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<Vision Zero Fund's Projects in the Agricultural Supply Chain>

QUICK FACTS

Countries: Global, Brazil, Colombia, Uganda, Viet Nam

Evaluation date: [Click here to enter a date.](#)

Evaluation type: Project

Evaluation timing: Final

Administrative Office: Vision Zero Fund, OSHE

Technical Office: Vision Zero Fund, OSHE

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Key Words: OSH, FPRW, Cooperatives

BACKGROUND & CONTEXT

Summary of the project purpose, logic and structure

The ILO's Vision Zero Fund (VZF) was established in 2016 and works with tripartite constituents and other stakeholders towards a vision of zero severe and fatal workplace accidents, injuries, and diseases in supply chains. VZF has implemented a series of projects supported by the European Commission's Directorate General for Employment (DG-EMPL) since 2019. This evaluation analyses two projects, "Improving Occupational Safety and Health in the Global Coffee Supply Chain - A Vision Zero Fund Project" (2022-2023) and "Improving Safety and Health in Agricultural Global Supply Chains - A Vision Zero Fund Project" (2024-2025). The overall intended impact for the first project was 'Reduced exposure of workers to occupational safety and health risks in the coffee global supply chain' and for the second project was 'Global and national stakeholders working in agricultural supply chains take action to improve occupational safety and health (OSH) in target sectors (coffee, sugar cane)'.

The projects have included a global campaign called #Coffee People, focused on raising awareness of OSH within the coffee sector and country level activities in Colombia, Brazil, Uganda, and Viet Nam. The second phase of the project was expanded to include the sugar cane sector. The projects have developed knowledge products, disseminated tools, and held workshops with government, workers, and employers to improve knowledge and action on OSH in the two sectors.

Present situation of the project

The first project was implemented from October 1 2022 to December 31 2023 and the second project from 1 March 2024 to 31 May 2025. A third phase of the project began on June 1 2025 and will be implemented until 31 August 2026.

Purpose, scope and clients of the evaluation

This was an internal evaluation. The purpose of the evaluation was to provide an independent assessment of the progress of the two projects towards their intended objectives. It focused on both assessment of the achievements to date and lesson learning for future projects.

The evaluation assessed two projects that ran consecutively (with a short two-month gap between the projects), the "Improving Occupational Safety and Health in the Global Coffee Supply Chain - A Vision Zero Fund Project" (2022-2023) (GLO/22/12/EUR), and

	<p>“Improving Safety and Health in Agricultural Global Supply Chains - A Vision Zero Fund Project” (2024-2025) (GLO/23/34/EUR).</p> <p>The main clients of the evaluation are the ILO’s Vision Zero Fund, ILO’s Flagship Programme Safety+Health for All, ILO constituents in target countries (government representatives, workers’ and employers’ organizations at country and global levels); VZF donors, in particular the European Union, the implementers of the next phase of the EU funded VZF project, the VZF Steering and Advisory Committee, and the Flagship programme’s Global Tripartite Advisory Committee (GTAC).</p>
Methodology of evaluation	<p>(A short description of methodology of data collection and analysis, including rationale for choice of methodology, data sources used and major limitations encountered)</p>
MAIN FINDINGS & CONCLUSIONS	<p>The evaluation criteria for the evaluation were relevance, coherence, efficiency, effectiveness, and sustainability and likelihood of impact. The evaluation was conducted remotely and utilised a mixed methods approach of both qualitative and quantitative methods. The main methods used were a desk review of key documentation, key informant interviews, and an online survey. A final report and two case studies were produced. Sampling was purposive based on suggestions from the VZF team and other stakeholders. The evaluator spoke with 26 stakeholders (16 women and 10 men) including VZF staff, other ILO staff, donor representatives, officials from sectoral organisations, and representatives of employers and workers. This included interviews with stakeholders in Brazil, Colombia, and Uganda, as well as global level stakeholders.</p> <p>The stakeholder survey was sent out in English, Portuguese, and Spanish, with a separate survey being sent to ILO staff. 25 people (16 women and 10 men) responded to the survey.</p>
RECOMMENDATIONS, LESSONS LEARNED AND GOOD PRACTICES	
Main findings & Conclusions	<p>Overall, the VZFs projects in the coffee and sugarcane sectors have led to important achievements and furthered conversations concerning OSH in the two sectors. VZF has utilised a limited level of funding in an efficient manner, and through a collaborative</p>

approach with other ILO projects has leveraged resources for various sources. While there is an internal debate within the ILO and its constituents about the global campaign and limitations in the measurement of its impact, there is evidence that the campaign, coupled with country level activities have supported changes in awareness and attitudes towards safety and health in the workplace in both sectors.

Relevance

Key Finding 1: Most stakeholders found the projects to have been useful in advancing occupational safety and health in the targeted supply chains and agreed that the project addressed key needs with the coffee and sugar cane sectors.

The evaluation found that stakeholders at the national level were most likely to identify the projects as having been useful, although many global level stakeholders had the same opinion. National level discussions and workplace activities had raised awareness in the sectors about the importance of OSH, were seen as relevant to needs, and were starting to contribute to workplace improvements.

Key Finding 2: The #Coffee People campaign appears to have been most relevant when combined with in-country activities in Brazil, Colombia, and Uganda. Challenges in measuring its impact make it harder to assess the relevance beyond these countries, although the inclusion of OSH into sectoral meetings and conferences is an example of relevance for sectoral actors. Opinions among global stakeholders about the utility and effectiveness of the campaign varied widely.

The #Coffee People campaign has been used as part of the strategy for addressing issues at the country-level and when combined with the national level activities was found to have resonated with stakeholders. Since the launch of the campaign, OSH has been included in the agenda of global and regional coffee conferences, which demonstrates the relevance of the issue to the sector. Opinions about the campaign within the ILO and among the tripartite constituents were divided, ranging from concerns about its design to views that it was innovative and a model for future ILO initiatives.

Some key points about the campaign:

- Country level stakeholders in general believed the campaign to have been useful for further the conversation on OSH and supporting workplace activities.
- There does appear to be an information gap among global stakeholders concerning what the projects did with the campaign at the country level.
- Measuring the impact of the campaign is challenging for a couple of reasons. The lack of PPPs being approved meant following up on pledges was not possible and the timeframe between the campaign and the report the ITC developed did not give enough time to understand outcomes and impact. Common feedback from many global stakeholders was that they were interested in the campaign but wanted to understand more about what it had achieved.
- The campaign videos do address OSH and working conditions but mainly comes from Western voices such as ILO and EU staff. The workers featured in the videos do not particularly address decent work deficits but speak in more general terms about coffee production.

Key Finding 3: The projects have contributed evidence-based research that highlights key drivers and constraints of OSH in both sugar cane and coffee in Brazil, Uganda, and Colombia.

The projects have developed four sectoral research reports in both the sugar cane and coffee sectors. These have helped support the engagement of the tripartite constituents in the countries of implementation and in some cases the development of road maps to achievement workplace improvements.

Key Finding 4: Gender equality has been effectively included in the project but there has been no focus on disability inclusion or the just transition to environmental sustainability.

VZF partnered with the International Women in Coffee Association (IWCA) during the projects. This helped to promote the voice of women in international and regional sectoral meetings. The research products have highlighted gender-specific risks in both the coffee and sugar-cane sectors and activities have included gender components. There has not been attention to disability inclusion in

the projects, although potential opportunities to work with the workers organisations who have disability inclusion policies and the ILO's Global Business and Disability Network do exist. Climate change impacts working conditions for workers in both sectors and is addressed through the identification of hazards during workshops, but it was not a specific focus of the project. Climate change interventions are funded by a different section of the European Commission.

Coherence

Key Finding 5: The VZF has successfully built strong collaboration with other projects that has helped to maximise the potential of the projects on a small budget.

The budget for the projects was small and acting alone would have limited the reach of the projects. VZF has effectively engaged with other ILO projects in Brazil, Colombia, and Uganda, which has allowed for more activities that would otherwise have been possible. In particular, synergies have been developed with projects working on other FPRW issues, supporting the ILO's strategy of an integrated approach to FPRW. The projects have also successfully worked with other departments. For example, the partnership with Coop was developed through an initial webinar, which led onto joint research being conducted.

Key Finding 6: There is some evidence of social dialogue improvements as a result of the project, but this could be strengthened further by enhanced efforts to bring in all three tripartite constituents.

National level stakeholders suggested there had been improvements in social dialogue as a result of the project. Examples of these included discussions being held between the tripartite constituents involved in sectors that had not taken place before the project, and improvements in workplace dialogue at individual companies. There are potential avenues for greater focus on social dialogue though, such as increased engagement of workers organisations in the sugar cane sector in Colombia. The projects also fostered social dialogue on OSH between global and national stakeholders in the coffee sector, particularly in the design of the campaign and through global, regional, and national conferences that have been held since. This is reported to be the first time

global dialogue on the topic of OSH in the coffee sector has taken place.

Effectiveness

Key Finding 7: The projects improved awareness of OSH within the coffee and sugar cane sectors and were successfully used to raise interest, awareness, and dialogue at the country level

Overall, the project achieved the outputs included in the projects' logframes. The logframes are though mainly focused on outputs and there were limited outcomes included. The next phase of the project has a greater focus on outcomes.

There is evidence that the project improved awareness of OSH within the coffee sector. The International Coffee Organisation (ICO) participation in the campaign led to it deciding to have "Joining forces for a safer coffee supply chain" as the official theme of the 2023 International Coffee Day. The ILO has been invited to several sectoral meetings and conferences since the #Coffee People campaign was launched to present strategies for improving OSH in the sector.

National level stakeholders also indicated there has been an increase in the interest in OSH as a result of the project. The campaign documentary (for the coffee sector), along tripartite workshops, and workplace training activities (for both sectors), has contributed to increased attention to the subject within the sectors. There is some evidence from stakeholder testimony that as a result of these activities, the projects have had some success in strengthening social dialogue, worker organising and collective action, at the country level.

Key Finding 8: The global campaign has supported greater discussion of OSH within the sector but challenges in the PPP process and following up on pledges reduced the potential momentum the campaign could have within global supply chains.

VZF planned to sign PPPs with global stakeholders that aligned with the global campaign. As part of the global campaign, stakeholders

were encouraged to make pledges concerning how they would work on OSH issues within their sphere of influence. VZF was able to sign PPPs with sectoral bodies such as ICO, the Global Coffee Platform, and the European Coffee Federation, as well as having an existing PPP with IWCA. However, PPPs with coffee companies were not finalized because they were not approved by the Workers' Group Secretariat within the ILO, whose endorsement is required under the ILO's PPP process. This had an impact both in terms of momentum and VZF's ability to engage with the coffee companies and also the monitoring of how effectively the pledges were being implemented.

Key Finding 9: Improving the measurement of changes the projects contribute to would help strengthen the justification for the interventions.

The projects' logframes mainly included outputs or short-term outcomes. Longer term outcomes, such as the Number of initiatives on OSH undertaken in the coffee supply chain by lead firms and/or PCIs (at national, regional or global level) were not reported on in the final project report because it was considered too early to measure. The ILOITC also developed a logframe for the coffee campaign and included long-term outcomes and impacts, but these were also not measured due to the longer timeframe needed to measure them. The campaign received mixed responses from key global stakeholders from both the ILO and the employers and workers' organisation. Strengthening the measurement of outcomes of the campaign and improving the documentation of the links between the campaign and how it has contributed to improvements in social dialogue and workplace conditions, would help strengthen the justification for future campaigns.

Efficiency

Key Finding 10: The projects made effective use of a limited budget by leveraging existing resources and partnering with other projects. The budgets of the projects were quite limited. This led to the short-time frame of each project of only 15 months. VZF seems to have maximised efficiency by effective partnerships with other projects. This has helped to increase the number of activities the projects have been able to deliver and broaden the number of people reached by the projects. The short-term nature of the projects does

reduce efficiency to a certain extent as it means the planning and timeframe with partners is limited and this contributes to the problems linked to producing longer term impact. However, the consecutive nature of the projects helps reduce this concern as overall progress can continue to development as the phases continue.

Sustainability and the Likelihood of Impact

Key Finding 11: There have been policy level changes or commitments to change that can be at least partly attributed to the work of the projects

There are some examples of actual change or intent to change policy at a national level. In Vietnam, OSH was mainstreamed into the National Sustainability Curriculum. In Brazil, the July 2025 Coffee and Dinner Summit included the signing, by the Cecafé - Brazilian Coffee Exporters Council of the Term of Adhesion to the Pact for the Adoption of Good Labor Practices in Coffee Growing, with the other tripartite members present and represented. In Uganda, following an awareness event which included screening the documentary, the Govt stated their intention to ratify C187 and asked for ILOs support to update their OSH profile.

Key Finding 12: Long-term impact of the global campaign is hard to identify as there is not a process for measuring the implementation of pledges

It is possible to identify changes at the national level, including improvements in understanding of OSH at both the national and workplace level. However, the impact of the campaign throughout global supply chains in the coffee sector is difficult to assess. The challenges over PPP approval meant some momentum with coffee companies from the campaign was lost, and the pledges that were made as part of the campaign were not followed up on. Additionally, as mentioned in the effectiveness section, measurement of the achievements of the campaign, documented in the ILOITC's report, were limited to outputs and short-term outcomes.

Key Finding 12: The short length of the projects has an impact on sustainability but the continuity of actions through various phases of funding mitigates some of this concern.

The projects were both 15 months, which is a limited timeframe for achieving significant change. This reduces potential for sustainability as it does not allow for longer term planning between VZF and the key stakeholders. However, there has been continuity of actions during the various phases of funding. Work is continuing in Brazil and Colombia, although not Uganda, in the new project that began in June 2025. This helps mitigate the concern over sustainability. Additionally, the strong connections VZF made with other ILO interventions, should also help ensure attention to OSH continues, even in locations that VZF were unable to include in the new phase of the project.

Recommendations

1. Focus on policy change and workplace improvements in the next phase of the project.
2. Improve monitoring of long-term changes
3. Strengthen communication of project's achievements
4. Ensure clear understanding of the PPP process (IGDS 83) particularly in relation to the timeframe for decision making.
5. Ensure labour inspectorates are included in project activities.
6. Conduct assessments of social media campaigns
7. Improve attention to disability inclusion in the projects
8. Work with donors to extend the length of the projects
9. Identify sectoral bodies for new sectors
10. Identify sectors for intervention based on both constituent request and also synergies with other ILO projects.

Main lessons learned and good practices

Lessons Learned

- Ensuring a follow up system for an international campaign is critical to understanding its long-term impact.

- Early engagement of cooperatives, businesses and other key sectoral actors is important in winning their support for a project.

Emerging Good Practices

- A collaborative approach to designing the campaigns helps increase ownership of the project's activities.
- Following up of a campaign with country level activities helps strengthen ownership and deliver country-level change.
- Changes to campaigns at the country level to allow for cultural and contextual changes are important for achieving success.
- The inclusion of cooperatives helped include a key segment of the coffee sector that can be hard to reach.
- The development of relationships with global sectoral bodies in the coffee industry helped strengthen the reach of the projects and supported the inclusion of OSH onto the agenda of the sector.