, media, trades unions, employers' representatives, and faith-based organisations. The extent of engagement with each one varied with the differing contexts in the three countries, but all were involved in one way or another. (E24)

5.1.4 Strong project management

In terms of **project management**, the consistent use of annual programming and activity plans was highlighted as an important good practice, as was the use of a good monitoring and accountability mechanism to report on both qualitative and quantitative aspects of project implementation (E9). Having an experienced coordination team able to adapt to local circumstances and create meaningful relationships with different actors was also deemed a success factor (E2).

The integration of **project and other related work plans**, such as those of the UN Social Protection and those developed by governments with development partners, were found to be more realistic, and enabled effective resource alignment (I-1).

5.1.5 Local ILO presence

A local ILO presence was found to be a significant positive factor for the development of alliances, both nationally and internationally. Regular contact with partners and local authorities, and participation in relevant discussions helped to develop collaborative networks and consolidate the project's results. The permanent presence of a dedicated team composed of ILO staff working systematically and regularly with partners contributed to the success of these partners' aligning interventions, and **fostered trust** between the different groups (E9). Having an ILO presence also facilitated the follow-up and implementation of field-level activities, whilst providing staff with valuable knowledge of working in the field (E12, E24, I-4).

In the case of regional or subregional projects, a good practice to emerge from the evaluation of a project in the Andean subregion focused on the importance of having a competent administrative structure comprising: national coordinators in each country; one coordinator

> #### Box 8. Importance of national coordinators working also as subregional coordinators

Having the national coordinator of the project in Peru also working as subregional coordinator led to facilitated dialogue, consultation and agreement between national constituents on conclusions and recommendations derived from the project outputs; and timely monitoring and quality control of the studies/products carried out.

At the subregional level, the coordinator supported the implementation of the project in the other countries; supported the Social Security Specialist of the Country Office for Andean Countries in the work of regional coordination, which ensured the realization of activities and products of a subregional nature with a regional perspective, facilitated discussions between national coordinators and the exchange of knowledge and experiences between countries and actors, which led to enhanced synergies and a continued sense of "team work" amongst those involved.

Source: Annex 1, E20.

with regional coordination responsibilities (e.g. based at the ILO Regional Office responsible for the project); and an administrative assistant. This ensured a regional perspective on the outputs and strategies, and encouraged exchanges and synergies between the countries involved, as described in the box above.

Trust was also enhanced through frequent exchanges between the ILO and the tripartite partners, as was discussed in one evaluation report: "Regular and sustained communication between Project Management and the tripartite partners can prevent misunderstandings. Through regular communication, the building of trust is substantially enhanced." (E25) In this case, communication took the form of National Project Advisory Group meetings, and regular bilateral meetings with government personnel, and representatives of workers' and employers' organizations, and business associations with Moscow-based senior specialists, national coordinators and project staff in target countries.

5.1.6 Focusing on synergies and cooperation

Synergy and cooperation between the projects under review and other projects contributed to effectiveness, efficiency, and the sustainability of outcomes (E9, E12, I-4). The use of an extended network of institutions was a good way to increase communication outreach and disseminate results to groups that were not actively involved in the projects.

For instance, the coverage of social protection was extended in the PALOP by building synergies between two projects, including the creation of a permanent link with the ITC/ILO International Social Protection, Governance and Tripartism Programme (E9). In Cambodia, the use of local resources was maximized by taking advantage of over 20 channels created by the Council for Agricultural and Rural Development (CARD) to reach target groups and disseminate results among different agents (E12). The project also built on existing government initiatives to design, develop and implement the social protection and employment policy. In addition, technical inputs produced by the project were used by other UN agencies.

The ability to establish links and synergies with other programmes and projects was noted as a key strength in promoting social protection in several evaluations. In Latin America, extensive relationships were developed with other ILO Bureau for Workers Activities (ACTRAV) and ILO initiatives in the region, and with DWCPs and development initiatives on social security and health in the workplace (E2). This approach attracted additional resources, generated economies of scale, and laid the foundation for the sustainability of results, while increasing their impact. Partnerships with ILO's Social Protection Department (SOCPRO) and the ITC/ILO in planning and implementing capacity-building events were also found to be a good practice. Similarly, the strengthening of internal ILO partnerships between the ILO Office in Algiers for Maghreb countries and ILO offices for West African countries was put forward as an important result (E32).

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5.1.7 Developing strategic alliances

The ILO's relationships with partners on the ground and its specialized technical knowledge and expertise were important elements, which led to its strategic advantage when promoting the extension of social protection, and policy development in particular. Furthermore, donor support and institutional partnerships have been critical in the effective and timely delivery of services to constituents, and in leveraging resources and policy influence. Examples of strategic relationship building were found in project evaluation reports where the ILO forged relationships with academic/research institutions and development partners, among others, to complement its field of competencies. Partnerships also facilitated constituents' capacity building and cost-sharing activities. Collaboration with UN agencies and universities was seen as a positive step in strengthening the results.

In Latin America, the report mentions the "significant work" done in the region through the Interagency Group for the development of Social Protection Floors in Latin America and the Caribbean, which was led by the ILO and the Pan American Health Organization/World Health Organization (PAHO/WHO) with the participation of the Economic Commission for Latin America (ECLAC), the United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA), the United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF), the United Nations Entity for Gender Equality and the Empowerment of Women (UN Women), the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO), the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), HelpAge, International, and the Inter-American Social Protection Network of the Organization of American States-RIPSO/OE (E29).

At local level, the ABND process in Mongolia was found to be successful in involving a range of UN agencies and social partners, through the appropriate selection of target areas, good communication with all key stakeholders, strong ILO expertise on the relevant issues, and good project management and implementation overall (E26). In Tajikistan, evaluative evidence shows that the ILO's partnership with the Ministry of Health and Social Protection of Population was "not a traditional one, but was justified and important to enhance diminished leadership in the area of social protection at central government after restructuring" (I-4).

Setting up mechanisms to ensure **smooth relationships with donors** was another strategy that led to positive results. Piloting committees were established and convened annually to ensure good coordination between projects and to identify potential areas where existing initiatives could be extended (E9). Regular communication with donors and other projects maximized the results of the interventions while avoiding overlap between project objectives (E34).

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5.1.8 Focusing on the ILO's comparative advantage and expertise, and building on previous work and achievements

The ILO's positive reputation in the field of social protection and labour issues helped projects gather support for their implementation. An example was the MIGSEC project, where the evaluation found the ILO to be "the best organization, both in terms of its expertise and mandate on labour issues in general, and its motivational interest in labour migration matters in particular, to play the role of international administrator." Similarly, political support for the ILO/EC Project (E12) was based on the "international recognition of the ILO as a serious institution with wide experience in the field of social security and employment. The ILO/EC 'trademark' was an intangible asset that helped the project to receive considerable attention from the different stakeholders."

Certain projects were starting new phases while they were being evaluated, or had been designed as follow-up phases, thus increasing the potential for sustainability and impact. For instance, the project "Extending Social Security Coverage in ASEAN (2016-18)" was an extension of the "Promoting and building income security and employment services in Asia, Phase II" project (E26). It built on the experience and lessons learned during this second phase with the aim of "enhancing knowledge, understanding and expertise on extension of social security, and stimulating South-South cooperation across ASEAN Member States" with particular focus on increasing social security coverage in Indonesia and Viet Nam, and improving their legal and institutional frameworks, administration and services.

Similarly, the second phase of the SSOS Project (E2) strengthened the activities of the first phase of the project, consolidating and furthering the progress initiated by strengthening and establishing technical worker's organizations and networks; exchanging experiences among workers' organizations at different levels; and facilitating training instruments. Additional objectives were included in the second phase, in response to their expressed requirements, and the list of beneficiary countries was expanded, incorporating Brazil, Chile and Costa Rica.

Furthermore, the concepts, approaches and tools developed by the ILO in the context of integrated social protection, and employment promotion policies, including the preparation of employment diagnostics and action plans, were seen as key factors in setting up solid foundations for the promotion of new social policy. Synergies with the concepts of Decent Work and the ILO Declaration on Social Justice for a Fair Globalization were also highlighted as being important.

> ▶ **Box 9. Evidence of the value of ILO's tool and methodological instruments**
>
> The evaluation found that ILO's tools and methodological instruments helped the ILO/EC Project to:
>
> 1. Provide an individual picture of all the social security, social assistance and health programmes in the country;
> 2. Identify major challenges and directions for the future social protection policy;
> 3. Estimate the cost of the social protection policy and assessing its financial sustainability;
> 4. Integrate the different components of the social protection-employment policy into one action plan that would guide future activities.
>
> **Source:** Annex 1, E12.

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5.1.9 Political will and stakeholder ownership are key for lasting results

An appropriate enabling environment and interventions that responded to tripartite demand were found to have better prospects for sustainability. This was the case in the context of a project on SPFs in Latin America, which listed conditions for sustainability:

> The results and achievements of the ILO's intervention in the region are high because the countries met one or more of the following conditions that are considered to ensure their sustainability:
>
> i)   the ratification of ILO conventions relating to Social Security;
>
> ii) the approval of laws that reflect the principles on Social Protection and Social Security enshrined in the Conventions and the Recommendation no. 202 of the ILO;
>
> iii) the products were requested and accepted by the governments or by the institutions responsible for Social Protection and Social Security in each country;
>
> iv) the products were developed, discussed and endorsed in institutional spaces of tripartite agreement. (E29)

Similarly, taking an inclusive approach and promoting ownership of the processes associated with the implementation of social protection led to more sustainable results:

> Giving each country the liberty to select the best way to organize the National Tripartite Steering Committee (and encourage in this way an enhanced feeling of ownership) favored the implementation of the project. Supporting a pluralistic approach to the composition of National Tripartite Steering Committees puts back on the table the debate of whether more social actors should integrate these bodies. Proposals about integrating other stakeholders like universities, other ministries (education, health) and NGOs that represent the interest of consumers and patients were made during the field work. The argument is clear: if the new ILO approach includes a broad concept of "social protection" (beyond the typical concept of social security), then the discussion should be expanded to include in the Committees the rest of the entities that deal, in one way or another, with the integration between social protection and employment promotion. (E12)

▶ 5.2 Obstacles

A number of challenges to the successful extension of social protection were identified in the evaluation reports. The main ones are discussed in below. In many cases, obstacles faced in project implementation came from various sources, both internal and external.

5.2.1 Unstable political and economic contexts, and changing governance

The political context had a direct impact on the possibility of progressing towards expected outputs and outcomes.

There were many examples where planned activities were suspended temporarily or indefinitely due **to political instability** and **changing governance and management frameworks**, reflecting the need for more systematic risk assessments at the design stage.

General elections and changes in government led several projects to experience delays, as new partners were not familiar with ILO culture and operations, and new relationships needed building and consolidated several times (E25). In Mauritius, such changes also led to the indefinite suspension of a draft social security agreement to negotiate bilateral agreements with Canada, France, and the United Kingdom (E10). Political unrest also stopped the implementation of some projects, for instance in Burkina Faso (E12) and Guinea Bissau (E9). Corruption scandals led to donors withdrawing budget contributions, with social protection being one of the primarily affected areas, such as the "Cashgate" scandal in Malawi, where social protection was one of the primarily affected areas, impacting the implementation of planned activities (E24).

Another challenge to implementation was **the deteriorating economic situation** in certain countries, leading to difficulties in implementing concepts such as SPFs. This was the case in Mongolia, for instance:

At the time the project was being designed, the economic prospects for Mongolia looked very positive. However, in the intervening period the economic situation has worsened and the public finances have become vulnerable with rising public debt. In this context, it is obviously more challenging to implement concepts such as the social protection floor and alternative approaches to social protection policy are being advocated by other development partners. At the same time, however, the need to enhance the employment-capacity of rural workers has been emphasized by the downturn in other areas of the economy.

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5.2.2 Low commitment and capacity of countries and actors

Ownership, and thus sustainability prospects were limited when certain stakeholder groups were not involved in project design and implementation, when there were discrepancies between priorities at national level and the priorities of ILO, and when the capacity of ILO constituents to develop and extend social protection was low.

For example, in Cape Verde, the implementation of Convention No. 102 was to be prioritized through ILO support. However, although the representatives of workers' and employers' organizations supported the ratification of this Convention, the government did not consider it to be a political priority. Similarly, the Single Window Service component in Viet Nam, which was to be implemented with ILO assistance, was dropped because it was not a government priority at the time of implementation (E33).

While the majority of evaluations demonstrated that the ILO provided relevant and effective capacity-building measures, **the initial capacity of the tripartite constituents was not consistently taken into account in a strategic manner**. When the level of institutional development and technical capacity of social partners to address Decent Work issues was weak, and/or when there were disparities in knowledge and experience in terms of social protection and labour issues, there was a direct negative influence on the effectiveness of promotion of social dialogue (E25). To cope with this challenge, it was recommended that more focus be put on strengthening constituents' organizational capacities, rather than on individual capacity, to facilitate common views on problems and disputes, and to jointly develop policies on social protection issues (I-4). It was considered that this would avoid running the risk of losing capacity over time.

A similar finding was noted in the evaluation of the joint ILO/EC project: "Efforts should emphasize institutional strengthening in countries before proceeding with policy preparation. Considerable institutional bottlenecks affected the implementation of project activities and eventually restricted the achievement of more outcomes. It seems important, in the future, to build strong national institutions." (E12)

Sector representatives were found to lack basic economic concepts necessary to providing inputs to discussions during meetings and workshops. Moreover, many stakeholders (workers' representatives, in particular) did not always send the same participants to training sessions, thus limiting the potential for follow-up.

This corroborated evaluative evidence emphasized the fact that while ILO's efforts were positive overall, **realistic timing related to capacity-building initiatives was also important** in "building tripartite constituents' capacity to design and implement social protection initiatives typically requires advocacy work and partnerships that may span several years and not just a biennium." (E21) Other evaluation reports also found that the training and capacity building carried out by projects often lacked continuity, and could benefit from a more programmatic and institutionalized approach in the form of formal institutional links with academic/research institutions at regional level to promote sustainability (I-3).

Policy differences between countries and institutional challenges were also an obstacle to the implementation and management of social protection initiatives, such as in a regional project, which aimed to extend social security rights of migrant workers and their families (E10). Some of the challenges identified in the evaluation were related to: (i) differing levels of commitment of partner countries to coordinate their social security systems; (ii) difficulties in determining applicable legislation to avoid double payment of benefits and/or of

contributions; and (iii) the unavailability of mutual administrative assistance to the partner countries (origin and host).

In Honduras, there was an initial reaction against the integrated approach promoted through the ILO/EC Project (E12) because the local authorities considered that social policy was best implemented by separating social protection and employment policies. Similarly, bilateral social security talks between Senegal and Spain failed because health insurance in Spain is based on taxes, rather than on social security, and there was disagreement between the two countries on the inclusion of health insurance for migrant workers in the agreement (E10).

5.2.3 Poor validity of design, and lack of monitoring and reporting mechanisms

Inadequate project design, with over-ambitious objectives in terms of duration and scope, limited, or no risk assessment, weak links between outputs and outcomes, and limited contextual analysis was a major element leading to the failure of certain project components. The absence of adequate monitoring and reporting mechanisms was also a recurrent challenge.

Several evaluation reports noted that project objectives were too ambitious, with the scope of expected outputs being unrealistic for the time available for implementation, especially when policies had to be inserted into a wider political agenda (E12), or into interventions focusing on achieving changes in concepts and ideologies (E13). More specific examples are provided below.

For instance, the evaluation report for the Social Protection and Gender in Cambodia project (E3) presented several factors that resulted in only partial achievement of the project's objectives, which were due to a number of planned outputs and activities not being implemented. The two-year project was unrealistic in terms of the ambitious strategies pursued, and the broad range of planned outputs and activities. Many project partners were involved, but their engagement with the project did not start at the same time, and there was no overall coordination in the implementation of activities, or joint reflection on the expected outputs of the project or its overall direction. The suspension of the Single Window Project (SSDM) in Cambodia due to the lack of actual services available to be delivered was provided as a further example of weak project design, although the evaluator stressed that this type of experience was rare in ILO social protection projects (I-3).

Considerations of the local context was missing in some projects, for example, a project in Mongolia did not take into account the seasonal pattern of herders' work, although they were one of the main target groups (E26). In the case of the MIGSEC regional project in Africa (E10), although positive results were obtained in some countries, the evaluation found that the project was:

> ILO's first practical attempt in Africa to give meaning to ILO Convention 118 and 157, and considering the intricate socio-economic-political implications of altering the legislations and the regulatory frameworks of countries, it would be overly ambitious to expect that MIGSEC could have achieved more than it did within the time space of 3 years. The lesson here is that 3 years is insufficient duration for a legislations-influencing project.

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A further limitation was that the scope of the project, as it "spread itself thinly over practically the entire African continent, with the attendant geographical and demographic challenges, as well as cultural and language differences and barriers that inhibit the sharing of experience amongst project countries." In this case, better targeting of project countries at the design stage could have improved effectiveness.

Very short-term projects with many planned activities increased the risk of failure if the products were developed independently of each other, and not incorporated as part of a long-term plan. Furthermore, findings from the Andean subregion demonstrated that countries were not always clear about the composition and integration of social security and protection systems. Also, the existence of fragmented and dispersed information, and the lack of articulation and inter-institutional coordination was a challenge for all projects (E20).

The lack of monitoring and reporting mechanisms, with suitable indicators, was also a challenge in many instances, and only a few projects had an explicit theory of change, especially in regional or multi-country projects. This was echoed in the synthesis review on creating and extending social protection floors,[1] which found that the recommendations mostly concentrated on monitoring, progress reporting and evaluation, and on the need to improve indicators at all levels, and to use more modern management information systems.

5.2.4 Insufficient attention to gender equality

The majority of projects paid insufficient attention to gender mainstreaming and gender equality as specific project components, both at the design stage and during implementation. There were also noted challenges in achieving balanced participation of men and women in projects, or gender-disaggregated data due to cultural norms and/or lack of stakeholders' interest in gender inclusiveness.

One recommendation was that ABND reports should contain a specific section on gender-related issues to ensure that these are considered in a systematic manner. This limitation regarding the lack of explicit focus and monitoring of gender equality, and the need for a more explicit strategy for gender mainstreaming was echoed in the high-level evaluation on social protection.

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[1] This synthesis review was part of the methodology and techniques used in the high-level: *Independent evaluation of the ILO's strategy and actions for creating and extending social protection floors, 2012–2017*, ILO, Evaluation Office, 2017, www.ilo.org/eval/Evaluationreports/Strategyandpolicyevaluations/WCMS_584279/lang--en/index.htm [accessed 2 Feb. 2020].

5.2.5 Lack of synergies and complementarities within and between relevant projects

Evaluative evidence showed that some projects did not build on potential complementarities with other ILO projects or partner initiatives, and that lack of synergies was sometimes identified, reflecting missed opportunities for resource optimization, sustainability and impact. Weak links between ILO HQ, regional offices and ILO staff on the ground led to inefficiencies in project implementation.

For instance, a major limitation identified in the evaluation of the Social Protection and Gender (SPG) in Cambodia project (E3) was that the project was expected to be the social protection component of Better Factories Cambodia, yet this had not been implemented, and synergies between the two projects was very limited as a result. The evaluator found that opportunities to connect elements of SPG's in-industry interventions to BFC's advocacy work and mandate of compliance monitoring were missed. Furthermore, there was virtually no collaboration with the ILO/EU Improving Social Protection and Promoting Employment project (E12), which was implemented as a response to the National Social Protection Strategy (NSPS) of the Government of Cambodia. Despite the projects not being directly linked, their objectives were in line with each other, and there were possibilities to connect their outputs (such as the SPG Social Protection Network) with the NSPS structure.

Moreover, international agencies did not always create synergies amongst themselves, despite their similar agendas in some countries. Local stakeholders in Burkina Faso, for instance, mentioned that there was a duplication of efforts between the World Bank and the ILO, in the sense that these organizations were both interested in social protection issues, but had no single, coordinated agenda of work, leading to the existence of a separate diagnosis for each one of the social protection projects conducted by each entity (E12).

5.2.6 Inefficient management processes and resource use

Obstacles also stemmed from project management, staffing, and funding issues, leading to resource inefficiencies.

Limited RBSA funding and delays in the disbursements were cited as the most important bottlenecks in the RBSA-funded social protection projects in Africa. In other cases, lack of qualified staff to carry out project implementation on the ground was a major obstacle. Lack of exit strategies to promote sustainability was also a weakness identified in the evaluation reports. Other obstacles noted in the reports included a mismatch between donor regulations and the ILO, leading to scheduling and planning issues, and variations in exchange rates, which led to pressure on the availability of resources.

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Conclusions
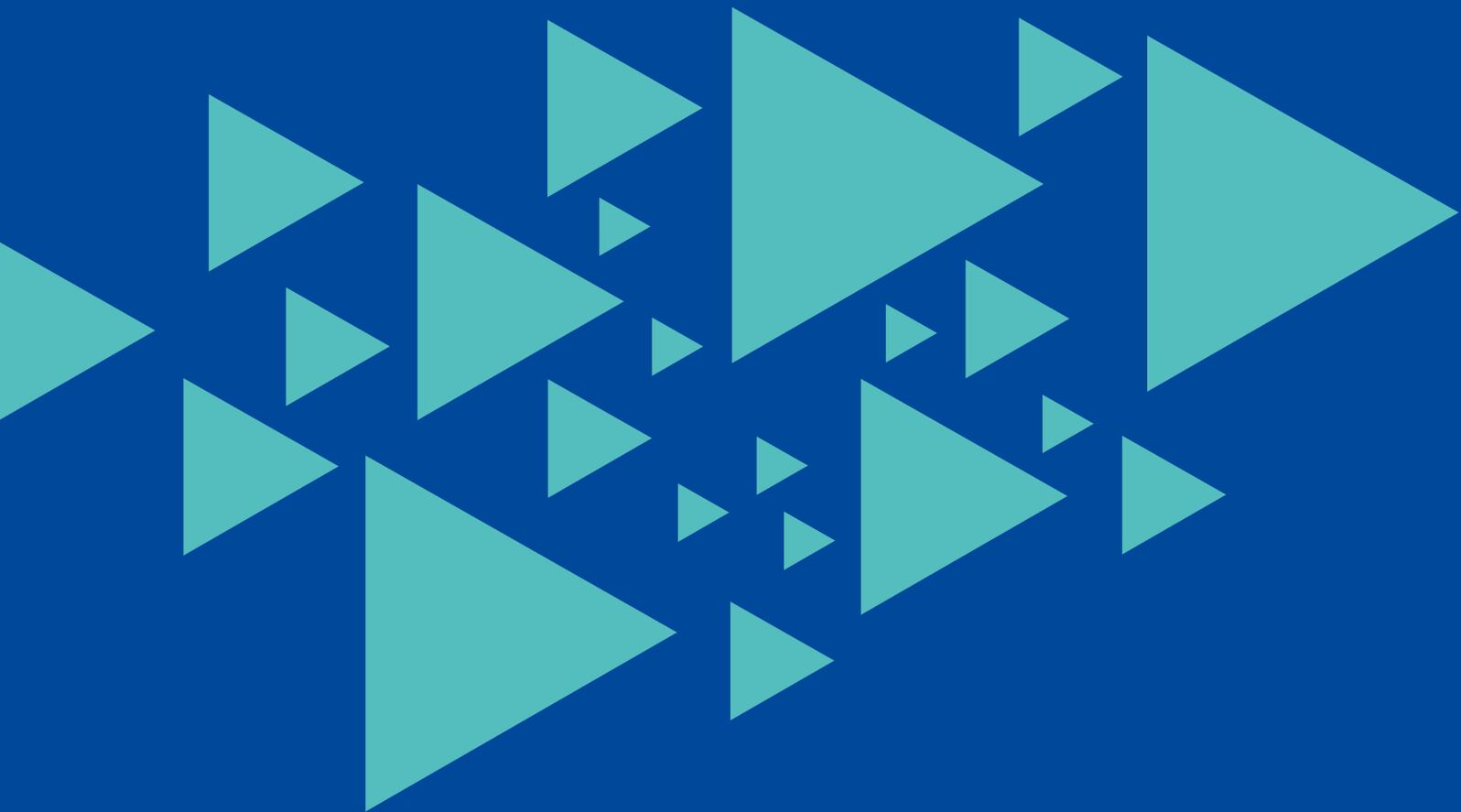
The ILO has been making significant progress towards the development and extension of social protection (social security) around the world. This review of evaluations conducted between 2012 and 2018 highlighted a number of key lessons related to strengths and weaknesses in ILO's interventions in the field of social protection (social security), which are summarized below.

Projects targeted specific stakeholder groups and final beneficiaries, including policy-makers, administrators, technical staff and social partners involved in social security issues. They also targeted specific groups such as migrant workers and their families, garment workers, lower income households, unemployed and vulnerable groups, including the working poor, women, and people living in rural areas. However, there was a lack of evaluative evidence to ascertain whether certain groups benefited more from ILO interventions than others, or whether these interventions effectively reached vulnerable categories of workers.

The use of social dialogue was an essential element in developing effective social protection policies and programmes, and was a key element of the ILO's comparative advantage. Platforms for national and regional dialogue were widely acknowledged as they allowed tripartite partners to build consensus and combine their efforts and resources to achieve improved social security coverage. Similarly, in many countries, the ILO Assessment Based National Dialogue was a driving force in enhancing participatory multi-stakeholder national dialogue, determining national priorities on social protection, and in mobilizing and consolidating efforts on social protection issues. Thus, it was a useful tool in promoting tripartism.

The ILO has a broad toolbox of capacity-building activities related to social protection and social security, and provided effective platforms for sharing experiences and good practices in this context. Impact was greatest when interventions took into account local needs, capacities and context, and results were anchored in national institutions. An inclusive approach to capacity building was highlighted as a strength, as was the strategy of peer-to-peer learning and the fostering of international exchange of experiences, practices and realities. Dissemination of good practices on topics related to social security and social protection, including through web-based platforms, regional knowledge-sharing tools, and publications, led to positive outcomes. ILO products provided useful insights into various instruments, practices, norms and laws that had the potential to contribute to the extension of social protection floors in project countries as well as beyond. This knowledge, along with technical assistance, led to a range of policy developments and implementation measures, as well as the promotion and application of international labour standards.

The ILO effectively collaborated with a range of institutional partners to implement its projects on social protection. In some instances, ILO was able to establish its sphere of influence by creating strong collaborative relationships for change in policy and practice with tripartite partners in target countries, and strategically targeting its partnership arrangements. The focus upon existing partnerships enabled projects to have maximum influence in a short period of time through focused technical assistance and support for pilot activities implemented by these partners.

Overall, successful projects were able to adapt to the local context and respond to the specific needs of stakeholders and beneficiaries. Project design and implementation was realistic and flexible, and a participatory approach at all stages of the project cycle promoted ownership, accountability, and increased prospects for sustainability. The ILO's tripartite approach also added value to the process and improved ownership when implementing social protection interventions. Political will and stakeholder ownership were essential elements to ensure project success, and the ILO's positive reputation and expertise in the field of social protection and labour issues helped project managers gather support for their implementation. This facilitated relationships at the international level and with partners on the ground, and led to the ILO's strategic advantage in the promotion and extension of social protection. Cooperation with other projects and partners contributed to positive synergies, and the sustainability of outcomes, and this improved further with a local ILO presence. Finally, strong and effective project management, both in terms of human resources and ILO presence, and the use of solid monitoring, reporting and evaluation mechanisms were crucial to project success.

Despite these success factors, projects aiming to advance social protection also faced different obstacles, both internal and external. Externally, the political context of certain target countries had impacts on project implementation as instability and government changes hindered progress towards intended outputs and outcomes, which was sometimes compounded by challenging economic situations. Related to this, the low commitment and capacities of certain actors limited prospects for sustainability. In some cases, institutional challenges, and differences in policies and priorities between countries were obstacles to the implementation of social protection initiatives. Internally, inadequate project design, inefficient management processes and resource use, insufficient attention to gender equality and lack of synergies and complementarities within and between relevant projects led to missed opportunities and weaknesses in implementation, thus constraining the potential for positive outcomes.

Annex. Final list
of reports reviewed

S.n.	Report No.	Title (TC Symbol)		Evaluation type and timing
1.	E2	Proyecto de seguridad social para organizaciones sindicales SSOS – Fase II (INT/00/000/AAA)	https://www.ilo.org/ievaldiscovery/#aglma04	Final Independent
2.	E3	Social protection and gender in Cambodia – Final Evaluation (CMB/09/04/SPA)	https://www.ilo.org/ievaldiscovery/#bq218xi	Final Independent
3.	E9	Extension of social protection – STEP/Portugal project, Phase II (GLO/08/60/POR)	https://www.ilo.org/ievaldiscovery/#azb79f1	Final Independent
4.	E10	Evaluation of MIGSEC: Extending social security to African migrant workers and their families (RBSA) (RAF/08/02/RBS)	https://www.ilo.org/ievaldiscovery/#a8yz8ns	Final Independent
5.	E12	Improving social protection and promoting employment (INT/09/06/EEC)	https://www.ilo.org/ievaldiscovery/#beq0l75	Final Independent
6.	E13	Making Decent Work a Reality for Domestic Workers (GLO/11/54/SID)	https://www.ilo.org/ievaldiscovery/#b718zk8	Final Independent
7.	E14	Responding effectively to the HIV/AIDS epidemic in the world of work: Country programmes (GLO/12/63/NOR)	https://www.ilo.org/ievaldiscovery/#bv8lc4w	Final Independent
8.	E19	Promotion and building unemployment insurance and employment services in ASEAN countries (RAS/13/53/JPN)	https://www.ilo.org/ievaldiscovery/#afi3ifc	Final Independent
9.	E20	Programa para la promoción de un Piso de Protección social en la región andina (RLA/14/03/SPA)	https://www.ilo.org/ievaldiscovery/#aafvp1q	Final independent
10.	E21	Report of the Independent Evaluation of African Country Programme Outcomes funded from 2012-2013 RBSA in the Thematic Area of Social Protection (INT/00/000/AAA)	https://www.ilo.org/ievaldiscovery/#alxmhnd	Final independent
11.	E23	Supporting the establishment of the National Health Insurance Scheme in Lao PDR and the extension of coverage – Final Evaluation (LAO/11/01/LUX)	https://www.ilo.org/ievaldiscovery/#a1qpu32	Final independent
12.	E24	Building national floors of social protection in Southern Africa (RAF/13/04/IRL)	https://www.ilo.org/ievaldiscovery/#bkwpovi	Final independent
13.	E25	From the crisis towards decent and safe jobs in Kyrgyzstan and Tajikistan, Phase II (RER/13/01/FIN)	https://www.ilo.org/ievaldiscovery/#ai7lxd9	Interim independent
14.	E26	Promoting and building income security and employment services in Asia, Phase II (RAS/13/08/JPN)	https://www.ilo.org/ievaldiscovery/#bry8ie0	Final independent
15.	E27	ILO's strategies and activities for creating and extending social protection floors for all 2012–2017 (N/A)	https://www.ilo.org/eval/Evaluationreports/Strategyandpolicyevaluations/WCMS_584279/lang--en/index.htm	High level evaluation
16.	E28	Evaluación cluster sobre iniciativas OIT en favor de la transición hacia la formalidad (RBSA) (N/A)	Regional thematic evaluation	Final independent

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S.n.	Report No.	Title (TC Symbol)		Evaluation type and timing
17.	E29	Evaluación Temática Regional sobre Pisos de Protección Social (N/A)	Regional thematic evaluation	Final independent
18.	E32	Programme de Coopération Sud-Sud pour les Pays d'Afrique dans le domaine du Dialogue Social et de la Protection Sociale (RAF/15/15/DZA)	https://www.ilo.org/ievaldiscovery/#auduvbr	Final independent
19.	E33	ILO/Korea Partnership Programme Towards the Realization of the Asian Decent Work Decade (2015-2017) (GLO/15/50/ROK)	https://www.ilo.org/ievaldiscovery/#bfidv07	Final independent
20.	E34	Strengthening of Social Protection Systems in the PALOP and Timor-Leste (GLO/15/12/PRT)	https://www.ilo.org/ievaldiscovery/#bxhwpv1	Final independent
21.	I2	Proyecto para la extensión de la protección social en los países de la subregión andina; Bolivia, Ecuador y Perú (RLA/08/02/SPA)	https://www.ilo.org/ievaldiscovery/#beb56	Final internal
22.	I-1	Social protection in Mozambique (MOZ/12/50/OUF)	https://www.ilo.org/ievaldiscovery/#bo9ngux	Final internal
23.	I-3	Asia Region Thematic Evaluation on Social Protection 2012-2017 (Phase II)	https://www.ilo.org/ievaldiscovery/#a67rau0	Final internal
24.	I-4	RBSA-Funded project on social security in Tajikistan 2016-2018 (N/A)	N/A	Final internal

Since 2012, EVAL has been regularly contributing to the recurrent discussions by preparing companion pieces to recurrent reports to enhance organizational learning. The value of these reports lies in the fact that they are based on evaluative evidences generated through a number of relevant evaluation reports. During the discussions on the follow-up to the resolution on Advancing social justice through Decent Work: Framework for recurrent discussions, this was recognized as a good practice and formalized as part of the drafting process for recurrent discussion reports. To date, EVAL has produced five synthesis reviews for recurrent discussions on Social Dialogue (2013 & 2017); Employment (2014); and Social Protection (Labour Protection) (2015) and Social Protection (Social Security) (2019).

This report *'Social Protection (Social Security) Interventions: What Works? and Why? Lessons Learned from a Synthesis Review 2012–2018'*, completed in 2019, presents the findings of a review of carefully selected 24 evaluation reports related to ILO interventions in the domain of social protection (social security) in the period 2012–2018. Through the systematic analysis of results, lessons learned and good practices of selected evaluation reports, this synthesis review identifies what works, for whom, and why, in the context of ILO's work on social protection (social security).

It aims to contribute to organizational learning, to provide guidance to ILO constituents on future work related to social protection (social security), and to strengthen the capacity of the Office to make evidence-based decisions from the findings generated through the analysis of the evaluation reports.

The summaries of this report are available in English, French and Spanish on EVAL's website.