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FINAL EVALUATION

TOGETHER AGAINST CHILD LABOR IN TUNISIA (PROTECTE) PROJECT

September 2023

Grantee: International Labour Organization (ILO)
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FINAL EVALUATION OF PROJECT TOGETHER AGAINST CHILD LABOR IN TUNISIA (PROTECTE)

ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

This report describes the final evaluation of the PROTECTE project. Fieldwork for this evaluation was conducted in July and August of 2023. DevTech Systems Inc. conducted this independent evaluation in collaboration with the project team and stakeholders and prepared the evaluation report according to the terms specified in its contract with the United States Department of Labor. The evaluation team would like to express sincere thanks to all the parties involved for their support and valuable contributions.

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CONTENTS

LIST OF ACRONYMS

Acronym	Full Phrase
CAMEL	Complexity-Aware Monitoring, Evaluation, and Learning
CDSI	Center for Defense and Social Integration
CLMS	Child Labor Monitoring System
CLU	Child Labor Unit
CMEP	Comprehensive Monitoring and Evaluation Plan
COPIL	NAP-TN / PROTECTE Steering Committee
CSO	Civil Society Organization
DPE	Delegation for the Protection of Children
DPS	Department of Social Protection
USDOL	United States Department of Labor
ILAB	Bureau of International Labor Affairs
ILO	International Labor Organization
M&E	Monitoring and Evaluation
MAS	Tunisian Ministry of Social Affairs
NAP-TN	National Action Plan to Combat Child Labor in Tunisia
OECD DAC	Organization for Economic Co-operation and Development's Development Assistance Committee
PROTECTE	Together Against Child Labor
TOsC	Theory of Sustained Change
UGTT	Tunisian General Labor Union
UTAP	Tunisian Union of Agriculture and Fishers
UTICA	Tunisian Union of Commerce, Industry and Crafts

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

BACKGROUND AND CONTEXT

The "Together Against Child Labour" (PROTECTE) project in Tunisia was funded by the United States Department of Labor (DOL) Bureau of International Labor Affairs (ILAB) and implemented by the International Labor Organization (ILO) from September 2016 to August 2023. PROTECTE was designed to support the Government of Tunisia and other key stakeholders in implementing the National Action Plan Against Child Labor in Tunisia (NAP-TN) and support the goal of preventing and reducing child labor in Tunisia.

Evaluation questions developed by DevTech in consultation with ILAB and ILO assessed the project's coherence; relevancy and validity; effectiveness and perceived impact; efficiency, project management, administration, and coordination; sustainability; and equity and inclusion.

KEY EVALUATION RESULTS

Coherence: The project was aligned with the priorities identified in the NAP-TN and, by extension, the priorities of the Government of Tunisia. The project selected the Ministry of Social Affairs as a primary implementing partner, a leading government ministry in addressing and eradicating child labor. PROTECTE complemented other Government of Tunisia initiatives to combat child labor. As reported by interviewed project team members, there was, however, no coordination with other donor projects, limiting the project's coherence.

Relevance and Validity: The project facilitated a participatory workshop to develop the theory of change, which ensured that the priorities and inputs of the multi-stakeholder community were reflected in the project's design. Conceptually, the project demonstrated a high degree of relevance and validity by tackling a highly important issue—child labor—in a manner that invited stakeholder engagement and ownership. In 2020, an adaptation of the project's logical framework was submitted to and accepted by the donor, and a revision of the Comprehensive Monitoring and Evaluation Plan (CMEP) occurred in 2021. Despite this, the underlying assumptions of the theory of change were not revised during the lifetime of the project. The volatile operating environment, namely the socio-political challenges associated with the democratic transition, had significant consequences for project implementation. However, these realities were not systematically incorporated to inform adjustments that could have strengthened the project's relevance.

Effectiveness and Perceived Impact: The greatest achievement of the project was sensitizing all participants to the issue of child labor. Prior to the project, public institutions largely denied the existence of child labor in Tunisia. Those views changed dramatically through the course of the project, with national government stakeholders now highly aware of the issues and consequences of child labor and many personally invested in prioritizing the fight against child labor. The project additionally reinforced the ownership of the regional committees and increased the coordination—albeit informally—among key stakeholders to fight against child labor. The remaining focal areas of the project saw lower levels of achievement due to challenges related to productively engaging key stakeholders (such as the Ministry of Education, the media, and the public), the lack of formalized inter-ministerial coordination systems, and an overly ambitious expectation for a replicable child labor monitoring system.

Efficiency, Project Management, Administration, and Coordination: Regional stakeholders reported several factors that negatively impacted project efficiency. Insufficient planning and coordination with Government of Tunisia partners on resource sharing, (for example, for transportation to field sites, training dissemination, etc.), produced operational obstacles and delays. National and regional stakeholders noted that the PROTECTE project team was understaffed and suffered from multiple staffing changes, affecting efficient implementation and continuity. A vague CMEP framework and suboptimal implementation of that framework also contributed to project administration challenges.

Sustainability: The increased awareness and prioritization of combatting child labor by public institutions was identified as a crucial and sustainable achievement. Coordination between current stakeholders, particularly at the regional level, is also seen as sustainable thanks in large part to the awareness, engagement, and commitment of those stakeholders to combatting child labor. However, the non-institutionalization of coordination structures at the national and regional levels was identified as a significant limitation for sustainability. There are no structures or requirements in place to continue coordination in the event of staff turnover, changes in directors, etc.

Equity and Inclusion: The project initially engaged a diverse group of stakeholders and aimed to consider a gender perspective in its design and implementation. However, concerns emerged regarding the selection of training participants and direct aid beneficiaries, with differing opinions among stakeholders. While the ILO team reported that the selection process for direct aid was based on clear criteria, the regional director committees in Sfax and the education representative of Jendouba highlighted that the selection of CSOs and final beneficiaries was not made in consultation with the regional committees. Limited resources posed challenges in reaching rural and disadvantaged communities, and migrant children were not included in the project.

PERFORMANCE SUMMARY

The table included below summarizes the evaluation's assessment of the six PROTECTE project outcomes and the ratings for achievement and sustainability assigned by the evaluation. The achievement and sustainability ratings scale is, from lowest to highest, as follows: low, moderate, above-moderate, high.

Table 1. Performance Summary

Performance Summary	Rating
Outcome 1 – Capacity of government, workers' and employers' organizations, and civil society strengthened to implement the NAP-TN.	
PROTECTE built the capacity of key stakeholders and front-line actors (e.g., social workers, law enforcement, labor inspectors) to execute the NAP-TN through targeted training and comprehensive guides that bridged the gap between legal provisions and practical actions. The project helped facilitate national and regional coordination, but there is a need to formalize those structures. Misaligned ministry priorities (particularly between the Ministry of Education and Social Affairs) posed significant challenges. The project promoted the incorporation of child labor considerations into the operational procedures of child protection institutions and the labor inspectorate in the targeted regions. However, the project's reach within child protection institutions was relatively constrained, emphasizing the need for the Tunisian government to replicate these efforts at the national level. The project contributed to advancing Tunisia's legal and institutional framework concerning child labor. It updated hazardous work lists and definitions. Yet, more government engagement is needed to define light work, revise Law 25-65 on domestic workers, and create regulations for children aged 12 to 15 without access to vocational training. Fostering coordination among government agencies, civil society, social actors, and frontline workers promoted a more collaborative and efficient approach to enforcing child labor laws in the targeted regions.	Achievement: Above Moderate Sustainability: High
Outcome 2 – The knowledge base on child labor and its worst forms in Tunisia is supported and strengthened.	
The project made significant progress in expanding the knowledge base on child labor and its worst forms in Tunisia. The project organized the first national survey of child labor issues, contributing to a better understanding of the phenomenon and providing evidence to inform policymakers and relevant interventions. The Ministry of Social Affairs (MAS) representative reported that they are better equipped with the knowledge and tools to report on child labor. Negotiations are underway to include a child labor indicator within the National Institute of Statistics' ongoing data collection efforts. This initiative aims to systematically gather and compile data from government and non-government entities, facilitating coordinated research and the establishment of effective mechanisms to continuously monitor and report on child labor in Tunisia.	Achievement: Above Moderate Sustainability: Above-Moderate

Performance Summary	Rating
Outcome 3 – Awareness and social mobilization on the fight against child labor strengthened.	
The initial step toward this outcome involved supporting a shift in public officials' sentiments from a state of denial to a solid commitment to combat child labor, which, although time-intensive, yielded very favourable results. However, subsequent efforts to raise public awareness of child labor faced limitations. Despite multiple awareness campaigns organized in communities, in the media, on social networks, and at World Day Against Child Labor events, PROTECTE encountered difficulties in widely disseminating the content and struggled to raise awareness among the general public. Project managers cited the high cost of media campaigns and the topic's sensitivity as reasons for this challenge.	Achievement: Moderate Sustainability: Low
Outcome 4 – A tested model child labor monitoring system (CLMS) is available to replicate.	
In the regions of Sfax and Jendouba, the project introduced a system for identifying and monitoring child labor cases within the various units of the regional committee. This involved using written guidelines, procedures, and checklists for managing child labor cases. Interviewed stakeholders reported significant progress in establishing a CLMS pilot at the regional level. Still, the nature of the CLMS pilot and the limited capacities and resources of other institutions renders the goal of replication highly unlikely without capacity building efforts and situation analyses to adapt the model to the local contexts.	Achievement: Moderate Sustainability: Moderate
Outcome 5 – Educational support and alternative reintegration models to prevent CL strengthened.	
The project fostered collaboration between MAS, the Ministry of Vocational Training and Employment, and civil society. The Center for Defense and Social Integration (CDSI) received support for educational reintegration, especially for children aged 12 to 15 without access to public vocational training. These centers' limited resources, seats, and geographical scope restrained the scale of the intervention and resulted in the exclusion of key vulnerable populations. A significant challenge encountered by the project was the Ministry of Education's resistance to consider the reintegration solutions proposed by the project.	Achievement: Moderate Sustainability: Moderate
Outcome 6 – Educational and alternative reintegration models to prevent child labor are implemented at community level in pilot regions (governorates).	

Performance Summary	Rating
The direct assistance interventions to vulnerable children and families faced considerable delays and were still in progress during data collection for this evaluation. Consequently, limited assessment was possible. At the time of the evaluation, regional stakeholders found direct aid to be highly welcome in providing concrete solutions, economically empowering vulnerable households, and resolving family conflicts. However, effectiveness was inhibited due to the lack of a shared vision between the Ministry of Education and the Ministry of Vocational Training and Employment.	Achievement: N/A Sustainability: N/A

PROMISING PRACTICES

1. Utilizing a participatory approach effectively involves diverse stakeholders and builds commitment and engagement to combat child labor, largely considered sustainable.

2. Utilizing evidence-based information to guide policy decisions regarding child labor is critical.

3. Developing a common understanding of the legal framework enhances comprehension of officials' roles and facilitates inter-agency collaboration and coordination.

4. The creation of regional committees in Sfax and Jendouba to implement the NAP-TN promoted effective decentralization and localized interventions.

5. Collaboration with civil society organizations (CSOs) enabled the project to overcome resource challenges that limited its ability to reach children in rural areas. For example, the project provided organizations with equipment and logistical support to reach underprivileged Tunisian children.

LESSONS LEARNED

1. Political instability and the limited human and logistical resources of Tunisia's government ministries should be considered in project planning.

2. The project's success depends on public institutions voluntarily committing to combat child labor and national and regional stakeholders personally prioritizing this cause, rather than solely fulfilling legal obligations.

3. Comprehensive understanding of Tunisia's administrative procedures and respect of administrative hierarchies and processes is critical to a successful participatory approach.

4. Implementing a national and regional information system proved to be an ambitious goal for Tunisia's initial child labor eradication plan.

5. Monitoring, evaluation, and learning processes are crucial for timely data gathering to inform evidence-based implementation adaptations, particularly for projects like PROTECTE that are the first to work on a particular issue in the country.

CONCLUSIONS

The project's multi-stakeholder, participatory approach promoted a high degree of relevance and effectively built partnerships to support implementation of the NAP-TN. The participatory design of the project fostered active engagement and collaboration among various stakeholders. Capacity building initiatives and the creation of high-quality tools, such as guidelines on laws and regulations focusing on intervention procedures and coordination mechanisms, played a crucial role in fostering a culture of compliance with child labor laws by helping stakeholders better understand the legal framework and recognize different roles and responsibilities to intervene against child labor. That said, **disagreement about the best strategy to address child labor hampered project effectiveness.** Representatives from the Ministry of Education expressed dissatisfaction with the project's emphasis on strengthening child labor prevention mechanisms, preferring resources be prioritized for the prevention of school dropouts.

Partnering with the NAP-TN / PROTECTE project steering committee (COPIL) and building inter-ministerial partnerships was an effective strategy to reach public institutions and policymakers in supporting implementation of the NAP-TN. The project contributed to strengthening the institutional capacities of key government entities, and stakeholders, via training focal points from CDSI, Department of Social Protection (DPS), DPE (Delegation for the Protection of Children), Tunisian General Labor Union (UGTT), Tunisian Union of Agriculture and Fishers (UTAP), and Tunisian Union of Commerce, Industry and Crafts (UTICA). However, these achievements remain too isolated and informal to produce broader institutional change due to the limited number of training beneficiaries compared to the breadth of government employees involved at the national level, and the absence of a systematic training dissemination plan until the end of the project. The cooperation mechanisms at the national and regional levels have not been formalized and rely on the continued prioritization of child labor issues by, and the political goodwill of key stakeholders. The public and the media—two critical stakeholders to sway societal understanding of and reporting on child labor—were not successfully engaged, leaving a significant gap in sensitization and advocacy efforts.

The CLMS is articulated and assimilated in the two pilot regions and additional effort is imperative to facilitate replication regionally and nationally. The creation of the CLMS pilot tool, by itself, is not sufficient to allow replication. More efforts are needed to disseminate training, tools, and coordination mechanisms within other regions as well as nationally.

KEY RECOMMENDATIONS

The following recommendations are informed by the evaluation findings and conclusions and are presented for consideration to the Government of Tunisia, ILO, and ILAB for future programming to prevent and reduce child labor in Tunisia.

Recommendations for the Government of Tunisia:

Recommendation 1. Work to unify the visions and align the strategies between ministry policies and parallel programs to increase coherence, effectiveness, and efficiency.

Recommendation 2. Continue efforts to revise the legal framework and align legal and regulatory instruments with international standards on child labor, defining light work, revising

Law 25-65 concerning domestic workers, and creating regulations for children aged 12 to 15 without access to vocational training.

Recommendation 3. Institutionalize articulated coordination mechanisms through national and regional committees to achieve systematic inter-ministerial collaboration with defined roles and responsibilities and decentralized implementation of NAP-TN strategies to improve child labor law enforcement.

Recommendation 4. Promote social sensitization and mobilization by engaging the Public Service Broadcaster to mainstream child labor issues on a national scale through targeted and continuous awareness campaigns. Also, strengthen civil society's role in localized awareness campaigns.

Recommendation 5. Continue the work to develop the digitized child labor monitoring system using feedback from the pilot experience, with a focus on implementation at the regional level.

Recommendation 6. Expand capacity building and mainstream child labor issues in additional governorates.

Recommendation 7. Enhance the child labor prevention component by mobilizing increased educational support and alternative reintegration models and expand its focus to include the most vulnerable children, especially at the start of the school year.

Recommendations for the ILO:

Recommendation 8. Place greater emphasis on contextual monitoring and learning. The rationale behind the project's actions, assumptions, and potential risks should undergo continuous and thorough analysis, adapting as needed to account for external factors and changes. Furthermore, there should be a systematic approach to regularly evaluating progress, learning from the results, and documenting how this ongoing learning informs project management priorities and decisions. Likewise, support implementation partners like COPIL to conduct monitoring, learning, and adaptation efforts.

Recommendation 9. When awarding grants, prioritize collaboration between CSOs and public institutions to better equip public institutions and frontline actors with logistical support to protect children and improve enforcement of laws related to child labor.

Recommendations for ILAB

Recommendation 10: Particularly in complex environments like Tunisia, strengthen the technical feasibility of projects by balancing stakeholder needs with a thorough contextual assessment, including understanding of the operating environment, risks, and baseline position of key stakeholders. Ensure implementers regularly review and update the contextual assessment or contextual indicators and reflect those realities in project planning to prevent ambiguity of expectations and overambitious goals.

1. PROJECT CONTEXT AND DESCRIPTION

Globally, approximately 160 million children—more than double the entire child population of the United States—are engaged in child labor.[1] Children involved in child labor are most often found in the informal sector—including in businesses owned and operated by their own families—and are at high risk for exploitation, interrupted or incomplete schooling, and other negative consequences with life-long effects. In Tunisia, an estimated 100,000 children drop out of school each year.[2] These children are more likely to be engaged in the informal economy, where exploitation and the worst forms of child labor prevail.[3] The Government of Tunisia has made several efforts to combat child labor both at the regulatory level and the operational level, including through the establishment of several government bodies dedicated to fighting child labor, such as the Child Protection Delegation under the Ministry of Social Affairs (MAS).[4] The 2016 adoption of the National Action Plan Against Child Labor in Tunisia (NAP-TN), a multi-stakeholder initiative directed to prevent and reduce child labor, pointed to the government's recognition of the phenomenon and its commitment to act against it.

Figure 1. PROTECTE Project Results Framework

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[1] International Labour Organization and United Nations Children's Fund. Child Labor: Global Estimates 2020, Trends and the Road Forward. 2021. Source URL: https://data.unicef.org/resources/child-labour-2020-global-estimates-trends-and-the-road-forward/

[2] Kimball, Sam and Pau Gonzalez. A second chance for Tunisian children's dreams. UNICEF. 2022. Source URL: https://www.unicef.org/tunisia/recits/second-chance-tunisian-childrens-dreams#:~:text=Each%20year%2C%20100%2C000%20Tunisian%20children,work%20opportunities%20they%20dream%20of.

[3] Bureau of International Labor Affairs. Together Against Child Labor in Tunisia (PROTECTE). U.S. Department of Labor. Source URL: https://www.dol.gov/agencies/ilab/together-against-child-labor-tunisia-protecte

[4] Learn more about the Tunisian governments efforts in the fight against child labor here Alliance 87, Pathfinder Country: Tunisia (nd). Source URL: https://alliance87.org/pathfinders/tunisia

The "Together Against Child Labour" (PROTECTE) project in Tunisia was funded by the United States Department of Labor (DOL) Bureau of International Labor Affairs (ILAB) and implemented by the International Labor Organization (ILO) from September 2016 to August 2023. PROTECTE was designed to support the Government of Tunisia and other key stakeholders to implement the NAP-TN and support the goal of preventing and reducing child labor in Tunisia. To promote the project's goal and central objective, the original design of the project included five core outcomes; a sixth outcome focused on providing direct services through small grants to local civil society organizations (CSOs) was added in December 2020.[5] Figure 1 presents the project results framework, including the goal, objectives, and outcomes.

2. EVALUATION PURPOSE

The purpose of this final performance evaluation is to provide ILAB, the grantee, other project stakeholders, and key actors working to combat child labor more broadly an assessment of the PROTECTE project's performance, its effects on project participants, and an understanding of the factors driving the project's results. Specifically, the evaluation's purpose is to:

- Assess the relevance and coherence of the design regarding country needs and how the project is perceived and valued by project beneficiaries and partners.

- Assess if the project has achieved its objectives, identifying the challenges encountered in doing so, and analyzing the driving factors for these challenges.

- Analyze the implementation strategies of the project in relation to their potential effectiveness in achieving the project outcomes and impacts, including unexpected results and factors affecting project implementation (positively and negatively).

- Assess the efficiency of the implementation strategy.

- Assess the intended and unintended effects of the project.

- Identify lessons learned and emerging practices from the project (e.g., strategies and models of intervention) and experiences in implementation that can be applied in current or future projects in the focus country(ies) and in projects designed under similar conditions or target sectors.

- Provide strategic recommendations for the different constituents, stakeholders, and partners to improve implementation of the project activities and attainment of project objectives.

- Assess which outcomes or outputs can be deemed sustainable.

The evaluation also assessed the implementation status of the recommendations made by the midterm evaluation in 2018.

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[5] USDOL/ILAB. Award Modification No. 3. December 7, 2020.

2.1. EVALUATION QUESTIONS

In collaboration with DOL/ILAB, the evaluation team identified 18 priority evaluation questions nested under the Organization for Economic Co-operation and Development's (OECD) Development Assistance Committee (DAC) evaluation criteria of project design coherence; relevancy and validity; effectiveness and perceived impact; efficiency, project management, administration, and coordination; and sustainability; as well as equity and inclusion.[6] Table 2 presents these 18 evaluation questions.[7]

Table 2. Evaluation Questions

Evaluation Criteria	Evaluation Question
Coherence	To what extent was the project aligned with the objectives of national (Tunisian Government) and international (donor) programs and priorities? To what extent and how has the project established links and coordinated with government-led efforts (national and regional) to eliminate child labor and with other donor-funded interventions?
Design relevancy and validity	To what extent was the project's theory of change valid given the implementing environment? To what extent has the project's theory of change remained responsive and relevant to the evolving implementing environment, including the impacts of COVID-19 and political and economic challenges? To what extent was project design responsive to stakeholder needs and priorities?

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[6] The use of OECD DAC criteria aligns with the DOL's standard evaluation policies.

[7] Additional detail on the evaluation questions, including guiding sub-questions is available in Annex D. Terms of Reference.

Evaluation Criteria	Evaluation Question
Effectiveness and perceived impact	To what extent and how has the project achieved its primary objectives and planned outcomes at the time of the evaluation?
	To what extent and how were the recommendations from the midterm evaluation implemented and what were the results?
	What were the key internal or external factors that limited or facilitated the coordination of stakeholders for project implementation and consequently, the achievement of project outcomes?
	What long-term changes in Tunisia's ability to address child labor can be directly or indirectly attributed to the project?
Efficiency, project management, administration, and coordination	To what extent could the project have delivered similar results in a more time or resource-efficient manner?
	To what extent and how did the project coordinate with key stakeholders during implementation?
	To what extent and how did the project facilitate coordination between government ministries themselves and between stakeholders at the central, regional, and local levels?
	To what extent and how was Monitoring and Evaluation (M&E) oversight conducted over project activities? What were the results and were the key internal or external factors that limited or facilitated M&E oversight?
Sustainability	To what extent and how are project outcomes and key outputs likely to be sustained through government or other organizations after the end of the project?
	To what extent and how has the project made the Child Labor Monitoring System (CLMS) available for replication on a national scale?

Evaluation Criteria	Evaluation Question
Equity and inclusion	How did PROTECTE incorporate elements of inclusion and equity into their design and implementation? How did PROTECTE serve the needs and priorities of diverse stakeholders, including those from underserved or marginalized communities? How were the beneficiaries of direct services selected?

3. EVALUATION RESULTS

3.1 COHERENCE

The PROTECTE project had strong coherence, demonstrated by its alignment to the objectives and priorities of the Tunisian national government and by building on existing efforts undertaken by Tunisian authorities. From 2013 to 2015, the Tunisian International Labor Affairs Office supported the participatory process of developing the NAP-TN. Issues and challenges related to the fight against child labor in Tunisia were identified through national and regional consultations and the NAP-TN was developed. It was then officially approved by the Tunisian government and social partners in January 2016. Acknowledging the child labor issue, the Government of Tunisia took concrete actions in 2013 by officially requesting support from ILO the country in the formulation of a NAP-TN, within a tripartite and participatory development process. The development of this plan was funded by the Government of France.

In September 2016, the PROTECTE project was launched in collaboration with the Tunisian Ministry of Social Affairs (MAS) and USDOL. The project's objective was to provide technical assistance to the Tunisian government and key stakeholders to implement the NAP-TN strategic pillars. The PROTECTE project objectives were informed by the objectives of the NAP-TN itself (refer to Table 3).

Table 3. PROTECTE Objectives vs NAP-TN Priorities

PROTECTE Project Objectives	NAP-TN Priorities
Increase the capacity of government, workers' and employers' organizations and civil society to implement the NAP-TN	Strengthen technical and operational capacities of relevant stakeholders to combat child labor Strengthen and harmonize legislative and institutional frameworks to combat child labor

PROTECTE Project Objectives	NAP-TN Priorities
Increase the knowledge base on child labor and its worst forms in Tunisia	Improve the knowledge base on child labor
Strengthen awareness and social mobilization on the fight against child labor	Enhance sensitization and social mobilization to combat child labor
Strengthen educational support and alternative reintegration models to prevent child labor Implement educational and alternative reintegration models to prevent child labor at the community level in pilot regions (governorates)	Strengthen the role of education and vocational training to combat child labor
Establish a tested CLMS model that is available for replication	Strengthen protection and prevention mechanisms to combat child labor

The project stood out for its coherence with Tunisia's development objectives and with the priorities identified in the NAP-TN. It was also aligned with ILAB's mandate and objectives since the donor had facilitated the development of the NAP-TN.

The program was also aligned with other Government of Tunisia efforts to eliminate child labor. The choice of the MAS as the implementing partner is also coherent with its mandate and role. This project is in complementarity with other initiatives carried out by the Tunisian government, namely the "AMEN SOCIAL" program, which aims to strengthen the implementation of Tunisia's social protection program,[8] and the "Second Chance" project, which aims to fight against youth dropping out of schools and develop a system allowing the return to education and apprenticeship.[9]

Lack of coordination with other existing projects and donors was reported as limiting the project's coherence. The majority of interviewees across stakeholder groups reported that the project's coherence could have been enhanced if intentional and systematic efforts had been made to coordinate with other ongoing projects to ensure better synergy and efficiency, but no such coordination took place during the lifespan of the project.

3.2 RELEVANCE AND VALIDITY

The theory of change lacked an adaptation strategy to adjust to contextual realities and maintain relevance throughout implementation. The project's theory of change was developed in a participatory manner, taking into account the various perspectives of key actors via a multi-stakeholder workshop that solicited government and social stakeholders to share their

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[8] Source URL: https://www.social.gov.tn/en/creating-sources-income-poor-who-have-benefited-amen-social-program
[9] Source URL: https://www.social.gov.tn/en/second-chance-program-teenagers

priorities and inputs, facilitated their continued engagement, and built consensus and ownership. The results chain of this theory of change was robust and relevant and remains valid even at the end of the project. However, the project's theory of change was not reviewed during project implementation and none of the initial assumptions (specifically assumptions of political and economic stability) were adjusted to reflect contextual realities.

The absence of an in-depth analysis of the implementation assumptions and the associated potential risks limited the project's continued responsiveness to stakeholder needs and priorities in Tunisia's complex and dynamic context from 2016 to 2023. The theory of change did not take into account various political and social factors or complexities specific to Tunisia, such as the bureaucracy and administrative hierarchy, the volatile political context, or the social crisis in the country. This shortcoming had an impact on the timely achievement of objectives, discussed below in the Effectiveness section.

The theory of change was not reviewed throughout the project's duration, and none of the initial assumptions were adjusted after contextual realities rendered them invalid. Thus, the extension of the project and the addition of Outcome 6 (implement educational and alternative reintegration models to prevent child labor at the community level in pilot regions) was not clearly in line with the initial theory of change and project objectives. While the value of this outcome is undeniable, sufficient evidence and strong assumptions were not presented to rationalize the decision to support vulnerable households with socio-economic services and how this would effectively contribute to the project's stated objectives, as outlined in the project document.

Interviewed stakeholders universally agreed that at a conceptual level, the project has demonstrable relevance; it responds to a problem—child labor—of great importance and was designed to accommodate the different needs of stakeholders and beneficiaries through strategically designed activities.

Although Tunisia has ratified international conventions on protecting children's rights and has a legal framework on these issues, the government has long denied the existence of the phenomenon of child labor. This project was designed to deliver specialized technical support to the Government of Tunisia in the implementation of its first-ever national plan to combat child labor. Indeed, the project design was informed by results of the 2017 National Survey on Child Labor in Tunisia, which was the first survey in Tunisia on the phenomenon of child labor. The use of the survey to inform the project design was identified as highlighting and reinforcing the project's strong relevance.

All of the interviewed stakeholders confirmed the high relevance and indisputable importance of this issue of child labor as well as of the PROTECTE project in addressing it.

Furthermore, all interviewed stakeholders agreed that project relevance was reinforced by its holistic vision that was in line with the strategic pillars of NAP-TN, by the relevance of the approaches to the needs of the target stakeholders, and by the balance between the different levels of intervention, as detailed below:

- **Establishing a steering committee:** Bringing NAP-TN and PROTECTE together under COPIL, the governance entity of the project that involved numerous ministries including the Prime Minister's Office, was a relevant approach and sped up decisions to fight child labor at the national and governorate level.

- **Relevance of the holistic approach:** The project addressed the problem of child labor in Tunisia in a holistic manner. Interviewed stakeholders emphasized that the project took a multidisciplinary approach (including all the institutional stakeholders involved) and multidimensional approach (taking into account the socio-economic, political, legislative, social, and educational aspects of child labor). The establishment of a tripartite steering committee (COPIL) concretized this approach and ensured its continuity throughout the project.

- **Relevance of the participatory approach:** PROTECTE was designed through a participatory approach during a workshop that brought together and collected the contributions of the various stakeholders prior to the launch of the project. In this way, the project identified and responded to the specific needs of the multistakeholder community and obtained their consensus, thus facilitating their engagement and sense of ownership.

- **Evidence-based project:** The project design was based on the results of the 2017 National Survey on Child Labor in Tunisia, thereby reinforcing the legitimacy of its approach among decision-makers and stakeholders.

- **Multi-tiered engagement:** The design of the project incorporated a balance between working at the central level of ministries and at the regional level of regional directorates, all while engaging frontline stakeholders, such as social workers, doctors, labor inspectors, and law enforcement.

Despite these positive elements, several factors restricted the project's continued relevance and validity. These include:

- **Suboptimal and ambitious design for a pilot project in an unstable context:** the aim of the PROTECTE project was to support the implementation of the NAP-TN. Yet, the ambition to achieve six individually valid objectives proved unrealistic when they were being implemented simultaneously, especially in light of external political factors and the COVID health crisis. Although it followed a pragmatic rationale, the project design assumed a predictable operating context. Its underlying assumptions presumed that the project activities and achievements would flow in a linear and effective manner, and at the same time, did not take into account the novelty of the project—it was the very first to fight against child labor in Tunisia—nor the complexity of the context that included multiple political and social changes.

  This was particularly notable for Outcome 1.2 and Outcome 4. Outcome 1.2 (strengthening of the regulatory framework on child labor) relied on the engagement and leadership of public institutions. However, political instability and the suspension of the Assembly of the People's Representatives until 2023 severely limited the implementation of work under this outcome. Outcome 4 (availability of a tested child labor monitoring system that can be reproduced) was also significantly delayed due to political challenges and the COVID-19 pandemic. Meaningful implementation of activities under this outcome did not begin until late in the project period of performance.

> " *The project objectives were very ambitious for a first plan to eradicate child labor [in Tunisia]. The child labor monitoring system requires a lot of continuous training and coaching to ensure that collected data is accurate and valid. This takes time and additional resources. The project design overestimated the timeline for a context like Tunisia.* "
>
> *- Interview with PROTECTE project staff*

- **Limitations of the M&E system**: the M&E system was designed in a linear fashion that did not accommodate the need of a novel project to learn and adapt. Outcomes were formulated in a vague and rather unmeasurable way, causing different interpretations by the different PROTECTE project directors and M&E managers. The absence of an established monitoring system hindered the consistent assessment of the relevance of the approaches adopted at the different project phases.

   The relevance of the sixth project outcome, added late in the project, is debatable, particularly in relation to the selection of participants and direct beneficiaries: as a result of the COVID-19 pandemic, there was an urgent need to protect children in vulnerable situations and those threatened by child labor. The addition of the sixth project outcome in December 2020,[10] which provided direct socio-economic and education services to help prevent child labor within pilot communities, responded to a clear need.

Stakeholder opinions vary regarding the relevance of this outcome. The aim was to expand the approach to combating child labor, adopting a more comprehensive perspective beyond capacity-building activities. However, some stakeholders observed that the introduction of direct services did not entirely align with the project's focus of supporting public institutions and key stakeholders implementing the NAP-TN. For certain national government stakeholders, the relevance of direct assistance appeared somewhat disconnected from the project's original areas of intervention.

Furthermore, the selection of grantees to support direct service provision and the identification of direct beneficiaries to receive those services lacked unanimous agreement among various actors, despite ILO's efforts. This lack of consensus has posed challenges in assessing the relevance of direct services and the rationale for their inclusion.

3.3 EFFECTIVENESS AND PERCIEVED IMPACT

EFFECTIVENESS

> **Objective 1: To support the Government of Tunisia and key stakeholders to implement the Tunisian National Action Plan (NAP-TN) against child labor**

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[10] USDOL/ILAB. *Award Modification No. 3*. December 7, 2020.

Achievement Level: Moderate

Low   Moderate   Above-Moderate   High
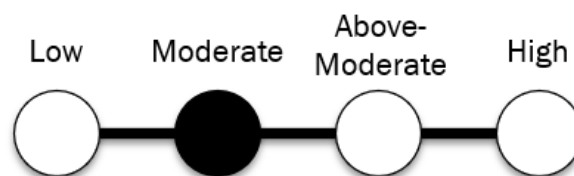
The project has shown great effectiveness in several key areas, including strengthening government workers' and employers' organizations, civil society capacity, improving awareness and coordination among stakeholders, and enhancing knowledge of child labor issues (Outcomes 1, 2, and 3). **However, significant gaps remain that limit the overall achievement of the objective,** such as, for example, inability to engage with the Ministry of Education as a key stakeholder, leveraging public media, and engaging large-scale social mobilization. There is also a need for systematic expansion of training to involve a greater number of key stakeholders. The project had overly ambitious expectations for a replicable child labor monitoring system (Outcome 4). According to the ILO project team, the Tunisian context was more complex than originally anticipated during project design and posed challenges for the CLMS. The CLMS is a complex process that should involve many actors and social and economic service structures. It also requires multiple trainings to reach the necessary breadth of stakeholders, sufficient budgetary resources, and more time to carry out the necessary activities.

A strengthened coordination system between ministries and efficient resource mobilization is required to ensure effective educational support and reintegration models to prevent child labor (Outcome 5 and 6).

Outcome 1: Capacity of Government, workers' and employers' organizations, and civil society strengthened to implement the NAP-TN
Outcome 1.1: Coordination among key stakeholders to fight against child labor strengthened
Outcome 1.2: Regulatory Framework on child labor strengthened
Outcome 1.3: Child labor is integrated into the policies and procedures of the labor inspectorate, the child protection institutions and other key stakeholders

Achievement Level: Above-Moderate
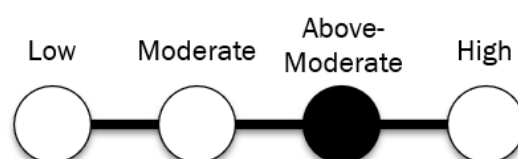
The achievement of this outcome is on track, although progress was not linear. Although the first stages of the project, which were the most complex, required a lot of time, they laid the foundation to move faster toward the complete achievement of the objective.

The project successfully increased stakeholders' capacity to implement the NAP-TN by identifying, engaging, and raising the awareness of institutional actors and stakeholders in the chain of fighting against child labor.

The topic of child labor has long been neglected by various actors and has even been denied by the Tunisian government. To remedy this, the project has put in significant efforts to break the silence, mainstream the issue, and not only raise awareness among different stakeholders, but also engage them in the fight against this problem. This was done through substantial preparatory work, which included identifying the relevant stakeholders and coordinating between them, and carrying out consultations and inter-ministerial advocacy work.

> *The project faced many challenges and delays, but thanks to the effective collaboration with the ILO and USDOL, and the COPIL committee, the project achieved great progress toward the NAP-TN priorities.*
>
> *- Interview with COPIL member*

Multiple interviewed stakeholders attributed the success of this objective to the cooperative working culture that the project created, thanks to its ability to identify, mobilize, and raise the awareness of the key actors involved in the fight against child labor. This approach was effective in overcoming cultural and bureaucratic obstacles and sustaining commitment over time.

Inter-institutional coordination and cooperation significantly increased through the project.

At the national level, coordination within and between Tunisian ministries is challenging due to bureaucratic rules and inter-ministerial rivalries. However, the project was able to overcome this and has succeeded in establishing national-level inter-ministerial coordination and collaboration. Thanks to the steering committee (COPIL), and in the interest of implementing the shared action plan, a set of practices for coordination, collaboration, information-sharing, and facilitation was put in place, despite the absence of a formal institutional framework.

Many of those involved in the evaluation noted and appreciated ILAB's efforts to facilitate this collaboration and ensure continuous and smooth communication. Coupled with effective documentation, this approach was particularly effective in navigating the rotations within ministries and ensuring the continuity of collaboration.

However, it must be noted that the project could not engage the Ministry of Education, which limited the project's effectiveness and impact.

At the regional level, the project established inter-institutional collaboration practices, which were not only adopted but also anchored in the working culture of those involved in the fight against child labor. The shared vision, which is included in the shared action plan of the regional committee, as well as the significant awareness-raising, and the engagement of the different stakeholders, made it possible to overcome bureaucratic and administrative obstacles.

The evaluation's interviewees unanimously agreed on the effectiveness of the coordination between the institutional, social, and civil society stakeholders, especially during the project's extension phase. This was particularly notable in Sfax, where the multi-stakeholder committee maintained its activity and consistency, even when faced with changes in leadership at the Regional Directorates of Social Affairs. This demonstrates the effectiveness and replicability of the project's coordination approach. Initiatives are already in progress to duplicate this approach in Mahdia and El Kef.

The Ministry of Education was reluctant to engage in the project activities at the regional level. Ministry of Education representatives in both Sfax and Jendouba had substantial reservations regarding the project's priorities and the absence of a consultation process, especially when the project aimed to provide direct services in schools under the Ministry's jurisdiction.

A Child Labor Unit (CLU) within the NAP was not established and its relevance is debated among stakeholders. Stakeholders expressed diverse opinions on the possibility of a CLU. The Tunisian government, represented by the MAS expressed reservations regarding this option, aiming to prevent administrative redundancy and preserve the government's limited resources. Multiple efforts and discussions were undertaken with successive ministries to advocate for the establishment of a CLU. Some interviewed stakeholders, particularly COPIL members, believed that creating a formal unit/mechanism is crucial for sustaining inter-ministerial coordination and the work of regional committees. Others (regional committees) argued that current stakeholder engagement and their commitment to child protection are sufficient to ensure coordination continuity. They saw the project as having successfully instilled a new collaborative culture based on personal commitment and team accountability (within the regional committees) rather than administrative obligations. At this point, no CLU or and inter-ministerial coordination mandate has been created for the purpose of fighting against child labor.

The evaluation acknowledges that while the project did not establish a dedicated CLU, it played a vital role in uniting stakeholders to combat child labor. Recognizing the significance of this ongoing discussion, it is essential to consider diverse perspectives. This is crucial for developing a more effective collaboration mechanism that coordinates efforts while preserving local cooperation flexibility, fostering individual engagement and initiative, and upholding the security and sustainability guaranteed by the institutional and legal framework.

After reviewing the current legislative and institutional frameworks in Tunisia, **a guide on child labor legislation and regulations was developed and disseminated**. The guide mapped the administrative channels and described the roles and responsibilities of the relevant stakeholders. Given the multitude of legislative texts and institutional frameworks, the guide was highly effective in enhancing the various readers' understanding of child labor legislation in Tunisia. Stakeholders found the contents to be greatly informative and practical, as it enabled them to collaborate with other stakeholders when needed, and to align their interventions aimed at safeguarding child labor victims with the legal framework. This has, in turn, considerably contributed to the reported improvement in the responsiveness and effectiveness of such interventions.

In terms of reviewing and updating the institutional framework to comply with international labor standards, the project's effectiveness was less successful. The interviewed stakeholders were not fully satisfied with the progress of reforms: revising the list of hazardous jobs, defining what "light work" meant in regulatory texts, and revising Law 25-65 on domestic workers. Interviewed stakeholders named several reasons for the insufficient alignment of the institutional framework with international labor standards, namely the political instability, the health crisis, and the dissolution of parliament. The ILO team highlighted that divergent opinions between the Ministry of Education (ME) and the other ministries arose during training seminars, particularly regarding the inclusion of children under 16 in vocational programs. They explain that due to the ongoing institutional crisis in Tunisia, the project did not engage in a legal framework revision process.

> **Outcome 2: The knowledge base on child labor and its worst forms in Tunisia is supported and strengthened**

Achievement Level: Above-Moderate

Low   Moderate   Above-Moderate   High
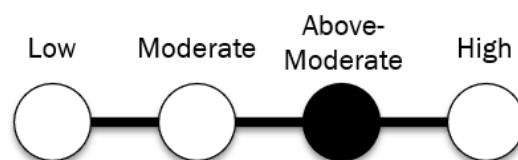
The project made significant progress to expand the knowledge base on child labor and its worst forms in Tunisia. The project organized the first national survey on the matter, thereby contributing to a better understanding of the phenomenon and providing evidence that would inform policy makers and relevant interventions.

Efforts are underway to include a module on child labor in the curricula of universities, particularly for those training to become future labor inspectors. Negotiations are also

underway to incorporate an indicator on child labor into the ongoing data collection process of the National Institute of Statistics, with a view to collect information and continuously inform stakeholders on the progress of this phenomenon.

The training workshops on the international conventions relating to child labor were highly appreciated by participants. Stakeholders shared that these training workshops clarified the theoretical concepts, the international legal framework, and Tunisia's commitments to combatting child labor.

Although there was knowledge exchange among the trained focal points, the project did not formalize a process for further knowledge dissemination. It was agreed that the focal points and COPIL members would be responsible for disseminating the tools to the appropriate staff in the country. However, no follow up mechanism was established to ensure the widespread dissemination of the training.

The interviewed stakeholders appreciated the quality expertise that the project provided, yet, they had unmet expectations regarding the creation of detailed training manuals and the development of a monitoring plan to increase the trainings and the number of participants, which would further promote knowledge increases and bring other colleagues up to speed.

The field work carried out by the regional committee provided stakeholders with in-depth practical knowledge on fighting child labor. Stakeholders from different administrative institutions had the opportunity to familiarize themselves with each other's missions and mandates, as well as the law governing them. This understanding and direct collaboration made it possible to overcome prejudices, to better grasp the roles and limitations of each stakeholder, and to find concrete solutions to overcome logistical and administrative obstacles as well as legal shortcomings. The head of the regional committee in Sfax took the initiative to share their experience with other regional directorates, namely that of Mahdia and Sousse. The regional committee in Jendouba is sharing the experience with three other regions.

However, in the two pilot communities of Jendouba and Sfax, the project planned very few learning and follow-up activities. Several interviewed frontline stakeholders in those regions noted that there were insufficient activities to leverage learning, share experiences, and reflect on the different endeavors to fight child labor.

Outcome 3: Awareness and social mobilization on the fight against child labor strengthened
Outcome 3.1: Key stakeholders aware of the negative consequences of child labor
Outcome 3.2: Key stakeholders with increased engagement in sensitization efforts on child labor

Achievement Level: Moderate

Low   Moderate   Above-Moderate   High
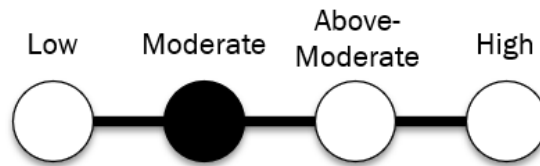
The journey toward this outcome was more time- and resource-intensive than anticipated by the project. The initial step of transitioning public officials from denial of child labor to a strong commitment to combat child labor was time-consuming but ultimately successful. This resulted in high levels of knowledge and engagement among key stakeholders in the fight against child labor. The training on the international legal framework related to child labor and the ILO SCREAM: Supporting Children's Rights through Education, the Arts and the Media program was particularly effective. Building the awareness, capacity, and commitment of key public stakeholders and institutions is an important first step to built partnership and support in broader dissemination and public awareness raising activities. However, the project did not translate those achievements into successfully enhancing public awareness on a large scale. **There was a remarkable change of attitude and mentality about the dangers of child labor and the urgency of intervening against it among the directly engaged stakeholders** (including policymakers, workers at administrative institutions, civil society, and field and social stakeholders). Prior to the project, public institutions in Tunisia largely denied the existence of child labor. Through the project, engaged officials significantly increased their awareness of child labor as a priority issue. This is evidenced by the sustained engagement of stakeholders throughout the duration of the project, high levels of ownership of the project, as well as the large number of personal initiatives undertaken to facilitate the running of activities and to support the work.

For example, all the interviewed stakeholders testified to the high degree of collaboration and coordination between the different stakeholders to ensure the success of the communication and awareness-raising efforts every year on the World Day Against Child Labor, despite the MAS not allocating any budget for this purpose. Additionally, Tunisian artists and public figures willingly volunteered to support the cause.

According to frontline actors interviewed, the field visits carried out by the regional committee, particularly to Sfax, succeeded in raising the employers' awareness of the legal risks of child labor, as well as of the best solutions for the integration and protection of children. This effort had a stronger effect in Sfax, where the workplaces of children were easy to identify in a commercial and industrial area, unlike in Jendouba, where the majority of children's work is informal and geographically dispersed.

The direct aid activities also contributed to raising the awareness of children and their parents on the rights of children and the dangers of child labor, as well as on the economic alternatives to support the family and/or to reintegrate the child if they've dropped out of school permanently.

However, the project did not succeed in mobilizing and strengthening the awareness of citizens, who are the most important stakeholders in the chain of fighting against child labor.

Members of the public hold a key role of monitoring and reporting child labor violations to the authorities. Despite having developed a detailed communications strategy and produced an awareness-raising ad, the project encountered difficulties in terms of disseminating the content on a large scale. Project managers attributed this limitation to the high cost of media campaigns and the sensitivity of the topic.

According to PROTECTE project staff, media outlets were saturated by political changes and the issues on the economic situation and reported it was difficult to engage journalists and mainstream the issue of child labor. When media did report on child labor, the issues were often trivialized or sensationalized and lacked clear information on the impact of child labor to educate the public.[11]

> *The project was very effective in engaging and raising awareness among key stakeholders. However, despite efforts to engage the media, the communication component of the project was not very effective. Communication costs are highly expensive, and [PROTECTE] couldn't engage the public media broadcaster due to their high cost. We discussed these challenges with the COPIL committee, but there was no significant response.*
>
> - Interview with PROTECTE project staff

The interviewed stakeholders shared the idea that since child labor is anchored in social and community norms, changing citizens' mentality can only be achieved through wide-scale and recurrent awareness campaigns with targeted informative messaging. That would require the involvement of public media and a national communications strategy in collaboration with initiatives to combat school dropout.

Outcome 4: A tested model CLMS is available to replicate
Outcome 4.1: Pilot-implementation of a CLMS model is carried out at local level

Achievement Level: Moderate

Low   Moderate   Above-Moderate   High
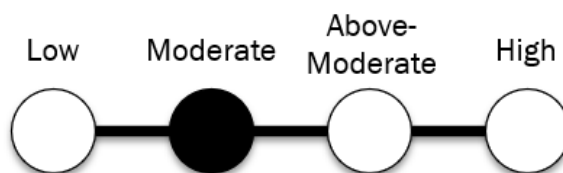
The objective of the CLMS is to create a sustainable mechanism that ensures coordination and coherence in efforts to eliminate child labor. This encompasses prevention, identification, and withdrawal of children from child labor, as well as crucial referrals to essential services

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[11] ILO. *Technical Progress Report.* 30 September 2018.

and protection measures to ensure that children either remain in school or gain access to vocational training.

Stakeholders reflected that significant progress establishing a CLMS was made at the regional level, but that the nature of the CLMS pilot and the current capacities and resources of institutions and individuals renders the possibility of replication ambitious and premature.

In the regions of Sfax and Jendouba, the project facilitated a case identification and monitoring system within the various units of the regional committee. In Sfax, where the committee's coordination and communication were reportedly more effective, detailed reports were produced to monitor cases. At the regional level, stakeholders who received the CLMS and related training have adopted the model. Greater uptake and replication will require the mobilization of all national stakeholders paired with in-depth training to sensitize stakeholders to the CLMS. The creation of a CLMS pilot model in Jendouba and Sfax was described by stakeholders as insufficient to support the desired outcome for replication and national application without significant resources dedicated to CLMS roll-out and associated training.

The ILO project team explained that implementing the CLMS is a complex process that involves multiple training sessions for key stakeholders at central and regional levels. This system requires sufficient time, technical expertise, and financial resources to become fully operational, which unfortunately were not available due to political instability and the COVID-19 pandemic.

It should be noted that the CLMS model piloted regionally was not digitized. Stakeholders reported that a digital system is necessary for a successful, unified, national CLMS. The adoption of such a system is not possible given the current limited resources and capacities of key stakeholders. The interviewees suggested leveraging the experiences of the pilot communities to create a regional system that would gradually include other regions. However, the pilot implementation of CLMS models was not adequately assessed, lessons learned were not shared, and recommendations for replication were not disseminated until the time of the evaluation at the conclusion of the project.

> **Outcome 5: Educational support and alternative reintegration models to prevent child labor strengthened**

Achievement Level: Moderate
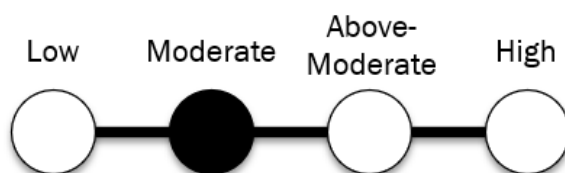
This outcome sparked debates and divergent opinions among the stakeholders interviewed.

The project succeeded in supporting the work of the Center for Defense and Social Integration (CDSI) through technical and logistical support, and in finding reintegration solutions especially for children aged 12 to 15 who did not have access to public vocational training. While a noted achievement, these centers' limited resources, seats, and geographical scope restrained the scale of the intervention and inherently limited the number of children who could benefit from reintegration services. Additionally, children in rural areas did not benefit from these services. The project did not succeed in disseminating enough information about the various reintegration alternatives already available for children who have dropped out of school, especially those aged 12 to 15.

A significant challenge encountered by the project was the Ministry of Education's refusal to consider the reintegration solutions proposed by the project. The Ministry of Education holds the view that child labor is a result of school dropout and that the project's focus should have been on the prevention of school dropout. As such, they focus on raising awareness, directly helping families at the start of the school year, and mobilizing resources for pupils with learning difficulties with the goal of making it easier for at-risk children to stay in school. In contrast to the MAS, representatives from the Ministry of Education disregarded efforts to reintegrate children back into school and did not acknowledge the socio-economic factors that force children to transition from school to work. In the view of the Ministry of Education, children under 16 should stay in school and all efforts should be focused on keeping children in school. Despite ongoing efforts by the project to engage with the Ministry of Education and advocate for the importance of addressing the realities of school dropouts, the multi-faceted causes of child labor, and the potential of reintegration solutions, the Ministry of Education could not be engaged as a partner.

For future projects, the project's focus and the issue of light work and children under the age of sixteen's access to apprenticeships and vocational training should be discussed and agreed upon between the Ministry of Education and other actors involved in the fight against child labor.

Outcome 6: Educational and alternative reintegration models to prevent child labor are implemented at community level in pilot regions (governorates)
Outcome 6.1: Vulnerable households supported with socio-economic services
Outcome 6.2: Educational services are provided to vulnerable children aged 7-17

Achievement Level: Insufficient information to rate

While the usefulness of these services is undeniable, it is important to note that their implementation is ongoing. This outcome was added late in the project period of performance and services and grants were distributed at the end of the project. At the time of the evaluation, the direct participants were in the process of receiving financial support. It is too early to assess the effectiveness of grant management and their contribution to project objectives at this stage.

Stakeholders found direct aid to be highly welcome in providing solutions for economically empowering vulnerable households and resolving family conflicts, which ultimately will protect children from labor. The joint activities and direct aid initiatives made notable efforts to bridge the gap between the education system and social institutions like the CDSI. They aimed to provide more financial aid than education services to vulnerable children aged 7-17 to prevent school dropout and child labor. Support for mothers' economic empowerment was reportedly well-received by direct beneficiaries. The strong engagement and mobilization of civil society further enhanced the reach of these activities by facilitating connection with local vulnerable households.

The project was criticized by some regional committee stakeholders and frontline stakeholders for not consulting them enough and not providing clear information about how the grant distribution and grantee selection process would work. However, the ILO team reported that while frequent changes in regional managers may have posed communication challenges, the project followed established procedures for selecting implementing partners in partnership with social partners and civil society, adhering to ILO guidelines.

Furthermore, **the effectiveness of these efforts was strongly inhibited due to the lack of a common vision between the Ministry of Education and the Ministry of Vocational Training and Employment.** The Ministry of Education saw economic incentives as inappropriate to combat the issue of school dropout (which they saw as the most critical issue facing children) and seemed to understand the PROTECTE project as combatting school dropout rather than child labor.

> *I'm not certain the project has been effective in providing education support. I am not aware of these efforts. The project's efforts seem to be primarily focused on providing social and economic support to marginalized families, which is undoubtedly important. However, the core issue is that children drop out of school because they lack access to educational services and receive no assistance when they encounter learning difficulties. This should be the central focus of our intervention [to combat school dropout].*

PERCEIVED IMPACT

Overall, interviewed stakeholders perceived the project as having a positive impact in three key areas: (1) changing attitudes and mindsets toward child labor; (2) changes in knowledge, tools, and working mechanisms to combat child labor among key stakeholders; and (3) creating pathways for victims of child labor to return to school.

Changing attitudes and mindsets toward child labor. The project targeted employees of government institutions, members of civil society organizations, teachers, parents and children, and employers. The project was seen as successfully shedding light on the importance of the issue, debunked preconceived notions about child labor, explained the dimensions and magnitude of this problem, and helped stakeholders to understand its negative impact on children. The project also contributed to fostering a sense of social responsibility in protecting children and mobilizing all stakeholders involved. As one

interviewed public official described the experience, "The excellent team spirit among colleagues from various institutions is the primary achievement of this project. The only way to overcome limitations is through effective collaboration and innovative problem-solving. We feel a significant responsibility as there are children depending on our interventions."[12]

Factors reinforcing these changes include the societal culture favoring children's rights and the active engagement of all stakeholders, especially during awareness days and field visits. Ongoing awareness activities in various places such as markets, public spaces, schools, institutes, and parks also contributed. The involvement of civil society was reported as particularly important for raising awareness among families and communities, often difficult to reach by state institutions, especially in rural areas.

However, the disengagement of public media has limited the scope of awareness. Moreover, the lack of commitment from the Ministry of Education and the inconsistency in project activities due to successive interruptions, limited the potential impact in this area.

> *The work of the regional committee was a great professional and personal experience. I learned a lot from the field visits. Each new case is an opportunity for learning. I gained experience through multi-actor interventions and regular committee meetings. This enhances the effectiveness of our interventions and the timeliness of our protective measures.*
>
> *- Interview with public official, Sfax*

Changes in Knowledge, Tools, and Working Mechanisms for Combating Child Labor. The project targeted a variety of stakeholders, including security, justice, and law enforcement officials; labor inspectors and occupational safety and health inspectors; social workers; vocational training, health, and education actors; civil society actors; and front-line responders. The project brought about a significant shift in knowledge and working practices for combating child labor among these stakeholder groups. Additionally, it successfully established regional committees in Sfax and Jendouba to implement the NAP-TN by identifying and training focal points within public institutions and civil society.

The project successfully overcame administrative bureaucratic barriers to enhance coordination among diverse state institutions, fostering collaboration and partnerships among state entities, social actors, and regional-level organizations. These dynamics accelerated and bolstered the intervention's effectiveness and set the stage for long-term positive trends. For example, the project's efforts helped to reduce response times in Sfax to less than 24 hours. Moreover, stakeholders reported that the number of children whose situations were addressed and who were reintegrated increased. Particularly in Sfax, the regional committee's work solidified, and the system for identifying and monitoring children in danger is now widely recognized and followed by involved stakeholders.

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[12] Interview with public official, Sfax

The participatory approach in project design; the quality of tools created, notably the operational guide; continuous support from ILO; the commitment of public institutions; and the personal dedication of stakeholders to the cause are factors that reinforce this impact. Negative factors that hindered this change include the turnover of focal points and project managers, limited participant numbers in training sessions, restricted dissemination of the procedural guide, lack of follow-up after Training of Trainers sessions, and absence of continuous monitoring.

Pathway Change for Child Victims of Child Labor. The PROTECTE project has contributed to reducing the number of child labor victims, although exact numbers are not available due to the lack of a rigorous tracking system. Nonetheless, the efforts of regional committees directly removed children from workplaces, provided protective solutions for their reintegration, and aimed to prevent relapse. Direct assistance empowered mothers economically to find alternatives to child labor. Financial support during the back-to-school period prevented school dropout and subsequent child labor. The component of direct subsidies supported the resources of CDSIs, schools, and CSOs for direct intervention benefiting families and children. The shared commitment of civil society and state institutions reinforced this impact.

However, the absence of a study on the push and pull factors of child labor makes the best intervention approach subject to the opinions and perceptions of various stakeholders. The selection of beneficiaries for the direct services was done in collaboration with local social structures, CDIS. However, the director of the regional committee at Sfax, and education representatives have claimed that the selection process was not consultative.

Moreover, coordination with the Ministry of Education for interventions in the school environment was perceived as suboptimal. The lack of resources and capacity in public institutions also limited this change.

IMPLEMENTATION OF MIDTERM EVALUATION RECOMMENDATIONS

The implementation status of the 13 recommendations made in the 2018 midterm evaluation is included in the table below. Green-shaded cells indicate the midterm recommendation was implemented; yellow-shaded cells indicate the recommendation was somewhat implemented; red-shaded cells indicate the recommendation was not implemented.

Table 4. Status of Midterm Recommendations

No.	Midterm Evaluation Recommendation	Implementation Status
01	Ensuring the MAS' commitment to promulgating the various legislative texts on child labor	Somewhat Implemented: The project successfully engaged MAS to update hazardous work lists and definitions. Yet, more consensus is needed in the government to define light work, revise Law 25-65 on domestic workers, and create regulations for children aged 12 to 15 without access to vocational training.

No.	Midterm Evaluation Recommendation	Implementation Status
02	Enhance engagement with the NAP-TN/PROTECTE Steering Committee (COPIL) members to enforce child labor laws and policies	Implemented: The project successfully engaged COPIL and helped to establish an informal inter-ministerial coordination mechanism.
03	Strengthen coordination with the Ministry of Education	Not Implemented: The project was unable to engage the Ministry of Education as an active partner.
04	Accelerate the drafting of official circulars or conventions for coordination among ministries	Not Implemented: The project struggled to formalize coordination among ministries. Decision-makers were opposed to creating an additional unit to fight child labor but were not opposite to formalize the existing structures.
05	Leverage MAS involvement to engage in the draft of the Labor Code amendment	Not Implemented: The project could not make an amendment to the law due to political instability and the suspension of the Assembly of the People's Representatives until 2023.
06	Encourage the dissemination of statistical or research-based information	Implemented: The project successfully collected data and evidence about child labor in Tunisia and began dissemination efforts.
07	Resume collaboration with journalists	Not Implemented: The project was unable to consistently engage journalists, who prioritized ongoing social, political, and economic crisis reporting.
08	Formulate the assumptions and risks associated with project activities more specifically	Not Implemented: As described in the above section on Relevance and Validity, this was not undertaken, with negative consequences for the alignment of project activities with the evolving context.
09	Strengthen local actor's capacity	Implemented: The project made significant, successful efforts to decentralize interventions and strengthen the capacity of local actors.
10	Support front-line personnel	Implemented: Front-line stakeholders were directly engaged in sensitization and capacity building activities.

No.	Midterm Evaluation Recommendation	Implementation Status
11	Enhance understanding of international methods and practices in the fight against child labor and their applicability in the Tunisian context	Implemented: As elaborated in the above discussion on Outcomes 1 and 2, the project successfully implemented capacity and awareness raising activities.
12	Expand activities to reflect the depreciation of the local currency	Implemented: The project received several extensions and added an additional, sixth outcome to use allocated funding.
13	Consider extending the pilot project in the governorate of Sfax to other regions	Not Implemented: The pilot project was implemented as planned in Sfax and Jendouba. The delay in project implementation did not allow the recommended expansion.

3.4 EFFICIENCY, PROJECT MANAGEMENT, ADMINISTRATION, AND COORDINATION

Available documentation on financial and operational decisions did not allow thorough assessment of the project's efficiency. However, the evaluation found some factors that limited the project's efficiency.

While the project was designed to support the Government of Tunisia, there was no agreement on how best to share responsibilities and coordinate resources to help the Government of Tunisia without causing an overburden. As a result, there was an increased reliance on the government's resources, which are subject to budgetary and bureaucratic constraints that were not clearly considered by the project. This created operational obstacles, particularly regarding the availability of resources, such as service vehicles for field visits and travel of the regional committee; the dissemination of training between colleagues; and the availability of personnel for meetings, trainings, etc.

While overcoming these obstacles depended on the voluntary initiatives and engagement of regional directors, personnel, and other stakeholders, this engagement was not rigorously documented or accounted for, severely limiting the ability to assess whether it was optimally managed to minimize efficiency losses.

The planning of activities was not always optimal. Several **gaps in the project timeline and the discontinuation of certain activities had repercussions on the efficient use of mobilized resources.** As an example, the endline Knowledge, Attitude and Practices (KAP) study was not carried out, which negatively affected the efficiency of the resources used to establish the baseline KAP study. A delay between the call for proposals and the selection and distribution of grants to provide direct services under Outcome 6 resulted in the delay of direct service provision and the inability to assess the effectiveness of those services.

Additionally, some financial timeframes were not taken into consideration when designing activities and the budget. For instance, there was a need for a focal point in the pilot regions to coordinate fieldwork and facilitate timely data collection in order to inform project

managers on implementation obstacles. That need should have been considered from the start and placed under the budget line for external consultants, which could have avoided unnecessary travel costs and optimized the use of resources.

Several factors related to ILO's internal management limited the efficiency, and therefore the effectiveness, of the project.

- **Administrative obstacles within ILO**: the administrative and financial procedures were not conducive to the achievement of the project objectives, especially during the phase of selecting grantees and allocating grants. There was a major gap of time and delay in activities between the phase of civil society mobilization and that of giving grants.

- **Understaffed management team**: the team consisted of a technical adviser, a national coordinator, a monitoring and evaluation (M&E) assistant, an administrative and financial officer, and a driver, but this proved to be insufficient given the scope of the project (national level) and the great geographical distance between the two pilot communities of Sfax and Jendouba. Moreover, the project was technically supervised by ILO's office in Geneva, and administratively managed by its office in Algeria. The absence of a local ILO subsidiary or branch in Tunisia made coordination confusing and delayed and hampered the team management as well as the mobilization of resources.

- **PROTECTE's M&E activities were insufficient to inform decision-making on the best way to mobilize resources**. Outcomes were interpreted differently by the different PROTECTE project directors and M&E managers, hindering consistent tracking, assessment, and data-driven adaptation. The project also lacked a formal context monitoring system, which would have facilitated periodic reflection on the alignment of project activities to the evolving operating environment. The project did not include monitoring and learning as a core component, and there were limited efforts made to strengthen the team's capacity and the structural frameworks for effective data collection, systematic progress monitoring, and learning from lessons.

- **Frequent changes of project managers, exacerbated by a time-consuming recruitment process**: the technical adviser was changed three times throughout the duration of the project and the role was unoccupied for several periods, sometimes for more than eight months. This was also the case for the national coordinator and the M&E assistant. These numerous and lengthy staffing gaps, sub-optimal documentation, and lack of handover affected the continuity of the project management and its efficiency.

3.5 SUSTAINABILITY

Several key aspects of the project are seen to be sustainable.

The increased awareness and prioritization of combatting child labor by public institutions was a crucial and sustainable achievement. Engaged individuals reported a personal commitment to combatting child labor that surpassed simply acquiescing to a mandate or job responsibility. Stakeholders also identified mindset changes, knowledge enhancement, and the framework for stakeholder engagement, especially in Sfax and Jendouba, as sustainable.

> " *The project has created valuable tools, including the procedural guide. However, there is a need for systematic dissemination of this training among all actors in the protection chain. Otherwise, the project's effectiveness will remain very limited.*
>
> *- Interview with COPIL member* "

Stakeholders consider progress made by the Tunisian government in legal and institutional aspects as largely poised to endure, driven by the continuous commitment of the Tunisian government toward combating child labor. As noted above, awareness raising and capacity building are seen as contributing to sustainable legal and institutional commitments to combat child labor. Expanding awareness to all actors in the chain of stakeholder engaging in child protection, however, will require additional engagement.

Stakeholder coordination structures are largely deemed sustainable, particularly at the regional level, as they have already successfully maintained their functionality despite political changes during the project's duration. Practices of coordination and multi-stakeholder collaboration have successfully brought stakeholders together and initiatives aimed at replicating the experience of regional committees are already underway.

The direct support provided to associations and/or public institutions will continue to benefit children beyond the project's conclusion. This includes the setup of vocational training rooms and procurement and delivery of equipment to those organizations,

However, a critical sustainability challenge identified by stakeholders was the Tunisian government's lack of resources to expand training to all stakeholders, duplicate the experience of regional committees, and replicate the CLMS pilot throughout the entire Tunisian territory. The government's available human resources for combating child labor are very limited. Despite the government's commitment toward combatting child labor, state employees are overwhelmed and lack logistical resources to fulfil their duties. In the absence of supportive and resourced solutions, the personal commitment of stakeholders may not suffice to address the number of children requiring protection, especially in rural areas. Stakeholders also noted that the system for identifying and monitoring child labor cases remains non-digital, with no clear plans to digitize the system. The non-digitized system risks compromising the quality and availability of collected data with ramifications for using reliable data to optimally inform policy decisions.

Furthermore, **the non-institutionalization of coordination structures at the national and regional levels was identified as a significant limitation for sustainability**. Inter-ministerial coordination remains informal and there is no mandate for coordination to continue. In the absence of a formal requirement, sustained coordination relies on the personal commitment of involved stakeholders and political goodwill between ministries. The lack of coordination between the MAS and the Ministry of Education—with both ministries having an important role in child and child labor issues—is seen as a risk to sustainability and continuity of efforts.

The lack of political will to involve public media in a comprehensive awareness strategy against child labor could also hamper the continued transformation of attitudes and prevailing societal norms around child labor.

3.6 EQUITY AND INCLUSION

As described in the sections above, **the project engaged a diverse group of national, regional, and local stakeholders to inform the design of the original scope of the project** (outcomes 1 to 5). The project held a multi-stakeholder workshop to solicit inputs, build rapport, and facilitated continued engagement with key stakeholders, helping to capture and integrate the views and priorities of diverse groups.

Regarding the delivery of direct services, including aid services under Outcome 6 and the provision of training, stakeholders agree that the project aimed to be inclusive but data on final participants was not available at the time of the evaluation. Although the project engaged a wide range of stakeholders, the project's selection of training participants and direct aid beneficiaries was not clearly communicated and was not made in consultation with other stakeholders.

Public institutions faced challenges in reaching rural and disadvantaged communities due to limited resources, such as insufficient administrative cars to reach faraway rural communities and people living in distant mountainous regions. There was also the challenge of reaching girls who are already working in houses as live-in maids Migrant children were not included in the project. During the extension phase, collaboration with CSOs and public institutions made it possible to reach some of these excluded communities, thanks to the logistical support and outreach capacities of CSOs. This significantly improved the inclusion efforts of the project

4. LESSONS LEARNED AND PROMISING PRACTICES

4.1 LESSONS LEARNED

Lesson Learned 1: Political instability and the limited human and logistical resources of Tunisia's government ministries should be considered in project planning. Tunisia's advanced regulatory and institutional framework and the high level of knowledge and skills among Tunisian stakeholders supported the adoption and application of new tools against child labor. However, political instability, differing visions of successive decision-makers, and the limited human and logistical resources within Tunisian public institutions are challenges that affected implementation achievement and need to be integrated into future project design. Project design and ongoing risk analysis should consider these realities and their possible effects on the project.

Lesson Learned 2: The project's success relied on public institutions voluntarily committing to combat child labor and national and regional stakeholders personally prioritizing this cause, rather than solely fulfilling legal obligations. Stakeholder engagement also relies on their available time, resources, and incentives, which can be limited or non-existent. These constraints should be considered for future project design and risk analysis.

Lesson Learned 3: Comprehensive understanding of Tunisia's administrative procedures and respect of administrative hierarchies and processes is critical to a successful participatory approach. In the Tunisian context, it is critical to adopt a participatory and consultative approach, joined with a deep understanding of administrative constraints, knowledge and respect of institutional hierarchies and procedures, and an in-depth understanding of socio-cultural nuances. This entails dedicating the required resources and time to comprehensively

understand administrative procedures, generate reliable data, and strategically engage stakeholders while respecting administrative hierarchies and processes.

Lesson Learned 4: Implementing a national and regional information system proved to be a highly ambitious goal for Tunisia's initial child labor eradication plan. This requires further training efforts and the systematic institutionalization of regional coordination and engagement with frontline actors.

Lesson Learned 5: Monitoring, evaluation, and learning processes are crucial for timely data gathering to inform evidence-based implementation adaptations, particularly for projects like PROTECTE that are the first to work on a particular issue in a country. Additionally, documenting ongoing lessons learned and best practices is essential for ensuring project continuity, especially in response to turnover in project staff and political transitions.

4.2 PROMISING PRACTICES

Promising Practice 1: Utilizing a participatory approach effectively involves diverse stakeholders and builds commitment and engagement to combat child labor. The project successfully facilitated collaboration with a range of stakeholders, particularly between national government ministries, and fostered a multi-stakeholder intervention approach that is widely considered sustainable.

Promising Practice 2: Utilizing evidence-based information, such as the national survey, to guide policy decisions regarding child labor is critical. In a context of ideological divergence and political conflict, relying on scientific facts is a highly effective practice for bridging differences of opinion. By the same, customizing interventions to fit local socio-cultural contexts is key to ensure optimal results. This is especially important for gaining a deeper understanding of the factors that push and pull children into child labor, which can inform decision-making and prioritization of prevention and corrective measures.

Promising Practice 3: Developing a common understanding of the legal framework enhances comprehension of officials' roles and facilitates inter-agency collaboration and coordination. While Tunisia's legal framework contains numerous laws supporting child protection, these laws are diverse. Stakeholders may be aware of laws relating to their own ministry but are often unaware of the texts that relate to other institutions and functions. Bringing together these laws and clarifying the roles and responsibilities of each administration in the child protection chain is an effective approach.

Promising Practice 4: The creation of regional committees in Sfax and Jendouba to implement the NAP-TN promoted effective decentralization and localized interventions. This approach enabled quick response times and tailored solutions relevant to each community's specific cultural and socials norms, structures, and population needs.

Promising Practice 5: Collaboration with CSOs enabled the project to overcome resource challenges that limited its ability to reach children in rural areas. Such collaborations on the regional level were highly effective, especially when CSOs facilitated reaching geographically inaccessible target groups. Partnering with CSOs also helped to address child labor issues despite resource constraints in certain public institutions.

5. CONCLUSION

The project's multi-stakeholder, participatory approach promoted a high degree of relevance and effectively built partnerships to support implementation of the NAP-TN. The participatory design of the project fostered active engagement and collaboration among various stakeholders, enabling a comprehensive understanding of the issue and its complex challenges. This approach contributed to the project's success in identifying and addressing the needs of different stakeholders within the Tunisian context. By engaging a wide spectrum of stakeholders, spanning government entities, civil society, and social actors, and employing a multi-layered strategy, the project embraced a comprehensive and holistic approach to tackling the complexities of child labor. Capacity-building initiatives and the creation of high-quality tools such as guidelines on laws and regulations focusing on intervention procedures and coordination mechanisms, played a crucial role in fostering a culture of compliance with child labor laws, helping stakeholders better understand the legal framework and recognize different roles and responsibilities related to intervening against child labor.

Disagreement **about the best strategy and focus to address child labor hampered project effectiveness.** Representatives from the Ministry of Education expressed dissatisfaction with the project's focus on strengthening child labor prevention mechanisms, as it diverged with their own priority of preventing school dropouts. The project's activities were aligned with the objectives of various ministries. However, the divergence of opinions and divisions mainly revolved around the project's focus and varying stances on the inclusion of children under 16 in vocational training programs.

Partnering with the COPIL governance body and building inter-ministerial partnerships was an effective strategy to reach public institutions and policymakers in supporting implementation of the NAP-TN. These partnerships facilitated the project's reach and engagement with policymakers. The project played a role in enhancing Tunisia's legal and institutional framework pertaining to child labor. It led to the revision of hazardous work definitions and lists, along with the creation of a procedural guide outlining intervention processes and coordination mechanisms, which stakeholders utilized. Yet there is a need to define light work and revise Law 25-65 on domestic workers.

The project successfully built the capacity of directly engaged stakeholders, but these achievements remain isolated at the national level. Additionally, training dissemination was informal. The project contributed to strengthening the institutional capacities of key government entities. By fostering collaboration among diverse institutions and stakeholders at the national and the regional level, the project streamlined efforts to protect children, strengthened protection frameworks, and accelerated intervention response times, especially in Sfax. However, these achievements remain too isolated and informal to produce broader institutional change due to the limited number of training beneficiaries compared to the breadth of broader government employees involved at the national level, and the absence of a systematic training dissemination plan during the majority of project implementation until the time of this final evaluation. Cooperation mechanisms at the national and regional levels have not been formalized and rely on the continued prioritization of child labor issues by, and the political goodwill of, key stakeholders. The public and the media—two critical stakeholders to sway societal understanding and reporting of child labor—were not successfully engaged, leaving a significant gap in sensitization and advocacy efforts.

The CLMS is articulated and assimilated in the two pilot regions and additional efforts are imperative to facilitate replication regionally and nationally. The non-digital pilot CLMS is in place in Sfax and Jendouba. The creation of a tool, by itself, is not sufficient to allow replication. More efforts are needed to disseminate training, tools, and coordination mechanisms within other regions as well as nationally. The goal of a unified—and therefore digitized—national monitoring system remains unlikely to be achieved given the existing national resources.

The **sustainability of the project** depends on political willingness and the Tunisian government's engagement to leverage the project's outcomes and mobilize resources against child labor. Nevertheless, the project showcases various sustainability elements, notably the new collaborative mindset and the developed tools.

6. RECOMMENDATIONS

The following recommendations are informed by the evaluation findings and conclusions and are presented for consideration to ILAB for future programming to prevent and reduce child labor in Tunisia.

Recommendations to the Government of Tunisia:

Recommendation 1. Work to unify the visions and align the strategies between ministry policies and parallel programs to increase coherence, effectiveness, and efficiency. Differences between ministerial priorities and approaches—especially the MAS and Ministry of Education—posed significant challenges and resulted in the non-engagement of the Ministry of Education. Assessing ministry positions up front, identifying areas of non-alignment, and facilitating a unified approach that is sensitive to ministry responsibilities and inter-ministerial relationships, will help to promote project coherence, effectiveness, and efficiency.

Recommendation 2. Continue efforts to revise the legal and regulatory instruments with international standards on child labor, defining light work, revising law 25-65 concerning domestic workers, and creating regulations for children aged 12 to 15 without access to vocational training. These critical components were not completed by the PROTECTE project and additional political engagement from the Tunisian government is recommended to promote the continuing advancement of the necessary frameworks to combat child labor and find solutions for children under 16 in vocational training programs.

Recommendation 3. Institutionalize articulated coordination mechanisms through national and regional committees to achieve systematic inter-ministerial collaboration with defined roles and responsibilities and decentralized implementation of NAP-TN strategies to improve child labor law enforcement. The non-institutionalization of coordination structures at the national and regional levels was identified as a limitation for sustainability. Currently, heightened awareness and a sense of personal responsibility among sensitized officials promotes continued inter-ministerial coordination. Formally articulating that coordination will support its continuation.

Recommendation 4. Promote social sensitization and mobilization by engaging the Public Service Broadcaster to mainstream child labor issues on a national scale through targeted

and continuous awareness campaigns. Also, strengthen civil society's role in localized awareness campaigns.

Recommendation 5. Continue the work to develop the digitized CLMS using feedback from the pilot experience, with a focus on implementation at the regional level. The piloted CLMS is assimilated and articulated, especially at Sfax, however additional effort is imperative to establish a digitized regional monitoring system for child labor.

Recommendation 6. Expand capacity building and mainstream child labor issues in additional governorates. Continue the effort toward strengthening technical and operational capacities of relevant stakeholders (including the MAS; the Ministry of Education; the Ministry of Women, Family and Children; the Ministry of Vocational Training and Employment; the Ministry of Interior; the Ministry of Justice) to combat child labor by expanding the project's reach. The evaluation team recommends to gradually mainstream child labor issues into institutional training and planning among key institutional partners.

Recommendation 7. Enhance the prevention component by mobilizing increased educational support and alternative reintegration models and expand to include the most vulnerable children, especially at the start of the school year. Expand efforts to reach the most vulnerable children, including rural and sub-Saharan immigrant children, who were not engaged by the PROTECTE project. Also, specifically target rural children with limited access to alternative education services and those aged 12 to 15. Strengthen civil society's capacity for rapid responses and direct assistance for children and families to prevent child labor, especially during the back-to-school period.

Recommendations for the ILO:

Recommendation 8. Place greater emphasis on contextual monitoring and learning for evidence-driven adaptations. Project design must be tailored to the context in which it operates. The rationale behind the project's actions, assumptions, and potential risks should undergo continuous and thorough analysis, adapting as needed to account for external factors and changes. Outcomes and associated indicators should be clearly defined for unanimous understanding of the project's expected results and cogent, consistent reporting of project achievements. Furthermore, there should be a systematic approach to regularly evaluate progress, learn from the results, and document how this ongoing learning informs project management priorities and decisions. Likewise, provide support to implementation partners like COPIL to conduct similar monitoring, learning, and adaptation priority actions.

Recommendation 9. When awarding grants, prioritize collaboration between CSOs and public institutions to better equip public institutions and frontline actors with logistical support to protect children and improve enforcement of laws related to child labor. The engagement of frontline actors, such as social workers, law enforcement, labor inspectors, and CSOs was successful in bridging the gaps associated with the government's efforts to reach vulnerable children and families in targeted communities. Grants that directly address these resource gaps will help to ensure resources are effectively and strategically deployed to maximize the number of children supported and consistently operationalize and enforce child labor laws.

Recommendations for ILAB:

Recommendation 10: Particularly in complex environments like Tunisia, strengthen the technical feasibility of projects by balancing stakeholder needs with a thorough contextual assessment, including understanding of the operating environment, risks, and baseline position of key stakeholders. Ensure implementers regularly review and update the contextual assessment or contextual indicators and reflect those realities in project planning to prevent ambiguity of expectations and overambitious goals.

Table 5. Recommendations and Supporting Evidence

No.	Recommendation	Evidence	Page
01	*(For Government of Tunisia)* Work to unify the visions and align the strategies between ministry policies and parallel programs to increase coherence, effectiveness, and efficiency.	Differences between Ministry of Education and MAS approaches posed significant challenges and caused disengagement of Ministry of Education	24
02	*(For Government of Tunisia)* Continue efforts to revise the legal framework and align legal and regulatory instruments with international standards on child labor, defining light work, revising Law 25-65 concerning domestic workers, and creating regulations for children aged 12 to 15 without access to vocational training.	The project was not able to define light work or revise Law 25-65 concerning domestic workers.	20
03	*(For Government of Tunisia)* Institutionalize articulated coordination mechanisms through national and regional committees to achieve systematic inter-ministerial collaboration with defined roles and responsibilities and decentralized implementation of NAP-TN strategies to improve child labor law enforcement.	The non-institutionalization of coordination structures at the national and regional levels was identified as a significant limitation for sustainability.	20
04	*(For Government of Tunisia)* Promote social sensitization and mobilization by engaging the Public Service Broadcaster to mainstream child labor issues on a national scale through targeted and continuous awareness campaigns. Also, strengthen civil society's role in localized awareness campaigns.	The disengagement of public media has limited the scope of awareness raising and cultural change.	22

No.	Recommendation	Evidence	Page
05	*(For Government of Tunisia)* Continue the work to develop the digitized child labor monitoring system using feedback from the pilot experience, with a focus on implementation at the regional level.	CLMS is assimilated and articulated, especially at Sfax, however additional efforts are imperative to establish a digitalized regional monitoring system for child labor.	23
06	*(For Government of Tunisia)* Expand capacity building and mainstream child labor issues in additional governorates.	Limited participant numbers in training sessions have limited the project's impact to enhance knowledge and institutional capacities.	19
07	*(For Government of Tunisia)* Enhance the prevention component by mobilizing increased educational support and alternative reintegration models and expand to include the most vulnerable children, especially at the start of the school year.	Limited resources and geographic scope of frontline organizations, and disagreement in approach from the Ministry of Education, limited the project's reach to the most vulnerable children.	25
08	*(For ILO)* Place greater emphasis on contextual monitoring and learning for evidence-driven adaptations.	The suboptimal, ambitious design in an unstable context was not revisited or revised during implementation and limited the project relevance and effectiveness.	17
09	*(For ILO)* When awarding grants, prioritize collaboration between CSOs and public institutions to better equip public institutions and frontline actors with logistical support to protect children and improve enforcement of laws related to child labor.	In the absence of supportive and resourced solutions, the personal commitment of stakeholders may not suffice to address the number of children requiring protection, especially in rural areas.	25
10	*(For ILAB)* Particularly in complex environments like Tunisia, strengthen the technical feasibility of projects by balancing stakeholder needs with a thorough contextual assessment, including understanding of the operating environment, risks, and baseline position of key stakeholders.	The suboptimal, ambitious design in an unstable context was not revisited or revised during implementation and limited the project relevance and effectiveness.	17

ANNEXES

ANNEX A. LIST OF DOCUMENTS REVIEWED

Comprehensive Monitoring and Evaluation Plan (CMEP) (December 2017), International Labour Organization.

Enquête nationale sur le travail des enfants en Tunisie de 2017 (January 2018). International Labour Organization. Source URL: https://www.ilo.org/ipec/Informationresources/WCMS_IPEC_PUB_29975/lang--fr/index.htm

Grant Modification/Notice of Obligation (April 2017), Department of Labor.

Grant Modification/Notice of Obligation (October 2019), Department of Labor.

Grant Modification/Notice of Obligation (December 2020), Department of Labor.

Grant Modification/Notice of Obligation (July 2022), Department of Labor.

Mid-Term Independent Evaluation of Together Against Child Labour (PROTECTE) (December 2018), International Labour Organization.

Notice of Award (September 2016), Department of Labor.

Project Document: Tunisia Project: "Together Against Child Labour" (PROTECTE) (October 2017), International Labour Organization.

Statement of Work: ILO's Project of Support to the Implementation of the National Action Plan Against Child Labour in Tunisia (NAP-TN) 2015-2020 (July 2016), International Labour Organization.

Technical Progress Report for "Together Against Child Labour" (PROTECTE) (January 2017), International Labour Organization.

Technical Progress Report for "Together Against Child Labour" (PROTECTE) (April 2017), International Labour Organization.

Technical Progress Report for "Together Against Child Labour" (PROTECTE) (October 2017), International Labour Organization.

Technical Progress Report for "Together Against Child Labour" (PROTECTE) (March 2018), International Labour Organization.

Technical Progress Report for "Together Against Child Labour" (PROTECTE) (September 2018), International Labour Organization.

Technical Progress Report for "Together Against Child Labour" (PROTECTE) (March 2019), International Labour Organization.

Technical Progress Report for "Together Against Child Labour" (PROTECTE) (September 2019), International Labour Organization.

Technical Progress Report for "Together Against Child Labour" (PROTECTE) (April 2020), International Labour Organization.

Technical Progress Report for "Together Against Child Labour" (PROTECTE) (April 2020-October 2020), International Labour Organization.

Technical Progress Report for "Together Against Child Labour" (PROTECTE) (October 2020-March 2021), International Labour Organization.

Technical Progress Report for "Together Against Child Labour" (PROTECTE) (April 2021-September 2021), International Labour Organization.

Technical Progress Report for "Together Against Child Labour" (PROTECTE) (October 2021-March 2022), International Labour Organization.

Technical Progress Report for "Together Against Child Labour" (PROTECTE) (April 2022-September 2022), International Labour Organization.

Technical Progress Report for "Together Against Child Labour" (PROTECTE) (October 2022-March 2023), International Labour Organization.

ANNEX B. EVALUATION ITINERARY

July 2023						
Sunday 9 -	Monday 10 KIIs with ILO PROTECTE Project Staff	Tuesday 11 KIIs with ILO PROTECTE Project Staff online and in Tunis	Wednesday 12 -	Thursday 13 KIIs with ILO PROTECTE Project Staff online and in Tunis	Friday 14 KIIs with ILO PROTECTE Project Staff in Tunis	Saturday 15 -
Sunday 16 -	Monday 17 -	Tuesday 18 -	Wednesday 19 -	Thursday 20 KIIs with Tunisian State Officials in Tunis	Friday 21 FDG with State Officials and Civil Society in Tunis	Saturday 22 -
Sunday 23 -	Monday 24 KIIs with Tunisian State Officials and FDGs with Direct Project Beneficiaries in Sfax	Tuesday 25 KIIs with Civil Society and ILAB Project Staff in Sfax	Wednesday 26 FDG with State Officials and Civil Society in Sfax	Thursday 27 KIIs with Tunisian State Officials in Jendouba	Friday 28 KIIs with Tunisian State Officials and FDG with Tunisisan State Officials in Jendouba	Saturday 29 -

August 2023						
Sunday 30 -	Monday 31 -	Tuesday 1 KIIs with Tunisian State Officials and Civil Society in Tunis	Wednesday 2 Stakeholder Workshop	Thursday 3 -	Friday 4 KIIs with US DOL/ILAB online	Saturday 5 -
Sunday 6 -	Monday 7 KIIs with ILO PROTECTE Project Staff in Tunis (Make-up of rescheduled interview)	Tuesday 8 -	Wednesday 9 -	Thursday 10 -	Friday 11 Post Fieldwork Debrief with ILAB	Saturday 12 -

ANNEX C. STAKEHOLDER WORKSHOP AGENDA AND PARTICIPANTS

The lead evaluator hosted an evaluation debrief on August 2nd, 2023 and was attended by official state representatives from multiple ministries and civil society members. The debrief was composed of a slide deck featuring the preliminary findings and provided stakeholders with the opportunity to respond to the initial findings and provide feedback and recommendations. The agenda and participants of the evaluation debrief are outlined below:

STAKEHOLDER DEBRIEF AGENDA

- Evaluation Background
- Evaluation Scope of Work
- Fieldwork Approach
- Initial Findings
- Interpretation of Initial Findings

TERMS OF REFERENCE

Final | July 19, 2023

INDEPENDENT FINAL EVALUATION OF THE PROJECT TOGETHER AGAINST CHILD LABOR IN TUNISIA (PROTECTE)

BACKGROUND AND JUSTIFICATION

The Office of Child Labor, Forced Labor, and Human Trafficking (OCFT) is an office within the Bureau of International Labor Affairs (ILAB), an agency of the U.S. Department of Labor (USDOL). ILAB's mission is to promote a fair global playing field for workers in the United States and around the world by enforcing trade commitments, strengthening labor standards, and combating international child labor, forced labor, and human trafficking.

OCFT works to combat child labor, forced labor, and human trafficking around the world through international research, policy engagement, technical cooperation, and awareness-raising. Since OCFT's technical cooperation program began in 1995, the U.S. Congress has appropriated funds annually to United States Department of Labour (USDOL) for efforts to combat exploitive child labor internationally. This funding has been used to support technical cooperation projects in more than 90 countries around the world. Technical cooperation projects funded by USDOL support sustained efforts that address child labor and forced labor's underlying causes, including poverty and lack of access to education.

This evaluation approach will be in accordance with USDOL's Evaluation Policy[13]. OCFT is committed to using the most rigorous methods applicable for this qualitative performance evaluation and to learning from the evaluation results. The evaluation will be conducted by an independent third party and in an ethical manner and safeguard the dignity, rights, safety and privacy of participants. The quality standards underlying this evaluation are: Relevance, Coherence (to the extent possible), Effectiveness, Efficiency, Impact (to the extent possible), and Sustainability.[14] In conducting this evaluation, the evaluator will strive to uphold the American Evaluation Association Guiding Principles for Evaluators.[15] OCFT will make the evaluation report available and accessible on its website.

PROJECT CONTEXT

Globally, approximately 160 million children—more than double the entire child population of the United States—are engaged in child labor.[16] Children engaged in child labor are most often engaged in the informal sector—including businesses owned and operated by their own families—and are at high risk for exploitation, interrupted or incomplete schooling, and other negative consequences with life-long effects. In Tunisia, an estimated 100,000 children drop

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[13] For more information on DOL's Evaluation Policy, please visit Source URL: https://www.dol.gov/asp/evaluation/evaluationpolicy.htm

[14] From Better Criteria for Better Evaluation: Revised Evaluation Criteria Definitions and Principles for Use by the Organization for Economic Development's Development Assistance Committee (OECD-DAC) Network on Development Evaluation. DOL determined these criteria are in accordance with the OMB Guidance M-20-12. For more information, please visit the source URL: https://www.oecd.org/dac/evaluation/revised-evaluation-criteria-dec-2019.pdf

[15] For more information on the American Evaluation Association's Guiding Principles, please visit the source URL: https://www.eval.org/About/Guiding-Principles

[16] International Labour Organization and United Nations Children's Fund. *Child Labor: Global Estimates 2020, Trends and the Road Forward.* 2021. Source URL: https://data.unicef.org/resources/child-labour-2020-global-estimates-trends-and-the-road-forward/

out of school each year.[17] These children are more likely to be engaged in the informal economy, where exploitation and the worst forms of child labor prevail.[18] The Government of Tunisia has taken steps to fight child labor, including through its formulation of the National Action Plan Against Child Labor in Tunisia (NAP-TN), adopted in 2016. More recently, Tunisia established an additional mechanism, the Leadership Committee to Combat Child Labor, to coordinate government-wide efforts against child labor.[19] Such efforts promote ongoing cooperation as seen by the development and piloting of a child labor 'monitoring model' which facilitates fluid data transfers between relevant parties.[20] Other moderate advancements include the passing of the Domestic Workers Bill prohibiting the employment of children in domestic work and the Second Chance program reintegrating children ages 12-18 who have dropped out of school.[21] Overall, the Tunisian government has prioritized institutional capacity building as the main area of intervention through the incorporation of trainings and awareness-raising campaigns.[22]

PROJECT SPECIFIC INFORMATION

ILAB is committed to supporting the elimination of forced labor and child labor and supports the Government of Tunisia in its responsibilities in this area. To this end, ILAB awarded the "Together Against Child Labour" (PROTECTE) project in Tunisia, which is the focus of this final performance evaluation.

PROTECTE: In 2016, ILAB awarded a $3,000,000 cooperative agreement to the International Labour Organization (ILO) to implement PROTECTE, a four-year (2016-2020) project with a series of extensions: a one-year extension in October 2019, a one-year extension and an additional award of $1,000,000 in December 2020, and a final one-year extension in July 2022. PROTECTE aims to support the implementation of NAP-TN by building the capacity of the Government of Tunisia and key stakeholders to prevent and reduce child labor in Tunisia. Specifically, the project's overall objective is to support the Government and key stakeholders to implement the NAP-TN by building the capacity of the MAS, workers' organizations (especially the Tunisian General Labor Union [UGTT]) and employers' organizations (Tunisian Union of Industry, Trade and Handicrafts [UTICA] and Tunisian Union of Agriculture and Fishery [UTAP). PROTECTE works to strengthen collaboration and coordination between the Government, employers' and workers' organizations, and other key stakeholders.

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[17] Kimball, Sam and Pau Gonzalez. *A second chance for Tunisian children's dreams.* UNICEF. 2022. Source URL: https://www.unicef.org/tunisia/recits/second-chance-tunisian-childrens-dreams#:~:text=Each%20year%2C%20100%2C000%20Tunisian%20children,work%20opportunities%20they%20dream%20of.

[18] Bureau of International Labor Affairs. *Together Against Child Labor in Tunisia (PROTECTE).* U.S. Department of Labor. Source URL: https://www.dol.gov/agencies/ilab/together-against-child-labor-tunisia-protecte

[19] Bureau of International Labor Affairs, *2021 Findings on the Worst Forms of Child Labor: Tunisia* (US Department of Labor, 2021). Source URL: https://www.dol.gov/agencies/ilab/resources/reports/child-labor/tunisia

[20] Alliance 87, *Pathfinder Country: Tunisia* (nd). Source URL: https://alliance87.org/pathfinders/tunisia

[21] Bureau of International Labor Affairs, *2021 Findings on the Worst Forms of Child Labor: Tunisia* (US Department of Labor, 2021). Source URL: https://www.dol.gov/agencies/ilab/resources/reports/child-labor/tunisia

[22] Alliance 87, *Pathfinder Country: Tunisia* (nd). Source URL: https://alliance87.org/pathfinders/tunisia

The project provides technical assistance to the stakeholders to implement activities according to the following priorities laid out in the NAP-TN: (1) strengthening and harmonizing legislative and institutional frameworks to combat child labor; (2) improving the knowledge base on child labor; (3) strengthening protection and prevention mechanisms to combat child labor; (4) strengthening technical and operational capacities of relevant stakeholders to combat child labor; (5) strengthening the role of education and vocational training to combat child labor; and (6) enhancing sensitization and social mobilization to combat child labor.[23] Technical assistance to Government mechanisms such as NAP-TN is included within the six priority outcomes supported through the PROTECTE project. These six priority outcomes are: (1) Capacity of the Government, the workers' and employers' organizations and the Civil Society to implement the NAP-TN is strengthened. (2) The knowledge base on child labor and its worst forms in Tunisia is supported and improved. (3) Awareness and social mobilization on the fight against child labor are strengthened. (4) A tested model of Child Labor Monitoring System is available for replication. (5) Educational support and alternative reintegration models to prevent child labor strengthened. (6) Educational and alternative reintegration models to prevent child labor are implemented at community level in pilot regions.[24]

PURPOSE AND SCOPE OF EVALUATION

EVALUATION PURPOSE

DevTech Systems, Inc. was commissioned to conduct an independent performance evaluation of PROTECTE to assess the project's relevance, effectiveness, efficiency, impact and sustainability. The purpose of the final performance evaluation includes the following:

- Assessing the relevance and coherence of project's design regarding country needs and how the project is perceived and valued by project beneficiaries and partners

- Assessing if the project has achieved its objectives, identifying the challenges encountered in doing so, and analyzing the driving factors for these challenges;

- Analyzing the implementation strategies of the project with regard to their potential effectiveness in achieving the project outcomes and impacts, including unexpected results and factors affecting project implementation (positively and negatively).

- Assessing the efficiency of the implementation strategy

- Assessing the intended and unintended effects of the project;

- Identifying lessons learned and emerging practices from the project (e.g., strategies and models of intervention) and experiences in implementation that can be applied in current or future projects in the focus country(ies) and in projects designed under similar conditions or target sectors;

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[23] ILO, *Project Document: Tunisia Project "Together Against Child Labour" PROTECTE* (2017).
[24] DOL, *Project Document: Award Modification No.4* (2022)

- Providing strategic recommendations for the different tripartite constituents, stakeholders, and partners to improve implementation of the project activities and attainment of project objectives

- Assessing which outcomes or outputs can be deemed sustainable.

As a final performance evaluation, this effort will further explore the extent to which recommendations from the midterm evaluation were implemented.

Intended Users

The evaluation will provide OCFT, the grantee, other project stakeholders, and stakeholders working to combat child labor more broadly, an assessment of the project's performance, its effects on project participants, and an understanding of the factors driving the project results. The evaluation results, conclusions and recommendations will serve to inform any project adjustments that may need to be made, and to inform stakeholders in the design and implementation of subsequent phases or future child labor elimination projects as appropriate. The evaluation report will be published on the USDOL website, so the report should be written as a standalone document, providing the necessary background information for readers who are unfamiliar with the details of the project.

EVALUATION QUESTIONS

The evaluation questions for the PROTECTE aim to assess the performance in terms of their relevancy and validity; coherence, efficiency, effectiveness, and perceived impact, project management, administration, and coordination, sustainability, and equity and inclusion. This final evaluation will examine the project's achievements in meeting its objectives, considering factors such as the validity and relevance of the project's design, including its theories of change within the local environment, its alignment with the needs of target groups and local stakeholders, compatibility and collaboration with other interventions, efficiency and effectiveness in delivering planned results, identification of unintended effects, likelihood of sustained benefits, lessons learned, promising practices, and the incorporation of inclusion and equity elements. The evaluation will also assess the extent to which the project applied the lessons learned and recommendations garnered during the midterm evaluation, among other learning activities. The following evaluation questions, grouped by the Organization for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD) and the Development Assistance Committee (DAC) criteria and ILAB learning priorities, will be applied to assess the overall performance of the PROTECTE project:

EQ 1 Design relevancy and validity

1.1 To what extent was the project's theory of change valid given the implementing environment?

a. How has the project adjusted the design and implementation of activities to reflect ongoing learning and ensure alignment with the current situation in country, including the needs of project participants, communities, and other stakeholders as well as the recent impacts of COVID-19 and political and economic challenges?

1.2 To what extent has the project's theory of change remained responsive and relevant to the evolving implementing environment, including the impacts of COVID-19 and political and economic challenges?

   a. To what extent were the project strategies relevant to the specific needs of project participants, communities, and other stakeholders?

1.3 To what extent was project design responsive to stakeholder needs and priorities?

   a. How did PROTECTE identify the needs of the multistakeholder community, including vulnerable populations and identity groups?

   b. Did PROTECTE respond to stakeholder needs and priorities during implementation and/or as contextual realities evolved?

EQ 2 Coherence

2.1 To what extent was the project aligned with the objectives of national (Tunisian Government) and international (donor) programs and priorities?

   a. The NAP-TN in Tunisia (2015-2020)

   b. The Tunisia Decent Work Country Program (DWCP) for 2017–2022

   c. The UN Sustainable Development Goals (particularly target 8.7, as Tunisia is a Pathfinder country)

   d. Other donor-funded programming such as the International Organization on Migration (IOM), the United Nations International Children's Emergency Fund (UNICEF), and the United States Agency for International Development

2.2 To what extent and how has the project established links and coordinated with government-led efforts (national and regional) to eliminate child labor and with other donor-funded interventions?

EQ 3 Effectiveness and Perceived Impact

EQ 3.a Effectiveness

3.1 To what extent and how has the project achieved its primary objectives and planned outcomes at the time of the evaluation? Specifically, to what extent and how has the project:

   a. Increased the capacity of Government, workers' and employers' organizations and civil society to implement the NAP-TN

   b. Increased the knowledge base on child labor and its worst forms in Tunisia

   c. Strengthened awareness and social mobilization on the fight against child labor

   d. Established a tested child labor monitoring system (CLMS) model that is available for replication

   e. Strengthened educational support and alternative reintegration models to prevent CL

   f. Implemented educational and alternative reintegration models to prevent child labor at the community level in pilot regions (governorates)

3.2 To what extent and how were the recommendations from the midterm evaluation implemented and what were the results?

    a. Ensuring Ministry of Social Affairs (MAS) commitment to promulgating the various legislative texts on child labor

    b. Enhance engagement with the NAP-TN/PROTECTE Steering Committee (COPIL) members to enforce child labor laws and policies

    c. Strengthen coordination with the Ministry of Education (ME)

    d. Accelerate the drafting of official circulars or conventions for coordination among ministries

    e. Leverage MAS involvement to engage in the draft of the Labor Code amendment

    f. Encourage the dissemination of statistical or research-based information

    g. Resume collaboration with journalists

    h. Formulate the assumptions and risks associated with project activities more specifically

    i. Strengthen local actor's capacity

    j. Support front-line personnel

    k. Enhance understanding of international methods and practices in the fight against child labor and their applicability in the Tunisian context

    l. Expand activities to reflect the depreciation of the local currently

    m. Consider extending the pilot project in the governorate of Sfax to other regions

    n. Training regional stakeholders on CLMS

3.3 What were the key internal or external factors that limited or facilitated the coordination of stakeholders for project implementation and consequently, the achievement of project outcomes?

EQ 3.b Perceived Impact

3.4 What long-term changes in Tunisia's ability to address child labor can be directly or indirectly attributed to the project?

EQ 4 Efficiency, project management, administration, and coordination

4.1 To what extent could the project have delivered similar results in a more time or resource-efficient manner?

4.2 To what extent and how did the project coordinate with key stakeholders during implementation including:

    a. The Comité de Pilotage (COPIL and its members (MAS, Ministry of Woman, Family, Childhood and Seniors [MWFC], ME, Ministry of the Interior [MI], Ministry of Vocational

Training and Employment [MFPE], Tunisian General Labor Union [UGTT], Tunisian Union of Agriculture and Fishery [UTAP], and Tunisian Union of Industry, Trade and Handicrafts [UTICA])

b. MAS (including the following directorates and sub-agencies: General Directorate of Labor, General Directorate of Labor Inspection and Conciliation, General Directorate of Social Promotion and Centers for Defense and Social Integration [CDSI])

c. ME (Ministry of Education)

d. Regional committees and implementing partners at central and local levels

4.3 To what extent and how did the project facilitate coordination between government ministries themselves and between stakeholders at the central, regional, and local levels?

4.4 To what extent and how was Monitoring and Evaluation (M&E) oversight conducted over project activities? What were the results and were the key internal or external factors that limited or facilitated M&E oversight?

EQ 5 Sustainability

5.1 To what extent and how are project outcomes and key outputs likely to be sustained through government or other organizations after the end of the project?

a. Do government stakeholders or other organizations have the willingness and capacity to sustain and build on the results of the project?

b. To what extent and how are project stakeholders leveraging the project learnings to promote the sustainability of outcomes?

5.2 To what extent and how has the project made CLMS available for replication on a national scale?

EQ 6 Equity and Inclusion

6.1 How did PROTECTE incorporate elements of inclusion and equity into their design and implementation?

6.2 How did PROTECTE serve the needs and priorities of diverse stakeholders, including those from underserved or marginalized communities?

6.3 How were the beneficiaries of direct services selected?

These evaluation questions will provide the structure for the evaluation and will be tailored to the specific learning priorities, objectives, expected results, activities, and stakeholders of the project. The evaluation team identifies the data sources it intends to use to answer these questions (refer to Annex A).

EVALUATION METHODOLOGY AND TIMEFRAME

This evaluation should be conducted in the context of criteria and approaches for international development assistance as established by the OECD/DAC Evaluation Quality Standard; and the

UNEG Code of Conduct for Evaluation in the UN System.

The evaluation methodology will consist of the following activities and approaches:

Approach

The evaluation approach will be qualitative and participatory in nature, utilizing a two-step outcome harvesting methodology infused with the principles of a utilization-focused evaluation (U-FE). A U-FE approach ensures that the evaluation is useful to its intended users and that integrating users into the evaluation process generates more relevant findings that are more likely to be used. This approach aligns with evaluation best practices and the Foundations for Evidence-Based Policymaking Act of 2018, and ensures that the findings, conclusions, and recommendations are validated and clearly oriented towards ILAB's learning priorities.

In accordance with the outcome harvesting methodology, the evaluation team will first identify the anticipated and actual outcomes PROTECTE using project indicators, targets, and reported results. Then, the evaluation team will reconstruct the chain of events that led to those outcomes by leveraging participatory data collection techniques such as semi-structured key informant interviews (KIIs) and focus group discussions (FGDs). These techniques actively involve the subjects of the evaluation in the process, allowing them to elaborate on the details of the outcomes, how and when they were achieved, how they link to program outputs, why processes unfolded as they did, and lessons learned. This approach empowers stakeholders to steer the interview and share what they perceive to be critical data, yielding a more nuanced and comprehensive evaluation. Additionally, the participatory nature of the evaluation will contribute to a sense of ownership among stakeholders and project participants. The KIIs and FGDs will be conducted both in-person during the field visit and remotely through videoconferences or phone calls. Outcome harvesting with U-FE principles facilitates the evaluation to:

- Identify which interventions are most effective at producing the desired outcomes.

- Identify which outcomes and, where applicable, which outputs have the greatest likelihood of being sustained after donor funding ends.

- Objectively rate the level of achievement of each of the project's major outcomes on a four-point scale (low, moderate, above-moderate, and high).

- As relevant during final evaluations, assess whether the results from the Routine Data Quality Assessment (RDQA) were used by the project to formulate and implement measures to strengthen their data management and reporting system and improve data quality.

- Include evaluator activity to review the Comprehensive Monitoring and Evaluation Plan (CMEP) data with grantee.

To the extent that it is available, the evaluation team will incorporate quantitative data from the CMEP and project reports into the analysis. This data will be triangulated with qualitative data collected during fieldwork and survey data to objectively assess the level of achievement of each

of the project's major outcomes on a four-point scale (low, moderate, above-moderate, and high). This approach allows for a more comprehensive understanding of the project's performance by combining both quantitative and qualitative data, as well as primary and secondary data sources. It also helps to increase the validity and reliability of the evaluation findings by cross-checking the data from different sources (discussion of data quality and data validation is included in the Data Analysis section below).

The evaluation approach will be independent in terms of the membership of the evaluation team. Project staff and implementing partners will generally only be present in meetings with stakeholders, communities, and beneficiaries to provide introductions. The following additional principles will be applied during the evaluation process:

1. Methods of data collection and stakeholder perspectives will be triangulated for as many as possible of the evaluation questions.

2. Efforts will be made to include parents' and children's voices and beneficiary participation generally, using child-sensitive approaches to interviewing children following the ILO-IPEC guidelines on research with children on the worst forms of child labor[25] and UNICEF Principles for Ethical Reporting on Children.[26]

3. Gender and cultural sensitivity will be integrated in the evaluation approach.

4. Consultations will incorporate a degree of flexibility to maintain a sense of ownership of the stakeholders and beneficiaries, allowing additional questions to be posed that are not included in the Terms of Reference (TOR), whilst ensuring that key information requirements are met.

5. As far as possible, a consistent approach will be followed in each project site, with adjustments made for the different actors involved, activities conducted, and the progress of implementation in each locality.

Evaluation Team

The evaluation team will consist of:

1. Team Lead (Lead Evaluator)

2. Co-Team Lead (Co-Lead Evaluator)

3. Contract Manager

The lead evaluators will be responsible for conducting the PROTECTE final performance evaluation, including managing the team and coordinating with ILAB. They will develop the evaluation methodology in consultation with ILAB and project staff; plan and implement data

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[25] Source URL: https://www.ilo.org/ipec/Informationresources/WCMS_IPEC_PUB_3026/lang--en/index.htm
[26] Source URL: https://www.unicef.org/media/reporting-guidelines

collection, including directly conducting interviews; analyze the evaluation material gathered; and create written and non-written deliverables such as presenting feedback on the initial results of the evaluation to the stakeholder meeting and preparing the evaluation report. The lead evaluators will be supported by a Contract Manager from DevTech Systems Inc.'s (DevTech) home office, who will provide administrative support, technical oversight, and logistical support.

DevTech's home office will ensure consistent oversight and quality control throughout the evaluation process, utilizing field-tested knowledge management tools to facilitate cohesive and effective teamwork. Devtech will also manage resources and guide the overall implementation of the evaluation, including the development, review, and submission of all deliverables.

Data Collection Methodology
DOCUMENT REVIEW

In preparation for fieldwork the evaluation team will conduct an extensive review of relevant project documents. This process is a crucial step in the evaluation, serving as the foundation of the team's understanding of the project under examination, including its objectives, priorities, documented achievements, stakeholders, strengths, and challenges. As needed, the team may also request supplementary program documentation, such as deliverables, policies, and strategies developed by the project team, either prior to or during data collection phase.

The desk review will allow the evaluation team to construct a preliminary sketch of the chain of events leading to the realization (or lack thereof) of project results. This preliminary understanding will be subsequently verified and expanded upon during fieldwork, through KIIs and FGDs. The information collected during the desk review will also contribute to the evaluation's findings, conclusions, and recommendations, and inform the refinement of additional data collection protocols by identifying specific areas of discussion for each group of stakeholders.

The evaluation team will review the following initial list of documents, many of which have already been provided by ILAB.
- CMEP documents and data reported in Annex A of the Technical Progress Report (TPR),
- Midterm evaluation report,
- RDQA form as appropriate,
- Project document and revisions,
- Project budget and revisions,
- Financial Reports (FFRs)
- Cooperative Agreement and project modifications,
- Technical Progress and Status Reports,
- Project Results Frameworks and Monitoring Plans,
- Original work plan and most current revised work plan,
- Correspondence related to Technical Progress Reports,
- Management Procedures and Guidelines as appropriate
- Research or other reports undertaken (Knowledge, Attitudes, and Practices studies, etc.) as appropriate, and,
- Project files (including school records) as appropriate.
- The National Action Plan on Child Labour (NAP-TN) in Tunisia (2015-2020)

- The Tunisia Decent Work Country Program (DWCP) for 2017–2022
- The UN Sustainable Development Goals (particularly target 8.7, as Tunisia is a Pathfinder country)

As part of the evaluation process, the team will conduct a review of the RDQA forms completed by the project grantees, as appropriate. The team will assess whether results from the RDQA were utilized by the project to formulate and implement measures to strengthen their data management and reporting system and improve data quality. The findings from this analysis will be included in the evaluation report.

Additionally, the evaluation team will review key CMEP outcome and OCFT Standard Output indicators with the grantees. This will include reviewing the indicator definitions in the CMEP's Performance Monitoring Plan (PMP) and the reported values in the TPR Annex A to ensure accuracy and completeness in the reporting.

QUESTION MATRIX

The evaluation team has created an evaluation design matrix, which outlines the source of data from where the evaluation team plans to collect information for each TOR question, as well as the data collection tools and analysis approach. This will help the evaluation team decide how to allocate time in the field; help to ensure that all possible avenues for data triangulation are explored; and to clearly note where evaluation results are coming from. Please refer to Annex A for the draft evaluation design matrix summarizing the proposed data sources, data collection tools and analytic approaches informing each of the evaluation criteria.

INTERVIEWS WITH STAKEHOLDERS

The evaluation team will conduct at least 20 KIIs and two to three FGDs during the data collection phase in Tunisia and with Washington, D.C.-based stakeholders. The team will solicit the opinions and perspectives of a diverse group of project stakeholders, including ILAB, ILO, other implementing partners such as key officials and point(s) of contact within engaged Government of Tunisia ministries, and project beneficiaries. The final list of stakeholders to be included in KII and FGD will be determined in consultation with ILAB/OCFT and the grantee. It is anticipated that KII and FGD may include:

- ILAB/OCFT staff responsible for this evaluation and project
- Grantee staff including Headquarters, Country Director, Project Managers, and Field Staff
- Members of the COPIL Steering Committee
- Government partners, such as:
    - (ME) Ministry of Education
    - (MAS) Ministry of Social Affairs
    - (MFEF) Ministry of Woman, Family, Childhood and Seniors
    - (MFPE) Ministry of Vocational Training and Employment
    - Ministry of the Interior
    - Ministry of Health
    - the National Institute of Statistics
    - the Ministry of Youth and Sports

- o Ministry of Agriculture
  - o Water Resources and Fisheries
  - o Ministry of Justice
- Engaged stakeholders from trade unions, such as:
  - o (UGTT) Tunisian General Labor Union
  - o (UTAP) Tunisian Union of Agriculture and Fishery
  - o (UTICA) Tunisian Union of Industry, Trade and Handicrafts
  - o (UTSS) Tunisian Union of Social Solidarity (UNFT) National Union of Tunisian Women
- Engaged regional committees and NGO partners in Sfax, including partners responsible for the implementation of PROTECTE services
  - o Association Innocence of Sfax
  - o Social Defense and Integration Centers (CDSI) Sfax
  - o Regional Directors of Social Affairs
  - o Scouts Sfax
  - o Tunisian Union of Social Solidarity (UTSS)
- Engaged regional committees and NGO partners in Jendouba, including partners responsible for the implementation of PROTECTE services
  - o Friquia Association for Strategies
  - o Organization of Will and Citizenship (OVC) Association
  - o Regional Directors of Social Affairs
  - o Tunisian Scouts of Jendouba
  - o UTSS

Interview Methods

KIIs: The evaluation team will conduct KIIs with stakeholders involved in project implementation. KIIs will be semi-structured interviews that will last 60 minutes or less and will involve one to three interviewees. The semi-structured format of these interviews will enable respondents to provide verbal accounts of specific moments in time. The retrospective data obtained through KIIs is critical for the outcome harvesting method. KIIs will begin with discussions related to the outcomes reported in program documents, followed by eliciting data from respondents on the specifics of the outcomes, how and when they were achieved, how they relate to program outputs, why the processes unfolded as they did, and any lessons learned.

FGDs: The evaluation team will conduct FGDs with project participants and other relevant stakeholders not directly involved in implementation. These FGDs will be semi-structured interviews with six to eight people, lasting no longer than 90 minutes. The use of FGDs will enable the evaluation team to assess whether the experiences of these stakeholders are consistent with the reported project outcomes, and to help verify reported project achievements and the underlying chain of events that led to those achievements, as reconstructed by the evaluation team. FGDs will also help identify additional intended or unintended outcomes, lessons learned, and recommendations. As with KIIs, FGD protocols will follow an outcome harvesting approach, beginning with discussing what is known (i.e., the reported outcomes) and then eliciting elaboration from participants on their experience to better understand the project achievements, processes, and linkages.

The use of the rapid scorecard template provided by ILAB, as outlined in Annex B, will be incorporated into KIIs and FGDs as appropriate. This will serve to enhance the objectivity of the achievement and sustainability ratings.

Data Analysis

The evaluation team will undertake a rigorous analysis of the data gathered through the various sources to assess the performance of activities in relation to the intended results and equity considerations. For the quantitative analysis, the evaluation team will rely on project monitoring data obtained through desk research. To analyze the project monitoring data, the evaluation team will follow a two-stage approach. First, the most recent (or, if available, final) indicator data will be compared to the final targets to understand the project's performance to date. In the second stage, the indicator data at each available reporting interval will be examined to establish whether the project was ahead, behind, or on schedule during its implementation. This two-pronged assessment of quantitative data will establish the project's achievements and identify any potential successes or challenges encountered during implementation, which are essential forms of learning for outcome harvesting.

For the qualitative data analysis, the evaluation team will use thematic coding of KII and FGD transcripts using Dedoose or similar software, to understand connections between planned and actual project achievements and the chain of events that produced them. This approach, aligned with outcome harvesting methodology, allows for a holistic examination of the evaluation criteria and recognizes the dynamic relationship between, for example, project relevance and sustainability. Upon completion of the qualitative coding exercise, the evaluation team will identify the most commonly reported themes across data sources under each evaluation criteria. These majority perspectives will be the focus of the evaluation report to ensure reliability and clarity of the information presented. Additional minority codes that provide valuable insight, although not reported frequently, may also be included in the evaluation findings.

The evaluation team will then triangulate quantitative data (project monitoring data and survey data) with relevant qualitative data collected during fieldwork, via KIIs and FGDs to compare documented and lived project achievements. This comparison validates similar findings between evaluation activities and across stakeholder groups while also identifying any gaps in evaluation findings. The team will use the information gathered through triangulation to generate summary achievement and sustainability ratings on a four-point scale: low, moderate, above-moderate, and high. Furthermore, the team will conduct an examination of equity in relation to the project's design, implementation, and outcomes for the target beneficiaries with a special focus on underserved populations or historically marginalized groups or communities.

FIELD VISITS

The evaluator will visit a selection of project sites to meet with a diverse array of involved stakeholders and beneficiaries. Different sites and stakeholders may also have different experiences of how the project experienced successes and/or encountered challenges. Field visits will take place in Tunis, Jendouba, and Sfax.

OUTCOME ACHIEVEMENT AND SUSTAINABILITY RATINGS

The evaluation team will objectively rate the level of achievement and potential for sustainability

of each of the project's outcomes on a four-point scale (low, moderate, above-moderate, and high).

ACHIEVEMENT

"**Achievement**" measures the extent to which a development intervention or project attains its objectives/outcomes, as described in its PMP.

For assessing the achievement of program or project outcomes, the evaluation team will consider the extent to which the objectives/outcomes were achieved and identify the major factors influencing the achievement or non-achievement of the objectives/outcomes. For this final evaluation, the evaluation team will consider to what extent the project is likely to meet or exceed its targets by project end.

Project achievement ratings will be determined through triangulation of qualitative and quantitative data. The evaluation team will collect qualitative data from key informant interviews and focus group discussions through a structured data collection process, such as semi-structured interview protocol or rapid scorecard. Interviews and focus groups can also provide context for the results reflected in the Data Reporting Form submitted with the TPR. The evaluation team will also analyze quantitative data collected by the project on key performance indicators defined in the PMP and reported on in the TPR Data Reporting Form. The evaluation team will consider the reliability and validity of the performance indicators and the completeness and accuracy of the data collected. The assessment of quantitative data will consider the extent to which the project achieved its targets and whether these targets were sufficiently ambitious and achievable within the period evaluated. The evaluation team will assess each of the project's objective(s) and outcome(s) according to the following scale:

- **High:** met or exceeded most targets for the period evaluated, with mostly positive feedback from key stakeholders and participants.
- **Above-moderate:** met or exceeded most targets for the period evaluated, **but** with mostly neutral or negative feedback from key stakeholders and participants.
- **Moderate:** missed most targets for the period evaluated, **but** with mostly positive feedback from key stakeholders and participants.
- **Low:** missed most targets for the period evaluated, with mostly neutral or negative feedback from key stakeholders and participants.

SUSTAINABILITY

"**Sustainability**" is concerned with measuring whether the benefits of an activity are likely to continue after donor funding has been withdrawn. When evaluating the sustainability of a project, it is useful to consider the likelihood that the benefits or effects of a particular output or outcome will continue after donor funding ends. It is also important to consider the extent to which the project takes into account the actors, factors, and institutions that are likely to have the strongest influence over, capacity, and willingness to sustain the desired outcomes and impacts. Indicators of sustainability could include agreements/linkages with local partners, stakeholder engagement in project sustainability planning, and successful handover of project activities or key outputs to local partners before project end, among others.

The project's Sustainability Plan (including the associated indicators) and TPRs (including the attachments) are key (but not the only) sources for determining its rating. The evaluation team will assess each of the project's objective(s) and outcome(s) according to the following scale:

- **High:** strong likelihood that the benefits of project activities will continue after donor funding is withdrawn and the necessary resources[27] are in place to ensure sustainability;
- **Above-moderate:** above average likelihood that the benefits of project activities will continue after donor funding is withdrawn and the necessary resources are identified but not yet committed;
- **Moderate:** some likelihood that the benefits of project activities will continue after donor funding is withdrawn and some of the necessary resources are identified;
- **Low:** weak likelihood that that the benefits of project activities will continue after donor funding is withdrawn and the necessary resources are not identified.

In determining the rating above, the evaluation team will also consider the extent to which sustainability risks were adequately identified and mitigated through the project's risk management and stakeholder engagement activities. For this final evaluation, the evaluation team will assess the risk environment and its expected effects on the project outcomes after the project exits and the capacity/motivation/resources/linkages of the local actors/stakeholders to sustain the outcomes produced by the project.

ETHICAL CONSIDERATIONS AND CONFIDENTIALITY

The evaluation mission will observe utmost confidentiality related to sensitive information and feedback elicited during KIIs and FGDs. To mitigate bias during the data collection process and ensure a maximum freedom of expression of the implementing partners, stakeholders, communities, and project participants, implementing partner staff will generally not be present during interviews. However, implementing partner staff may accompany the evaluator to make introductions whenever necessary, to facilitate the evaluation process, make respondents feel comfortable, and to allow the evaluator to observe the interaction between the implementing partner staff and the interviewees.

The evaluation team will respect the rights and safety of participants in this evaluation. During this study, the evaluation team will take several precautions to ensure the protection of respondents' rights:

- No interview will begin without receipt of informed consent from each respondent.
- The evaluation team will conduct KIIs and FGDs in a confidential setting, so no one else can hear the respondent's answers.
- COVID-19 precautions and social distancing will be implemented during face-to-face interviews and FGDs.
- The evaluation team will be in control of its written notes at all times.
- The evaluation team will transmit data electronically using secure measures.

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[27] Resources can include financial resources (i.e. non-donor replacement resources), as well as organization capacity, institutional linkages, motivation and ownership, and political will, among others.

The evaluation team will talk with respondents to assess their ability to make autonomous decisions and their understanding of informed consent. Participants will understand that they have the right to skip any question with which they are not comfortable or to stop at any time.

STAKEHOLDER MEETINGS
POST-FIELDWORK STAKEHOLDER WORKSHOP

At the conclusion of field-based data collection, the evaluation team will facilitate a post-fieldwork stakeholder workshop. This workshop will engage in-country stakeholders to validate preliminary emergent findings and discuss key factors surrounding project sustainability. The workshop will include a wide variety of stakeholders and may require translation and interpretation services to ensure stakeholder engagement. The list of participants to be invited will be drafted prior to the evaluator's visit and confirmed in consultation with project staff during fieldwork. ILAB staff may participate in the stakeholder meeting virtually if available. ILAB and project staff may coordinate with relevant US Embassy representatives for their participation, as well. The evaluation team will coordinate with the grantee for the stakeholder workshop logistics.

The agenda will be determined by the evaluation team in consultation with project staff and may include specific questions to guide the discussion and a brief written feedback form. The agenda is expected to include some of the following items:

- Presentation by the evaluator of the preliminary emergent findings

- Feedback and questions from stakeholders on the results

- Opportunity for implementing partners not met to present their views on progress and challenges in their locality

- If appropriate, Possible Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities and Threats (SWOT) exercise on the project's performance

- Discussion of recommendations to promote sustainability. Consideration will be given to the value of distributing a feedback form for participants to nominate their "action priorities" for the remainder of the project.

FIELD EXIT BRIEFING FOR ILAB

Within one week of completing all remote and in-country fieldwork, the evaluation team will conduct a field exit briefing with relevant ILAB staff. The field exit briefing will deliver a summary of the in-country data collection activities completed and brief identification of emerging trends or themes in the data, leading to a discussion of recommendations. The purpose of the briefing is to ensure that the conclusions resonate with ILAB and that the pursuant recommendations reflect the U.S. Government's resources, requirements, goals, and priorities. The evaluation team will source inputs from attendees to refine and prioritize the evaluation's recommendations. These inputs will be incorporated into the draft report. Undertaking a field exit briefing as part of the data analysis process reflects U-FE best practices, reduces the

likelihood of significant revisions to the draft report, and minimizes the review work required by ILAB. At this time, the evaluation team may share preliminary findings and key considerations for the sustainability of the project's results, reflecting the outputs of the workshop and broader findings, to support immediate project close-out efforts by the grantee in August.

LIMITATIONS

The evaluation team recognizes that, as with any research endeavor, there may be factors that affect the ability of the team to gather complete and accurate data and thus may impact the validity of the evaluation findings. This section will provide an overview of the limitations identified by the evaluation team and discusses the strategies that will be implemented to address or mitigate them. The limitations discussed in this section include time and resource constraints, potential biases, and the scope of the evaluation.

In-country fieldwork for the evaluation will last approximately two weeks, which may not be sufficient time to visit all project sites and stakeholders. Additionally, selection bias may occur due to the use of project documentation by the evaluation team to select priority KII and FGD participants, which may result in a bias towards more active project stakeholders. The stakeholders who agree to participate in the KIIs and FGDs may have a more positive view of the project, which could affect the accuracy of the evaluation findings. To the extent possible and as time and resources allow, the evaluation team will utilize a snowball sampling approach to identify relevant individuals during fieldwork to complement the pre-identified participants of at least 20 KIIs and thus diversify the range of stakeholders interviewed.

Key informants constitute a key source for answering the evaluation questions. But interview data is prone to cognitive biases, including recall and social desirability. Recall bias is a potential limitation as KII and FGD participants may have difficulty accurately recalling and reporting past events or experiences for a specific period in time, leading to distorted or incomplete information that may affect the validity and reliability of the evaluation results. Social desirability bias is also a potential limitation, as KII and FGD participants may provide responses that they believe will be viewed favorably by the evaluation team or society, particularly when discussing sensitive topics such as child labor. To mitigate the potential cognitive bias, the evaluation team will begin each KII and FGD with a protocol that will review the projects' objectives; explain the evaluation purpose and how the data will be used and confidentiality ensured. The evaluation team will also create a comfortable, private, and safe environment for participants to share their thoughts and experiences, explain the purpose and uses of the interview material, and use an anonymous online survey to allow for candid responses without fear of judgement or repercussions. To ensure the evaluation's validity and reliability, the team will systematically triangulate data across respondent groups as well as data-collection methods, using multiple data sources to identify whether and where there is alignment or divergence in findings, to generate actionable conclusions and recommendations. Additionally, the primary data collected will be triangulated with secondary data sources whenever possible.

Finally, this evaluation is not a formal impact assessment. Results for the evaluation will be based on information collected from background documents and in interviews with stakeholders, such as project staff and project participants. The accuracy of the evaluation results will be determined by the integrity of information provided to the evaluator from these sources.

Furthermore, the ability of the evaluator to determine efficiency will be limited by the amount of financial data available. A cost-efficiency analysis is not included because it would require impact data which is not available.

ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

DevTech is responsible for accomplishing the following items:

- Providing all evaluation management and logistical support for evaluation deliverables within the timelines specified in the contract and TOR;
- Providing all logistical support for travel associated with the evaluation;
- Providing quality control over all deliverables submitted to ILAB;
- Ensuring the Evaluation Team conducts the evaluation according to the TOR;

The Evaluation Team will conduct the evaluation according to the TOR. The Evaluation Team is responsible for accomplishing the following items:

- Receiving and responding to or incorporating input from the grantees and ILAB on the initial TOR draft;
- Finalizing and submitting the TOR and sharing concurrently with the grantees and ILAB;
- Reviewing project background documents;
- Reviewing the evaluation questions and refining them as necessary;
- Developing and implementing an evaluation methodology, including document review, KIIs and FGDs, and secondary data analysis, to answer the evaluation questions;
- Conducting planning meetings or calls, including developing a field itinerary, as necessary, with ILAB and grantees;
- Deciding the composition of field visit KII and FGD participants to ensure the objectivity of the evaluation;
- Developing an evaluation question matrix for ILAB;
- Presenting preliminary results verbally to project field staff and other stakeholders as determined in consultation with ILAB and grantees;
- Preparing an initial draft of the evaluation report for ILAB and grantee review;
- Incorporating comments from ILAB and the grantee/other stakeholders into the final report, as appropriate.
- Developing a comment matrix addressing the disposition of all of the comments provided;
- Preparing and submitting the final report;

ILAB is responsible for the following items:

- Launching the contract;
- Reviewing the TOR, providing input to the evaluation team as necessary, and agreeing on final draft;
- Providing project background documents to the evaluation team, in collaboration with the grantees;
- Obtaining country clearance from U.S. Embassy in fieldwork country;
- Briefing grantees on the upcoming field visit and working with them to coordinate and prepare for the visit;

- Reviewing and providing comments on the draft evaluation report;
- Approving the final draft of the evaluation report;
- Participating in the pre- and post-trip debriefing and interviews;
- Including the ILAB evaluation contracting officer's representative on all communication with the evaluation team;

ILO as the grantee is responsible for the following items:

- Reviewing the TOR, providing input to the evaluation team as necessary, and agreeing on the final draft;
- Providing project background materials to the evaluation team, in collaboration with ILAB;
- Preparing a list of recommended interviewees with feedback on the draft TOR;
- Participating in planning meetings or calls, including developing a field itinerary, as necessary, with ILAB and evaluator;
- Scheduling meetings during the field visit and coordinating all logistical arrangements;
- Helping the evaluation team to identify and arrange for interpreters as needed to facilitate worker interviews;
- Reviewing and providing comments on the draft evaluation reports;
- Organizing, financing, and participating in the stakeholder debriefing meeting;
- Providing in-country ground transportation to meetings and interviews;
- Including the ILAB project manager and contracting officer's representative on all written communication with the evaluation team.

TIMETABLE

The tentative timetable is as follows. Actual dates may be adjusted as needs arise.

Task	Responsible Party	Date
Evaluation launch call	DOL/OCFT	June 2, 2023
Background project documents sent to DevTech	DOL/OCFT	June 2, 2023
TOR Template submitted to DevTech	DOL/OCFT	June 2, 2023
Logistics call - Discuss logistics and field itinerary	Contractor and Grantee (DOL/OCFT as needed)	June 13, 2023
DevTech sends minutes from logistics call	Contractor	June 13, 2023
DevTech and ILO work to develop draft itinerary and stakeholder list	Contractor and Grantee	June 13, 2023
Draft TOR sent to DOL/OCFT and ILO	Contractor	June 9, 2023
DOL/OCFT and ILO provide comments on draft TOR	DOL/OCFT and Grantee	June 16, 2023
Fieldwork budget submitted to DOL/OCFT	Contractor	June 16, 2023
Fieldwork budget approved by DOL/OCFT	DOL/OCFT	June 20, 2023
Finalize field itinerary and stakeholder list for workshop	DOL/OCFT, Contractor, and Grantee	June 23, 2023
Cable clearance information submitted to DOL/OCFT	Contractor	June 20, 2023
Final TOR submitted to DOL/OCFT for approval	Contractor	June 23, 2023
Question matrix submitted to DOL/OCFT for review	Contractor	June 9, 2023

Task	Responsible Party	Date
Final approval of TOR by DOL/OCFT	DOL/OCFT	June 28, 2023
Submit finalized TOR to ILO	Contractor	June 28, 2023
Interview calls with DOL/OCFT	Contractor	June 28 - 30, 2023 July 17 – 31, 2023
Interview call with ILO HQ staff	Contractor	July 17-31, 2023
Fieldwork	Contractor	Remote: July 10 – 31, 2023 In country: July 20 – August 2, 2023
Stakeholder Workshop	Contractor	August 2, 2023
Post-fieldwork debrief call	Contractor	August 9, 2023
Draft report submitted to DOL/OCFT and ILO	Contractor	August 30, 2023
DOL/OCFT and ILO/key stakeholder comments due to DevTech after full 2-week review	DOL/OCFT and Grantee	September 13, 2023
Revised report in redline submitted to DOL/OCFT and ILO demonstrating how all comments were addressed either via a comment matrix or other format	Contractor	September 27, 2023
DOL/OCFT and ILO provides concurrence that comments were addressed	DOL/OCFT and Grantee	October 4, 2023
Final report submitted to DOL/OCFT and ILO	Contractor	October 6, 2023
Final approval of report by DOL/OCFT	DOL/OCFT	October 6, 2023
Draft infographic/brief document submitted to DOL/OCFT	Contractor	September 27, 2023
DOL/OCFT comments on draft infographic/brief	DOL/OCFT	October 11, 2023
Editing and 508 compliance by DevTech	Contractor	October 20, 2023
Final infographic/brief submitted to DOL/OCFT (508 compliant)	Contractor	October 20, 2023
Final approval of infographic/brief by DOL/OCFT (508 compliant)	DOL/OCFT	October 20, 2023
Final edited report submitted to COR (508 compliant)	Contractor	October 20, 2023
Final edited approved report and infographic/brief shared with ILO (508 compliant)	Contractor	October 20, 2023

EVALUATION REPORT AND 1-PAGE SUMMARY

Within four weeks of completion of fieldwork, a first draft evaluation report will be submitted to the COR. The report will have the following structure and content:

1. Table of Contents
2. List of Acronyms
3. Executive Summary (no more than **five pages** providing an overview of the evaluation, summary of main results/lessons learned/emerging good practices, and key recommendations)
4. Evaluation Objectives
5. Project Description
6. Listing of Evaluation Questions
7. Results
   a. The results section includes the facts, analysis, and supporting evidence. The results section of the evaluation report should address the evaluation questions. It does not have to be in a question-response format, but should be responsive to each evaluation question.
8. Conclusions and Recommendations
   a. Conclusions – interpretation of the facts, including criteria for judgments.
   b. Lessons Learned and Emerging Good Practices[28]
   c. Key Recommendations - critical for successfully meeting project objectives and/or judgments on what changes need to be made for sustainability or future programming.
9. Annexes –
   a. List of documents reviewed;
   b. Interviews (including list of stakeholder groups; without PII in web version)/meetings/site visits;
   c. Stakeholder workshop agenda and participants;
   d. TOR, Evaluation Methodology and Limitations;
   e. Summary of Recommendations (citing page numbers for evidence in the body of the report, listing out the supporting evidence for each recommendation, and identifying party that the recommendation is directed toward.)

The key recommendations will be **action-oriented and implementable.** The recommendations will be clearly linked to results and directed to a specific party to be implemented. It is preferable for the report to contain no more than 10 recommendations, but other suggestions may be incorporated in the report in other ways.

The total length of the report should be approximately 30 pages for the main report, excluding

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[28] An emerging *good practice* is a process, practice, or system highlighted in the evaluation reports as having improved the performance and efficiency of the program in specific areas. They are activities or systems that are recommended to others for use in similar situations. A *lesson learned* documents the experience gained during a program. They may identify a process, practice, or systems to avoid in specific situations.

the executive summary and annexes.

The first draft of the report will be circulated to ILAB/OCFT and the grantee individually for their review. Following a two-week review period and within 14 calendar days of receiving ILAB and grantee feedback on the draft report, the evaluation team will incorporate comments from OCFT and the grantee/other key stakeholders into the final reports as appropriate, and the evaluator will provide a response, in the form of a comment matrix, as to why any comments might not have been incorporated. The evaluation team will ensure that the final report is ILAB compliant, of high quality and completeness.

While the substantive content of the results, conclusions, and recommendations of the report shall be determined by the evaluator, the report is subject to final approval by ILAB/OCFT in terms of whether or not the report meets the conditions of the TOR.

To accompany the report, the team will present a 1-page evaluation summary or infographic utilizing data visualization techniques to facilitate greater dissemination of major findings.

FINAL EVALUATION BRIEFING AND PRESENTATION

In addition to the written evaluation products, the evaluation team will also develop and present a summary PowerPoint presentation recapping the key findings and recommendations. The intended audience for the presentation includes ILAB and other key stakeholders, as appropriate.

ANNEX E. EVALUATION METHODOLOGY AND LIMITATIONS

EVALUATION APPROACH AND METHODOLOGY

The evaluation approach is qualitative and participatory in nature, utilizing a two-step outcome harvesting methodology infused with the principles of a U-FE. All findings, and the evidence-based conclusions and recommendations that follow, reflect the triangulation of information across multiple data sources. Quantitative project performance data, drawn from the CMEP and project documents, was complemented by qualitative data collected through KIIs, FDGs, and stakeholder workshops, conducted both in person and virtually. In accordance with the outcome harvesting methodology, the evaluation team first identified the anticipated and actual outcomes of PROTECTE using project indicators, targets, and reported results. Through participatory data collection techniques KIIs and FGDs, the evaluation team reconstructed the chain of events that led to the project outcomes. The participatory techniques actively involved and subjects of the evaluation and allowed them to elaborate on the details of the outcomes, how and when they were achieved, how they link to program outputs, why processes unfolded as they did, and lessons learned.

The evaluation team triangulated and compared the many sources of collected data to objectively assess the level of achievement of each of the project's major outcomes on a four-point scale (low, moderate, above-moderate, and high) and to respond to the evaluation questions. Triangulation allowed for a more comprehensive understanding of the project's performance by combining both quantitative and qualitative data, as well as primary and secondary data sources. The approach also helped increase the validity and reliability of the evaluation findings by cross-checking data from different sources.

The team conducted a desk review of relevant documents, including the PROTECTE notice of award and award modifications, the project's scope of work, the CMEP, and quarterly technical progress reports[29]. The evaluation team conducted 26 key informant interviews and 5 focus group discussions with stakeholders including PROTECTE project staff from ILO, Tunisian state officials, representatives from DOL, civil society, and direct project beneficiaries.

LIMITATIONS

The evaluation team recognizes that, as with any research endeavor, there may be factors that affect the ability of the team to gather complete and accurate data, such as scope of the evaluation, potential biases, and time and resource constraints, and thus may impact the validity of the evaluation findings.

The results of the evaluation are based on information collected from background documents and interviews. As such, the accuracy of the evaluation results is determined by the integrity of information provided to the evaluator. The evaluation relied heavily on information collected through KII. Such data incurs the potential for recall bias, challenges in recalling details of prior events, and response bias, conscious or unconscious delivery of an incomplete or

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[29] This section provides a summary of the methodology used for this evaluation. A more detailed description of the evaluation approach can be found in Annex D. Terms of Reference.

inaccurate response. Memory lapses or inconsistencies can be caused by a variety of factors, such as coinciding pressing priorities which occurred during the same time of the project or interview. The evaluation team mitigated recall bias by including specific probe questions to actively explore the fullest details of the project possible. Response bias may occur for a variety of reasons; respondents may wish to present their organization in a positive light or echo the sentiments of higher-ranked individuals. Response bias is combatted by conducting one-on-one interviews, rather than group interviews, and using the aforementioned probe questions. Additionally, the synthesis of collected information to inform achievement and sustainability ratings was done independently by multiple members of the evaluation team, including Tunisians and non-Tunisians. Preliminary, individual ratings were discussed and final agreement was reached to promote impartiality in the assessment.

The data collection process encountered several fieldwork challenges. Firstly, time constraints due to holidays and leave periods among stakeholders affected the availability of key participants. Additionally, the limited administrative working hours during July and August hindered the scheduling of interviews and meetings. Administrative bureaucracy restricted the flexibility to interview additional individuals without prior authorization, and some state officials required written authorization for voice recording, forcing the evaluation team to rely on handwritten notes.

Furthermore, fieldwork in Jendouba faced unexpected obstacles as it coincided with a significant community-affecting fire involving the regional social affairs department, which limited their availability. Lastly, the location discrepancy between Tabarka and Jendouba posed logistical challenges throughout the data collection process.

These limitations are not unusual for performance evaluations and the evaluation team is confident in the validity of the information presented herein and its ability to provide rich insight into the project's implementation, challenges, successes, and future sustainability.