

Central project evaluation – executive summary

Socio-economic Dialogue in Libya

Title	Socio-economic Dialogue (SED)		
County/region/global	Libya		
Sector and CRS code	15150 - Democratic participation and civil society (30%), 15220 - Civilian peacebuilding, conflict prevention and resolution (20%), 15110 - Politics and administration in the public sector (50%)		
Project number	2017.2142.2		
Commissioning party	German Federal Ministry for Economic Cooperation and Development (BMZ)		
Lead executing agency/partner organisations	Ministry of Planning of Libya/ United Nations Economic and Social Commission for Western Asia (ESCWA)		
Project value	EUR 4,000,000.00		
Project term	December 2017 - February 2021		
Reporting year CPE	2021	Sample year CPE	2019

Context of the project

During project implementation, Libya was considered a fragile and volatile country affected by civil war: it had not succeeded in returning to a stable political and economic development path since the 2011 revolution. Gaddafi's fall was followed by an armed conflict in 2014. In 2015, the Government of National Accord was formed. However, it was weak and fragmentation was ongoing. Even worse, a second civil war broke out. The escalating situation limited the government's influence as it controlled only parts of the country. Furthermore, the division of the country was perpetuated during most of the project's term by the existence of two governments. A permanent ceasefire was signed to end the civil war only in October 2020. The formation of an interim unity government was announced on 5 February 2021, and national elections were scheduled for 24 December 2021.

From an economic standpoint, the country continued to be shaped by the former centralist and state-socialist structures. Libya's economy, which has so far been centrally managed, was still almost exclusively dependent on the oil sector. The private sector had been systematically 'destroyed' by the Gaddafi regime and because of this plays only a marginal role. This has led to a bloated public sector where oil was used to keep the people 'happy and quiet'. At the same time, in addition to 350,000 internally displaced persons, there are about 700,000 to 1,000,000

Figure 1: Project region © GIZ



migrants in Libya, whereby Libya is both a transit and a destination country. The Government of National Accord was thus unable to address the country's most pressing problems through effective governance.

The development of medium- and long-term policy approaches to solve these problems was almost non-existent. The central problem at the project's inception was therefore that options for a sustainable state and social model for the Libya of the future, which would flow into the political processes for the transformation of the country, had not been developed.

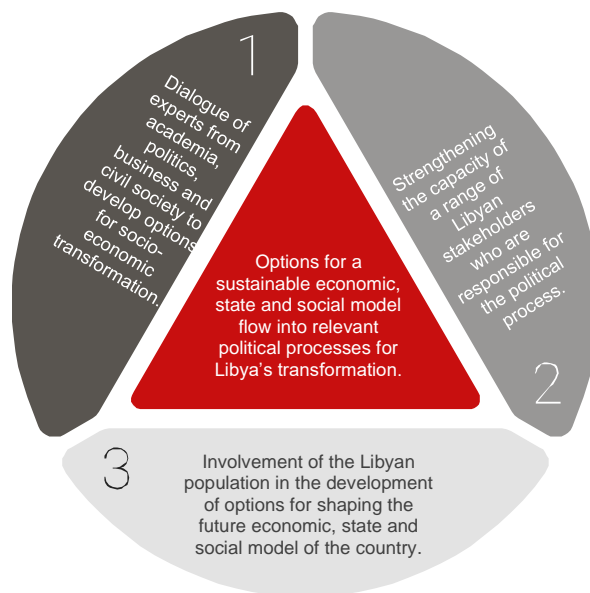
Brief description of the project

The project aimed to develop options for a viable economic, state and social model for Libya and their inclusion in relevant political processes.

It operated under three components: output 1 aimed to support a national dialogue between experts from academia, politics, business and civil society in Libya on the development of options for socio-economic transformation. By this, the project was supposed to contribute to social cohesion, confidence-building in government institutions, economic stabilisation and the development of prospects for the younger generation in Libya. It was envisaged that the project would also identify roadmaps for implementation of those options developed within the dialogue process. Implementation of component 1 was delegated to the United Nations Economic and Social Commission for Western Asia (ESCWA) based on a grant agreement. Component 2 aimed to strengthen the capacity of Libyan stakeholders (especially from the government, but also beyond) who are responsible for the political process. Moreover, national and subnational dialogue facilitators were trained under this component. Finally, component 3 aimed at the broader involvement of the Libyan population in the development of options for shaping the future economic, state and social model of the country. For this purpose, the population of selected Libyan municipalities was expected to be involved in the development of options for shaping the future economic, state and social model of the country.

The project's direct target groups were the participants of the socio-economic dialogue processes such as leaders and representatives of a broad range of society groups in Libya (from politics, business, trade unions, science, civil society including women and youth groups) as well as representatives of the country's local communities, civil society organisations, private sector and academia. Another direct target group were Libyan government stakeholders in charge of the political process. The entire population of Libya was considered an indirect target group (final beneficiaries) of the project, which was represented in the project's dialogue processes at national and subnational level.

Figure 2: Project objective/areas of intervention



Assessment according to DAC criteria

Relevance

The relevance of the project is rated as moderately successful, with 75 out of 100 points.

The project contributed to several sustainable development goals and was relevant to the overall national policies and priorities for Libya's future development despite a lack of overarching strategies in this regard. The project was aligned well with sectoral policies and strategies of the German Federal Ministry of Economic Cooperation and Development. The project also addressed the needs and capacities of its beneficiaries and stakeholders. However, the buy-in of government institutions in the dialogue process was low, mainly because of the 'apolitical' approach by ESCWA in keeping the Government of National Accord and representatives of competing government institutions in Libya out of the process for reasons of neutrality. The project design had shortcomings, because it was partly inappropriate and unrealistic for achieving the intended objectives. These deficiencies were due to the strong dependency of those components of the project which GIZ was supposed to implement, as opposed to those ESCWA was taking care of.

Another facet of the project's suboptimal design was its reliance on the Ministry of Planning as the project's political partner. This was incongruent with the

approach of ESCWA to not recognise the Ministry of Planning as an official implementing partner of the national dialogue for reasons of neutrality. Additionally, some of the planned results proved too ambitious and not realistic, considering the fragile and dynamic conditions, the project's short term, its limited budget and the existing risks. In terms of adaptability, the project navigated well through its extremely volatile environment by updating the implementation strategy, but it was hesitant in addressing strategy changes by subsequent modifications of the results matrix.

Coherence

The coherence of the project was rated as successful, with 81 out of 100 points.

Overall, the evaluation results show that internal coherence was mostly achieved: the project fitted well into GIZ's overall Libya portfolio, and the project management sought close and fruitful cooperation and exchange with other GIZ projects in Libya and made efforts to create synergies as best as possible. However, the evaluation team considered that potential synergies with other projects could have been better exploited. The project achieved external coherence by its efforts in attracting additional funding from other donors. Exchange and cooperation with other international organisations involved in Libya, however, was limited on purpose due to the national dialogue participants' perception of these organisations as being involved in the ongoing conflict and for ensuring a Libyan-owned and Libyan-driven dialogue process.

Photo 1: Libyan dialogue moderators, © GIZ/Firas Ben Khelifa



Effectiveness

The effectiveness of the project was rated as successful, with 87 out of 100 points.

The project has largely achieved its intended project objective (outcome). Overall, most of the project's outcome and output indicators were fulfilled. Therefore, the project implementation can be considered effective. The project managed to achieve all of its outcome indicators by an average 79,17%. The project was partly successful at the output level. Indicators related to output A were achieved in full, whereas outputs B and C were achieved partially. Furthermore, the project's contribution to the achievement of its objectives seems plausible as the three hypotheses linking the project's outputs and activities to its module objective were assessed to be fulfilled. (1) It could be confirmed that the provision of guidance by experts for the dialogue process and elaboration of socio-economic options was successful. (2) The training of dialogue facilitators has enabled them to successfully design and implement socio-economic dialogue processes. (3) Trained dialogue facilitators have been able to apply their knowledge at the local level. Looking at the way the project was able to achieve its objectives, the assessment of the project's implementation quality revealed a mixed picture: on the one hand, GIZ and ESCWA were able to develop a very good, respectful, effective and constructive working relationship and the advisory board's support proved to be highly successful. However, GIZ and ESCWA could not always reach a common understanding about the approach of the project and there was no joint overall strategy for project implementation which both organisations could rely on.

Additionally, the collaboration between ESCWA and the Ministry of Planning was not smooth, mainly due to the project's inappropriate design. As a result, the project's political partner grew steadily more frustrated with the project's implementation and led to the feeling that the project did not really care for its partner's specific interests and ownership. Finally, the project also experienced positive original unplanned results during its implementation. One additional positive result was generated by the Covid-19 pandemic requiring the dialogue process shift to online communication media. As a consequence, the process became more inclusive due to more participants involved and less expensive.

Figure 3: Achievement of project objective indicators



Impact

The impact of the project was rated as moderately successful, with 72 out of 100 points.

At impact level, it was observed that the dialogue process contributed to better social cohesion, at least among those who participated in the process as it proved that dialogue is possible even in times of ongoing civil war. The project's contribution to confidence-building in Libya's government institutions, however, was rather low considering that the number of government officials participating in the dialogue was meagre. For creating more impact, the key written products need to be operationalised including the drafting and approval of roadmaps which have not yet been developed. Hence, a couple of interim steps will be necessary until key products might reach the level of practical government policy. So far, the evaluation was unable to find any evidence for government ownership of the key products. The project did not manage to contribute much in terms of introducing and conducting dialogue processes at municipal level seeing that only one subnational dialogue was implemented. On a positive note,

however, was the training for national and subnational dialogue facilitators. Although the evaluation team could not find much evidence that these people are regularly engaged in dialogue facilitation, the situation might change when the pandemic restrictions have been lifted. An indication for potential future impact is the foundation of a national association of dialogue facilitators. The hypotheses on contributions to higher-level development results and changes were assessed as partially plausible. It could be confirmed that dialogues conducted by the project were Libyan-owned and Libyan-driven with countrywide participation, including active participation of women and youth. Also the project was successful in introducing the concept of dialogue as involvement across a broad level of participation. However, it could not be verified that strategies introduced by the project are considered by Libyan government authorities at national and local levels.

Efficiency

The efficiency of the project was rated as successful, with 81 out of 100 points.

The project was assessed to be successful in its production and allocation efficiency. For the production efficiency, the share of overarching costs was comparably low considering that the project operated in a conflict context which generally causes higher security costs. Overall, the project's production efficiency is underscored by the fact that it could achieve most of its indicators at output and outcome levels. The allocation of costs between the outputs was assessed to be appropriate considering their final achievement levels. In terms of the project's cooperation management, the financing agreement with limited influence from GIZ made it difficult to demand agreed objectives and milestones from the implementing partner, but GIZ had no other (or better) instrument available for establishing a cooperation basis. However, it would have been beneficial for the project to develop a joint implementation strategy of GIZ and ESCWA and to negotiate the key elements of the grant agreement before the German Federal Ministry for Economic Cooperation and Development commissioned the project.

Regarding the project's allocation efficiency, the multi-level approach was found to be highly appropriate bearing in mind there was a strong need and interest in dialogue facilitation at subnational level. However,

the project only minimally exploited the potential of the multi-level approach. Finally, the project made efforts to include additional funding sources although they were not successful.

Sustainability

The sustainability of the project was rated as moderately successful, with 68 out of 100 points.

Although the project was moderately successful in terms of sustainability, the basis for assessing the project's sustainability was poor as key outputs from the national dialogue had not been finalised at the time of the evaluation. In terms of capacity building, the project's major focus was on strengthening the capacity of Libyan stakeholders responsible for and involved in political processes. The project was limited in its reach to this important direct target group, mainly because of its low budget and the poor ownership on behalf of the Libyan government. Regarding project subnational-level activities, the project conducted one successful dialogue within a municipality. However, it was successful in creating ownership among participants involved in the dialogue process including the advisory board. Due to the low ownership of the project by the Ministry of Planning, the anchoring of results in government partner structures was weak although the project followed a strongly participatory approach. But the project was more successful in anchoring results such as introducing the concept of dialogue regarding other direct target groups, namely participants of the socio-economic dialogue and the trained dialogue facilitators. These results may have a positive effect in terms of social cohesion in future. Presumably, durability of the project's results will also be ensured by ESCWA's plans and preparation to continue the project in a second phase.

Overall rating

Overall, the project is rated as 'moderately successful' (77.33 out of 100 points). The table shows the overall assessment.

Table 1: Rating OECD DAC evaluation criteria

Criteria	Score Points (max. 100)	Rating 1 (highly successful) to 6 (highly unsuccessful)
Relevance	75	Level 3, moderately successful
Coherence	81	Level 2, successful
Effectiveness	87	Level 2, successful
Impact	72	Level 3, moderately successful
Efficiency	81	Level 2, successful
Sustainability	68	Level 3, moderately successful
Overall	77	Level 3, moderately successful

Conclusions and factors of success and failure

Although the project was implemented in a highly fragile and conflict-driven environment, it has succeeded in conducting a holistic and participatory socio-economic dialogue process to carve out three baseline studies, eight policy papers and a vision for Libya's future development. The project has also succeeded in conducting a truly Libyan-driven and Libyan-owned process for preparing these deliverables and thereby introduced a culture of dialogue in an environment struck by armed conflict. Bringing Libyans to the table to discuss the country's future was a big step. For sustaining a dialogue culture in Libya, the project has trained dialogue facilitators who are in a position to contribute to establishing participatory approaches and mediate among conflicting interests and factions in the future – at both national and subnational levels. However, the project was less successful on relevance, impact and sustainability. This was mainly due to shortcomings in the project's design and its strategy, resulting in decreasing ownership of its partner, the Government of National Accord. But it was also due to limited consensus among the two implementing partners, GIZ and ESCWA, on an overall implementation strategy; insufficient funding on the side of GIZ; difficulties and hesitance in reaching out to the subnational level; and a lacking capacity building strategy for Libyan stakeholders responsible for and involved in political processes. However, at least some of these deficiencies can be overcome by

a successful implementation of the project's second phase planned by ESCWA.

Major external factors challenging successful project implementation have been the escalation of conflict in Libya, the Covid-19 pandemic and the project's limited funding in relation to its ambitions. Furthermore, it should be noted that the collaboration between GIZ and ESCWA was not a partnership of choice, but instead initiated at the request of the commissioning party.

One of the success factors has been the inclusiveness of the national dialogue process enabling a dialogue which was perceived as truly Libyan-driven and Libyan-owned by its participants. The evaluation team notes especially the good composition of the advisory board that has contributed greatly to this success. Another key success factor was the project's shift towards training dialogue facilitators at the request of its political partner. These trained dialogue facilitators might pave the way for further introducing and sustaining a dialogue culture in future. Finally, another factor of potential future success is the fact that ESCWA will continue working on the project's key outputs in the project's planned phase 2, even though the GIZ project has come to an end. This continuation might ensure more successful project results in future, especially on relevance, impact and sustainability.

Among the factors of failure have been significant shortcomings in the project design; the decreasing ownership of the project's main partner; the weak buy-in of government stakeholders in the dialogue process; the lack of a joint implementation strategy for GIZ and ESCWA; the differences in understanding the role of the Government of National Accord; the significant delays in implementing the national dialogue process by ESCWA; and GIZ's hesitance in adapting the overall project strategy including revision of indicators, initiating additional dialogue processes within local government and seeking closer cooperation with other GIZ projects on subnational dialogues.

Recommendations

When setting up a cooperation project with a (regional) United Nations organisation, one should remember that such organisations have their own (regional) agenda and will not act like an ordinary subcontractor. Accordingly, it will be challenging for GIZ to demand agreed objectives from the implementing organisation. This holds particularly true when the respective organisation has developed an initial proposal for the project's implementation before the GIZ project is commissioned, as was the case with this project. It is crucial that both GIZ and the United Nations partner organisation develop and agree on a joint strategy for the implementation of the project. Otherwise, the lack of a joint implementation strategy might result in different and possibly also conflicting approaches of both organisations that will perpetuate during the project's lifetime with negative implications for the outcome and impact level. Moreover, it would have been beneficial for the project to negotiate the key elements of the grant agreement before BMZ commissioned the project. Such an approach would have enabled or stimulated a much better synchronisation of the contributions.

If GIZ actually has no more than limited control regarding implementation of a project's component (as was the case with the national dialogue process), the project's logic should be designed in a way that all components can be implemented independently from each other. This was not the case here with the interventions at subnational level planned to partly follow the national dialogue in terms of time and content. Such interlinkages and interdependencies may cause fundamental problems, for example due to implementation delays. In addition, it is not recommended to conclude a grant agreement on the assumption that the grant recipient will acquire additional funding necessary for implementation.

For a project to be overall successful, it needs to adapt its strategy due to developments in its environment if necessary. By the same token the project should revise its results matrix in agreement with the German Federal Ministry for Economic Cooperation and Development if outcome or output-level indicators prove to be unrealistic, especially if this happens at an early stage of project implementation. Otherwise, the project risks shortcomings on dimensions such as relevance, effectiveness and impact.

A dialogue project in an environment severely struck by ongoing conflict is certainly difficult to implement if the project's main partner is representing a party involved in ongoing conflict (even if the partner represents a government recognised by the United Nations) as the dialogue facilitation needs to be organised so that it is perceived as neutral and not linked to any conflicting party. For this reason, GIZ would have been better advised to keep the Ministry of Planning out and instead select a different partner institution that is more neutral in the ongoing conflict.

If a project has a strong capacity development component, an overall capacity development strategy needs to be elaborated to define and guide the capacity development approach.

When continuing to implement the project in its planned phase 2, ESCWA is strongly advised to seek close cooperation with the new Libyan government for establishing sufficient ownership.

Approach and methods of the evaluation

The project was evaluated using a theory-based evaluation design that relied on the project's theory of change as a basis for analysis. Specifically, the evaluation team implemented a contribution analysis. A contribution analysis assesses the extent to which observed (positive or negative) results can be related to a given intervention (e.g. project).

Both qualitative and quantitative data were collected by using interviews and surveys. The combination of the different empirical methods served to counterbalance their individual limitations. The qualitative interviews offered the strength of analysing causal relationships and their explanations in great depth and helped to interpret the quantitative survey results. The quantitative survey as well as the various forms of triangulation therefore counterbalanced the risk of biases of qualitative data collection. Researcher, data and method triangulation took place at various points during data collection and data analysis.

The evaluation team consisted of an international and a local evaluator. The team relied on four main data sources: internal documentation provided by the project team, secondary data, and semi-structured interviews conducted by the evaluation team as well as the quantitative survey data. In total, 25 interviews were included in the evaluation with the project's staff, other GIZ projects, implementation partners, other stakeholders and beneficiaries. Interviews were held in October 2020 (inception mission) and February 2021 (evaluation mission). The interviews were all conducted remotely (by phone or video conference) owing to the Covid-19 pandemic. The evaluation team followed a participatory approach that included sharing the purpose of the evaluation with the interview partners and taking into account the questions that stakeholders wanted to see addressed. Furthermore, the evaluators were transparent on how the evaluation results were derived from the data and gave stakeholders the opportunity to provide feedback on the evaluation findings. The preliminary findings of the evaluation were shared and discussed with project staff.

Rating system

Projects are rated based on the OECD/DAC criteria of relevance, coherence, effectiveness, impact, sustainability and efficiency. Each of the six criteria is rated on a scale of 1 to 100 (percentage system).

The project's overall score is derived from the average points awarded for the individual DAC criteria. The average value for the overall score is rounded according to mathematical convention. All DAC criteria are equally weighted for the overall score. Compared with the predecessor systems (6-point scale, 16-point scale), a 100-point scale has a number of advantages in that it allows differentiation, is commonly used internationally, is easy to understand and can readily be converted into other assessment systems.

Table 2: Rating and score scales

100-point scale (score)	6-level scale (rating)
92–100	Level 1: highly successful
81–91	Level 2: successful
67–80	Level 3: moderately successful
50–66	Level 4: moderately unsuccessful
30–49	Level 5: unsuccessful
0–29	Level 6: highly unsuccessful

Overall rating: The criteria of effectiveness, impact and sustainability are knock-out criteria: If one of the criteria is rated at level 4 or lower, the overall rating cannot go beyond level 4 although the mean score may be higher.

Both the assessment dimensions within the OECD/DAC criteria and the determination of the overall score using a points system serve to increase the transparency of ratings while enabling better comparability between individual projects.

Publication details

Responsible:

Albert Engel, Director
GIZ Corporate Unit Evaluation

Concept, coordination and management:

Claudia Kornahrens, Head of section
Benjamin Braeuer, GIZ, Evaluation Manager
Central Project Evaluations section
GIZ Corporate Unit Evaluation

Evaluators:

Torge Hamkens (FAKT Consult GmbH) and Dr Haider El Saeh

Authors:

Torge Hamkens (FAKT Consult GmbH) and Dr Haider El Saeh

Editing:

International Correspondents in Education (ICE)

Design:

Layout: DITHO Design GmbH, Cologne
Graphics: Stefan Oltsch

Printing and distribution:

GIZ, Bonn

Maps:

The maps printed here are intended only for information purposes and in no way constitute recognition under international law of boundaries and territories. GIZ accepts no responsibility for these maps being entirely up to date, correct or complete. All liability for any damage, direct or indirect, resulting from their use is excluded.

E evaluierung@giz.de
I www.giz.de/evaluierung
www.youtube.com/user/GIZonlineTV
https://twitter.com/giz_gmbh

Deutsche Gesellschaft für
Internationale Zusammenarbeit (GIZ) GmbH

Registered offices:

Bonn and Eschborn

Friedrich-Ebert-Allee 32 + 36
53113 Bonn, Germany
T: +49 228 44 60-0
F: +49 228 44 60-17 66

Dag-Hammarskjöld-Weg 1–5
65760 Eschborn, Germany
T: +49 6196 79-0
F: +49 6196 79-11 15

E: info@giz.de
I: www.giz.de

Bonn 2023