

Interim Evaluation of the Project: Advancing Labor Compliance in Colombia's Port Sector

Evaluation Contractor: Sistemas, Familia y Sociedad Ltd. (SFS)



Objective

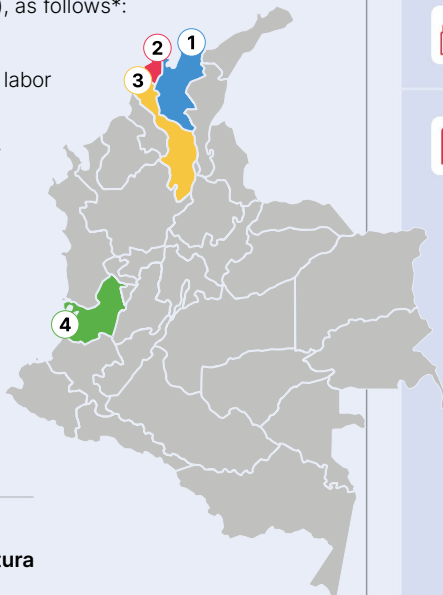
The project aims to **improve compliance with national laws related to internationally recognized labor rights in the Colombian port sector**, through one Long-Term Outcome (LTO) and two Medium-Term Outcomes (MTOs), as follows*:

- **LTO 1:** Increased utilization by port stakeholders of processes to improve labor law compliance in the port sector.
- **MTO 1:** Improved delivery of services associated with the improvement of labor law compliance.
- **MTO 2:** Increased demand by port workers for services associated with the improvement of labor law compliance.

*Revised results framework from February 2023. The original LTOs are assessed below.

Ports intervened:

- 1 Santa Marta
- 2 Barranquilla
- 3 Cartagena
- 4 Buenaventura



[Click HERE to see the Evaluation Report](#)



Period of Performance:

Dec 2020 – Dec 2024



Funding:

\$5,000,000



Implementer:

Partners of the Americas (POA)



Partner Institutions:

- **Government of Colombia (GOC):** Ministry of Labor and Social Affairs (MoL); Pension and Parafiscal Management Unit (UGPP); Ports Delegate (PD) under the Superintendency of Ports and Transport (ST).
- **Unions:** Sindicato Nacional de Trabajadores de Rama, Servicios de la Industria del Transporte y Logística de Colombia (SNTT); Sindicato de la Industria de la Actividad de los Trabajadores de la Rama Portuaria – Transporte y su Logística Colombiana (SINAPORTLC); and Sindicato de Trabajadores Portuarios (STP).
- **Employers:** National Business Association of Colombia (ANDI) and Regional Societies Ports.
- **Universities:** Pontificia University Javeriana (PUJ) and the National University of Colombia (UNAL).
- **Civil Society Organizations:** Carvajal Foundation (FC) and Social Accountability International (SAI).

Interim Evaluation Conclusions

Relevance

- The CPP responds to the needs of key stakeholders in Colombia ports.
- A long delay in producing a Comprehensive Assessment (CA) (Outcome 1) along with technical gaps in the POA team led to a slow start in implementation.
- A revision of the project's Results Framework (RF) in February 2023 established three short-term objectives (e.g., 1. Understanding of the regulatory framework; 2. Social dialogue; and 3. unions' capabilities).

Effectiveness

- No outputs were delivered, and no outcomes achieved during the first two years.
- The revision of the RF set a new path and gave more clarity and direction to the project.
- After the revision, the CPP has sped up the pace of implementation. New short-term objectives were agreed, and the delivery of services shows that implementation is progressing well.
- Not addressing issues of gender equity and inclusion in a systematic way.

Efficiency

- Experienced difficulties at the outset due to gaps in technical expertise in the project team.
- No formal Steering Committee was set up for the governance of the project as originally planned.
- Since 2023 a strengthened CPP team has been put in place, by combining new appointments and consultancies.
- The communication dynamic between different stakeholders flows well and POA is now perceived as a neutral and credible actor by all parties.

Impact

- The project's impact by the time of the interim evaluation is negligible.
- Has set the foundations for a beneficial alliance between the MOL, the PD and the UGPP, which may increase the effectiveness of the GOC's enforcement role.

Sustainability

- Capacity building efforts and the inclusion of port labor issues into the institutional agendas of government institutions, unions and employers' organizations may have a self-replicating effect.
- The sustainability plan is outdated and needs to be reviewed.

"The guide has been very helpful to clarify doubts about the limits of outsourcing, are disseminating it through our networks."

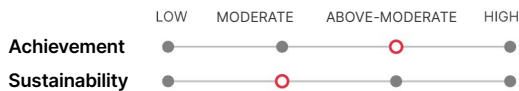
- Trade Union Leader



✓ Achievements and Sustainability of Project's Long-Term Outcomes (LTO)

LTO1

Increased understanding of barriers to compliance with national laws related to internationally recognized labor rights in Colombia's port sector.



LTO2

Development of approaches to support compliance with national laws related to internationally recognized labor rights in Colombia's port sector.



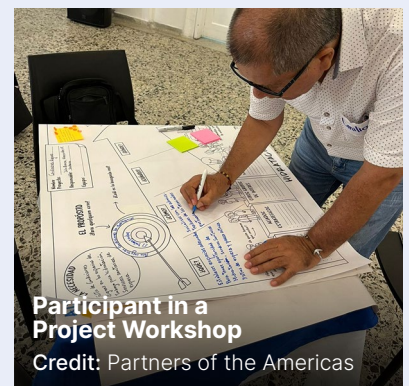
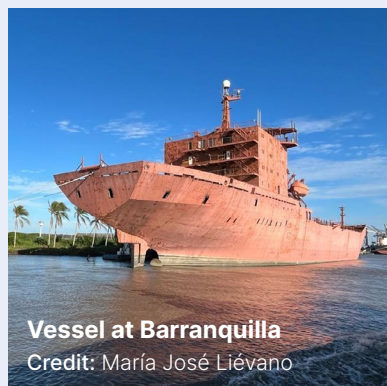
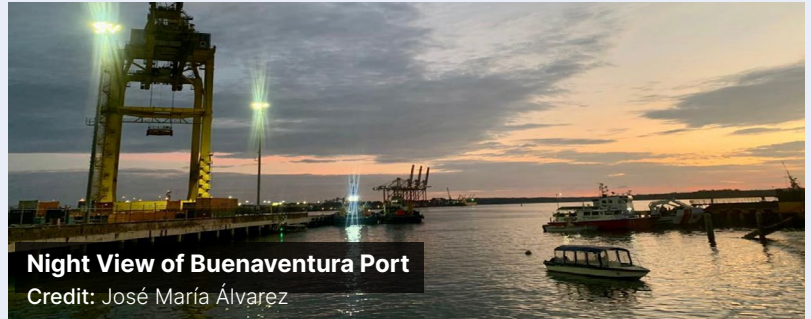
LTO3

Demonstrated effectiveness of approaches to support compliance with national laws related to internationally recognized labor rights in Colombia's port sector.



LTO4

Increased awareness and adoption of approaches to support compliance with national laws related to internationally recognized labor rights in Colombia's port sector.



Promising Practices (PP)

- Investing time in **setting the foundations for a constructive dialogue** between key stakeholders helps develop a common understanding of the project's approach and dissipates misunderstandings.
- Engaging different public institutions to enforce the compliance** of different administrative and labor rules, is an auspicious way to tackle informality and combat the breaches of domestic legislation from different angles.

Lessons Learned (LL)


- Funding Opportunity Announcements (FOA) and project designers should **avoid placing certain outputs as a precondition for implementation of other set of outputs/ project interventions** (e.g., in CPP completing the CA was stated as a prerequisite to conducting any other type of activity). This generated an impediment to advance in project implementation.
- Research activities** linked to project implementation **should integrate its methods and processes into the broader implementation process.**



"Each port is different and CPP should avoid generalizations when communicating its diagnosis and proposals."

- Private Sector Representative

Recommendations

For USDOL		USDOL	POA	GOC
1	Consider a non-cost extension to allow the adequate completion of key processes such as the proposed strengthening of the enforceability mechanisms (as per recommendation 8).	 USDOL		
For USDOL and Partners of the Americas (POA)		USDOL	POA	GOC
2	Explore jointly (OTLA and POA) different options for incorporating international actors in the ports' due diligence process, such as ports' operators, investors, multinationals, and shipping companies, who have decisive influence in the framework and limits of ports' operations.	 USDOL	 POA	
3	Speed up the revision and dissemination of the final version of the Comprehensive Assessment amongst stakeholders.	 USDOL	 POA	
4	Define some specific measures to optimize the use and applications of the Comprehensive Assessment, such as: a) Refining the CPP's Theory of Change (ToC) to validate and further update the original RF; b) Extracting ideas from the CA for communication materials; c) Using the CA to debate/ gather different views on controversial issues and building consensus among social actors; d) Recovering ideas from different CA versions and updating the CPP workplan.	 USDOL	 POA	
For Partners of the Americas and The Government of Colombia (GOC)		USDOL	POA	GOC
5	Support the development of mechanisms of enforceability and compliance with current regulations, with the CPPs support, through an institutional alliance under the leadership of the MoL, involving the UGPP and the PD.		 POA	 GOC
For Partners of the Americas (POA)		USDOL	POA	GOC
6	Consider increasing CPP's support to the development of mechanisms of enforceability and compliance with current regulations, such as: 8.1 An institutional alliance under the leadership of the MoL, involving the UGPP and the PD; 8.2 Strengthening the workers' litigation capacity (e.g., support for the formalization workers' claims through ENS or Solidarity Center <i>pro bono</i> legal services).		 POA	
7	Consider greater involvement and participation of the Escuela Nacional Sindical in the design and implementation of the capacity building program, foreseen for unions under Intervention 3.		 POA	
8	Consider an increase in unions' membership and union unity actions as priority themes for the strengthening of workers' organizations under intervention 3.		 POA	
9	Promote models of self-regulation and due diligence mechanisms by companies in the supply chain, such as the adoption of a code of conduct for the port sector, an international certification standard such as 'Norm 8000', or an agreement among Port Societies and Port Operators to introduce social and labor clauses in their sub-contacting processes.		 POA	
10	Further explore formulas and mechanisms to reach out to the informal workers outside the port facilities and search for options to facilitate their formalization, through support to CSO/ local governments and unions accompanying this process, training, and certification of competencies as a channel towards formalization, and/or actively involving operators acting outside port terminals.		 POA	
11	Develop a more comprehensive and all-encompassing communication strategy.		 POA	
12	Reinforce work on gender equality, non-discrimination, and inclusion.		 POA	