
ILO/EC project
“Improving social protection and promoting employment”

INT/09/06/EEC

Final Independent Evaluation

Evaluator: José Francisco Pacheco Jiménez

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Acronyms and abbreviations

CTA	Chief Technical Advisor
EC	European Commission
GIZ	Deutsche Gesellschaft Für Internationale Zusammenarbeit (GIZ) GmbH
ILO	International Labor Office
OVI	Objectively Verifiable Indicators
RAP	Rapid Assessment Protocol
SC	Steering Committee
SPER	Social Protection Expenditure and Performance Review

Executive Summary

Project background

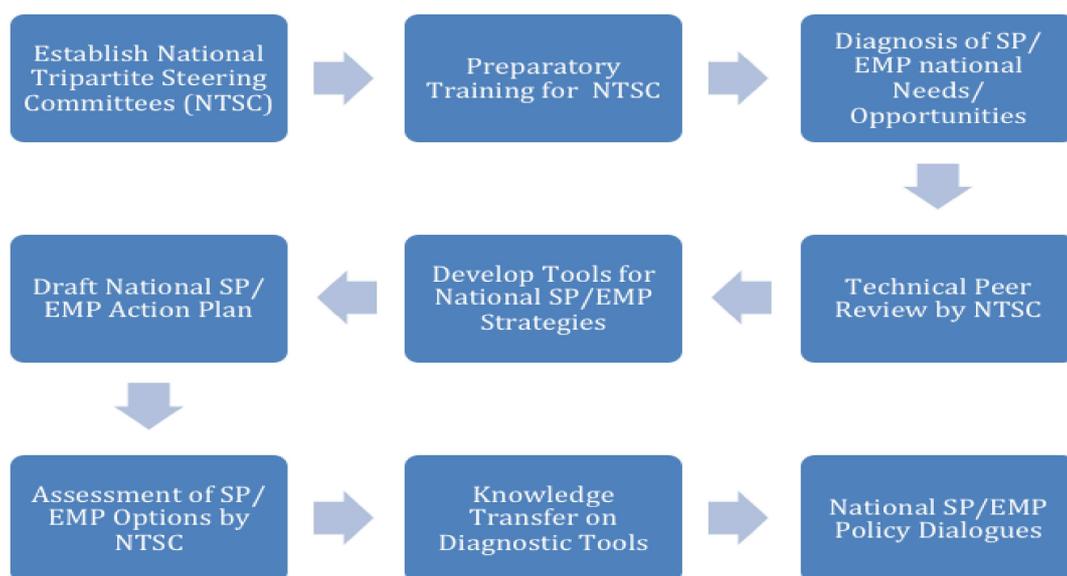
The 2008 Global Financial and economic Crisis negatively affected the social conditions of countries all over the world. Contrary to the situation in developed countries where social protection plays a key role in the mitigation of those negative effects, in most developing countries social protection systems and labor markets usually have minimal capacity to increase coverage and protect vulnerable families during economic downturns. Among other reasons, lack of the appropriate institutional capacities, fiscal constraints and poorly designed, fragmented policies help in explaining this marginal contribution.

It is in that context that the ILO/EC project *Improving social protection and promoting employment* was conceived. The initiative was defined as a joint effort between the ILO and the European Commission with the main objective of promoting *integrated social protection and employment policies based on national consensus*. The project was intended to be an input in the process of national social protection and employment policy formulation. The specific objectives were defined in the following terms:

1. Specific objective 1: Development of national plans to extend social protection and to promote employment demonstrating the feasibility and effectiveness of both a basic social protection package and coordinated inclusive employment strategies.
2. Specific objective 2: Promotion of an international campaign and platform for awareness-raising and exchanges of good practice in social protection and employment.

The initial planning identified several critical activities that were to be implemented in each country in more or less the same chronology, starting from the establishment of the National Tripartite Steering Committee and finishing with a general conference to share experiences and lessons learned.

Sequence of project activities according to initial planning



Source: ILO (2012).

The project included four expected results. The first one was a diagnosis of the corresponding national social protection and employment situation in the selected pilot-countries. This diagnosis was country-specific. The second expected result was a draft national action plan prepared through social dialogue and based on the integrated social protection-employment promotion approach. The third expected result was defined in terms of national capacity building, knowledge development and transfer. The final expected result was the dissemination of knowledge generated. This was done through three different channels. The first channel of dissemination was a project web page (<http://www.social-protection.org/gimi/gess/ShowWiki.do?wid=1273>) that made available all the relevant documents of the project including country-specific reports. The second channel was, precisely, the different reports prepared under the project. The third channel was the ILO/EC Interregional Conference held in Brussels in December, 2012.

Participant countries and initial context

To come up with the final list of project pilot countries, the ILO/EC team defined a set of criteria based on cross-regional orientation, low-income or lower-middle-income condition and a strong government commitment to engage in the project. In principle, the initiative identified four pilot countries: Cambodia, Burkina Faso, Honduras and Ethiopia. By mid-2011, however, Ethiopia was dropped because the Ministry of Finance requested the decentralization of resources and local execution without involvement of ILO and EU specialists, which the ILO/EC project Steering Committee in Brussels in June 2011 could not accept. The three remaining pilot countries showed quite distinctive conditions but in general terms, they all shared some particularities such as the low socio-economic status of the country's population and the commitment of the governments to implement social protection and employment policies.

Organizational arrangements

The administrative and technical implementation of the project activities was assumed by the ILO's Social Security Department and the Employment Policy Department. Additionally, representatives from these two departments and the European Commission formed the joint ILO/C Steering Committee with the primary responsibility of technically supervising the project. The ILO/EC Steering Committee provided overall guidance, monitoring and validation of the technical products. A first meeting of the Committee was to be held three months after the project initiation and then once per year. However, after the 2nd Meeting of the ILO/EC Steering Committee (29 September 2010), the body decided to meet every six months instead.

The Chief Technical Advisor (CTA) managed the project with the support of a part-time administrative/financial assistant and a part-time expert on social protection and employment modeling. The project had two CTAs during the full implementation of the project. The first CTA worked until mid-2011, thereafter he was replaced by a second CTA who coordinated the project until its end in December 2012. This second CTA is an ILO staff member from the Social Security Department in Geneva and devoted about two-thirds of his time to the coordination and supervision of the remaining different activities. His work was not charged to the project.

Sub-regional ILO offices also provide extensive support to the wide range of national activities and tasks, particularly in the promotion of **political** linkages at the national level. Besides, at the national level, each pilot country was initially intended to have a national coordinator that would liaise with and organize activities with national authorities and social partners, provide support to the international consultants who would develop the

technical products and to the National Steering Committees on a day-to-day basis. Other functions of the national coordinator included:

1. Data collection;
2. Diagnosis preparation and elaboration of draft national plans;
3. Organization of agendas of international consultants; and
4. Regular follow-up.

In the end, Burkina Faso was the only country without a formal national coordinator due to an express request from the Government and the decision of the ILO that the sub-regional ILO Office in Dakar could assume the responsibility. The key activities were, thus, directly coordinated with the Ministry of Economy and Finance.

There is an additional arrangement that deserves attention. Internally to the ILO, the project represented a challenge because it presupposed an *implicit* shared coordination of the project between Social Protection and Employment Policy Department. In practice, this shared coordination generated some frictions between units because each department considered the project biased its discussion and activities in favor of “the other area”.

Budget

The total budget of the project amounts to €2,769,124 of which the contribution of the European Community amounts to €2,500,000 (90.3%) while the ILO participation amounts to €269,124 (9.7%). About one-third of the budget (33.9%) was allocated to salaries while disbursements for research and publications amounted to an additional 20%. Other relevant spending categories were conference costs and capacity building (14.7%) and travel and per diem (12.7%).

Brief review of project implementation (milestones and major events)

The project was officially launched in November 2009 with an initial timeline of implementation of 36 months. During the first six months, the project devoted most of the efforts to set up the Joint ILO/EC Steering Committee, select international staff and the national coordinators for the pilot countries, initiate consultations with local stakeholders and set up local offices. Other critical activities included in the list of main tasks that the project implemented were the Interregional Conference “*Improving Social Protection and Promoting Employment: Experiences and Lessons Learnt*” which was held in Brussels, Belgium on 3 December 2012 and the publication of the Synthesis report “*Coordinating social protection and employment policies: Experiences from Burkina Faso, Cambodia and Honduras*” in 2013.

Additional important dates can be observed in Table 2. Later events ran almost simultaneously in the three countries although by the end of the program (Review of Draft Action Plans and National Dialogue stages) Honduras lagged behind the rest of the countries mainly for four reasons. The first one was the political conflict experienced in 2009 that motivated the decisions of the United Nations (UN) of not developing new projects until the situation improved. The UN lifted the restriction in June 2010. The second factor was the continuous changes of the national coordinator. During the whole period, three professionals coordinated the project in Honduras and this negatively affected the flow of activities across the time. In addition, the first coordinator started operations in June 2010, about six months after project launch. Third, under the existing regulatory framework in Honduras, all policy issues are to be discussed at the regional level before

implementation. Finally, problems with data availability affected the development of the initial diagnoses like the SPER and other related documents.

Calendar of implementation of the key activities, by country

Activity	Burkina Faso	Cambodia	Honduras
Establishment of National Tripartite Steering Committee	February 2011	January, 2011	March 2011
Diagnostic Studies (first drafts) and development of planning tools	August 2011	August 2011	August 2011
Validation Workshop	October 2011	November 2011	September 2011
Training Sessions	March 2012 & November 2012	November 2011 & November 2012	September 2011 & November 2012
Steering Committee Review of Draft Action Plans	March 2012	January 2012	May 2012
National Dialogue	May 2012	March 2012	October 2012

Source: Schwarzer (2012).

In terms of production, the observed differences in the rhythm of project implementation seem to be related with the total number of studies that each country finally prepared. For instance, 5 different studies were developed for Cambodia while 4 were completed for Burkina Faso and 3 for Honduras. Each country had, at a minimum, one SPER, one employment policy review and one National Action plan with considerations on how to integrate social protection expansion and employment promotion; additional reports with sector-specific assessments were also produced, as it can be seen in the list below.

Burkina Faso

- Social Protection Expenditure and Performance Review
- Towards a strategy of highly labor intensive public works programs (HIMO)
- Employment funds: performance and impact
- Towards an integrated social protection extension and employment promotion approach

Cambodia

- Social protection expenditure and performance review (SPER)
- Toward integrated employment and social protection policies
- Financial assessment of the National Social Protection Strategy for the Poor and Vulnerable (NSPS)
- Social security for the formal economy
- Toward a national employment strategy for sustained poverty reduction

Honduras

- La protección social en Honduras: informe para discusión / Mejorar la protección social y promover el empleo, un proyecto de la Unión Europea; Oficina Internacional del Trabajo: OIT, 2012
- Honduras: elementos para una política de empleo y combate a la pobreza / Mejorar la protección social y promover el empleo, un proyecto de la Unión Europea ; Oficina Internacional del Trabajo: OIT 2012
- Política Integrada de Empleo y Protección Social en Honduras. Lineamientos para un Plan de Acción Nacional: OIT 2013.

Relevance and strategic fit

The proposed project became highly relevant for two reasons. First, the socioeconomic and policy conditions that prevailed in the pilot countries in the context of the financial crisis created an adequate environment to start discussing about social protection and employment policies in a different way. In addition, the project implemented a series of activities and made use of ILO-developed tools that drive the initiative to good port. Other strategic components of the design, like the implementation of National Steering Committees (SC) to promote social dialogue, ownership and dissemination of results and the training program, played a critical role in the successful completion of the work.

The project was also relevant for both the ILO and the EU because it was designed in line with the main strategic approaches supported by the two institutions. The initiative was defined as a joint effort between the ILO and the European Commission with the purpose to assist the beneficiary countries in the formulation of integrated social protection and employment promotion policy based on national consensus, in line with the institutional commitments identified in the ILO's Decent Work agenda, the European Consensus on Development and the 2008 ILO Declaration on Social Justice for a Fair Globalization.

Despite this, the design showed a series of drawbacks and problems that called the attention of local stakeholders and other participants. The initial objectives were considered "too ambitious" although the subsequent work clarified that their scope was more limited than understood. The country selection process was based on a set of criteria with no specific guidelines to understand how the pilot countries were chosen while the integration of local stakeholders in the final project design was null, something that then complicated the implementation and the feeling of ownership that the same project wanted to motivate. Finally, the country training programs helped in increasing awareness and the basic knowledge about the integrated approach, policy tools (RAP, Social Budgeting, SPER) but some gaps still remained. A general conclusion in the three countries was that while the stakeholders were made aware of the linkages between social protection and employment there still remained some gaps in understanding so more intensive training is required in that area. Without a clear understanding of those links, the effective contribution of all local actors to the formulation of integrated policies will be considered an academic exercise. Success in this regard also requires a strong commitment of the different stakeholders to the activities of future projects. One of the major problems observed in this ILO/EC project was the fact that many stakeholders (workers, in particular) did not always send the same participants to training sessions and thus follow-up was not assured.

Effectiveness

The project contributed to a better understanding of the integrated policy approach. The SC worked as a mechanism to enhance tripartite social dialogue and disseminate the objectives and expected outcomes of the project. The implementation of the proposed activities allowed the project to develop draft national action plans, to train different actors on the concept and implications of the integrated approach and to disseminate case studies and experiences using a project web page. Although in the short term the impact of the project will be limited because the real effects on the population require changes in the way social protection and employment policies are designed, implemented and approached by the different stakeholders. However, it is clear that the initiative set up the foundations for further local developments towards the formulation of a new social policy.

While The positive outcomes of the project outweigh the weaknesses, these weaknesses identified in this evaluation reports should be taken into consideration to improve effectiveness of future projects. Lack of a complete monitoring system, with OVIs, baseline indicators and a risk assessment, affected the possibility to improve project management and to incorporate changes to the initial calendar, among others. Certainly the nature of the project imposes limits to the use of quantitative indicators but the absence of any follow-up tool should be reconsidered in the future. Also, the project faced challenges regarding the range of national actors from the social protection sector that should be involved in national consultations. Many of the interviewed persons mentioned the limited role of their institutions in the project despite their clear identification as a labor or as a social protection entity. This opens the discussion about the extension of the SC although this should be largely discussed to avoid eventual governance problems.

Efficiency

The project achieved important outcomes given the level of resources allocated and the activities proposed in the design. It seems that, from an efficiency perspective, the project had two phases in line with the administrator in place. During the first phase of the project (November 2009-July 2011), progress was slow and negatively affected by both internal factors (project administration issues) and external conditions (pilot countries political situation). Then in a second phase, with the advent of a new CTA (July 2011-December 2012), things moved faster and the project completed all the major activities and outputs. Late implementation of the project during the first phase affected not only the implementation of the activities but the time devoted to their development. In countries like Honduras, the social dialogue session was completed just six weeks before the project closure, leaving no room for more discussion of the results.

Sustainability

The project can be envisaged as an initiative that positively contributed to the discussion and preparation of social policies in the pilot countries. Moreover, the achieved outcomes may represent a breakpoint in the way social and employment policies are conceived in those countries, with substantial improvements in the formulation, implementation and impact on the beneficiaries. As it was commented before, the value added of the project comes in the form of:

1. A strengthened institutional framework where social dialogue plays a fundamental role;
2. Better technical skills at the professional level so future plans and programs can be formulated based on evidence;

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3. Identification of areas for improving the quality of the policies and their likely effect on the population;
 4. Cost estimation and assessment of the feasibility of implementing social and employment policies in a determined social and fiscal context.

Sustainability of the project outcomes is not a natural process but requires additional efforts from both the countries themselves and the partner institutions. Among the measures that should keep and increase the gains achieved by the project, this document identifies the following:

1. Training should be intensified and extended. The best way to maintain the outcomes of this project is through capacity building in order to keep the message flowing at the highest level of authority and among professional staff involved in analysis and policy development in the fields of social protection and employment. The results of the assessment show that, despite several training activities and workshops, there is still a gap in the understanding of the integrated approach and the linkages between the two areas. This message needs to be reinforced specially at the SC level. In addition, hands on training on policy tools (SPER, Social Budgeting, RAP, etc) require an extension of the number of participants and enough time to develop real cases. Finally, training contents should start delivering management tools to relevant staff and authorities in order to strengthen the capacity to administer large-scale projects, both technically and politically.
2. Social dialogue should be *institutionalized* as part of the policy formulation and follow-up process. The SC should exist as a permanent body of debate and not just as an entity that responds to a need at a determined moment. Honduras seems to be on the correct path. Not only the CES is the dialogue forum with strong political support but at this moment the country is debating a law to provide the CES with legal representation and a statutory framework that would isolate it from electoral and political influences.
3. Advocacy and awareness-raising strategies to promote the integrated approach should also be extended to other local stakeholders in addition to those ones participating in the Tripartite National Steering Committees. This new policy perspective requires more dissemination among other social actors like universities, media and NGOs. An active *communication strategy*, aimed at positioning the approach in the panel of discussions and creating greater awareness, is needed.
4. In line with the previous point, the importance of expanding the list of public sectors that participate in social protection activities was also highlighted. Education, for instance, is usually excluded from the discussion or its role is minimized despite its fundamental role in human capital formation.
5. Political consensus and will is an important piece of the puzzle. In practically all the countries, the governments in turn realized the importance of discussing the integrated approach and decided to take different type of actions to preserve the discussion and prepare future plans. The abovementioned case of Honduras and the decision of the government of Burkina Faso to move the coordination of social protection policies to the Prime Ministry are examples of this political support. However, many stakeholders showed concerns of having the government as the manager of the process, given the political fluctuations and electoral interests that may affect it. Thus, there is an increasing consensus that civil society organizations (employers, workers or a third party) should take the role and coordinate the required actions. Again, the experience of the CES, where workers and employers agreed on a series of labor issues (minimum salary, for instance) without the direct mediation of

the government is an example that two parties can sit down and negotiate issues of mutual interest.

6. Political determination should be translated into fiscal will. Government and international agencies should allocate funds to finance the operation of the SC, to disseminate the messages and to prepare additional studies that would be needed in the course of formulation of social protection-employment policies. For instance, there is a need to undertake research on the nature of employment and other national labor market challenges and in the identification of sources of funding to expand fiscal space for social protection purposes.
7. More structural measures should also be analysed. For instance, in all the three pilot countries, the information systems lack even the most basic indicators to guide policy formulation so a deep restructuring of the data flows is required. Also, governments should pay attention to ministerial organization to avoid duplicated functions and to promote cooperation among the institutions. For instance, in Honduras there is a Ministry of Labor and Social Security and, at the same, in 2009 the government created the Ministry of Social Development. The former has the administration of the social security system while the later develops and implements poverty reduction programs. Although it is clear that both entities have some natural linkages in their programs and activities, coordination of tasks hardly occurs.

Conclusions

Key conclusions of the report can be summarized as follows:

1. In general terms, the ILO/EC project was a well-designed initiative that took advantage of an international situation (the financial crisis) and identified an area of critical importance for the socioeconomic development of developing countries. Despite some specific issues in the initial definition of the objectives and expected products, the project was pertinent and relevant to the development priorities of the pilot countries. The activities included in the design were sufficient to achieve the objectives of promoting the integrated approach, develop draft action plans and disseminate good results.
2. The project achieves the objectives defined in the corresponding design. But, besides the successful completion of activities and the preparation of several reports, the project was important because it promoted social dialogue, increased the level of awareness about the role of social protection and employment policies and provided the basis for future policy initiatives. Social dialogue was a critical success factor in countries where multisectoral negotiation is not the rule. This brings the social protection-employment promotion issue back to the priorities of the policy agenda. In addition, the technical inputs of the project provided the foundations for future policy formulation. At this point in time, all the pilot countries have used the reports to start discussing their future social and employment policies.
3. The available documental evidence is clear about the existence of design and implementation issues that may require further discussion and review to get the necessary lessons for overall management improvement in future projects. The evaluation highlights the importance of paying attention to the following aspects: the project design should be designed jointly with local stakeholders (at least with other ILO offices and EU delegations); the objectives and expected outcomes can be the same for all the pilot countries but the activities should be country-specific; projects should identify performance indicators to monitor follow-up; pilot country selection criteria should be more specific, not using broad standards as the ones applied to this

project; there should be a mechanism in place to introduce changes in the design in a more flexible way.

4. As a consequence of the project, there is an increasing awareness regarding the importance of developing coherent national policies based on national consensus that take into account the links between social protection and employment. Both policymakers and social actors in the pilot countries consider of the utmost importance to move to a new approach and they understand the positive effects this decision may have. In this regards, the training workshops played a critical role. Despite this enhanced awareness, not all the actors fully understood how to link social protection extension and employment promotion. In short, there is still a general tendency to consider social protection as a synonym of social protection. This is definitely an area where ILO and EU should continue efforts to improve the capacities of the technical staff and the authorities in the conceptual and methodological scope of the integrated approach.
5. The project faced challenges in integrating the long list of agents related to social protection and employment. Despite the positive role of the SC in the promotion of the social dialogue, the participation of some key stakeholders was limited to a minor role, mostly assistance to workshops. In some cases, excluded institutions were a critical piece in the social protection puzzle as it was the case of the Ministry of Social Development of Honduras although this decision relied on the internal decisions of the country regarding the composition of the Steering Committee. The apparent contradiction generated some concerns in local agents and raised the issue of a potential need to redefine the range of actors to be included and working rules of Tripartite Commissions.
6. Not all the local stakeholders were convinced that the ILO has full clarity of the integrated approach and how both employment and social protection policies can be coordinated. It was said that the ILO still promotes two bodies of policies (one for employment and one for social protection) even though the target population is basically the same. This introduces an element of confusion among local authorities.
7. Some management problems also appeared in the course of the project. The CTAs found difficult to manage it due to the centralized format that the project (distance command from Geneva) and the absence of at least a list of basic indicators to follow-up progress.
8. The ILO played an essential role by contributing to the project in 4 areas: the ILO/EC trademark provides confidence on the quality of the work; the project was based on policy approaches developed by the ILO (integrated approach, Decent Work); the project made intensive use of policy tools developed by the ILO (Social Budgeting, SPER and RAP) during the workshops; and ILO technical and administrative staff heavily supported the implementation.
9. Despite some efforts, the relationship with other international agencies was limited to sporadic (but useful) interventions in the development of specific products. Local stakeholders, however, have been claiming for a more active participation of the different development partners in the projects of other agencies. In some cases, as in Cambodia, some public authorities mentioned that the lack of an integrated agenda caused, for instance, that the country now to have two labor market assessments.
10. Due to the nature of the project, it is not possible to talk about the impact of the project. The initiative should be regarded as part of a broader chain with repercussions in the formulation of integrated national policies that, at the same time, are expected to affect the lives of the final beneficiaries. However, the project generated some effects in the overall country capacity to develop integrated policies.

The sustainability of the results cannot be taken for granted and to minimize any potential loss the development agencies, donors, governments and civil society groups should give continuity to a series of actions in terms of social dialogue strengthening, capacity building, information system improvement and enhanced sensitization among the stakeholders.

11. The operation framework in which the EU operates seems to be very rigid to the type of projects that the ILO promotes where national results and outcomes depend on the priorities and will of national governments and stakeholders (such as concerning national policy development). In the specific case of this project, changes to the logframe were proposed in line with the recommendations made by the ROM but they were not accepted by the ILO/EC Steering Committee in October 2011.

Lessons learned

1. The new integrated approach reveals a series of advantages that, if materialized, may help countries to improve the process of policy formulation and enhance the expected results and impacts on the population. However, the new approach put on the table for debating a series of. One of these topics refers to the scope and work of the Tripartite Commissions. The experience shows that, under a new policy approach as the one supported by the project, the institutional framework in which it relies should also experience important changes. Specifically, if the integrated approach promotes a broad concept of social promotion, then the scope of the social dialogue should be expanded too in order to incorporate all this range of groups and institutions that are now part of the concept.
2. Problems with the institutional settings in low-income countries make difficult the implementation of the policy tools presented as part of this project during the training workshops. New simplified tools and a full reformulation of the existing information systems will contribute to advance toward enhanced institutional capacity to do more complex analyses.
3. The discussion and presentation of results during the Interregional Conference in Brussels in December 2012 would have benefitted from more detailed exchange of country experiences in integrating social protection and employment policies and future challenges. The lesson here is that, for future projects, such experience sharing conferences would benefit from the contributions of both those involved at national level in **political decision-making and those involved with providing technical knowhow to the policy formulation process**. As it was stated by the EU delegation in Honduras, there should be a higher level of pre-conference coordination to check up the contents of the presentation and recommend any modifications previous to the main event.
4. The CTAs had project management problems, in part, because the initiative had no specific metrics to follow-up the progress at the country level. Certainly general indicators exist but some opinions established that nation-specific metrics should exist because the internal conditions vary considerably from country to country. Keeping the same indicators, especially outcomes indicators, is necessary to guarantee comparability across countries but for monitoring purposes, intermediate indicators should exist. For future efforts, the lesson is that even if the scale of the project is small or the nature of its outputs is qualitative, each project should have a small set of relevant indicators, including OVI coefficients.
5. There is a tendency between government officials and decision makers to separate employment from social protection. It is clear that they do not see clear linkages between those two areas in terms of effectiveness of policies, and concrete development actions. Therefore more advocacy and training in this particular is needed in order to design new interventions or new activities. In fact, some of the training sessions should be studying real cases where the clear understanding of this relationship had made the difference, in order to create conciseness majorly in the decision makers but also in technicians involved.
6. Time lost during the first months of the project due to internal (slowly-implemented activities) and external causes (political unrest in Honduras and Burkina Faso) was critical to understand the short time devoted to National Policy Dialogue Forums and workshops to discuss results of the project. In other words, time is gold and losing too much time during the first stages may complicate the implementation of later activities, perhaps the most important of the project. Future initiatives should be

aware of a series of issues before planning the calendar of implementation: the likelihood that something will go wrong (*risk assessment*), the time allocated to administrative issues (personnel and hiring of consultant) and the level of flexibility the project management guidelines offer in case any variation is required.

7. The experience in Burkina Faso shows that this type of initiatives needs full-time local coordinators. Although the international expert who coordinated activities in Burkina Faso did a very good job, his part-time, long distance involvement was something that affected the smooth implementation of the project. It seems that the ideal local coordinator is a mix of the background and functions of the national coordinators hired for Cambodia and Honduras: a local person who works at the coordinating agency.
8. The CTA is a critical position whose work has significant implications for the normal implementation of the project. One of the factors that affected the late implementation of the project was the slow reaction of the first CTA to the unexpected conditions in the countries. The experience calls for the need to review the recruitment process and the requirements to fill positions of similar nature.
9. The administrative framework in which projects such as the ILO/EC initiative operate needs to be more flexible and give more tools to local coordinators. In this way, projects can react according to national conditions without waiting long periods to proceed when the external circumstances change.

Good practices

Some of the good practices promoted under the project were:

1. National Steering Committees/Tripartite Commissions were excellent bodies as mechanisms to promote social dialogue, to increase the level of information sharing and experiences among participants and to enhance project ownership. Through these committees, the project was able to increase the level of awareness at the time it delegated sufficient self-decision to determine whether the technical inputs were of relevance for the country.
2. The use of an extended network of institutions “outside the SC” was a good way to disseminate results and reach groups that were not actively involved in the project. That was the case in Cambodia, where the project made use of several CARD mechanisms that contributed to increasing the outreach of the communication and dissemination of results.
3. One of the most remarkable characteristics of the initiative was the decision to build-up the project based on existing national efforts (i.e. social or employment policies, national development plans, etc). This was useful for several reasons. First, this sent a positive signal to the local agents that the ILO and the EU wanted to construct something according to local vision and conditions. This reinforced their role as *guiding partners*. In this way, the project wanted to motivate ownership. Second, basing the process on national initiatives improved efficiency by reducing time allocated to issues already discussed and approved at the national level. So more efforts could be applied to the preparation of integrated policies.
4. The project left it up to the countries to decide on the best way to organize their National Tripartite Steering Committee and this resulted in a better comprehension of national conditions and how they should be managed. The final format of the SC was the result of the prevailing political conditions governing each country.
5. The role performed by the second CTA can be classified as a good practice. Daily involvement in the project and constant communication with local coordinators plus regular fieldtrips were fundamental to complete in one and a half year all the core activities of the project despite the late start.

Recommendations

The report proposes the following recommendations:

Social dialogue should be maintained and strengthened but with some changes. Tripartite social dialogue is one of the cornerstones of any sound policy formulation process as it integrates representatives of at least the three core groups in the country (government, workers and employers). However, there is an increasing need to expand the range of participation in the SCs to include other relevant representative institutions and agents that belong to the social protection realm, in line with the new approach. In fact, the SC in Burkina had an inter-ministerial nature. Thus, the SC should be expanded to include participants from the health, education and social assistance sectors, among others. Also, the ILO/EC should promote the approval of local regulations to give the SC a permanent nature far from the electoral and political waves that affect developing countries from time to time.

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.** The report recommends paying more attention to two critical factors for the success of future policy development: information systems and administrative/organizational processes. Information system strengthening is a vital issue because the level of data availability and quality is so poor that it makes difficult to clearly adopt measures based on strong evidence. Also, it may be important to support the consolidation of social protection and employment institutional process so linkages exist and, in this way, an integrated approach can be effectively developed. As they are know, their organization respond to an old-fashioned way to split the two types of policies as separate elements.

Continue the capacity building program. The sustainability of many of the project results depends on the existence of a group of government officials and civil society persons who clearly understand the integrated approach and/or are able to implement certain type of assessment to formulate appropriate policies. As mentioned above, it is essential to **build strong national capacities.** Thus, training workshops and other related activities should be part of the proposed working agenda. Training plans should be oriented to reinforce the understanding of the links between social protection and employment, to instruct on how to develop labor policy and to promote hands-on exercises that would replicate real cases.

Promote and finance the preparation of studies that search for fiscal space options. After completing the studies on costing estimates and fiscal feasibility assessment, technical analysis is required to identify and evaluate *financing options* to close the gap between the current amount of resources allocated to social protection and employment policies and the required resources under different policy scenarios.

Encourage the use of individual logframes for a better project management framework. Unified objectives and expected outcomes can be adequate to compare the results of the project across the different countries. However, establishing a single logframe for all the countries may not be the most appropriate because of the idiosyncratic conditions offered by each nation; it is necessary to have a country-specific set of activities that will guide the implementation of the project according to local considerations.

Multi-country projects should move towards a more decentralized execution. In line with the previous point, for multi-country projects the administration model should be defined in different terms. An alternative model consists of a structure where the CTA in Geneva defines a single methodological framework and provides the required

backstopping support. Then, local coordinators follow the framework but have enough degree of freedom to adapt the logframe to the country conditions.

Introduce changes to the administrative framework in which this type of project operates. The EU administrative framework needs to be more flexible because, as it currently works, it does not grant enough degree of freedom to introduce (sometimes critical) changes to the project. A modified framework should be implemented and adapted to the conditions of developing countries (political instability, environmental disasters, institutional poor capacity to manage development projects, etc).

Countries should move to the preparation of integrated policies. After completing the draft action plan, the next natural step seems to be the preparation of national integrated policies formulated with the inputs produced under this project. However, little progress would be observed if the country commits to the preparation of the Integrated Policy before solving many of the institutional factors affecting the performance of the different entities.

In relation to the previous point, adequate preparation of the countries to formulate integrated policies pass through a full clarification of the project inside the ILO. For the ILO, one recommendation is the strengthening of its own role as regulation and normative entity, by the development of a clear concept of the link between employment and social protection. One example of this condition is the current situation in Honduras. There, both the high level of unemployed or underemployed persons and the low rate of social protection coverage may be referring, at the end, to the same population. Although this may implied that one single policy should be defined (because it is targeting the same group), some opinions pinpoint to the fact that, currently, the ILO employment promotion programs are designing activities to improve the access to employment no matter what happen with the social security coverage and vice versa. This situation, is was said, is a bad signal to political stakeholders in the different countries because it may be saying that the entity itself does not have full clarity of the approach it is promoting. This situation provokes that the governance entities such as the Ministries of Labour have no arguments to reinforce the integration of actions and consequently the maximization of resources is more difficult.

1. Project background

The 2008 Global Financial and economic Crisis negatively affected the social conditions of countries all over the world. Contrary to the situation in developed countries where social protection plays a key role in the mitigation of those negative effects, in most developing countries social protection systems and labor markets usually have minimal capacity to increase coverage and protect vulnerable families during economic downturns. Among other reasons, lack of the appropriate institutional capacities, fiscal constraints and poorly designed, fragmented policies help in explaining this marginal contribution.

It is in that context that the ILO/EC project Improving social protection and promoting employment was conceived. The initiative was defined as a joint effort between the ILO and the European Commission with the purpose to assist the beneficiary countries in the formulation of integrated social protection and employment promotion policy based on national consensus, in line with the institutional commitments identified in the ILO's Decent Work agenda, the European Consensus on Development and the 2008 ILO Declaration on Social Justice for a Fair Globalization.

The overall objective of the project, according to its Logical Framework, was *to promote integrated social protection and employment policies based on national consensus*. The project was intended to be an *input* in the process of national social protection and employment policy formulation.

Specific objectives were defined in the following terms:

1. Specific objective 1: Development of national plans to extend social protection and to promote employment demonstrating the feasibility and effectiveness of both a basic social protection package and coordinated inclusive employment strategies.
2. Specific objective 2: Promotion of an international campaign and platform for awareness-raising and exchanges of good practice in social protection and employment.

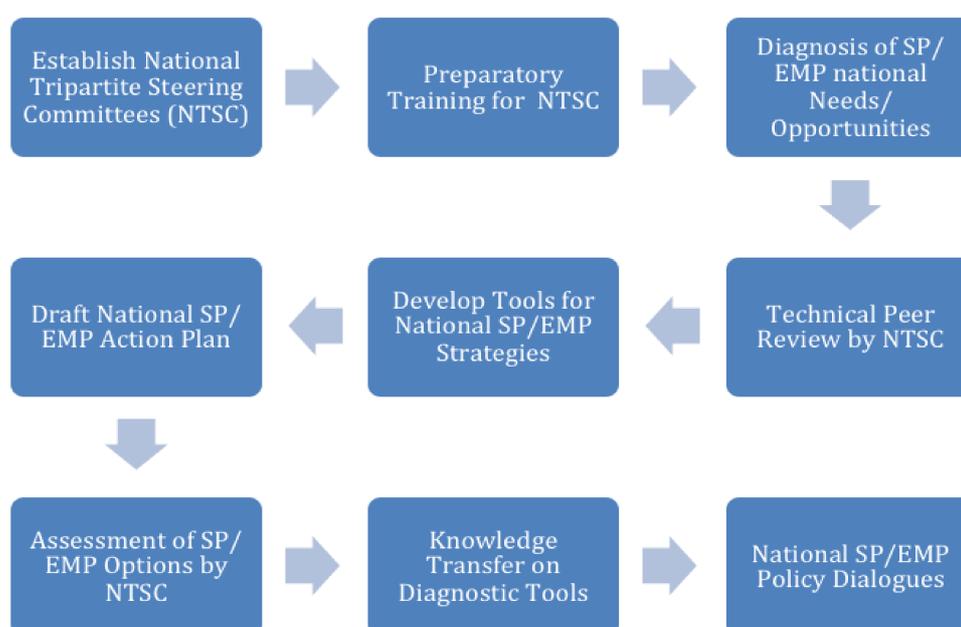
The first objective recognizes the importance of social protection in the fight against poverty. In particular, during periods of economic crisis countries with strong social protection and employment policies usually experience milder effects than those without these policies. Thus, the project considers of the utmost importance the consolidation of efforts aimed at formulating integrated plans to enhance employability of the workforce and protection of persons in vulnerable conditions.

The second specific objective is related to the role of the project as dialogue enhancer and experience sharing laboratory at both the local level (internal to the country) and at the international level. In this way, the project was conceived as an excellent opportunity to generate evidence about the implementation and effects of the integrated social protection-employment approach, the Social Protection Floor and the Decent Work agenda in developing countries. Part of the budget, thus, was allocated to fostering local tripartite dialogue and to disseminating the experiences in other countries.

The initial planning identified several critical activities that were to be implemented in each country in more or less the same chronology, starting from the establishment of the National Tripartite Steering Committee and finishing with a general conference to share experiences and lessons learned. In short, the following are the key activities of the project:

1. Establishment of National Tripartite Steering Committees in each of the pilot countries with an aim to building an institutional mechanism conducive to effective social dialogue on employment and social protection policies and preparatory training of its members.
2. Development of diagnostic studies on current employment challenges and opportunities and social protection.
3. Validation of the studies by the National Tripartite Steering Committees and discussion of policy options in tripartite workshops.
4. Development of planning tools necessary for the preparation of cost estimates for the formulation of programs for extending basic social protection and promoting employment.
5. Elaboration of draft integrated national action plans for the extension of social security and employment promotion.
6. Validation of the draft action plans by the National Tripartite Steering Committees through National tripartite employment and social protection policy dialogues.
7. Knowledge transfer and capacity building of national stakeholders on diagnostic tools for the extension of social protection and employment promotion. Building knowledge and technical capacity for the formulation of integrated policy frameworks.
8. Organization of National Employment and Social Protection policy dialogue conferences to discuss draft national action plans.
9. Elaboration and publication of the final project synthesis report” are presented as separate activities.

Figure 1. Sequence of project activities according to initial planning



Source: ILO (2012)

The project included four expected results. The first one was a diagnosis of the corresponding national social protection and employment situation in the selected pilot-countries. This diagnosis was country-specific. For instance, in Burkina Faso, the assessment of the employment policy focuses in the performance of the Employment Funds (*Fonds d'Emploi*) and the Labor Intensive Public Works Program while in Cambodia the corresponding employment policy assessment adopted a broader approach. In all the countries, the project promotes the preparation of Social Protection Expenditure and Performance Review (SPER) although the final content of each document depended on data availability.

The second expected result was a draft national action plan prepared through social dialogue and based on the integrated social protection-employment promotion approach. By the end of the project, all the countries had a final document with “*elements for the formulation of a social protection extension and employment promotion integrated policy*”, being this one of the critical inputs for the future preparation of national social policy.

The third expected result was defined in terms of national capacity building, knowledge development and transfer. Dissemination of knowledge had at least two dimensions. The first one, with a more theoretical and conceptual focus, aimed at disseminating key concepts such as Decent Work and the Integrated Social Protection-Employment Promotion Approach for the formulation of social policy. The second dimension had a practical orientation. For this, the project would implement diagnostic tools that would be applied in the country to generate specific assessments about the design and performance of social programs, the cost of social protection policies and the identification of key areas for future policy. That was the case, for instance, of the **SPER approach** applied in the three countries and the **Social Budget methodology** and the **Rapid Assessment Protocol (RAP)** applied in Cambodia and Burkina Faso. In this way, the project aimed at enhancing national capacities in order to have better dialogue discussions based on empirical evidence and where all the stakeholders talk the same language.

The final expected result was the dissemination of knowledge generated. This was done through three different channels. The first channel of dissemination was a project web page (<http://www.social-protection.org/gimi/gess/ShowWiki.do?wid=1273>) that made available all the relevant documents of the project including country-specific reports. The second channel was, precisely, the different reports prepared under the project. The third channel was the ILO/EC Interregional Conference held in Brussels in December, 2012.

1.1. Participant countries and initial context

To come up with the final list of project pilot countries, the ILO/EC team defined a set of criteria based on cross-regional orientation, low-income or lower-middle-income condition and a strong government commitment to engage in the project. In principle, the initiative identified four pilot countries: Cambodia, Burkina Faso, Honduras and Ethiopia. By mid-2011, however, Ethiopia was dropped because the Ministry of Finance requested the decentralization of resources and local execution without involvement of ILO and EU specialists, which the ILO/EC project Steering Committee in Brussels in June 2011 could not accept. The three remaining pilot countries showed quite distinctive conditions but in general terms, they all shared some particularities such as the low socio-economic status of the country's population and the commitment of the governments to implement social protection and employment policies.

Burkina Faso was the first West African country to implement a poverty-reduction strategy in 2000-2003, which was the first expression of political will to improve the living conditions of the population through specific health and education policies. This interest in social protection and employment-related initiatives continued during the rest of the

decade as reflected in the second generation Poverty Reduction Strategy (2004-2006) and the *Stratégie de Croissance Accélérée et du Développement Durable* (SCADD 2010–2015). At the time when the project was launched, the country had a National Employment Policy, a National Labour Policy and a National Social Protection Policy, all of them working individually and without any type of linkages between them.

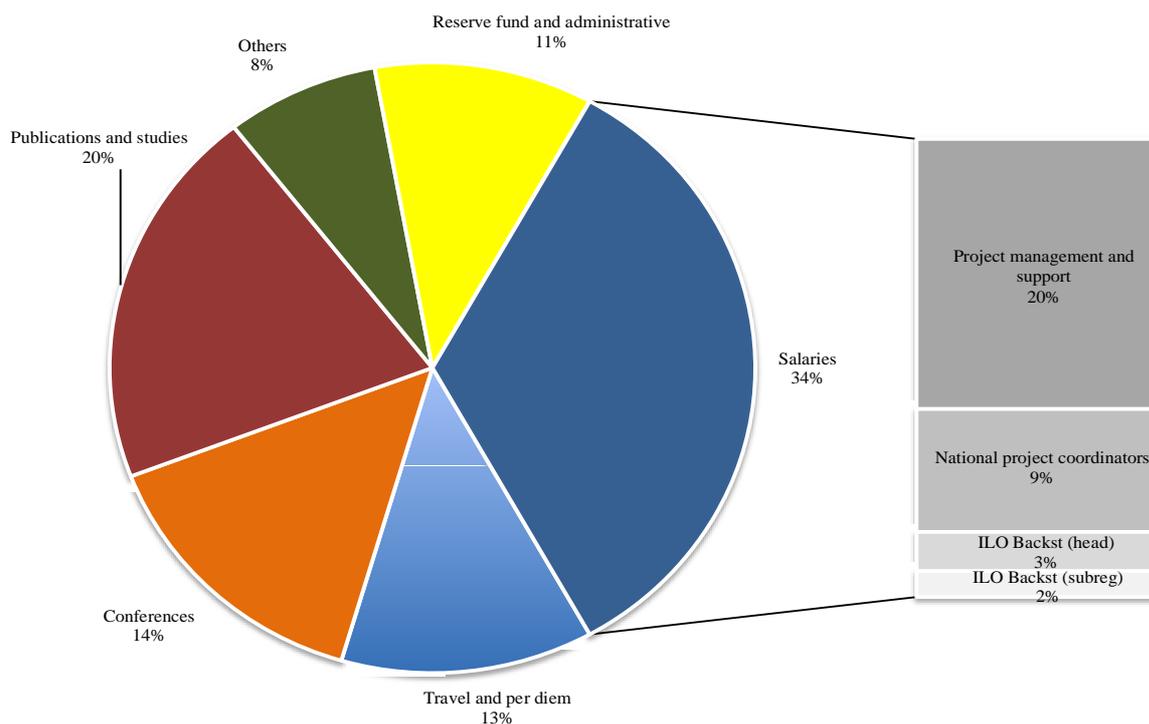
Among the three final pilot countries of the project, Cambodia was the country with the highest average GDP growth rate (8.3% in the past decade) and the lowest poverty incidence (30%). Political commitment to promote social protection coverage and employment is grounded in the *Rectangular Strategy for Growth, Employment, Equity and Efficiency Phase II 2008-2013* (that contains the ‘Socio-Economic Policy Agenda’) and the *National Strategic Development Plan (NSDP) Update 2009-2013* that provides the roadmap for the implementation of the priorities outlined in the first document. In 2011, the country adopted the National Social Protection Strategy (NSPS) aimed at extending social protection coverage to the poor and most vulnerable in the short term and to establish a comprehensive social protection system with well-defined social insurance programs. As in Burkina Faso, both employment and social protection programs are unarticulated so their efforts lack the synergies and complementarities that the ILO integrated approach promotes. Thus, the ILO/EC project became an excellent opportunity to promote the coordination between the NSPS and the corresponding employment policies.

Honduras presented the highest poverty rate (over 60% of its population) among the three pilot countries and some political instability at the moment of launching the project. This situation delayed the formal implementation of the project until June 2010. In that year, the Government launched the Plan de Nación/Visión de País, a long-run development plan with five key goals two of which were related to social protection expansion and decent work. By the time the ILO/EC project started, the country had no formal social protection policy despite the existence of a long-established Social Security Institute and several poverty alleviation programs. An employment policy (*Propuesta Plan Nacional para la Generación de Empleo Digno en Honduras*) was approved in 2006 in line with Decent Work guidelines and objectives.

1.2. Budget

The total budget of the project amounts to €2,769,124 of which the contribution of the European Community amounts to €2,500,000 (90.3%) while the ILO participation amounts to €269,124 (9.7%). About one-third of the budget (33.9%) was allocated to salaries while disbursements for research and publications amounted to an additional 20%. Other relevant spending categories were conference costs and capacity building (14.7%) and travel and per diem (12.7%).

Graph 1. Initial Distribution of the Budget



1.3. Organizational arrangements

The administrative and technical implementation of the project activities was assumed by the ILO's Social Security Department and the Employment Policy Department. Additionally, representatives from these two departments and the European Commission formed the joint ILO/EC Steering Committee with the primary responsibility of technically supervising the project. The ILO/EC Steering Committee provided overall guidance, monitoring and validation of the technical products. A first meeting of the Committee was to be held three months after the project initiation and then once per year. However, after the 2nd Meeting of the ILO/EC Steering Committee (29 September 2010), the body decided to meet every six months instead.

The Chief Technical Advisor (CTA) managed the project with the support of a part-time administrative/financial assistant and a part-time expert on social protection and employment modeling. The project had two CTAs during the full implementation of the project. The first CTA worked until mid-2011, thereafter he was replaced by a second CTA who coordinated the project until its end in December 2012. This second CTA is an ILO staff member from the Social Security Department in Geneva and devoted about two-thirds of his time to the coordination and supervision of the remaining different activities. His work was not charged to the project.

Sub-regional ILO offices also provide extensive support to the wide range of national activities and tasks, particularly in the promotion of political linkages at the national level. Besides, at the national level, each pilot country was initially intended to have a national coordinator that would liaise with and organize activities with national authorities and social partners, provide support to the international consultants who would develop the technical products and to the National Steering Committees on a day-to-day basis. Other functions of the national coordinator included:

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1. Data collection;
 2. Diagnosis preparation and elaboration of draft national plans;
 3. Organization of agendas of international consultants; and
 4. Regular follow-up.

In the end, Burkina Faso was the only country without a formal national coordinator due to an express request from the Government and the decision of the ILO that the sub-regional ILO Office in Dakar could assume the responsibility. The key activities were, thus, directly coordinated with the Ministry of Economy and Finance.

There is an additional arrangement that deserves attention. Internally to the ILO, the project represented a challenge because it presupposed an *implicit* shared coordination of the project between Social Protection and Employment Policy Department. In practice, this shared coordination generated some frictions between units because each department considered the project biased its discussion and activities in favor of “the other area”.

1.4. Target groups and final beneficiaries

Government officials of relevant institutions in social protection and employment areas (mainly the ministries of Labour, Social Security, Employment, Finance, Planning, Health and Education) and civil society groups (particularly trade unions and employers organizations) were the main target groups of the project. Target groups and final beneficiaries, however, were different. Because the aim of the initiative was to provide the foundations for the preparation of integrated plans, any positive outcome from the project would be translated into better policies for improved living conditions of lower income households, unemployed and vulnerable groups. The Project Document specifically states that there is a strong motivation to orient policies towards people living in rural areas and women, given that social protection programs tend to undercover them and, at the same time, they tend to have higher informal employment rates.

1.5. Roles of the ILO, EU and other partners

As mentioned in a previous point, the ILO played an important role in the overall monitoring of the project, in providing technical guidance through the process and in supporting political liaisons with local stakeholders, this without forgetting backstopping support (technical and administrative) provided by the Geneva office and the local and sub-regional offices. However, many other actors played critical roles in the implementation of the activities and the discussion of main results. Government officials, employers and workers were critical for the social dialogue, for providing guidance towards the diagnostics of the national situation and defining of priorities for the national action plan, and the validation of products but these were just some of the expected tasks of those groups. In the future, members of the Tripartite Steering Committee are expected to disseminate knowledge acquired through workshops and training sessions. Other relevant actors were civil society organizations, international agencies (especially World Bank in Burkina Faso and GIZ in Cambodia) and EC delegations were also important supportive stakeholders in the process of policy dialogue, product development, validation of results and ownership promotion. Table 1 presents a detailed list of the main tasks per group.

Table 1. Key participants and their most relevant tasks

Participant group	Main activities
ILO	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Overall technical guidance ▪ Political linkages at local level ▪ Monitoring ▪ Report validation ▪ Backstopping ▪ Day-to-day management ▪ Administration and coordination of activities
Government officials	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Active role in the Tripartite National Steering Committees ▪ Guidance in the preparation of the diagnosis and the national plans ▪ Information provision ▪ Promotion of social dialogue ▪ Document validation ▪ Direct receptors of knowledge dissemination/training ▪ Disseminating agents
Employers' and workers' representatives	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Key participants of the policy-dialogue process ▪ Participants of training sessions ▪ Promotion of social dialogue ▪ Guidance and product validation
EC National delegations	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Promotion of ownership of the project by local authorities ▪ Consultation activities (National Tripartite Steering Committee) ▪ Inputs to products of the project ▪ Support organization of the Participants in policy dialogue conference
Civil society and other international agencies and donors	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Members of the consultation process ▪ Technical guidance for elaboration of diagnosis and national plans ▪ Participation in international
EC-ILO Joint Management	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Overall technical guidance

Source: Project document.

1.6. Brief review of project implementation (milestones and major events)

The project was officially launched in November 2009 with an initial timeline of implementation of 36 months. During the first six months, the project devoted most of the efforts to set up the Joint ILO/EC Steering Committee, select international staff and the national coordinators for the pilot countries, initiate consultations with local stakeholders and set up local offices. Other critical activities included in the list of main tasks that the project implemented were the Interregional Conference “*Improving Social Protection and Promoting Employment: Experiences and Lessons Learnt*” which was held in Brussels, Belgium on 3 December 2012 and the publication of the Synthesis report “Coordinating social protection and employment policies: Experiences from Burkina Faso, Cambodia and Honduras” in 2013.

The key activities, however, experienced important delays. For instance, the first key activity (establishment of the National Tripartite Steering Committee) was completed 14 months after project took-off in Cambodia, 15 months in Burkina Faso and 16 months in Honduras. In other words, completing this task took on average 39% of the available time span.

The establishment of the National Tripartite Steering Committees was not a straightforward task. In the three countries, the final decision on who should integrate the Committee took longer than expected. In Honduras, the government decided that the **Consejo Económico y Social** (CES, for its initials in Spanish) would serve as the local body given its role as a discussion forum for reviewing the social and employment policies. Several ministries and all the key social stakeholders integrated the CES. It was not until March 2011 that the CES started operating. In a similar way, in Burkina Faso problems regarding the choice of which ministry should coordinate the project (Ministry of Employment or Ministry of Work and Social Security) yielded a final decision to form an **Interministerial Commission** led by the Ministry of Finance. Finally, in Cambodia, the country agreed to the establishment of a **Steering Committee** with a broad participatory base that included members of over 15 different organizations and public entities.

Other critical dates are presented in Table 2. Later events ran almost simultaneously in the three countries although by the end of the program (Review of Draft Action Plans and National Dialogue stages) Honduras lagged behind the rest of the countries mainly for four reasons. The first one was the political conflict experienced in 2009 that motivated the decisions of the United Nations (UN) of not developing new projects until the situation improved. The UN lifted the restriction in June 2010. The second factor was the continuous changes of the national coordinator. During the whole period, three professionals coordinated the project in Honduras and this negatively affected the flow of activities across the time. In addition, the first coordinator started operations in June 2010, about six months after project launch. Third, under the existing regulatory framework in Honduras, all policy issues are to be discussed at the regional level before implementation. Finally, problems with data availability affected the development of the initial diagnoses like the SPER and other related documents.

Table 2. Calendar of implementation of the key activities, by country

Activity	Burkina Faso	Cambodia	Honduras
Establishment of National Tripartite Steering Committee	February 2011	January, 2011	March 2011
Diagnostic Studies (first drafts) and development of planning tools	August 2011	August 2011	August 2011
Validation Workshop	October 2011	November 2011	September 2011
Training Sessions	March 2012 & November 2012	November 2011 & November 2012	September 2011 & November 2012
Steering Committee Review of Draft Action Plans	March 2012	January 2012	May 2012
National Dialogue	May 2012	March 2012	October 2012

Source: Schwarzer (2012).

External and internal circumstances explained that delay. The *coup d'Etat* in Honduras and the political riots in Burkina Faso (and the impediment to travel to the country) paused the start of operations in both countries. This situation also affected Cambodia because of the decision to stop any further actions until better news comes from the politically unstable nations. Unexpected delays plus the absence of a contingency strategy and alternative paths of action motivated the replacement of the CTA and left a short period (September 2011-December 2012) to implement the most important activities.

According to table 2, things advanced at a faster pace in Cambodia while Honduras usually lagged behind the other two countries. Effective implementation time was 24 months in Cambodia (63% of the initial timeline), 23 months in Burkina Faso (60%) and 22 months in Honduras (58%).

In terms of production, the observed differences in the rhythm of project implementation seem to be related with the total number of studies that each country finally prepared. For instance, 5 different studies were developed for Cambodia while 4 were completed for Burkina Faso and 3 for Honduras. Each country had, at a minimum, one SPER, one employment policy review and one National Action plan with considerations on how to integrate social protection expansion and employment promotion; additional reports with sector-specific assessments were also produced, as it can be seen in the list below.

Burkina Faso

- Social Protection Expenditure and Performance Review
- Towards a strategy of highly labor intensive public works programs (HIMO)
- Employment funds: performance and impact
- Towards an integrated social protection extension and employment promotion approach

Cambodia

- Social protection expenditure and performance review (SPER)
- Toward integrated employment and social protection policies

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- Financial assessment of the National Social Protection Strategy for the Poor and Vulnerable (NSPS)
 - Social security for the formal economy
 - Toward a national employment strategy for sustained poverty reduction

Honduras

- La protección social en Honduras : informe para discusión / Mejorar la protección social y promover el empleo, un proyecto de la Unión Europea ; Oficina Internacional del Trabajo: OIT, 2012
- Honduras: elementos para una política de empleo y combate a la pobreza / Mejorar la protección social y promover el empleo, un proyecto de la Unión Europea ; Oficina Internacional del Trabajo: OIT 2012
- Política Integrada de Empleo y Protección Social en Honduras. Lineamientos para un Plan de Acción Nacional: OIT 2013

2. Evaluation background

2.1. Purpose and primary use of the evaluation

The final independent evaluation aims at examining the extent to which the project objectives have been achieved. The evaluation is expected to determine the efficiency, effectiveness and sustainability of the outcomes achieved. The final evaluation will also formulate conclusions and recommendations and generate lessons learned and good practices for sharing of knowledge and experiences. The evaluation will be useful for accountability purposes by feeding lessons learned into the decision-making process of project stakeholders, including donors and national partners.

2.2. Scope of the evaluation

The evaluation includes *all the activities* developed by the project between November 2009 and December 2012. The evaluation reviews a wide list of issues including progress of the activities, implementation arrangements, achievements, challenges, good practices and lessons learned.

2.3. Dates of the evaluation

The evaluation was conducted between December 4th and April 17th, although the initial calendar of activities defined December-February as the planned timeline, *force majeure* situations delayed the final completion of the assignment¹.

Chronologically, the evaluation process had three moments. During the first moment (between December 3th and December 7th), the independent evaluator visited Brussels and Geneva. In Brussels, the consultant attended the Interregional Conference “Improving Social Protection and Promoting Employment: Experiences and Lessons Learnt - An ILO/EC Project” (December 3rd and 4th), the specific meetings between ILO and the representatives of each pilot country and carried out initial meetings with EU representatives (December 5th). The first mission also included a two-day visit to the ILO premises in Geneva where the consultant met staff members directly involved in the project, either as participants of the ILO/EC Steering Committee or as technical support staff for the country level activities.

The second part of the evaluation included field trips to pilot countries. The main objective of those visits was to collect information from key local participants and stakeholders that were relevant for the implementation of the project. The independent evaluator paid visits to Honduras (18-21 February 2013) and Burkina Faso (4-7 March 2013).

In Burkina Faso, three interviews, one with Ms. Somkinda Traore Ouedraogo (Director of the National Social Security Office (CNSS)), one with Ms. Stella Some (Director General for Social Protection) and one with Mr. Saibou Seynou (Permanent Secretary for Health insurance) remained pending after the visit of the evaluator. A local consultant Mr. Venceslas Nikiema undertook the interviews of the officials between March 10th and April 10th, 2013.

¹ The external evaluator experienced a critical health condition between the end of December and mid-February that limited his possibilities to travel extensively.

For Cambodia, a local consultant (Mr. Sok Somith) was hired to conduct the requested interviews using the same questionnaire described in previous sections. The interviews in Cambodia were held between January 29th and February 10th, 2013. The external evaluator proceeded with Skype interviews with Mr. Adélio Fernández, GIZ-Cambodia and Mr. Vincent Vire, EU Delegation to Cambodia on February 18th and 19th respectively. (Both discussions were successfully conducted. One additional Skype-conference was initially planned for Tuesday, February 19th with Brother Ath Thorn of the Cambodian Labour Confederation. However, due to a working trip to Sweden, Mr. Thorn was not available in the week February 16th-February 22nd. Despite the initial promise to arrange the meeting after that period, the conference was never set up.

The last part of the evaluation represented the preparation of the report. Although this phase overlapped with the data collection stage, it was not only April 10th that all the information was completed. This third stage covered the period of March 1st to April 17th 2013.

2.4. Clients of the evaluation and main audience of the report

The primary clients of the evaluation are the ILO and the EC. The evaluation findings and recommendations will confirm and validate the achievements of the Project, provide lessons learned and be instrumental in developing and implementing new projects of similar nature in other low-income countries. Secondary clients are the technical ministries and social partners of the pilot countries, Social Protection Floor Initiative members and other national stakeholders who will benefit from the findings and recommendations of the evaluation.

2.5. Independent evaluator

Mr Jose Francisco Pacheco-Jimenez, independent evaluator, conducted the exercise. Mr Pacheco is an economist with over 12 years of professional experience in the fields of healthcare, social protection, education and poverty analysis. Previous works include assignments in over 30 countries around the world, including Latin America and the Caribbean, Africa, South East Asia, Central Asia and Eastern Europe.

2.6. ILO evaluation manager

The evaluation manager is Ms Karuna Pal, Coordinator of Budget and Resource Management in the Social Security Department at the ILO. The evaluation is under the overall direction of the ILO Evaluation Unit.

3. Methodology

3.1. Evaluation criteria

There are no quantitative criteria to evaluate the project. However, the success of the initiative was assessed in accordance to the specific objectives and the expected results defined in the Project Document. They would be identified as follows:

Specific Objective 1: Development of national plans to extend social protection and to promote employment demonstrating the feasibility and effectiveness of both a basic social protection package and coordinated inclusive employment strategies.

The expected results of this objective were identified as follows:

- A diagnosis of the national situation and needs in the areas of social protection and employment prepared in the pilot countries in consultations with government agencies and social partners;
- National plans are drafted for extension of social protection coverage and for employment promotion policies in the pilot countries through a social dialogue process, demonstrating the feasibility and effectiveness of their coordination;
- Policy makers and social actors in the four countries are capable to use diagnostic tools to prepare national plans on extension of social protection and employment promotion and to participate in specialized social dialogue discussions.

Specific Objective 2: Promotion of an international campaign and platform for awareness raising and exchanges of good practices in social protection and employment. The expected results consist of:

- Dissemination of experience providing support for the International Campaign for the Extension of Social Protection to Establishment of the National Tripartite Steering Committee.

Based on the previous considerations, this report considered a detailed evaluation criteria based on the Logframe definition:

1. Integrated national social protection and employment policies, developed in consultation with social partners, are endorsed by the government of the pilot countries.
2. Database with information on social protection coverage and expenditures of social protection and employment is available.
3. Social Protection Expenditure and Performance and Employment Reviews are elaborated.
4. Published National plans demonstrating the feasibility and effectiveness of both a basic social protection package and coordinated inclusive employment strategies for the formal and informal economy are approved by the National Tripartite Steering Committee in the pilot countries.
5. Policy proposals submitted to Governments of the target countries.

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6. Diagnostic tools and tripartite social dialogue incorporated into the policy-making process.
 7. Number of officials and institutions applying the tools in a coordinated way.
 8. Results of the experiences in pilot countries have broader international diffusion and support the international campaign.

It is important to highlight the fact that several criteria were required to be reformulated during the course of the project. According to the *Interim Annotated Narrative Report covering the period November 1, 2010-February 29, 2012*, the ILO/EC Steering Committee recognized the need to reword or change some sections of the LogFrame in accordance to the European Commission's Result Oriented Monitoring (ROM) July 2011 mission. Some of the key recommended changes included:

1. The intervention logic of Specific Objective 1 would be changed to "Development of **draft** national **action** plans...". The objectively verifiable indicator of achievement (point 1 above) should also be modified to "**Coordinated** national social protection and employment **action plan...presented** to the governments of the pilot countries". This change was considered after verifying that not all the countries have social protection or employment policies in place.
2. Training should be regarded as an activity with a limited number of participants, not a large group of attendants (point 7 above).
3. The synthesis report should contain not international guidelines but lessons learned and recommendations (point 8 above).

Despite these necessary changes (to clearly limit the scope of the project, formerly defined as an initiative with a very broad objectives), the original LogFrame experienced no alterations "in the paper", although the implementation did introduce some changes in practice. Although the EU **project management structure** is usually blamed as the main barrier to proceed with changes in the project design, in reality this situation is not full accurate. Indeed, EC procedures do allow changes although they should be formulated and requested using a specific process. Formalization of this process takes time and there is a certain degree of inflexibility in the EC's vision of the extent to which changes can be introduced vis-à-vis the original project document.

3.2. Evaluation questions

The evaluation utilized a *standardized questionnaire* that included questions related to four areas: **relevance and strategic fit, effectiveness, efficiency and sustainability and impact**. All the questions were discussed between the independent evaluator and the ILO Evaluation Manager.

The list of questions can be found in Annex 1.

3.3. Evaluation methods and data collection instruments

The ILO's Evaluation Guidelines provided the basic framework for conducting the assessment. In addition, the evaluator made use of two main methods: structured and semi-structured interviews using the *standardized questionnaire* (the data collection form) and an extensive review of the documentation.

In relation to the application of the former, because each interviewed actor had a different role in the implementation, the questionnaire was tailored to request information only on those topics of relevance for the person. For instance, during the field visits, it was clear that most of the government officials, workers and employers representatives had no information about follow-up/monitoring arrangements; asking them about those topics would yield no positive information. In some specific cases (for instance, the interview with the Minister of Labour of Honduras and the meeting with the National Social Security Office in Burkina Faso), the dynamics of the interview replicated a focus group where several participants (3 or over) shared comments and impressions about the project.

The evaluator also prepared an extensive desk review of the key documentation. The main sources of information were:

- The Project Documents
- Technical and workshop reports per country
- The mid-term review
- Steering Committee Meetings Reports and annotated reports and flash reports prepared for the EC (2010-2012).

To formulate the conclusions and main findings, the evaluator gathered the opinions of all the relevant actors interviewed during the process and prepared main conclusions by topic. In addition, the argumentation was supplemented with information coming from the EC and the ILO.

3.4. Sources of information/data

Key documentation came from many different sources. The EC provided all the transcripts of the ILO/EC Steering Committee meetings plus the midterm evaluation report. The ILO provided all the country reports produced under the project, the evaluation guidelines, key documentation from the Employment Policy and the Social Security Departments, the presentations of the interregional conference in Brussels and specific data on the participation of the ILO (in terms of physical and material resources) in the project. Additional reports and other key documents were collected during the field trips to the pilot countries. Finally, the web page of the project (<http://www.social-protection.org/gimi/gess/ShowProjectSpePage.do?pid=1175>) supplied technical inputs, dates of events and other country information. The complete list of references is included in Annex 3.

3.5. Limitations

Conclusions regarding the performance of the project rely considerably on the opinion of the stakeholders and the assessment by the evaluator of those opinions. Because most of the opinions come from stakeholders who actively participate in the project, there is some room for biased responses (i.e. mostly positive comments about the project or just moderate-to-low negative opinions in some cases, especially if the person was part of the implementation) although our general impression is that a good balance between positive and negative opinions was achieved.

Lack of quantitative indicators (with a corresponding baseline) may also make difficult the final interpretation of results. This can be particularly relevant in those cases with many negative responses because the magnitude of the effect can be differently interpreted.

3.6. Description and rationale for stakeholder participation in the evaluation

As it was commented elsewhere in this report, country field visits were part of the key activities of the evaluation in order to talk with the local stakeholders about their opinion regarding the relevance, efficiency, sustainability of the results, bottlenecks and potential challenges in the near future. The evaluation conducted interviews with the following stakeholders:

1. Government officials, mainly from the Ministry of Finance, Ministry of Social Protection/Social Security, Ministry of Labour and program directors
2. Worker organization representatives
3. Employer organization representatives
4. EU staff in Brussels and in existing local or sub-regional offices
5. ILO staff in Geneva and in existing local or sub-regional offices
6. Other partners (GIZ in Cambodia).

A complete list of interviewed stakeholders is attached in Annex 2.

Given the nature of the evaluation criteria (with practically no quantitative component), the opinion of those participants in the field is critical in order to analyze qualitative elements and expand on the details that affect the implementation of the initiative.

3.7. Evaluation norms, standards and ethics

The evaluation followed the ILO evaluation standards as defined by the ILO's Evaluation Department (EVAL). UN Evaluation Norms and Standards and OECD/DAC Evaluation Quality Standards were also considered².

² For further information the reader can visit http://www.ilo.org/wcmsp5/groups/public/---ed_mas/---eval/documents/publication/wcms_176814.pdf and a list of guidelines and templates can be found in: http://www.ilo.org/wcmsp5/groups/public/---ed_mas/---eval/documents/publication/wcms_176814.pdf

4. Main findings

4.1. Relevance and strategic fit

The first part of the evaluation of results comprises a series of topic related to the relevance, design and some implementation considerations of the project.

4.1.1. *Relationship between national priorities and donor's specific concerns*

One of the main strengths of the ILO/EC project was its formulation in line with the development priorities of the pilot countries and the specific priorities of the donors. In Burkina Faso, for instance, the strategic planning framework is the **Stratégie de Croissance Accélérée et du Développement Durable** (SCADD 2010-2015) that already includes employment promotion and social protection extension as two priority goals. In Cambodia, the initiative fits the development objectives established in the **National Strategic Development Plan** (update 2009-2013) and the related Rectangular Strategy that identified human capital and private sector development as two of the key areas of action. Job creation, small and medium enterprise promotion, social safety nets implementation and the improvement of labor conditions are mentioned as included as strategic areas of the Plan. Finally, in Honduras, the **Visión de País/Plan de Nación of 2010** identified productive and decent work and the elimination of extreme poverty by 2038 as two of the most important objectives. In short, the ILO/EC project focused on topics that were of utmost importance for the development priorities of the countries such as:

1. Protection to vulnerable groups
2. Decent work
3. Youth labor/unemployment
4. Entrepreneurial capacity.

In relation to the priorities of the EU and the ILO, the project stressed the importance of including the major building blocks of ILO action: the search for Decent Work in the labor market, the launch of national Social Protection Floors, the promotion of Tripartite Social Dialogue between government and social partners, the design and implementation of coherent and coordinated social protection and employment policies. All this goes in line with the outcomes of the International Labour Conferences (99th, 100th and 101st Sessions), the 2008 ILO Declaration on Social Justice for a Fair Globalization. The Project was also sustained on a series of initiatives launched by the European Union in the course of the recent years previous such as:

1. The European Consensus on Development
2. The EC “Investing in People” thematic program 2007-2013
3. The EC communication on “Promoting Decent Work for all – the EU contribution to the implementation of the Decent Work agenda in the world” of May 2006
4. The EC communication on “Supporting developing countries in coping with the crisis” (April 2009)

5. The 2007 Commission Staff Working Document “Promoting Employment through EU Development Cooperation”.

4.1.2. Relevance

The project was very relevant for the three countries where it was finally implemented. However, this relevance has to be properly interpreted. As it was defined in the Project Document, the initiative aimed at providing technical assistance to the governments in order to establish a policy that might help the country to mitigate the effects of the 2008 crisis. This first point is critical to understand, in the next paragraphs, the scope of the assignment.

In this regards, the term “pertinence” can be analyzed in three broad dimensions: *socioeconomic relevance, policy relevance and technical relevance*. In relation to the first dimension, the table below summarizes the main economic and social characteristics of each participant in the project. A general reading of the socioeconomic conditions shows that, despite high rates of economic growth in the pre-crisis period (especially in Cambodia and Burkina Faso), all the countries still face significant challenges in the social realm. In Burkina Faso, for instance, literacy rate remains low while in Honduras the poverty rate is at the top of the list. Life expectancy in Cambodia and Burkina Faso lags behind the international average of 68 years according to United Nations World Population Prospects 2010 Revision. Social protection and labor indicators also reflect poor performance in the three countries. According to the base documents prepared under the project, in Cambodia in 2010, the National Social Security Fund covers roughly 7.5% of the total employed while the National Social Security Fund for Civil Servants increases coverage in about 175,000 employees. Similarly, coverage with social security in Honduras accounts for about 14% of the total population. In Burkina Faso, the labor conditions are also precarious. About 8 of each 10 workers in the country work in agricultural activities while 25% of the occupied population is underemployed.

This brief socioeconomic perspective confirms at least two main conclusions. The first one is that economic growth is not enough to reduce poverty and improve the living conditions of the population, as it has been widely discussed in the past decade. The second conclusion denotes that the three countries can benefit significantly from active social policies as the proposed under the Project given the strong emphasis on employment and social protection.

Table 3. Basic socioeconomic indicators per country, 2009

Indicator	Burkina Faso	Cambodia	Honduras
Population, total	15,984,479	13,977,903	7,449,923
Life expectancy at birth, total (years)	54	62	73
GDP per capita, PPP (constant 2005 international \$)	1,085	1,879	3,493
GDP growth rate (2000-2007)	5.4	8.3	4.4
Poverty headcount ratio at national poverty line	47	30	65
Literacy rate, adult total (% of people ages 15 and above)	28.7	73.9	83.6

Note: Poverty headcount for Cambodia is from 2007. Literacy rates of Burkina Faso and Honduras correspond to 2007.
Source: World Bank Database on line.

Policy relevance refers to the contribution of the project to the debate around social and employment policies. In all the countries, the project complemented existing efforts currently in place or raises the awareness among key stakeholders about the importance to

place again in the agenda specific topics such as Decent Work in Honduras, social security wages in Burkina Faso and social protection coverage in Cambodia. This pertinence, however, varies by country because each one faced different realities at the moment of launching the initiative. Cambodia, for instance, was in the process of discussing a National Social Protection Policy that was finally launched in November 2011 as the *National Social Protection Strategy for the Poor and Vulnerable (NSPS)*. In Burkina Faso, no social protection policy existed but they did have an employment policy (the *National Employment Policy*). Finally, in Honduras, there were no formal employment or social protection policies despite the existence of long-established social institutions.

Policy relevance also benefited from the **integrated approach** the ILO/EC was proposing. This approach represented a shift in the way governments and social actors usually conceived the design of labour and social protection policies, more as individual efforts with independent objectives and no synergies with other areas. The project was, therefore, an excellent opportunity to apply the new vision in three different national contexts.

Technical relevance is the last dimension and refers to the type of outcomes and activities that the initiative defined. There is a wide consensus among the stakeholders that the project presented an important body of logical and coherent activities that would have positive effects through multiple channels. Social dialogue, for instance, reinforced the importance of social protection and employment in the country development agenda and increased the awareness of policy makers and other stakeholders about the need to have integrated policies. This was particularly important in countries like Honduras and Burkina Faso where there was a general impression that the discussion had in the past been “partial”, that is, the Government called for either employment or social protection discussions independently. In addition, the preparation of certain specific reports was critical for a complete assessment of the policies in place or as inputs in the preparation of the future policy. In Cambodia, the reports on the SPER (ILO, 2012) and the Financial Assessment of the National Social Protection Strategy for the Poor and the Vulnerable (ILO, 2012) provide excellent insights based on concrete evidence for future policies aimed at extending social protection coverage and promoting employment. Capacity building was observed as a critical activity to complement efforts in the promotion of the integrated approach and to improve the transfer of knowledge to key social participants. Given that the formulation of the integrated employment-social protection approach is relatively new, the project appeared as an important window to spread the foundations of the approach at the roots of the groups involved in policy design and implementation.

4.1.3. Integration of different national stakeholders and final beneficiaries and effects

One of the most controversial aspects discussed during the fieldwork refers to the effective integration of all the relevant national stakeholders and final beneficiaries in the design and implementation of the project.

Project design: an important share of respondents casted doubts about this point. Local counterparts complained that national stakeholders said nothing about the design of the project and this situation influenced the final implementation in multiple ways. The local ILO representatives of Honduras also reinforced this idea of null participation of the local stakeholders in the design.

First because some of the local conditions in which the project had to be implemented should have been considered. One concrete example was referred in Honduras. As it was mentioned earlier, due to the specific legislation in place, every policy has to be discussed at the regional level. As a result, it is important to plan the activities with this issue in mind to give enough time to debate about the proposal. Because the initial design did not

consider that factor (although it was later included in the project schedule), progress in the subsequent activities was delayed.

Second, no inception assessment was carried out to know the current situation of the country and know the point of departure of the project. Treating the National Tripartite Steering Committee as a homogeneous body was, in fact, part of the mistakes that local counterparts claimed. The 2011 Results Oriented Monitoring (ROM) Report summarized this situation in the following terms:

“...ii) the formulation phase failed to account for the asymmetry of capacity of the members of the steering committees, which makes it practically impossible for them to play the role initially assigned to them in the project document (for instance, in terms of the capacity of all members to understand and negotiate). “

As one can expect, final beneficiaries (defined as participants of the social programs) have no direct participation in the design and implementation of the project. It is expected that, in the medium and long terms, the implementation of integrated policies positively impact the effects on poor families, vulnerable groups and socially disadvantaged persons.

Project implementation: With respect to the involvement in the project implementation process, similar objections emerged from certain groups in relation to their reduced or inexistent participation in the implementation of the project. For example, the interviewed members of the Central General de Trabajadores in Honduras stated that they have no idea about the scope and activities of the project except for the October 2012 invitation to participate in the social dialogue conference. However, it was the opinion of some other local stakeholders that the involvement of workers was null not in terms of their participation in project activities but in terms of their contribution during discussions. This situation is partially explained by the lack of an appropriate understanding of the integrated approach but, at the same, it may be the result of a negative, “informal” attitude to the development of the project. This is exemplified by the fact that the representatives of the workers were not always the same, so each activity was attended by a different person.

The other dimension of the integration debate focuses on whether the different interests of the stakeholders were finally introduced into the project implementation. The evidence shows mixed results and a wide range of ideas. One first issue was the consideration that the project was unbalanced in terms of the social protection-employment relationship. In Honduras and Burkina Faso, the opinion was that employment discussions were prioritized over social protection; in Cambodia, the opposite view prevailed. This situation can be explained on the grounds of two possible explanations. The first explanation explains this bias in terms of the professional backgrounds of the CTAs. The first CTA was an employment expert while the second CTA has extensive professional experience in the social protection field. However, a second explanation identifies this bias as a result of taking into account national priorities and requests. In Burkina Faso the government focus was on youth employment and the project prepared a document focusing on policies for this group. In Honduras, employment-oriented discussions were the natural result of a country where underemployment exceeds 30% of the labor force and the recent international financial crisis put extra pressure on the topic.

Another problem that emerged during the discussion was the distance that existed between consultants and government officials during the preparation of the different technical documents. Although all the stakeholders recognized the excellent quality, relevance and utility of the different assessments, their limited involvement in the construction of those documents were observed as a barrier for the ownership that the project requires and for their active involvement in the discussions.

Despite those two aspects, the work of the National Tripartite Steering Committees opened an important space to discuss about priorities of the different stakeholders and to look for

mechanisms to integrate specific requests in the final draft action plan. In Cambodia, employers pushed for vocational training activities as part of the agenda and succeeded in integrating this area in the final plan. The topic was initially excluded of the design because this is an independent department inside the ILO organizational structure and had no direct participation in the formulation of the project.

4.1.4. Assessment of strategic elements and implementation strategy

Several issues were raised during the interviews with stakeholders and ILO/EC technical staff in relation to the project design. Overall, the project was a very good initiative that took advantage of a critical situation (the international financial and economic crisis) to introduce a new approach based on local opportunities. In broad terms, the project generated very positive comments in relation to: (1) the design and definition of the general and specific objectives, activities and expected results although, as it was identified later during the implementation, some adjustments were needed to introduce a higher level of “reality” for the outcomes that could be achieved by such a project³; (2) the implementation strategy and the interventions required to achieve the objectives of formulating coherent and integrated policies.

In terms of the design of the project, three aspects were referred as potential areas of improvement for future projects. First, strategic objective 1 was considered as “too ambitious”, that is, the scope of the expected final product exceeds the available time to complete the task and the context that usually prevail in developing countries. The ILO/EC Steering Committee recognized this situation and proposed a re-scoping of the objective, something that continued over the course of the project implementation without any operational complication. However, in relation to the initial design, the evaluation would like to emphasize the following considerations for future action:

- The objectives should be contextualized in terms of the real available time that the project would have to implement the different activities. The timeline of the ILO/EC project included not 36 but 30 effective months of work in the field because the first six months were mostly devoted to organize the project at the central level and in the different pilot countries.
- • Despite the existence of local initiatives in place (i.e. employment policies, social security plans, a network of institutions, etc), a lot of preliminary work was necessary to get the insights about the performance and situational status of the sectors and the feasibility of promoting an integrated approach. These initial efforts included the preparation of technical reports (SPER, costing, etc) and the allocation of significant time to train the members of the National Tripartite Steering Committees and to lobby at the highest political levels to achieve consensus about the importance of the project. In addition, once the policy is drafted, it is required to sit down again and discuss the product to get a final national plan. Because the project is inserted into a broader political agenda and competes against multiple interests, implementing all those activities requires time. In other words, a deep understanding of the “baseline situation of the country” is required, and this should be strengthened through a greater involvement of local ILO and EU offices and other national partners.

A second design issue focused in the way the countries were selected. According to the Project Document, the pilot countries were identified on the basis of the following criteria:

³ See the section 3.1 on Evaluation Criteria.

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1. Cross-regional orientation
 2. Focus on low-income or lower-middle-income countries
 3. A strong government commitment to engage in the project
 4. Possibility of replicating the lessons learnt from the pilot countries in other countries.

This approach, however, had at least two major drawbacks. The first one was the lack of refinement of the criteria and the high reliance on subjective opinion to prepare the initial list of countries (Burkina Faso, Cambodia, Ethiopia and Honduras). As it is described, it seems that many countries can perfectly match the three conditions. Among those three, perhaps the most controversial criterion was the third one given the absence of a parameter to measure the “level of commitment of the government”. In fact, it is unclear whether the term is based on the *historical* commitment of the country or on the *promised* commitment of the government.

Project management at the local level was intensive with a strong support coming from ILO local offices. Although the project did not formulate country-specific Logical Framework Matrixes (LF), the number of activities, workshops and publications reflect that the project had an active presence in the country and made use of institutional support from the ILO and the ministries to finally implement the plan. Improvement may come from the design of the monitoring chapter, as it was commented elsewhere in this document. The request for having individual LF was presented in several documents (Monitoring Reports mainly) in order to have a specific baseline, a list of explicit risks and a country-based Objective Verifiable Indicators (OVIs) to improve project management at the local level. However, a recurrent criticism concerned the rigidity of the project management system to adopt and adapt changes once the work had started.

Another dimension of analysis refers to the adequacy of the activities. There is wide consensus that the activities were the correct ones and they all supported the achievements at the end of the project in terms of having a draft national action plan, trained stakeholders and the promotion of a significant dissemination of results.

Some specific activities were subject to further analysis in relation to their role in the project. More than questioning whether the activity was adequate for the purposes of the project, different stakeholders had doubts about the way they were finally implemented. That was the case regarding the promotion of social dialogue, capacity building and communication.

Time devoted to social dialogue activities was one of the key aspects raised during the conversations with the different parties. Some of the reactions considered that the project allocated little time to this activity, one of the pillars of the ILO action. This opinion mainly prevailed in Honduras where the interval between the Employment Review workshop (September 2011) and the National Forum on Employment and Social Protection (2012) was considered quite distant. This consideration, however, may not be fully accurate. The evidence shows that, indeed, the project actively implemented several national dialogue activities. For instance, between September 2011 and November 2012, the initiative implemented two policy workshops (those ones mentioned above), five Conversatorios (dialogues between EU-ILO and different social actors) and one technical workshop (*Utilizando herramientas de Proyección en Políticas de Protección social y empleo*). The Conversatorios were in fact implemented due to the legal imperative in Honduras that all policy initiatives must be discussed at the regional levels, too. Consequently, the project opens, in May 2012, five activities of such a kind in Tegucigalpa and San Pedro Sula.

Perhaps the problem was not the few social dialogue activities but the short time span between the National Forum and the end of the project (December 2012). This situation left no more time to extend the discussions to other relevant topics or to review the initial plan and to meet again to go over a new version of the plan. In fact, the visit to Honduras revealed that none of the interviewees had read the final draft of the “Elements for an employment and a poverty reduction policy report”.

The importance of training activities was dimensioned in terms of the effective impact on the different participants, depending on their role in the project. Most of the opinions agreed that the preparatory training of the members of the National Tripartite Steering Committee did not yield the expected benefits because of the heterogeneous nature of the members. Lack of previous training in economics, social security, employment or related areas and significant gaps in the understanding of the local conditions of the country limited the possibility to effectively level the playing field in which the Steering Committees would act during the implementation of the project. As a result, there was not clarity if all the members of the Committee were in a position to technically evaluate the quality and pertinence of the deliverables.

There were also some concerns in relation to the capacity of the training program to prepare government staff in the use of the tools utilized during the preparation of the reports (SPER, Social Budget, etc). In short, even if the participants received a full training session, the project did not open more space to hands on use and apply the technique in the field. Thus, the sustainability of the training results depends on the commitment of the government to continue with the dissemination of good practices and with the periodic development of similar studies.

Perhaps among all the activities implemented under the project the one which raised most concerns about its implementation was communication. Problems in this regard covered a wide range of issues. For instance, with more than 50% of the project already implemented, none of the national coordinators had the Logframe in their hands to coordinate the key activities. Similar problems were found in the communication with the EU delegation in Burkina Faso and key stakeholders in the country, who usually complained about having no information about the progress of the calendar of implementation or about the development of certain activities.

In some cases, the relationship was regarded as “too vertical” without any possibility to discuss or amend the scope of work. In Burkina Faso, the ILO office in Senegal replaced the national coordinator and worked in close collaboration with the ILO office in Geneva⁴. Indeed, the Ministry of Economy and Finance of Burkina Faso mentioned not having the *budget plan* of the project despite the fact that they coordinate the Interministerial Commission.

Some problems were found in the *marketing strategy* of the project. During the initial stages of the project, the CTA visited the pilot countries in order to promote the work. The initial idea that remained in the minds of many stakeholders was that the project aimed at developing National Coordinated Plans. As this report already commented, the ILO/EC Steering Committee was aware of the situation and redefined the scope of the outcome. However, it seems that this change was not formally communicated to local participants.

Possibly the issue that raised most of the concern was the effective clarification of the link between social protection and employment promotion. Local stakeholders in the three countries expressed their doubts of whether all the key participants understood the

⁴ Later in 2011, following the departure of the ILO Social security specialist from Dakar, it was the ILO Geneva office that controlled the activities.

rationale and the linkages between the two concepts. If analyzed separately, there was no problem in understanding each topic and their importance for social development and poverty reduction, but the integrated approach was something that remained unclear in different groups even after all the process of communication and training ended. In this situation, several factors may play a role. First, the different educational backgrounds of the members of the National Tripartite Steering Committees created a barrier usually referred during the interviews. The main problem with this is that the level and depth of the internal discussions were limited and consequently not all the stakeholders heavily involved in the review of the documents and the generation of ideas. Second, as it will be analyzed later, the major role was played by social security institutions while other social protection entities were relegated to minor tasks, in the best of the cases. So it seems that the prevailing approach (social protection and social security as synonyms) prevailed in many cases.

4.1.5. Strengths and weaknesses

Strengths

1. The Tripartite model was the appropriate mechanism to support the implementation of the project. The project brought a consultative process that was the right approach to stimulate participation of relevant stakeholders in implementing the to-be developed strategy.
2. Relevant stakeholders had been able to provide inputs through policy dialogues that were the right mechanism – tripartite in formulating social protection and employment framework. Outputs from the workshops/meetings were rich resources to base a further discussion for social protection and employment strategy.
3. The project design responded to the current national development priorities/initiatives. The relevance of the project can be visualized in terms of socioeconomic, policy and technical evidence.
4. The integrated approach for social protection extension and employment promotion policy is an innovative way to think differently about how things have been done in the last year.
5. The integration of different stakeholders created better institutional links. For instance, in Cambodia, a much better relation between CARD and MoLVT has been observed.
6. The project built on the government’s initiatives – to design, develop, and implement the social protection and employment policy.
7. Trainings provided were interesting and fit with contextualized concerns/priorities in raising awareness of national stakeholders about social and employment policies.

Weaknesses

1. Not all the relevant stakeholders were consulted during the process of project design. Thus, ownership of the national stakeholders was limited.
2. The project had problems in the formulation of OVIs as they were too broad and not monitor individual country progress according to internal conditions.
3. Countries were selected on the basis of weak criteria.

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4. Due to marketing and communication problems, the local agents expected a greater impact of the project than was initially conceived.
 5. Lack of staff to carry out the work (the project employed only National Project Coordinators to manage both administrative and programing issues). The project required more staff to keep it on the right speed and especially to compensate for the critical delay (almost a year) in implementation.
 6. Data collection took more time to finish especially getting it through the government institutions/agencies. Some data that were politically sensitive (i.e. statistic of government officials) were not provided by the government counterparts.
 7. Sector representatives usually lacked basic economic concepts that were necessary to provide the right inputs to the discussion at meetings/workshops.
 8. Attendance of some of SC members was observed as irregular.
 9. Reporting and auditing requirements introduced some type of rigidity in the administration of the project
 10. Limited participation of trade union and employer representatives in providing inputs to discussion meetings/workshops.
 11. Despite a positive role of training in getting transmitting knowledge on the basic concepts of the integrated approach to the SC members and other participants, there are some gaps that require continuous work to be filled. One of those issues is the understanding of how to link social protection and employment.

4.1.6. Good practices and lessons learned

Some of the lessons and good practices identified are:

1. The project showed that, overall, the initiative was relevant for the pilot countries and there is a good level of openness among stakeholders to know, review and evaluate the pertinence of the integrated approach. The project was relevant in terms of the socioeconomic reality of the country, in terms of the need of a better social policy and in terms of technical inputs it prepared. The general opinion is that the proposed activities were coherent, relevant and adequate to achieve the final objectives.
2. Promotion of social dialogue through SC establishment was considered one of the most important decisions for the good implementation of the program. In this way, the project was able to integrate into one single body the interests and positions of the main social actors. Despite this, the participation of other actors was missed in Honduras and Burkina Faso especially.
3. Lack of a country-specific monitoring strategy, with individual OVI, and administrative rigidity represented problems to track progress and incorporate amendments to the original design.

4.2. Effectiveness

This section evaluates the level of effectiveness of the project and, as such, assesses the level of achievement of results, the level of integration of key stakeholders and the role of the Steering Committees, among other issues.

4.2.1. Overall achievement

The project achieved all the major objectives and expected results. This is true when we consider the recommended modified version of the Logframe, as it was described in the “Evaluation Criteria” section and according to the *Interim Annotated Narrative Report covering the period November 1, 2010-February 29, 2012*. It was common opinion that the project positively contributed with the promotion of the integrated approach among pilot countries through the consolidation of the social dialogue and the enhancement of the internal capabilities to prepare social policies, among other ways. As it was mentioned elsewhere, the key message that countries should promote integrated policies was essentially accepted by all the stakeholders in all the countries as a new view to do social and employment policy. Certainly more future follow-up efforts should be undertaken to consolidate this vision and to explain/clarify the linkages and implications of adopting this approach, but the first step was certainly successful.

In relation to the two specific objectives, the project was able to formulate draft national action plans and implement the mechanisms to disseminate good practices and increase awareness on the topic. In this regard, the project effectively added value to the overall discussion and raised the importance of social protection and employment promotion in the policy agenda of the three countries. One of the officials interviewed in Honduras noted that the main achievement of the project was *its ability to raise awareness of the importance of social protection and employment promotion in the political agenda of the countries, topics that were left out of discussion for several years*.

Dissemination of experiences was also a major achievement of the project. Although the web page is the most visible output, in reality this dissemination started in each of the countries via social dialogue activities and other workshops. At the moment of preparing this evaluation the web page was functioning with all the relevant materials (Intraregional Conference materials, technical outputs by country, draft national action plans, etc) properly uploaded.

In total, the project prepared 13 key documents, including one synthesis report with the experiences and conclusions of the countries. Of the remaining 13 reports, Cambodia concentrated 45% of the inputs (5 documents) while Burkina accounted for an additional 36%. All countries have their own social protection and employment assessments and draft national action plans.

In terms of workshops and similar activities, the project completed 18 activities (including the Interregional Conference) with Honduras accounting for 44% of them. In this case, the higher participation of Honduras is explained by the existing legislation that compels all relevant policy initiatives to be discussed nationwide. In this case, for instance, regional workshops (*Conversatorios*) included 4 presentations between May 10th and May 15th in Tegucigalpa and San Pedro Sula. Although initially envisaged as part of the activities and appropriately introduced in the budget, the time factor affected the effectiveness of the training courses, i.e. shorter period of training workshops/meetings organized aside from administrative difficulty in logistic arrangements, getting agreed on dates and times for the events.

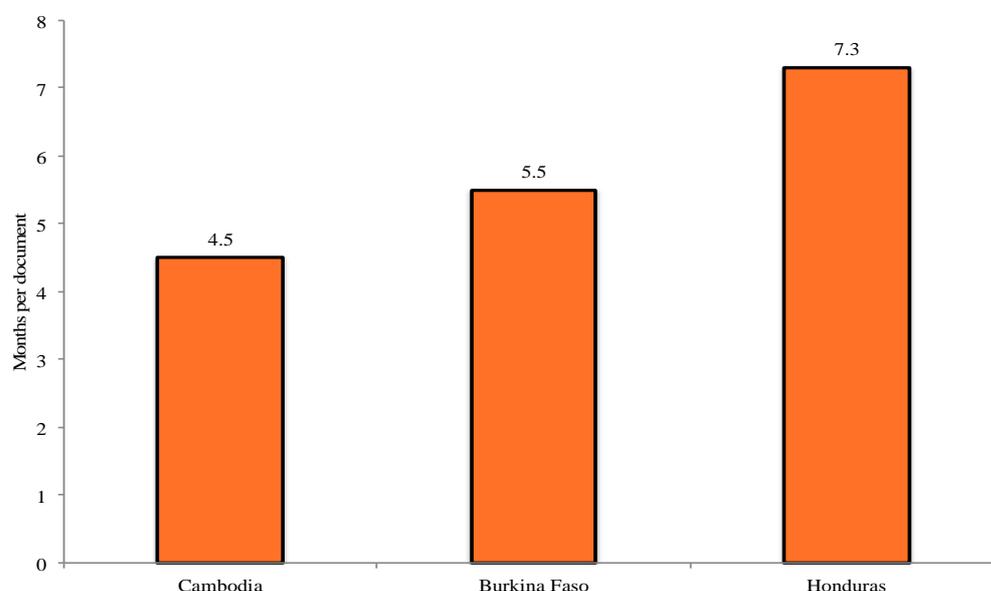
Table 4. Summary of publications and workshops implemented during the project, by country

Activity or product	Burkina Faso	Cambodia	Honduras	Project
Publication	4	5	3	1
Workshop	4	5	8	1

Source: Prepared with information of the web page of the project

If we evaluate the level of achievement per country in terms of the overall production of technical inputs, then the best results were attained in Cambodia, followed by Burkina Faso. This is expressed in the indicator “average number of months per technical report”, presented in the figure below. In total, the available information shows that Cambodia prepared 5 documents, 4 in Burkina and 3 in Honduras⁵. If we consider the time elapsed since the establishment of the national Steering Committee, the former figures imply that Cambodia prepared one document each 4.6 months while in Burkina this value represented 5.5 months per document. Honduras lagged behind with one document each 7.3 months. These differences across countries are explained on the grounds of several factors: the availability of information, the existence of partnerships with other agencies (for instance, the ILO provided a peer review to the actuarial study developed by GIZ in Cambodia) and the level of administrative organization at the local level (in Honduras, as it was stated, the national coordinators changed 3 times).

Figure 2. Average number of months per technical report, by country



Source: Own elaboration

In the balance, the evaluation found gaps in the following areas:

1. There is still a not-so-clear relationship between social protection and employment promotion. Linkages are blurred even to National Tripartite Steering Committee members.
2. Some local stakeholders mentioned having no information about the existence of the web page so this opens an area of work in the next months to promote visits to the page not only among pilot countries but also among other interested countries.
3. Although the project completed the preparation of the most important documents (assessments and draft action plans) and most of the stakeholders (especially in Honduras and Cambodia) confirmed the utility and quality of the reports, it seems that some room exists for improvement. In Burkina Faso, for instance, comments pointed to three aspects: a) the low level of depth in the SPER, in

⁵ According to information in the web page of the project

particular in those programs related to social assistance; b) the misleading analysis of the Fonds d'Emploi because it was identified as an impact evaluation, something that was not true and c) the need to expand the financial assessments to include potential sources of funds to close the gap.

4.2.2. Monitoring and evaluation arrangements

Monitoring arrangements included a follow-up report per year and a mid-term review, plus a final evaluation. However, many elements of a typical project follow-up system are missing. In particular, there were not baseline indicators and, although they existed, the Objectively Verifiable Indicators (OVIs) were criticized for not being locally defined. This makes the Logframe a poor tool for managing the project given the absence of either quantitative or qualitative metrics to track the progress in the different pilot countries.

Besides, the initial design lacked a risk assessment analysis and consequently the project did not evaluate potential distortions to good implementation (political breaks and natural disasters for instance). Developing countries are prone to experience unexpected situations and there is a high probability that unstable socioeconomic context may play a critical role in the extension of the activities. But even if the context is stable, differences in the electoral and the budget cycle may affect the level of commitment of the political forces and the capacity to negotiate changes in the direction of the policy. In this regards, the project should be scheduled in line with elections in the pilot country so to take full advantage of the presidential term. In practical and operational terms, this condition is hardly feasible.

Finally, the evaluation also found problems in the internal communication processes. For example, local ILO offices had no responsibility in informing to the central level about the observed progress in the project.

4.2.3. Level of involvement of social partners and government departments

This issue was subject of considerable debate among the different interviewees. In general, one can observe two groups of experiences. In Cambodia, most of the participants agreed that the project took into account all the relevant stakeholders that should be part of the discussion. A brief scan into the participants of the project showed that it included members of the following institutions:

1. Technical, Vocational, Education and Training (TVET), Ministry of Labour and Vocational Training (MoLVT)
2. Ministry of Labour and Vocational Training (MoLVT)
3. Council for Agricultural and Rural Development (CARD)
4. National Employment Agency (NEA)
5. Building and Wood Workers Trade Union Federation of Cambodia (BWTUF)
6. Cambodian Confederation of Trade Union (CCTU)
7. Independent Democracy of Informal Economy Association (IDEA)

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8. UNICEF
 9. Cambodia Federation of Employers and Business Association
 10. National Social Security Fund (NSSF)
 11. National Social Security Fund for Civil Servants (NSSFC),
 12. Ministry of Social Affairs, Veterans and Youth Rehabilitations (MoSVY).

On the other hand, more reactions about stakeholder participation emerged in Honduras and Burkina Faso. In Honduras, the Ministry of Labour and Social Security led the project given its double nature that facilitated the overall coordination. However, the Ministry of Social Development (MSD) claimed the project incurred in a significant (conceptual) contradiction by giving the Ministry of Labour and Social Security the technical coordination of the work. The main argument of the MSD was that they are legally entitled to manage social protection programs in Honduras and, therefore, they were the single entity that should coordinate the project. The “bad signal” for the different stakeholders, it was said, is that while the discourse promotes an integrated approach, in practice it continues with the old view that social protection equals social security. The employers’ association expressed a similar position in terms of defining social protection in a broader way. It may be important to consider here that, in the specific case of Honduras, the MSD was a relatively new institution (it started operations in 2009) that it was just in the process of organizing its processes at the same time the project was implemented.⁶

Other groups also complained about their limited role. *The Central General de Trabajadores* (CGT) in Honduras and the *National Social Security Office* in Burkina Faso also complained about not having relevant participation in the day-to-day discussions. Both groups declared knowing about the project because they were invited to specific activities as *passive* actors. In the case of the CGT, that was the October 2012 social dialogue; the National Social Security Office, indicated that they participated in the RAP training only. However, many of these opinions may not be fully accurate due to misinformation. For instance, the transcripts about the attendance to the workshops in Burkina Faso are clear that staff from the National Social Security Office went to the activities on June 25-26, 2012 and November 21-23, 2012. So it seems that, in this case, there was a problem of internal communication. Also, the lists of registration show that different persons attended each workshop.

4.2.4. Role of National Steering Committees

The different sectors recognized the positive role of the National Tripartite Steering Committees in the overall implementation of the project. In each country, the reason behind this conclusion varies. In Cambodia, the broad participation in the Committee facilitated the integration of many actors and consequently their commitment with the project.

In Burkina Faso, many stakeholders saw the coordination of the Ministry of Economy and Finance as a positive decision for two main reasons. First, in this way the country avoided

⁶ The ILO main constituent among public agencies is usually the Ministry of Labour, which has the contributory social security institution under its control. This is a possible explanation for this “feeling” that the non-contributory schemes have not been present at all decision-taking moments. However, the project was aware of the need that both contributory and non-contributory schemes needed to be taken into account. But, the project could not prescribe to the national authorities which changes should be done regarding the national steering committee compositions.

further conflicts between the Ministry of Employment and the Ministry of Labour and Social Security that would paralyze the project. In second place, the strategic role played by the Ministry of Economy and Finance was regarded as critical for the sustainability of results. The active involvement of this Ministry was essential for the continuation of the project outcomes such that both political and fiscal support could be strengthened. However, the decision also had detractors who claimed that because the Ministry of Economy and Finance did not master either employment or social protection issues it therefore would concentrate all the efforts in the financial dimension of the project only.

Finally, in Honduras, the decision to appoint the CES brought a good signal of political support to the initiative. In this way, the government made use of a local resource with pluralistic participation of the social sectors and avoided conflicts with the CES if another forum of similar nature would have been created. It also helped the country to gain some time because the members of the CES were working for a while and had a common agenda of work.

In short, 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.

It is good to highlight that fact that the ILO encourages the participation of other stakeholders. For instance, ILO Recommendation R.202 on the Social protection floors stipulates in paragraph 3(r) that countries should promote “tripartite participation with representative organizations of employers and workers, as well as consultation with other relevant and representative organizations of persons concerned.”

The opinions in relation to the value added of the Steering Committees during the review of the technical inputs were less optimistic. In what was a common opinion among the different stakeholders and technical ILO staff that the Committees lacked the technical skills to provide useful feedback to the reports. Different academic backgrounds, the diverse levels of experience in the technical field and the dissimilar levels of commitment of the members of the National Tripartite Steering Committees helps to explain that situation. In Honduras, for instance, the employers’ representatives attended all the meetings and workshops organized as part of the project; workers representatives, on the contrary, only attended meetings on an irregular basis and frequently changed representatives. A similar situation was observed in Burkina Faso where the persons appointed to the Committee usually changed from one session to the other, something that reduced the possibility of consolidating the group. In general, this combination of high/low motivation, high/low commitment among members of the SC was common across all the countries.

In line with this, the debate moved to consider if: a) the training program had not been as intensive as required to level the playing field and assure that all the members of the Committee were able to manage the same knowledge; or b) the responsibility of reviewing and approving the technical documents should have been given to another group or to the SC supported by a groups of experts.

4.2.5. Surprising achievements and challenges in the course of the implementation

In addition to the achievement of the proposed objectives, the project also generated external results that positively affected the development of other initiatives. In some other cases, the project (regarded as an overall effort) influenced or motivated certain type of decisions within the government or private sectors (employers and workers). Among the one recorded during the field work, the most important surprising achievements were:

1. In Honduras, it was in the context of the project development (as expressed by the Minister of Labour) that the country approved the ratification of the ILO Social Security Minimum Standards Convention 1952, No. 102. At this point in time, the Ministry is elaborating a Roadmap to implement the Convention.
2. Similarly, the project also played a motivational role in the formulation, negotiation and approval of the *Gran Acuerdo Nacional* (GAN), a National Tripartite Agreement that was signed by the government, workers and employers organizations of Honduras which highlighted their commitment to the creation of sustainable economic growth with social equity.
3. The existing regulatory framework in Honduras forces each policy initiative to be discussed nationwide. The project design did not foresee this situation, with the corresponding delay of the rest of activities until that phase was completed.
4. Political considerations also affected the smooth implementation of the project. In Burkina Faso, the 2011 political unrest stopped the initiative for some months while in Honduras, the declaration of the Presidency of the Republic affected the decision of the workers to join some specific activities. The constant change of the local coordinators in Honduras also affected the credibility in the project.
5. In Cambodia, the SPER and the Costing Exercise were two critical inputs for UNICEF in its study on the Rate of Return of the Social Investment in Cambodia.
6. The technical inputs produced by the project also were the basis for the preparation of different policy notes in Cambodia. The CARD is now developing some policy guidelines on the basis of the studies developed under the project.
7. The national dialogue strongly supported the progress with the so-called “Single Window Service” or PEOPLE Service in Cambodia, a project that coordinates and integrates service and benefit delivery to the citizen in the fields of employment and social protection at the provincial and local levels (ILO, 2012).
8. Two institutional-based challenges appeared during the implementation. First, in Honduras, there was a first reaction against the integrated approach because local authorities considered that the best way to do social policy is by defining social protection and employment policies separately. So the project provided them arguments to convince them about the importance of thinking differently. Second, in Burkina Faso, the two relevant Secretaries (Labour and Social Security and Employment) had visible frictions that were obstructing the work. The decision in this case was the confirmation of the Inter-ministerial commission led by the Ministry of Economy and Finance.

4.2.6. Good practices and lessons

1. In multi-country projects, the use of individual Logframes can be a good option to improve overall project management capacities. This idea seems to be relevant at the

moment of defining the activities that each country should implement to achieve the objectives. After considering the political factors that affected the good flow of activities in Honduras and Burkina Faso, it seems that the initial design did not consider several factors that ultimately affected the timely completion of the activities. But, keeping the execution of the project at a centralized level is important to guarantee that the different technical products are comparable across experiences.

2. Well-designed monitoring systems should be implemented in all projects, especially in those ones with a multi-country orientation. At least, there should be a list of OVIs to improve follow up tasks at the central and local levels.
3. Each country should define the way to organize the Tripartite Commissions. Factors such as the pluralistic integration of the Committee and the active role of a non-traditional actor like the Ministry of Economy and Finance in Burkina Faso for example helped to explain the successful role of the SC. No single recipe exists so each Committee should be tailor-made to consider the existing political conditions of the country.

4.3. Efficiency

The section on efficiency assessment analyses three topics: partnership arrangements, ILO contribution to the project and optimal use of resources.

4.3.1. Partnership arrangements

As stated in different parts of this document, the project succeeded in setting up an implementation structure that facilitated the conclusion of all the main activities. Both internal and external arrangements played a critical role but this does not mean that no bottlenecks were found during the execution of the project.

At the SC level, it was already discussed that the project faced problems in terms of the difficulty in obtaining an agreed date for the workshops/meetings; the replacement of SC representatives who were often not kept up-to-date by the previous representative or did not themselves pass on to the next representative what had been discussed at the previous workshops/meetings; partial attendance by some representatives who left the workshops/meetings early and who eventually did not get hold of the daily sessions; and the professional differences among members that resulted in different levels of commitment and interest in the initiative.

In addition to the main implementation arrangements described in the Project Background, the project also engaged in other types of arrangements with government institutions, UN agencies and development organizations.

In Cambodia, for instance, the project supported actuarial work by providing a peer review of the work done by the Deutsche Gesellschaft für Internationale Zusammenarbeit (GIZ) for social health insurance. In addition, there was a close relationship with the Interim Working Group on Social Safety Net (IWG-SSN/SP) and the Social Protection Core Group (SPCG) under the mandate of CARD's Social Protection Coordination Unit. The project had utilized existing mechanisms (over 20 in Cambodia) which were established by CARD and other Development Partners (DP) to seek cooperation and circulate its achievements. In total, the Cambodian experience shows that there were 18 representatives from various institutions including employer and workers organizations who were formal members of the Steering Committee. In addition, 8 development partners (ADB, WB, WFP, UNDP, UNICEF, AusAID, and GIZ) had informally sent their representative to be observers.

Similar efforts of more limited scope were found in Burkina Faso, too. Both the WB and different UN organizations were involved in the project in different degrees despite the lack of a local coordination that would be relevant to strengthen partnership initiatives. This close relationship can be observed in Burkina Faso's "*Revue des dépenses et de la performance de la protection sociale*" (SPER), where the report explicitly specifies that the conclusions and recommendations go in line with ones that WB and UNICEF have been supporting during the last years.

In Honduras, the experience shows an opposite direction. The two key financing development agencies in Latin America (WB and IDB) were not linked to the project. Although not clear responses were received about the grounds of this decision, factors such as conceptual differences among the agencies may influence it. For instance, the concept of social protection developed by ILO has substantial differences with the safety nets of the WB approach.

4.3.2. ILO technical resources

The technical and administrative support of the ILO was critical for the good implementation and termination of the project. This support comes from various sides.

First, there is a great international recognition of the ILO as a serious institution with wide experience in the implementation of development projects and a world leader in the fields 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 and the required political support for its implementation.

Second, the different concepts that the ILO has developed in the course of the last years were the fundamentals of the project in place. In particular, as it was discussed several times in this report, the integrated approach between social protection and employment promotion was the cornerstone of this project jointly with other concepts such as Decent Work and the 2008 ILO Declaration on Social Justice for a Fair Globalization, among the most important.

The project also benefited from the tools the ILO staff recurrently utilized in the field to prepare their assessment. In particular, the SPER methodology, the RAP and the Social Budgeting tool were critical to analyze the performance of the national social protection systems, to prepare an inventory of the social programs in the country and to assess the estimated costs of a social strategy. The preparation of employment diagnostics and the action plans complemented the list of tools. All these methodological instruments helped the project in the following ways:

1. By providing an individual picture of all the social security, social assistance and health programs in the country
2. By identifying major challenges and directions for the future social protection policy
3. By estimating the cost of the social protection policy and assessing its financial sustainability
4. By integrating the different components of the social protection-employment policy into one action plan that would guide future activities.

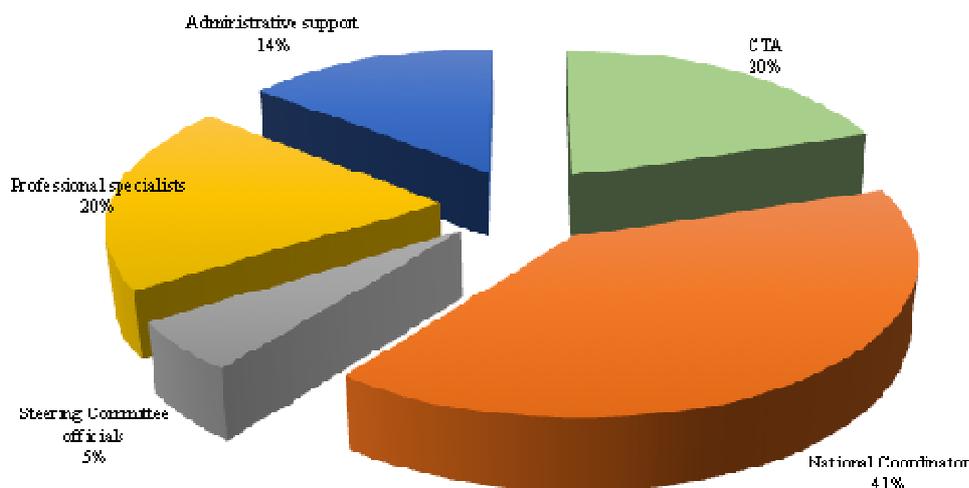
Finally, the contribution in terms of backstopping, specialized technical support (employment, modeling, etc) and time devoted by the ILO/EC Steering Committee represented an approximately 148.6 work-months. In total, national coordination accounted for about 40% of the time while CTAs and professional advice represented 20%

each. This time does not include project closure activities that represented extra work for the CTA and the administrative ILO staff after December 31st. A clear example of the level of professional support coming from ILO staff was the involvement of four ILO employment and social security specialists in Honduras during the discussions of the reports and some of the capacity building activities. In total, the ILO contribution, especially in terms of staff time, ended up being more important than its initial contractual commitment.

In addition to staff contribution, the ILO has local infrastructure in Honduras and Cambodia that also contributed to the good implementation. There is, however, one important issue that has to be considered here: the importance of local presence. In Burkina Faso, where the project was first coordinated by ILO-Dakar and then by ILO-Geneva (after the ILO specialist in Dakar left the organization), the Ministry of Economy expressed concerns about the way the project was implemented. The physical distance affected the level of communication between the two entities and this separation also created the perception that all the activities were imposed from outside with little room for negotiation. This problem was intensified by some elements, like the fact that the Ministry itself never received a copy of the project budget.

Administratively speaking, the experience of the ILO in implementing this type of project also favored the good development of the activities. Resources were available in a timely manner and no relevant delays were experienced in payments and the organization of activities.

Figure 3. Distribution of work-months by type of support



Source: ILO

4.3.3. Optimal use of resources

A key aspect in the analysis of project efficiency deals with optimal use of resources. In other words, it seems unavoidable to ask whether the project would have been able to do more things with the same resources and timeline. Three aspects deserve attention in this regard.

The first one refers to the time devoted to administratively setting-up the project (hiring consultants, local coordinators, etc). It took about 6 months to complete this phase and this accounted, as it was described earlier, for a significant share of the total project. Certainly one should be aware of the fact that during these first months, besides those administrative tasks, the CTA conducted a series of concurrent activities that ran during the same period (promotional visits to the countries, for example). Despite this, it seems important to search for alternatives to cut the time devoted to administratively set the projects, especially the hiring of staff permanently associated to the assignment (i.e. non-consulting teams).

Second, if the project was able to complete in about 1.5-2 years what was initially intended to last 3 years, then this may be suggesting that, if designed in a different way, the project would have achieved more. This deserves a “partial yes”. On one hand, the project management ability of the second CTA made possible to push and almost align the activities in the three countries to successfully conclude the project on time. Indeed, it was in a period of one and a half years that most of the activities took place: conclusion of technical inputs, training and social dialogue workshops. But, on the other hand, the completion of all the tasks does not imply that enough time was allocated to those activities. For instance, some of the reflections around the end of the project suggest that two tasks, training of SC members and social dialogue, would require more time to fully take advantage of the initial project design. In addition, it seems that the efficiency problems were not a design-related problem but were more related to the implementation abilities.

Finally, the project in some of the pilot countries did not make use of existing conditions to promote the project and the different recommendations. In Honduras, linkages with other actors outside the CES were minimized in contrast to Cambodia, where the involvement of socio-economic actors was highly relevant to disseminate the results and increase the awareness of ownership.

4.3.4. Good practices and lessons

1. Maximize the use of local resources. The project found the experience in Cambodia very illustrative on how to take advantage of local conditions to disseminate results and expand participation from other public institutions. The project utilized over 20 channels created by CARD to disseminate results among different agents.
2. International agencies should look to more synergies amongst themselves given their close agenda in these countries. Local stakeholders in Burkina Faso, for instance, mentioned that there was a duplication of efforts between the World Bank and the ILO/EC project in the sense that those organizations were interested in social protection issues but had no single, coordinated agenda of work. The best example was the existence of a separate diagnosis for each one of the social protection projects conducted by each entity.
3. The slow implementation of the start-up project and the subsequent delay in the overall initiative suggest the importance of paying more attention to the CTA recruitment process and to have specific controls to monitor the performance of the CTA.

4.4. Sustainability and impact

The final section of the evaluation analyses sustainability and impact conditions and identifies potential factors that may affect or spur the outcomes achieved under the project.

4.4.1. Sustainability

The project has paved a way for taking further actions by the government in terms of finalizing the draft integrated social protection and employment strategy. The strength of this path depends on the *quality, relevance and pertinence* of the technical inputs of national authorities, social partners and other stakeholders. This seems to be the first condition for the sustainability of the project outcomes. But also, the level of engagement of the government, social partners and other stakeholders in all the project development processes plays an important role. Their involvement clearly defines ownership of the project's achievements.

This project should be regarded as a first gateway to the understanding of the integrated approach (and, in some cases, of the overall set of policy initiatives promoted by ILO and EU). All the main outcomes (particularly results related to the development of the draft action plans and training activities) can be sustained in the way some actions are adopted by the pilot countries. At present, a series of factors may jeopardize the expected long-run effects of the project in the pilot countries. Some factors should be considered and it is important to adopt an active role to continue promoting the ILO/EC approach with a view to ensuring long-term sustainability. For instance, already trained staff may be moved from their current position to another position due to political considerations and this may leave a gap that cannot be filled by someone without formal training. Also, the National Tripartite Steering Committees may disappear or may be transformed into a forum to dialogue about other issues rather than social protection and employment. Third, the lack

of professional staff with enough project management capacities and the absence of formal monitoring systems limit the possibility of expanding the project beyond what was currently done. Fourth, due to fiscal constraints, government institutions with an active role may desist because it is impossible for them to finance workshops, travels, SC expenditures and similar items. Finally, the upcoming of elections (November 2013 in Honduras, 2015 in Burkina Faso) may alter the level of priority that social protection and employment currently have in the political agenda.

Certainly, it is important to remark that the technical products already started having an influence in the policy agenda of the countries. As it was presented in the 5th Meeting of the Joint Steering Committee (ILO/EC 2012), the progress observed so far was enough to consider that the project was contributing to the formulation of new social protection-employment promotion policies:

In Cambodia, the ILO is supporting the development of the National Employment Strategy, which has been highlighted by the National Dialogue as a priority for the next biennium, as well as the implementation of the Social Protection Strategy. In Burkina Faso, project production had been used by the partners for the elaboration of a National Social Protection Strategy and to start discussions on reforms regarding the Employment Funds. In Honduras, the national stakeholders signed the “Gran Acuerdo Nacional por un Crecimiento Económico con Equidad Social” which builds on the project inputs, and requests the development of an employment policy. Additionally, Honduras has demanded the ILO and the EU to further support to calculate scenarios for the adjustments of the social security institutions, which are currently out of balance.

In order to ensure that the achievements of the project can be sustained, the following is a list of proposed actions gathered during the interviews and from the desk review:

1. Training should be intensified and extended. The best way to maintain the outcomes of this project is through capacity building in order to keep the message flowing at the highest level of authority and among professional staff involved in social protection and employment. The results of the assessment show that, despite several training activities and workshops, there is still a gap in the understanding of the integrated approach and the linkages between the two areas. This message needs to be reinforced specially at the SC level. In addition, hands on training on policy tools (SPER, Social Budgeting, RAP, etc) requires an extension of the number of participants and enough time to develop real cases. Finally, training contents should start delivering management tools to relevant staff and authorities in order to strengthen the capacity to administer nationwide initiatives aimed at covering all the population. Technical and political staff skills should be reinforced.
2. Social dialogue should be *institutionalized* as part of the policy formulation and follow-up process. The SC should exist as a permanent body of debate and not just as an entity that responds to a situation at a determined moment. Honduras seems to be on the correct path. The CES is not only the dialogue forum with strong political support but in this moment the country is debating a law to provide the CES with a legal representation and statutory framework that would isolate the *Consejo* from electoral and political influences.
3. The focus of the integrated approach should also be extended beyond the Tripartite Commissions. The new policy perspective requires more dissemination among other social actors like universities, media and NGOs. An active *communication strategy*, aimed at positioning the approach in the panel of discussions and creating greater awareness, is needed.
4. In line with the previous point, there is also considerable focus on the importance of expanding the SC to other public sector entities that participate in social protection

activities. Education, for instance, is usually excluded from the discussion or its role is minimized despite its fundamental role in human capital formation.

5. Political consensus and will is an important piece of the puzzle. In all the countries, the governments in turn realized the importance of discussing the integrated approach and decided to take different type of actions to preserve the discussion and prepare future plans. The abovementioned case of Honduras and the decision of the government of Burkina Faso to move the coordination of social protection policies to the Prime Ministry are examples of this political support. However, many stakeholders showed concerns with having the government as the manager of the process, given the political fluctuations and electoral interests that may affect it. Thus, there is an increasing consensus that civil society organizations (employers, workers or a third party) should take the role and coordinate the required actions. Again, the experience of the CES, where workers and employers agreed on a series of labor issues (minimum wage, for instance) without the direct mediation of the government is an example that two parties can sit down and negotiate issues of mutual interest.
6. Political determination should be translated into fiscal will. Government and international agencies should allocate funds to finance the operation of the SC, to disseminate the messages and to prepare additional studies that would be needed in the course of formulation of the social protection-employment policy. For instance, there is a need to undertake research on the nature of employment and other labor market challenges and in the identification of sources of funding to expand fiscal space for social protection purposes.
7. More structural measures should also be analysed. For instance, in all the countries, the information systems lack even the most basic indicators to guide policy formulation so a deep restructuring of the data flows is required. Also, governments should pay attention to the ministerial organization to avoid duplicated functions and to promote cooperation among the institutions.

4.4.2. Impacts analysis: contributions and effects

At this point of time it is not possible to talk about impact. The project is mainly intended to increase awareness about the importance of the new approach and to generate a series of inputs that will operate as the basis in the preparation of national integrated policies that, at the same time, are expected to contribute to the improvement of the living standards of the population. So in reality this project was part of a larger chain of events in which the initiative was the “triggering point” with a limited direct impact on the final beneficiaries of the project. Considering that the project increased the level of awareness about the integrated approach and prepared initial inputs for further use and discussion (as it was this case), then it is possible to conclude that the project contributed to the establishment of a new promising way to develop social protection and employment policies.

The project supported enhanced institutional capacity through training and social dialogue activities. Administrative modernization and legal reforms were not intended to be the subject of specific activities although the project does consider them as fundamental to the overall success of the implementation of policies.

Although difficult to measure, the perception from the different opinions gathered is that social dialogue played a more strategic role than training. Social dialogue in the form of SC discussions and other type of workshops not only brought back the topic into the policy agenda but also was capable to bring together in a forum groups that otherwise would have different agendas. This was a critical intangible asset of the project: the capacity to make social dialogue a recurrent way to discuss about social protection and employment.

Training also played a relevant role in the construction of better institutions but in this case the effects should be assessed using a broad perspective. If one considers that the level of familiarity with the concepts included in the integrated approach and the Decent Work Agenda was limited among the key stakeholders, then including training as part of the activities was a good decision. The fact of inducing stakeholders into the rationale, main concepts and policy alternatives of the new approach resulted in a big step and now the participants are, at least, aware of the existence of those proposals. However, if on the other hand one evaluates the long-run effects of training, then the conclusions are more moderate. As it was presented in the previous sections, there are important gaps to fill in terms of capacity building, mainly in the understanding of how to integrate social protection and employment and how to use policy tools. It is the view of the evaluator that as long as the understanding of the linkages between social protection and employment remain unclear, the advances in the formulation of an integrated policy will be slow. The devil is in the details. During the field visit, it was clear that the respondents had a positive opinion and agreed with the initial idea of integrating both policies. The option seems reasonable and understandable when the discussion moves between social security and employment, but it was not that optimistic when other areas of social protection (for instance, social assistance) were included into the analysis. As a result, respondents tended to cast doubts about the possibility of formulating something that was as straightforward as initially assumed.

4.4.3. The gender dimension

Gender-disaggregated data were used in the labour market assessments and, to a lesser degree, in the SPER. In both cases, scarce data availability in the three countries limited the possibility to expand the analysis beyond the basic indicators (unemployment and program coverage by gender). However, it seems that gender-oriented recommendations were not part of the final draft action plans. Policy recommendations were oriented to topics such as rural employment, migrant conditions and coverage of vulnerable groups (children, elderly, etc).

4.4.4. Good practices and lessons

Some of the good practices of the project in terms of sustainability were:

1. The sustainability of the outcomes does not depend on one or two factors and are not the result of one-shot efforts only. To keep outcomes sustainable over time, countries should engage in a package of activities that will keep the spirit of the initiative alive. This package include actions in terms of continuous awareness among social partners, training of technical staff and more presence in the media, among others.
2. Tripartite Committees should be the supported by a strong regulatory framework and a visible political will to continue. Civil society organizations should play a critical leading role in the functioning of the SC, as it is stated in the ILO Recommendation 202 on social protection floors.
3. Social dialogue prepared the basis for future efforts to integrate both types of policies.

5. Conclusions

Key conclusions of the report can be summarized as follows:

1. In general terms, the ILO/EC project was a well-designed initiative that took advantage of an international situation (the financial crisis) and identified an area of critical importance for the socioeconomic development of developing countries. Despite some specific issues in the initial definition of the objectives and expected products, the project was pertinent and relevant to the development priorities of the pilot countries. The activities included in the design were sufficient to achieve the objectives of promoting the integrated approach, develop draft action plans and disseminate good results.
2. The project achieves the objectives defined in the corresponding design. But, besides the successful completion of activities and the preparation of several reports, the project was important because it promoted social dialogue, increased the level of awareness about the role of social protection and employment policies and provided the basis for future policy initiatives. Social dialogue was a critical success factor in countries where multisectoral negotiation is not the rule. This brings the social protection-employment promotion issue back to the priorities of the policy agenda. In addition, the technical inputs of the project provided the foundations for future policy formulation. At this point in time, all the pilot countries have used the reports to start discussing their future social and employment policies.
3. The available documental evidence is clear about the existence of design and implementation issues that may require further discussion and review to get the necessary lessons for overall management improvement in future projects. The evaluation highlights the importance of paying attention to the following aspects: the project design should be designed jointly with local stakeholders (at least with other ILO offices and EU delegations); the objectives and expected outcomes can be the same for all the pilot countries but the activities should be country-specific; projects should identify performance indicators to monitor follow-up; pilot country selection criteria should be more specific, not using broad standards as the ones applied to this project; there should be a mechanism in place to introduce changes in the design in a more flexible way.
4. As a consequence of the project, there is an increasing awareness regarding the importance of developing coherent national policies based on national consensus that take into account the links between social protection and employment. Both policymakers and social actors in the pilot countries consider of the utmost importance to move to a new approach and they understand the positive effects this decision may have. In this regards, the training workshops played a critical role. Despite this enhanced awareness, not all the actors fully understood how to link social protection extension and employment promotion. In short, there is still a general tendency to consider social protection as a synonym of social protection. This is definitely an area where ILO and EU should continue efforts to improve the capacities of the technical staff and the authorities in the conceptual and methodological scope of the integrated approach.
5. The project faced challenges in integrating the long list of agents related to social protection and employment. Despite the positive role of the SC in the promotion of the social dialogue, the participation of some key stakeholders was limited to a minor role, mostly assistance to workshops. In some cases, excluded institutions were a critical piece in the social protection puzzle as it was the case of the Ministry of Social Development of Honduras, although this decision relied on the internal

decisions of the country regarding the composition of the Steering Committee. The apparent contradiction generated some concerns in local agents and raised the issue of a potential need to redefine the range of actors to be included and working rules of Tripartite Commissions.

6. Not all the local stakeholders were convinced that the ILO has full clarity of the integrated approach and how both employment and social protection policies can be coordinated. It was said that the ILO still promotes two bodies of policies (one for employment and one for social protection) even though the target population is basically the same. This introduces an element of confusion among local authorities.
7. Some management problems also appeared in the course of the project. The CTAs found difficult to manage it due to the centralized format that the project (distance command from Geneva) and the absence of at least a list of basic indicators to follow-up progress.
8. The ILO played an essential role by contributing to the project in 4 areas: the ILO/EC trademark provides confidence on the quality of the work; the project was based on policy approaches developed by the ILO (integrated approach, Decent Work); the project made intensive use of policy tools developed by the ILO (Social Budgeting, SPER and RAP) during the workshops; and ILO technical and administrative staff heavily supported the implementation.
9. Despite some efforts, the relationship with other international agencies was limited to sporadic (but useful) interventions in the development of specific products. Local stakeholders, however, have been claiming for a more active participation of the different development partners in the projects of other agencies. In some cases, as in Cambodia, some public authorities mentioned that the lack of an integrated agenda caused, for instance, that the country now to have two labour market assessments.
10. Due to the nature of the project, it is not possible to talk about the impact of the project. The initiative should be regarded as part of a broader chain with repercussions in the formulation of integrated national policies that, at the same time, are expected to affect the lives of the final beneficiaries. However, the project generated some effects in the overall country capacity to develop integrated policies. The sustainability of the results cannot be taken for granted and to minimize any potential loss the development agencies, donors, governments and civil society groups should give continuity to a series of actions in terms of social dialogue strengthening, capacity building, information system improvement and enhanced sensitization among the stakeholders.
11. The operation framework in which the EU operates seems to be very rigid to the type of projects that the ILO promotes where national results and outcomes depend on the priorities and will of national governments and stakeholders (such as concerning national policy development). In the specific case of this project, changes to the logframe were proposed in line with the recommendations made by the ROM but they were not accepted by the ILO/EC Steering Committee in October 2011.

Lessons learned

1. The new integrated approach reveals a series of advantages that, if materialized, may help countries to improve the process of policy formulation and enhance the expected results and impacts on the population. However, the new approach put on the table for debating a series of. One of these topics refers to the scope and work of the Tripartite Commissions. The experience shows that, under a new policy approach as the one supported by the project, the institutional framework in which it relies should also experience important changes. Specifically, if the integrated approach promotes a broad concept of social promotion, then the scope of the social dialogue should be expanded too in order to incorporate all this range of groups and institutions that are now part of the concept.
2. Problems with the institutional settings in low-income countries make difficult the implementation of the policy tools presented as part of this project during the training workshops. New simplified tools and a full reformulation of the existing information systems will contribute to advance toward enhanced institutional capacity to do more complex analyses.
3. The discussion and presentation of results during the Interregional Conference in Brussels in December 2012 would have benefitted from more detailed exchange of country experiences in integrating social protection and employment policies and future challenges. The lesson here is that, for future projects, such experience sharing conferences would benefit from the contributions of both those involved at national level in **political decision-making and those involved with providing technical knowhow to the policy formulation process**. As it was stated by the EU delegation in Honduras, there should be a higher level of pre-conference coordination to check up the contents of the presentation and recommend any modifications previous to the main event.
4. The CTAs had project management problems, in part, because the initiative had no specific metrics to follow-up the progress at the country level. Certainly general indicators exist but some opinions established that nation-specific metrics should exist because the internal conditions vary considerably from country to country. Keeping the same indicators, especially outcomes indicators, is necessary to guarantee comparability across countries but for monitoring purposes, intermediate indicators should exist. For future efforts, the lesson is that even if the scale of the project is small or the nature of its outputs is qualitative, each project should have a small set of relevant indicators, including OVI coefficients.
5. There is a tendency between government officials and decision makers to separate employment from social protection. It is clear that they do not see clear linkages between those two areas in terms of effectiveness of policies, and concrete development actions. Therefore more advocacy and training in this particular is needed in order to design new interventions or new activities. In fact, some of the training sessions should be studying real cases where the clear understanding of this relationship had made the difference, in order to create conciseness majorly in the decision makers but also in technicians involved.
6. Time lost during the first months of the project due to internal (slowly-implemented activities) and external causes (political unrest in Honduras and Burkina Faso) was critical to understand the short time devoted to National Policy Dialogue Forums and workshops to discuss results of the project. In other words, time is gold and losing too much time during the first stages may complicate the implementation of later activities, perhaps the most important of the project. Future initiatives should be

aware of a series of issues before planning the calendar of implementation: the likelihood that something will go wrong (*risk assessment*), the time allocated to administrative issues (personnel and hiring of consultant) and the level of flexibility the project management guidelines offer in case any variation is required.

7. The experience in Burkina Faso shows that this type of initiatives needs full-time local coordinators. Although the international expert who coordinated activities in Burkina Faso did a very good job, his part-time, long distance involvement was something that affected the smooth implementation of the project. It seems that the ideal local coordinator is a mix of the background and functions of the national coordinators hired for Cambodia and Honduras: a local person who works at the coordinating agency.
8. The CTA is a critical position whose work has significant implications for the normal implementation of the project. One of the factors that affected the late implementation of the project was the slow reaction of the first CTA to the unexpected conditions in the countries. The experience calls for the need to review the recruitment process and the requirements to fill positions of similar nature.
9. It is clear that the administrative framework in which projects such as the ILO/EC initiative operates is quite rigid and sometimes difficult to manage. This situation, however, will hardly change in the future because this functioning is attached to the reporting requirements that the EC provides to the EU Parliament and the strict auditing procedures on the use of funds. So, in order to improve overall project management, the solution would be to reduce the total time that elapse between a requested change and the final decision.

Good practices

Some of the good practices promoted under the project were:

1. National Steering Committees/Tripartite Commissions were excellent bodies as mechanisms to promote social dialogue, to increase the level of information sharing and experiences among participants and to enhance project ownership. Through these committees, the project was able to increase the level of awareness at the time it delegated sufficient self-decision to determine whether the technical inputs were of relevance for the country.
2. The use of an extended network of institutions “outside the SC” was a good way to disseminate results and reach groups that were not actively involved in the project. That was the case in Cambodia, where the project made use of several CARD mechanisms that contributed to increasing the outreach of the communication and dissemination of results.
3. One of the most remarkable characteristics of the initiative was the decision to build-up the project based on existing national efforts (i.e. social or employment policies, national development plans, etc). This was useful for several reasons. First, this sent a positive signal to the local agents that the ILO and the EU wanted to construct something according to local vision and conditions. This reinforced their role as *guiding partners*. In this way, the project wanted to motivate ownership. Second, basing the process on national initiatives improved efficiency by reducing time allocated to issues already discussed and approved at the national level. So more efforts could be applied to the preparation of integrated policies.
4. The project left it up to the countries to decide on the best way to organize their National Tripartite Steering Committee and this resulted in a better comprehension of national conditions and how they should be managed. The final format of the SC was the result of the prevailing political conditions governing each country.
5. The role performed by the second CTA can be classified as a good practice. Daily involvement in the project and constant communication with local coordinators plus regular fieldtrips were fundamental to complete in one and a half year all the core activities of the project despite the late start.

Recommendations

The report proposes the following recommendations:

Social dialogue should be maintained and strengthened but with some changes. Tripartite social dialogue is one of the cornerstones of any sound policy formulation process as it integrates representatives of at least the three core groups in the country (government, workers and employers). However, there is an increasing need to expand the range of participation in the SCs to include other relevant representative institutions and agents that belong to the social protection realm, in line with the new approach. In fact, the SC in Burkina had an inter-ministerial nature. Thus, the SC should be expanded to include participants from the health, education and social assistance sectors, among others. Also, the ILO/EC should promote the approval of local regulations to give the SC a permanent nature far from the electoral and political waves that affect developing countries from time to time.

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.** The report recommends paying more attention to two critical factors for the success of future policy development: information systems and administrative/organizational processes. Information system strengthening is a vital issue because the level of data availability and quality is so poor that it makes difficult to clearly adopt measures based on strong evidence. Also, it may be important to support the consolidation of social protection and employment institutional process so linkages exist and, in this way, an integrated approach can be effectively developed. As they are known, their organization respond to an old-fashioned way to split the two types of policies as separate elements.

Continue the capacity building program. The sustainability of many of the project results depends on the existence of a group of government officials and civil society persons who clearly understand the integrated approach and/or are able to implement certain type of assessment to formulate appropriate policies. As mentioned above, it is essential to **build strong national capacities.** Thus, training workshops and other related activities should be part of the proposed working agenda. Training plans should be oriented to reinforce the understanding of the links between social protection and employment, to instruct on how to develop labor policy and to promote hands-on exercises that would replicate real cases.

Promote and finance the preparation of studies that search for fiscal space options. After completing the studies on costing estimates and fiscal feasibility assessment, technical analysis is required to identify and evaluate *financing options* to close the gap between the current amount of resources allocated to social protection and employment policies and the required resources under different policy scenarios.

Encourage the use of individual logframes for a better project management framework. Unified objectives and expected outcomes can be adequate to compare the results of the project across the different countries. However, establishing a single logframe for all the countries may not be the most appropriate because of the idiosyncratic conditions offered by each nation; it is necessary to have a country-specific set of activities that will guide the implementation of the project according to local considerations.

Multi-country projects should move towards a more decentralized execution. In line with the previous point, for multi-country projects the administration model should be defined in different terms. An alternative model consists of a structure where the CTA in

Geneva defines a single methodological framework and provides the required backstopping support. Then, local coordinators follow the framework but have enough degree of freedom to adapt the logframe to the country conditions.

Introduce changes to the administrative framework in which this type of project operates. The EU administrative framework needs to be more flexible because, as it currently works, it does not grant enough degree of freedom to introduce (sometimes critical) changes to the project. A modified framework should be implemented and adapted to the conditions of developing countries (political instability, environmental disasters, institutional poor capacity to manage development projects, etc).

Countries should move to the preparation of integrated policies. After completing the draft action plan, the next natural step seems to be the preparation of national integrated policies formulated with the inputs produced under this project. However, little progress would be observed if the country commits to the preparation of the Integrated Policy before solving many of the institutional factors affecting the performance of the different entities.

In relation to the previous point, adequate preparation of the countries to formulate integrated policies pass through a full clarification of the project inside the ILO. For the ILO, one recommendation is the strengthening of its own role as regulation and normative entity, by the development of a clear concept of the link between employment and social protection. One example of this condition is the current situation in Honduras. There, both the high level of unemployed or underemployed persons and the low rate of social protection coverage may be referring, at the end, to the same population. Although this may implied that one single policy should be defined (because it is targeting the same group), some opinions pinpoint to the fact that, currently, the ILO employment promotion programs are designing activities to improve the access to employment no matter what happen with the social security coverage and vice versa. This situation, is was said, is a bad signal to political stakeholders in the different countries because it may be saying that the entity itself does not have full clarity of the approach it is promoting. This situation provokes that the governance entities such as the Ministries of Labor have no arguments to reinforce the integration of actions and consequently the maximization of resources is more difficult.

Annex 1

Terms of reference

I. Introduction and Rational for Evaluation

These Terms of Reference provide the framework for the final independent evaluation of the ILO/EC project “Improving social protection and promoting employment” (INT/09/06/EEC). Funded by the European Community it is a project of the Commission of the European Communities (EC) and the International Labour Organization (ILO) with a budget of € 2,769,124. The Project which was signed in 2009 started implementation in November 2009 and will end activities on 31 December 2012.

In October 2011 a mid-term evaluation was done by an independent external consultant in order to assess the results and impact achieved by the project mid-term into the projects life cycle and with the aim also to provide recommendations to strengthen future action by the Project Management. The evaluation was carried out in compliance with the ILO Evaluation Policy and Strategy, the UN Evaluation Norms and Standards and OECD/DAC Evaluation Quality Standards. The mid-term evaluation also took into account the findings of the European Commission’s contracted independent Result Oriented Monitoring (ROM) report which was provided in August 2011.

The final independent evaluation aims at examining the extent to which the project objectives have been achieved. The evaluation is expected to determine the efficiency, effectiveness and sustainability of the outcomes achieved. The final evaluation will also formulate conclusions and recommendations and generate lessons learned and good practices for sharing of knowledge and experiences. The final independent evaluation will take place from December 2012-February 2013. The evaluation will be managed by an ILO Evaluation Manager who is independent of the ILO/EC project, and under the overall direction of the ILO Evaluation Unit. It will be conducted by an external independent consultant. The evaluation will comply with UN Norms and standards and those ethical safeguards will be followed.⁷

II. Background and Justification

The project contributes to the development of coherent and integrated social protection and employment policy frameworks in the pilot countries based on effective social dialogue and inter-ministerial coordination. The three pilot countries in which the project is implemented are: Burkina Faso, Cambodia and Honduras. While at the onset a fourth country, Ethiopia, had been chosen as a pilot country, following the decision of local authorities to only participate under terms which were not acceptable to the ILO and the EC requiring the decentralization of project resources and local execution without guarantee of involvement of ILO and EC staff, it was mutually decided by the ILO and the EC to abandon this fourth pilot. Despite belonging to different regions, the three pilot countries face similar challenges, namely the fight against high levels of poverty and income inequality, the need for sound labour market and comprehensive social security institutions, gender inequality, the need for establishing effective social dialogue and the central role of integrated and coherent employment and social protection policies.

⁷ UN Evaluation Norms and Standards and OECD/DAC Evaluation Quality Standards. See <http://www.ilo.org/eval/Evaluationpolicy/lang--en/index.htm>

The project has two specific objectives which are meant to contribute to the promotion of integrated social protection and employment policies adopted through national consensus in the three pilot countries. The first specific objective is to develop national action plans to extend social protection and to promote employment demonstrating the feasibility and effectiveness of a basic social protection package and coordinated, inclusive employment strategies. The second specific objective is to promote an international campaign and platform for awareness-raising and exchanges of good practice in social protection and employment.

The project has worked within the context of various international instruments which have provided a sound framework for its recommendations. The work of the project puts into effect the 2008 ILO Declaration on Social Justice for a Fair Globalisation which highlights the “inseparable, interrelated and mutually supportive” nature of the four Decent Work strategic objectives: employment, social protection, social dialogue and rights at work. Among the important internationally adopted instruments which provide the basis for the work undertaken by the project are the Conclusions and Resolutions adopted by ILO constituents (governments, employers and workers) at the International Labour Conference regarding the Recurrent discussion on employment in 2010, the Recurrent discussion on social protection (social security) in 2011, the Call for Action on Youth employment in 2012 and the Social Protection Floors Recommendation, 2012 (no. 202); and the EC Declaration on Social security (2012).

The main activities of the project have been:

- 1) Establishment of National Tripartite Steering Committees in each of the pilot countries with an aim to building an institutional mechanism conducive to effective social dialogue on employment and social protection policies.
- 2) Development of diagnostic studies on current employment challenges and opportunities and social protection.
- 3) Validation of the studies by the National Tripartite Steering Committees and discussion of policy options in tripartite workshops.
- 4) Development of planning tools necessary for the preparation of cost estimates for the formulation of programmes for extending basic social protection and promoting employment.
- 5) Elaboration of draft integrated national action plans for the extension of social security and employment promotion.
- 6) Validation of the draft action plans by the National Tripartite Steering Committees through National tripartite employment and social protection policy dialogues.
- 7) Knowledge transfer and capacity building of national stakeholders on diagnostic tools for the extension of social protection and employment promotion. Building knowledge and technical capacity for the formulation of integrated policy frameworks.
- 8) Organisation of a final conference to compare the experience of the three countries, to draw lessons and to disseminate the findings.

The final beneficiaries of the project are low income persons, including the elderly, people with disabilities, the unemployed, children living in low income households, and workers in the informal economy. In the project document, the final beneficiary population has been defined as comprising mostly people living in poverty; people who tend to live in rural areas, a predominant female participation and an important representation of children.

The exact number of beneficiaries is difficult to estimate, however, potential policy reforms emerging which extend employment and social protection will improve the social and economic status mainly of the poorest population.

The target groups of project activities are Government officials (including the Ministries of Labour, Employment, Social Protection, Finance, Planning, Health, and Education, and Social Security and labour market Institutions), social partners' organizations and other relevant civil society organizations.

The project is a joint management project between the ILO and the EC. It is centralized with budgetary, administrative and technical backstopping at the ILO Headquarters in Geneva. It is a project which is jointly technically backstopped by the Social Security Department (SEC/SOC) of the Social Protection Sector and the Employment Policy Department (EMP/POLICY) of the Employment Sector. At the country level, national project coordinators (in Cambodia and in Honduras) ensure programming and administrative support for the country activities. The ILO's field structure through the ILO's Decent Work Country Support Team (DWT) and Country Office in Dakar, the ILO's Regional Office for Asia and the Pacific and DWT in Bangkok and the ILO's DWT and Country Office in San José provide support to the work in the countries as well as regional expertise. In all the three pilot countries, staff from the European Union delegations have been kept abreast of the implementation of project activities and have participated in the national dialogue processes. Furthermore, a joint ILO/EC Steering Committee has been in place following the implementation of project activities.

Burkina Faso

Burkina Faso was the first West African country to implement a poverty-reduction strategy (*Cadre stratégique de lutte contre la pauvreté – CSLP 2000–2003*) – focusing on the social sectors (in particular, education and health) and on speeding up economic growth. Social protection was built into this strategy's priorities starting with the second generation of the Poverty Reduction Strategy Paper (CSLP 2004–2006, extended until 2010), and its priority was confirmed with the third generation, called the “Strategy for accelerated growth and sustainable development” (*Stratégie de Croissance Accélérée et du Développement Durable – SCADD 2010–2015*), in parallel with highlighting the creation of employment and support to growth-promoting sectors. The employment and social protection priorities of the SCADD are being implemented through the National Employment policy (*Politique nationale de l'emploi (PNE)*), the National Labour Policy (*Politique nationale du travail (PNT)*) and the National Social Protection Policy (*Politique nationale de protection sociale (PNPS)*). These have however, shown that while separate national policies in the areas of employment and of social protection exist they lack in providing an integrated approach.

It is within this context that the ILO/EC project has worked jointly with the Ministry of Employment, Vocational Training and Youth, the Ministry of the Economy and Finance and the Ministry of Civil Service, Labour and Social Security and the social partners. Building on work done by the ILO over various years, the project has contributed to the development of a national action plan providing the basis for an integrated approach for the coordinated development of social security extension policies and employment promotion policies for young men and women, with the involvement of stakeholders. In this context, a diagnosis of the national situation and needs in the area of social protection and employment was carried out through a Social Protection Expenditure and Performance Review (SPER), as well as a review on the performance and impact of Employment Funds, and a review of employment intensive public works. The involvement of national and international stakeholders has been ensured through the validation of the project outputs at technical workshops and a National Policy Dialogue Forum.

In Burkina Faso, the work undertaken by the ILO/EC project through the development of the national plan has brought to the forefront the commitment of the social partners towards an integration of employment and social protection policies.

The project has contributed through knowledge transfer to the capacity building of national staff to better understand the linkages between social protection and employment promotion policies ensuring that policy planners are in a better position to address national needs through coordinated policies. They have been trained in the use of a number of diagnostic tools that can be used for the development of national employment and social protection policies and plans.

Working in the “One UN” framework as well as the joint UN Social Protection Floor Initiative, the project has benefitted from the participation of the development partners in the technical workshops and national policy dialogue forums and a collaboration with the World Bank on employment intensive public works.

Cambodia

The agenda for economic planning and development of the government of Cambodia is laid down in two documents. The first document, the *Rectangular Strategy for Growth, Employment, Equity and Efficiency Phase II* contains the ‘Socio-Economic Policy Agenda’ for the fourth legislature of the Royal Government of Cambodia (RGC) 2008-2013. The second document the *National Strategic Development Plan (NSDP) Update 2009-2013* provides the roadmap for the implementation of the priorities outlined in the first document. The document also lays out the public finance framework and the targeting of financial resources to Cambodia’s industrial needs. With respect to social protection, the *National Social Protection Strategy (NSPS)* adopted in April 2011 elaborates upon the priorities laid out in the NSDP Update 2009-2013. The NSPS for the short and medium term focuses on establishing and extending social protection for the poor and the vulnerable and for the longer term the NSPS envisages a further extension towards a comprehensive social protection framework, including the establishment and enhancement of new and existing social insurance schemes, and aims to complement and coordinate the plans and strategies of line ministries and other stakeholders in the area of social protection. The government of Cambodia approached the ILO for technical assistance in implementing the National Social Protection Strategy (NSPS) and in developing a National Employment Strategy (NES) in line with the NSDP.

In this context, the project was seen as an opportunity to develop an NES that would not only be aligned with the objectives of the NSDP, but also with those of the NSPS. Following requests from the Ministry of Labour and Vocational Training (MOLVT) and the social partners, an employment situation analysis was conducted, which led to the publication of the report *Towards a National Employment Strategy for sustained poverty reduction*. Specific attention was given to policy areas where employment priorities could be integrated with the priorities adopted in the NSPS. Training was provided to all relevant stakeholders on key employment issues (data collection and analysis, impact assessment tools, priority setting techniques, etc.). Technical advice was given to the MOLVT for setting-up an inter-ministerial committee on employment. The employment policy work conducted in the framework of the project was complemented by work financed by ILO funds through the DWT in Bangkok. In the area of social protection, a diagnostic study has been done through a Social Protection Expenditure and Performance Review (SPER) as well as a *Financial assessment of the National Social Protection Strategy (NSPS) for the poor and the vulnerable*. These have provided an overview of the social protection system and the feasibility of introducing priority social protection programmes as outlined in the NSPS. The employment and social protection diagnostic studies have contributed towards the development of the national action plan *Towards Integrated Employment and Social Protection Policies for Cambodia* which has been validated in a National Policy Dialogue

forum in 2012. Finally, the project supported actuarial work done by the Deutsche Gesellschaft für Internationale Zusammenarbeit (GIZ) for social health insurance and a report was produced to support the extension strategy adopted by the RGC for social insurance to the formal sector (*Social Security for the Formal Economy: Outlook and Challenges Ahead*).

In order to ensure the appropriate integration of project outputs into the country's strategic action framework, the project has worked in close collaboration with the Ministry of Labour and Vocational Training (MOLVT), Council for Agricultural and Rural Development (CARD), Ministry for Rural Development (MRD), the National Employment Agency (NEA), the Ministry of Social Affairs, Veterans and Youth Rehabilitation (MoSVY), the Ministry of Planning (MoP), and the Ministry of Economy and Finance (MEF). The project works in close collaboration with the other United Nations agencies, such as UNICEF and other development partners such as the Asian Development Bank (ADB) and the GIZ.

Sound planning and assessment of existing schemes as well as future policy options is essential to the viability of systems. In this context, knowledge transfer and capacity building activities have been conducted to enhance national capacities to conduct Assessment Based National Dialogue exercises as well as to design and cost policy options for social protection and employment schemes.

Honduras

Honduras suffered a major political crisis in late 2009, creating an impediment for the launch of activities at the start of project implementation. It is only once the travel ban was lifted for the UN System and the EU development partners in June 2010 that activities could commence. The government of Honduras requested the ILO for support in the development of employment and social protection policies and the ILO/EU Project was the opportunity to develop coordinated work in the country. In 2010 the government of Honduras launched the *Plan de Nación/Visión de País (PN/VP 2010-2038)*, which is a strategic development plan, that foresees five strategic goals among which one is related to the extension of social protection and the fight against poverty, and another is related to the creation of employment according to decent work criteria.

In 2012, the *Gran Acuerdo Nacional* (GAN, a National Tripartite Agreement) was signed by the government, workers and employers organizations of Honduras which highlighted their commitment to the creation of sustainable economic growth with social equity. Employment and social protection figure among the objectives identified as central in the agreement. The GAN provides a national response to the international crisis and, simultaneously, establishes a priority in terms of how the employment goals of the PN/VP should be attained. The ILO/EU Project provided support to prepare an action plan to implement the SP/EMP elements of the national tripartite agreement.

In the area of social protection, the Government of Honduras adopted a Social Protection Policy (*Política de Protección Social*) in 2012 with the aim to progressively put in place social conditions which guarantee the personal and collective welfare of vulnerable segments of the population through effective strategic planning. In the area of employment, Honduras adopted a plan for the creation of decent employment (*Propuesta Plan Nacional para la Generación de Empleo Digno en Honduras*) in 2006 and an action plan for the promotion of youth employment (*Plan de Acción para promover el empleo juvenil en Honduras*) in 2011. The challenge was hence to support dialogue around existing frameworks on employment and on social protection and to try and draw elements that could be integrated.

The ILO/EC project thus undertook an employment situation analysis as well as a review of the employment programmes in place in order to identify the elements for a National

Employment Strategy (*Elementos para una política de empleo y combate a la pobreza*) that interrelates with the foreseen *Plan Estratégico Interinstitucional de la Política de Protección Social 2012-2016* (an Inter-institutional Strategic Social Protection Policy Plan 2012-2016) which aims to complement and coordinate the policies and strategies in the area of social protection. In this context, the ILO/EC project undertook a *Social Protection Expenditure and Performance Review* which supplied a consolidation of social expenditure in Honduras. To support the debate on the need to put in place a Social Protection Floor comprising of basic social security guarantees, the project provided cost estimation for basic social protection coverage extension based on hands-on exercises done during training with the tripartite constituents and other key stakeholders and prior to the National Policy Dialogue forum.

It is within this context that the ILO/EC project has worked jointly with the Ministry of Labour and Social Security including the Consejo Económico y Social (Economic and Social Council), the Secretaría de Desarrollo Social (the Ministry of Social Development), the Secretaría de Finanzas (the Ministry of Finance), and other ministries, the Employment services and the social partners. The project has contributed to the development of an integrated national action plan (*Política integrada de empleo y protección social en Honduras: Lineamientos para un plan de acción nacional*) providing the basis for an integrated approach for the development of social security extension policies and full and productive employment promotion policies with the involvement of stakeholders. This was achieved through the validation of the project outputs at technical workshops and National Policy Dialogue Forums which included participants from various Ministries, employers and workers organizations, academics and experts from international organizations. At the end of the National Policy Dialogue, the Ministry of Labour and Social Security, and the employers and the workers agreed on a short list of consensus points regarding future developments concerning employment and social protection policies in Honduras.

The project has organized and delivered training workshops to build the capacity of tripartite constituents and other key stakeholders on employment and social protection tools and methodologies as well as to ensure transfer of these tools for their application during the process of future national planning and policy development.

Promotion of an international campaign and platform for awareness-raising and exchanges of good practice in social protection and employment

Substantial efforts have been made to ensure knowledge dissemination and visibility for the project. A website has been developed with a view to sharing of knowledge by providing information on the project its activities and events, as well as on the social protection and employment policies in the three pilot countries. The reports produced within the framework of the project are also disseminated through this platform with a view to fostering sharing of knowledge regarding country experiences. At the national level, the reports of the project have been disseminated among the stakeholders and have been validated within the context of national policy dialogue forums. To ensure visibility of the outcomes of the project at the national level, press releases at certain of project events were prepared in Cambodia and Honduras.

Furthermore, the project is organizing an Interregional Conference on “Improving social protection and promoting employment: experiences and lessons learnt” to be held in Brussels on the 3rd of December. The aim of the Conference is to present, discuss and disseminate findings of the project. It will present country experiences on social security and employment policy development based on social dialogue and will discuss lessons learnt and best practices from a comparative perspective. Recommendations should ensue from these technical discussions for future policy development and technical cooperation work in low-income countries to improve coherence between social protection and employment promotion interventions.

III. Client, Scope and Purpose of the Evaluation

Purpose

The proposed evaluation will provide an independent assessment of the ILO/EC Project concerning the relevance and validity of project design and the efficiency, effectiveness and sustainability of its outcomes.

The evaluation will be useful for accountability purposes by feeding lessons learned into the decision-making process of project stakeholders, including donors and national partners.

The proposed evaluation will examine the Project's achievement as a whole, including intended or unintended impacts and lessons learned.

The evaluation will document lessons learned and good practices for knowledge sharing purposes.

Scope

The proposed evaluation will examine the ILO/EC project in terms of its progress, its implementation arrangements, partnerships, achievements, challenges, good practices, and lessons learned from the implementation of the project.

The evaluation shall include all ILO/EC project activities undertaken from November 2009 to 31 December 2012.

Client

The primary clients of the evaluation are the ILO and the EC. The evaluation findings and recommendations will confirm and validate the achievements of the Project, provide lessons learned and be instrumental in developing and implementing new projects of similar nature in other low-income countries. Secondary clients are the technical ministries and social partners of the beneficiary countries, Social Protection Floor Initiative members and other national stakeholders who will benefit from the findings and recommendations of the evaluation.

IV. Key evaluation questions/analytical framework

A preliminary list of suggested evaluation questions is provided below. These and any additional questions defined by the Evaluation Team Leader are to be refined and finalized in consultation with the ILO Evaluation Manager.

Relevance and strategic fit:

- Does the Project design effectively address the national development priorities and donor's specific priorities/concerns in the three pilot countries?
- Does the Project design effectively integrate the interests of different national stakeholders and final beneficiaries of social protection and employment programmes?
- Were the Project's strategic elements (objectives, expected results, outputs, implementation strategies and activities, indicators of achievement) achievable?

-
- To what extent is the Project design and implementation strategy consistent with the project's objective in terms of the development of coherent and integrated social protection and employment policy frameworks?
 - What are the strengths and weaknesses of this approach?
 - To what extent does the Project implementation strategy include the proper interventions to contribute to the objective of formulating national plans to extend social protection coverage and to promote employment?
 - Did the Project build on existing national initiatives on social protection and employment?
 - What are the good practices and lessons learned noteworthy of documentation?

Effectiveness:

- The extent to which the overall project objectives, and expected results and outputs, qualitatively and quantitatively have been achieved or met.
- Examine the achievements of objectives using specified outputs and activities indicators linked to each objective.
- What are the project's monitoring and evaluation arrangements to ensure that the Project is on track with regard to the expected outcomes?
- What are the "surprising" achievements and challenges in the course of the implementation?
- The extent to which the social partners and relevant government departments have been involved in the implementation of the project.
- Were the tripartite national steering committees in each of the three pilot countries a strong factor supporting the implementation of project activities?
- What are the good practices and lessons learned noteworthy of documentation?

Efficiency:

- What are the partnership arrangements in the implementation of the Project at various levels, and interagency in each of the three countries? What were the challenges in the formulation of these partnerships? What were the results of these partnerships?
- Has the Project implementation benefited from the ILO's technical resources and international experiences efficiently and in what ways?
- What are the good practices and lessons learned noteworthy of documentation?

Sustainability and impact:

- Are the Project's achievements sustainable?
- What are the elements of the achievements that are not likely to be sustainable?
- What are the necessary actions/interventions by the ILO and donors to ensure that the achievements of the project can be sustained?

-
- What are the impacts of the project?
 - (a) To what extent has the project made a significant contribution to broader, longer term development impact in the three pilot countries?
 - (b) What are the realistic long-term effects of the project in terms of enhancing institutional capacity and development of integrated policies on the extension of social protection and employment promotion?
 - To what extent did the project use gender disaggregated data and take into consideration gender specific analysis?
 - What are the good practices and lessons learned noteworthy of documentation?

V. *Expected Outputs of the Review*

An Evaluation report (approximately 35-40 pages excluding executive summary and annexes):

The report will comprise an Evaluation Summary (in standard ILO template) and the Evaluation Report with necessary annexes.

The Evaluation Report shall be written in English and should follow the standard evaluation report outline:

- Title Page (using standard template)
- Table of Contents
- Executive Summary
- Acronyms
- Background and project description (and progress to date)
- Purpose of evaluation
- Evaluation methodology and evaluation questions
- Project status, findings and recommendations by areas of evaluation (relevance and strategic fit; effectiveness; efficiency; and sustainability and impact)
- Conclusion and recommendations by degree of importance
- Lessons learned and good practices on the intervention approaches and results
- Annexes, including but not limited to list of interviews, evaluation schedule, proceedings of stakeholders meetings, and other relevant information.

The Evaluation Summary will be prepared as per the template attached in Annex 2.

An initial full draft of the Evaluation Report should be circulated for comments by 24 January 2013 followed by a second final draft that addresses, as appropriate, the comments received by 15 February 2013.

The Evaluation Report and Evaluation Summary will be written in English. The final forms will be submitted in electronic, print ready copy. **The final Evaluation Report will**

meet the minimum quality standards as per the evaluation report quality checklist in Annex 3. See also Annex 4 Preparing the Evaluation Report. The final report is subject to final approval by the ILO Evaluation Unit.

Quality recommendations in the evaluation report must meet the following criteria as stated in the ILO Evaluation guidelines to results-based evaluation: Principles and rationale for evaluation and the ILO guidelines of formatting requirements for evaluation reports. They are as follows:

- (a) recommendations are based on the findings and conclusions of the report
- (b) recommendations are clear, concise, constructive and of relevance to the intended user(s)
- (c) recommendations are realist and actionable (including who is called upon to act and recommended timeframe)
- (d) recommendations should be numbered (not in bullet points)
- (e) recommendations should not be more than 12
- (f) all recommendations must be presented at the end of the body of the main report, and the concise statement should be copied over into the Evaluation Summary (that is, the concise statement).

ILO management will prepare management responses to the evaluation recommendations and action measures based on the recommendations will be undertaken and reported to the ILO Evaluation Unit in due course.

VI. Suggested Evaluation Methodology

ILO's Evaluation Guidelines provide the basic framework; the evaluation will be carried out in accordance with ILO standard policies and procedures.

The evaluation is an independent evaluation and the final methodology and evaluation questions will be determined by the Evaluation Team Leader in consultation with the ILO Evaluation Manager. Several methods will be used to collect information in order to determine the questions.

Evaluation methods will include but are not limited to:

- Desk review of background documents listed below:
 - Project Documents
 - Project outputs for the three pilot countries (see Annex 5)
 - Steering Committee Meetings Reports and annotated reports and flash reports prepared for the EC (2010-2012)
- Website of the project –
<http://www.social-protection.org/gimi/gess/ShowProjectSpePage.do?pid=1175>

The evaluation will include desk-based as well as in-country reviews. This will include attendance at the project's Interregional Conference held in Brussels on 3 and 4 December, briefing in Geneva and possible missions to the pilot countries. The Evaluation Team Leader may alternatively team up with an evaluator (National Consultant) in the pilot

countries to assist in the evaluation of country activities and language requirements (to be decided in consultation with the ILO Evaluation Manager). In that case, the Applicant will act as the Team Leader for the Evaluation and will be the primary and ultimate responsible for the delivery of the evaluation report. The Evaluation Team Leader, will perform the following activities:

- Two days mission in Geneva in order to meet with the project staff, ILO Evaluation Manager and three days in Brussels to meet with the project donor and to attend the Interregional Conference where national stakeholders will be present.
- Possible mission to Burkina Faso, Cambodia and Honduras. The evaluation mission will meet with the national project coordinators in Cambodia and Honduras as well as representatives of the main stakeholders involved directly and indirectly in the project activities (Ministries, social partners, EU Delegations, international organizations).

The Evaluation Team Leader will coordinate and facilitate the involvement of all key stakeholders throughout the evaluation process and will support all activities during the evaluation missions. The Evaluation Team Leader will further work closely with the ILO Evaluation Manager appointed specifically for this Programme Evaluation, who is not involved in the Project design, implementation, and monitoring/backstopping.

VII. Evaluation Management

The evaluation will be managed by the ILO Evaluation Manager who will manage the recruitment of the consultants for final approval from EVAL. The Social Security Department (SEC/SOC) of the International Labour Office in Geneva will handle all contractual arrangements with the evaluation team and provide any logistical and other assistance as may be required. The Evaluation Team Leader reports to the ILO Evaluation Manager.

The Evaluation Team Leader: The Evaluation Team Leader will have a Master's degree from a reputable university, a minimum of eight years of experience conducting evaluations. familiarity with policy making, the formulation of employment and social protection policies; the ILO mandate and its tripartite and international standards foundations. Country experience in the project countries under review is an advantage. Candidates should also demonstrate solid team work skills, and have excellent written and oral communication skills in English and French and/or Spanish given that some of the information for the evaluation will only be available in the language of communication of the pilot country. She/he shouldn't have been involved in the ILO/EC Project and implementation.

The evaluation will be financed by the ILO/EC project.

The cost of the External Collaboration Contract for the Evaluation Team Leader and if applicable the External Collaboration Contracts for the National Consultants will be in accordance with ILO rules and regulations. It will comprise for the Evaluation Team Leader of fees for 35 days. The Evaluation Team Leader may rely on the national consultant to undertake the evaluation interviews in one or more of the pilot countries. This will have to be decided in consultation with the ILO Evaluation Manager. The travel costs of the Evaluation Team Leader, as decided by the Evaluation Team Leader and the ILO Evaluation Manager to Geneva, Brussels, Ouagadougou, Phnom Penh and/or Tegucigalpa, and applicable UN Daily Subsistence Allowance for these missions will be covered separately.

VIII. Time Frame

The Evaluation is scheduled to take place from 30 November 2012 – 15 February 2013.

The tentative schedule for the evaluation, subject to modification following discussions with the Evaluation Team Leader is as follows:

Date (and effective work days)	Work	Output
30 November – 5 December 2012 (5 work days)	- Desk Review (started) - Mission to Brussels: Participation at the Interregional Conference of the ILO/EC project (3 December), the meetings with country representatives (4 December), meeting with project staff, meetings with EC staff	Evaluation questions, evaluation findings
6-7 December 2012 (2 work days)	- Mission to Geneva: Meeting with project staff, ILO Evaluation Manager and EVAL team - Desk Review	Evaluation questions, evaluation findings
10 December 2012 -24 January 2013 (25 work days)	- Desk Review preliminary finding - Mission to pilot countries (t.b.d.): Interviews, preliminary findings, drafting and stakeholders briefings - Preparation of the draft report	Preliminary evaluation findings and recommendations discussed with key stakeholders The draft report shall be submitted to the ILO Evaluation Manager no later than 24 January 2013
25 January- 11 February 2013	Draft report circulated by ILO Evaluation Manager to key stakeholders including the EC for comments and inputs. ILO Evaluation Manager consolidates all comments and sends them to the Evaluation Team Leader	Consolidated comments sent to the Evaluation Team Manager
12- 15 February 2013 (3 work days)	Finalizing the evaluation report.	Final evaluation report and evaluation summaries to the satisfaction of the ILO. The final report shall be submitted to the ILO Evaluation Manager no later than 15 February 2013

Annex 2

List of persons interviewed

EU and ILO (Brussels and Geneva)

Wednesday, 5 December 2012

Alicia Martín-Díaz, European Commission. DG DEVCO D3 Employment, Social Inclusion, Migration

Thursday, 6 December 2012

Karuna Pal, ILO Evaluation Manager, Social Security Department

Michael Cichon, Director Social Security Department

Azita Berar-Awad, Director, Employment Policy Department EMP/POLICY

Carla Henry, Evaluation Unit EVAL

Friday, 7 December 2012

Mariangels Fortuny, Employment Sector Management Support Unit ED/EMP/MSU

Helmut Schwarzer, CTA ILO/EC project, Social Security Department

Anne-Laure Henry-Gréard, Development Cooperation Branch CODEV

Eléonore D'Achon, Country Employment Policy Unit EMP/CEPOL

Olivier Chaillet, Finance Department, BUD/CT

Olivier Louis dit Guerin, international consultant

Claire Harasty, Employment Specialist

Makiko Matsumoto, Employment Specialist

Cambodia

Tuesday, 29 January 2013

Mr Tep Oeun, Deputy Director General of TVET, MoLVT (TCG)

H.E Sann Vathana, Deputy Secretary General of Council for Agricultural and Rural Development (CARD) (TCG)

Mr Kong Chanthy, Deputy Director CARD/SPCU

Lunch Meeting: Ms OK Malika, ILO/EC National ILO/EC National Project Coordinator

H.E Heng Sour, Director General of Admin. & Finance, MoLVT focal point on Social Protection

Wednesday, 30 January 2013

H.E Hong Choeun, Head of National Employment Agency (NEA) - (TCG)

Meeting with MoLVT:

- Mr Hou Vudthy, Deputy DG - TCG
- Mr Ouk Ravuth, MoLVT, ILO/EC focal Point
- Mr Khim Sosamrach, Assistant to Director General

Lunch

Mr Van Thol, 1st Vice-President, Building and Wood Workers Trade Union Federation of Cambodia (BWTUF) TCG

Thursday, 31 January 2013

Mr Tun Sophorn, ILO National Coordinator in Cambodia

H.E Vong Sovann, Former President of Cambodian Confederation of Trade Union (CCTU)

Mr Heng Sam Orn, Independent Democracy of Informal Economy Association (IDEA) TCG

Lunch

Mr Chea Kimsong, Social Policy Specialist

Mr Ouk Samvithyea, National Social Security Fund (NSSF) Team

Mr Chiev Bunnarith, Director of Policy Division (TCG)

Interviews via Skype:

Mr Adélio Fernández, GIZ-Cambodia (18 February 2013)

Mr Vincent Vire, EU Delegation to Cambodia (19 February 2013)

Honduras

Monday, 18 February 2013

Felicito Ávila, Ministro del Trabajo

Patricia Canales, Directora de Empleo de la STSS

Elsa Ramírez, Directora de Previsión Social de la STSS

Tuesday, 19 February 2013

Allan Cruz, Head of the UPEG, Secretary of Labor and Social Security (also ILO/EC National project coordinator period January-February 2012)

Héctor Díaz Romero, former advisor of the Secretary of Social Development

Flavia Martinez, ILO/EC National Project Coordinator (period April-December 2012)

Ilario Espinoza CTH

Wednesday, 20 February 2013

Lidia Fromm, Subsecretaria de Desarrollo Social

Benjamín Vásquez, José García and Alberto Taibo Central General de Trabajadores

Sr. José Luis Baquedano Secretario General, Confederación Unitaria de Trabajadores de Honduras (CUTH), Honduras

Thursday, 21 February 2013

Armando Urtecho, COHEP

Melba Hernández, Delegación Unión Europea

Carlos Montes Rodríguez, Viceminister of Labor and Social Security

Burkina Faso

Tuesday, 5 March 2013

Mme. Inés Bakio, Directrice de la Sécurité Sociale et des Mutualités

M. Frédéric Kaboré, Directeur général de la promotion de l'emploi, Ministère de la Jeunesse, de la formation professionnelle et de l'Emploi

Millogo Adama, Chargé de programmes à la section "Economie et Secteurs sociaux" Délégation de l'Union européenne au Burkina Faso

Wednesday, 6 March 2013

Mme. Marie Eugénie Malgoubri/ Kyendrebeogo, Chargé de mission, Chef du Département du Genre et des Affaires Sociales (DGAS), Premier Ministère (PM)

M. Adama Sawadogo, Ministère de l'Economie et des Finances, Direction Générale de l'Economie et de la Planification (DGEP), oadamsaw@yahoo.fr

M. Ouiminga Inoussa, Directeur général de l'économie et de la planification

M. Mamoudou Sebeogo

Mme. Honorine Illa, Fonds d'Appui à la Formation Professionnelle et de l'Apprentissage (FAFPA)

M. Jean Baptiste LANSOMDE, Directeur, Fonds d'Appui à la Promotion de l'Emploi

Thursday, 7 March 2013

Mme. Yameogo Tou, Secrétaire Générale, Conseil national du Patronat Burkinabé (CNPB)

M. Olivier Guy Ouedraogo, Secrétaire General, Confederation Syndicale Burkinabé (CSB)

Interviews conducted by Mr Nikiema

The CNSS team: Wednesday, 13 March 2013

Ms Stella SOME: Monday, 18 March 2013

Mr Saybou Seynou: Wednesday, 13 March 2013 for the first meeting and the second meeting was on Wednesday, 10 April 2013.

Annex 3

References

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- (2012d) *Burkina Faso: Vers une stratégie de travaux publics à haute intensité de main-d'œuvre*. Améliorer la protection sociale et promouvoir l'emploi, un projet BIT/UE (Genève).
- (2013). *Burkina Faso: Calcul du coût d'un socle de protection sociale dans le cadre d'une stratégie conjointe de politiques d'emploi et de protection sociale*. Améliorer la protection sociale et promouvoir l'emploi, un projet BIT/UE (Genève).
- European Commission (2009) *Project Document: Improving Social Protection and Promoting Employment. Annexes 1a to 1d*. Brussels: DCI-HUM/2008/2009.
- Hagemeyer, Krzysztof (2007) *Assessing current and future costs of social protection transfers*. Social Security Department, International Labour Office. Presentation at the Conference: Designing and Implementing Social Transfer Programmes 22 July - 4 August. Cape Town, South Africa.
- International Labor Office (2012a) *Cambodia: Financial assessment of the National Social Protection Strategy for the Poor and Vulnerable / EU/ILO Project on Improving Social Protection and Promoting Employment (Geneva)*.
- (2012b) *Cambodia: Social Protection Expenditure and Performance Review. / EU/ILO Project on Improving Social Protection and Promoting Employment; in cooperation with the GIZ Social Health Protection Programme, Cambodia, in the context of the P4H initiative (Geneva)*.
- (2012c) *Cambodia: Social security for the formal economy. Outlook and challenges ahead / EU/ILO Project on Improving Social Protection and Promoting Employment (Geneva)*.
- (2012d) *Cambodia: Toward a national employment strategy for sustained poverty reduction / a EU/ILO Project on Improving Social Protection and Promoting Employment ; Ministry of Labour and Vocational Training (Geneva)*.
- (2012e) *Cambodia: Toward integrated employment and social protection policies / EU/ILO Project on Improving Social Protection and Promoting Employment (Geneva: ILO)*.
- *Coordinating social protection and employment policies: experiences from Burkina Faso, Cambodia and Honduras / A EU/ILO Project on Improving Social Protection and Promoting Employment (Geneva)*.

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—. (2012b) *La protección social en Honduras: Informe para discusión*. Mejorar la protección social y promover el empleo, un proyecto de la Unión Europea (Ginebra: OIT).

—. (2012c) *Política integrada de empleo y protección social en Honduras. Lineamientos para un Plan de Acción Nacional / Mejorar la protección social y promover el empleo*, un proyecto de la Unión Europea (Ginebra: OIT).

Schwarzer, Helmut (2012) *Vinculaciones Empleo-Protección Social: Experiencias del Proyecto en Camboya y Burkina Faso; Puntos en Honduras*. Presentación ante Foro Nacional Empleo y Protección Social Tegucigalpa, 10 Octubre 2012. Departamento de Seguridad Social, Oficina Internacional del Trabajo, Ginebra.

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Minutes and monitoring reports

ILO/EC Project “Improving social protection and promoting employment”, 1st Meeting of the Joint Steering Committee

ILO/EC Project “Improving social protection and promoting employment”, 2nd Meeting of the Joint Steering Committee, 29 September 2010, 09h00-13h00

ILO/EC Project “Improving social protection and promoting employment”, 3rd Meeting of the Joint Steering Committee, 29 June 2011 14h00 – 17h00

ILO/EC Project “Improving social protection and promoting employment”, 5th Meeting of the Joint Steering Committee, 28 June 2012, 10h00 – 12:30

Project INT/009/006/EEC: Improving Social Protection and Promoting Employment Project Activities report no.2 (August 2010)

EC ROM Response

ILO ROM Response

Interim Annotated Narrative Report

ILO/EC Project "Improving Social Protection and Promoting Employment", Interim Annotated Narrative Report, 1st YEAR OF ACTION (1 Nov. 2009 - 31 Oct. 2010)

Rapport de monitoring, 28/08/2011