

## ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

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This report describes in detail the midterm evaluation, conducted during July 2009, of the *Todos y Todas Trabajamos: Derechos Laborales para Todos y Todas* (TTT) project. The report was prepared by Macro International Inc. (ICF Macro), according to agreements specified in its contract with the U.S. Department of Labor (USDOL). The evaluation of *Todos y Todas Trabajamos* project in Central America was conducted and documented by Dr. Dwight Ordoñez, an independent evaluator in collaboration with USDOL staff, the *Todos y Todas Trabajamos* project team, and stakeholders in El Salvador, Nicaragua, Honduras and Guatemala. ICF Macro would like to express sincere thanks to all parties involved in this evaluation: the independent evaluator, Catholic Relief Services and its partners, and U.S. Department of Labor.



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## LIST OF ACRONYMS

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CEADEL	Centro de Estudios y Apoyo para el Desarrollo Local
CJP	Justice and Peace Commission of León (Nicaragua)
CRS	Catholic Relief Services
COVERCO	Commission for the Verification of Codes of Conduct (Guatemala)
DME	Director of Monitoring and Evaluation
GMIES	Independent Monitoring Group of El Salvador
IDHUCA	Human Rights Institute of the University of Central America (El Salvador)
IHNFA	Instituto Hondureño de la Niñez y la Familia
ILO	International Labour Organization
JRS	Jesuit Refugee Service (Dominican Republic)
LOP	Life of Project
M&E	Monitoring and Evaluation
MOL(s)	Ministry(ies) of Labor
NGO	Nongovernmental Organization
PMP	Performance Monitoring Plan
PSC	National Caritas (Costa Rica)
TOT	Training of Trainers
TTT	<i>Todos y Todas Trabajamos</i> Project
USAID	United States Agency for International Development
USDOL	United States Department of Labor
WRC	Worker Rights Center

## EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

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The *Todos y Todas Trabajamos* (TTT) project is a four-year United States Department of Labor (USDOL)-funded initiative, which began in 2007 and is implemented by Catholic Relief Services (CRS) and a consortium of institutional partners in five countries in Central America (Costa Rica, El Salvador, Honduras, Guatemala and Nicaragua) and the Dominican Republic. The project works under a development objective, on which the project is not required to measure impact, but to which specific project objectives contribute. The Development Objective for this project is: To improve labor law compliance in Central America and the Dominican Republic. The project's immediate objective is: To empower workers to exercise their labor rights using appropriate legal mechanisms.

The project strategy is based on three components:

- To provide free legal advice to workers through Workers Rights Centers (WRC);
- To carry out "training of trainers" (TOT) courses to be later replicated among workers in order to help them acquire relevant information on their rights; and
- To increase worker's consciousness on labor rights through various awareness raising activities.

A midterm evaluation of the TTT project was carried out during July 2009 by an independent evaluator contracted and organized by Macro International Inc. (ICF Macro). The evaluation was carried out through direct visits to four of the six countries targeted by the project (El Salvador, Guatemala, Honduras, and Nicaragua), and also included phone conferences with project staff in Costa Rica and Dominican Republic.

The evaluation found that the TTT project has been quite effective in attaining its goals and has had an important impact on its target population. The project implemented its strategy and activities in a timely manner and showed a high level of outputs on the basis of a limited budget. Main project achievements include the following:

- The project surpassed its initial goals by implementing a greater number of services for workers. By mid-2009 the project had implemented 11 WRCs within the six countries (four more WRCs than the seven originally planned). A total of 17,670 workers had received direct orientation from the project at the six WRCs in the four countries visited by the evaluator. Some of these consultations led to 1,670 legal procedures, accompanied by WRC staff, before the Ministry of Labor (MOL) and/or the Labor Courts.
- The project also had an important impact on empowering trainers and union representatives, strengthening their roles as leaders and their knowledge of labor laws in these countries. In total, 313 workers in the six countries have been trained through TOT, and of these, 84% increased their knowledge and abilities regarding labor laws. Additionally, 21,367 workers had participated in replicated courses taught by other colleagues or in educational activities organized by project staff. This occurred despite the fact that many trained trainers did not replicate the program.
- In most of the countries, project activities have also complemented the work of labor authorities, such as MOL's labor inspection division, Labor Courts and public defenders, and have improved MOL's capacity to better address workers' queries and disseminate information on labor law.
- Project staff managed to establish useful and functional links in all countries with labor authorities, national and local chapters of unions, several nongovernmental organizations (NGOs), various universities and other institutions. These links created an adequate institutional framework for project activities and provides sustainability for some activities.

- The performance of WRC staff has been very committed and generally successful. WRC's staff has put in considerable time to ensure that both the legal advice and educational processes are carried out with quality and depth. Workers in all countries visited, who had participated in trainings and were interviewed during the evaluation, expressed their satisfaction and gratefulness to project staff with regard to learning about their rights.
- CRS's local partners in each country also benefitted from the project by acquiring the ability to promote or defend labor rights, or by consolidating their work to do so. Except in the case of Guatemala, local partner institutions had a successful response in complying with their roles and duties with regard to the project.
- Finally, the existence of a monitoring system and software that allows distant access to any project database (from any country) is a practical and cost-effective feature for managing information. The software is one of the most important assets to project monitoring and is a flexible tool that can also be very useful for project management.

Thus, except for some implementation problems in Guatemala, and the fact that there have been fewer beneficiaries of the replica training courses than projected, the project has attained, and even surpassed, most of its targets within the expected timeframe.

The main obstacles faced by the project were due to the fact that labor authorities throughout the region are often politically weak and run on very limited budgets, and thus, lack the resources to adequately protect labor rights. Judiciary procedures are often excessively long and delayed through legal gimmicks, which also create obstacles in obtaining justice for workers. These facts, plus an increased demand among workers for legal assistance services, overburden the resources of the WRCs. This may hamper project sustainability if project staff continues to closely follow a significant number of cases all the way to the judiciary level, as is the current practice.

The project has also been successful in establishing a data collection procedure among its beneficiaries, which has become useful in communicating and integrating information from the project at the regional level. The evaluation identified several good practices, which may be useful for replication within the project and in other similar initiatives. Key recommendations include:

- Establish criteria to rationalize legal assistance services provided to workers.
- Standardize the curriculum of the training courses provided as replicas.
- Project staff should review and modify the definition of several indicators and targets and means of verification, in order to introduce measures that better reflect the quality, complexity and level of effort characterized by the legal assistance services provided by the project.
- The project should become a resource to improve norms and procedures, which may be used for indirect advocacy before labor authorities and by other projects / institutions and unions working to improve labor justice.
- Establish collaborative alliances with institutions other than unions, such as women's, community or immigrant organizations, in order to foster more sustainable development of the project's educational activities.
- Develop a regional awareness-raising strategy on labor rights that prioritizes certain target groups and topics within each country.
- During the next two years, CRS and its partner organizations should begin working on the design and costs for a minimal structure and services to remain in place after the end of the project, which will continue working in a sustainable manner on the basis of local and other third parties' support.

## I. BACKGROUND AND PROJECT DESCRIPTION

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In May 2007, Catholic Relief Services (CRS) received a four-year cooperative agreement in the amount of approximately \$4.9 million from U.S. Department of Labor (USDOL) Division of Trade Agreement Administration and Technical Cooperation (TAATC) to implement the *Todos y Todas Trabajamos: Derechos Laborales Para Todos y Todas (Everyone Works: Labor Rights for Everyone)* project in five countries in Central America (Costa Rica, El Salvador, Honduras, Guatemala and Nicaragua) and the Dominican Republic, covering six countries total.

Catholic Relief Services (CRS) worked in partnership with the Human Rights Institute of the University of Central America, El Salvador (IDHUCA), the Independent Monitoring Group of El Salvador (GMIES), the Justice and Peace Commission of León/Chinandega, Nicaragua (CJP), National Caritas of Costa Rica (PSC), the Center for Research and Promotion of Human Rights, Pastoral Social Caritas Arquidiocesana (Caritas Tegucigalpa) in Honduras, Centro de Apoyo al Desarrollo Local (CEADEL) in Guatemala, and the Jesuit Refugee Service in the Dominican Republic (JRS) to implement the *Todos y Todas Trabajamos (TTT)* project.

The project works under a development objective, for which it is not required to measure impact, but under which specific project objectives should contribute. The Development Objective for this project is: Improve labor law compliance in Central America and the Dominican Republic. The project's Immediate Objective is: To empower workers to exercise their labor rights using appropriate legal mechanisms.

The project targets are beneficiaries of its legal defense and training activities—a total of 218,252 workers in these six countries. Project components include the establishment of (an originally planned) seven model Worker Rights Centers (WRCs) and the development of outreach activities involving local labor organizations. The TTT project targets individual workers, labor organizations and labor unions representing workers in a variety of industries in each of the six countries.

The outputs that the TTT project seeks to achieve are:

- Legal Services – Workers receive quality legal assistance about labor rights;
- Education – Workers receive labor rights training and outreach; and
- Public Awareness – Targeted workers are informed on how to exercise their rights.

The project used the following strategies to improve labor law compliance and offer viable options for workers to access information about their labor rights and legal assistance:

- Work with existing local organizations and stakeholders to establish WRCs to provide relevant and high-quality labor rights information and legal assistance to workers;
- Strengthen local networks for replication and dissemination of labor rights information; and
- Use a variety of media to raise awareness about WRCs and labor rights issues.

The TTT project, which began in May 2007, was carried out in two phases. Phase I countries—El Salvador and Nicaragua—began activities in the first year, which included hiring staff; opening WRCs; conducting staff trainings, awareness workshops, initial train-the-trainers workshops; and holding two regional staff meetings (in May 2007 and February 2008). Phase II countries began activities in the project's second year by opening WRCs in 2008. The Phase II countries are in various stages of implementation, working with local organizations on the train-the-trainers programs. A regional meeting was held with project staff and stakeholders from all participating countries in November 2008.

## II. EVALUATION OBJECTIVES AND METHODOLOGY

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The midterm evaluation of the TTT project had the following objectives:

- Determine if the project is achieving its stated objectives;
- Evaluate benefits to and impact accrued to target groups;
- Assess implementation status, project management and performance monitoring, as well as strategies to build in sustainability for project activities; and
- Provide recommendations on how to improve project performance through possible modifications to the strategy or work plan.

The evaluation methodology consisted of the following:

- a. Document Review: Prior to and during visits to the field, the evaluator reviewed key background documents on the project, including the project document, quarterly reports, reports on specific project activities, training materials, the project's strategic framework and performance monitoring plan, work plans/plans of action and other relevant documents.
- b. Composition of Field Visit Interviews: After document review and prior to the field mission, the evaluator developed a field itinerary that included an arrangement of interviews to ensure objectivity of the evaluation; the evaluator then worked with the project's stakeholders to refine the itinerary.
- c. Team Planning Meeting: The evaluator held a team planning meeting with the USDOL Project Manager and project field staff (via conference call). The objective of the team planning meeting was to reach a common understanding among the evaluator, funder, and project implementers regarding the status of the project, project background, the composition of field visit interviews, the priority evaluation questions, the available data sources and data collection instruments, and evaluation logistics.
- d. Field Visit: Four of the six participating project countries were visited from July 12-28, 2009. The mission began at project headquarters in El Salvador and continued through Honduras, Guatemala, and Nicaragua. Meetings were scheduled in advance of the field visits by the TTT staff, coordinated by the Project Director and the project's Monitoring and Evaluation (M&E) Coordinator, in accordance with the evaluator's requests. Individual interviews and focus groups were conducted with the following:
  - Project director and M&E coordinator
  - CRS staff in countries visited
  - Staff of local partners
  - Working Rights Center staff
  - Participants of training-the-trainers programs
  - Other staff from organizations working with WRCs
  - Center beneficiaries
  - Local Ministry of Labor staff
  - USDOL Project Manager
  - U.S. Embassy Labor Attachés

- Other projects working in the field of labor justice, funded by international donors (ILO, USAID, USDOL)<sup>1</sup>
- Phone interviews with local partner staff in Costa Rica and Dominican Republic

The above-mentioned meetings were conducted without the participation of any project staff. In addition, the evaluator visited WRCs and reviewed the project's databases and case files at different project sites.

- e. Field Debrief: The evaluator conducted a debrief session and presented preliminary findings of the evaluation in El Salvador to the USDOL Project Manager and the project staff (CRS and partner organizations), during the first day of the TTT Regional Meeting on July 27, 2009.

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<sup>1</sup> ILO stands for International Labour Organization; and USAID stands for United States Agency for International Development.

### III. FINDINGS

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#### 3.1 VALIDITY OF PROJECT DESIGN

Regarding the validity of the project's objectives, the Development Objective ("to improve labor law compliance in Central America and the Dominican Republic") and Immediate Objective ("to empower workers to exercise their labor rights using appropriate legal mechanisms") seem both valid and attainable.

The three components of the project's strategy are relevant, and take into account the fact that workers in the target countries often lack the economic means and knowledge to defend their rights. By providing free legal advice to workers and carrying out training of trainers' (TOT) courses, the project helps workers exercise their rights and acquire relevant information on labor laws. Likewise, the project strategy aims to increase the consciousness of workers and the general public through various awareness raising activities on labor rights and how to exercise those rights.

Although the project has a Strategic Framework, the original project design did not include a complete log frame (a hierarchical set of objectives, results and activities, with indicators expressing specific targets, whose accomplishment may be measured through the review of means of verification). Project targets and thresholds deemed as successful were established by May 31, 2007,<sup>2</sup> in order to elaborate a Performance Monitoring Plan (PMP) during the implementation phase.

The initial project design did not include carrying out advocacy activities before legislative, judicial or labor authorities in order to improve mechanisms related to the application of law. However, through the experience of its WRCs, the project has collected relevant information on key issues and possible changes in procedures that may lead to improved labor law compliance in each country. This information could be useful for other USAID or USDOL projects working on these issues throughout the region, as well as for local stakeholders such as unions, NGOs and some of the project's partner institutions.

The original design of the project sought to provide only general orientation and basic legal support so that workers could address, either by themselves or with minimal help, administrative and judicial labor processes. However, for various educational, economic and social reasons, most workers are not able to follow through with such labor procedures without support from the WRCs. This has led project staff to assist workers by providing a wider and more comprehensive range of legal services which includes accompanying workers through to the end of the judicial phase of their legal processes. This process has demanded an increased effort on the part of project staff. In other cases, the advice of WRC staff is sought to help workers unionize. This increase in the level of effort provided by WRC's staff is a key contributing factor to the success of the WRCs, as expressed by the increasing demand of WRC services and the high rate of satisfaction found by this evaluation among beneficiaries of training courses and legal services.

The project's strategy, based on the implementation of its three components, is relevant and valid; and it is specifically aimed at empowering workers to exercise their labor rights. The strategy also takes into account the widespread "culture" of little to no compliance with labor laws and of impunity with regard to labor-related violations. Thus, the component of free legal advice is a key contribution in the eyes of workers, some of whom for the first time in their lives, learned through this project that they could claim rights at work. Likewise, there is scarce awareness among the Central American population about the importance of labor rights. Therefore, both training and awareness-raising activities are very relevant in empowering workers to defend their rights.

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<sup>2</sup> The Cooperative Agreement between USDOL and CRS was signed on May 22, 20007.

Similarly, the original scheme of training workers to become trainers of other workers (through a TOT arrangement) had some implementation difficulties. For example, in several countries, a number of the workers that were trained as trainers did not have the time or commitment to satisfactorily replicate the training they received with other workers. Some of these worker-trainers then left the program. In order to counter further early drop-out of trainers, project staff trained a greater number of people as trainers than originally foreseen. Although this helped attain a greater number of replicas, it did not solve the issue of trainers' drop-out.

In other cases, countries targeted more established institutions to conduct the TOT. In the case of the Dominican Republic, for example, the project used community promoters to replicate training of workers. In Honduras, the project trained unionized workers from a public institution (who were able to get free time for this activity from their employers) as trainers. This led to lower attrition rates for those trained trainers and higher rates of replication. In the future, the project may explore more sustainable arrangements for this component, such as training members of NGOs, national unions and other institutions working in the field of labor relationships, particularly as it addresses the difficult issue of sustainability beyond the project.

Finally, although the project staff has advanced the awareness-raising component by successfully informing target beneficiaries about the existence of the WRCs and their services, CRS and its partner organizations need to devise and implement a communications strategy on labor rights common to all countries (including main target groups, key messages, and selected media outlets) and methods to verify and monitor its impact.<sup>3</sup>

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<sup>3</sup> This component was scheduled to happen later in the project in order to design a carefully targeted message based on the information from implementation, such as the most common problems facing the workers arriving to the center.

### 3.2 BENEFITS AND IMPACT

The project has been quite effective in attaining its goals. By mid-2009 the project had implemented 11 WRCs within the six countries (four additional WRCs than originally planned). As shown in Table 1, these centers are having a great impact on its beneficiaries.

Without the free legal advice from the project and the support it provides to workers by accompanying them in their processes at both the MOL and the Judiciary level, most workers in all countries would not have accessed labor justice at the MOL, and even less so before Labor Courts.

By June 30, 2009, a total of 17,670 workers had received direct orientation from the project at the six WRCs in the four countries visited by the evaluator (El Salvador, Nicaragua, Guatemala and Honduras). Some of these consultations have led to 1,670 legal procedures, accompanied by WRC staff, before the MOL and/or the labor courts.

The following table shows the distribution of WRC beneficiaries (individual and collective cases) at the four countries visited during the evaluation.

**Table 1: Summary of Beneficiaries Requesting Services/Receiving Support at Six WRCs in El Salvador, Guatemala, Honduras and Nicaragua<sup>4</sup>**

Country / City	People requesting services from WRC*	People consulting WRCs with queries not leading to a legal procedure	Total number of people involved in legal procedures supported by WRCs**	Individual clients of WRCs involved in legal procedures	Collective clients of WRCs involved in legal procedures	Total number of cases introduced before labor authorities with support of WRC staff	Individual cases introduced before labor authorities	Collective cases introduced before labor authorities
<b>Nicaragua</b>	<b>3,307</b>	<b>2,245</b>	<b>1062</b>	511	551	<b>516</b>	511	5
Chinandega			359	359	0	359	359	0
León			703	152	551	157	152	5
<b>Honduras</b>	<b>1,002</b>	<b>485</b>	<b>517</b>	463	54	<b>463</b>	462	1
Tegucigalpa			230	230	0	230	230	0
San Pedro de Sula			287	233	54	233	232	1
<b>Guatemala</b> (Chimaltenango)	<b>428</b>	<b>58</b>	<b>370</b>	370	0	<b>370</b>	370	0
<b>El Salvador</b> (San Salvador)	<b>13,183</b>	<b>2,901</b> <sup>(1)</sup>	<b>10,282</b>	306	9,976 <sup>(2)</sup>	<b>321</b>	306	15
<b>Total</b>	<b>17,670</b>	<b>5,689</b>	<b>12,449</b>	1,650	10,581	<b>1,670</b>	1,649	21

\*includes request of information and individual/collective legal procedures

\*\*MOL or Judiciary

<sup>(1)</sup> Includes eight cases involving a total of 299 workers, who requested WRC support in order to establish a union (not a case of violation of labor rights).

<sup>(2)</sup> Includes 7,888 workers belonging to one sole collective case introduced before labor authorities, plus another 2,088 workers involved in 14 other collective cases introduced before labor authorities.

Besides its impact through helping workers access labor justice and on the protection of labor rights in the different countries, the project has an important impact through empowering trainers and union representatives, strengthening their roles as leaders and their knowledge of labor law. In total, 313 workers in the six countries have been trained through TOT, 84% of whom increased their knowledge

<sup>4</sup> The table includes data only on countries visited during the midterm evaluation.

and abilities regarding labor law. Additionally, 21,367 workers have participated in replicated courses taught by other colleagues or have participated in educational activities organized by project staff, and thus have also benefitted through the educational component. Workers who participated in trainings and were interviewed during the evaluation expressed their satisfaction and gratefulness to project staff with regard to learning about their rights.

CRS's local partners in each country benefitted from the project by increasing their capacity to promote and defend labor rights. The systematization of the methodology to organize WRCs and the monitoring system software provided by the regional partner institutions were very useful in establishing conceptual consistency among project interventions throughout the region. However, the complexity of the activities carried out on a daily basis by the WRCs currently surpass both what is established in the project's organizational handbook as well as in the monitoring system, which needs to be improved.

Likewise, in most of the countries, project activities have contributed to complementing the work of labor authorities (i.e., MOL's labor inspection, labor courts and public defenders) and to improving their ability to better address workers' queries and disseminate information on labor laws.

### 3.3 IMPLEMENTATION STATUS

The TTT project has implemented its strategy and activities in an effective and timely manner. In most cases CRS established partnerships with institutions which had a good public reputation and relevant experience in running analogous services and/or were in the field of defending labor rights, which contributed to the project's effectiveness. This factor allowed for a quick selection of project staff and for a rapid rollout of the project.

Generally speaking, except for the number of trainers that completed replicas of training courses and the number of beneficiaries of the latter,<sup>5</sup> the project has attained, and even surpassed, most of its targets within the expected timeframe.<sup>6</sup> The limited output (i.e., replication of courses) by many workers trained as trainers has been compensated up to now by training a greater number of people to carry out replicas. However, other alternatives need to be explored if a more sustainable outcome is sought for this component, such as utilizing community promoters as trainers or working with more established unions or training organizations that may guarantee a greater continuity of training courses.

The main obstacles faced by the project were that labor authorities in the region very often are politically weak and run on very limited budgets, and thus lack the resources to adequately protect labor rights. Additionally, the frequent turnover of staff in key positions adds to institutional instability. The excessive length of judiciary processes and the way in which processes are delayed through legal gimmicks are also obstacles to the goal of obtaining justice for workers.<sup>7</sup> These facts,

<sup>5</sup> The TOT process rollout at San Pedro de Sula and Chimaltenango was hampered by the fact that these WRCs lacked educators exclusively in charge of supervising such activities and living at each site. Additionally, the selection of an inexperienced person as an educator in Guatemala and the partner organization's non-compliance with its commitments hampered the implementation of the educational component in this country.

<sup>6</sup> However, data provided by the monitoring system on result no. 3.1 (number of workers reached by mass media campaigns) seems to have limited reliability, due to insufficient/non-comparable means of verification among countries and an imprecise definition of the target population of media campaigns.

<sup>8</sup> This task has encountered some resistance from WRC staff. Registering information in the monitoring system is perceived by several staff members as a laborious and "external" request that overworks them and reduces the time available for other tasks. This is reflected in repeated delays and mistakes in submitting quarterly reports to the Regional M&E Director. In some cases, staff members mistrust the reliability of the software used by the monitoring system. In the two countries where a random review of a sample of files was conducted, the evaluation detected that in an important number of these, the information on the outcome of cases had not been updated in the computer (e.g Nicaragua); in other cities, the physical files lacked the summary sheet on the case, provided by the monitoring software (e.g Tegucigalpa).

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plus an increased demand for legal assistance services from workers is overburdening the resources of the WRCs. This may hamper project sustainability if a significant number of cases continue to receive such close follow-up from project staff up through the judiciary level, as is current practice. Even if the number of project staff at several WRCs is increased, the project should make a serious effort to rationalize the extension and depth of the services provided by the WRCs, establishing criteria to allocate its resources to those more complex or needy cases, or to cases where the stakes are higher or which may establish a precedent in the application of labor law.

Project staff managed to establish useful and functional links in all countries with labor authorities, national and local chapters of unions, several NGOs, and various universities and other institutions, which has created an adequate institutional framework for project activities and provides sustainability for some activities. Project staff in all countries also maintained relationships with other U.S. government projects as well as other donor projects aimed to improve labor justice, promote labor rights and improve compliance of labor law in the region. The project's relationship with these other projects is mainly of a formal and informative nature, but it may become a useful means to convey information and recommendations to key stakeholders in order to improve labor justice.

In order to provide legal advice and training to the most vulnerable workers, project staff focused its activities in some key sectors where labor violations are common (i.e., intensive hand labor industries, such as *maquilas* or factories, agriculture, and commerce), as well as with worker unions (mostly those related to public sector institutions). This strategy was quite successful and allowed the project to rapidly gain in-depth knowledge of the way in which labor justice works in the different countries. During the second half of the life of the project (LOP), the project has planned to develop more specific strategies in order to reach some sectors and organizations which, being more vulnerable to labor abuses, are also more difficult to access, such as domestic work, agriculture, and security services.

The handbooks and other learning materials provided to the WRCs to organize their services and implement the project's monitoring system were generally very useful for staff. The Regional Partners (GMIES and IDHUCA) developed a manual establishing the procedures for the reception and handling of workers' cases at the WRCs, which was very useful in providing consistency to the functioning of services and orienting staff work. Likewise, the Regional Partners also developed a manual to support the use of the monitoring software/system by staff, which was useful in the organization of this system.

With support of local consultants in each country, GMIES and IDHUCA also produced a technical manual on labor rights for each country ("*Manual de Derechos Laborales*"). However, the manuals on labor rights are very lengthy and technical, so they could not be used in the training process (TOTs or replicas) nor were they useful for lawyers in charge of workers' defense at each WRC. For WRC lawyers, the content of these manuals was well known, although this information was useful for legal trainees and students.

Finally, GMIES and IDHUCA produced a pedagogical guide ("*Manual para capacitadores y capacitadoras*," developed by GMIES and IDHUCA), which was aimed at helping organize training processes, but which arrived late to the project offices (by the second quarter of 2009) and thus was not always useful. Given the above, the partner institutions in several countries (i.e., Guatemala, Dominican Republic, Honduras, Nicaragua) decided to create their own training materials or to use handbooks from other projects (i.e., the *Cumple y Gana* project at Guatemala, among others). The format of some of these materials (especially in Nicaragua) may be useful in the future for other countries which may need to generate training guides and other information to distribute to workers.

The main project strategy to attain sustainability is based on working with committed, church-related institutions that have long standing relationships with the poorest sections of these countries; have had previous experience in providing legal or other assistance services to communities; or have previously managed community education initiatives. The rationale of this strategy is based on the commitment of these institutions, which means that they will find additional resources or use their

own resources to continue at least part of the services implemented by the project. Such rationale seems sound, although additional efforts should be carried out.

A parallel strategy followed by the project is to work with and/or strengthen union movements in each country through training, under the rationale that these institutions will have a self-interest in reproducing and transmitting the knowledge that has been acquired and in providing services for their members. The limitations of this strategy are mainly of a financial nature, particularly in the case of those institutions that did not previously offer counseling services of any kind before the implementation of the project, and thus will have more difficulties absorbing these activities within its institutional structure once the project ends (i.e., Guatemala and Costa Rica).

Regarding workers' training, the limited response (replicas) obtained from several workers trained as TOT hampers the sustainability of these activities. Consequently, the project may seek to establish collaborative schemes with other kinds of institutions, such as women's, community or immigrant organizations that may play an active role in the defense of labor rights.

The length and complexity of the legal assistance services provided by most WRCs implies an increasing workload that may not be sustainable in the medium term if all processes receive such intensive support from WRC staff, up to the end of their administrative and/or judiciary phase. Project staff in all countries should introduce selection criteria to establish which cases will be followed up to the end as well as which cases will receive short term support that may be handled or followed up directly by workers.

During the next two years, CRS and its partner organizations should begin working on the design and costs of a minimal structure and services to remain in place after the end of the LOP and which may continue working in a sustainable manner on the basis of local and other third party support.

### **3.4 EFFECTIVENESS OF THE MONITORING SYSTEM**

The Project Document included a Strategic Framework, from which the PMP was based. However, the original strategic framework lacked clear specific targets (figures per objective) and consistent means of verification. These were added / defined by project staff during the implementation phase. Under the lead of the M&E/Learning Director, project staff has been successful in establishing a data collection process among its beneficiaries, a fact that has become useful in communicating and integrating information about the project at the regional level. This process has provided project staff in all countries with a "common language" of updating their databases on a weekly basis.<sup>8</sup> The existence of a monitoring system/software that allows distant access to any project database (from any country) is a practical and cost-effective feature for managing information. The software is one of the more important assets to project monitoring and is a flexible tool that can be very useful for project management. The data provided by the project's monitoring system has attracted the interest of relevant local institutions, such as the MOL in El Salvador and Asociación de Investigación y Estudios Sociales in Costa Rica, which have recently requested information from the project.

Notwithstanding the above, the PMP reflects the attainment of project targets in a simple manner. Given that the original proposal did not consider the complexity of the legal assistance activities that are now provided, the monitoring system currently serves more as a means to provide general information for donor reports, rather than as a tool to monitor the quality of the performance of the WRCs and of the legal assistance and education services. Thus, although all partner institutions base their activities on operational plans, the information provided by the monitoring system is not used at the local level to orient the management or planning of the WRCs and is not necessarily systematized or periodically shared among WRC's staff.

Additionally, the information provided by the monitoring system does not always reflect the quality and different types of services provided by project staff, nor the complexity and level of effort implied in the legal assistance component.<sup>9</sup> Some of the indicators within the original design and currently used by the project (such as the notion of “*casos completos*,” the number of labor rights that may have been violated, on the basis of queries of workers, or the indicator of the project’s immediate objective<sup>10</sup> defined as “number of queries contained in the files (x) -times- the number of people presenting the case,” rather than “number of files -cases- submitted to the authorities”) provide a quantitative overview of the problems that affect the project’s direct clients (workers requesting its legal advice service). However, these indicators alone do not reflect the project results and its level of effort in terms of the enhanced quality and complexity of the services provided to its direct beneficiaries (i.e., accompanying workers in either administrative or judiciary procedures, or through both types of procedures, or the difference between collective and individual cases). Thus, the current indicators do not allow the project to properly measure the impact and success of the activities carried out by the WRCs, nor do they reflect the outstanding commitment of its staff. In fact, staff members at different WRCs use their own categories and classifications to follow up the status of the cases they manage, with the aid of charts in Word or Excel.

In addition, in order to increase the consistency of this component, project staff should standardize the content, duration and characteristics of the replication courses being implemented in the different countries. The concept of a “training replica” now covers any instruction from a single two-hour meeting on a sole subject to a six-day training course with a highly-specific curriculum, but all such replicas are registered in the same manner. Thus, a common curriculum based on a minimum number of key subjects or hours should be agreed upon as the definition of a “replica course” on labor rights for all project target countries. Such minimum curriculum may still be complemented by other additional topics so that centers may target their message to the needs/requests of the communities they serve.

Data collection within the project is, in some cases, affected by the non-univocal character of some indicators and by the lack of adequate criteria and means of verification in the case of other indicators. Moreover, the quality of some indicators is affected by the lack of “performance standards” (i.e., a detailed, standardized description of the product to be delivered) that may allow comparison of results. For example, in the case of mass media campaigns, the means of verification and methodology to estimate the project’s impact differ greatly from one country to another.<sup>11</sup>

Reporting also suffers from some difficulties linked to certain instabilities in the data generated by the monitoring system (as per the report of an informatics engineer that assessed the performance of the

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<sup>9</sup> Furthermore, the fact of considering individual and collective cases under a sole cluster (that of “queries”) may provide in some cases distorted information with regard to the trends of the cases being handled by the WRCs (e.g. with regard to the number of processes per region or economic sector presented before the authorities). In other cases, given the absence of adequate means of verification (e.g., in the case of the “workers” reached by media campaigns) some information appears disproportionate. Other problematic issues regarding the definition of the indicators used for monitoring are described in a short report from a WRC staff member in Annex 4.

<sup>10</sup> E.g., “number of complete cases presented by workers to MOL and/or other appropriate administrative or judicial entities.”

<sup>11</sup> Other problems detected with regard to the indicators, thresholds or means of verification used by the project: 1) In the Immediate Objective, the targets are relatively small (two-three collective cases with thousands of beneficiaries, multiplied by the number of people affected would allow staff to attain the target for the entire LOP). In this case, both the definition of the indicator and the target are inconvenient; 2) For Objective 3.1, the means of verification and calculation formulae seem inconsistent; 3) For Objective 1.3, the means of data collection (direct survey) may not be the most convenient to obtain objective feedback; 4) For Objective 2.2, the denominator used to calculate the indicator is erroneous: the percentage of people increasing their knowledge should be established with regard to the total number of people trained by the project; 5) For Objective 2.3, the percentage of people creating a replica of training should be established in a cumulative but non-repeated manner with regard to the total number of people trained by the project.

software in Nicaragua). The monitoring software has undergone various versions during its rollout. For example, given some difficulties in implementing the monitoring software at Nicaragua, project follow up was carried out on the basis of Excel spreadsheets up to January 2009.

### 3.5 MANAGEMENT PERFORMANCE

Overall, key personnel have performed well in reaching project targets and attaining the project's objectives. The **Project Director** has closely followed up with the project and provided support to partner institutions. His role has been pivotal in helping partner institutions keep up with an adequate rollout of activities and in clarifying (both internally and externally to the project) the roles and commitments of both CRS and its partner institutions.<sup>12</sup> The Project Director has provided constant feedback to CRS' country coordinators and to the partner organizations on the level of progress attained by the project.

The **Director of Monitoring and Evaluation (DME)** has provided timely technical assistance to partners for the implementation of the project's monitoring system and has been key in ensuring that quarterly reports on project results are integrated into a regional report for the donor. The DME's role has also been key in ensuring that comments from the field regarding the monitoring software are integrated within its successive versions.

**CRS' country coordinators** have invested variable time in supporting the implementation of the project by partner organizations. However, in some countries the elaboration of quarterly reports has not been sufficient, so the Project Director has had to review these products in depth. Otherwise, in some countries such as El Salvador and Honduras, the local partners are experienced and well organized, and thus can supervise the WRCs with little oversight from CRS. As a result, the project may decide to redirect resources from the CRS oversight component in these countries to WRC staff and support.

The **regional partners'** (IDHUCA and GMIES) roles and contributions seem to have been more relevant and useful in the organization of the WRCs and the implementation of the monitoring system, rather than in the case of the TOT rollout process. While the regional partners' contributions in adapting the monitoring software was a key factor in building up the project's information system, the decisions of country offices to subcontract local institutions to elaborate some of the train the trainer g materials diminished the relevance of these materials developed by the regional partner.

Generally speaking, except in the case of Guatemala, **local partner institutions** have had a successful response in complying with their roles and duties with regard to the project. Partner institutions have contributed with their own resources and those of their institutional networks to the success of the WRCs and that of the project. They also have helped the WRCs gain credibility, providing a trusted source of information to workers often in countries with deep distrust and histories of conflict.

Except for the case of the Coordinator and the Educator in Guatemala, the performance of **WRC staff** has been very committed and successful.<sup>13</sup> WRC's staff has put in important extra time to ensure that both the legal advice and educational processes are carried out with quality and depth. This caused part of the staff to "overwork" in order to keep up with the needs and demands of workers, as well as with the difficulties posed by each country's institutional framework. The number of legal staff (lawyers) is insufficient in some countries (i.e., Guatemala) as is that of educators (i.e., San Pedro de

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<sup>12</sup> However, there has been an extended delay in resolving the situation in Guatemala, where the current cooperation with a partner organization needs to be cancelled. The prolonged time to replace the project coordinator and the educator in this country has produced significant delays in project implementation, including the establishment of a new WRC in Guatemala City.

<sup>13</sup>In the case of Costa Rica, the change of the previous Project Coordinator hampered the functioning of the WRC for a while.

Sula and Chimaltenango)—where, in many cases, there should be one educator per WRC. Notwithstanding their important commitment to the project, this situation has created significant stress among team members. Together with an increased allocation of human resources for the WRCs, during the second part of the LOP, project staff should establish criteria in order to rationalize its workload; for example, reserving the option of accompanying workers to the judiciary level only in the most relevant and necessary cases.

**Project staff** has carried out a permanent dialogue with different stakeholders through internet communications and meetings. Regional meetings have been organized once or twice a year to allow project staff to reach a consensus on key issues. In most cases, the strategies and activities implemented in the field in all countries have the consensus of the partner organizations. Except in the case of Guatemala, communication between CRS and partner organizations, and within each country's WRC staff, has been clear, on-going and adequate.

**CRS**, including its regional staff and regional partners, has provided close support to partners during the planning stage and in the process of rolling out the WRCs. The Project Coordinator and the M&E Director have visited all countries several times. Likewise, CRS country offices maintain a permanent dialogue with partners and CRS Country Coordinators; and its financial staff provides support to partner organizations in elaborating quarterly reports. However, CRS Country Coordinators (such as in Guatemala) could increase the amount of time devoted to addressing the functioning of WRCs by visiting the different sites more often.

**USDOL's Project Manager** has maintained a close relationship with the project and has remained informed of its developments and needs in a timely manner through means of continuous communication with project's staff and attendance in the project's regional meetings. USDOL's sensibility with regard to strengthening of key aspects of the project has been demonstrated by the allocation of additional funds in mid-2009 to support expansion of project activities.

Regarding cost-efficiency, the project has shown a high level of outputs on the basis of a limited budget. Project implementation has surpassed its initial goals by implementing a greater number of services for workers (11 over seven WRCs). Thus, the project needed to hire more staff than projected in order to cope with increasing demand. Likewise, partner institutions have contributed with their own resources (locales, furniture, computers, and staff) to implement WRCs.

## IV. GOOD PRACTICES

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The following activities and products are considered good practices generated by the *Todos y Todas Trabajamos* project that may be shared among WRCs and replicated by other projects and institutions:

- The elaboration of agreements or memoranda of understanding with the MOLs: Various countries.
- Using community promoters as trainers: Dominican Republic.
- Establishing alliances with unions to carry out the educational component of the project: Various countries.
- Incorporating the TOT into a university course that requests trainers implement replicas as part of their training: Costa Rica.
- Using law students as trainees in support of WRC activities: Various countries.
- Training journalists as a means to sensitize the media and obtain free time and space for awareness-raising campaigns: El Salvador and Nicaragua.
- Organizing lawyers in such a way that one lawyer stays in the WRC receiving new requests while another lawyer accompanies workers in their processes before the MOL, allowing for better management of the workload: Honduras.
- Elaboration of brochures on violations of specific labor rights, using a question format to highlight the messages, in order to publicize the existence of WRCs: Regional level.
- Dissemination of short guidelines to help workers calculate the amount of their compensation after stopping work (in cases of resignation, an unjustified end to a contract, or being fired without reasonable cause): El Salvador.
- Informative manual on labor rights distributed to all beneficiaries trained during replicas: Nicaragua.
- The software of the monitoring system, which allows for distance audits of databases: Regional level.
- Obtaining permanent space on weekly radio programs (i.e., for legal consultation): Guatemala and Nicaragua.
- Elaboration of a guide on “Mechanisms to denounce the violation of labor rights”—elaborated by *Centro de Estudios y Apoyo para el Desarrollo Local* (CEADEL) for another project but used in the *Todos y Todas Trabajamos* project: Guatemala.
- Methodological handbook for (teaching to) trainers: Nicaragua.
- Use of precautionary legal measures when posing judiciary demands in order to speed up processes and entice other parties to negotiate (such as bank account embargoes and bans on travel of employers’ legal representatives outside the country): Guatemala.
- Diverse radio spots: El Salvador, Honduras, Guatemala, and Dominican Republic.

## V. LESSONS LEARNED

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The following are lessons learned concerning different aspects of project design and implementation:

- General design: The project could go beyond “to empower workers and guarantee their access to labor justice,” thus incorporating much more complex activities for accompanying workers in their processes before the MOL and labor courts. How to do this within the resources of the project may require alliance building with other projects.
- Conception: There are important differences to be considered when analyzing individual and collective cases.
- Selection of staff: CRS should play an active role (including veto power, given what happened in the Guatemala case) in the selection processes of WRC staff.
- The unforeseen needs to be attended to: Assisting the needs of the working class population implies both gaining their trust and generating expectations that sometimes are difficult to handle.
- Training material: The level of complexity of training material should be adapted to the level of users’ understanding. In order to be realistically useful, training materials should also be provided in a timely manner to users.

## VI. RECOMMENDATIONS

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The recommendations issued from the evaluation are organized according to the topics they concern. With regards to its general strategy, the *Todos y Todas Trabajamos* project should also become an important source of information in each country regarding what works and what does not work in defending labor rights, as well as a source of recommendations to improve norms and procedures, which may be delivered by CRS partners and other institutions to labor authorities and unions. In this framework, it would be useful for the Regional Coordinator of the Project, CRS Country Coordinators and the partner organizations' staff to carry out indirect advocacy activities on key issues through international cooperation projects (such as other projects sponsored by U.S. Government agencies, i.e., *Proyecto Cumplo y Gana*, *Proyecto Administración de la Justicia Laboral*, *Proyecto de Verificación de Retos y Recomendaciones del Libro Blanco*, *Proyecto Cultivar*, *Proyecto Pilar*, and other ILO-related initiatives). To better accomplish this, it would be necessary that the TTT project establish a list of procedural features and current practices per country which constitute legal obstacles to the defense of labor rights at the administrative or judiciary levels.

1. With regard to **its outreach and the targeted groups in which the project focus its efforts**, each country and WRC should formulate a strategy to reach, through customized awareness-raising campaigns (i.e., with specific topics, messages and means), those groups of workers which are most vulnerable to labor abuse and to which the project now reaches in a limited manner.
2. With regard to **its legal assistance component**, the project's WRCs should continue providing integrated legal assistance services at both the administrative and judiciary levels but should develop criteria to limit the complexity of their intervention accordingly—for example, to the gravity of the cases, the paradigmatic character of the cases, the number of interests at stake, to workers in extreme poverty, and any other criteria—that may allow the WRCs to handle a greater number of clients in a sustainable manner.
3. With regard to **the implementation of the education component**, and apart from working with unions, project staff should seek to establish collaborative alliances with other kinds of institutions—such as women's, community or immigrant organizations—that may have a direct stake and play an active role in the defense of labor rights. In the case of unions, using members from organizations that receive employers' permits to develop their union-related activities as trainers (such as public employees in some countries, e.g., *Instituto Hondureño de la Niñez y la Familia* (IHNFA) employees in Honduras) may allow planning trainings in a more continuous and stable way as well as allow trainers to reach both unionized and nonunionized workers. In this sense, training “institutional teams of trainers” belonging to a same institution favors the replication of trainings.
4. With regard to the **materials used in support of trainings by some WRCs** (such as Nicaragua and El Salvador), it would be useful for some of these products to be shared among and replicated by other WRCs (see the list of these products in section IV of this report). Training and awareness-related material should be adapted to the level of understanding of beneficiaries and should be introduced in a timely manner within the educational process rollout.
5. With regard to the **awareness raising component**, it is necessary that the project develop, as soon as possible, a “most-vulnerable-workers awareness-raising strategy” that, on the basis of a common general platform, prioritizes certain target groups and topics in each country, selects the types of messages to be used, and establishes some rationality in the means to be employed according to the target groups to be reached. The data obtained from WRC activities should serve as an input to design of campaigns for target populations, on the basis of the most frequent violations detected at each country/sector.

6. With regard to **project management issues**, it would be convenient for CRS Country Coordinators to visit the WRCs at least once a week, to provide support, follow up on successes and difficulties, and collect information that may be useful for third parties in order to improve labor justice administration through advocacy activities. CRS Coordinators should also intensify actions to improve the quality and punctuality of reports from partner organizations and to avoid delays in systematizing project information. In the case of Honduras, Caritas Tegucigalpa should provide more close support in the implementation of the educational component by the Diocesan Caritas branch at San Pedro de Sula. (In El Salvador, it would be important for IDHUCA to increase the number of cases that receive support during the judiciary phase of their processes.)
7. Regarding the **corrective measures to be taken in Guatemala**, it should be noted that the project will now need two partner organizations in this country—one in Chimaltenango, where there is an existing WRC, and one in Guatemala City. The process to hire a new Project Coordinator should be carried out, and thus the project coordinator position in Guatemala may report directly to CRS or, alternatively, the responsibilities of this position could be assumed directly by CRS' Country Coordinator. The hiring process of a Project Coordinator for Guatemala should be done with haste, as should starting direct discussions with unions and NGOs in order to assess their interest to become partners in establishing a new WRC in Guatemala City. The new partner organization should be selected on the basis of its experience and ability to provide legal assistance and education services, its institutional strength, and the perspective of sustainability of activities offered by the partner organization. Given its recent experience with partnerships in this country, CRS should participate in the selection of the staff of WRCs to be hired by partner organizations, including that of an educator for each WRC.
8. With regard to the eventual **allocation of additional resources to the project**, it will be imperative to increase the number of WRC staff at some sites, but this should be carried out on the basis of a detailed analysis of the amount of work and level of effort (i.e., administrative cases at the MOL level judiciary processes and general orientation consultations) carried out at each WRC.<sup>14</sup> The amount and complexity of collective and individual files handled by each lawyer and WRC should be the basic criteria for this kind of analysis on the effective demand of WRC services. Likewise, the San Pedro de Sula WRC would also need direct support of an educator located at that site.
9. Regarding issues related to the **monitoring system**, it would be convenient to introduce several improvements as follows:
  - a. While continuing to use the monitoring software employed by the project, staff should review and modify the definition of several indicators, targets and means of verification, in order to introduce categories that better reflect the quality, complexity and level of effort involved in the legal assistance services provided by project staff. This would allow the project to establish a performance management system with regard to the defense of labor rights, which may serve to provide information on the status and results of cases sponsored by WRCs before labor authorities, so as to monitor the real impact of the project and the cost-efficiency ratio of the resources allocated to each country. The unit to be used in order to assess the immediate objective target should not be the "number of queries" (i.e., *casos completos*) contained in files submitted to the authorities, but the number of cases themselves (*expedientes* or "files"), which may be of an individual or collective nature and contain more than one query and/or claimant.<sup>15</sup>

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<sup>14</sup> Such analysis should also take into account the need to preserve at least three positions (e.g., two lawyers plus one educator) for a new WRC in Guatemala City.

<sup>15</sup> The number of queries submitted by workers may continue to be registered as additional data on most frequent labor claims. Other data, such as the number of cases in which WRCs provides legal support to workers so they can register a new union, should also be included in the monitoring system as WRC activities.

- b. The indicator related to the number of replications of training courses should be based on a standard definition of the characteristics (content, duration) of a “replica.”<sup>16</sup> The project needs to standardize a “curriculum” on which topics should be included as “minimal content” of replicas. In doing so, the project should tend to reduce, as much as possible, the thematic complexity and duration of such “minimal curriculum.” The standardization of content should take into account some particularities of the countries, the characteristics of some target groups and the nature of those fundamental rights which are violated repeatedly throughout the region or within each country.
  - c. The measurement of some issues, such as the level of satisfaction of beneficiaries of WRC legal services (often close to 100%) or the number of workers who learned about WRCs existence from media campaigns (often a very low percentage) should be reviewed. In the first case, interviewing people immediately after or during the period in which they are receiving the services might not lead to forthright disclosures; in the second case, some additional questions on how the informant’s sources (often relatives or friends) learned about the WRCs may lead to more relevant information. Likewise the educational impact of the project on workers could be better assessed if instead of assessing the knowledge attained by trainers, the same information is randomly and periodically collected from beneficiaries of the “replicas.” The reach of awareness-raising campaigns should be measured with regard to workers, not the general population exposed to the messages.
  - d. It would be convenient to introduce or add categories to the monitoring system that may help WRC staff generate and receive feedback on the results of their defense efforts and on the status of the legal processes that they handle. This review and any changes should be done on the basis of a consensus among representatives of all WRCs. For example, the monitoring system should report the current and past caseload of each WRC / lawyer, as well as the nature and evolving status of each case (administrative, judiciary, in appeals, with a verdict, etc.). In order to learn about the impact of the project in the improvement of labor justice, it may be useful to know the percentage of the caseload that has to go through both administrative and judiciary procedures; the percentage of cases in which the parties reach a judicial or extrajudicial (direct) agreement; if they do so before, during or after the cases are presented to the MOL or the courts; the percentage of cases in which workers dropped out from litigation at the administrative or judiciary level; and the percentage of cases that ended with positive results for workers at the administrative or judicial level. The documents that systematize WRCs’ organization and the functioning of the monitoring system should be reviewed and adapted according to the changes introduced.
  - e. Finally, during the final two years of the project some practical issues regarding the use of the monitoring software should be shared in a definitive way: a) The small inconsistencies still found in the monitoring software that generate instability in the system should be solved by an external expert; and b) The project should consider the possibility of hiring computer science students for one or two days per week, who can support WRC staff with the tasks of data entry and updating information.
10. With regard to the **sustainability of project activity lines**, during the next two years, CRS and its partner organizations should start working on the design and costs of a minimal structure and services that may remain in place after the end of the LOP and which may continue working in a sustainable manner with local and other third party support. CRS and its partner institutions should immediately begin drafting a strategy to diversify the sources of funding of the TTT

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<sup>16</sup> It is necessary to review the homogeneity of the criteria used by different countries to report beneficiaries (for example, in Nicaragua there is an additional cluster of “group cases”—several people from one employer included within one sole file for queries that are not related to any of the three reasons that establish a “collective case”). These “group cases,” which are litigated under one sole legal file, are registered as if they would be a myriad of individual cases.

project. The criteria for selection of a new partner organization to carry out a new WRC in Guatemala should include, as a priority, the likelihood of sustainable action after the end of the LOP by local unions and NGOs (i.e., Guatemalan Union Workers, General Center of Workers of Guatemala, and Fundación Mario López Larrabe). Given the limited resources available in comparison to the needs of legal support in all countries, it is necessary that the WRCs define strict criteria on which cases will be accompanied by project staff up to the judicial level.

## VII. CONCLUSIONS

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The TTT Project has had an important impact among its target population. Without the free legal advice from the project and the support it provides to workers by accompanying them in their processes at both the MOL and the judiciary, most workers in all countries would not have accessed labor justice at the MOL and even less so before labor courts.

Generally speaking, except for some implementation problems in Guatemala in that a fewer number of trainers than expected completed replicas of training courses, which led to a fewer number of beneficiaries experiencing this training, the project has attained and even surpassed most of its targets.

In practice, project implementation articulated three sets of interests: those of the donor and of the project's official institutional commitments; those of CRS and partner organizations' staff, who contributed a level of effort and commitment much larger than required by project goals; and those of the workers and direct beneficiaries, whose interests went well beyond the project's initial objectives. In this framework, the project found a way to successfully reconcile theory and praxis and both attain its objectives and surpass them by providing more complex and valuable services than initially expected for workers. In the years to come, together with consolidating the structures it helped create (the WRCs), the project's main challenge will be to help generate a local environment and "culture" favorable to the defense of workers' rights.