

Learning response

Learning response : *Final evaluation of “Decent Work and Social Protection” Project (DGD 17-21)*

Prepared by:	<i>Nguyen Thi Mai – MEL Specialist; Le Thuy Hanh – Project Manager; Nguyen Thu Huong – Senior Governance Manager in Vietnam Program manager, program officers, and input from MEL coordinators and Gender justice coordinators in Laos Mariana Anton, Regional Policy Coordinator for Social Protection in Cambodia Visal Tan, Project Coordinator in Cambodia</i>
Approved by:	<i>Pham Quang Tu – Deputy National Director of Vietnam This Horn Butsalang, National Director Laos Chan Sok Chhorvy – Voice for Change Manager, Cambodia</i>

1. General

Briefly describe the why, what and how of the evaluation. In this section you can also assess the quality of the evaluation, as this will inevitably influence your response or agreement with the recommendations resulting from the evaluation. As a minimum, you can note 3 strong elements and 3 elements that could be improved in the evaluation process.

As the programme come to an end, a final evaluation has been commissioned to explore how the project has achieved the set objectives in term of **Impact, Effectiveness, Sustainability, Relevance, and Efficiency** in the three countries and regional component. It also assessed how the project has applied key approaches including gender mainstreaming.

Outcome Harvesting was chosen as the preferred methodology due to its participative nature. Outcome Harvesting is a monitoring and evaluation tool that is being used worldwide to robustly identify, describe, analyse and interpret outcomes regardless of whether they were pre-defined. In contrast to other evaluation methods, outcome harvesting does not measure the progress of pre-determined results or objectives, but collects evidence of what has changed, and working backwards, determines whether/how an intervention contributed to these changes.

As a result, the evaluation was participatory, reflecting the views of all key stakeholders including local NGOs/networks, migrant workers’ groups, policy makers, mass organisations, etc. Other qualitative methods were also used to ensure sufficient data collection & triangulation to answer all evaluation questions.

Strong elements in the evaluation process:

- Outcome harvesting allowed the participants in three countries and regional partners to fully take part in the process of evaluation, increasing the ownership of the process.
- The process enabled collection of specific outcomes and results which otherwise would have been overlooked.

- The quality information collected from the evaluation has been identified as extremely valuable to the partners
- Through this process it was possible to strengthen the capacity of the partners to be able to self-evaluate their own achievements and contribute with their knowledge and expertise to the evaluation.

Weak points in the evaluation process

- Being a new methodology, partners took a lot of time to understand the process and get familiar with the methodology. The time constraints were perhaps the biggest limitation of the evaluation.
- One of the main challenges in conducting the harvest was the fact that this methodology was used only at the end of the project. As such, there was no previous work on which the harvesters and evaluators could rely on or previous process of capitalization. It would have been helpful for the main project stakeholders to harvest on a yearly basis, which would have increasingly built capacity over the length of the programme and greatly facilitated the final outcome harvesting workshop.
- Due to Covid-19 restrictions, some countries like Laos, Vietnam were forced to organize the harvesting virtually. The same was true for the regional component. Thus, the outcome harvesting was organised online over a series of sessions. This resulted in a time-consuming process in order to produce quality outcomes, with many back and forward sessions and support from in country Oxfam offices.
- Lack of qualified staff who are familiar with the methodology was another challenge.

2. Learning response

VIETNAM

RECOMMENDATIONS	Agreement with the recommendation	Further information: follow-up actions and/or explanation	Who is responsible?	Timing
<p><i>For workers and groups of workers:</i></p> <p>It is proposed to set forth the higher objective for the worker groups development, including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Organizing workers (formal and informal) and providing capacity-building for worker's organizations so that they can defend themselves and be involved in advocacy related to the government's law review and law drafting and employers' policies and practices. Promoting the worker groups to expand its members, or link / network with other groups in the regions or other parts of the Country to increase the influences; Encouraging the worker groups to proactively find and work with the trade unions in the enterprises or mass organizations in the districts/communes (in case of informal workers) to have the mutual supports; Encouraging the worker groups to establish the "registered" worker organizations. 	Agree	Oxfam has shared and discussed these recommendations with key partners in closing and sustainability workshop. Oxfam and partners planned to take up these recommendations in relevant projects, especially those suggestions related to training group leaders on basic social and labor protection knowledge, advocacy skills, democratic leadership, representation; building network of migrant CBOs in the regions and other parts of the country, more engaging with trade unions and other mass organisations such as women's unions to gain their mutual support.	Oxfam and partners	During the implementation of the programme DGD 2022-2026
<p><i>For the CSOs:</i></p> <p>It is of importance to encourage and ensure the CSOs to conduct effectively all the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Promote CSO (including CBOs) network coalition (linking local, national, and regional organizations) Capacity building for CSOs in promoting for workers' rights (law, policies, monitoring, networking, Collective Bargaining Agreements (CBA), organizing workers, advocacy campaigning) & organizational development. Promote cooperation between various actors: labor unions, NGOs, research organizations, local authorities... for more effective labor rights defenses; 	Agree	<p>Oxfam plans:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> To continue supporting CSOs and their networks at all levels in organising workers, advocacy and campaign on social protection and others To promote multi-stakeholder cooperation and partnership between CSOs, local authorities/mass organisations, trade unions and research institutions to advocate for better access to social protection of migrant workers. To connect and strengthen learning and exchange internationally, regionally and locally To continue engaging with relevant private actors and promote their respect of human rights, 	Oxfam and partners	During the implementation of the programme DGD 2022-2026

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Increase international exchange, networking and cooperation for improved learning. • Working with enterprises to support them to develop culture and policies respecting labor core standards (Child Labor, Worker Right Organizations, Collective Bargaining, Forced Labor, Non-Discrimination) & working conditions (living wage, Over Time, Occupational Safety Health...). 		<p>environmental protection, decent working conditions for migrant workers</p>		
<p><i>For coordinating with policy makers, government agencies and mass organizations:</i></p> <p>This aims to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Advocate for better laws and policies on labor and social protection: better standards (national and international), extend coverage to all workers. • Promote law compliance (national and international). • Promote responsible business practices (RBP). 	<p>Agree</p>	<p>Oxfam will continue supporting CSOs partners engaging with relevant government actors, facilitating and capacity building for CSOs to develop and implement influencing strategy on social projects in similar future projects.</p>	<p>Oxfam and partners</p>	<p>During the implementation of the programme DGD 2022-2026</p>

LAOS

RECOMMENDATIONS	Agreement with the recommendation	Further information: follow-up actions and/or explanation	Who is responsible?	Timing
Saving and group welfare remain short-term and an informal mechanisms. Groups need broader demand for their rights to access public social protection schemes which are more permanent and sustainable.	Agree	Oxfam and partners need to do more awareness at the grassroots level, organize bullish dialogues, and exchange with regional to target beneficiaries and their community to understand their rights on access to public social protection that is more sustainable.	Program officers and partners	During the mend of a new phase or by the mid of 2023
Some great achievements resulted from the combined efforts between CSO partners (CAMKID) and local Trade Union (District and Provincial) partners, building capacity to groups leaders, sufficient technical inputs and provided knowledge on collective bargaining, labor law, labor rights, rights to social	Agree	This is a good lesson learned rather than a recommendation, So Oxfam will continue to facilitate or broker for strengthening the corroboration between Trade Union and CSO actors to leverage policy advocacy and influence works at the local and national levels.	Oxfam, program officer, and Manager	Mid 2024
Group needs to develop long term engagement with local government authorities to make sure the regular reporting mechanism from groups to local authorities are need to be in place, etc.	Agree	This recommendation will be reflected in the coming project's kick-off meeting/planning of the new phase, especially in the MEL session to ensure the reporting mechanism is properly developed and reviewed, and then set up a training plan on reporting, as well as power mapping for target groups	MEL manager, and program officers	Jun 2022
Localize labor dispute solutions through village mediation units is good strategy, however LFTU need more collaboration with wider stakeholders, especially the Ministry of Justice who line management of mediation units for joining on how to provide technical capacity to village mediation units on labor dispute and solution	Agree	Knowing that this initiative is limited happened in some locations only, Oxfam and LFTU will organize a consultation meeting with MoJ and Lao Front to initiative strategy for official and broader mainstreaming of labor disputes solution capacity into the village mediations units. And this will link above response on reporting mechanism between local groups and government authorities	Program manager, program officers, and LFTU partners	Jun 2023
Collective bargaining agreement (CBA) is a critical mechanism and working well in Lao context, however its request stronger leadership of Grassroot Trade Union (GTU) and worker groups	Agree	Provide more training on collective bargaining skill as well as analytical knowledge through empowerment tools such as: GALs, Soaban research, public speaking, negotiation and problem resolving skills etc, to local groups leaders	Program officers, and partners	Jan 2023

who are key actors to voice concerns and collective negotiate on behalf of worker at the workplace.		and grassroots trade union leaders as well district and Provincial Trade Union staff who can provide support on the CBA processes.		
CSO partners need to improve their critical analysis and their public speaking skills to ensure that the evidence base advocacy are well facilitated, when an opportunity comes, especially when government and stakeholder invite for national agenda or platform.	Agree	Oxfam will support CSO partners to facilitate/lead their own research rather than just only join and participate in Oxfam and other stakeholders 'research this will be a good strategy to help them for a deeper understanding of their local context and demands. As well as Oxfam will contact an external consultant to provide more training on public speaking and evidence base analysis skills to CSO partners like justice approach training, etc. and more constructive engagement on those specific issues	Program officers	March 2023
GALS have proven to be a great tool for empowerment and to raise awareness about worker rights and for increasing access to information (labor law, working standard, etc.) that help these women worker confident to claim rights. Training and annually reflection on GALS adaptation in social protection is one more key factor to includes women and empowerment in social protection. Output on gender behavior change is a good tool to encourage the social in improving gender inequality in the sociality. Social media and digital technology can decuple and speed impact and changes.	Agree	This is a good outcome, so Oxfam will broader mainstream GALS methodology in the social and labour rights initiative by collaborating with GALS expert organizations (like MHP) to facilitate GALS methodology in the broader groups, roll model from existing groups/achievements into other areas, especially in agri-food sectors where most of the women faced violence and lack of proper social protection	Program officers and Gender justice coordinator	August, 2022
National Partner (LFTU) has increased knowledge and skills on advocacy, becoming a champion of program, breakthrough many constraints on engaging and promoting informal worker rights in Laos, and their active participation on research and regular met / visiting marginalized workers help them better understanding demand and need of workers.	Agreed	Knowing that to address labor rights and access to social protection, it needs to engage with broader stakeholders and different decision-makers from relevant ministries such as MoLSW, MoH, MoF, MIP, NLLCI, NA /PPA, etc. So LFTU will need to extend its effort to engage with those broader stakeholders by inviting them to participate in program interventions as well as visiting the workplace and direct listening to the voice of marginalized workers, etc	LFTU	Jun 2024 – Jan 2025

Cambodia

RECOMMENDATIONS	Agreement with the recommendation	Further information: follow-up actions and/or explanation	Who is responsible?	Timing
The continuation of organizing, awareness raising and people empowerment, especially women, at both local and national levels is an important element for advocacy and influencing decision makers in policy development.	Agree	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The organizing process will be reviewed and strengthened by all partners (using existing resources such as SE booklet) • Knowledge sharing on organizing among partners (existing partners to support new partners) 	Oxfam and Partners	From the beginning of the programme DGD 2022-2026
All partners should prioritize the implementation and practice of gender mainstreaming into their work, including strengthening and building their capacity on gender justice and enforcing implementation of gender policy and use of GALS tool within their organizations.	Agree	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Oxfam will support partners to partners to mainstream gender into their work (training, practice of GAL tool) • Gender policy reviewed, developed, and implemented • Adoption of Safeguarding policy by all partners 	Oxfam and partners	During the implementation of the programme DGD 2022-2026
All partners should join force to advocate for gender responsive social protection law and policy implementation as well as continue to engage and create quota for women in leadership roles at all level.	Agree	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Gender response should be included in the agenda of the annual reflection • Oxfam will continue to closely collaborate with Ministry of Women Affairs • Review and develop advocacy and policy influencing strategy to ensure that the gender transformation is one of its contents 	Oxfam and Partners	During the implementation of the programme DGD 2022-2026
Documentation is proved to be an important tool for formulating and replicating policy influencing strategy for future use; more evidence for effective advocacy and campaign should be produced.	Agree	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Capacity building on development of case study, video, success stories is needed for all partners • Agreement among partners on the exact number of case studies, success stories, video to be developed 	Oxfam and Partners	From the beginning of the programme DGD 2022-2026 implementation
Enabling environment for like-minded CSOs and Trade Union members is also required for better participation and	Agree	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Use SP4ALL platform effectively • Create more national events for advocacy, policy influencing, campaign, and exchange learning 	Oxfam, Partners,	During the whole

communication in active discussion and consultation on social protection policy development, analysis, and consultation.		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Regular coordination with regional partners on relevant advocacy and policy influencing campaign 	and regional partners	implementation
--	--	--	-----------------------	----------------

REGIONAL

RECOMMENDATIONS	Agreement with the recommendation	Further information: follow-up actions and/or explanation	Who is responsible?	Timing
In the multi-county regional ASEAN context, it is important to continue building the alliances, collaboration and movements, as well as distinguishing among different partnership strategies which would be helpful for learning and monitoring what works in that context and inform better future synergies. Finding linkages between the DGD programme and other ongoing programmes at the regional level and partner with other allies in the region will contribute to more visibility and strengthening the labour movement in the region.	Agree	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Mapping out the different actors at the regional level engaging in ASEAN influencing and working on food sectors • Together with the regional partners identify strategies for engaging with the different actors • Oxfam will work closely with other Oxfam regional programmes including <i>Gender Transformative And Responsible Agribusiness Investment In South East Asia (GRAISEA) Project</i> • Together with the ASEAN Working Group ensure that social protection is part of Oxfam in Asia strategy 	Oxfam and partners	Ongoing throughout the new programme cycle
For future projects, the regional partners of Oxfam can benefit from improved collaboration and coordination among themselves and with the national partners from Cambodia, Laos and Vietnam, for purposes of learning, exchange and common consensus building. Oxfam can take a more active role on coordinating and facilitating the alliance building, as well as developing optimized, creative and inclusive strategies.	Agree	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Oxfam will take an active role to organise regular meetings between regional partners and national partners • An event calendar will be developed pinning all the important coordination meetings in advance. 	Oxfam and partners	Throughout the new programme cycle
The future work of Oxfam on social protection would benefit from further redefined and explicit strategies for engaging at the regional level with ASEAN bodies and entities together with the regional partners and country offices. Generally, there should be clear advocacy strategies developed,	Agree	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • An influencing and advocacy strategy will be developed for the project with inputs from all partners, including national partners. 	Oxfam and partners	January 2023

including on the role that Oxfam and its partners want to play in fostering the labour rights movement in ASEAN.				
In terms of programmatic approach, it's important that there is a clear framework and understanding about the programme and TOC, as well as key strategies employed.	Agree	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Kick-off meeting will be held at the beginning of the project • Regular sessions will be organised on the content of the project • A capacity building plan will be developed for all the partners 	Oxfam	Throughout the new programme cycle
Develop a monitoring system and methods that will allow harvesting outcomes and changes more easily and on a regular basis	Agree	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Outcome harvesting will be used to collect outcomes on a yearly basis • Learning sessions will be held on quarterly basis • In the absence of a MEAL coordinator it's difficult to increase the monitoring efforts. There are no plans for recruiting for a MEAL position. • Monitoring system will be developed in the 2nd half of 2022 	Oxfam	Throughout the new programme cycle