"It Can Happen to You" is an awareness raising play on human trafficking - Community Referral DMOP, Paraguay 2021

INTERIM EVALUATION

ATLAS: ATTAINING LASTING CHANGE FOR BETTER ENFORCEMENT OF LABOR AND CRIMINAL LAW TO ADDRESS CHILD LABOR, FORCED LABOR, AND HUMAN TRAFFICKING

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This report describes in the interim evaluation of the ATLAS project. Fieldwork for this evaluation was conducted in September - October 2021. Winrock International conducted this evaluation in collaboration with the project team and stakeholders. The evaluation team would like to express sincere thanks to all the parties involved for their support and valuable contributions.

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1. ACRONYMS

AGILE	Analytics, Gender, Inclusion, Learning, and Evaluation
AHTD	Anti-Human Trafficking Police
AMLO	Anti-Money Laundering Office
ATLAS	Attaining Lasting Change for Better Enforcement of Labor and Criminal Law to Address Child Labor, Forced Labor, and Human Trafficking
ATU	Anti-Trafficking Units
BOK	Body of Knowledge
CL	Child Labor
CODENI	Defense Councils for the Rights of Children and Adolescents
COEER	Catholic Office for Emergency Relief and Refugee
CONAETI	National Commission for the Prevention and Eradication of Child Labor and Protection of Working Adolescents
CONTRAFOR	National Commission on Fundamental Rights at Work and Prevention of Forced Labor
CSJ	Supreme Court of Justice
CSO	Civil Society Organization
CTIP	Combating Trafficking in Persons
DATIP	Division of Anti-Trafficking in Persons
DCY	Department of Children and Youth
DG	Discussion Guide
DLPW	Department of Labour Protection and Welfare
DMOP	Differentiated Model of Practice
DOE	Department of Employment
DOPA	Department of Provincial Administration
DSI	Department of Special Investigation
ETP	Enforcement Training Program
FGD	Focus Group Discussion
FL	Forced Labor
FLACSO	Facultad Latinoamericana de Ciencias Sociales
GESI	Gender Equality and Social Inclusion
GOP	Government of Paraguay
HO	Home Office
HQ	Headquarter
HT	Human Trafficking
IB	Immigration Bureau
IJM	International Justice Mission
ILO	International Labour Organization
IOM	International Organization for Migration
KI	Key Informant
KII	Key Informant Interview
LIFT	LIFT International
MAUEP	Multi-Agency Unified Enforcement Procedures
MDP	Ministry of Public Defense
MDS	Ministry of Social Development

MDT	Multi-Disciplinary Teams
MEC	Ministry of Education and Sciences
MERL	Monitoring, Evaluation, Reporting, and Learning
MINNA	Public Defender's Office, and the Ministry of Children and Adolescents
MM	Ministry for Women
MOI	Ministry of Interior
MOJ	Ministry of Justice
MOL	Ministry of Labor
MOU	Memorandum of Understanding
MP	Public Ministry
MRREE	Ministry of Foreign Affairs
MSDHS	Ministry of Social Development and Human Security
MTE	Midterm Evaluation
MTESS	Ministry of Labor, Employment, and Social Security
NDP	National Development Plan
NGO	Non-Governmental Organization
OAG	Office of The Attorney General
OECD	Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development
PN	National Police
POA	Partners of the Americas
PSA	Pre-Situational Analysis
PSDHS	Provincial Social Development and Human Security Office
RTG	Royal Thai Government
RTP	Royal Thai Police
SOP	Standard Operating Procedure
SOW	Scope of Work
TA	Technical Assistance
TATIP	Thailand's Anti-Trafficking in Persons Task Force (under the Royal Thai Police)
TIP	Trafficking in Persons
TOT	Training of Trainers
UNICEF	United Nations Children's Fund
USAID	The United States Agency for International Development
USDOL	United States Department of Labor

2. EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The Attaining Lasting Change for Better Enforcement of Labor and Criminal Law to Address Child Labor, Forced Labor and Human Trafficking (ATLAS) project, funded by the United States Department of Labor (USDOL) and implemented by Winrock International (Winrock) recently commissioned a midterm evaluation (MTE). The MTE focuses on evaluating the project strategy, embodied in the nine-step Differentiated Model of Practice (DMOP) process, for the purposes of understanding current best practices, determining how the project can adapt its implementation going forward, and providing recommendations to donors and implementers of projects intended to reduce CL, FL, and HT.

Winrock commissioned two country-level evaluations, one in Paraguay and one in Thailand, to assess the implementation of DMOPs in the countries where project implementation is most advanced. With the support of Winrock's Analytics, Gender, Inclusion, Learning, and Evaluation (AGILE) unit – the organization's centralized Monitoring, Evaluation, Research, and Learning and Gender Equity and Social Inclusion department – ATLAS supervised consultants as they conducted key informant interviews (KIIs) with project stakeholders in each country. These KIIs constituted primary data collection for the evaluation, and the data from them were analyzed in conjunction with the evaluators' thorough review of project documentation. After the finalization of each country report, AGILE reviewed the reports, project documents, and, where necessary, raw data from each country evaluation to compare and contrast findings. AGILE drafted a set of global-level findings and recommendations. Country-level findings and recommendations can be found in the relevant sections of the report.

The key findings from this evaluation are:

1. Overall, the project is making appropriate progress toward its objectives despite challenges and delays, primarily but not exclusively due to the effects of COVID-19.
2. The project effectively pivoted to online platforms in response to COVID-19, but some stakeholders feel that this has come at the expense of quality.
3. The project strategy is not well understood by stakeholders.
4. Certain project documents, such as the Body of Knowledge (BOK) and Pre-Situational Analyses (PSAs), were not widely shared with stakeholders, and the decision to do or not do so appears to have been ad hoc.
5. ATLAS staff are overall highly committed and effective. However, sometimes relationships between global staff located at Winrock HO and country staff in Thailand and Paraguay encountered difficulties.
6. Sustainability and impact planning need to be priorities for ATLAS in the remaining years of the project.

The key recommendations for ATLAS are:

7. Create an intentional strategy for project communications and the dissemination of products.
8. Continue to adaptively manage project activities and strategy.
9. Create space for updating project tools but try to reduce planning time.
10. Foster local ownership.

3. INTRODUCTION

3.2. ATLAS PROJECT SUMMARY

Winrock International (Winrock) is a non-profit organization that works with people around the world to increase economic opportunity, sustain natural resources, and protect the environment. Winrock strengthens the capacity of women, children, youth, government, and civil society organizations to actively participate in local and national development and to transform their societies.

Winrock is currently implementing the United States Department of Labor (USDOL)-funded project Attaining Lasting Change for Better Enforcement of Labor and Criminal Law to Address Child Labor, Forced Labor and Human Trafficking (ATLAS) with the objective of strengthening the capacity of governments to address child labor, forced labor, and human trafficking in Thailand, Paraguay, Argentina, and Liberia. The ATLAS project began in January 2019 with the following Theory of Change:
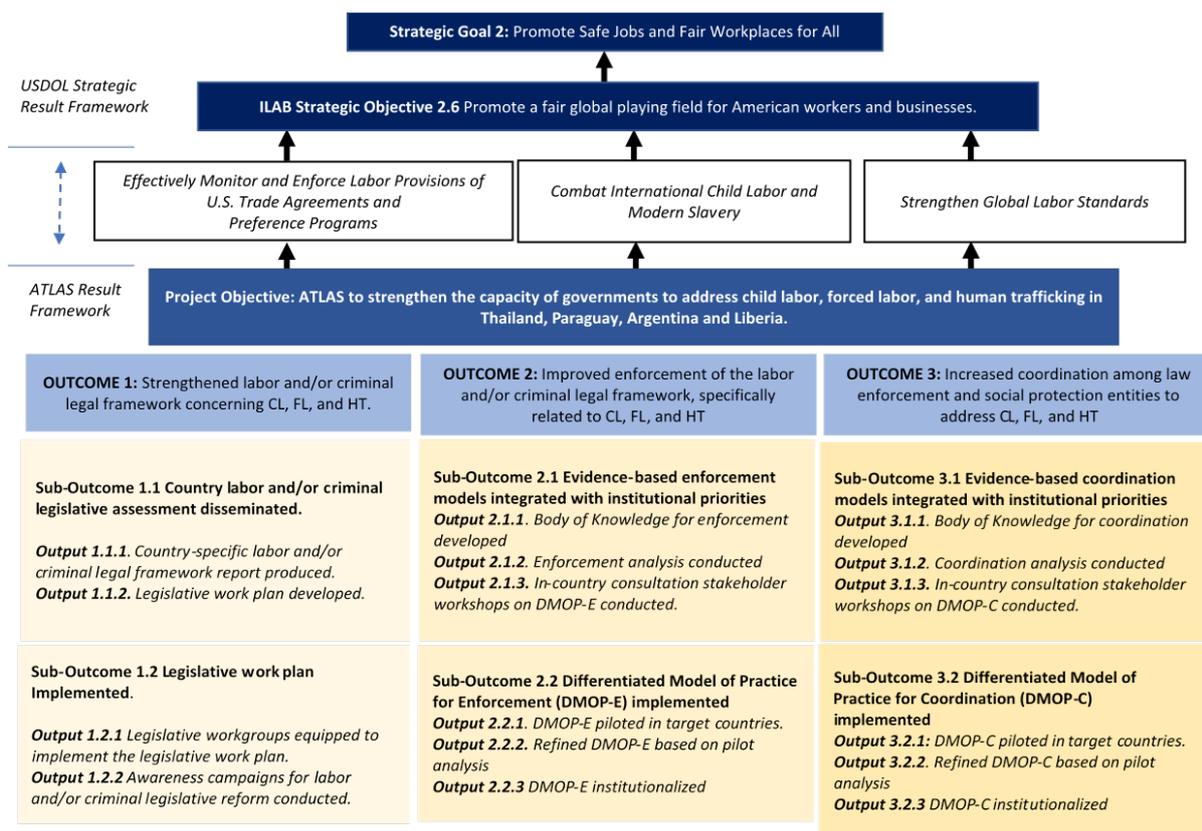
IF legal frameworks for child labor (CL), forced labor (FL), and human trafficking (HT) are in place that meet international standards, AND IF relevant enforcement entities have the knowledge, resources and standard procedures to implement the legal framework, AND IF enforcement and social protection entities are able to effectively coordinate within and among each other THEN target governments will have the capacity to address CL, FL, and HT, which will lead to the following:

1. Perpetrators will increasingly be held accountable for labor and criminal offenses (medium term)
2. Victims will consistently be identified and supported with appropriate services (medium term)
3. Child Labor, Forced Labor and Human Trafficking will be measurably decreased (long term)

As such, the project works towards three outcomes:

1. Strengthened labor and/or criminal legal framework concerning CL, FL, and HT.
2. Improved enforcement of the labor and/or legal criminal framework, specifically related to CL, FL, and HT.
3. Increased coordination among law enforcement and social protection entities to address CL, FL, and HT.

The theory of change is below.

3.3. PROJECT STRATEGY

To achieve Outcomes 2 and 3, ATLAS has developed and implemented a strategy known as the Differentiated Model of Practice (DMOP), a specific process to tailor project interventions and outcomes through an evidence-based approach that adapts technical assistance to country-specific priorities. This process consists of developing specific intervention models (individually called Differentiated Models or Practice, or DMOPs) that are tested and implemented in each country to improve enforcement and/or coordination around CL, FL, and HT. These interventions are informed by a Body of Knowledge (BOK), a global-level research document that reviews evidence on the effectiveness of previous efforts to address CL, FL, and HT, and by individual country-level Pre-Situational Analyses (PSAs).

More specifically, the DMOP strategy includes the following steps:

Step 1: Establish a global BOK, identifying and ranking the quality of the evidence about interventions that effectively strengthen enforcement and coordination.

Step 2: Conduct an in-country PSA of enforcement and coordination to identify stakeholders and integrate their understanding of and expertise on the current labor and criminal systems and coordination mechanisms;

Step 3: Hold consultation events with key stakeholders to prioritize efforts and identify technical assistance (TA) needs;

Step 4: Form country workgroups of international and national expert professionals to develop, evaluate and refine data-driven models of practice, also called DMOP-E (enforcement DMOPs) and DMOP-C (coordination DMOPs);

Step 5: Pilot the intervention models of practice (DMOP-E/DMOP-C);

Step 6: Evaluate and refine the pilot intervention models of practice (DMOP-E/DMOP-C);

Step 7: Present intervention models to country workgroups and stakeholders for refinement and validation;

Step 8: Implement the refined models (DMOP-E/DMOP-C) and integrate them with the existing structures; and,

Step 9: Finalize with stakeholders the institutionalization plan for the approved models.

ATLAS is implementing this strategy in Paraguay, Thailand, Liberia, and Argentina but only in Thailand and Paraguay have interventions been developed and piloted. In each of these two countries the ATLAS project has committed to the development of five DMOPs with two DMOPs focused on improving enforcement efforts (Outcome 2) and three DMOPS targeting improved coordination (Outcome 3). These DMOPs include training curricula, practitioners' guides, and other products and interventions to improve enforcement of laws around CL, FL, and HT and coordination between relevant stakeholders.

3.4. EVALUATION OBJECTIVE AND SCOPE

USDOL worked collaboratively with Winrock to define the scope of this evaluation, which is slightly different than a traditional midterm evaluation. Rather than a review of project progress toward established quantitative targets, this evaluation focuses on the ATLAS project strategy and its effectiveness, efficiency, relevance, sustainability, and impact. With the collaboration and guidance of USDOL, Winrock developed an internally-managed evaluation process that maintains some independence by delegating the country-level evaluation roles to independent in-country consultants and the analysis and synthesis of these reports to Winrock's in-house Analytics, Gender, Inclusion, Learning, and Evaluation (AGILE) unit. AGILE is an independent department with no reporting lines to the ATLAS project or the technical unit in which it is housed. To design the scope of the evaluation and manage country-level evaluations, ATLAS collaborated with the AGILE Evidence and Evaluation Services Technical Advisor, but she independently drafted overall findings and recommendations using data available from the country-level analyses and available documentation. She compared and contrasted findings from each country and arrived at a unified set of findings and recommendations where possible. While she validated these findings and recommendations in conversations with ATLAS staff, ATLAS staff did not influence these findings in either a positive or negative direction. The inclusion of both country- and global-level analyses allows the focus to remain on the project strategy and its appropriateness in a global context, in addition to specific findings from the contexts in which the project strategy is currently most advanced.

3.4.1. COUNTRY-LEVEL OBJECTIVES

The objective of each country-level assessment is to assess the extent to which the project strategy - that is, the nine-step DMOP process - has or has not been successful towards making progress against the Theory of Change in Thailand and/or Paraguay. Each country-level assessment addresses research questions about the implementation of the project strategy in that country and includes actionable recommendations, lessons learned, and best practices from the country in question.

3.4.2. SCOPE

This is a qualitative evaluation that focuses on the project strategy, the nine-step DMOP process. It entailed a review of the effectiveness, relevance, and efficiency of the project strategy and, to the extent possible, the impact of activities and prospects of sustainability. The

evaluation also addresses the impact of COVID-19 on the project strategy, including limitations imposed as well as lessons learned.

The consultants in each country reviewed progress made in developing and implementing enforcement DMOPs under Outcome 2 (DMOP-Es) and coordination DMOPs under Outcome 3 (DMOP-Cs), which have been uniquely adapted to each participating country. This includes reviews of the process utilized to identify, develop, and administer these interventions, as well as an assessment of their effectiveness. To answer the evaluation questions, listed below, country-level consultants interviewed a pool of stakeholders including government officials, ATLAS staff, and other relevant individuals.

3.4.3. EVALUATION QUESTIONS

In an effort to answer the following questions for the project strategy as a whole, the country-level evaluations included the questions listed below, organized with respect to the Organization for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD) Development Assistance Committee criteria. While each evaluation focused on the same set of questions, they were operationalized differently in interview guides to ensure that questions were asked of stakeholders in a way that was contextually and culturally appropriate.

Effectiveness
- Is the project strategy accomplishing its planned results as expected at the country level? What factors, internal and external to the project, may be contributing to these successes and challenges?
- To what extent have project interventions (individual DMOPs) achieved their stated goals (improving enforcement and coordination) to date? Is the project on track to achieve its outcomes and objective?
- How effective have data and knowledge gathering activities (Book of Knowledge, Pre-Situational Analyses, stakeholder consultations, etc.) been in identifying appropriate interventions?
- What factors have influenced the effectiveness of the project strategy and specific interventions?

Relevance
- Has the project strategy resulted in interventions and activities that respond to the needs and priorities of government stakeholders? Why or why not?
- Has the project strategy allowed sufficient flexibility to respond to the local context?
- How has the project strategy adapted to the local context?
- To what extent has the project strategy been implemented as designed?

Efficiency
- How could the project strategy and the nine-step DMOP process be made more efficient in terms of time and resources?
- To what extent has the project strategy adapted to changes in the operating environment caused by the COVID-19 and/or other issues? How has that impacted results?

Sustainability
- How engaged and committed to the project strategy are government stakeholders? What mechanisms have been effective in gaining their commitment?
- Is the project strategy creating systems and structures to sustain activities and results beyond the end of the project?
- Is the project strategy replicable in other country contexts?

Impact

- To date, what evidence exists that the project strategy is achieving the overall objective of increasing the capacity of host governments to address CL, FL, and/or HT?
- Are there any success stories that could provide best practices or lessons learned for other countries or for future iterations of the project?

Evaluation findings are reported below in both country-level reports and across both countries. The findings are organized by the OECD criteria for ease of reference.

3.5. COUNTRY-LEVEL REPORTS

As ATLAS is a global project implementing in multiple countries, Winrock decided to focus the evaluation in two countries where multiple DMOPs have been or are being implemented, Paraguay and Thailand. These are the two countries in which the project strategy is most advanced. Winrock commissioned a team of consultants in each country to carry out primary data collection among relevant stakeholders, as well as analysis of the findings. The specific methods used in each country are detailed in the relevant country-level reports. Representatives from ATLAS and AGILE worked collaboratively with the country-level consultants to refine data collection tools, provide feedback on analysis, and finalize draft country reports. The consultant teams independently drafted data collection tools, but ATLAS and AGILE ensured that, while not identical, the tools were sufficiently similar to allow comparison between countries. ATLAS and AGILE did not insist on identical tools so that consultants had sufficient freedom to focus on questions of most relevant in each country, to word questions appropriately for the context, and to pilot and refine tools in each country. For these reasons, the country reports do not follow an identical structure, but each answers the main questions of interest.

3.6. META-ANALYSIS

After the finalization of country-level reports, AGILE conducted additional analysis on the findings and recommendations from each country. Two researchers compared the data and results from both Paraguay and Thailand, identifying common themes as well as notable areas of divergence. While recognizing that implementation in two countries may not be a robust enough set of comparison points to completely evaluate all components of the project strategy, the findings provide useful information about the effectiveness, efficiency, relevance, sustainability, and impact of the DMOP process. In particular, the findings highlight that the DMOPs appear to be highly relevant and have strong early evidence for their efficiency and effectiveness. It is more difficult to judge the sustainability and impact of the DMOPs at this point in the project cycle, and it is recommended that the final evaluation pay particular attention to these questions.

In addition to these early results, this evaluation has resulted in a set of recommendations for adaptations that the project should consider as it progresses in the remaining two countries of implementation, Liberia and Argentina. It identifies which practices are working as intended as well as areas where alternative processes may be tested. A main purpose of this evaluation is to refine the project strategy and practice adaptive management over the remaining life of the project, as well as to begin to develop recommendations for how the DMOP strategy can be adapted and implemented in new contexts beyond the ATLAS project, which will be the true test of the project's ultimate sustainability.

3.7. LIMITATIONS

This is an entirely qualitative evaluation, based on a review of relevant project documents and key informant interviews with relevant stakeholders. This is not an assessment of the project's progress toward achieving targets, nor are quantitative results presented. Analysis focused on identifying common themes across respondents, in addition to areas of divergence that evaluators thought it important to surface. Given the relatively small pool of respondents who actively participated in project activities and could be reasonably thought to have insights into the project strategy, it is possible that saturation was not reached in primary data collection and that continuing to interview additional respondents may have generated additional insights. To reduce the chances of missing important information, evaluators made repeated attempts to contact all

possible respondents. In addition, the evaluation teams held validation workshops with stakeholders to test insights and ask about significant points that were not originally raised by multiple respondents. In addition to the validation workshop, the evaluation team in each country presented to local and home office (HO)-based staff to allow staff respondents an opportunity to clarify any findings, provide feedback and fact-checking when appropriate, and supply additional validation to findings.

ATLAS focuses on capacity strengthening at the level of governments. Due to this, direct participants are less numerous than in projects that provide direct services. This both limited the potential respondent pool and limited the ability of the evaluation teams to reach out to respondents directly. In both Thailand and Paraguay, local staff were primarily responsible for identifying potential respondents and connecting them to the evaluators. There is potential for bias to be introduced when the subject of an evaluation chooses who will be consulted for the evaluation. In an effort to be transparent, evaluation teams were presented with comprehensive lists of participants and encouraged to ask respondents to refer them directly to additional participants. Winrock and Partners of the Americas (POA) staff were crucial, however, in supplying evaluators with access to participants. Without their efforts and letters of introduction, it is likely that the evaluation teams would have struggled to connect with respondents.

Another potential limitation is the use of multiple evaluators. ATLAS chose to engage separate evaluation teams in Paraguay and Thailand. This was in part to ensure that the evaluators would be familiar with the local context and would be able to collect data in the language in which respondents are most comfortable. While Winrock conducted a competitive selection process, the evaluation teams in Thailand and Paraguay differed somewhat in their ability to conduct rigorous, systematic analysis of qualitative data, resulting in some differences between country-level reports. In addition, the evaluators from the AGILE unit worked purely from the evidence provided by the local evaluation teams. The different perspectives from different groups of evaluators may be visible in the final product.

Finally, due to the COVID-19 pandemic, most data collection activities were conducted virtually. This is in line with many project activities, which have had to pivot to online due to restrictions on gatherings. Virtual interviewing allowed for safe settings for all key informant interviews (KIIs), but some respondents may not be as comfortable talking virtually and poor internet connectivity can interfere in the quality of interviews. In addition, it may be more difficult for interviewers to interpret non-verbal cues and establish rapport.

4. OVERALL FINDINGS

4.2. EFFECTIVENESS

Respondents in both Paraguay and Thailand emphasized the technical quality of activities and these individuals delivering trainings. While participants had numerous suggestions to improve project activities related to the specific DMOPs, overall, they reported very high levels of satisfaction with both the content of activities and the delivery. In both countries, multiple respondents referred to specific individuals who led or participated in activities as contributing to the overall quality. Evaluators also found that the high quality of project deliverables, such as the manual created for the ETP DMOP-E, were notable achievements. The high level of satisfaction with the quality of the TA and materials provided is likely tied to the carefulness with which these materials are designed. While respondents could often not clearly articulate the value of the BOK or PSAs and were not able to recall specifics from them, if they had even received the deliverables, the use of the BOK and PSAs to develop evidence-based DMOPs for each country were directly linked to the early success of those DMOPs.

While future implementation will occur largely in new countries, the BOK will continue to provide important insights, and the project has demonstrated the ability to conduct rigorous PSAs that provide important information about the legal environments surrounding activities to combat CL, FL, and HT in the countries where ATLAS operates. Perhaps even more importantly, ATLAS has demonstrated the ability to build on the current evidence base of the PSAs and tailor interventions to the specific needs of each country, building on national efforts already underway in this area. The robustness with which ATLAS approaches Steps 1 and 2 of the DMOP process is encouraging for finalizing current DMOPs in Paraguay and Thailand and proceeding to design and implement DMOPs in Argentina and Liberia.

While overall, satisfaction with project activities was quite high, respondents did offer suggestions for improvement. The Living Lab DMOP in Paraguay seemed to particularly excite participants, and similar exercises may be of interest in other settings. In Thailand, respondents reported that cases under discussion were often not directly tied to their experience and that more relevant case studies might have led to more effective trainings. While there was a very high level of satisfaction with the technical expertise of those leading activities, some did note that the use of technical jargon in English was a barrier to many. ATLAS should review all training materials to ensure that the language used is appropriate depending on the country of implementation.

4.3. EFFICIENCY

Due largely to COVID-19 interruptions, ATLAS experienced some significant delays in implementation. Multiple respondents report that the project quickly pivoted and adapted, allowing activities to proceed. However, some delays were inevitable as countries entered lockdown periods and due to shifting regulations. Contributing to and exacerbating delays that COVID caused were scheduling issues in general. The project is often juggling multiple schedules and must be responsive to shifts in government timelines and priorities. When one event is delayed, it may have ramifications on multiple subsequent events or activities. These scheduling issues are a primary reason that some project activities have been delayed. For example, in Paraguay, it took approximately a full year from the start of the PSA to its finalization, which caused later DMOP steps to be delayed as well.

COVID-19 also resulted in needing to shift to virtual events and gatherings. Multiple stakeholders in both countries praised ATLAS staff for the quickness and care with which they were able to transform activities that had been planned as in-person events to virtual gatherings. Some noted that the shift to online trainings made possible the expansion of activities to a wider pool of participants. There were challenges with this shift as well, however. Some respondents reported poor connectivity and bandwidth issues. Government participants are often juggling competing priorities, and many were not able to focus exclusively on ATLAS activities when joining them remotely.

In Paraguay, a substantial minority of respondents spoke unfavorably about the participation of some of their fellow trainees, as not everyone was able to be fully engaged. In Thailand, some respondents reported that events were too long for online sessions and suggested breaking them into more frequent but shorter meetings. Respondents also reported that online learning resulted in less learning overall.

In general, participants agreed that pivoting to online events presented challenges but also created opportunities. Given the uncertainties surrounding the global pandemic, as well as some of the benefits noted, many participants recommended some sort of hybrid future for the project. This is also something that should be considered after the project is over as a potential way to contain costs and sustain the project or implement it beyond the ATLAS Project countries.

4.4. RELEVANCE

In both Paraguay and Thailand, stakeholders consistently reported the relevance of project activities to the needs of country stakeholders. Stakeholders in Paraguay specifically pointed to the PSA, one of the early stages in the DMOP process, as a useful tool for identifying national priorities. Paraguay's PSA identified a robust set of national laws for the ATLAS project to build on, and project objectives converged with existing plans and policies, most notably the National Plan for Preventing and Combating Human Trafficking, the National Strategy of Forced Labor in Paraguay, and the National Strategy for the Prevention and Eradication of Child Labor and the Protection of Adolescent Labor. Similarly, in Thailand, multiple government stakeholders reported that the project interventions and activities met their expectations and the learnings disseminated through project workshops were useful to them in their work addressing CL, FL, and HT.

Stakeholders in Paraguay explicitly called out the care with which POA had planned activities in consultation with different institutions. Relevant stakeholders participated actively in the identification of gaps to address and provided inputs to the action plan. Overall, it is clear that POA has implemented activities in a way that is closely aligned with the project strategy and DMOP process.

In Thailand, while most respondents could not articulate the connections between staff actions and the project strategy, there was general consensus that the project approach allowed for sufficient flexibility to respond to the local context. In addition to receiving trainings, respondents reported that their feedback was solicited and used to refine the training methods and materials. It is important to note, however, that some Thailand staff reported that the project was largely defined by staff in the HO, and they felt that there was not sufficient flexibility to adapt the strategy to the specific context of Thailand.

4.5. SUSTAINABILITY

Overall, most respondents thought it early to be able to draw conclusions about project sustainability. What's more, many ATLAS activities specifically focused on sustainability and the handover of project products and interventions, such as the development and implementation of institutionalization plans and training of certain trainers are only scheduled to begin in future months. That said, some potential risks to sustainability have already been identified. These should be considered by the project while it is ongoing, in an effort to leave stakeholders in the best possible position to continue to make gains in the eradication of CL, FL, and HT after the end of the project.

The most commonly raised issue was that of sustainable financing. While ATLAS has worked carefully to align priorities with the gaps and priorities identified by stakeholders and to align with national policies and guidelines, it is unclear whether host governments will allocated appropriate financing to continue building on project-initiated successes. Country governments struggle to finance their systems and may not have the resources to continue activities that begin under ATLAS. The evaluators in each country, particularly Paraguay, emphasized the need for additional USG funds, but the evaluation did not independently assess the funding landscape and potential for continuation of project activities.

In addition, while ATLAS's multi-stakeholder approach is part of the project strategy and behind its success in building consensus, the evaluators in Paraguay are concerned that lack of a lead agency creates risk of no single unit taking responsibility to build on the project once it is no longer active in Paraguay. As part of its focus on capacity strengthening, ATLAS may wish to identify potential champions who can lead related activities and continue advocating for government prioritization once the project is no longer active. This may increase the chances of sustainable gains by formalizing the transition from project to local ownership.

4.6. IMPACT

Similarly to questions of sustainability, stakeholders and evaluators alike found it early to be discussing significant project impacts. Most DMOPs in Thailand and Paraguay are not sufficiently advanced to understand any long-term effects they may have on capacity to address CL, FL, and HT. However, in both countries there is at least one DMOP that is complete or nearly complete, and these cases provide some insights into small-scale impacts that are likely to grow as the project continues.

In Paraguay, evaluators were able to confirm the impact that capacity building efforts have had on enforcement, particularly through the ETP DMOP. Several interviewees attested to the fact that thanks to the associated training they had a much better sense of how to approach the issues of child labor, forced labor and human trafficking. The police in Paraguay thanked the ATLAS Project for upgrading their knowledge about how to deal with cases that involved minors. They also mentioned that the training strengthened their teams in the human trafficking unit. The labor inspectors interviewed expressed that they are now more aware of the issue of CL and FL.

4.7. SUMMARY OF FINDINGS

Overall, the project is making appropriate progress toward its objectives. This is despite challenges and delays, primarily but not exclusively due to the effects of COVID-19. Nearly unanimously, respondents found the project to be both responsive to country-needs and the interventions to be of high quality. Even those stakeholders who thought that the project should make some adjustments, for example limited the use of technical terms and jargon in English or not covering material that stakeholders were already familiar with, tended to rate the project high overall. While some deliverables were delayed due to COVID-19 and other factors, most stakeholders believe the project will still meet its objectives.

The project effectively pivoted to online platforms in response to COVID-19, but some stakeholders feel that this has come at the expense of quality. When the COVID-19 pandemic became global in 2020, ATLAS quickly and efficiently pivoted from in-person meetings and workshops to online activities. Respondents noted that this has had benefits, including expanding access to project activities to larger groups than could be accommodated via in-person activities. However, there were also tradeoffs in quality, as stakeholders believed that lack of inter-personal communications hindered the development of effective collaboration strategies and that learning outcomes were not met as well via online platforms. Going forward, the project should seek to maximize the potential of virtual engagement while limiting the perils, possibly through a hybrid strategy combining in-person and virtual activities.

ATLAS has not engaged in explicit decision making about how to communicate the project strategy; as a result, many stakeholders were not able to articulate the strategy. Few stakeholders in either country were able to speak about the DMOP process or the project strategy with any clarity. For respondents, the ATLAS project consists of various workshops and other activities. While there was widespread appreciation of project activities and the opportunities provided to learn and connect with others working in the same sphere, these activities are not connected to the larger project strategy for stakeholders and most country-based staff. While ATLAS staff, particularly from Winrock's HO, describe the project in terms of specific Outcomes, other stakeholders are largely only able to report on specific activities, such as a training or event. Even beyond the somewhat complicated DMOP process, in Thailand, neither the project nor Winrock had much name recognition with respondents. In Paraguay, the evaluator framed this disconnect between project

staff and other stakeholders as a "dual narrative," noting that the lack of a lead national stakeholder to guide the DMOP processes contributed to the lack of knowledge of the strategy and recommending that the project put greater effort into explaining the DMOP strategy and process to stakeholders, decision-makers, and project participants.

The project has very specific terminology that staff use to describe processes and activities. While in both Paraguay and Thailand some non-staff stakeholders could describe some of the project's goals and objectives and distinguish between some activities (for example, respondents referenced pilot phases and validation processes), they were substantially more likely to refer to meetings, courses, and other activities in generic terms. POA staff in Paraguay explicitly called out that it seemed more appropriate to avoid an overly formal approach to DMOP terminology; deciding instead to use better-known terminology, such as "identification of best practices." In Thailand, in contrast, one staff member seemed to drive much of the decision making around whether or not to distribute the BOK, even referring to sharing with a wide group as a potential "waste." The DMOP terminology, therefore, is used by Winrock and POA staff, both at the HO and in each country, while external stakeholders use more ad hoc terms

For the long-term sustainability of the project strategy and possible implementation in additional settings after the end of the ATLAS project, staff should consider consistently using the same set of terms internally and externally to build a shared understanding of project processes in addition to overarching goals. While it may be determined that, ultimately, strict project-specific terminology is too limiting and requires too much of participants, a robust discussion of the issue and which terminology to use across Winrock and POA staff affiliated with the project will ensure that decisions are made systematically and based on robust discussion and not on an ad hoc basis by individual staff members, as may currently be the case.

Certain project documents, such as the Body of Knowledge and Pre-Situational Analyses, were not widely shared with stakeholders, and the decision to do or not do so appears to have been ad hoc. The DMOP process calls for the establishment of a BOK to provide and evidence base for project activities. The BOK was one of the earliest resources developed by the project, and it serves as a robust synthesis on the existing evidence around programming to promote effective capacity strengthening related to the prevention of CL, FL, and HT. Those stakeholders aware of the BOK and who have access to its contents generally praise it as an effective tool, but most respondents had not received a copy. According to some project staff interviews, these tools were not considered relevant to stakeholders. It may be worth considering whether products developed in early stages of implementing the project strategy can be used to create a shared understanding of global and country-level trends around efforts to improve enforcement and coordination to reduce CL, FL, and HT.

ATLAS staff are overall highly committed and effective. However, sometimes relationships between global staff located at Winrock HO and country staff in Thailand and Paraguay encountered difficulties. In Paraguay, Partners of the Americas (POA) staff run project operations, and few specific issues were raised. However, Winrock has limited institutional presence or knowledge in Paraguay, and due to travel restrictions, there has been little opportunity for HO staff to work closely with their counterparts in Paraguay. This should be a priority for the project, even as activities in Paraguay move toward their close. Likewise, in Thailand, some project staff reported feeling as if HO staff did not fully understand the local context and constraints. While there may be times when global staff need to make and enforce decisions that country staff do not necessarily agree with, it is important for the project to focus on collaborative communications and ensuring that all staff feel heard and respected.

Sustainability and impact planning need to be priorities for ATLAS in the remaining years of the project. Respondents in Paraguay and Thailand report high levels of engagement and satisfaction with the project strategy and activities. The project is closely aligned with government priorities in both country, in part due to the PSAs that were carried out at the beginning of implementation. However, government budgets are often not sufficient for local ownership of ongoing activities related to the project. ATLAS should consider how to engage with local counterparts to institutionalize activities and sustain progress after the life of the project.

Similarly, the project should be actively planning now for how to achieve and sustain impacts. Institutionalization of project activities, such as the creation of communities of practice for government stakeholders to use to network and collaborate, at this stage of the project could increase the likelihood that participants will continue to build on the project's strategy after the project has concluded interventions in any given country. Impact planning should also consider whether the DMOP strategy can be packaged and shared widely for other implementers to use and adapt in other contexts outside of those included in the ATLAS project itself.

It should be noted that the ATLAS project strategy and DMOP process include an institutionalization phase in which the project will work with government stakeholders to develop and implement institutionalization plans for the various DMOPs so that agencies may use the DMOPs developed beyond the life of the project. However, as the project has yet to enter this phase it was not possible to evaluate this work in this evaluation.

4.8. RECOMMENDATIONS FOR WINROCK INTERNATIONAL

Create an intentional strategy for project communications and the dissemination of products. Few respondents were familiar with the project strategy or some of the key documents. Many were not even familiar with the project name or the name of Winrock as the implementer. ATLAS should consider defining a strategy about what is to be communicated to stakeholders and that strategy should be flexible yet consistent among countries where implementing. This will ensure that messaging is clear and consistent as well as intentional and not the result of ad hoc staff decisions. Consider developing a flyer with a simple presentation of the DMOP to be distributed in all the events and among the stakeholders as a way to create a common understanding of the project strategy across participants.

Continue to adaptively manage project activities and strategy. While the shift to online activities was necessary due to the global pandemic and increased access to a wider range of participants, there were downsides. Many of the government participants were unable to focus for the length of workshops, due to the difficulty of online gatherings and competing priorities. For many, bandwidth limitations inhibited participation. ATLAS should develop protocols on hybrid training models for future projects. These may include basic standards for internet connections and types of equipment as well as a set of commitments for project participants and their institutions. ATLAS should also consider adapting the format of online or hybrid activities. For example, multiple respondents expressed a preference for more but shorter online sessions. Continue to solicit feedback on training topics, the content of workshops, and the mode of delivery of information and use to adapt activities to the specific context.

Create space for updating project tools but try to reduce planning time. Engaging relevant expertise, from higher education institutions and others involved in combating CL, FL, and HT in project countries, to maintain and expand project documents such as the BOK and ETP Manual. Be sure to select participants with the appropriate profile to actively engage in project activities in an effort to reduce dropout rates in the pilot phases of activities. To ensure that participants can actively engage, plan around schedules and try to ensure that project activities can be completed within working hours. Continuously assess the validity of working assumptions, making sure they are tested and updated as needed. Build in time for country staff to engage in the planning process. Simultaneously, the project will likely need to speed up implementation to reach its objectives in the remaining time. There may be efficiencies to be found in reducing the time for PSAs and similar deliverables.

Foster local ownership: To promote a sense of government ownership in project initiatives, Winrock or ATLAS should continue promoting co-creation—that is, bringing together government agencies and organizations and moving toward partnerships based on shared goals and objectives. ATLAS, more importantly, should foster more government ownership of the technical assistance provided and shared accountability in the project. This may be achieved by engaging more decision-makers or government stakeholders to be party to the project design and implementation.

In addition, the project should continue to build on the communities of practice it has started to establish. The project has created a critical mass of people that are more interested and better

prepared to respond to CL, FL, and HT. However, the community is still weak. The pandemic has not allowed it to consolidate. It is therefore very important to continue the training, extending its reach to ensure that a significant number of people is reached, enough to survive the quick turn over that exists among public sector personnel. It is also important to nurture the community, feeding them with information, updates, briefs, and news about new events. In that sense, an additional recommendation is to facilitate networking and create virtual communities with those who have been in the meetings and trainings.

5. PARAGUAY MIDTERM EVALUATION REPORT

5.2. EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Paraguay is a middle-income country, with an estimated population of seven million[1] (about twice the population of Oklahoma) that includes a substantial proportion of young people. The United Nations Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean estimates that 20% of the population lived in poverty by 2020.[2] The minimum monthly wage is US$334 per month, and gross domestic product per capita is at US$4,950, compared to US$16,287 in neighboring Uruguay. A sizable proportion of the population is economically vulnerable whether they are classified as poor or not. It is estimated that 70%[3] of the population do not have health insurance or any type of social security. Families carry with the burden of care and out of pocket expenses in case of illness. These vulnerabilities are undoubtedly acting as social determinants for cases of CL, FL, and HT. It is in this environment that the ATLAS project is implementing six DMOPs.

The DMOP strategy in Paraguay consists of six specifics DMOPs, three in the area of enforcement and three in the area of coordination. Each of these DMOPs follows the nine steps of the DMOP process. These are in synch with outcomes 2 and 3 of the ATLAS Project. The following table show the status of each DMOP.

DMOP	Status
DMOPs - Enforcement	
Enforcement Training Program	Step 7/8 - They have evaluated the training and refined the training program, presented the refined program to stakeholders and are implementing new methodologies.
Living Lab	Step 5/6 – The pilot phase is ending, going into evaluation and refinement
Moot Court	Step 4 – The ATLAS Project has yet to establish working groups and refine the model of practice
DMOPs - Coordination	
Multi-Agency Unified Enforcement Procedures	Step 5 – The pilot is approaching the final stage, preparing for evaluation and then refinement
Inter-Platforms Coordination Mechanism	Step 6 – Pilot stage ended, and they are entering the evaluation stage, looking at refinement

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[1] https://www.ine.gov.py/default.php?publicacion=2

[2] https://statistics.cepal.org/portal/cepalstat/perfil-nacional.html?theme=1&country=pry&lang=es

[3] Instituto Nacional de Estadística del Paraguay, Encuesta Permanente de Hogares 2017 – 2019, Seguro de Salud

Community Referrals	Step 5 – Pilot stage, with important communication material that needs to be tested.

The midterm evaluation relied on an extensive desk review and a sample of interviewees that was relatively well balanced in terms of stakeholder type. Because of the timing of the midterm evaluation and the status and timeline of each DMOP, the information and data provided by the interviews was largely related to the Enforcement Training Program (ETP) DMOP. The evaluation research was therefore much more able to provide a fair assessment of that DMOP, than of the others, which have started their pilot phase in earnest by mid-2021, more or less at the time the evaluation began.

The pandemic undoubtedly affected the project implementation process. When the evaluators looked into the impact of the lockdowns on the ETP DMOP, the effects of the pandemic did not seem to be as serious as one would have thought. However, when one broadens the perspective and reviews all the DMOPs one can notice that the pandemic has had more grave consequences. The main one has been the delay in the initial steps of the DMOP process, namely steps 1, 2 and 3.

These delays were compounded by the relatively slow start of steps 1 and 2. The final version of the PSA was ready in March/April 2020, almost one year after signing the Winrock and POA agreement and the initial transfer of funds. Step 3, the validation process of the prioritization that emerged from the PSA took 4 months, with individual virtual meetings at a time when the Executive was asking most national stakeholders to focus on the response to the pandemic. The attention and engagement with the project on behalf of the national stakeholders at the time was at a low point.

The fact that the ETP DMOP was able to reach step 7 by the last quarter of 2021, is a demonstration that the DMOP strategy can work in the Paraguayan context. Despite all the odds, first and foremost the ones related to the pandemic and the rapid transition to an online process, the ATLAS Project managed to proceed.

The ETP DMOP was well regarded by the interviewees, and the desk review also showed the evaluators good training materials and monitoring reports. The Manual produced by this DMOP is of superior quality and can be part of future training programs with periodic updates. The technical reports also demonstrated a thorough process of validation, piloting, evaluation and refinement.

This Living Lab DMOP has garnered interest in the enforcement community, because tort legislation in the case of damage done to victims of CL, FL, and HT did not previously have many precedents in Paraguay. The ATLAS Project has raised the importance of the topic and one respondent, a very prominent judge in the organized crime area, stated that the debate about that issue helped underline the importance for the prosecution to gather evidence about the damaged caused to the victims.

The project also show that coordination can improve matters in the case of referrals of cases at the local level. The Multi-Agency Unified Enforcement Procedures DMOP has a strong case when it proposes to clarify protocols on how the different stakeholders can work together in order to see certain cases through, from the moment of the identification of a case, through the referral to the appropriate enforcement agencies, and then the provision of services for the protection and the restitution of rights of the victims. Clarification of protocols would combine not only the roles and responsibilities of each institution, but also enhance cost efficiencies, by combining resources from the different agencies. A respondent from a non-governmental organization (NGO) addressed this issue and argued that this was one of the strengths of the ATLAS Project and the Multi-Agency DMOP. The DMOP helped stakeholders develop a clear vision of the way forward, and the technical assistance for the design of these "routes of intervention" was commendable.

The development of the policy paper, "Analysis of Public Policies on CL, FL, and HT" provides a substantive and lengthy account of the avenues that are open for the national stakeholders to go about establishing the above-mentioned links and connections. The purpose is to give these sectors technical guidance on how to plan for the appropriation of resources to effectively address the challenges of CL, FL, and HT. Such an approach is likely an effective strategy to ensure the sustainability of the interventions and trainings that the ATLAS Project has introduced.

Thanks to the ATLAS Project there is also a better understanding of the roles and responsibilities of each of the institutions involved, both within the social protection sector and the law enforcement sector and the ATLAS Project can be considered as a benchmark for international technical assistance projects in the areas of better enforcement of laws in the areas of CL, FL, and HT. Its evidence-based priority setting and validation process, as well as the practice of piloting, evaluating and refining interventions, have generated interventions that are well aligned with national plans and policies.

The project has made a significant dent on the socio-cultural "normalization" of CL and FL, raising awareness that such things are wrong. In the territories where it has chosen to act, the ATLAS Project will have a significant impact in terms of the capacity of the departmental actors to articulate efforts and pool resources to intervene in cases of CL, FL, or HT. The problem with this probable impact is that the project would need to continue funding the activities for at least two years.

5.3. INTRODUCTION

5.3.1.   NATIONAL CONTEXT

Poverty is one of main contributing factor to CL, FL and HT in Paraguay. However, we should also bear in mind that there are other factors that converge with socio-economic vulnerabilities. These are: a) the increasing presence of organized crime [4] in the country while Paraguay is rapidly becoming an important transit country for drug trafficking, and b) the informal economy, which constitutes more than 50% [5] of the economy. While poverty and the prevalence of illegal practices do not, by themselves, explain the occurrence of child labor, forced labor and human trafficking, they are important enabling conditions. There are also other mediating circumstances, which have to do with patriarchal gender norms, racial and ethnic discrimination and the ensuing "normalization" of CL, FL, and HT. It is this reality that leads to the sad fact that often the intermediaries between the vulnerable communities and families and their exploiters are members of the victim's families and communities, including parents that give the traffickers their daughters or place their sons and daughters in child labor.

Unfortunately, statistical information of child labor, forced labor and human trafficking is out of date, scant or non-existent. Situational analyses still depend on the 2011 National Survey of Activities of Children and Adolescents, which found that 22.4% of children ages 5–17 was engaged in CL. [6] The third National Census of Indigenous Peoples indicated that FL is prevalent among Paraguay's indigenous population. [7] A study conducted in 2005 [8] reported that in 2000, of the 16,000 indigenous households, 1,570 received "non-monetary benefits" in exchange for work. Paraguay is a country of origin, destination, and transit of men, women, and children who are trafficked for sexual exploitation and FL. Sex trafficking primarily impacts women, girls and

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[4] https://insightcrime.org/paraguay-organized-crime-news/#:~:text=Organized%20crime%20in%20Paraguay%20benefits%20from%20rampant%2C%20widespread,of%20the%20region%E2%80%99s%20burgeoning%20narcotics%20hubs%20in%20Bolivia.

[5] https://www.mf.com.py/medios/blog/ocupacion-informal-en-paraguay-componentes-caracteristicas-y-perspectivas.html

[6] https://www.dequeni.org.py/es/userfiles/files/paraguay-informe-actividades.pdf

[7] https://www.ine.gov.py/Publicaciones/Biblioteca/indigena2012/Pueblos%20indigenas%20

en%20el%20Paraguay%20Resultados%20Finales%20de%20Poblacion%20y%20Viviendas%202012.pdf

[8] https://www.ilo.org/wcmsp5/groups/public/---ed_norm/---declaration/documents/publication/wcms_081941.pdf

transgender persons. Young women are recruited for drug trafficking in Europe and Africa, where they are often subjected to forced prostitution. It has also been reported that children are subjected to FL in the cultivation and sale of illicit drugs in Brazil. The triple-border area between Argentina, Brazil and Paraguay is vulnerable to HT due to the lack of regulatory measures, insufficient transnational cooperation, and the flow of illicit goods and services. We can in fact attest that it is the combination of vulnerability and the growing presence pf organized crime in a country where the rule of law is weak that appears as the most common backdrop to the cases that are identified.[9]

These afore-mentioned realities collide with a robust legal framework, but nonetheless very weak institutionalization and rule of law. Paraguay has ratified key international conventions on CL, FL, and HT; met minimum standards for trafficking in 2015, 2016, and 2017; and made significant advancements to their legal framework to address labor abuse, although they have yet to ratify P029. Among major advancements are the implementation of the National Strategy for the Prevention and Eradication of Child Labor and Protection of Working Adolescents, and the ratification of the Declaration of the Latin America and the Caribbean Free of Child Labor.

It is also true that there are institutional mechanisms for CL law enforcement and regulation that rely heavily on anti-trafficking units (ATUs) in the National Police (PN), the Public Defender's Office, and the Ministry of Children and Adolescents (MINNA). These institutions are responsible for investigating the worst forms of CL whereas enforcement of CL and FL laws falls to the Ministry of Labor, Employment, and Social Security (MTESS), which the Labor Code empowers to apply administrative, but not criminal, sanctions on employers.

The problem is that a lack of knowledge means that most government officials, other than those in specialized units or major cities, are unaware of procedures for proactively identifying victims among vulnerable populations, such as sex workers, domestic workers, or street children.

Compared to other countries, Paraguay is advanced in terms of inter-ministerial coordination on issues of CL, FL, and HT, maintaining four mechanisms to coordinate government efforts on CL: the National Commission for the Prevention and Eradication of Child Labor and Protection of Working Adolescents (CONAETI), the National Commission on Fundamental Rights at Work and Prevention of Forced Labor (CONTRAFOR), the Interinstitutional Roundtable for Prevention and Combat of Trafficking in Persons, and the Defense Councils for the Right of Children and Adolescents (CODENI). Despite these mechanisms, the lack of human resources, training, authority, siloed interventions, and basic infrastructure hinder the entities' capacity to act.

5.3.2. THE COVID19 PANDEMIC

The Pandemic in Paraguay had a first phase that consisted of a harsh confinement period from March 12, 2020, until May 4, 2020. Starting in May, the country entered a phase of gradual flexibility and easing of the restrictions to salvage the economy, allowing the reactivation of industrial activity and the re-opening of outdoor public and private spaces. After that, starting May 25, 2020, there was a reopening of commercial and manufacturing activities with strict health protocols in place, and on June 15, 2020, activities such as restaurants, gyms and cultural and religious gatherings were allowed with certain restrictions.[10]

Starting July 2020, the measures began to vary, and lockdown criteria became more complex. These were applied according to local contexts, lifting restrictions in areas with low infection rates and maintaining stricter measures where rates were higher, as in the case of the more densely populated areas, including the Asunción and its metropolitan area. In 2021, the country suffered a new wave, with a peak in March and April. Then vaccines started to appear on a piecemeal basis, and finally in June 2021, the flow of incoming vaccine doses started to have an impact. Today the vaccination plan is up and running, with doses becoming available with more ease. The number of

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[9] See Technical Project Document, Winrock International, ATLAS project, 2019, Section on Paraguay national context.

[10] Information on the different phases of the COVID response was provided by the Partners of the Americas regular technical reports, on the basis of the decrees and announcement made by the Ministry of Health.

cases has been steadily decreasing since July 2021, with days in which no deaths were reported and ICUs were mostly empty. The country has reached an estimated 35%.[11] fully vaccinated rate and is now starting a more aggressive vaccination campaign.

5.3.3. THE ATLAS PROJECT PARTNER IN PARAGUAY, PARTNERS OF THE AMERICAS (POA)

ATLAS does not employ Winrock staff in Paraguay. Instead, ATLAS works through their local partner, Parterns of the Americas (POA) to implement. POA has worked very closely with MTESS, since the previous administration of President Horacio Cartes, when Guillermo Sosa was Minister. The minister always asked POA to be present and lend a helping hand when he received yearly visits of USDOL representatives and helped draft the end of mission memorandums.

Although it is the first time POA deals with forced labor and human trafficking, it was a timely evolution, because the Government of Paraguay (GOP) was concerned about observations and recommendations made by International Labour Organization (ILO) committees to investigate the complaints about cases of forced labor in the Chaco region, where indigenous people had been victimized.

POA's work with the MTESS had been mainly in that area of child labor, thanks to the "Okakuaa" project.[12], also funded by USDOL, even though it extended to include forced labor as a result of the ILO observations and the request made to USDOL by the MTESS. This experience played to the advantage of the ATLAS Project, in the sense that POA already had a relation with many of the stakeholders that needed to be mobilized to implement the activities. For example, POA's partnership in Boquerón, Chaco, on the issue of child and forced labor.

5.4. THE MIDTERM EVALUATION

In August 2021, Winrock launched a call for proposals to organizations and individuals to do the midterm evaluation of the ATLAS Project in Paraguay titled "Attaining Lasting Change for Better Enforcement of Labor and Criminal Law to Address Child Labor, Forced Labor and Human Trafficking 2019 – 2022", which was funded by USDOL, and implemented in Paraguay by POA, with the support of Lawyers Without Borders (LWOB). The global objective of the ATLAS Project is to strengthen the capacity of government counterparts in Thailand, Paraguay, Liberia, and Argentina to respond to child labor, forced labor, and human trafficking. The technical assistance provided by the project should lead to a strengthening of the labor and criminal legal frameworks that refer to CL, FL, and HT, better enforcement of the legislation, and improved coordination between the institutions charged with the response.

In Paraguay, the ATLAS Project focused on two of the above-mentioned outcomes, namely outcome 2 "(2) improved enforcement of the labor and/or criminal frameworks, specifically related to child labor, forced labor and/or human trafficking; and outcome 3: "increased coordination among law enforcement and social protection entities to address child labor, forced labor, and/or human trafficking". Partners of the Americas and Winrock signed their agreement on April 15, 2021, and since then they have been implementing the nine steps indicated by the Differentiated Model of Practice (DMOP) to ensure an evidence-based strategy, anchored on the specific priorities of Paraguay.

For the midterm evaluation of the ATLAS Project in Paraguay Winrock contracted the services of Facultad Latinoamericana de Ciencias Sociales (FLACSO) and asked them to focus on the DMOP strategy, implementing a qualitative study of the effectiveness, efficiency, relevance, sustainability,

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[11] https://dgvs.mspbs.gov.py/

[12] Paraguay Okakuaa is a project of the MTESS of Paraguay, funded by USDOL, and implemented by Partners of the Americas and its allies (Centro de Información y Recursos para el Desarrollo and Fundación Alda).

The project supports Paraguay in its efforts to reduce the worst forms of child labor, combat forced labor, and improve labor law compliance and working conditions, with a particular focus on the departments of Guairá and Boquerón. In response to the MTESS's political will, the project expanded its efforts to the Chaco—particularly in the Department of Boquerón—to address the issue of forced labor. There, Paraguay Okakuaa provided educational services that promote protected spaces for children vulnerable to child labor and/or forced labor. Activities will also include coordinating actions among key stakeholders and raising awareness and providing training on forced labor to improve working conditions. The project ended in September 2021.

and impact of the strategy. The terms of reference also underlined the importance of looking into the way in which the Covid 19 impacted project implementation. Winrock's expectation for this evaluation was to identify strengths and weaknesses of the strategy, investigate best practices and lessons learnt and thereby reach a set of recommendations that could be useful for implementation of the DMOP strategy in the future, either by Winrock, POA and/or USDOL. The terms of reference included in the call for proposals made by Winrock foresaw a midterm evaluation that would rely primarily on information obtained through a set of semi-structured interviews with key stakeholders and project staff and a desk review. What follows is the final country report of that evaluation.

5.4.1. DIFFERENTIATED MODEL OF PRACTICE STRATEGY

To strengthen enforcement systems and coordination mechanisms, Winrock developed a unique approach, known as a DMOP, for achieving project outcomes. The DMOP process is described in detail above. The emphasis in the case of Paraguay has been to strengthen the enforcement of already existing legislation and to increase coordination.

The DMOP strategy in Paraguay consists of six specific DMOPs, three pertaining to the area of enforcement and three pertaining to the area of coordination. These are in synch with outcomes 2 and 3 of the ATLAS Project. The evaluators reviewed the concept note for each of these DMOPs, and what follows is a brief synthesis of each:

DMOPs for Outcome 2: Improved enforcement of the labor and/or criminal legal framework, specifically related to CL, FL, and HT

a) <u>Enforcement Training Program</u>: A systemic training program for key government stakeholders, focused on strengthening capacity to act in cases of CL, FL, and HT. It builds knowledge and skills, using comprehensive training materials and provides a manual that can be used by all actors (labor inspectors, prosecutors, police, judges, public defenders, and officials from social protection sectors). It responds to the weak enforcement gap identified by the PSA and aims at strengthening understanding of the existing laws and regulations, so that each institution can better understand their role and responsibility.

b) <u>Living Lab:</u> This DMOP uses the Living Lab (LL) participatory approach to offer participants a platform where they can link research and practice to develop innovative approaches to address victim compensation. The DMOP collects information on the status of proceedings for compensating CL, FL, and HT victims and on that basis organizes working groups among judges, public defenders, prosecutors and Ministry of Labor officials, to seek practical ways in which gaps can be addressed. The DMOP also shares international experience in this area.

c) <u>Moot Court:</u> Moot Court is a training activity which consists of a mock trial competition in which participants simulate playing the typical roles of prosecutors and defenders (role play) for a specific hypothetical case presented before an examining board. This involves the preparation, presentation, and legal defense of a pre-established case file, within the framework of a process that generally consists of two stages: the first is written and the second is oral. It aims at strengthening capacity of technical officials from institutions of the justice system: Supreme Court of Justice [1] (CSJ) (officials from the criminal sentencing courts), Public Ministry[2] (MP) (prosecutors' assistants) and the Ministry of Public Defense [3] (MDP) (public defenders' assistants) from the central level and the territories prioritized by ATLAS, with the objective of enhancing the study, understanding and knowledge of specialized legal action of cases involving punishable acts related to CL, FL, and HT.

DMOPs for Outcome 3: Increased coordination among law enforcement and social protection entities to address CL, FL, and HT.

a) <u>Multi-Agency Unified Enforcement Procedures: A</u>ddresses the need to work with government institutions at the regulatory level to have a unified understanding of CL, FL, and HT and streamline enforcement procedures to improve coordination. It promotes a

further integration of the existing coordination platforms at the central level (CONAETI, CONTRAFOR, and the HT Roundtable). The DMOP provides technical assistance to enable a comprehensive and coordinated approach, considering the importance of referral mechanisms between enforcement institutions and social services to support victims. These procedures will also be presented at the local level in the project's target territories. In this context, five departments have been identified in consultation with key government stakeholders, based on their specific characteristics and challenges regarding CL, FL, and HT: Boquerón, Ñeembucú, Caaguazú, Guairá, and Itapúa.

b) <u>Inter-Platform Action Plan Coordination Mechanism:</u> This DMOP aims at aligning sectoral policies on CL, FL, and HT with the macro social development policy currently in force in Paraguay. It also aims at strengthening the capacity of the national and local stakeholders pertaining to those sectors to follow the institutional planning processes, establishing the links with the National Development Plan and the results-based budgeting system currently underway in the public sector. The purpose is to give these sectors good sense of how to plan to obtain of resources to effectively address the challenges of CL, FL, and HT. Such an approach will also identify how each of these sectoral policies contribute to specific targets contemplated in the National Development Plan (NDP). Finally, the DMOP wants to work with the Departmental Governments, for them to mainstream those same sectoral results in their departmental development plans, following the same results-based budgeting methodology.

c) <u>Community Referrals:</u> This DMOP focuses on improving the identification and referral of cases of CL, FL, and HT both at the national and local levels, through a targeted strategic communication campaign. It provides technical assistance to a working group formed by officials from the communication offices of key government stakeholders[4]. It includes the development of different awareness materials to be disseminated through social media such as Facebook, Instagram and WhatsApp, radios, printed materials and theater performances. These cover a variety of topics, such as: inter-relation among CL, FL, and HT, decent work, existing reporting channels and protection services, rights of victims in judicial processes, roles of different justice system institutions and social protection agencies in addressing CL, FL, and HT, deeply-rooted cases of the worst forms of child labor widely prevailing in the country such as *criadazgo*, as well as topics related to acceptable working conditions, raising awareness about the existing reporting channels and protection services available to victims.

Overview of the DMOP implementation process in Paraguay

The desk review allowed the evaluator to analyze the progress made in terms of the 9-step process. This was thanks to the revision of the periodic technical progress reports that POA produced on a quarterly basis.

On April 15th, 2019, POA and Winrock signed their agreement and commenced a preparatory planning phase that takes that entire year. During that stage, step 2 of the DMOP was the major concern. The scope of work for the PSA was sent to USDOL in August 2019, and in November 2019, POA presents the preliminary results to national stakeholders in a validation workshop, with 26 participants from 13 institutions. The draft PSA report subsequently went through several iterations involving POA, Winrock and USDOL. The draft PSA report was sent by Winrock to USDOL the 13th of December 2019. After that, the draft returned to Winrock, with comments and recommendations from USDOL, and the draft was again revised and refined by Winrock and POA. The final version of the PSA was approved in March/April 2020.

Step 1 of the DMOP process, for the case of Paraguay, was affected by the fact that the BOK was formally issued in April 2020 and came into the picture when the ATLAS Project in Paraguay was already quite advanced in the process for Step 2, as can be seen above. When the BOK was going to be further discussed between the partners Winrock and POA, the pandemic broke out and the scheduled in person meeting between the partners was cancelled, and they discussed the findings of the PSA and what aspects of the BOK could be useful in three virtual meetings. The POA partners acknowledged the value of the BOK, as a reference, but at the same time commented that the

good practices and lessons learned compiled by the BOK seemed to them quite generic and were difficult to use in an already ongoing DMOP process.

Step 3 of the DMOP process was certainly affected by the pandemic. This step was the core of the project implementation process in 2020. With the identification of the gaps that had been the product of the PSA, the ATLAS Project proceeded to hold consultation events with key stakeholders to prioritize efforts and identify TA needs. By then, the above mentioned DMOPs had already been outlined and the issue was to validate an action plan for each of these. The initial plan was to do it jointly with all the national stakeholders in an in-person format, but due to the strict confinement measures taken by the Government to control the spread of COVID-19, the format was changed, and they were eight individual virtual sessions with each national stakeholder. The national stakeholders included were the following:

- Ministry for Children and Adolescents – June 10, 2020
- Public Ministry – June 15, 2020
- Ministry of Labor, Employment and Social Security – June 29, 2020
- Ministry of Public Defense – July 21, 2020
- Supreme Court of Justice – July 24, 2020
- Ministry for Women (MM) – August 10, 2020
- National Police – August 24, 2020
- Ministry of Foreign Affairs (MRREE) – Sept 7, 2020

These sessions were held at the ministerial level in the cases of the MTESS and the MDP, vice-ministerial level in the case of MM, and at the level of director general in the cases of CSJ, MP, MINNA, MREE and, finally, at the commissar level in the National Police. There was not a validation meeting with the Ministry of Social Development (MDS), but an agreement was signed with the Minister in February 2021.

After these validation meetings, the ATLAS Project started step 4 for each of the specific DMOPs. The development of the concept notes for each DMOP began in earnest, the territories in which the project would act at the local level were defined, and preparatory meetings were held with some of the departmental governments, such as the case of Boquerón. The training materials for the ETP DMOP were developed, and the experts and instructors were defined. At that point of the implementation process, it was the ETP DMOP that was poised to start step 5, the pilot phase. The other enforcement DMOPs still needed to survey the situation further and extract lessons learned from the ETP DMOP to be able to start off. In the case of the coordination DMOPs, it was more problematic to establish the working groups and prepare the training materials. The coordination DMOPs were much more affected by the pandemic, because they needed to establish local level working groups and the pandemic made it difficult for them to be able to have in-person preparatory meetings, particularly in the case of the multi-agency DMOP. On the other hand, the community referral DMOP suffered delays because POA needed to recruit a communications specialist in order to have the necessary expertise for implementation. In the case of the Inter-Platform DMOP, a complex policy paper had to be developed and the terms of reference and consultancy for that important material were not yet in place.

This all lead to the fact that the only DMOP that was ready to start the step 5 pilot phase in 2020 was the ETP DMOP. In October 2020, the last version of the ETP training manual was issued and the pilot started with the General Symposium (November 4 and 6, 2020), followed by the Social Protection Symposium (November 20 and 25, 2020), and the Enforcement Symposium. A first group of ToT sessions were implemented for labor inspectors and members of the MP (December 11, 2020) and with the Police.

The pilot phase of the ETP DMOP continued in 2021, with the ToTs for police (April 10, May 12, May 31, and June 9, 2021) and labor inspectors (February and March 2021); and there was also the training of judges. A special in-person training with members of the MP was planned to be held in June and October 2021, but it was postponed at the request of the MP until February 2022. In July 2021, the ETP DMOP started to close its pilot phase and start step 6 with the evaluation. There have been individual evaluations with the MTESS on July 16, 2021, PN, July 16 ,2021, CSJ, July

23, 2021, and a larger evaluation meeting with MINNA, MDS, the Ministry of Education and Sciences (MEC), and MRREE, on July 29, 2021.

Meanwhile, the second enforcement DMOP called Living Lab and the coordination DMOPs started to enter step 5, the pilot phase. The year 2021 witnessed an acceleration of activities related to those DMOPs. There was a virtual meeting with the three platforms, called CONAETI, CONTRAFOR and the HT Roundtable, in Feb 2021, to discuss the importance of developing synergies between the different institution's roles and responsibilities, and in March 2021, the recruitment of the consultancy to develop the "Analysis of Public Policies" paper that would guide that process of coordination began. The results of that consultancy were presented during a virtual meeting in July 2021, the national stakeholders provided feedback and the final version was presented in September 2021. Those were key milestones for the Inter-Platform DMOP. The community referral DMOP had three meetings in Feb 2021 to define next steps in that DMOP and completed a table with the outreach activities each of the national stakeholders would commit to within the strategic communication framework. Since then, several communication materials started to be utilized. On the other hand, the multi-Agency coordination DMOP started to have in-person meetings with selected Departments to raise awareness and prepare for the installation of the HT inter-institutional committee, mirroring the HT roundtable at central level.

For DMOP-E Living Lab, ATLAS drafted a survey with the aim of collecting data on the institutional experiences of key government stakeholders (CSJ, MDP, MTESS, and MP) on compensation to victims of CL, FL, and HT. A total of 42 interviews were conducted throughout May and June 2021. The data collected indicates there was a lack of clarity among stakeholders regarding their intervention in cases of CL, FL, and HT in relation to the matter of claims or actions for damages. With few exceptions, stakeholders in the justice system have vague knowledge or no knowledge of the national and international regulations applicable to CL, FL, and HT situations. Additionally, there is no unified criteria on which is the competent authority or the adequate procedures and legal mechanisms to address CL, FL, and HT cases. On July 28, 2021, the project held its first meeting with the working group with the objective of presenting the work plan, methodology and objectives on the topic of compensation to victims of CL, FL, and HT to be carried out in the framework of the Living Lab. The in-person meeting was attended by 18 officials from the CSJ, MDP, MP, and MTESS, who were formally appointed by their institutions to participate in this DMOP. On September 2, 2021, the second meeting was held to present the results of the survey and make an introductory presentation on damage. The virtual meeting was attended by 14 officials of the workgroup.

5.4.2. METHODS

The midterm evaluation interviewed a pool of stakeholders representing central government ministries and institutions, departmental governments, regional offices, and civil society organizations. The selection of interviewees was made jointly with the ATLAS Project staff in Winrock and in POA. The latter had direct knowledge of who participated in what activity and whether they had been participants, instructors or "decision makers". This category of "decision maker" refers to the heads, usually directors or general directors, of the national institutions that were considered key stakeholders for the project. They were key decision makers because during the DMOP validation process, they provided the go ahead for the activities and also guided the selection of the participants and instructors for the training.

The selection was carefully done, to have a good sample of the different stakeholders (inspectors, judges, prosecutors, directors, members of the social protection ministries, etc. All the interviewees were initially approached by POA staff, and they scheduled the appointments. Once that appointment was scheduled, the evaluator approached them, thanking them for their time and provided them with copy of the presentation letter drafted by Winrock. None of those approached were unavailable, except the original choice of respondent from the Specialized Technical Unit for Human Trafficking and Sexual Exploitation of Children and Adolescents of the MP. One of the attorneys of the unit was nonetheless interviewed.

The interviews were conducted by the principal evaluator and his assistant, lasting on average 45 minutes. The assistant used the questionnaire to guide the interview and the principal evaluator recorded the conversation and took notes. He intervened frequently to probe the interviewee or to clarify any issues that were not being well explained.

The interviews were conducted using a semi-structured questionnaire that needed to be applied with certain flexibility, because the interviewees had different approaches to some of the issues that were asked or had been involved in different ways with project activities. The questionnaire was structured around four headings: a) knowledge, experiences and perspectives towards the ATLAS Project and its activities; b) evaluation of the ATLAS Project activities, project achievements, best practices, and challenges; c) impact and sustainability, and d) recommendations for the execution of the project. Each of the questions under these headings were tagged with five main categories, that is, effectiveness, efficiency, relevance, sustainability, and impact.

The evaluators managed to interview thirty-six stakeholders, including four project staff, one from Winrock and three from POA. In addition, they interviewed ten decision-makers and 22 additional participants. They started the 24th of September and ended the 15th of October 2021. These interviews were audio recorded to have a backup in case the evaluators wanted to verify information that was noted down in paper during the interview. During the interviews and after, the principal evaluator transcribed a clean version of the handwritten notes, and these were compiled into one master interview document. Based on the analysis of those clean notes the evaluator established patterns and did the analysis. The approach was more akin to a thematic analysis in the sense that the evaluator followed the above-mentioned headings and tags, and at the end focused mostly on the tags to organize the material for the final report.

The evaluators have saved in shared folder for further consultation, if necessary, the audio recordings of the interviews, the clean notes of each of the interviews and the compilation of responses.

Although the sample of interviewees was well balanced in terms of stakeholders, it must be noted that, because of the timing of the mid-term evaluation and the status in which they found the DMOPs, the information and data provided by the interviews was largely related to the ETP DMOP. The evaluation research is therefore much more able to provide a fair assessment of that DMOP, than of the others, which have started their pilot phase in earnest by mid-2021.

Profiles of Key Informants by Their Workplaces

Department/ Agency	Ministry/ Organization	# of Respondents
Government Stakeholders		
Court of Appeals for Children and Adolescents	Supreme Court of Justice	2
Jurisdictional Unit	Supreme Court of Justice	3
Human Rights' Directorate	Supreme Court of Justice	2
International Center for Judicial Studies	Supreme Court of Justice	1
Deputy Prosecutors' Offices Prosecution Areas	Public Ministry	2
Specialized Unit Against Human Trafficking	Public Ministry	1
General Protection of Children and Adolescents (DGPNA)	Ministry of Labor, Employment and Social Security	1
Directorate of International Norms	Ministry of Labor, Employment and Social Security	1
Regional Directorate of Labor	Ministry of Labor, Employment and Social Security	2
General Directorate of Inspection and Control	Ministry of Labor, Employment and Social Security	2
Higher Institute Training Center (ISEPOL)	National Police	2

Department/ Agency	Ministry/ Organization	# of Respondents
Investigation Department against Human Trafficking	National Police	1
Department for Labor Matters	Ministry of Public Defense	1
Department for Civil, Children and Adolescents Matters	Ministry of Public Defense	3
Ministerial Cabinet	Ministry of Public Defense	1
Education and Training Department	Ministry for Social Development	1
Department of Human Trafficking Prevention Policies	Ministry for Women	2
Departmental Government of Boquerón	Provincial Government	1
Policy Directorate	Ministry of Foreign Affairs	1
ATLAS Project Team and Civil Society Organizations Stakeholders		
Partners of the Americas	NGO	3
Winrock International	NGO	1
Dequeni	Civil Society Organization	1
Total		35

5.5. EVALUATION FINDINGS

5.5.1. A DUAL NARRATIVE

The evaluator found that it was indispensable to do the desk review of the project documents and technical reports to be able to have an understanding of the DMOP strategy in Paraguay. The interviews were not useful for a more integral view of the strategy´s implementation process. This was mostly due to the fact that there wasn´t a lead national stakeholder that was guiding the whole process. Such a function remained very much in the hands of POA. As a result of this, respondents were largely unable to speak directly to project strategy using project terminology.

The interviewees did not address the DMOPs as such but spoke about specific components in the case of the decision makers or about activities in the case of participants. The interviewees did however distinguish between a validation process, a pilot phase and an evaluation, but they were unsure about what were the exact titles of the activities in which they were involved, they referred to meetings, courses and the like, in generic terms.

In the tabulation of the interviewees answers regarding outcomes, activities and milestones of the ATLAS Project one can notice the gap that exists.

Are you familiar with the ATLAS Project?		
Yes	No	Partially
27	0	1
Does the interviewee mention the objectives when invited to so?		
Yes	No	Partially
1	18	9
Have you participated in one of the Project activities?		
Yes	No	Observation:
28	0	
Does the interviewee correctly identify the activity?		
Yes	No	Partially
5	4	19

There was only one interviewee that mentioned outcomes 2 and 3, and nobody really referred directly to any of the sub-outcomes of the project. Those partial answers that are recorded in the table refer mostly to people mentioning the topics of CL, FL, and HT, or alluded to the focus on training in law enforcement.

At moments, the answers to these questions were somewhat discouraging. Particularly, when you heard one interviewee saying that he or she did not recall clearly when a course or training took place, or what it was about exactly, adding a comment such as "I have so many trainings". This should be put into context, considering some of the realities of the public sector in Paraguay. The evaluators, in this consultancy, and in other similar experiences with Government personnel, have noticed that for individuals to advance in their careers, they are often requested to present proof of trainings and certificates. Thus, there are incentives for them to take as many courses as possible to nurture their CVs. On the other hand, as one respondent pointed out, law schools in the country rarely touch on subjects related to CL, FL and HT, while new institutional departments in the MP, PN and MDP on those issues are being installed, convening people with the necessary expertise.

Something similar to the above phenomenon occurs when the evaluators asked about the PSA and the BOK.

Do you recall the presentation of the PSA at the start of the project?		
Yes	No	Partially
6	22	0
Do you recall having referred to the Body of Knowledge?		
Yes	No	Partially
2	22	4

Unfortunately, although some of the decision makers were aware of the PSA and acknowledged its presentation, the interviewees that had been in courses and meetings could not attest to the existence of a PSA or the BOK, as shown in the table below. In the interviews with project staff from POA, they acknowledged this reality, but, at the same explained that DMOPs at steps 1 and 2, where mostly dealt with the decision makers and the participants that were later selected for the training and meetings, had not been briefed or made aware of the PSA, and even less so of the BOK.

The answer "partially" in the case of the BOK refers to interviewees that believe they were introduced to the BOK but were not sure. They commented that the training activities and meetings often referred to good practices and lessons learned, but they could not specify which ones.

In reference to these specific issues regarding the recognition of key steps in the DMOP process, by the interviewees, one member of the POA staff explained that they believed it was smarter to take some precautions in the way they communicated the DMOP process. It seemed more appropriate to avoid a very formal approach to the DMOP terminology and focus on engaging the national stakeholders by referring to better known project terminology, such as evidence-based planning, validation processes, piloting, evaluations and identification of best practices, among others. They have thus opted for a more implicit mainstreaming of the DMOP process, without insisting on terminology that might appear to be too much of packaged deal.

This circumstance did complicate the analysis for the evaluators because they looked for tips on the DMOP process from the interviewees, but these were hard to come by. Nevertheless, as mentioned above, one can easily trace the DMOP strategy when doing the desk review, and POA has been quite diligent in respecting the 9-step process. However, this divide between official documentation of the project strategy and the lack of effective communication of that strategy beyond ATLAS staff is stark.

Finally, what the evaluators perceive is that the above-described situation, coupled with the complexity of the project strategy and unique implementation methodology for each DMOP, made

capturing the effectiveness and impact of the strategy difficult and lead to the creation of a "dual narrative." By this, the evaluators refer to the phenomenon in which, on the one hand, you have the overarching higher level narrative used by the project implementing partners (Winrock and POA) and, on the other a more piecemeal narrative used by the national stakeholders.

5.5.2. EFFECTS OF THE COVID 19 PANDEMIC

The pandemic undoubtedly affected the project implementation process. When the evaluators looked into the impact of the lockdowns on the ETP DMOP, the effects of the pandemic did not seem to be as serious as one would have thought. However, when one broadens the perspective and reviews all the DMOPS one can notice that the pandemic has had more grave consequences. The main one has been the delay in the initial steps of the DMOP process, namely steps 1, 2 and 3.

These delays were compounded by the relatively slow start of steps 1 and 2. The final version of the PSA was ready in March/April 2020, almost one year after signing the Winrock and POA agreement and the initial transfer of funds. Step 3, the validation process of the prioritization that emerged from the PSA took 4 months, with individual virtual meeting at a time when the Executive was asking most national stakeholders to focus on the response to the pandemic. The attention and engagement with the project on behalf of the national stakeholders at the time was at a low point.

The pandemic also affected the initiation of step 4, particularly in the case of the coordination DMOPS. The latter were much more a field-based intervention implying frequent travel to the departments and more engagement with actors in the interior of the country. The confinement restricted travel and in person meetings, and many of the stakeholders in the departments did not have such good connectivity, nor access to good equipment to connect.

The pandemic also restricted in-person contact between Winrock and POA staff. These two partners were unknown to each other, and the Winrock staff has not been able to visit the country and become acquainted with important on the ground realities firsthand. It must be noted that Paraguay was chosen as a beneficiary by USDOL, and Winrock went along choosing POA as a subgrantee.

In the case of the ETP DMOP, the fact that they were able to transition to step 4, relying on the online mode created new obstacles and advantages for counterpart participation and engagement. Participation was increased thanks to the online platform, meaning that more people could be reached through the internet than by using the in-person mode. There was no need to travel and that lowered costs. On the other hand, the participants with bad or no connectivity in far out places suffered the consequences of a digital divide of sorts. Participation also suffered from switched off cameras, sudden loss of power and disconnection, bad audio, etc., all conspired against good engagement. Dropout rates became an issue, both from the course altogether, or from one of the sessions. Julio Ramirez, a commissar from the PN stated that from their team of 20 participants in the ToT for police, 12 managed to finish the courses. The online modality also hampered the opportunity for participants to network between themselves, even some of that did happen anyway.

5.5.3. EFFECTIVENESS, EFFICIENCY, AND IMPACT

The ETP DMOP example

The fact that the ETP DMOP was able to reach step 7 by the last quarter of 2021, is a demonstration that the DMOP strategy can work in the Paraguayan context. Despite all the odds, first and foremost the ones related to the pandemic and the rapid transition to an online process, the ATLAS Project managed to proceed.

The ETP DMOP was well regarded by the interviewees, and the desk review also showed the evaluators good training materials and monitoring reports. The Manual produced by this DMOP is of superior quality and can be part of future training programs with periodic updates. The technical reports also demonstrated a thorough process of validation, piloting, evaluation and refinement.

The comments made by the interviewees were tabulated and the evaluator made a judgement call from the revision of the interview notes in order to assess the number of "only positive comments", "only negative comments" and "combined positive and negative comments". The results are found in the following table, and are organized in such way that one can see comments regarding the different aspects of the ETP.

What is your assessment of the activities you participated in?				
	Only positive	Only negative	Positive and negative	Observations
Organization	9			
Contents	11		1	Some interviewees would have liked more on the issue of the criminal offenses involved in cases of CL, FL and HT.
Instructors	8			
Methodologies	5		2	The negative comments were mostly related to the pros and cons of online platforms.
Participation	6		3	• Alumni complained about lack of commitment of their peers. • Others suggested that there should be more follow up activity with on-the-job training • Some interviewees wished there had been more debate about the issues • Would like to have seen more participation from the Education sector and Foreign Affairs.
Scheduling	1	1	1	

The interviewees commended the specialists, instructors, and contents of the activities in which they were involved. They also seemed very satisfied with the organization of the different events, including the teaching and facilitation methods used in the activities.

The assessment of the activities became more nuanced when interviewees dwelled into issues related to participation and scheduling. Their observations on participation were not a criticism of the training and facilitation methods used by the project but seemed to be mostly directed at some of the fellow classmates and the use of the online platforms. The evaluators heard complaints that many people were linked to the sessions but turned off their cameras and remained very passive during the class or meeting. It was only once that an interviewee mentioned that the instructors tasked to teach some of the police ToT modules covered too much ground in one session and left too little time for participation.

The other participation issue had to do with connectivity and the quality of the devices that are available. The government officials at the lower echelons of the bureaucracy, such as police officers or departmental government officials, usually had less capacity to connect. Some of them did not have internet connection in their homes, or had bad connectivity in their workplace, as well as inferior quality equipment. This created a digital divide of sorts, whereby some of the

government stakeholders had limited technological resources, which prevented them to have quality participation, while others were better set up for the transition to online platforms.

Overall, the transition to online platforms had the important merit of allowing the enforcement training program to move through its pilot and refinements phases, despite the COVID restrictions. In many instances it was even able to reach out to more participants than it would have been able to reach out to using an in-person format. The participants appreciated the quick adaptation of the project, even though they also expressed their preference for a hybrid model once conditions allowed. One of the minuses of the online training, according to some of the interviewees was that although it does not impede networking altogether, it makes it more difficult, and by doing so it hampered the inter-institutional coordination component of the project.

What did become evident in the interviews is that the activities faced scheduling difficulties. The issues brought up by the interviewees had to do with following:

- Planning activities with the Supreme Court of Justice must be done very early on because the approval process in the CSJ goes through several steps. The recommendation would be in this case to start 6 months in advance.
- Planning activities with the judiciary should consider that for most of the judiciary the last trimester of the year is not a good time for trainings, because it is a time dedicated to end of year reporting and planning.
- Overall, scheduling trainings and meetings for government personnel, of all branches and levels, should bear in mind that activities after working hours are not a good match. Most professionals in the government have their own busy schedules and have parenting and family commitments.
- Finally, for online courses, extended periods of time are not advisable. One course had two 4-hour sessions per month. The capacity of students to follow and pay attention diminished consequently. The other complaint was that having only two sessions in a month meant that there was too long of an interval between each session.

Despite these challenges, the achievements outweighed the challenges. The impact in capacity building for enforcement was confirmed by the evaluators. Several interviewees attested to the fact that thanks to the training they had a much better sense of how to approach the issues of child labor, forced labor and human trafficking. The police thanked the ATLAS Project for upgrading their knowledge about how to deal with cases that involved minors. They also mentioned that the training strengthened their teams in the human trafficking unit. The labor inspectors became more aware of the issue of CL and FL. For them the definition of child labor, namely prohibited child labor, was of great importance, because, as Jose Garcia, from the MTESS in the Department of Cordillera, said, it is not the case that CL and FL are events they regularly confront in the inspections, so the training gave them practical knowledge about how to identify these cases and what to do as inspectors. Likewise, an expression used by Judge Alicia Orrego, was that thanks to the training she felt much more prepared to confront cases of CL, FL and HT. She explained that judges have a very heavy agenda and attend several cases during the year. The Department of Central, where she acts a Sentencing Judge, is one of the busiest judiciaries in the country. The time she has to prepare for each case is short, and thus the training on what questions to ask, what type of evidence she should request the prosecutors to present, how to typify the associated criminal offences, were all topics that she clarified in the training. One could notice in the interview that the training had empowered her in a very positive way.

Today, the ETP DMOP is poised for step 8 and should start thinking about institutionalization. In that sense, the indicators used to measure that achievement are converging on an optimistic note. The national counterpart's commitment to overcome the challenges posed by CL, FL, and HT, bodes well for the sustainability of the ATLAS Project capacity building interventions. The SCJ and its General Directorate of Human Rights have incorporated the topics of CL, FL and HT in their strategic plan. Their training institute can incorporate the modules developed by the project into their curricular plan. The training center of the Public Prosecutor's Office (Public Ministry) has the capacity to take up some of the training modules of the ETP courses, particularly those areas that concern criminal cases. They could even extend coverage and reach professionals in other

departments. Other training centers, such as the one in the Ministry of Public Defense (MDP) and the Ministry for Children and Adolescents (MINNA) could adopt modules if there is an agreement to restructure existing curricula. It is also the case of the National Police. ATLAS should continue to monitor the situation and provide support for sustaining the ETP DMOP where possible.

The Living Lab DMOP as promising practice

The Living Lab DMOP is about to end its pilot phase. When the evaluators matched some of the interviewee's responses with the Living Lab meetings, it became obvious that the experience the interviewees were having in that DMOP was a very positive one. What the interviewees appreciated was the methodology, which consists of a horizontal and participatory approach, whereby the participants share experiences and experts talk about concrete cases. In this case, the issue compensating victims is the focus, providing cases related to tort legislation.

This DMOP has garnered interest in the enforcement community, because tort legislation in the case of damage done to victims of CL, FL, and HT did not have many precedents. The ATLAS Project has raised the importance of the topic and Elsa Garcia, a very prominent judge in the organized crime area, stated that the debate about that issue helped underline the importance for the prosecution to gather evidence about the damaged caused to the victims, in the case of human trafficking, for example. She also emphasized that in the investigation it was important to identify the assets of those who have been indicted and make the judges in charge of the control of guarantees order the embargo of those assets, until the accused are sentenced. Since calculating compensation in monetary terms has little precedents in the Paraguayan jurisprudence, the sharing of international experience by the Living Lab has also been greatly appreciated.

The relevance of the topic, and the methodology of the DMOP during the pilot phase have been complemented by some of the lessons learned in the selection of participants extracted from the ETP DMOP. It happened that in the pilot phase of the ETP DMOP the trainees were often selected haphazardly by the decision makers, and the profile of those selected did not really match the profile that the training course was designed for. Therefore, the POA team changed tactics after the evaluation and refinement and instead of asking the decision makers to select participants, they preferred to rely on firsthand knowledge of the participants in the ETP trainings and asked the authorities of the national stakeholders to allow specific people to participate. What the POA staff argue is that this new tactic has resulted in more participation and less dropout rate.

The coordination DMOPs

The midterm evaluation of the coordination DMOPs presented some challenges because these were not yet well advanced in the pilot phase, and therefore there was not much that could be gauged through the interview process. What was more useful to evaluate these DMOPs was the desk review, which gave the evaluators good information about the design stage and initial arrangements that took place in steps 3 and 4. Some of the findings from the DMOP-Es should be kept in mind as implementation of DMOP-Cs continue.

Before commenting on that design, the evaluators believe it is pertinent to clarify that coordination, as a way to leverage better enforcement, is not only the purview of the coordination DMOPs. The General Symposium, and the Social Protection and Enforcements Symposiums that were organized during the initial stages of the ETP pilot phase also contributed to coordination, because they were multi-stakeholder meetings. This was also the opinion of some of the interviewees that reflected on the impact of the training. They seemed to agree that the multistakeholder approach increased the capacity for coordinated action, because the different stakeholders became more aware of the role and responsibilities of each institution, as a result. Such awareness has also been capitalized by the participants themselves, who, by their own initiative, engaged in informal networks with other participants to facilitate the exchange of technical information and knowledge on enforcement and inter-institutional coordination.

The Social Protection Symposium opened a much-needed channel of communication, knowledge sharing, and debate between the jurisdictional entities (Justice Palace, MP and MDP) and the social sectors (MTESS, MINNA, MDP, MM and MEC). However, in that regard, the evaluators have

perceived that the ATLAS Project theory of change emphasizes the idea of coordinating between the enforcement sector and social protection sector, but more from the perspective of strengthening enforcement. It does less in the area of strengthening the capacity to prevent cases by acting on the social determinants of CL, FL, and HT. Such an approach, in a country such as Paraguay, where social policies and protection systems are not robust enough to eradicate the vulnerability of communities and families that are victims of CL, FL, and HT, can be, to a certain extent, self-defeating. Namely, because the cases will continue to crop up as a result of that vulnerability.

The evaluators became aware of the above-mentioned conundrum when they interviewed a respondent from the cash transfer social program called Tekopora. She spoke about the main purpose of connecting with the ATLAS Project being the training of their social workers, who visit the families that are eligible for the cash transfer. A training that is mainly focused on recognizing possible cases of CL, FL, and HT, in order to alert the enforcement sector. On the other hand, a judge included in the respondent list was quite adamant about the fact that it was very frustrating to do enforcement in a context in which social policies were incapable of reversing the tendency for more cases to arise. She mentioned the Abrazos program of the MINNA, which supposedly was set up to reduce CL, but the proportion of children in CL continues to be the same after years of the program's implementation.

The National System for the Promotion and Protection of the Rights of Children cannot cope with the situation. Its Departmental and Municipal Councils, as well as the CODENI are very weak or non-existent. On the other hand, social protection programs, such as Tekopora, a cash transfer program can avoid some cases extreme poverty, but cannot address the deep underlying structural issues that undermine the families and communities' capacity to steer clear from CL, FL, and HT.

The senior evaluator notes the design of the DMOP-Cs includes very complex objectives, some of which rest on questionable assumptions. One such assumption is that a relatively small project, as is the case of the ATLAS Project, can have a significant impact in the capacity of the three main platforms (CONAETI, CONTRAFOR and the HT Roundtable) to coordinate more operative, aspects, such as the issue of referrals. These large bodies are not meeting regularly. When the evaluators asked the representative of the MRREE when the last time was that the HT Roundtable had met, she could not remember. This may be to turnover in the role, as the previous Coordinator of the HT Roundtable was appointed as an ambassador. The relevant respondent is currently serving as interim Coordinator and, as such, does not have the authority to convene meetings. While these specific circumstances may not be repeated, the project should attempt to plan for turnover inherent in government positions. The meetings of these inter-institutional platforms are most useful to discuss policy, rather than interventions. In that sense. the national plans and strategies that have been endorsed by these bodies do have a role to play, but they cannot go much beyond that. One possible recommendation to emerge from this is that ATLAS should periodically review the project assumptions to validate their continuing relevance.

The argument made by the Multi-Agency DMOP is that the national level platform coordination will be mostly to push through policy and norms, whereas the emphasis on operational procedures will rely mostly on the inter-institutional coordination at the departmental and municipal level. That approach makes much sense, and the usefulness of a project that strengthens that capacity is evident. In the interview the evaluators had with a high-level respondent from the Department for Children, Women and Older Adults, of Boquerón, the appreciation for the ATLAS Project was emphasized. She called the project "my only hope", because it had allowed her to convene inter-institutional groups, create the committee on HT, and expand her capacity to visit certain sites and talk to far away communities. As she talked about that "only" hope, the evaluators took note that her budgets and the support provided by the sector ministries were quite limited. In fact, at one point she mentioned that the MINNA has not yet set foot in Boquerón, and that the MM could not support any of the meetings on HT she has been able to have with the support of the ATLAS Project.

This leads us to bear in mind that despite the enthusiasm and willingness to continue with the capacity development process initiated by the ATLAS Project, those departments that have been on board suffer from underlying weaknesses in terms of finance, logistics, equipment, human

resources, and infrastructure. All of which make it unlikely they will be able to sustain the interventions without that external budgetary support. In reference to other departments, the evaluators took note that commitment and leadership for a sustained process of capacity development for better law enforcement on CL, FL, and HT is weakest among some of the country's key departments (Alto Parana, Cordillera, Amambay, and San Pedro were mentioned).

The other assumption, that CODENIs could be a sort of hub of interinstitutional coordination at the municipal level can also lead to some questioning. The evaluator has worked on the revision of the National Plan for Children and Adolescents in 2021, and for that task interviewed several key stakeholders connected to MINNA and the National System for the Protection and Promotion of Children's Rights. The CODENIs, which are limited to issues related to children under 18 years of age, are very weak entities, most of them with only one person as personnel. The membership of the CODENIs is very much tied to the political changes at the municipal level and lack the necessary professionalism.

Despite these potential flaws, coordination can improve matters in the case of referrals of cases at the local level. The Multi-Agency Unified Enforcement Procedures DMOP does have a strong case when it proposes to clarify protocols on how the different stakeholders can work together in order to see certain cases through, from the moment of the identification of a case, through the referral to the appropriate enforcement agencies, and then the provision of services for the protection and the restitution of rights of the victims. The proposed changes would combine not only the roles and responsibilities of each institution, but also enhance cost efficiencies, by combining resources from the different agencies. Andreza Ortigoza, from the NGO called Dequeni, addressed this issue and argued that this was one of the strengths of the ATLAS Project and the Multi-Agency DMOP. It had a clear vision of the way forward, and its technical assistance for the design of these "routes of intervention" were commendable. The problem, as stated above, was that for this to be mainstreamed at the departmental level there was a need to expand the number Departments reached and the time foreseen for the capacity development to have an impact needs to be extended. In the case of the Inter-Platforms Action Plan Coordination Mechanism DMOP the aim of aligning sectoral policies on CL, FL, and HT with the macro social development policy currently in force in Paraguay is a strategic contribution. It will eventually strengthen the capacity of the national and local stakeholders pertaining to those sectors to establish links with the National Development Plan objectives, targets and indicators, and then with the results-based budgeting system currently underway in the public sector.

The development of the policy paper "Analysis of Public Policies on CL, FL, and HT" provides a substantive and lengthy account of the avenues that are open for the national stakeholders to go about establishing the above-mentioned links and connections. The purpose is to give these sectors technical guidance on how to plan for the appropriation of resources to effectively address the challenges of CL, FL, and HT. Such a purpose is probably the best strategy to ensure the sustainability of the interventions and trainings that the ATLAS Project has introduced. The issue is its complexity. For such an approach to take hold among the CL, FL, and HT stakeholders the project would have to pilot the case during the planning and budgeting stages that the government goes through during the first and second quarter of 2022, for the results to be seen in the National General Budget Bill that is presented to Congress in September of each year, to be approved by December of that same year. The same applies for the development of the departmental development plans that follow the same results-based budgeting methodology.

The Community Referrals DMOP is also an essential component of the ATLAS Project. The multi-stakeholder consensus on the communication strategy that has been achieved, promises to reinforce the effectiveness of all the other DMOPs, since it covers the whole cycle of awareness raising, identification of cases, formulation of complaints, referrals, protection of victims, and the treatment of the cases by the judiciary.

The working group is made of one representative from each of the participating institutions. In principle, the working group has defined responsibilities for each entity and the pilot phase is advancing. Much of it has to do with development of communication materials. The revision of some of these materials was done during the desk review, and what was at hand seemed to be of

good quality, some of them with very simple and basic messages, in Spanish and in Guarani. They have also taken good care to customize the materials so that they are useful in the urban and rural contexts, with traditional radio communication, and also social media, which is good. As the Community Referral concept note explains "It includes the development of different awareness materials to be disseminated through social media such as Facebook, Instagram and WhatsApp, radios, printed materials and theater performances. These cover a variety of topics, such as: inter-relation among CL, FL, and HT, decent work, existing reporting channels and protection services, rights of victims in judicial processes, roles of different justice system institutions and social protection agencies in addressing CL, FL, and HT, deeply-rooted cases of the worst forms of child labor widely prevailing in the country".

The delay in reaching the pilot phase in this DMOP has been unfortunate, since according to the DMOP approach communications and monitoring and evaluation ought to be present during the course of the project's life. In this case, the materials will be part of the project's legacy and should be a central aspect of the quest for the intervention's sustainability after the closure of the project.

5.5.4. RELEVANCE AND SUSTAINABILITY:

One of the principal factors that played in favor of the project was its relevance. Even though during the pandemic the government prioritized actions that were directly related to the response to the public health crisis at hand, the interviewees commended the project for having planned jointly with government counterparts and establish clear links between the project objectives and the national plans. Meaning, the general National Development Plan for 2030, and the different sectoral strategies and plans in the areas of CL, FL, and HT. What follows are some of the important findings in relevance.

The PSA had already pointed out that the ATLAS Project had a robust set of national legislation that it could draw on in order to direct its support, and at the same there was a convergence of project objectives with different plan and policies, most notably the National Plan for Preventing and Combatting Human Trafficking, the National Strategy of Forced Labor in Paraguay, and the National Strategy for the Prevention and Eradication of Child Labor and the Protection of Adolescent Labor.

Are the project objectives well aligned with government priorities		
Yes	No	Partially
23	0	2

One of the strengths of the ATLAS Project is that it was deemed relevant by the totality of the interviewees. The responses that are classified as "partially" have mostly to do with the departmental governments. In those cases, the interviewee criticized that the sub-national level was not giving the issue the importance it needed to and that its priorities were other altogether. Another "partial" answer was that the project objectives were aligned with the government priorities, as they appear in policy documents, but that the priorities on the ground/in action were different.

The decision makers that were interviewed said that the alignment was possible because POA had been very careful in planning activities in consultation with the different institutions. The actions taken by POA in that regard were very much in line with steps 2 and 3 of the DMOP process. The stakeholders participated in the identification of the gaps they needed to address and discussed the action plan. The mapping out of gaps had come out of the PSA that had been initially conducted.

When asked about the relevant contributions made by the project, the interviewees mentioned the following points:

- Awareness raising and agenda setting made progress.
- Raised the issue of what the institutions can do to pool resources and act in a coordinated manner

- Provided knowledge on how to best investigate and condemn cases of CL, FL, and HT.
- Increased the capacity of stakeholders to act according to their roles and responsibilities.
- Upgraded human resource knowledge and skills.
- Clearly identified the legal instruments available to condemn guilty parties in the areas of CL, FL, and HT.
- Facilitated the identification of alerts that needed to be denounced so as initiate an investigation of cases of CL, FL, and HT.
- The question of compensating the victim and calculating the damage done in monetary terms has been a novelty in the discussion.
- Established a benchmark for assessment of quality technical assistance.

On sustainability, it seems obvious the biggest issue that the ATLAS Project faces, revolves around this question. At this moment, the ATLAS Project in Paraguay has not reached the institutionalization phase yet, but a sustainability strategy needs to be urgently discussed.

Such a strategy must focus on consolidating some of its initial gains to increase its chances for a successful transition to a sustainable process, led and funded by national stakeholders. The biggest hurdle here are the fiscal limitations that all government agencies face. They argue that government is trying to recover its fiscal balance, keeping a tab on budgets after increased spending and indebtedness surged to respond to the pandemic's impact on public health, education, and the economy.

On the other hand, even though the ETP DMOP has a more promising institutionalization phase to look forward to, the prospects for a sustained capacity development process are most challenging in the case of the gaps that were only recently identified in the debate about CL, FL, and HT. We refer mainly to actions needed to protect and compensate victims, as well as actions required to investigate the vulnerabilities faced by migrants and refugees.

Compensation of victims is seen as a challenge that could best be approached by working with the tribunal on economic and organized crime and the specialized units in the MP. There are several challenges in the investigation of crimes related to HT, which require complex technical knowledge related to finance and digital processes. The prosecutors have the challenge of finding the evidence by being able to navigate these complex mechanisms and muster up a robust case for the court. Among those challenges is the need to identify the assets of those who have been indicted to embargo them preemptively in case they are finally sentenced guilty, and their assets can be used for compensation.

Another of the dimension of a possible sustainability strategy is that interviewees recommend doing more advocacy with the Departmental Governments. One of the advocacy tactics that was mentioned in the interviews is the presentation of a "Letter of Commitment" to be taken up by the National Board of Governors and have all the Department Governors sign it. That same letter could also be used to advocate with candidates that will run in the upcoming gubernatorial elections of 2023.[13].

On the other hand, it is important to remember that one cannot rely exclusively on departmental governments. There is a tendency in Paraguay to "delegate" social protection action to the departments, but without the resources necessary to take meaningful action. The coordination effort needs to become tightly knit joint action of both the national and sub-national levels. The "integrated routes of intervention" in the coordination DMOPDMOPs ought to reinforce this aspect.

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[13] The electoral process in Paraguay includes an important primary process through which political parties select candidates for all the elective offices that are at stake. In 2022 there will be primaries to select candidates for President and Vice-President, members of both chambers of Congress, and the Departmental Governments that include a Governor and members of the departmental councils. The selected candidates will then go on to run in the general elections, in April 2023. The whole process will necessarily affect the behavior and choices government decision makers and leaders make. This could affect sustainability efforts.

The other aspect of this concentration on coordination has to do with the issue of institutional leadership. As it has been stated in the findings, the multistakeholder approach has the merit of strengthening the integrated approach to CL, FL, and HT, but at the same time it leaves the issue of appropriation by national stakeholders in a difficult path of convergence. An issue to be considered whether it would not be a good idea to investigate the possibility of having a lead institution linked to the Presidency that would look at the issues from a development perspective and who also have a role to play in the national budgeting process. In the validation workshop, the role of the National Planning Secretariat was mentioned, but the POA staff also suggested looking into the Social Cabinet that directly responds to the President. It would be useful to explore whether an arrangement such as this could help ease a latent tension there is between the enforcement and the social protection sectors, whereby on accuses the other of being inefficient in its quest to prevent the multiplication of cases, and the other says that when the social protection identifies criminal cases law enforcement is too slow in its reactions.

5.6. RECOMMENDATIONS

Despite the many challenges the project faces with regards to sustainability, what we have been able to examine above in terms of achievements and perspectives for institutionalization encourage us to reflect on some of the probable impacts, good practices and lessons learned. What the evaluators have been able to observe in terms of probable impact is that the project has set the ground for collaboration among stakeholders in the areas of CL, FL, and HT. This could be formalized through a "community of practice," which would act as a tool to identify impact and produce quality products that can be used for situational analyses, training, organizing, investigating, and judging cases of CL, FL, and HT.

There is also a better understanding of the roles and responsibilities of each of the institutions involved, both within the social protection sector and the law enforcement sector and the ATLAS Project can be considered as a benchmark for international technical assistance projects in the areas of better enforcement of laws in the areas of CL, FL, and HT. Its evidence-based priority setting and validation process, as well as the practice of piloting, evaluating and refining interventions, have generated interventions that are well aligned with national plans and policies.

The project has made a significant dent on the socio-cultural "normalization" of CL and FL, raising awareness that such things are wrong. In the territories where it has chosen to act, the ATLAS Project will have a significant impact in terms of the capacity of the departmental actors to articulate efforts and pool resources to intervene in cases of CL, FL, or HT. There is some concern that this impact would require continuing funding for the activities for at least two years, but Multi-Agency Unified Enforcement Procedures (MAUEP) workshops are highlighting that budgetary concerns can be alleviated with a correct inter-institutional articulation, hoping that each institution will make efficient use of the available economic resources.

It is very hard to identify good practices and lessons learned drawing exclusively from what have been findings in the desk review and the interviews. On a tentative basis, we would enumerate the following:

1. Good and respectful communication with the national counterparts: Project staff took the time to ensure planned activities were validated by the nine institutions that participated in the project;

2. The project took advantage of the social capital that had been nurtured by previous USDOL projects and quickly identified decision makers who could commit the institution's participation in the project;

3. Developed top-quality situation analysis that identified issues, challenges, and gaps in the areas of CL, FL, and HT;

4. Recruited project specialists who could garner the respect of national counterparts and provide adequate guidance to consultants, other specialists, and instructors; e) Good selection of national instructors for the courses and trainings;

5. Showed flexibility and adapted to national and local contexts without abandoning the core principles of the DMOP process;

6. Adapted quickly to changing Covid 19 pandemic conditions, going online when needed and opting for more hybrid solutions when it was called for;

7. Developed a top-quality training manual that covered all dimensions of the integrated approach to CL, FL, and HT;

8. Developed a concrete proposal on how to conceive inter-institutional integrated routes of intervention in cases of CL, FL, and HT;

9. Created a dynamic and participatory DMOP (Living Lab) that concentrates on the issue of compensation of victims;

10. Developed a cross-cutting communication strategy that is useful at all levels of the ATLAS Project community of practice, be it at the national or community level, with law enforcement agencies or with the social protection sector;

11. Respected the DMOP steps of piloting, evaluation, and refinement, to improve project interventions;

12. Refined the selection of participants in the training programs, with a more thorough and precise description of the profile of those prospective students; and

13. Kept good records of the activities, participants, evaluations, and report on them in a regular basis.

Taking all these findings into consideration, the evaluators believe that the main recommendations are as follows. These are divided into recommendations for the ATLAS project to consider and recommendations for USDOL or other donors to consider. Please note there is some overlap in recommendations, as some can be considered by ATLAS for the remainder of the project, while others may be of use in future programming aimed at improving capacity to combat CL, FL, and HT.

5.6.1. RECOMMENDATIONS FOR ATLAS:

1. Avoid the dual narrative issue by investing more time in the explanation of the DMOP to stakeholders, at the decision makers level, as well as at the participant level. Such an explanation could be done by making references to program and project management terminology that is of more common use in the country. If there is not one yet, consider developing a flyer with a simple presentation of the DMOP to be distributed in all the events and among the stakeholders.

2. Avoid in other ATLAS Projects such a long planning phase, shortening the time between the signature of the agreements and the presentation of the final version of the PSA, in order to go more quickly into the validation process and the agreement on the DMOPs that are necessary to reach the project expected outcomes.

3. Develop protocols on hybrid training models for future projects. It would be useful to have basic standards for internet connections and types of equipment. In those protocols the project might want to consider including a set of commitments that should be made by the providers of the training and the participants, and by the institutions in which the participants work. These institutions should take responsibility for releasing their personnel for the time that is required to fully participate in the training. They should also guarantee that the personnel that is being trained has the adequate connection to internet and the required equipment. If these conditions apply, try to have participants always turn on their cameras and make sure to have an induction program for instructors, on how to use participatory methods using online platforms.

4. Make sure to have the training modules well recorded for asynchronous dissemination of lessons, to multiply audiences.

5. Set standards for the periodic update of key project documents, namely the PSA, the Manual for Enforcement Training, the Analysis of Policies, and communication materials. Use these to interest other higher education institutes so they may consider having special seminars, reaching out to law schools in the country. The National Council for Higher Education (CONES) has a list of the higher education institutes and universities that might be useful to identify education partners.

6. Grant importance and planning time to scheduling courses in training. When it comes to building capacity of government personnel, try avoiding training out of working hours.

7. To reduce dropout rates in the pilot phase of trainings, take the necessary time to select participants that match the required profile. During the validation process of the DMOPs give due time to discussion the profile of participants.

8. Convene a special meeting with the training centers of all the stakeholders that have one, whether they are higher education institutes as in the case of the CSJ or graduate level in the PN. Discuss with them the terms for the institutionalization of the ETP DMOP.

9. Expand the use of the Living Lab methodology[14], using an analysis of case studies participatory approaches that unleash co-creative potentialities, and strengthen the awareness of users and the real-life settings.

10. Bear in mind that the midterm evaluation could not assess the pilot phase of the coordination DMOPs and had to reflect on the materials and evidence provided by the desk review, with some additional opinions and information provided by interviewees. That circumstance made the evaluation of those DMOP tend more towards and ex ante evaluation than a formative evaluation. Nonetheless, there are lessons and elements of the evaluation of the ETP DMOP that are useful for all the Paraguay ATLAS Project DMOPs. The end of program evaluation should consider a special section on emphasis on the assessment of results in the coordination DMOPs.

11. Consider strengthening the approach the ATLAS Project has towards socio-economic policy and development. The analysis of the social determinants of CL, FL, and HT is relatively weak and there is a tendency to give too much weight to what some critics would call the judicialization of poverty. Overcoming the issues that are of concern has a strong component related to prevention through socio-economic policy and focus on livelihoods, which is not well presented.

12. Examine in more depth the validity of certain assumptions about capacity of departmental governments and municipal councils. Consider the time and scope of a capacity development interventions such as the one proposed by the coordination DMOPs, in order to define with precision what results are within the realm of possibilities for the ATLAS Project in Paraguay.

13. Focus attention on the issue of the routes of intervention in the coordination DMOPs, in order to leave a well thought out protocol on how to coordinate interventions to identify,

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[14] See https://re.public.polimi.it/retrieve/handle/11311/959178/299408/DellEra%20and%20Landoni%20%282014%29_CIM_Living%20Lab%5bRe.Public%5d.pdf

refer, protect, judge guilty parties and protect and compensate victims. Good documentation on this issue will be of great utility.

14. The situation analysis should contemplate a more specific study of each the departments or regions of the country to better survey the more nuanced aspects of the problems at territorial level. The trafficking route in Caaguazú, HT, and FL in the triple border in Alto Paraná, and the Chaco context have been mentioned.

15. The critical pathway to pilot and refine the Inter-Platform Coordination Mechanism needs to be well thought out. The document on the "Analysis of Public Policies on CL, FL, and HT" and its proposal of linking those areas with the National Development Plan and results-based budgeting process has to be piloted with selected national stakeholders in the 1st and 2nd quarter of 2022, so as to articulate will with the national budgeting process that goes from the preparation of the plans of each government agency, then the intervention of the Technical Planning Secretariat and to the Treasury Ministry, and then to Congress.

16. Have a special internal strategy meeting between Winrock and POA on sustainability in order to prepare the project's legacy and define an action plan. If possible, an exercise on costing the scaling of the ATLAS Project interventions would be handy to help the discussion about budgeting with the national stakeholders.

17. In the discussion about possible extension of the project, with continued funding from the donor the emphasis could be placed on the issue of compensation of victims, the right of migrants, and the correct piloting on the Inter-Platform Coordination Mechanism DMOP, as priorities. Winrock should organize a mission to Paraguay, get better acquainted with the context, and gauge the need for such extension. The pandemic has had an important impact on the timing and the issues of sustainability present us of with very compelling arguments in favor of such an extension, if possible until the end of 2023.

18. The evaluators find that the concept of "community of practice" is quite useful to analyze the results of the ATLAS Project. It adequately describes what has been building up as a consequence of the trainings and meetings. The project has created a critical mass of people that are more interested and better prepared to respond to CL, FL, and HT. However, the community is still weak. The pandemic has not allowed it to consolidate. It is therefore very important to continue the training, extending its reach to ensure that a significant number of people is reached, enough to survive the quick turn over that exists among public sector personnel. It is also important to nurture the community, feeding them with information, updates, briefs, and news about new events. In that sense, an additional recommendation is to facilitate networking and create virtual communities with those who have been in the meetings and trainings.

5.6.2. RECOMMENDATIONS FOR USDOL

19. Consider an extension of the project in Paraguay. The pandemic had a negative impact in the implementation process. The implementation of the pilot phases of the coordination DMOPs were particularly hard hit and would need extra time to finish the now ongoing pilot phase, go through refinement and set eyes on institutionalization.

20. The final evaluation led by DOL should consider a special section or emphasis on the assessment of the results of the coordination DMOPs. At the time of the midterm evaluation, the coordination DMOPs were not assessed properly because these DMOPs were at the early stages of the pilot phase and the information upon which the midterm

evaluation was based consisted of desk review materials and opinions gathered from interviews that largely focused on the enforcement DMOPs.

6. THAILAND MIDTERM EVALUATION REPORT

To assess the project's achievements, this midterm evaluation (MTE) was designed to assess the project strategy—namely, the DMOP process—and its success in Thailand according to project objectives. This evaluation reviewed the effectiveness, relevance, and efficiency of the project strategy and, wherever possible, the impact of activities and the prospect of sustainability. It also set out to capture the strengths and weaknesses of the strategy, current emerging best practices, lessons learned, and provide actionable and realistic recommendations for Winrock and the USDOL in implementing this strategy in the future.

6.2. INTRODUCTION

Child labor, forced labor, and human trafficking are human rights violations that affect millions of people worldwide. All three crimes generally involve some form of exploitation or modern slavery. According to the ILO, CL refers to work that "is mentally, physically, socially or morally dangerous and harmful to children; and/or interferes with their schooling by depriving them of the opportunity to attend school; obliging them to leave school prematurely; or requiring them to attempt to combine school attendance with excessively long and heavy work".[15] FL has been defined by the ILO Forced Labour Convention, 1930 (No. 29) as "all work or service which is exacted from any person under the threat of a penalty and for which the person has not offered himself or herself voluntarily."[16] Meanwhile, HT—also known as trafficking in persons (TIP)—is defined by the Palermo Protocol as "the recruitment, transportation, transfer, harboring or receipt of persons, by means of the threat or use of force or other forms of coercion, of abduction, of fraud, of deception, of the abuse of power or of a position of vulnerability or of the giving or receiving of payments or benefits to achieve the consent of a person having control over another person, for the purpose of exploitation."[17]

Globally, it has been estimated that 152 million children are in CL, and 25 million people are in FL.[18] Additionally, 48,478 victims of HT were detected in 135 countries in 2018.[19] A USDOL report revealed that 13% of children aged 5 to 14 years old in Thailand are engaged in hazardous child labor, including in the shrimp and seafood industries, Muay Thai fighting, and commercial sexual exploitation.[20] Moreover, HT, which may also lead to FL or CL, remains a significant problem in Thailand.

Three major factors contribute to the presence of CL, FL, and HT in Thailand:[21]

1. Thailand has a significant rural population, including ethnic minorities who live in the country's mountainous regions. These populations are particularly vulnerable to human traffickers, who may sell them into slavery either within Thailand's borders or abroad.
2. Thailand is a major transit route for human traffickers, who smuggle victims into the country from Myanmar, Laos, Cambodia, or China and then ship them off to other countries.
3. Thailand is also a destination for trafficked men, women, and children, who are subjected to FL and sex trafficking in Thailand.

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[15] ILO. n.d. What is child labour. Accessed December 14, 2021. https://www.ilo.org/ipec/facts/lang--en/index.htm.

[16] ILO. n.d. What is forced labour, modern slavery and human trafficking. Accessed December 14, 2021. https://www.ilo.org/global/topics/forced-labour/definition/lang--en/index.htm.

[17] United Nations. 2000. Protocol to prevent, suppress and punish trafficking in persons, especially women and children, supplementing the United Nations convention against transnational organized crime. https://www.ohchr.org/en/professionalinterest/pages/protocoltraffickinginpersons.aspx.

[18] ILO & Walk Free Foundation. 2017. Global Estimates of Modern Slavery: Forced Labour and Forced Marriage, in collaboration with International Organisation for Migration (Geneva, ILO). http://www.ilo.org/wcmsp5/groups/public/--dgreports/--dcomm/documents/publication/wcms_575479.pdf.

[19] UNODC. 2020. Global Report on Trafficking in Persons. https://www.unodc.org/documents/data-and-analysis/tip/2021/GLOTiP_2020_15jan_web.pdf.

[20] USDOL. 2019. 2018 Worst Forms of Child Labor Report

[21] Zimmerman, C. et al. 2014. *Health and human trafficking in the Greater Mekong Subregion. Findings from a survey of men women and children in Cambodia, Thailand, and Vietnam*. International Organization for Migration and London School of Hygiene and Tropical Medicine.

Factors behind HT can be attributed to:

1. Economics: Ten to 20 years ago, poverty might have been pointed to as the main factor that caused women and children to fall victims to abuse and exploitation. However, it has been found that poverty is not the root cause of human trafficking. [22] Poverty must be combined with other factors, such as a lack of education, inaccessible government support, a lack of skills or knowledge, and unawareness of the types of tricks used by traffickers to lure victims. In addition, unhappy family life may drive some women and children to leave home to seek a better life without adequately weighing the dangers. [23]
2. Materialism/consumerism: This refers to the perception that material objects or money are an end in themselves, either to support one's parents or to serve one's own materialistic needs. [24]
3. Sexism and prejudice: There are an attitude held by certain men that women and children are inferior and make easy victims of exploitation and abuse. [25]

In 2014, Thailand's Prime Minister endorsed a range of measures to prevent and address the country's HT problems, with the prevention and suppression of HT being placed on the national agenda on August 6, 2014. Six strategies for solving HT have been introduced: (1) increase capabilities, (2) improve information exchange, (3) review and improve HT-related regulations, (4) raise awareness of HT among civil society as a significant issue, (5) facilitate the treatment of HT victims, and (6) change society's attitudes. [26]

In 2020, the government investigated 132 potential trafficking cases, initiated prosecutions of 302 suspected traffickers, convicted 233 traffickers, and identified 230 trafficking victims. [27] These numbers dropped from 2019, when 288 trafficking cases were investigated, 386 traffickers were prosecuted, 304 traffickers were convicted, and 868 victims were identified. [28] The declines were at least partially due to COVID-related lockdowns, which limited court and law enforcement operations. Additionally, the Ministry of Social Development and Human Security (MSDHS) reported assisting fewer trafficking victims in government and NGO shelters. In 2020, the MSDHS assisted 148 victims, including 77 Thai, 71 foreign, 57 male, 91 female, 78 victims of sex trafficking, and 70 victims of labor trafficking, which was a significant decrease from the 610 victims (170 sex trafficking and 440 labor trafficking) assisted by the Ministry in 2019. [29] To date, in 2021, the Trafficking in Persons (TIP) Report conducted by the U.S. Department of State downgraded Thailand from Tier 2 to Tier 2 Watch List due to a lack of progress. [30]

While Thailand has legislation in place penalizing CL and FL, it is not as robust and as well implemented as HT legislation. The Royal Thai Government (RTG) has made HT an area of focus and is implementing the legislation more effectively than either the CL or FL legislation. [31] In 2019, Thailand amended its Human Trafficking Act to update the definition and increase

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[22] Meade, A. 2013. Thailand's Trouble with Human Trafficking. https://borgenproject.org/thailands-trouble-with-human-trafficking/.

[23] The New Humanitarian. 2008. Poverty and poor education behind child trafficking – govt. https://www.thenewhumanitarian.org/report/76411/nigeria-poverty-and-poor-education-behind-child-trafficking-govt.

[24] Sorajjakool, S. 2013. *Human Trafficking in Thailand: Current Issues, Trends, and the Role of the Thai Government*. Chiang Mai: Silkworm Books.

[25] Saha, A. K., & Saha, A. 2017. Abuse of Women: Causes, Consequences & Prevention- A Survey of College Going Youth. *Indian Journal of Industrial Relations, 52*(4), 621–633.

[26] Royal Thai Police. 2017. Policies for solving human trafficking problems in Thailand, p. 19.

[27] Ibid.

[28] Ibid.

[29] Ibid.

[30] U.S. Department of State. 2021. *2021 Trafficking in Persons Report*. Retrieved from https://www.state.gov/wp-content/uploads/2021/09/TIPR-GPA-upload-07222021.pdf

[31] ATLAS Thailand technical document, assessed in November 2021

the penalty for FL.[32] Because the definitions of FL and HT are very similar, it is challenging to distinguish between the two. FL indicators are currently being developed by Thailand's Division of Anti-Trafficking in Persons (DATIP), in partnership with Winrock's Combating Trafficking in Persons (CTIP) program.

6.2.1. THE ATLAS PROJECT

Apart from local authorities, international organizations have also contributed to the efforts to prevent and suppress CL, FL, and HT in Thailand. Among such organizations is Winrock International (Winrock), a non-profit organization that works with people and communities worldwide to increase economic opportunity, sustain natural resources, and protect the environment, among other objectives. Currently, Winrock implements the USDOL-funded ATLAS project to strengthen the capacity of governments to address CL, FL, and HT in Thailand, Paraguay, Liberia, and Argentina. The project provides technical assistance to these countries to achieve three outcomes:

Outcome 1: Strengthened labor and/or criminal legal framework concerning CL, FL, and HT

Outcome 2: Improved enforcement of the labor and/or criminal legal framework, specifically related to CL, FL, and HT

Outcome 3: Increased coordination among law enforcement and social protection entities to address CL, FL, and HT

6.3. MIDTERM EVALUATION

This midterm evaluation (MTE) was designed to assess the project strategy and its success in Thailand according to the project objectives. Focused on the nine-step DMOP process, this evaluation reviewed the effectiveness, relevance, and efficiency of the project strategy and, to the extent possible, the impact of activities and potential for sustainability. This assessment also captured the strengths and weaknesses of the strategy, current emerging best practices, and lessons learned. Results of the evaluation should lead to actionable and realistic recommendations for Winrock and USDOL for implementing this strategy in the future.

6.3.1. METHODOLOGY

Study Design and Data Collection

The evaluation team conducted a desk review of project documents to provide background information and context and then conducted qualitative primary research using KII among three types of evaluation respondents, including general and decision-maker government stakeholders, civil society organization (CSO) staff, and ATLAS project staff at headquarters (HQ) and Thailand (local) offices. Among the 39 key informants (KIs), 22 persons are general government staff, 5 of them are government decision-makers, 2 individuals are from CSOs, and 5 of them are ATLAS project staff from home or headquarter (HQ) and Thailand (local) offices. This MTE was conducted in 7 weeks and included the following activities:

Desk review. This was to review relevant project documents, results of relevant research, in-country PSA, BOK, and training assessment reports to understand the project contexts and activities. Results of the review assisted the evaluation team in designing the data collection tools.

Qualitative data collection methods and target respondents. Qualitative research using the KII method was designed to collect in-depth information about the ATLAS project. The three types of target respondents were: 1) government stakeholders, including both decision-makers and general government stakeholders working on CL, FL, and HT; 2) CSO staff involved in the topics of interest; and 3) ATLAS project staff from HQ and Thailand offices. Due to the COVID-19

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[32] ATLAS Thailand technical document, assessed in November 2021

pandemic, which worsened in Thailand from September to October 2021, KIIs were implemented remotely using phone, Zoom, or Microsoft Teams online interview platforms. All respondents participating in the evaluation expressed their strong willingness to participate in the entire process.

<u>Validation meeting.</u> The evaluators organized a validation meeting on October 18, 2021, via Zoom to present key evaluation findings to relevant government stakeholders and obtain their feedback to finalize the final MTE report. Five government stakeholders attended the meeting: 3 representatives from the Department of Provincial Administration (DOPA), Ministry of Interior (MOI) and 2 individuals from the Department of Labour Protection and Welfare (DLPW), Ministry of Labour (MOL). Among these five representatives, one was a government decision-maker. In addition, the evaluators presented the MTE results to the ATLAS project team on November 1, 2021, to obtain suggestions from the project team on revisions to the report.

Sampling

Thirty-nine KI respondents (12 males and 27 females) participated in this evaluation. Among the 39 KIs, 27 were general government stakeholders, 5 were government decision-makers; 5 were ATLAS project staff (HQ and local Thailand office); and 2 were staff from CSOs.

Of the 39 KIs, thirty-two respondents were from government agencies: 11 respondents from the DLPW, MOL; 8 respondents from the MOL Department of Employment (DOE); 5 respondents from Immigration Bureau (IB), Royal Thai Police (RTP); 3 respondents from DOPA, MOI; 2 respondents from DATIP, MSDHS; 1 respondent from the Department of Children and Youth (DCY), MSDHS; 1 respondent from Department of Special Investigation (DSI), Ministry of Justice (MOJ); and 1 respondent from Office of the Attorney General (OAG). There were also 7 respondents from CSOs: 5 from Winrock International's HQ and Thailand offices,1 respondent from Catholic Office for Emergency Relief and Refugee (COEER), and 1 respondent from LIFT International (LIFT). These profiles are presented in the table below.

Profiles of Key Informants by Their Workplaces

Department/ Agency	Ministry/ Organization	# of Respondents
Government Stakeholders		
Department of Labour Protection and Welfare	Ministry of Labour	11
Department of Employment	Ministry of Labour	8
Immigration Bureau	Royal Thai Police	5
Department of Provincial Administration	Ministry of Interior	3
Department of Anti-Trafficking in Persons	Ministry of Social	2
Department of Children and Youth	Ministry of Social	1
Department of Special Investigation	Ministry of Justice	1
Office of the Attorney General	Office of The Attorney	1
ATLAS Project Team and Civil Society		
Winrock International	Winrock International	5
Civil Society Organizations	Catholic Office for Emergency Relief and Refugee and LIFT International	2
Total		**39**

Among 33 KIs consisting of 31 government stakeholders and 2 representatives from CSOs, 8 attended the 3-day Enforcement Training Program (ETP), 7 attended the 3-day ETP (MOL) training, 6 attended the 2-day training (2D ETP), 5 attended the 2-day Multi-Disciplinary Team (MDT) online training, 3 attended the 2-day ETP training and the 2-day MDT online training, 2

attended the 3-day ETP and 2-day MDT training, 1 attended the 2-day ETP (MOL) training and 3-day ETP (MOL) training, and 1 attended the 2-day ETP training and 3-day ETP training. Details of the workshop attendances are presented in the table below.

Workshop Attendance of Key Informants

Workshop Profiles	Workshop Dates	# of Respondents
The Enforcement Training Program 3-day training	March 21, 2021	8
The Enforcement Training Program, Ministry of Labour, 3-day training	July 21, 2021	7
The Enforcement Training Program 2-day training	December 2020	6
The Multi-Disciplinary Teams 2-day online training	June 21, 2021	5
The Enforcement Training Program 2-day training and the Multi-Disciplinary Teams 2-day online training	December 2020 and June 2021	3
The Enforcement Training Program 3-day training and Multi-Disciplinary Teams 2-day training	March 21, 2021 (3-day Enforcement Training Program); and June 2, 2021, (2-day Multi-Disciplinary Teams training)	2
The Enforcement Training Program 2-day training; and Enforcement Training Program, Ministry of Labour 3-day training	June 21, 2021, online 2-day Enforcement Training Program; and July 21, 2021, online 3-day Enforcement Training Program, Ministry of Labour	1
The Enforcement Training Program 2-day and 3-day training	December 20, 2020, 2-day Enforcement Training Program; and March 21, 202, 3-day Enforcement Training Program	1
Total		**33**

Study Tools

The evaluators designed the KII discussion guides (DGs) considering the following: a) the evaluation questions that were suggested in the evaluation scope of work (SOW), b) results of the desk review, and c) discussions with the ATLAS project team in HQ and Thailand offices. The tool was pre-tested with four government stakeholders whose names were provided by the Thailand ATLAS project team. The results of the pre-test were used to refine the DGs before the actual data collection activities. The ATLAS project team reviewed and approved the final tools (see Annex C for a list of the tools).

Data Collection Procedures

The ATLAS project team in Thailand provided a list of potential KIs with their contact details. Researchers contacted the KIs and arranged interview dates and times. The KIIs were conducted by three senior qualitative researchers, each accompanied by a note-taker. Informants' consent and verbal agreement for the interview and audio recording were obtained before the interviews.

Data Analysis

The KII notes were synthesized to obtain the codes and evaluation themes following the evaluation objectives. The audio recordings and information gathered were reviewed and directly summarized into Excel sheets following the set themes in Thai. These summaries were then translated into English. The notes and summaries were analyzed based on evaluation objectives, themes (effectiveness, relevance, efficiency, sustainability, impact of the project), and recommendations for future project implementation. Wherever possible, the evaluators triangulated findings among multiple data sources to ensure their reliability and validity.

Limitations of the Evaluation

The COVID-19 pandemic situation in Thailand limited the ability to collect data on-site. The evaluators conducted the KIIs remotely through phone calls or Zoom or Teams meeting platforms. However, the online interview methods limited the interpersonal communication and observable body language reactions during the interviews. Additionally, the KIs were easily distracted by other office activities during the discussions. Another challenge with the MTE process was the potential of selection bias, as the ATLAS Thailand project team selected the evaluation respondents. Most of the proposed interview respondents were ATLAS workshop participants rather than government decision-makers involved with designing, planning, and implement, possibly because decision-makers were unavailable during the MTE for the interviews. As a result, information collected about the project strategy and the DMOP process might have been limited. Most of the KIs explained workshop details, focusing on the micro-level of project activities and making it complicated to draw conclusions at the level of the project strategy. In addition, the proportion of the respondent types was another issue, as just five government decision-makers and two CSO staff participated in this MTE, so the information gathered may not be diverse enough to allow comparisons between each type of MTE respondents.

For the online validation meeting on October 18, 2021, only 5 government stakeholders were part of the 13 KIs who participated in the validation meeting. The 13 KIs were invited since they mostly knew about the project and workshop activities from the KIIs. The 5 stakeholders were from two main ministries, the Ministry of Labour and the Ministry of Interior, and included a decision-maker. Due to the rapid MTE process, the date and time set for this meeting did not suit the availability of other invited respondents.

6.4. RESULTS

6.4.1. PROJECT GOALS, OBJECTIVES, STRATEGIES, AND ACTIVITIES

Winrock began work on ATLAS in Thailand in 2019 and will continue working in the country until August 2022, focusing on Outcomes 2 and 3. To achieve these outcomes, ATLAS has developed and implemented a strategy known as the Differentiated Model of Practice (DMOP). The DMOP process tailors project interventions and outcomes through an evidence-based approach that adapts technical assistance to country-specific priorities, using intervention models that are tested and implemented in each country to improve enforcement and coordination around CL, FL, and HT.

The DMOP strategy is a nine-step participatory process that integrates evidence-based efforts to design country-specific CL, FL, and HT interventions in support of government's priorities. Multiple DMOPs will be implemented in Thailand over the life of the ATLAS project.

In close coordination with senior officials from the Thai MOL, ATLAS Thailand conceptualized the DMOP process for Thailand, which is a participatory project strategy that integrates evidence-based efforts to design country-specific CL, FL, and HT interventions in support of government priorities. The consultation DMOP workshop took place following engagement with relevant Thai government stakeholders in a launch event conducted in November 2019 with

the MOL, the MSDHS, the OAG, the RTG, and civil society and international organizations, such as the ILO.

To date, eight of the nine steps in the DMOP process have been implemented at least partially, as follows:

DMOP - Enforcement	
DMOP	**Status**
Enforcement Training Program	Step 7/8. The pilot phase of ETP completed, an assessment of the pilot conducted, assessment result presented to stakeholder for feedback and refinement of the materials, training materials refined and the ETP is at the re-implementation stage.
Practitioner's Guide on Investigation of Forced Labor	Step 4. The practitioner guide design and development completed and is ready for pilot stage of the DMOP
DMOP - Coordination	
Practitioner's Guide on Coordination	Step 7. The practitioner's Guide on Coordination completed pilot phase of the DMOP process, the feedback on the DMOP collected and DMOP is at the refinement stage.
Multidisciplinary Teams Training	Step 7. Multidisciplinary Teams Training completed pilot phase of the DMOP process, the feedback on the DMOP collected and DMOP is at the refinement stage.
Community Referrals	Step 4. The Community Referrals DMOP is at the design and development stage. Not yet piloted.

ATLAS Thailand DMOP Overview

Step 1: Established a global Body of Knowledge, identifying and ranking the quality of the evidence about interventions that effectively strengthen enforcement and coordination. The ATLAS project conducted a global systematic review of existing evidence and best practices pertinent to law enforcement efforts to produce the ATLAS BOK. The BOK analyzed global evidence on the effectiveness of programs, initiatives, efforts, and practices to address CL, FL, and HT. Regarding Outcome 3, which concerns coordination among law enforcement and social protection entities in Thailand, the BOK's key findings deemed the following interventions to be of "high quality":

1. Provide legal services support to help victims complete paperwork, arrange depositions, arrange settlements, and process immigration issues.

2. Conduct legal services in combination with comprehensive support interventions to improve victims' willingness and capacity to interact with law enforcement.

The key findings of the BOK also suggested that high-quality enforcement interventions should include:

1. Conduct training for law enforcement, protection service entities, prosecutors, and immigration officials on how to effectively identify and provide services to victims of HT.
2. Incorporate local industry and mental health professionals in the training for law enforcement and prosecutors.
3. Conduct follow-up activities to provide additional support and/or training and ensure that behavioral change occurs in the long-term.

Over the course of the MTE, the evaluators learned that the BOK was not widely distributed to all relevant stakeholders, except to the MOL due to its direct involvement. However, the BOK results were presented and distributed during consultation meetings and workshops.

Step 2: Conducted an in-country pre-situational analysis. The PSA for Thailand was conducted in late 2019 by a research consultant. The PSA assessed enforcement relevant to labor and criminal (including HT) legislation and regulations and included interviews with 25 KIs to identify gaps and needs for enforcement. The enforcement gaps identified included few prosecutions of FL- and CL-only cases due to a lack of guidelines to refer these types of cases to court; challenges with identifying cases, particularly in distinguishing between FL and HT; and judges being unfamiliar with CL and FL due to a lack of cases.

Due to the Thai government's response to the COVID-19 pandemic, the validation workshop for the PSA results planned for April 2020 was cancelled. As part of ATLAS's contingency plan, the report was shared for validation with the MOL, RTP, and the OAG. Feedback received by March 20, 2020, was incorporated into the second version of the PSA, which was submitted to the USDOL on April 6, 2020. USDOL approved the Thailand PSA on September 10, 2020, which was an 8-month delay from the original project plan.

The MTE also revealed that the PSA was perceived to be incredibly important, especially among the ATLAS project team and some government stakeholders since it identified gaps and challenges and inform interventions to address the gaps. Despite the PSA being conducted two years ago, some of the MTE interviewees were able to recognize it through their participation at the stakeholder consultation workshops, although they were unable to recall the precise details.

Step 3: Held consultation events with key stakeholders to prioritize efforts and identify technical assistance needs. Because of the COVID-19 pandemic situation, ATLAS Thailand had to cancel the first consultation workshop in April 2020. The workshop was intended to identify differentiated models of practice for enforcement (DMOP-Es) to be designed and piloted (Sub-Outcome 2.2). However, as part of the ATLAS contingency plan submitted to USDOL, Winrock used the PSA and BOK findings to draft a list of suggested DMOP-Es that address the identified enforcement gaps, receiving one-on-one feedback from stakeholders before presenting them to the full group at an event in September 2020 for validation and approval.

To operationalize the DMOP, ATLAS, in close collaboration with the MOL, held a one-day workshop with key stakeholders to establish a workgroup, prioritize efforts, and identify technical needs on September 22, 2020. The workshop title was "ATLAS Thailand Project's Stakeholder Consultation Workshop on DMOP," which had the following objectives:

1. Familiarize all participants with the ATLAS project and formulate recommendations for future interventions and implementation of subsequent project components.

2. Establish a workgroup and identify a champion for ATLAS DMOPs to ensure continued collaboration, effective implementation, and institutionalization of the DMOPs.

3. Present the findings of the BOK and assess the application of national legislation related to CL, FL, and HT.

4. Present the overall ATLAS technical assistance program, which forms an integral part to DMOP-Es and the models of practice for coordination (DMOP-Cs) in addressing the issues of CL and FL tailored for labor and law enforcement authorities, including social protection agencies, and formulate recommendations for improvement.

This workshop brought together 36 senior officials, with representatives from the MOL (10 participants), the MSDHS (2 participants), the Department of Special Investigation (DSI) (2 participants), the Anti-Money Laundering Office (AMLO) (3 participants), the Department of Provincial Administration (DOPA) of the Ministry of Interior (MOI) (3 participants), Thailand Anti-Trafficking in Persons Task Force (TATIP) of the Royal Thai Police (RTP) (3 participants), the

Immigration Bureau (IB) (6 participants), the Anti-Human Trafficking Division (ATHD) of the RTP (3 participants), and the OAG (5 participants).

The workshop applied a participatory approach, focusing on interaction and feedback. It used a variety of methods, including presentations, brainstorming, and highly participatory discussions through questioning and reflections on personal experiences. The workshop promoted participants' engagement, which was effective since participants had first-hand or on-the-job experience with incidences of CL, FL, or HT; an understanding of current practices of addressing the issues; and insights into potential improvements. The workshop was facilitated by a key expert in the fields of national and international legislative frameworks pertinent to CL, FL, and HT. A set of visual aids were used to complement the presentations. While the tone during the sessions was formal for the most part, participants had the opportunity to interact with each other during the informal discussion sessions.

At this event and through subsequent consultations, the ATLAS team identified two enforcement DMOPs (DMOP-Es) and three coordination DMOPs (DMOP-Cs) for implementation over the life of the project. Enforcement DMOPs included the Enforcement Training Program and a Practitioners Guide on Forced Labor. DMOP-Cs included training for Multi-Disciplinary Teams that are frequently the first to respond to cases of human trafficking at the local level; a Practitioners Guide on Coordination; and a Community Referrals initiative to increase referral of CL, FL, and HT.

Step 4: Facilitated the formation of country workgroups. As part of the September 22, 2020, workshop, a country-level workgroup on CL, FL, and HT was formed. The workgroup brought together relevant government officials to discuss the current CL, FL, and HT situations in Thailand and how to work together more effectively to tackle the problems. Each government agency also nominated a champion for the ATLAS DMOPs to serve as a focal point to ensure continued collaboration, effective implementation, and institutionalization of DMOPs throughout the project life cycle.

The stakeholders in this workshop participated in developing, evaluating, and refining data-driven DMOP-Es and DMOP-Cs. The Thailand technical document [33] and Annex D present details of the suggested DMOP-Es and DMOP-Cs from the workshop.

Step 5: Piloted the intervention models of practice (DMOP-E and DMOP-C). As of the date of this evaluation, the ATLAS project had developed and piloted the Enforcement Training Program, Multi-Disciplinary Teams (MDT) training, and the Practitioners Guide on Coordination DMOPs.

In consideration of the PSA key findings and recommendations, Winrock developed the master ETP in close collaboration with LWOB. The ETP is a DMOP-E developed by ATLAS under Outcome 2. It was designed to be a standardized program to help law enforcement agencies and social protection entities develop the necessary skills and knowledge to address CL, FL, and HT, which can be adapted to specific country contexts. ATLAS Thailand has operationalized the DMOP-E through the capacity-building program for relevant Thai authorities working on CL, FL, and HT using the global ETP developed by the Winrock HQ in close collaboration with LWOB. This capacity intervention was done at two levels, general and advanced, which included pilot training and two subsequent training events that integrated adaptation suggestions from the piloting.

ATLAS Thailand first adapted and contextualized the existing ETP and aligned its strategy to meet the needs and address the performance gaps of law enforcement authorities, including, but not limited to, the MOL, the IB, the AHTD, the DOPA, and the DSI. On December 15–16, 2020, ATLAS Thailand piloted this ETP at the 2-day Enforcement Training workshop for frontline

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[33] ATLAS Thailand technical document, assessed in November 2021

officers to address CL, FL, and HT. The participants consisted of 42 frontline and investigative officers from the MOL, the IB, the AHTD, the TATIP of RTP, the DSI of the MOJ, the DOPA of the MOI, and the AMLO. In addition to the piloted ETP training program, participants also received lessons on the investigative process from prosecutorial perspectives and practical exercises through case studies, which were developed from the stakeholders' consultation analysis on the DMOP-E, once it was refined following piloting, conducted in January 2021. The lessons on practical case studies, which featured an exercise that allowed the participants to use interview and investigation techniques on different case scenarios and on the investigation process (securing a crime scene, collecting evidence, charging and case evaluation) were rated as the most effective lessons in terms of usefulness and understanding. The participants also praised the training quality and in-depth experience of the trainers, especially Dr. Mark Charoenwong, who is a prosecutor on human trafficking and transnational crimes.

In Thailand, multi-disciplinary teams (MDTs) are the main implementing body when it comes to FL and HT victim identification. The agencies and personnel operating in an MDT vary, depending on the type of crimes committed. For instance, if there were indications that a person may be a victim of FL, the MDT addressing the case would consist of an inquiry official, an officer under the MSDHS, a labor inspector, and a social worker. If a case were child-related, the MDT would be composed of an inquiry official, an officer from the Office of Social Development and Human Security, a labor inspector, a psychologist, and a social worker. Non-governmental or civil society actors whose mandate involves child protection, migrants' rights protection, and issues of labor trafficking and human trafficking may also be authorized to participate in an MDT. In some cases, a non-governmental organization could conduct a rescue operation in coordination with local law enforcement authorities and bring a case forward in conjunction with an MDT. The purpose of having the identification process carried out by an MDT comprised of experts from various fields is to determine whether the interviewee is a victim of HT and to consider the pursuit of legal actions. Based on this context and in line with the findings of the PSA, ATLAS Thailand operationalized a DMOP-C to provide training for MDTs and practitioners. The aim of this DMOP-C intervention is twofold:

1. To create uniform understandings of CL, FL, and HT; and

2. To facilitate communication and coordination between government agencies and civil society organizations, contributing to better protection services and referrals to victims.

To enhance coordination efforts among the MDTs, ATLAS Thailand developed the training program based on Module 1 (Identification of CL, FL, and HT) and Module 3 (Referral for Services and Protection) of the master ETP. The training program was designed to provide knowledge of laws concerning CL, FL, and HT and to fill gaps in the capacities of the MDTs to be able to provide victims with legal assistance and social services to complete the investigation, sentencing, and immigration processes.

ATLAS Thailand piloted the MDT training at the 2-day training workshop on enhanced coordination and services for protection of child labor, forced labor and human trafficking victims. The workshop, held from June 15–16, 2021, included participants from 14 government agencies and NGOs. The sessions were conducted with support from experienced speakers and covered a range of topics. These included key definitions of CL, FL, and HT within the international standard and legislative frameworks; Thailand's key legislations and how to distinguish and identify CL, FL, and HT; trauma-informed care; interview techniques from psychology perspectives; victim needs and services; and referral mechanisms. The participants were 46 practitioners, representing 8 NGOs and 6 government agencies: the International Justice Mission, COERR, Stella Maris, Asylum Access, the International Organization for Migration, Childline Thailand, Nightlife International, Lift International, the MOL, the IB, the AHTD under the RTP, the DOPA of the MOI, the DATIP, and the DCY of the MSDHS.

Finally, ATLAS developed the Practitioner's Guide on Coordination, a document that will strengthen coordination among law enforcement and social protection entities in addressing

CL, FL, and HT by outlining coordination procedures with a focus on labor inspectors and their relations with other agencies and actors. The goal is for this Guide to be adopted and institutionalized within the Ministry of Social Development and Human Security (MSDHS) and the Ministry of Labor's Labor Inspectorate. Beginning in April, the team worked to develop a manual that 1) Classifies duties of labor inspectors regarding CL, FL, and HT; 2) Studied other relevant agencies that coordinate with labor inspectors on CL, FL, and HT; and 3) Provides recommendations on better identifying CL, FL, and HT.

As part of its research, the team held a focus group discussion in August with the MSDHS' Division of Anti-Trafficking in Person (DATIP), the main service provider for victim assistance. Shortly after, a draft of the Guide was circulated with the Ministry of Labor to solicit practice input from labor inspectors and legal officers. A final draft of the Guide, entitled "The Coordination Practice Manual for Cases of Employment of Child Labor, Forced Labor and Human Trafficking" was completed in September, completing the pilot period.

Step 6: Refined the pilot intervention models of practice (DMOP-E/DMOP-C). ATLAS Thailand has refined two DMOPs based on an analysis of the pilot events – the Enforcement Training Program and the Multi-Disciplinary Teams training. Pre- and post-tests were designed to measure whether expected changes took place. A standard test, survey, or questionnaire was selected based on the type of DMOP and conducted before participation began and again after the pilot was complete. For the ETP, ATLAS Thailand also followed up with training participants at least three months after completion of the training to evaluate the training's long-term usefulness, including the extent to which the skills and techniques learned in the workshop had benefited the participants by increasing their capacity to perform their duties effectively and professionally and identify cases of CL, FL, and HT at their duty stations. For the MDT training, the focus group discussion (FGD) method was used for the refinement to collect participant feedback on the pilot activities. The FGD was divided into 4 phases, focusing on the reaction of the participants, learning aspects, behavioral change, and result of the MDT training program. ATLAS then worked with local stakeholders to refine the contents of ETP and MDT training accordingly.

Step 7: Presented intervention models to country workgroups and stakeholders for refinement and validation. As part of the collection of feedback on the MDT and the ETP, ATLAS worked with local stakeholders to refine the DMOPs and get their buy-in.

Step 8: Implement the refined models (DMOP-E/DMOP-C) and integrate them with the existing structures. Thus far, one refined model, the Enforcement Training Program, has been implemented in Thailand. ATLAS held three events as part of this implementation. A 3-day capacity-building workshop for labor inspectors and investigative officers on investigation of child labor, forced labor, and human trafficking was held on March 24–26, 2021. The workshop participants were 55 labor inspectors and investigative officers from the MOL, IB, AHTD, TATIP, DOPA, DATIP, and DCY of the MSDHS. Later, on July 14–16, 2021, ATLAS Thailand organized a 3-day MOL training session. Participants were provincial-level labor inspectors and officers from all over the country. Finally, on September 8-9, 2021, ATLAS hosted an online peer-to-peer workshop for judges and prosecutors. The workshop brought together current and former judges and prosecutors from Thailand and the U.S. for discussions on challenges faced in CL, FL, and HT cases as well as solutions to those challenges.

Step 9: Finalize with stakeholders the institutionalization plan for the approved models. Each DMOP will have its own institutionalization plan as part of Step 9 of the DMOP process. As mentioned above, ATLAS will verify if the government has the capacity to support the institutionalization of DMOPs. If further action is required, the workgroup will develop an institutionalization plan to present to high-level government decision-makers for approval. Institutionalization may include embedding the training program in relevant agencies, enabling qualified champions to continue delivering training after the closing of the ATLAS program, and encouraging professional development, among other measures.

Coordination and Collaboration with Other Projects

The ATLAS ETP manual was adapted to the Thai context and translated into the Thai language before it was given to the MOL, the IB's Training Center, and other law enforcement agencies. Subject to a mutual agreement, the ETP manual in Thai can also be made available online on the Thailand Resource Toolkit website, which can be accessed at https://app.freedomcollaborative.org/thailandtoolbox/en. Winrock, with support from the United States Agency for International Development (USAID) Thailand Counter Trafficking in Persons, has developed the online toolkit for interested parties, specifically, but not limited to, civil society organizations, to enable them to access information and materials that they can use to conduct training, outreach, and awareness-raising activities.

6.5. EVALUATION FINDINGS

6.5.1. STAKEHOLDER KNOWLEDGE OF ATLAS PROJECT

This MTE asked the key informants (KIs) about their knowledge and experiences with the ATLAS project and its activities. A majority of non-staff respondents reported that they did not know about Winrock or the ATLAS Project until they were invited to attend a workshop in 2020 and 2021. Nonetheless, among this group, 8 respondents did report having learned about Winrock or the ATLAS project through various channels before taking part in the workshops, such as meeting with Winrock or the ATLAS project team in 2019 and 2020 either individually or as part of a group or consultation meeting. Examples of ways that respondents came to know about Winrock or ATLAS prior to participation in trainings include that they had worked with the Winrock-CTIP project, were involved with the ATLAS project during the planning and workshop preparation phases, heard about Winrock or the project through their supervisors or colleagues who were trained by the project, or they met with the project team during the PSA result presentation and discussion.

The majority of respondents (27) claimed at least some degree of familiarity with the project's goals and/or objectives, reporting, for example, that it exists to support law enforcement work in solving the problem of CL, FL, and HT among enforcement and social protection entities; to provide technical cooperation on law enforcement related to CL, FL, and HT in Thailand.

Interestingly, there were some respondents who offered examples of specific workshop objectives as the overarching ATLAS objectives, for example, to learn about the nature of human trafficking characteristics of debt bondage workers; characteristics of child labor that should be checked or integrated with other organizations; and the need for MOL officials to classify CL, FL, and HT and build an interagency network to understand and increase knowledge of FL, CL, and HT.

For the purpose of project activities like training, examples of KI responses include perceptions that the activities were designed to improve the knowledge and capacity of the government stakeholders related to CL, FL, and HT, that the TOT was meant to transfer knowledge and workshop training contents to other organization staff, and that the project worked on joint initiatives and integrated work on CL, FL, and HT with the MSDHS, multi-disciplinary teams (MDT), and relevant stakeholders. Notably, 9 respondents among government and CSO stakeholders did not know or could not recall anything about the objectives or purpose of the ATLAS project.

> *"I was not sure of the objectives of the ATLAS project and if its purpose was only to provide training."*
>
> *(A male government stakeholder, WI_009)*

6.5.2. STAKEHOLDER INVOLVEMENT IN THE ATLAS PROJECT IMPLEMENTATION

Project Intervention Designing and Planning

Senior officials from MOL and OAG reported that they have collaborated closely with ATLAS Thailand to conceptualize the DMOP and plan the DMOP strategies and implementations. The consultation DMOP workshop was organized in September 2020, following a November 2019 launch event that engaged Thai government stakeholders from MOL, MSDSH, OAG, RTG, CSOs, and NGOs, such as ILO. The workshop was one of the key components of this project and sought to secure the commitment of government representatives to the DMOP process and decide which identified gaps would be prioritized for enforcement and coordination. The working group was invited to discuss the current CL, FL, and HT situations in Thailand and work together to resolve the problems. Each government agency in attendance nominated a champion for the ATLAS DMOP to serve as a focal point to ensure continued collaboration, effective implementation, and institutionalization of the DMOP throughout the project life cycle. During this meeting, results of the BOK and PSA were presented, and feedback was obtained from the stakeholders on the suggested DMOP-Es and DMOP-Cs.

The results of the MTE also revealed that that among five government decision-makers, two of them reported being involved with the project since the design, planning, and preparation of the project activities and implementation of the workshops. Few of the decision-makers reported that project's goals, objectives, and strategies were explained to them. Following feedback received from workshop participants in 2020, one of the decision-makers was invited to participate in the preparation and implementation of the workshop. This individual was invited because of their extensive knowledge and expertise on HT, relevant laws, and legislations.

Activity Implementation

ATLAS activities consisted of workshops, training, and meetings with stakeholders to strengthen law enforcement and improve coordination. ATLAS, in consultation with the government partners, identified relevant stakeholders to attend the workshop. Often, ATLAS prioritized the permanently appointed government officers over temporary hires performing roles and responsibilities relevant to CL, FL, and HT. Once the date, venue, and time of the activities were identified, the ATLAS project team informed activity participants through official invitation letters and unofficial communications via emails and phone calls within a month-long coordination period. The ATLAS project held the events face-to-face until the COVID-19 pandemic began in 2020. The pandemic led to the adaptation of training programs into online formats. Moving the workshops online not only resulted in a safer environment for participants but also greater participation of stakeholders, including from regional and provincial governments. However, it was reported that the online workshops adversely impacted the quality of learning because there were fewer opportunities for face-to-face interaction or discussion on technical issues. The advantages of attending the online workshops included that the Thai stakeholders were able to connect with international and local counterparts and learn about their missions and responsibilities related to HT issues.

> *"I've been working for more than 30 years. But I have never experienced a workshop that has Thais and foreigners who jointly discuss during the sessions. The workshop was conducted in an appropriate manner (no need to play games like the structured energizers), especially among adults like me."*
>
> *(A female government stakeholder, WI_007)*

The KIs also reported that the workshops provided interesting case scenarios for group exercise activities, including sessions where individuals could discuss their experiences with facilitators and other participants. After attending the workshops, participants claimed they had expanded their work connections.

The KIs reported that ATLAS Thailand interviewed some KIs to gather feedback to improve the workshop's implementation for the future. Several KIs complimented the ATLAS Thailand team on how it communicated and followed up with the workshop participants. However, the KIs noted the following challenges during the on-site and online workshop implementation:

- The time of the workshops was relatively short. Group exercises and sharing sessions to discuss the case scenarios were rushed.
- Too many handouts and documents were provided to read, which hampered the participants from catching up during both on-site and online training sessions. So, they suggested that the organizers should provide copies of the PowerPoint presentations to participants for them to follow the content of the discussions.
- Conflicting priorities arose when there were urgent office requests during the workshops, which the participants had to comply with right away, especially during on-site workshops in Bangkok.
- Less interaction occurred during the on-site group exercise because group members had less experience with CL, FL, or HT, which limited their ability to share their opinions during the discussions.
- Case scenarios might not be actual cases in Thailand. As a result, the workshop participants had difficulty imagining the situation presented.
- Laws and interpretations about the use of CL were not clearly discussed during the workshop. This might be because the facilitator did not thoroughly explain the term well and the materials were not clearly explained.
- Too much jargon, technical terms, and English language were used during the sessions. Some handouts were written in English, which was the main barrier to the participants' comprehending the topics discussed.

> *"The lectures used Thai and English. I had difficulty to understand the sessions on relevant laws and legislations of the professors from Chulalongkorn University)."*
>
> *(A female government stakeholder, WI_007)*

- Some KIs reported that some of the workshop participants lacked understanding of organizational roles and responsibilities of individual organizations, resulting in misunderstandings and uncomfortable feelings during the meeting and group exercise activities with other organization staff.
- Workshop topics were already known to participants. This made the participants feel bored and lose interest in the sessions. Also, some lectured sessions were reported to be less interactive

Specific challenges and limitations of the online workshops below were also reported:

- The Zoom platform was not functioning properly in the participants' offices, delaying their attendance. Also, some workshop participants found it difficult to use the technology. They also found that pictures and audio were not clear during the online meeting.
- Several participants could not concentrate during the discussion and were doing other tasks during the training sessions.
- Sessions were less interactive, particularly during the open forum; there were many participants and limited time to interact during online sessions and exercise activities.
- Workshop attendees could not establish further connections with the online participants since they didn't interact face-to-face.

On the other hand, some KIs reported that they did not find any challenges during the workshop activities.

They reported that they knew about the topics before attending the workshop. Most participants were familiar with CL and HT. They reported attending similar CL discussions in previous meetings. The interview techniques covered in the ATLAS workshops were also not new to them, as they had attended international meetings and training with similar content. The familiarity might be because of their roles and responsibilities in their offices or because they were trained by other organizations on CL, FL, HT, laws, legislations, and case investigations. For all but two of the KIs, there was some content of the workshops that they did not previously know.

Among the workshop topics that respondents reported as being new to them, common responses included interview techniques with adults and children, child labor in families, human trafficking in different forms in several countries, case investigation, forced labor and debt among workers, PEACE model [34], laws and legislation at local levels and abroad, psychological techniques, mental health treatment, identification of victims, case scenarios from other countries, and stakeholders' engagement from various organizations.

The KIs reported on the topics they liked the most. The most frequently cited, with 11 respondents referring to it, was the subject of investigation and interview techniques for adults and children. Respondents also liked Dr. Mark Charoenwong's sessions because they were very interactive. Other subjects mentioned by individual respondents include trauma care topics, FL, laws and legislations on HT, discussion on MDTs functions, and psychology-related subjects and techniques. Some participants provided feedback on topics they like the least, including laws and legislation on human trafficking, because they were already familiar with these topics; facilitators using terminology in Thai and English, which the participants found difficult to understand; and topics being presented mainly as theories and concepts. Others expressed difficulty understanding the topics covered by international facilitators because of translation issues from English to the Thai language. Informants further claimed that the case scenarios did not enhance learning because the scenarios were not actual cases and were difficult to understand.

After attending the workshops, most of the KIs reported that the training topics are applicable to their work, especially case investigation among adults and children and investigation techniques for collecting data from victims. The PEACE Model was used to train their colleagues and staff in various regions across the country. Three KIs said the HT training documents were used as reference or knowledge management resources within their organizations. However, because the COVID-19 pandemic limited face-to-face interaction and led to changes in the workplace environment, four KIs specifically reported that they have not yet applied the topics in their work.

6.5.3. EFFECTIVENESS

How effective have data and knowledge gathering activities (Body of Knowledge, Pre-Situational Analyses, stakeholder consultation, etc.) been in identifying appropriate interventions?

The ATLAS project commissioned a team of researchers to conduct the BOK, a review of global evidence on effectiveness of efforts addressing CL, FL, and HT, to identify best practices and the most promising types of interventions. Regarding Outcome 3, which concerns coordination among law enforcement and social protection entities in Thailand, the BOK's key findings indicate the following "high quality" interventions:

1. Provide legal services to help victims complete paperwork, arrange depositions, arrange settlement, and process immigration issues.

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[34] The PEACE model represents a non-accusatory interview technique. The model's steps include: Preparation and Planning, Engage and Explain, Account, Closure, Evaluate.

2. Conduct legal services in combination with comprehensive support interventions to improve victims' willingness and capacity to interact with law enforcement.

In addition, in a country-specific effort, ATLAS Thailand has conducted the PSA, an evidence-based research initiative designed to examine the existence and functionality of enforcement and coordination entities as well as the legal frameworks, organizational structures, and systems in place for enforcement and coordination to address child labor, forced labor, and human trafficking in Thailand. The PSA provides key recommendations to increase coordination among law enforcement and social protection entities under Outcome 3, advising that ATLAS could address the following:

1. The multi-disciplinary teams (MDTs) and practitioners do not have uniform understandings of HT and often cannot recognize CL and FL. Providing training and other informational materials could help to address this issue.

2. Government and civil society often do not coordinate on CL, FL, and HT. Improving communication and referrals would help to increase coordination.

Based on interviews with the ATLAS Thailand team, the decision was made to distribute the BOK only to stakeholders at the Ministry of Labor (MOL) and to present the BOK contents at the stakeholder consultation workshop. The ATLAS project team did not share the document beyond these events because of its primary function in identifying suitable interventions and designing activities, which meant that its application was not directly relevant to stakeholders at the phases of DMOP implementation.

The MTE found a variety of opinions and perceptions among the project staff who were directly involved with the BOK and PSA. For instance, one project staff member viewed the BOK and PSA as inappropriate interventions for implementation in Thailand because government stakeholders were not involved in developing the BOK or PSA from the beginning. Another staff member regarded the BOK and PSA as suitable for decision-makers, such as the Deputy Permanent Secretary, Deputy Director, Attorney General, and head of legal development at the DOPA. They indicated that the documents could be useful to project staff interested in understanding operational efficiency and to government stakeholders involved in decision-making at a high level who would like to study the theoretical concepts related to interventions, with the caveat that if documents are merely distributed to workshop participants without making clear what their purpose is the materials would be useless because stakeholders and participants have different goals from the ATLAS project. One of the project team members was clear in pointing to the PSA as incredibly important because it had been used to identify and review gaps and challenges and design interventions to address each gap, highlighting the fact that it was still used as a reference despite being conducted years ago.

Three non-staff respondents reported that they had seen the BOK or PSA previously or reviewed a part of the PSA and provided comments to their supervisor to finalize the PSA. One further respondent reported that the BOK and PSA results were presented during a workshops they attended, although they were unable to explain the details of the documents. Additionally, 10 non-staff respondents reported that project documents were made available for download.

> *"I think that government didn't really care about the papers when NGOs came in to help formulate the laws, as they would just need to tackle the task head-on. Distributing the BOK and PSA documents or showing the presentation slides every time could be a waste of time. We could spend more time building their capacity with other knowledge and skills and providing explanations on the outcomes of the PS). After 1-2 months, we can assess that they used and shared the knowledge."*
>
> *(A female ATLAS staff, WI_036)*

To what extent have project interventions (individual DMOPs) achieved their stated goals (improving enforcement and coordination) to date? Is the project on track to achieve its outcomes and objective?

To date, the project interventions and individual DMOPs are on track to achieve the project's outcomes and objectives, even though there have been delays finalizing the PSA and delays associated with the COVID-19 pandemic and there remain tight timelines for the implementation of the Practitioner's Guide on Investigation of Forced Labor DMOP. On this subject, one project team member noted that the team had been in talks with the government and was able to develop a workable, if narrow, schedule to achieve implementation.

Another project staff member raised that Thailand has a comprehensive legal framework. However, it's fairly complex, and the people in charge of implementing it, like labor inspectors, law enforcement, judges, and prosecutors, do not always fully understand it or are not aware of all the nuances of the law, which can present a large challenge to the project.

Almost none of government and CSO stakeholders interviewed were aware of individual DMOPs, project activities, and expected outcomes. They may have been provided with this information or informed of it by the ATLAS team during the meetings and workshops, but they couldn't recall. In contrast, they could recall the workshop details, such as the number of training days, training venues, curricula, lectured topics, training instructors, and offices of the workshop participants. One respondent mentioned that the ATLAS project intends to provide government staff training to be trainers/facilitators, which demonstrates at least some limited awareness of the project's TOT approach.

> *"ATLAS provided training for trainers; then these trainers will be training the staff in their organizations."*
>
> *(A male government stakeholder, WI_008)*

One government stakeholder mentioned that although the project launched just two years ago, the project enabled government stakeholders to get to know each other. The Thai MOL and the USDOL have been collaborating since the two agencies met at meetings organized by ATLAS.

Because most of the KIs were workshop participants, they were asked whether the workshop objectives were achieved as planned. Most KIs reported that they gained more knowledge, especially on how to distinguish between each form of CL, FL, and HT. Notably, six respondents noted that project activities were beneficial in helping to increase their interactions with the network of counterparts in other offices to address the HT issues.

What factors have influenced the effectiveness of the project strategy and specific interventions?

Strong support from government stakeholders at each step of the DMOP process was a significant factor that influenced the effectiveness of the overall project strategy. The long-standing partnership between the United States and Thailand opened the opportunity for the project and stakeholders to work together. The Thai government also prioritized resolving the issues of CL, FL, and HT, thus allowing the government officers to be engaged in most of the project activities, like project design, planning, and implementation. They also perceived that the DMOP interventions were responsive to the needs and priorities of government stakeholders to increase their capacity to work on CL, FL, and HT. Moreover, training topics on human trafficking laws, the different types of criminal cases, and the human trafficking tier rating were seen to be aligned to the Thai context, with some government stakeholders highlighting the TIP Report and its importance in solving human trafficking issues in Thailand.

ATLAS project team members and some decision-makers reported that the ATLAS Thailand team leader is one of the key factors influencing the project's effectiveness. The local project

leader possesses relevant project implementation experience, knowledge of technical assistance concepts, and strong connections to government stakeholders and experts who have been invited as workshop resource persons and facilitators.

Another project team member reported that they have a strong team because they have worked like a "family," which allowed the project activities to continue despite the COVID-19 pandemic crisis. Furthermore, ATLAS HQ has also provided timely technical assistance and guidance in project direction, drafting concept notes, and facilitating lectures during the workshops.

Government stakeholders from the central and provincial levels reported that the training events were one of the key achievements that should be continued after the project ends in Thailand and considered for on-site implementation. However, they said the training should also include practical simulations of actual situations encountered in the field.

> *"The classroom-type of training alone may not build expertise. If one doesn't experience the real action, one wouldn't understand."*
>
> *(A female government stakeholder, WI_026)*

Moreover, workshop facilitators were also considered as key and to have influenced effectiveness because they provided sufficient and valuable knowledge. In addition, the project was successful at recruiting many organizations to join the workshop, which helps create an enabling environment for the integration of efforts related to human trafficking across multiple institutions.

Is the project strategy accomplishing its planned results as expected at the country level? What factors, internal and external to the project, maybe contribute to these successes and challenges?

The project strategy accomplished its target activity and expected outcomes at the country level but failed to meet the original project timeline. The delays were due to PSA finalization, COVID-19 pandemic-related problems, and a change in project policy that required signing a memorandum of understanding (MOU) with the MOL.

To resolve the above-mentioned delays and challenges, the ATLAS Thailand project team had to organize a stakeholder consultation to adjust the strategy, invite subject-matter experts to draft the relevant laws on HT, ensure lectures were interesting, design group activities to get the participants to brainstorm and produce recommendations for each point, and collect data. These strategies could help the project to develop realistic and achievable timelines and keep the DMOP implementation on track.

Another project team member perceived that the project has been successful "beyond expectations" in terms of the increasing the number of target beneficiaries in the workshop. According to the original project plan, there was to be a maximum capacity of 30–40 workshop participants per on-site training for a total of 120 participants trained in ETP in a year (4 training sessions in total). But due to the COVID-19 situation and the shift to online training, more than 100 participants were included in one ETP online training. A challenge with the online workshop evaluation was that the level of participant engagement was difficult to evaluate since the number of online participants exceeded the target numbers, and workshop participants' reactions were barely observable. As a result, it is difficult to determine the amount of knowledge gained or to what extent the case studies could be exercised and applied. The online training significantly differs from in-person training, where the level of engagement, group Q&A, test scores, and post-training evaluation can provide a better indication of the outcomes.

Some government stakeholders and decision-makers who learned about the project strategy and were involved with the project planning and implementation reported that the project

achieved its planned results at the country level. One decision-maker praised the project's approach to the workshop's planning and preparation, which included informing potential facilitators about the workshop details (e.g., objectives, names of other facilitators, and details of potential respondents) in advance of the actual training events.

6.5.4. RELEVANCE

To what extent has the project strategy been implemented as designed?

In Thailand, the project strategy was implemented as designed amidst the COVID-19 pandemic situation. As previously mentioned, a delay in finalizing the PSA drastically affected the timeline. The project also shifted to other implementation methods from on-site workshops to online training platforms. However, the project team has attempted to follow project strategies and DMOPs, such as 1) establishing a global BOK; 2) conducting an in-country PSA; 3) conducting consultation meetings with key stakeholders to prioritize efforts and identify technical assistance needs; 4) forming country workgroups composed of international and national expert professionals to develop, evaluate and refine data-driven models of practice (interventions); 5) piloting the intervention models of practice (DMOP-E/DMOP-C); and 6) providing training to relevant stakeholders. Training activities were largely conducted as designed, though there were some challenges in activity implementation; for example, the training of immigration officers was delayed because it was not possible to conduct it virtually, leading the project (as of September 2021) to focus on the SOPs for DMOP-C and DMOP-E. \

Has the project strategy resulted in interventions and activities that respond to the needs and priorities of government stakeholders? Why or why not?

The project strategy resulted in interventions and activities that respond to the needs and priorities of government stakeholders because the RTG highly prioritized HT issues. FL was covered by the Anti-Human Trafficking Act, whereas CL is under the Labor Protection Act.

The ATLAS project used evidence-based gap analyses to respond to government needs and aligned interventions to local contexts in close collaboration with different government agencies to identify local solutions to address the challenges. A member of the MOL staff reported that their department was highly concerned about the TIP since they need to submit a TIP report to USDOL every year. 15 non-staff respondents indicated that the project strategy, interventions, and activities met the expectations of government stakeholders and were responsive to government needs and priorities. For example, the training included topics on how to distinguish cases and victims, which could assist government stakeholders to work productively. The project interventions were also attuned to government priority issues on CL, FL, and HT, especially among Thai and foreign (migrant) workers, and the training content and project activities were applicable to the stakeholders' work.

Additionally, getting to know government and non-governmental agencies through the project's meetings and workshops could facilitate work by the Thai government on Cl, FL, and HT issues. And by engaging with the project's strategy and interventions and staying connected, government stakeholders can participate in an exchange of knowledge that could help them understand the issues of the CL, FL, and HT.

> *"I think the government has focused on the human trafficking issue because it is a national problem. If the government is not prioritizing addressing the problem, all the more problems can happen."*
>
> *(A female government stakeholder, WI_028)*

How has the project strategy adapted to the local context?

The ATLAS team reported that the project strategy was designed to be very participatory. The project team started by assessing what project outcomes work in Thailand. The team identified that Thailand already had a very strong legal framework. Given this legal framework, the ATLAS project in Thailand focused on Outcomes no. 2 and no. 3.

A local project staff member raised concerns that Thailand has no international standard for relevant work on HT because Thailand's CL and FL initiatives have not been yet aligned with the international standards of the ILO. Thus, the curriculum from overseas was considered, not as a model, but as a guideline for good practices to be followed. In providing technical assistance of this nature, the effectiveness rested on the number of people who had acquired the knowledge.

Another project staff member amplified that the local team members need to understand the DMOP, BOK, and the ETP modules, which were designed by HQ. This project staff raised that HQ staff should understand the situation in Thailand, so it can make the curricula suitable for participants in the local context. Additionally, communication efforts within the project team should seek compromise and the team should work to communicate effectively.

15 government stakeholders confirmed that the learnings they gained from the workshop could be used in their work related to addressing the issues of CL, FL, and HT. Training topics aligned to Thai contexts, such as topics on human trafficking laws, the differences between criminal cases, the human trafficking tier rating, and the TIP report, demonstrated the importance of solving human trafficking issues. Another KI confirmed that the project did not have any operational issues with Thai and foreign laws. However, the project should share new techniques concerning victim protection and investigation with Thai officers, like those used in foreign countries. It was also suggested and that foreign facilitators pass on their knowledge to training participants.

However, how to meet the challenge of adapting to local contexts is not clear, especially regarding which government agency should serve as the host agency directly responsible for law enforcement in Thailand. Though numerous government agencies with a variety of roles and responsibilities have been involved, pursuing collaboration among different groups is only one of their many responsibilities. One KI also made a comment asking whether the training topics were practical enough to be adapted in the local context.

Has the project strategy allowed sufficient flexibility to respond to the local context?

The project, according to the ATLAS team and some of KIs, has been designed with flexibility, responsiveness, and adaptability to the local country context. Another project team member reasoned that the project strategy allowed sufficient flexibility to respond to the local context because *"the workers [ATLAS team members] are experienced."*

> *"Yes, that sort of flexibility, I think, it was written into ATLAS' award and the proposal that would initially be submitted for the ATLAS project. The entire structure was designed to be flexible and responsive, and adaptive to the local country context. And I think the project did a very good job."*
>
> *(A female ATLAS staff, WI_021)*

Another project staff member mentioned that the training events resulting from consultations with various stakeholders were compatible with the Thai context. In contrast, a few KI government stakeholders reported that their organization could only apply some of the learnings because the organization's main tasks on human trafficking were to curb prostitution and production of pornographic media, whereas the training focused more on CL, FL, and other labor-related HT issues.

16 government stakeholders reported that the project strategy and interventions allowed for sufficient flexibility to respond to the local contexts. Evidence showed that the government stakeholders received the training, and they provided feedback to refine the training methods and materials. Such efforts from the project showed that it prizes flexibility, as it engaged stakeholders and encouraged their participation in the DMOP process and valued their inputs to refine and support the implementation and institutionalization of the process.

6.5.5. EFFICIENCY

How could the project strategy and the nine-step DMOP process be made more efficient in terms of time and resources?

ATLAS project staff included six staff members in HQ and three staff in the Thailand office. The HO team provided project oversight not only in Thailand but also in the three ATLAS countries (Thailand, Paraguay, and Liberia). Project staff in the Thailand office consisted of a country program manager, a project and data reporting officer, and an administrative and finance officer. Given the limited number of Thailand staff, the administrative and finance officer must liaise with the government and relevant stakeholders, especially on workshop preparations and logistic requirements.

The ATLAS project team confirmed that it was challenging to recruit staff and consultants to work for the project in Thailand. The project team did not know why it was difficult to recruit staff. The ATLAS team in HO and Thailand had been doing an excellent job implementing the activities, especially adapting to the COVID-19 pandemic. The project instituted innovations to carry out the activities amidst lockdowns and public health concerns.

A staff member recognized that the DMOP process was good and systematic. This staff member also suggested that if the project implementer simply *"played by the book,"* without considering each country's context, the implementation timeframe, and the team's capacity (which may be lacking), it might result in overburdening the staff. Another project staff member's comments corroborated this statement.

The MTE results found that once HQ approved the activity, all activities were supposed to be implemented within a one- or-two-month time frame. The local activities included the issuance of official invitation letters, coordination, and confirmation of attendance to the workshop, which could be completed by the three local staff members. Per feedback from government stakeholders during the validation meeting, communications with the government stakeholders about the workshops were completed a few weeks before the events.

One government stakeholder involved with the project planning and implementation indicated their perception of the project strategy and nine-step DMOP process as efficient in terms of time and resources utilization. They pointed to the TOT as an example of this, where the project trained workshop participants to share their knowledge with their colleagues in their respective offices or departments at the central, regional, or provincial levels. The TOT could expand knowledge and capacity more widely to target government stakeholders.

To what extent has the project strategy adapted to change in the operating environment caused by the COVID-19 and/or other issues? How have that impacted results?

Amidst the COVID-19 pandemic, KIs from the government, CSO stakeholders, and ATLAS project staff reportedly were working from home. They implemented online meetings and technology-driven communication with their teams and beneficiaries.

For the ATLAS project activities, the COVID-19 pandemic limited face-to-face interactions, and the project could not implement activities for the first six months during the height of the pandemic, as mentioned earlier. Some activities were delayed, including designing SOPs and conducting training for immigration officers. As a result, the project strategy adapted to the changes in the operating environment. Workshops were organized online, and the numbers of participants were increased from the original plan. The local project team had to focus on working on the SOPs for DMOP-C and DMOP-E because the training for the immigration officers

was set aside. Using the online platform, it was difficult to evaluate the effectiveness of training. Several Thai government people were reluctant to attend online and virtual meetings. However, the virtual training increased the number of training participants and reduced COVID-19 transmission risks. In addition, the project team found that online training could be efficient, because more people were able to attend, such as those living in the provinces, who were not required to travel to Bangkok to participate. The meetings also had disadvantages though, because they limited the opportunity for active participation and group discussions, and some KIs encountered issues with internet connectivity. Also, some participants dropped out in the middle of online training due to urgent office tasks. Some senior people who were not used to the online platform could not make the connection themselves: They would stay in the office and ask someone to support them using the technology, especially to connect with the Zoom meeting application. Some government stakeholders complimented the ATLAS project for adapting the training method from on-site to online via Zoom, which gathered several participants in one meeting.

The evaluators realized that because of the COVID-19 pandemic and its impact on the activity implementation In Thailand, there is a need for additional time to fully complete the DMOPs as designed.

6.5.6.   SUSTAINABILITY

How engaged and committed to the project strategy are government stakeholders? What mechanisms have been effective in gaining their commitment?

The project involved various government and non-governmental stakeholders, such as the MOL, DOPA, RTP (patrol division), MSDHS, DATIP, IB, DSI (a division in charge of pornographic media and human trafficking), OAG, and OAG's research institute, the AMLO (oversees money laundering crimes related to human trafficking), and other relevant agencies. The project engaged stakeholders and sought their commitment and support to the project.

A project staff member perceived that the relationship with government stakeholders was very positive, especially with Dr. Mark Charoenwong, who works for the OAG. He was very much involved in the project. He was considered a champion of the ATLAS project in Thailand. One project staff member mentioned that a key stakeholder in MOL realized that this project was initiated from an idea of Thailand's Ministry of Labor, which had direct contact with USDOL. The MOL kept an eye on the project and waited to see the results. Another project staff member confirmed that the government was heavily involved and influenced the continuity of the project.

Upon orders from the department heads or their ministries, the government has been involved with and highly prioritized the issues of CL, FL, and HT. A government stakeholder reported that the Department of Labor Protection and Welfare coordinate with Winrock quite often because Winrock's projects (not only ATLAS but also the CTIP project) bear relevancy to social protection aspects. KIs also confirmed that there was an increasing and improved collaboration among government stakeholders in the same workshop groups who continuously coordinated and interacted with each other about laws and legislations via LINE.[35] groups. The coordination was observed between the stakeholders, including signing an MOU to operate under the same SOP to combat human trafficking. To harmoniously work in the areas of CL, FL, and HT and achieve each party's objective, relevant agencies aligned their practices and coordinated with each other.

Is the project strategy creating systems and structures to sustain activities and results beyond the end of the project?

One government stakeholder reported that project strategy could sustain activities such as using the results of the PSA (DMOP Step 2) as evidence-based information or a knowledge

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[35] LINE is an online communication platform: https://line.me/en/.

management document to identify stakeholders and integrate their understanding of the current labor and criminal systems and coordination mechanisms. While the knowledge and curriculum from the project could be maintained and sustained by the trained government stakeholders, it could also be shared or disseminated to relevant government staff as references.

For sustained communication and coordination among the prevention and social protection entities, a project staff member believed that coordination among stakeholders would likely end when the project ends. However, three government stakeholders reported that in terms of collaboration among the agencies, even without this project, the agencies had already established coordination among themselves. The effectiveness of collaboration would depend on whether the manual, SOP, or protocol on collaboration would be put into good use.

Another government stakeholder reported that the workshops could help build a network to increase communication efficiency. Participants exchanged phone numbers for future contact, to share experiences, and expand their circle of networks. This stakeholder noted that there could be opportunities for integration and collaboration in law enforcement with other organizations in the future. Some KIs reported that the LINE group shouldn't be closed after the project ends. This could be a valuable communication channel to sustain their sharing of knowledge and experiences.

One key decision-maker reported that an MOU between or among different government agencies could be instrumental in continuing their activities and exchange of learning lessons on the job related to CL, FL, and HT.

Is the project strategy replicable in other country contexts?

Government stakeholders, CSO staff, and project staff expressed different opinions toward replication of project strategy in other countries. Under the DMOP process, the plan to conduct and the method of using the PSA to identify problems and project recommendations (DMOP Step 2) could be replicated in other countries, even though every country has specific characteristics, cultures, and issues. The BOK (DMOP Step 1) could be used as a global reference of evidence-based interventions that effectively strengthen enforcement and coordination. It would also be possible to conduct consultation events (DMOP Step 3) with key stakeholders to prioritize efforts and identify technical assistance needs that could be replicated in other Southeast Asia countries with similar culture and sociodemographic contexts, such as Cambodia, Lao PDR, Indonesia, Myanmar, Philippines, and Vietnam.

In-country workgroups could be formed to address individual country laws and legislations, including developing, evaluating, and refining data-driven models of practice (interventions), also called DMOP-Es (enforcement) and DMOP-Cs (coordination); piloting, evaluating, and refining the intervention models of practice (DMOP Step 4–6); presenting intervention models to country workgroups and stakeholders for refinement and validation (DMOP Step 7); implementing the refined models (DMOP-E and DMOP-C) and integrating them with the existing structures (DMOP Step 8); and finalizing the institutionalization plan for the approved models with stakeholders (DMOP Step 9). Regarding training methods, it might be possible to use the TOT model in other countries if the case scenarios were revised to reflect individual country contexts.

However, a project staff member thought the project strategy used in Thailand could not be replicated because each country has different laws and legal systems. Likewise, one government stakeholder reported that the context of each country must be considered prior to the replication of the activities and topics, as each country's culture and nationalism differ.

> *"If one asks whether it could be replicated in each country, my answer is "no," because the organizational culture and coordination culture in each country differ."*
>
> *(A female ATLAS staff, WI_037)*

13 government and CSO stakeholders involved in the workshops reported that the training topics on human trafficking could be applied, in whole or in part, in foreign countries. One reason given was that *"human trafficking is an international offense,"* and therefore lectures delivered in Thailand and in foreign countries would likely be similar.

6.5.7. IMPACT

To date, what evidence exists that the project strategy is achieving the overall objective of increasing the capacity of host governments to address CL, FL, and/or HT?

Under the DMOP process, the PSA is used to identify stakeholders and integrate their understanding of and expertise on the current labor and criminal systems and coordination mechanisms. The DMOP intervention in Steps 5 to 6 could increase the capacity of the host government to address CL, FL, and HT. Several government stakeholders reported that participation in the workshop led to their increased knowledge, making the work of participants easier and encouraging collaboration with other agencies working on CL, FL, and HT. The KIs appreciated the skills learned, such as conducting inspections with the police and the local administrative organization to ensure improved work performance, staying on track with their work, and learning to distinguish between human trafficking, child labor, and forced labor. Government stakeholders reported that the training helped build the capacity of the participants regarding distinguishing and understanding the elements of the offense, evidence collection, and operation techniques.

A DOPA government staff member reported that the training on CL, FL, and HT was responsive to the needs of the work in his organization.

A project staff member viewed the government stakeholders as *"more knowledgeable and proficient than the project staff"* but interested in refreshing their knowledge about labor laws through the training. Another informant also reported that the participants came from various agencies and held various roles and responsibilities. During the training, copies of presentations were given, and the speakers provided explanations to build understanding of the topics discussed. The informant thought that those who were less familiar with the concepts of CL, FL, and HT would be able to apply the lessons from the training.

Another project team member reported that a labor inspector attended one of the ETP training sessions. The labor inspector learned the techniques of interviewing children and used the PEACE model to interview a victim of child labor. The techniques enabled the inspector to successfully interview the child, who felt at ease and shared a lot of information that the prosecutor could use to prosecute the perpetrator of the crime.

The KIs who are government stakeholders reported that knowledge gained from the training could be applied in their work. The training enabled the participants to become aware of the law. Based on the desk review of the project documents, 241 participants confirmed the use of the PEACE model for interviewing more victims. Additionally, the post-training evaluation scored no less than 4.2 out of 5 in evaluating the application of knowledge acquired from the training. Likewise, one project staff member reported that the government was particularly interested in international BOK and skills such as the use of the PEACE model in interviewing, which would help increase the efficiency of those working at the frontline, clarity in interpreting laws, and the collaborative identification and solving of problems.

Are there any success stories that could provide best practices or lessons learned for other countries or for future iterations of the project?

Several best practices and lessons learned were reported:

A project staff member reported that the project hosted a joint session between Thai and American judges and prosecutors. It was part of the ETP, but it was a little different than many other ETP training sessions. The project brought the judges together and discussed the differences and the similarities in the work that they do. They exchanged best practices and lessons learned. The session was very participatory and was not simply didactic lecturing of

Thai government officials and could be regarded as knowledge exchange. This project staff member also thought that Thailand's enforcement capacity was strengthened, and participants charged with identifying, investigating, and prosecuting child labor, forced labor, and human trafficking would be able to do their jobs better because of the ETP training.

> "I think it was very participatory. The training highlighted the fact that this wasn't just sort of teaching Thai government officials but rather engaging them in knowledge exchange. And I also hope that activities like the ETP will be institutionalized within the Thai government. Training of trainers should be conducted. We should be setting up the work to continue after us."
>
> (A female ATLAS project staff, WI_021)

One government stakeholder reported that the training and events organized by the project were quite effective and could improve the knowledge of government officers who work at the regional or provincial levels. In addition, the training management was successful in terms of assembling a diverse group of participants, enabling people with work experience to share their experiences, and fostering communication within the group.

Lectured topics during the workshops were considered as "best practices," and several informants acknowledged that the learnings could be applied to their routine work. In considering how to implement this learning, stakeholders pointed to CL, FL, and HT investigation and mitigation efforts as areas for future collaboration. A government KI mentioned that knowledge from the workshop could be applied in real-life situations. However, the government should consider external factors such as the agency's level of prioritization of the issues and budget allocation. Another KI applied knowledge gained related to case management and self-care.

The training events were conducted in an organized manner. Topics were coherently organized and easy to understand. A government decision-maker shared that training topics matched the KI's work area quite well. For instance, in cases where the KI's organization made arrests related to human smuggling or illegal entry from Laos, Myanmar, or Cambodia, the superior officials would order the distinction of alien victims before processing each of them. This allowed KI to apply knowledge about victim sorting to distinguish between those who would like to migrate to work in Thailand, those who had illegally entered, and victims of human trafficking before proceeding with each case.

Another government stakeholder reported that the PEACE model of interviewing is considered a good piece of knowledge that could be extended as a best practice, pending efforts to measure its actual benefits when widely applied.

> "If the PEACE model wasn't considered 'best practice,' we would not expand it utilization nationwide by agencies involved."
>
> (A female government stakeholder, WI_001)

Another project staff member reported that following the project activity in March 2021, the project staff received a request from the MOL to organize a training for 100 personnel. Police officers from the Immigration Bureau posted the manual at the Training Center. The Bureau's head thought it was useful and would like to see a training where the travel, accommodation, and venue costs were supported for the officers of the inspector rank and above nationwide, with ATLAS managing the training, speakers, and curriculum.

A government stakeholder reported that connections established from the workshop attendance could increase collaboration to help abandoned and scammed crew members and migrant workers who were forced, physically abused, and trafficked. This emerging coordination

among relevant agencies in Thailand could benefit FL victims by minimizing negative impacts and improving efforts to secure justice for offenses. This KI has also appreciated the engagement of CSOs and NGOs that could support initiatives for refugee cases and their protection.

6.6. CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

The ATLAS project in Thailand was designed to strengthen the capacity of the government to address child labor, forced labor, and human trafficking and pursue two main outcomes: (1) improved enforcement of the labor and/or criminal legal framework, specifically related to CL, FL, and/or HT; and (2) increased coordination among law enforcement and social protection entities to address CL, FL, and/or HT.

A desk review of project documents was conducted to provide background information and context. Subsequently, the MTE team collected primary qualitative data via KI interviews with three types of respondents: government stakeholders, CSO staff, and ATLAS project staff in HQ and Thailand offices. Among the 39 KIs interviewed, 22 were general government officers, 5 were government decision-makers, 2 were CSO staff members, and 5 were ATLAS project staff members.

The MTE results showed that the project interventions and individual DMOPs were on track to achieve their outcomes and objectives, despite the project being delayed due to the finalization of the PSA and the COVID-19 situation. Eight of the nine steps of the project strategy have been implemented, with the ETP being the most advanced DMOP implemented in Thailand. The achievements might be the result of the project strategy's participatory design, which has allowed for sufficient flexibility to respond to the local contexts.

The project has received strong support from government stakeholders in each step of the DMOP process. The process and interventions were perceived as responsive to the needs and priorities of government stakeholders to increase their capacity in working on CL, FL, and HT. In addition, the leadership of the ATLAS Thailand team leader was acknowledged as key to the project's effectiveness, thanks to her relevant experiences on project management, knowledge of technical assistance concepts, and strong connections with government stakeholders, including the experts invited as workshop resource persons and facilitators. The ATLAS Thailand team also demonstrated strong teamwork, which allowed the project activities to continue despite the worsening COVID-19 situation.

Training topics on the relevant laws, how to distinguish between different types of criminal cases, and the HT tier rating were aligned with the Thai context and were particularly useful for government stakeholders involved in the TIP report, which demonstrates the importance of solving HT issues in Thailand. The government stakeholders were able to gain knowledge from the workshops and apply the knowledge gained to their work addressing CL, FL, and HT issues.

However, the project encountered some challenges. The COVID-19 pandemic limited face-to-face interactions for the project's first six months. Some activities were delayed, including designing SOPs and training for immigration officers. As a result, the project strategy adapted to change in the operating environment, and training workshops were shifted from offline to online. Because the training for the immigration officers was set aside, the local project team turned their focus to the SOPs for DMOP-C and DMOP-E. An advantage of holding the workshops online was that the number of workshop participants became significantly larger than originally planned. However, it was more difficult to observe the participants' reaction and engagement with the training, especially during the exercise. Some workshop participants also encountered internet connectivity issue and others dropped off in the middle of the online training to attend urgent office tasks.

This MTE was able to provide the following conclusions and recommendations.

6.6.1. RECOMMENDATIONS FOR WINROCK INTERNATIONAL

Organization/project branding

Most of the MTE respondents did not know either about Winrock International or ATLAS project until they were invited to attend a workshop. Additionally, most could not recognize the full name of the project until they were probed. This suggests that the ATLAS project should have properly introduced or emphasized the organization's purpose and project details to relevant stakeholders, especially during the workshops/ trainings. Information provided should have included the project's name, objectives, and rationale.

Gathering and distribution of knowledge management documents

The BOK was not distributed to relevant stakeholders, except to the MOL, which directly received the BOK. However, the PSA was distributed and discussed with specific government stakeholders to validate and finalize the results with them until September 10, 2020. This evaluation observed that government stakeholders found the shared training and workshop documents to be useful reference materials. Although the timeline for implementing the training activities is limited, it would be beneficial for ATLAS to distribute the BOK and PSA reports as handouts as part of the training materials given to the stakeholders.

Workshop/meetings, planning, and implementation

Several stakeholders suggested that the training duration should be extended by adding four or five days to avoid rushing the discussion of workshop contents. The training should also be offered to practitioners in other areas in Thailand and representatives from NGOs/CSOs. Training frequency should be increased from two times a year to three times a year to keep law enforcement officers updated with new knowledge. Additional content on practical application, exchanging of case studies, and sharing of success stories and experiences should be included in organizational learning portals to drive the motivation of learning together.

The training should allow for more time for discussion, perhaps through follow-up meetings via Zoom or Google Meet, to continue the exchange of ideas among participants. Furthermore, NGO staff, police, and investigators should be invited as speakers to provide a broader range of perspectives. More time should be provided for group exercises to allow people to get to know each other better and facilitate their future collaboration.

Improvement of coordination and communication

Several workshop participants complimented the project staff's coordination work before and during the workshop implementation. However, one prominent government decision-maker offered a strong comment on the local project supporters' needs for improvement. Reportedly, there were communication issues that could have damaged the credibility of the project. Therefore, guidelines for communication with relevant government stakeholders among the local team should be re-assessed to improve coordination and communication. This would improve stakeholders' perceptions toward the project, project staff, and Winrock International for future initiatives.

To promote a sense of government ownership in project initiatives, Winrock or ATLAS should continue promoting co-creation—that is, bringing together government agencies and organizations and moving toward partnerships based on shared goals and objectives. ATLAS, more importantly, should foster more government ownership of the technical assistance provided and shared accountability in the project. This may be achieved by engaging more decision-makers or government stakeholders to be party to the project design and implementation.

Regarding communication channels, other platforms could be explored aside from official letters and emails. Communication channels such as Facebook and LINE groups allow trained government stakeholders to interact and share insights on their work. This may help to promote a sustained collaboration among law enforcement and social protection entities.

Project limitations

Some limitations of the project implementation were raised, especially among government decision-makers. Notably, the project has strict rules and regulations that prevented speakers working with a government office from being compensated. This might be an obstacle to inviting key experts from the governmental sector. Also, the local project director might not be able to address the imposition of strict rules and regulations to the relevant stakeholders. In addition, top-down policymaking and project implementation require careful consideration of the social context of each country. In particular, one decision-maker highlighted that the initial plan to train judges and prosecutors may have clashed with Thailand's social context and expectations.

7. CONCLUSION

The ATLAS MTE focused on the project strategy, as exemplified in the nine-step DMOP process, in the two countries where that strategy is most advanced, Paraguay and Thailand. The evaluation provides both the ATLAS project team and DOL with information on how the project is performing to date, activities that should be replicated or scaled-up, and areas for adaption and potential improvement.

Fundamentally, project stakeholders are overwhelmingly positive about ATLAS. Nearly unanimously in both Paraguay and Thailand, evaluators heard that the interventions the project designed were relevant to the contexts and delivered effectively. The flexibility built in to the design of ATLAS meant that relevant stakeholders participate in the design of activities and are also able to provide feedback for those activities to be refined. While some respondents criticized project decisions or approaches as being inappropriate for a given setting, these critical notes were in the minority and directed toward highly specific actions, not the project as a whole.

Beyond just the design of activities, participants find the quality of project interventions to be high. The technical assistance that ATLAS is able to provide received high praise from the majority of stakeholders, ranging from appreciation for specific presenters and trainers to enthusiasm for specific DMOPs, such as the Living Lab and Moot Court in Paraguay.

As the project pivots to focus more on the remaining countries, Argentina and Liberia, it should maintain the high level of quality. It should also consider adapting several practices. It is important that project-level priorities are communicated about clearly and directly between ATLAS HO and the country offices. Decisions about adaptation of materials to a particular context, how and to whom to distribute project materials such as the BOK and PSAs, and how best to communicate with various stakeholders should be made with inputs from global and country-level staff, and, once final, should be communicated clearly. Staff should continue to lean into the opportunities that online platforms can provide, while trying to find ways to overcome the difficulties inherent in virtual modes of working together.

Questions of sustainability and impact will need to be addressed in greater depth in forthcoming assessments, such as a final evaluation of the project. At this moment in time, ATLAS seems poised to have a lasting impact on the capacity of government stakeholders to combat CL, FL, and HT, but without strong sustainability planning, that impact may not be achieved. At this time, some stakeholders in Paraguay and Thailand expressed nervousness about whether they can continue to build on project successes without continued financial and technical support. As ATLAS finishes its operations in those countries, it should continue to work with stakeholders to determine how the DMOPs may be institutionalized in each context. As the project ramps up operations in Argentina and Liberia, focusing on the lessons related to sustainability from Paraguay and Argentina may help all stakeholders make long-term impact planning a central component of their work.