

Strengthened and Informative Migration Systems (SIMS) Project

Mid-Term Review

Evaluation Report



Financial Literacy Training Session ©Helvetas April 21, 2022

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List of Acronyms

BMET:	Bureau of Manpower, Employment and Training
BNWLA:	Bangladesh National Woman Lawyers' Association
CSO:	Civil Society Organisation
CTC:	Counter-Trafficking Committee
DEMO:	District Employment and Manpower Offices
FGD:	Focus Group Discussion
FinLit:	Financial Literacy
GCM:	Global Compact on Migration
GMC:	Grievance Management Committee
ILO:	International Labour Organization
IOM:	International Organization for Migration
KII:	Key Informant Interview
LANGO:	Legal Aid Non-Governmental Organisation
LSP:	Local Service Provider
M&E:	Monitoring and Evaluation
MEL:	Monitoring, Evaluation, and Learning
MNGO:	Migration Non-Governmental Organisation
MoEWOE:	Ministry of Expatriates' Welfare and Overseas Employment
MRA:	Migrant Recruitment Advisor
MTR:	Mid-term Review
OKUP:	Ovibashi Karmi Unnayan Program
OPD:	Organisation of Persons with Disabilities
PAC:	Project Advisory Committee
PDMO:	Pre-Decision Making Orientation
PDO:	Pre-Departure Orientation
PRODOC:	Project Document (proposal document)
RMMRU:	Refugee and Migratory Movements Research Unit
SDC:	Swiss Agency for Development and Cooperation
SDG:	Sustainable Development Goals
SIMS:	Strengthened and Informative Migration Systems
TOR:	Terms of Reference
TTC:	Technical Training Centre
WEWB:	Wage Earners' Welfare Board

Executive Summary

Background and Context

This document reports on the findings of an independent mid-term review (MTR) of the “Strengthened and Informative Migration Systems (SIMS) project. The project is funded by the Swiss Agency for Development and Cooperation (SDC). SIMS is implemented by Helvetas Swiss Intercooperation in three high migration districts of Chattogram, Cumilla and Narsingdi in Bangladesh. Helvetas has sub-contracted various elements of implementation to three Migration Non-Governmental Organisations (MNGOs), Ovivashi Karmi Unnayan Program (OKUP), Refugee and Migratory Movements Research Unit (RMMRU), and PROTTYASHI, and to one Legal Aid NGO (LANGO), Bangladesh National Woman Lawyers' Association (BNWLA).

The overall impact goal of the project is ‘to improve the well-being of migrants, particularly marginalised men and women, through safer migration practices and strengthened service delivery from both public and private actors.’ To achieve this, the project is built around three main areas where change is required: 1) enhanced information and awareness of migrants and their families at home, 2) improved quality and enhanced outreach of service delivery to migrants and their families, and 3) greater resilience of migrants and family members through effective use of remittances.

Purpose, Scope and Users of the MTR

This was a mid-term review and thus was formative in nature with a focus on lesson learning. The review focused on tracking how the project is performing against planned outcomes, identifying key bottlenecks and challenges, providing recommendations for overcoming these challenges, and identifying lessons learned. The evaluation covered the project in entirety to date from inception to the current status of implementation. The main users of the MTR will be the SDC, Helvetas Bangladesh, the three partner MNGOs, and the LANGO.

Methodology

The MTR followed the OECD/DAC criteria. The MTR used qualitative methods. There was considerable participation of Helvetas and its partners in the MTR, with a focus on ownership and utilisation of the MTR results to support analysis of necessary course corrections for the remainder of the project.

The methods used in the MTR included a desk-review of relevant documentation, key informant interviews (KII) and focus group discussions (FGD) with key programme stakeholders, and the holding of a participatory results workshop with SDC, Helvetas, and the project partners. KII and FGD participants included service users of the pre-decision making orientation training (PDMO), the financial literacy (FinLit) training, the entrepreneurial training, and access to justice seekers, as well as local and national government officials, other NGOs and UN agencies working on migration. A total of 118 service users (79 women and 39 men) and 62 other stakeholders (16 women and 46 men) participated in KIIs and FGDs.

Findings and Conclusions

Relevance

The project is relevant to the goals of the Government of Bangladesh and supports a majority of the agenda points for overseas employment and well-being of migrant workers, as well aligning with the 8th Five Year Plan and the 2013 Overseas Employment and Migration Act. The project also aligns with key international frameworks such as the Global Compact for Safe and Orderly Migration (GCM) and the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). Aspiring and returnee migrants and families left behind shared with the MTR team that the content of training addressed many gaps in knowledge in awareness of safe migration and financial management and use of overseas remittances, although the project’s direct services on reintegration are limited to access to justice cases, with indirect impact coming through the FinLit and entrepreneurship training aiming to support sustainable reintegration of family members on their return. The needs of the project’s stakeholders remain relevant in the COVID-19 era as the world moves towards living with the virus. Migration numbers for 2022 are significant, and the need for information and capacity building remains relevant.

The inclusion of the FinLit training is a strong point of the project, which allows it to include (mostly) women left behind by their migrating husbands. However, the interventions of the project are quite gendered to date, with most PDMO graduates being men and the vast majority of FinLit graduates being women. While much of this is linked to the gendered nature of labour migration from Bangladesh, addressing the different challenges faced by women in migrating, such as those migrating for domestic work, and for men in attending FinLit training, such as the time and format of the training, would help support a more gender responsive approach. The project has made efforts to be inclusive for marginalised communities such as the rural poor and the Char communities, although conducting more research into the barriers persons with disabilities face both migrating and when left behind and engaging with local Organisations of Persons with Disabilities (OPDs) could improve the disability inclusion of the project.

Coherence

SIMS has managed to build on previous interventions in Bangladesh and identify synergies with other projects, as well as building on relationships the project partners have previously developed with the community and duty bearers. Examples of this include building on the Grievance Management Committee (GMC) model developed by the PROKAS project, supporting Counter Trafficking Committees (CTCs) in areas where they are operational, and building on migrant forums developed by OKUP in previous interventions. The project also builds on previous work on advocacy by the project partners, such as RMMRU's focus on the registration of middlemen. The project links to existing projects such as ILO SKILLS 21 and through OKUP referring migrants for healthcare support in one of its other projects, as well as partnering with ILO's migration project on job fairs and Winrock's Ashshash on training of lawyers. There are areas where the project could improve its coordination including supporting the roll out of the Migrant Recruitment Advisor (MRA) webpage and linking to the new [SALAM network](#), both of which are supported through SDC funding.

Synergies with government duty bearers has also been good, although due to the 2021 local elections this much of the work only began in earnest in 2022, and thus results are not known yet. However, Government duty bearers at the local, district, and national level expressed satisfaction in the project's activities and indicated they believed it was important for SIMS to continue to work closely with them.

Effectiveness

While considerable progress has been made in implementing project activities, SIMS is behind overall in its implementation status. The targets for PDMO, FinLit, and entrepreneurial training graduations and access to justice cases all need to be revisited in light of delays to the project in contracting partners and the COVID-19 pandemic. SDC, Helvetas, and the project partners need to review the results framework targets and consider what trade-off between quality, quantity, and use of activity budget to provide more field staff would be acceptable and provide a reachable balance. Considering what level of support can be given to graduates of both the PDMO and the FinLit training for those who complete the courses late in the project will be important. In terms of measuring the change the project brings about, the monitoring, learning, and evaluation, MEL system of SIMS is strong and the overall sample size sufficient. Helvetas may though want to consider over-sampling certain groups, such as women attending the PDMO training, or particular marginalised groups including the Char communities, and conducting qualitative data collection with them to ensure the input of these groups is sufficient to understand the project's impact on them.

The MTR identified several strengths of the SIMS project and some challenges. Strengths included good teamwork, strong partners with different strengths, a holistic approach to much of the migration cycle, a migrant-centred approach, good community trust, well developed manuals and technical support, and the Project Advisory Committee (PAC). The challenges included accessing skill training, limitations in gender responsiveness, the challenges posed by the targets and workload of field staff, and the need to strengthen opportunities for civil society organisation (CSO) advocacy.

Efficiency

SDC is conducting an economic and financial analysis of the project, so the MTR focused on the efficiency of project management. The pandemic had an impact on the delivery of the project, but Helvetas utilised time during lockdowns effectively to develop project resources such as training manuals. The project was also delayed by the lengthy procurement process to identify the four project partners. Although this delayed the initial roll out of the project, the identification of experienced partners who support the project approach should contribute to the quality and efficiency of the project in the future. Communication between Helvetas and the project partners was also adjudged to be excellent. However, one area where learning could be enhanced would be on allowing the project partners more flexibility to implement slightly different approaches or trial different techniques where they see it to fit the local situation. So long as a learning approach was applied to this, supporting different approaches, has the potential to increase quality of delivery and efficiency in the long run.

Impact

It is quite early to identify impact, but initial areas of change were identified by the MTR. FinLit graduates shared examples of how they had changed saving and spending habits and in many cases were developing new small-scale businesses. PDMO graduates also shared examples of using the cost-benefit analysis exercise to revisit their decision to migrate, with many delaying migration to ensure the follow safe migration practices or obtain training first, and some changing their minds about migrating. Other examples included aspirant migrants being more careful about checking and retaining their documents and asking middlemen for receipts. One concern on impact was the potential for negative consequences from failed businesses which the entrepreneurial training graduates set up. More attention should be given to risk management in the FinLit and entrepreneurial training manuals. There was less indication of impact among government duty bearers as a result of the capacity building being delayed by the 2021 local elections. Positive signs of enthusiasm for increasing their knowledge of migration and being involved in the GMCs and CTCs provided evidence of the potential for impact. Ensuring the GMC and CTC members have the capacity to understand mediation processes will be important for the second half of the project.

Sustainability

As with impact, assessing sustainability of an intervention midway through the first phase of implementation can be challenging. There were encouraging signs of ownership of the project by local and national duty bearers, but capacity will need to be strengthened at a local level, and advocacy efforts at a national level will need to bear fruit in policy and guideline changes to ensure sustainability. The knowledge which service users gain from the FinLit and PDMO training should be long-lasting and should the enterprises set up by entrepreneurial training graduates be successful, this will support the local rural economy. Additionally, the project has engaged Bangladesh civil society through the partnership with RMMRU, OKUP, PROTTYASHI, and BNWLA. Civil society will need to play a key role in providing support on interventions such as the FinLit training, which is outside of the scope of the government's mandate, and should thus this engagement should strengthen sustainability.

Overall, the project has made a good start in the first phase of the project, despite the challenges posed by COVID-19. Should the good collaboration between SDC, Helvetas, and the project partners continue and there are no further external delays, SIMS should be able to achieve a good level of impact by the end of the project.

Recommendations

(more detailed recommendations are included at the end of the main report)

Recommendations	Priority and Timeframe	Resource Implications
1. Review the results and revise framework and agree with SDC, Helvetas, and the partners the best balance of quality and quantity.	High ASAP	May impact approaches to allocation of staff responsibilities.
2. Identify areas in Section 4 of the grant	High	Potential for budget

agreement where there will be underspend on activities and consider how to realign the budget to include more staffing.	ASAP	realignment
3. Ensure the next phase of the project is designed in a participatory manner will all the project partners.	High Starting by Dec 2022	Staff time
4. Implement the recommendations of the Gender and Social Equity Analysis paying particular attention to how to increase numbers of women attending PDMO and men attending FINLIT. domestic workers.	High Ongoing	Staff time
5. Formalise into an advocacy strategy, the discussions the project had will all partners on opportunities for advocacy and CSO engagement at both the national and local levels.	High Ongoing	Staff time
6. Integrate more emphasis on risk management in the FinLit and entrepreneurial training.	High ASAP	Staff time Training costs
7. Allow more leeway to the MNGOs to implement the different activities using different approaches.	Medium Ongoing (emphasis on the second phase)	Staff time for monitoring differences
8. Disseminate examples of good paperwork, invoices, and contracts, which migrants should be obtaining from middlemen and recruitment firms to community leaders.	Medium Ongoing	Staff time Printing costs
9. Engage closely with the new Upazila TTCs where they overlap with the project area.	Medium As they are launched	Staff time Meeting costs Training costs
10. Strengthened engagement with the Union Council including providing all council members and secretary to the council with safe migration messages.	Medium Ongoing	Staff time Training costs
11. Conduct a mapping of Organisations of Persons with Disabilities in the project areas, and consider how the project can engage them more in various activities.	Medium Focus on the second phase	Staff time Meeting costs Potential consultant costs
12. Review the definition of completion for training so it is more than 50% attendance (recommend 80%) and ensure it is monitored.	ASAP High	Staff time Consultant database fees
13. Identify which groups will have a small sample size in the overall monitoring sample group and conduct qualitative research with them to understand more clearly the impacts of the project of them.	Ongoing Medium	Staff time
14. Ensure the risk matrix and assumptions of the results framework are regularly updated. This could be done annually in the annual report and reviewed quarterly at the partners' meeting.	Initially ASAP and then ongoing Medium	Staff time
15. Ensure period context analyses are undertaken to support project amendments where necessary	Ongoing Medium	Staff time

1. Background and Project Description

1.1 Background

Migration is a key element of Bangladesh's economic development. With a large, young population, new labour market entrants place a significant strain on the job market. Approximately 2 million individuals enter the labour market every year in Bangladesh¹. Bangladesh's 7th five-year plan (2016-2020) set a target of an average of 2.2 million domestic jobs created per year. In reality, an average of 1.2 million per year were created in the first four years of the plan. The 7th five-year plan also set a target of 400,000 jobs overseas for Bangladesh job seekers, but over-achieved on this, with an average of 700,000². As such, international migration provides an opportunity for Bangladeshi citizens to seek work they cannot find at home. Despite considerable success in reducing the numbers of its population who live in extreme poverty and improving its performance on human development indicators since 2020, Bangladesh still remains a low-income country. In 2019, it ranked 147 out of 188 countries on the Human Development Index, with a score of 0.682, however, this falls to 0.478 when the value is discounted for inequality³. Migration provides a route for Bangladeshis from poor communities to escape poverty and provide support through remittances for their families.

Labour migration has many benefits including reducing unemployment pressure at home and providing a significant source of revenue for a country such as Bangladesh. It also offers migrants the opportunities to obtain better paying jobs, to develop new skills, and increases resilience and independence. However, migrants face considerable risks. Often faced with precarious immigration status, they are at risk of being subjected to poor working conditions, sexual and physical violence, exploitation, and discrimination. Services for migrants are often limited at every stage of the migration process from pre-decision/pre-employment and pre-departure to return and re-integration.

Women can face particular vulnerabilities, often working in specific industries such as domestic work and the garment industry, where, particularly in domestic work, they have limited protections and are at high risk of sexual and gender-based violence. Bangladeshi women already experience a vast range of unequal socio-economic determinates and considerable discrimination in their communities including a lack of agency for decision making, discriminatory gender norms in the family and the community, and a lack of access to financial inclusion. These are often predictors for unsafe migration. The intersectionality of gender and migrant discrimination heightens the risks for women, particularly those in low paid jobs. Migration governance systems are generally not gender-responsive and fail to recognise the different challenges faced as a result of a migrant's gender, which allows this discrimination and exploitation to flourish, and reduces the options for safe and regular migration for women.

1.2 Programme Description

The overall impact goal of the project is 'to improve the well-being of migrants, particularly marginalised men and women, through safer migration practices and strengthened service delivery from both public and private actors.' To achieve this, the project is built around three main areas where change is required: 1) enhanced information and awareness of migrants and their families at home, 2) improved quality and enhanced outreach of service delivery to migrants and their families, and 3) greater resilience of migrants and family members through effective use of remittances. These areas were

¹ <https://thefinancialexpress.com.bd/views/woes-and-opportunities-in-bangladesh-labour-market-1544800825>

² General Economics Department, Bangladesh Planning Commission (2020). '8th Five Year Plan- Promoting Prosperity and Fostering Inclusiveness'.

<https://policy.asiapacificenergy.org/sites/default/files/Eighth%20Five%20Year%20Plan%20%28EN%29.pdf>

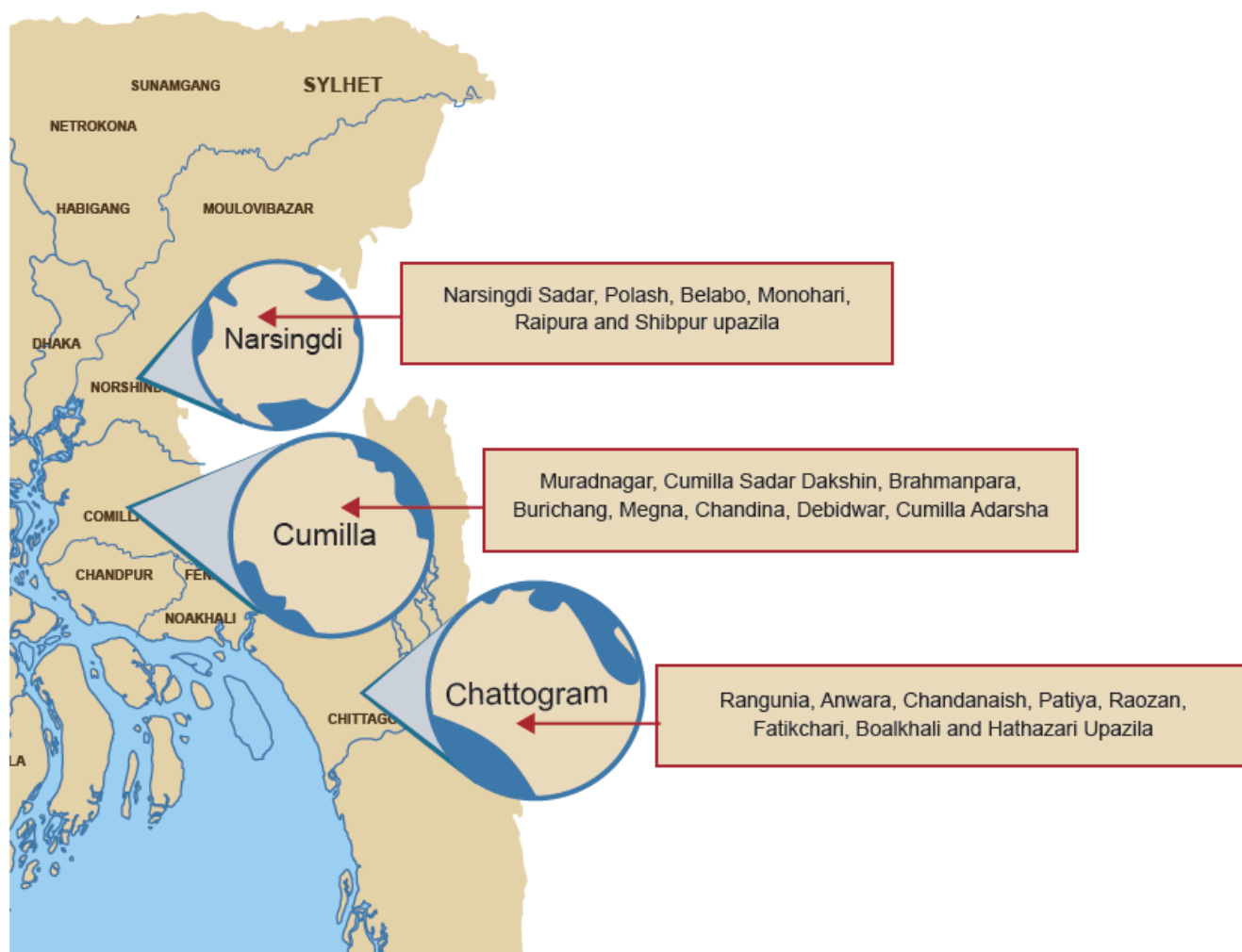
³ UNDP. (2020). The Next Frontier: Human Development and the Anthropocene Briefing note for countries on the 2020 Human Development Report-Bangladesh. <https://hdr.undp.org/sites/default/files/Country-Profiles/BGD.pdf>

developed into three outcomes in the PRODOC, with each outcome focusing on one of the areas of change. The outcomes of the project are:

- Outcome 1: Men and women migrant workers make an informed decision on migration with a view to choose pathways that maximise economic returns and minimise risks related to migration;
- Outcome 2: Public and private sector providers have improved capacity to provide necessary services for safe migration;
- Outcome 3: Migrants and their family members are able to reduce exposure to external shocks by using remittances more effectively.

Within each outcome, there are a series of outputs and activities designed to achieve the outcomes. The theory of change behind the project is that improved decision making on migration choices requires potential migrants and their families to be given better information on options for regular migration and the dangers of irregular migration and have access to improved services including pre departure skills training and grievance management mechanisms. However, access to information and services can only be sustainably available in the long-term if the capacity of duty bearers to provide these services are increased. Additionally, to compliment successful migration, it is important that migrants and their family members have improved capacities on financial management to use remittances more effectively.

The project is implemented in three districts, Narsinghdi, Chattogram, and Cumilla:



Additional work takes place in Dhaka through engagement of government duty bearers and other organisations who work on migration.

2. Evaluation Background

2.1 Purpose, Scope, and Users of the MTR

As a mid-term exercise the review was formative in nature with a focus on lesson learning. The MTR focused on tracking how the project is performing against planned outcomes, identifying key bottlenecks and challenges, providing recommendations for overcoming these challenges, and identifying lessons learned. The MTR provides evidence which can be translated into actionable recommendations for both the remainder of the project and also looking ahead to future programming.

The MTR covered the project in entirety to date from design and inception to the current status of implementation as of August 2022. The MTR covered the work of all the three MNGOs, the LANGO, and Helvetas. The data collection mission involved visits to Cumilla and Chattogram. Due to time constraints, data collection was not conducted in Narsinghi. However, the locations of data collection covered implementation by all project partners.

2.2 MTR Criteria and Questions

The criteria for the MTR were relevance, coherence, effectiveness, efficiency, impact, and sustainability. Broad questions were proposed in the TOR and sub-questions and lines of enquiry were developed by the MTR team during the inception period. The MTR matrix is at annex 2 which provides more detail on the evaluation MTR.

2.3 Methodology

As a formative exercise the methodology followed a utilisation focused approach which prioritised the participation of Helvetas and its project partners during data collection and the analysis of the results. This was done to help build ownership of the MTR findings.

Methods

The MTR used the following qualitative methods:

1. Desk Review

During the inception period project documentation such as the project document (PRODOC), progress reports, workplans, M&E tools, and training materials and guidelines were reviewed. Additional documents such as government plans and policies and research documents were also reviewed to serve as reference points throughout the MTR. These documents served both as a basis to introduce the MTR team to the project and help the design of the MTR but also as data source which were triangulated against findings from MTR collection.

- Inception period briefings with key project staff

Initial virtual briefings were held with SDC, the Helvetas team leader and the thematic experts. Further briefings were held individually with the senior management and project managers of each MNGO and the LANGO. Two virtual interviews with external stakeholders were also held when the data collection mission was delayed to reduce the pressure on the schedule of the visit. These briefings allowed for the development of the inception report which included the MTR matrix and proposed interview guides.

2. Data collection period

The data collection mission took place between August 12 and 22. A schedule of the mission can be found at annex 4. The following approaches were used during the MTR:

- Key Informant Interviews (KIIs)

Semi- structured KIIs were conducted with key government stakeholders, NGO representatives, UN agencies, and migrants who had filed access to justice cases.

- Focus Group Discussions (FGDs)

FGDs were used with various groups in the MTR. This allowed for a considerable expansion of the number of MTR participants than would have been possible using just KIIs. FGDs were used for conversations with financial literacy graduates, local government institution officials, migrant forum members, counter-trafficking committee members, pre-decision making orientation graduates, grievance management committee members, recruitment sub-agents, and local service providers.

- Findings Workshop

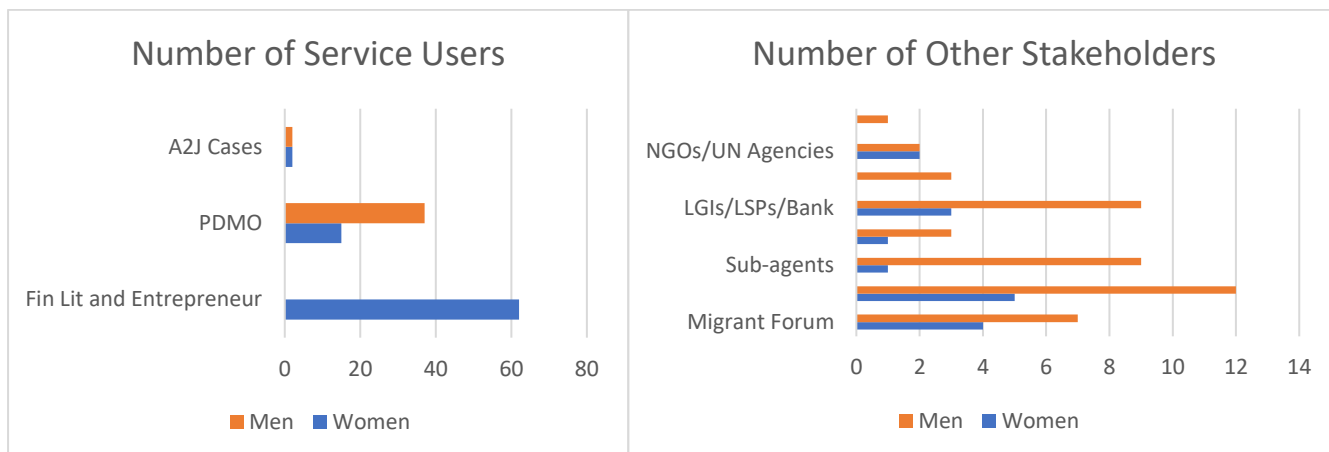
A briefing of initial findings was held with Helvetas, SDC, and the project partners after the field visits to Cumilla and Chattogram. This allowed for participatory analysis of the findings and discussion on the emerging recommendations. Following the submission of the draft report and feedback from SDC, Helvetas, and partners, a virtual presentation of findings was held.

Sampling

Sampling for both the KIIs and FGDs was purposive, covering the main stakeholders who have been involved in the project. The sampling covered different Upazilas where the project is being implemented in Cumilla and Chattogram. Out of out of 3 implementing districts and 23 implementing upazilas 2 districts and 6 upazilas were visited by the evaluation team. The sample also included national level actors such as BMET, MoEWOE, civil society members, and staff from ILO. The following numbers of stakeholders participated in the MTR:

Service Users			
	Women	Men	Total
Fin Lit and Entrepreneur	62	0	62
PDMO	15	37	52
A2J Cases	2	2	4
Total	79	39	118
Number of Other Stakeholders			
Migrant Forum	4	7	11
CTC/GMC	5	12	17
Sub-agents	1	9	10
TTC/DEMO	1	3	4
LGIs/LSPs/Bank	3	9	12
National Government Officials	0	3	3
NGOs/UN Agencies	2	2	4
PSC Member	0	1	1
Total	16	46	62

Sampling included service users who have participated in different project activities. As graph 1 and 2 demonstrate, there was an oversampling of women service users compared to the project implementation demographics. This was done deliberately to try to gather more data on how to balance gender participation in the different project activities. However, the number of other stakeholders who were men, far outweighed those who are women, which is a reflection of the limited number of women who occupy positions of power in Bangladesh society.



Graph 1

Graph 2

2.4 Limitations and Challenges

The major limitations and challenges of the MTR included only being able to visit two districts, the lack of gender balance in the MTR team, language barriers, and a delay to the data collection mission. Although the MTR team only visited two districts, areas of implementation of all three MNGOs were included in the schedule and as such helped mitigate this constraint. The MTR team were both men but ensuring the sensitive conducting of KIIs and FGDs, as well as arranging women only FGDs helped mitigate the challenges this may have caused the MTR. The team leader did not speak Bangla and many of the FGDs and KIIs required interpretation by a Helvetas staff member. There is the risk of missing certain pieces of information and the nuances of replies due to this. However, the quality of interpretation was good, and regular discussion was held between the Team Leader the Helvetas staff members to ensure a clear understanding of the questions. The National Consultant also spoke Bengali as a mother-tongue, and fluent English, which allowed for a further triangulation of responses and interpretation. The field mission was also delayed due to the Team Leader testing positive for COVID-19 prior to travel. However, the extensive efforts of Helvetas and its partners to rearrange the schedule, meant that no planned sessions were cancelled as a result.

3. Findings

3.1 Relevance

Alignment with national and international plans and frameworks

The MTR found the project to be responsive to the needs of potential migrants, migrant workers, spouses left behind, and those seeking redress for rights violations, as well as duty bearers such as local and national government offices.

The Government of Bangladesh's policies and plans: The project aligns with the Government of Bangladesh's 8th Five Year Plan, most notably points 1, 3, 4, 5, 8, and 10 of the 10 Point Agenda for Overseas Employment and Well-being of Migrant Workers. The project is designed to align with point 1 by supporting the decentralisation of services. This includes working to support the decentralisation of pre-departure activities to the District Employment and Manpower Offices (DEMOs), and with the newly established Upazila Technical Training Centres (TTCs), although as these have only just been launched in a limited number of Upazilas, this is yet to be implemented. The project supports point 3 on skills development by working to enhance the referral system for skills training with the TTCs and other providers. The work on strengthening the capacities of the Bureau of Manpower, Employment and Training (BMET) and local level grievance management systems, and thus strengthening access to justice, aligns with point 4 access to service and the improvement of the grievance management system. The FinLit training supports point 5's goal of improved access to finance and remittance management. Point 8 includes the development of an ethical recruitment system. The project is designed to engage sub-agents, a group often ignored by previous projects as they are considered part of the problem, and is supporting advocacy efforts to register them and thus make regulation of this group easier for the

government. Point 10 of the agenda is built around initiatives on reintegration. The project does support this point of the agenda through providing access to justice support for victims of fraud, deception, and trafficking, and indirectly by providing skills on FinLit to left behind family members which should help support mi-grants when they return. However, the project does not work on other elements of reintegration, as this is supported by SDC through other projects. The relevance of the project to the government's agenda on reintegration, is thus limited to access to justice and FinLit support. Overall, though, the project supports over 50% of the agenda points and thus provides a broad response to the challenges identified by the Government of Bangladesh.

The project also aligns with the 2013 Overseas Employment and Migration Act. The PDMO sessions allows the project to contribute to the implementation of the Act through improving awareness of the employment contract, facilitating the enjoyment of right to information, and supporting migrants to follow safe migration steps across the migration cycle.

Alignment with international frameworks: The project aligns with key international frameworks. Notably, the focus on ensuring on providing accurate information on safe migration, working to facilitate fair and ethical recruitment, the referral of potential migrants for skill development, and strengthening awareness of remittance systems all contribute to various objectives of the Global Compact on Migration (GCM). The project's overall goal is designed to support SDG target 10.7, 'Facilitate orderly, safe, regular and responsible migration and mobility of people, including through the implementation of planned and well-managed migration policies.' The project also supports SDG 8 on access to decent work, and SDG 5 with the empowerment of women through the financial literacy and entrepreneurial aspect of the project.

Relevance to the service users and community leaders: Input from both national and local government duty-bearers also confirmed the key themes of the project were relevant to their needs and those of migrants and their families in their localities. Local community leaders such as Union council members and members of the GMCs, CTCs, and Migrant Forums all shared a major challenge in their communities was the lack of awareness of safe migration practices, the obligations of aspiring migrants under Bangladesh legislation, and the government and non-governmental avenues for support which aspiring migrants, migrants, and their families can seek.

Aspiring migrants shared with the evaluation that the information they had received from the PDMOs was new to them and helped them re-evaluate their decisions, with some pausing their migration or even postponing it all together. Women who participated in the FinLit and entrepreneurial trainings also shared how the project had addressed gaps in their knowledge which was valuable for managing their family finances.

Gaps in relevance: The major gap highlighted both by the project's service users and local duty bearers was the limited activities related to reintegration for returnee migrants. The project does support returnees who wish to seek redress for rights violations through the access to justice programme. However, many stakeholders in the evaluation indicated that support on skill training, access to financing for business development (which can be a challenge if assets are registered in their migrant spouses' name), and psychosocial support was also needed to aid reintegration. The project does not include this in its activities because SDC supports reintegration through its support to the Reintegration to the Migrant Workers in Bangladesh project. However, this only overlaps with the SIMS project in one district, and thus means there is a gap in provision in the other two districts. The WEWB will be implementing the RAISE project through World Bank funding in the next few years, and this may provide an opportunity for the project to refer returnees for support.

COVID-19

The project began in December 2019, and thus was only 3 months into implementation when the World Health Organisation declared a global pandemic because of COVID-19. The pandemic had immediate impacts both in terms of the ability of Bangladesh migrants to both departure for migrant work and also return home from overseas in employment. Many migrants found themselves without a job in their destination countries and also with limited ability to return home due to government lockdowns. The numbers of individuals migrating from Bangladesh reduced significantly in 2020. At the same time, a greater number returned to Bangladesh. However, migration patterns are changing again. Numbers of migrants in 2021 were only down 12% from 2019, and in 2022, almost as many migrants (691,017) have left

Bangladesh by July 2022 as in all of 2019 (700,159)⁴, as borders open up and both migrants who were forced to return during the initial crisis and those who have not had the chance to newly migrate since early 2020 decide to migrate. The need to ensure aspirant migrants are making informed decisions and are aware of safe migration steps remains as relevant as prior to the pandemic outbreak.

During the COVID lockdowns, the project adapted by providing emergency COVID related support for migrant families in the communities the project works with, and COVID information through an online based campaign along with information dissemination through miking. This helped address challenges the families of migrants were facing as in many cases the remittances they were receiving from their family members abroad were reduced, often completely, due to labour stoppages in the countries of destination. Bangladesh migrant workers abroad were not eligible for government support measures. Thus, during the immediate crisis and the related lockdowns, the support provided was relevant to the families of migrant workers. The project also used the time during lockdowns to develop technical resources, which is covered in more depth in the efficiency section of the report.

Gender Responsiveness

The PRODOC acknowledges that migration is a highly gendered process with challenges impacting men and women differently. The PRODOC indicates the SIMS project will respond to this through conducting a gendered context analysis early in the project, will ensure data collection is disaggregated by gender, and will incorporate the different protection and safe migration needs into the planning, development of modules, and the handling of access to justice cases.

Migration from Bangladesh follows gendered patterns. Women migrants are more likely to be low-skilled and tend to be more likely to come from households in extreme poverty. Women generally migrate for work in two industries, garments and domestic work, as opposed to men who migrate for a broader range of jobs including construction, security guards, drivers, mechanics, and the hospitality sector. Women and their families are also much more reluctant to share their plans to migrate with the community. During one FGD, PDMO graduates who were men shared that their status in the community could increase if they migrate due to improved skills and higher salaries. The MTR team asked women if they had the same experience. All of them replied that this was not the case for them:

“The increased respect (in the community) does not apply for us, but we are focused on the family well being and improvement (as a reason for migration)” (Women PDMO Graduates)

Many of FGD participants shared that the community generally had negative attitudes to women migrating. This is particularly the case in the more conservative areas of Bangladesh, which includes Cumilla and Chattogram. If they are sexual assault survivors, community attitudes are often negative to them, considering them at fault or to be ‘damaged’ in the eyes of potential husbands. As a result, women often hide their intention to migrate, and are more reluctant to seek access to justice for rights violations when they return.

The project included gendered differences to migration in its baseline of 2021, and conducted an ongoing gender and social equity analysis from 2020, with a report being compiled in 2022, which made recommendations on how to enhance the gender responsiveness of the project, with the goal of making it gender transformative. In terms of the target groups of the project, men are much more likely to migrate overseas from Bangladesh than women, and women are much more likely to be left behind by migrating husbands. There are though women who migrate and husbands who are left behind and take on household and family management responsibilities which, under traditional gender practices in Bangladesh, are usually conducted by women. However, currently the project training for PDMO and FinLit are not particularly designed to acknowledge the different challenges women face in migration than men, and different needs men left behind would have to attend training and benefit from the messages. Therefore, while one of the strong points of the project is that it is engaging women through the FinLit training, currently the services provided are quite gendered and do not yet fully respond to the different challenges faced by men and women who both migrate and are left behind.

⁴ <http://www.old.bmet.gov.bd/BMET/viewStatReport.action?reportnumber=24>

Currently, the project would rate as gender targeted on the Gender Results Effectiveness Scale (GRES)⁵. The gender and social equity analysis lays out a series of recommendations to move the project to being gender responsive and transformative. These appear to be valid suggestions, such as applying more participatory approaches to data collection which will allow women more voice, conduct a behavioural change analysis to understand why men and women make unsafe decisions on migration even if they are aware of safe migration messages (which is planned for September 2022), customising SIMS activities to response more to the needs of women for PDMOs, particularly in Chattogram and Cumilla, and men for FinLit sessions, and assess the participation of men and women in the GMCs to understand differences in opportunities for meaningful input. Implementing the action plan of the gender and social equity analysis would strengthen the relevance of the project to both men and women.

Marginalised Groups

The planned overall impact of the SIMS project 'is to improve the well-being of migrants, particularly marginalised men and women, through safer migration practices and strengthened service delivery from both public and private actors.' The PRODOC itself does not refer to targeted categories of marginalised groups, but includes as an annex SDC's Bangladesh Poverty Concept, which includes 'women, members of ethnic and religious minorities, scheduled castes, affected by climate change or natural disasters (coastal zones, haors, char-islands, drought-affected), people with special needs, HIV/AIDS and TB affected, and lesbians, gays, bisexuals, transgender/transsexuals.' The project's selection criteria includes these groups, which when combined with extreme poverty form the groups which SIMS will put emphasis on being included as service users. The project has selected rural areas which generally have higher poverty rates and lower education levels than urban areas. The project also specifically targets the Char community in certain locations. As such, the project works with a number of marginalised groups. However, there does not appear to have been targeted interventions towards persons with special needs, the LGBTI community, religious minorities or those with specific health needs such as HIV/AIDS and TB. A number of these groups will have limited numbers migrating. HIV/AIDS and TB often places a bar on migration to many countries, and many of the main countries of migration for Bangladesh migrants are countries which highly restrict the rights of the LGBTI community. To date, the project has also had a limited response for persons with special needs. There is limited data and global research available into disability and migration. However, Bangladesh does have well-established networks of organisation of persons with disabilities (OPDs) and the International Labour Organisation (ILO) established Bangladesh Business and Disability Network is active. Engaging these might provide entry points for SIMS to work more with persons with disabilities, including particular challenges migrants with disabilities face, ensuring families left behind access the necessary support for persons with disabilities, and working with local duty bearers to build capacities on supporting returning migrants who acquire a disability during migration.

3.2 Coherence

Building on the previous interventions and leveraging resources of current projects

The MTR identified a number of previous interventions which the project had successfully built upon. The selection of partners for the project allowed SIMS to leverage the structures which the partners had previously set up. This includes OKUP's work on developing migrant fora in a number of project sites. SIMS has continued support for existing migration fora and used the model to develop new fora in other locations. In PROTTYASHI's areas, the local level offices which have been used to implement their micro-finance programmes, has provided a good entry point for accessing the local communities on migration. RMMRU's existing advocacy efforts have also been built on. For example, RMMRU has argued for many years for the need to register sub-agents and SIMS has been able to fund some advocacy activities linked to this, as well as feeding into RMMRU's work by conducting activities with the sub-agents. Partnerships the partners NGOs have developed have also been built on such as BNWLA's relationships with the BMET leadership which helps to address back-logged cases. The project partners are also able to provide links and referrals to their other projects, such as OKUP's health project which refers SIMS service users for support.

The project also builds upon previous interventions from other actors. The PROKAS project,

⁵ [GRES_English.pdf \(undp.org\)](#)

implemented by the British Council, developed the GMC model which the project has replicated in areas which did not previously have a GMC. In areas which had a CTC, SIMS adapted strategies to work with CTCs in a similar manner to the GMCs. SIMS has taken the responsibility of providing financial support to the Grievance Receiving Centre initiated and implemented by WARBE Development Foundation at the BMET.

SIMS also has linked to ongoing projects and initiatives. Helvetas and OKUP are implementing the SKILLS 21 project and SIMS refers returning migrants in Narsinghi to this project. Additionally, the two projects jointly organised a job fair in Chattogram in December 2021. Helvetas Bangladesh has previously developed a local service provider model for its value chain development interventions, and SIMS has adopted this model. SIMS has also worked with an ILO migration project and Bangladesh Employers Federation (BEF) on job fairs. The project also links with Winrock International's work on trafficking and lawyers with connections to SIMS have participating in pro bono training offered by Winrock.

There are areas where the synergies could be strengthened. One example would be to share details with aspiring migrants of the [Migrant Recruitment Advisor \(MRA\) webpage](#), which is implemented by the International Trade Union Confederation and supported by ILO. SDC funded the development of the Bangladesh site through the GOALS programme. Additionally, the GOALS project is supporting the SALAM network, a collaboration of leading academic institutions which focus on migration in Bangladesh, India, Nepal, Pakistan, and Sri Lanka, which also has links to universities in the US and Europe. The Bangladesh representative on SALAM is RMMRU. This presents an opportunity for the SIMS project to advocate on the key areas where research is needed and provides an entry point to the Colombo Process Thematic Area Working Groups. Both the MRA and SALAM network have only recently been operationalised. Identifying ways SIMS can promote MRA and influence the SALAM network would help build synergies with this SDC funded initiative.

Partnerships with Government Duty Bearers

The project has also built partnerships with government duty bearers at all levels. The project has worked closely with the Ministry of Expatriates' Welfare and Overseas Employment (MoEWOE), the WEWB, and the BMET at the national level. SIMS was included in the annual report of the MoEWOE for 2021.

Interviews with district level officials at DEMO and TTCs showed the project has worked to ensure SIMS service users can be referred for skill development activities. One TTC Vice Principal specifically requested for women trainees to be referred:

“Please send women participants for our future training programmes” (TTC Official)

While the connections the project has made is positive, this comment does speak to one of the challenges the project faces, namely the supply of training opportunities from government service providers does not match the demand from many community members. Women in particular shared with the MTR that it was difficult for them to travel to the district level for training, if fact many even thought travelling to the Upazila level was too far. However, at the moment the TTCs are situated at the district level.

“If technical training could be arranged in our locality it would be good. It would allow us to manage the household work. We are interested to have more training to learn more and get better connected.” (Entrepreneur Training Graduate)

The Government of Bangladesh has announced plans for Upazila level TTCs with the first wave being rolled out at the moment. At least one of the new TTCs is in an Upazila the project works in. Engaging with the Upazila TTCs where they are in the same locations as the project, provides SIMS an important opportunity moving forward.

3.3 Effectiveness

Implementation status of the project:

Delays to the project: The project has been affected by two major delays. SDC's contracting rules required Helvetas to apply only for the funding and then conduct a procurement process to identify the four partners to implement activities. This process took considerable time due to the need to launch a

tender process, review proposals and interview partners, conduct due diligence, and make a final selection of partners. As such it was not possible to conduct many activities in the early stages of the project. The project also started just before the beginning of the COVID-19 pandemic. During 2020 and 2021, the Government of Bangladesh initiated a lengthy lockdown in 2020 and a brief strict lockdown in 2021 which prevented travelling to project sites. There were also a series of lockdowns announced, but not strictly enforced due to pressure on the readymade garments sector. However, Helvetas chose to respect these as well and suspended travel to project sites. This particularly affected implementation in the second year when the project partners had been selected. The targets of the project are ambitious but would probably have been achievable without the project delays. However, given the project has faced these considerable delays, it is currently unlikely that the project can achieve the targets whilst maintaining the same quality of intervention at the current staffing levels. As a result, there are three options available for SDC, Helvetas, and the project partners to decide upon. Either targets are reduced, staffing is increased, or there is an acceptance that the quality of support given to service users may be reduced. This would occur both through limited time to provide follow-up support to PDMO graduates throughout the project, and also through needing to provide the FinLit and PDMO training right to the end of the project, thus limiting ongoing support after the training (unless this is included and funded in the second phase of the project).

Outcome 1: In Outcome 1, the Safe Migration component, the project had conducted PDMO training for 20,383 aspirant migrants out of a target of 100,000 by July 31, 2022. Achieving 100,000 is now too optimistic, and the project will need to consider reducing this target. Project partners were keen to stress during the MTR that quality delivery of this activity is not just limited to conducting a two-day training, but also involves providing follow up mentoring, guidance, and information, to help aspirant migrants make informed and safe decisions about migration. Pushing to reach 100,000 aspirant migrants by the end of the project may lead to a reduction in quality of support which can be provided. This outcome also has a target of 25,000 referrals for aspirant migrants seeking to obtain skills qualifications prior to migrating. This target faces a number of challenges. The capacity of the local government training centres such as the TTCs to offer training is limited both in the courses offered and the places available. The TTCs are also located at the district level which can require considerable travel from the Upazilas where most of the service users for the project live. Additionally, this project does not provide skill specific training or pay for beneficiaries to attend it. It merely refers service users to available government training. A tradition of NGOs and CSOs paying travel and other costs for service users in Bangladesh may reduce the attractiveness of the training opportunities to some participants.

Outcome 2: The access to justice case element of the project also has challenges in achieving the target for the total number of cases. Up until July, 452 cases had been lodged with BNWLA. Of these, 305 had been referred and 66 are resolved. A small number of these could not proceed due to various reasons but there is also a backlog of about 3 months cases (approximately 150) where a decision on the referral pathway has not been made yet. The current rate of intake of cases is around 50 a month. Although this is increasing, the project would need to take in 126 cases a month from now until the end of the project to meet the target of 2,500, even assuming the project takes in cases right up until the end of the project. The target for referrals (lodge cases in different redress channels) is more achievable. In the results framework, the target for referral is 50% (1,250). Currently the project is actually referring over 90% of cases, and so even at the current rate of case in-take should be able to reach the target of 1,250 cases referred.

Outcome 3: The target for FinLit training also experiences the same challenge about the quality at the end of the project as the PDMO training. Based on current staffing and rate of implementation, it is possible to reach the target of 3,500. By the time of the evaluation, 507 people had fully completed the training and a further 495 has almost completed training. However, each batch takes 17 weeks to complete (two hours per day, once a week with flexible time decided by the service-users), followed for a further 3 days for entrepreneurial training, which almost all FinLit graduates attend. As such the last batch for FinLit must be started by the start of September 2023 to complete the training. However, the

participants also need follow up support and mentoring to help ensure they are able to put what they learn into practice. Additionally, the planned general election in December 2023, also will mean field activity will probably not be possible after September 30th. Thus, to ensure the quality of support is maintained and from a practical logistical level, the project should consider dropping the last batch from the results framework targets.

The MTR also identified a couple of concerns over the definition of the completion of training. For both the PDMO and FinLit training, a participant needs to complete 50% of the training to be counted towards the target. This would be mean one out of two days for the PDMO and 9 out of 17 days for FinLit. Both are quite a low attendance amount to be considered as completing training, although in reality the vast majority of participants are attending both days of the PDMO and the average attendance for FinLit is probably around 16 or 17 days. The project should consider formalising a higher target for attendance, perhaps 14 days in FinLit and 75% of people attending two days of training in PDMO. Linked to this, it is not currently possible for the database to run a report to identify how many days training attendees have attended. It is only possible to identify how many have completed training under the current definition of 50%. This should be possible to adjust by engaging with the consultant who developed the database to make necessary adjustments.

Outcome targets:

Outcome targets which measure the change the project is achieving are harder to assess at this point of the project. The project has set up a monitoring sample to measure the change on beneficiaries. For PDMO training this is a random sample of one person per session, which would give a sample size of over 3,300. This is considerably over the total of 383 which would be needed to ensure a confidence interval of 95%. The sample size should also be large enough to draw inferences on differences between districts. There may however be challenges with the sizes of certain smaller groups should the project wish to use multiple regression to understand differences between certain vulnerable groups such as the Char community. Additionally, with PDMO, the number of women attendees is small, particularly in Cumilla and Chattogram. As such, the project may wish to consider oversampling some particular groups or conducting more qualitative research with certain groups.

Progress towards outcome indicators is shown in the table below. While the MTR did not conduct surveys to confirm some of the outcome indicators in the results framework, the KII's and FGDs did agree with much of the information the MEL system has collected to date. In terms of outcome indicators, the project appears on-track to achieve 1.1, 1.2, 3.1, and 3.2. Outcome indicators 1.3, 2.1, and 2.4 are harder to assess because they rely on external action by the Government of Bangladesh or private actors, and progress particularly with the Government can be slow and require a number of stages of approval. A number of indicators haven't been measured yet, and thus are harder to assess at this stage. This includes 2.2 and 3.3, although testimony gathered both from local community leaders for 2.2 and FinLit graduates for 3.3, suggest these indicators are achievable. The one indicator where the project faces a strong challenge to achieve is 1.4, on skills referrals, due to the challenges listed elsewhere in the report, of matching government training offerings to the needs of the potential migrants, the training being offered in urban areas and the challenges linked to rural services users accessing these, and the lack of provision of expenses to support the attendance of the service users. Outcome 2.3 should be achievable if the cases move quickly enough to be measured, but the definition and criteria of what counts as 'in favour of the migrant worker' needs to be clearly laid out.

Indicator	Unit	Phase Target	Total	Men	Women
IND-OC1.1 % of PEO receiver MW follow 3-5 aspects or requirements of safe migration	%	35	42	44	32
IND-OC1.2 Number of aggrieved MW and/or LBFM use the formal (court, DEMO , police)	#	1,250	285	274	11

and non-formal (GMC) justice system to address their grievances					
IND-OC1.3 No. of policy direction given by relevant GoB department in favour of Migration Workers' rights.	#	1	0	n/a	n/a
IND-OC1.4 Number of aspirant MW referred for skilling prior to migration undergo skills training.	#	10,000	1032	531	501
IND-OC2.1 Number of new and improved services received by MW from DEMO, and TTC	#	2 each	0	n/a	n/a
IND-OC2.2 % of UP -representatives, UDC members, CTC members, and Tottho Apa disseminate safer migration information	%	40	Not yet measured		
IND-OC2.3: % of MW's rights related resolved cases in formal and non-formal justice system go in favor of MW	%	50	98	100	83
IND-OC2.4 Number of new and improved financial and remittance services received by MW and/or LBFM from financial sector actors.	#	2 each			
IND-OC3.1 % of migrant household manage remittances, savings and household expenditure as per plan	%	80	64	n/a	n/a
IND-OC3.2 % of migrant household invested remittance in productive purpose (farming, business, enterprise, fixed deposit, bond, purchase of productive land, etc.)	%	65	59	n/a	n/a
IND-OC3.3 % returnee migrants are reintegrated in economic activities	%	40	Not yet measured		

Strengths and Weaknesses of the Project

The MTR conducted individual SWOT analysis with the Helvetas project team and each of the project partners (BNWLA's district staff participated in the SWOTs of each of the MNGOs but the MTR did not conduct a further SWOT independently with BNWLA). These can be found at annex 6. Many of the identified strengths and weaknesses were similar between SWOTs and agreed with those identified by the MTR team during the review process.

Strengths: Key strengths of the project include good teamwork, strong partners with different strengths, a holistic approach to much of the migrant cycle, a migrant-centred approach, good community trust, well developed manuals and technical support, and the project advisory committee (PAC).

Strong partnerships and good teamwork were identified by all five agencies in their SWOT analyses. This was apparent during the MTR. The four implementing partners indicated they were appreciative of the technical support provided by Helvetas, as well of the effectiveness of the communication systems set up. Although anecdotal, the enthusiasm with which all 5 agencies participated in the MTR is a strong indication of their commitment to the project, the partnerships, and their willingness to learn and adapt. Similarly, there is good evidence of sharing between the 3 MNGOs about the successes and challenges they have faced. Different sectoral staff have set up their own WhatsApp groups to share between themselves.

Migrant centred approach: The project follows a migrant centred approach, placing the different “thematic” needs of migrants, aspirant migrants, and their families at the heart of the project. This helps strengthen the relevance of the project to the target service users. The project also covers a number of stages of the migrant cycle, through support prior to migration, supporting families left behind, and providing access to justice support to returning migrants who have faced fraud and exploitation. The main caveat to this, is the limited support provided for reintegration, which aside from the access to justice component, is not directly covered by the project. This is linked to SDC funding reintegration work through other partners SDC’s upcoming project on reintegration only overlaps in one district, where close collaboration with the implementing agencies of this project will be needed to bridge the gap between projects Reintegration support remains a challenge in the other locations. This was regularly mentioned by local government stakeholders as being a need of their community. It should be mentioned on reintegration that the project does aim to provide indirect support for the future. The FinLit and entrepreneurial training is aimed at supporting possible reintegration of family members by ensuring less reliance on remittances and the creation of income generation opportunities for migrants when they return. A number of FinLit and entrepreneurial training graduates indicated they would expand their businesses with their husbands when they returned.

Community trust: The migrant centred approach supports another strength of the project, namely strong trust in the community. The project partners have experience in the communities they work in, even if in some cases this hasn’t been focused on migration, and bring strong relationships with the community leadership and local government to the project. This strength is supported by the migrant centred approach ensuring the project responds to the needs of the local community. During the MTR, the review team received some feedback on recommendations or ways to improve the project, but universally heard praise of the relationship with Helvetas and the relevant partner in different locations.

Technical support: A further strength of the project is the quality of the technical manuals and the level of technical support provided. This is discussed further in efficiency section of the report.

Weaknesses: Weaknesses and challenges were also acknowledged by the project partners and identified by the MTR team. These include challenges in accessing skill training, limitations in the gender responsiveness of the project, the challenges posed by the targets and workload of field staff, the need to be clearly present the risks related to service users starting businesses, and the need to strengthen opportunities for CSO advocacy. The challenges in accessing skill training and the issues linked to the targets and the workload are addressed above and in efficiency. The limitations in the gender responsiveness of the project are addressed in the relevance section and in the sub-section below on differences in how the project affects/benefits men and women differently.

CSO advocacy: The issue of CSO advocacy should not be regarded as a major weakness of the project, and in many ways offers opportunities for future engagement. However, some stakeholders raised the need to ensure the project is utilising the opportunities for activity advocacy by CSOs in Bangladesh and not just funnelling information and issues to the advocacy work of bilateral donors such as SDC and UN agencies. Positive examples are CSO advocacy by the partners are available. There have been important events held by the project linked to advocacy, most recently a RMMRU hosted event for parliamentarians on the issue of regularising sub-agents, which was designed to take advantage of the presence of the Colombo Process TAWG on fair and ethical recruitment held in Bangladesh in late August. RMMRU, OKUP, and BNWLA all have significant experience on advocacy on migration related issues. The identified weakness is more related to the need to ensure a structured approach which prioritises the voice of civil society and utilises the skills, experiences, and leverage of the partners, and as such presents more than opportunity than a weakness at the mid-stage of the project. This though will need to be done with adequate staffing support, potentially an additional staff member, to ensure the partners are conducting strategic advocacy which focuses on areas with a strong potential for change.

Networks of influence: Linked to the above point, was also reflections from stakeholders for the project to review the networks of influence it has both at the local and the national level to ensure the

project is developing relationships with the key decision makers for national and local policy. While the MTR found that strong relationships between the project and many key duty bearers, conducting a revised stakeholder and power analysis would be advisable to ensure the project is reaching the key individuals. As with the previous point, this should probably be considered more of an opportunity than a weakness.

Risks from entrepreneurship: This point is covered in more detail in the sustainability section, but a threat to the service-users and ultimate the project's reputation in the community comes from the economic risk some of the FinLit and entrepreneurial graduates take on in starting businesses, often before the training has been completed. The FinLit and entrepreneurship training has limited emphasis on risks, (although some is present in the entrepreneurship training). A stronger emphasis on the potential pitfalls of starting a business would be advisable.

Does the project benefit/affect women and men differently?

As identified in the relevance section, the project currently has quite stark gendered differences between the PDMO training, which is mainly attended by men, and FinLit training, which is mainly attended by women. As such, men are more benefitting from increased awareness of safe migration approaches and women from improved financial management and entrepreneurial skills. The approaches and manuals do not currently specifically address concerns or challenges which may affect men and women differently in both attending the training and in the actual process of migration or setting up a business. Developing different approaches for implementing the training and designing gender focused modules (such as a module for domestic workers), would help even out the benefits men and women get from the project. Certain approaches which have been trialed by a particular partner in some areas, such as women only PDMO sessions, can provide a learning opportunity for the project as a whole.

Current project monitoring data shows 83.5% of PDMO attendees are men and 16.5% are women. However, when looking at district level, 39% are women in Narsinghi, compared to only 12% in Cumilla and 6% in Chattogram. For FinLit training, 99.3% of the attendees are women. While the differences partly reflects the fact more men migrate from the project areas than women, and more women are therefore part of left behind families, it does not fully match the actual numbers. For example, the baseline found that 62% of women received remittances, compared to 38% men. If this is the case, then there are a significant number of men who receive remittances who are not receiving FinLit training. When asked about this, the FinLit graduates (women) informed the MTR team that this was linked to men's work making it hard to attend training during the day. The PDMOs are mainly attracting men, although the project has successfully attracted a significant number of women in Narsinghi. Project staff for Helvetas and partners indicated that there simply weren't many women migrating from the project areas, and government data does support this. However, identifying ways to find and engage women who are thinking of migrating should be considered by the project to make it more relevant for them. For example, there is a strong case for providing specific information to aspiring domestic workers in an adapted PDMO session. Domestic work is a particularly unique form of labour given the isolated nature of the workplace and the fact that home life and work life are mixed, making the worker much more at risk of physical and verbal violence, and wage theft through underpayment and expectations to work at all hours.

As noted, it must be acknowledged when reviewing project performance data that the number of women migrants from Bangladesh is considerably less than men, and the proportion has dropped since the onset of the pandemic. The average ratio of men to women migrants in the three years prior to the pandemic was 86.6% to 13.4%. In 2020, this was 90% to 10%. In 2021, the ratio was fairly similar to the pre-COVID period, but to date in 2022, the ratio is 93.7% to 6.3%. It is yet unclear whether migration patterns will return to similar levels pre-pandemic in future years. Additionally, the numbers from particular districts do vary depending upon community attitudes to women migrating. Therefore, while implementing the recommendations of the Gender and Social Equity Analysis and attempting identify ways to engage men and women differently is advisable and can increase the numbers of

women attending PDMO training and men attending FinLit training, the actual results of gender balance in the project need to be viewed with the overall migration numbers in mind.

Assumptions and Risks

The PRODOC includes a risk matrix and the results framework includes a series of assumptions linked to the outcomes and outputs. Neither the risk matrix nor the assumptions have been updated since the start of the project. While many remain valid, it is good practice to regularly review the risks and assumptions and update the risks as they change and the assumptions as evidence on their accuracy becomes available. This could be done as an agenda point in the quarterly partners meeting and then ensuring this is reported annually in the annual progress report. For the risk matrix of the project, the risks generally appear to remain valid, but mitigation strategies and the impact needs to be updated for many of them. Risks related to COVID-19 should also be added. For the results framework, the assumptions linked to skills development and BMET staffing in particular need review, and more assumptions linked to outcome 3 are needed, as only one is currently included. Considering assumptions in light of the gender and social equity assessment would enhance the gender responsiveness of the results framework.

3.4 Efficiency

SDC is conducting an economic and financial analysis of the project in August and September 2022. As such the MTR did not conduct a cost-effectiveness or value for money assessment. The review of efficiency in the MTR focused on the project management structures, adaptations to the COVID-19 pandemic, and the effective use of existing resources.

COVID impact: The initial design of the project foresaw continuous activity throughout the project, but the COVID-19 pandemic impacted the ability to do this. During the initial phase of the pandemic in 2020, partner selection was ongoing anyway and thus had less impact on the planned activities. During 2021 though there was a series of lockdowns enforced by the Government of Bangladesh which prevented project partners for accessing the field and thus conducting face to face activities. The project did use this time effectively by working on the development of activity manuals and technical guidance, as well as where feasible, holding online training. The quality of the manuals was cited by all project partners as being a key strength of the project. Using time when project locations could not be accessed to develop these has probably strengthened the overall quality of the activities as it meant the service users who have gone through the PDMO or FinLit training have done so after the development of the manuals which should have increased the quality of the training.

The project also distributed emergency COVID-19 support during the lockdowns. The MTR did not speak to recipients of this so is not able to take a position on this element of the project. However, it was suggested by project partners that the provision of pandemic related support helped build relationships with the local Upazila and Union Parishad members. This was particularly effective in locations which were new for the project partners. This probably supported improved efficiency of the project as local leaders were more welcoming to the project after the provision of COVID-19 aid.

Partner procurement: The requirements of the contract required Helvetas to tender for the project partners after the grant had been awarded rather than identifying and applying with partners during the call for proposals. This process consumed most of the first year of the project with the partners being onboarded in early 2021. From the perspective of ensuring activities could be begin promptly, this was less efficient than allowing Helvetas to build its team prior to the proposal date. However, an alternative way to assess this would be from the point of view of quality. Timelines on calls for proposals can often be limited, leading to the rushed development of partnerships. Helvetas had an existing partnership with OKUP in other projects, but not with the other three partner NGOs. Conducting the tendering process after the grant had been signed, probably allowed Helvetas to investigate more options and make an informed decision on the right partners for the process. Given the strong partnerships which have developed and the clear indication that each partner brings a different expertise to the project, it can be argued that in the longer-term picture of this funding cycle and potentially the next, that this approach

will end up ensuring a greater quality of delivery in the long run. A decision on awarding the next phase of the contract to Helvetas has not been taken yet, but if this is the decision, then the efficiency of the next phase would be considerably helped if the second phase of the project does not require a re-tendering for the partners. Options for how to do that within SDC's rules would need to be agreed. A self-evaluation of the partners by Helvetas could be an acceptable solution.

Communication and project management: The MTR found the project management and communication between all five partners to be strong for the most part. All of the implementing partners shared with the MTR team the value they placed on the interaction with Helvetas and the other implementing partners. The only small caveat to this was a concern about communication on the progress of access to justice cases, but it was acknowledged this has improved in recent months. Additionally, this is partly caused by the limitations of BMET and WEWB in making progress on cases.

The project management structure for monitoring progress of the project is strong. Regular communication is maintained and each of the four Helvetas thematic experts has been assigned one partner to be focal point for. Quarterly update meetings help ensure regular troubleshooting of emerging concerns. The project holds an annual planning exercise to develop an annual workplan which covers the budget, activity targets, and M&E tasks. WhatsApp groups have been set up to allow partners to communicate effectively with each other. Thematic sub-groups allow individuals working on particular elements of the project to share success stories and challenges with each other directly. These groups were cited by project partners as examples of the strong communication between all implementers.

Approaches used by MNGOs: The MTR matrix included a question identifying the effectiveness of the different approaches of the three MNGOs. The MTR team was not able to identify significant differences, although some minor differences can be seen. This was probably for two reasons. On the one hand, the limited time in the field made it more difficult to identify the differences and on the other, there is a fairly fixed implementation approach which has been shared with the partners. The project implementation approach is currently for all three MNGOs to follow the same approach to PDMO and FinLit activities, following the developed manuals and implementing in 2 days for PDMO, and 17 two-hour sessions (once a week with flexible time decided by the service users) for FinLit. While this supports the immediate efficiency linked to consistent application of the manuals, it can be argued the project is missing out on opportunities to learn lessons from the use of different approaches. Having three partners with different experiences and expertise could be used to trial different approaches, which if monitored effectively could provide project learning which could improve efficiency in the future. This would not mean major changes to curricula and the learning service users received but could involve different approaches to rolling out the training such as splitting the PDMO sessions into small sessions over more days or having breaks between the days to make it easier for individuals to attend.

3.5 Impact

As this is a mid-term review, and the project has been affected by delays from the COVID-19 pandemic, the full impact of the project is hard to identify at this point. However, the MTR was able to identify initial impacts being felt, particularly by some of the service users.

Remittances are used more effectively: The FinLit and entrepreneurial training have provided the clearest evidence of impact to date. A constant reflection from participants was that they are now recording their household budgeting and have cut back on unnecessary expenditure. As a result, they are less likely to spend all the remittances they receive as soon as it arrives. A number reported opening savings account and increasing the amount of saving they make each month.

A number of the training attendees also reported an increase in resource management and income generation activities. These ranged from small scale changes at home to provide more nutrition options for their family, such as planting fruit trees and vegetable crops on their land, to running new businesses, including handicraft production, cow and chicken rearing, and serving food at local events. Graduates also shared that they had coached their husbands on sending remittances via proper channels in order to save money on transfer fees. Women trainees brought up the issue of

empowerment, some expressing that prior to the training they had not thought it possible for them to undertake these types of income generating activities:

“Prior to the training we did not think it possible for us as women to have such a business. Now we see it as possible” (FinLit Graduate)

“Earlier we spent our time for scrolling on the our mobile phone but now we are using our time to our increasing income” (FinLit Graduate)

“I have a cow. Before the training I had a plan to sell it. After the training, I continued with the rearing of the cow, and now I expect a calf as a result. I have also started new savings of 2,000 taka per month. Before this, we did not have the courage to save. Now we think we can because of the training.” (FinLit Graduate)

Need to focus on risk management: Although the services users expressed enthusiasm and appreciation for being guided in these opportunities, the project probably needs to pay more attention to risk management to ensure negative impacts are not felt by the trainees. A number had taken out fairly substantial loans to purchase livestock. These ranged up to 100,000 taka and may not account for the risks of market depreciation and disease. One woman reported she had purchased 800 chickens, having only previously had a small handful for household consumption. This is a significant investment in one go, which is prone to a risk such as a bird flu outbreak or the overcrowding of producers for the same product reducing price due to local market saturation. Similarly, individuals who had purchased cows were placed their investment in one animal which would also be at risk of disease or a price drop in the market. Strengthening the messages on risk management, which currently are covered to an extent in the entrepreneurial training, by adding in a section during the FinLit training would address this. Similarly, the exercise used during the entrepreneurial training to show an income-expenditure plan for a potential business, could include an example of a business which would lose money, as well as the current example of one making money. Additionally, it does appear that there is a strong emphasis on setting up income generating opportunities during the FinLit training, and the vast majority of attendees are also doing the entrepreneurial training. Reinforcing the message that budgeting, saving, and looking for ways to use their resources more productively for the household use (eg planting fruit trees) may be just as important as setting up a business, and that running a business is not something everyone is naturally suited to, would also help reduce potential risks.

Impact on migration decision-making: Graduates of the PDMO training also showed some evidence of impact on their decision making. A small number indicated they had decided against migration after doing the cost benefit analysis and SWOT analysis exercise at home after the training. One participant shared that he decided the 4 to 6 lakh he would spend migrating could be more profitably used in Bangladesh. Most of the participants indicated they were still interested in migrating, but many had slowed the process to try to acquire additional work and language skills before migrating and to ensure they followed the correct channels for obtaining visas. Other indications of the impact of training included graduates sharing they would be more careful in retaining documents and obtaining receipts from sub-agents, the opening of separate bank accounts to send remittances, and those who had obtained visas were checking their validity through DEMO.

“We wouldn’t have the double bank account, if I didn’t take training.” (PDMO graduate)

Impact on the services provided by government duty-bearers: There was less indication of impact yet in the actions and services of government duty bearers at the local and national level. This isn’t to say that impact is not possible by the end of the project. The impact the project seeks at the duty bearer level is harder to achieve at in an immediate timeframe which can be achieved through the training of aspirant migrants and families left behind and work with many of the local government institutions only mainly began in 2022 due to the local elections in 2021, and the project chose to wait to ensure it did not need to train new members if the elections led to a turn-over in council members. The capacity training will take time to see impact. What the MTR was able to identify was recognition of the importance of addressing the needs of migrant workers and their families and a level of enthusiasm

from the local government members to respond to the challenges they face. Members of Union Parishads, GMCs, and CTCs all identified challenges related to information, unsafe migration practices, problems with middlemen, and remittance management, and expressed willingness to support their communities to address these if given support and training by the project. Some local government officials indicated they were already disseminating some of the messages of safe migration but it's not clear how widespread this is. A further possible effect on impact is the increased awareness of the project and good relationships the partners have built with the local leaders means they are informing more community members about the project's services and referring them to the project partners, which should lead to these individuals benefiting from the impacts described in the paragraph above.

Where there were existing structures which had previously been set up by one of the project partners, it was possible to identify some changes the project had contributed to. For example, members of one migrant forum shared that since the start of the SIMS project, they were more aware of access to justice needs and pathways, and that women's participation in the forum had increased:

"The difference between the forum before and after SIMS is that another component has been included in the activity list, namely we help people with access to justice. We are going to help people to connect to the GMC. This started recently, and we will continue it." (Migrant Forum Member)

"The number of women participating in the forum has also increased. One of the reasons for this is the financial component. The men have outside engagement and women's capacities have grown to give their time. Under the SIMS project there are 2 activities- door to door meeting and courtyard meeting, they are reaching to the home and thus women are being reached more." (Migrant Forum Member)

Strengthening capacity for local mediation processes through GMC and CTC: The project will need to carefully monitor the capacities of the GMCs and CTCs to conduct mediation of the access to justice cases which are referred to them. Currently, it is not clear that the GMC and CTC members have an adequate understanding of how to conduct mediation, which may be partly as a result of it being in the early stages of this activity. Cases have already been referred to the GMCs and CTCs, and while many have resulted in positive results for migrants, there was at least one case shared with the MTR team where the initial decision by the GMC would lead to the migrant paying more money to a middleman to try to resolve immigration status issues overseas. To ensure positive impact by the end of the project, SIMS will need to ensure continuous capacity building, mentoring, and support is given to the GMCs and CTCs, and consider how to respond if local politics or lack of capacities is harming the mediation process.

Achieving the intended results by the end of the project: Reviewing the intended outcomes of the project which are included in the theory of change for the results framework shows that the project has the potential to achieve these by the of the implementation period. However, some of the impacts are dependent on the capacities, resources, and will of government stakeholders, which is harder for the project to control. Based on current indications, the project should be able to achieve the expected impacts for aspirant migrants and families left behind in the practise of safe migration and the more effective use of remittances. This comes with the caveat discussed in effectiveness that the numbers reach may need to be reduced to maintain the quality of the programme. Those that are reached though should feel the intended impacts of the project. Impacts linked to support provided by DEMOs, TTCs, and Union and Upazila level offices are dependent on the capacity and resources they have. The project should be able to achieve many of the impacts linked to the provision of services. Potentially more challenging will be achieving significant impacts in the resolution of access to justice cases by the end of the project. The time taken for court cases to proceed in Bangladesh means most of the cases which go through this avenue will still be pending by the end of the project. The project works hard to advocate with BMET and WEWB, but the departments are understaffed, and BMET does not have full time staff dedicated to resolving the cases. The project is undertaking advocacy to try to address these challenges. Similarly, the theory of change and logical framework target one change in policy by the

Government of Bangladesh which is in favour of migrant workers' rights. While this may be achievable, government policy change can be a slow-moving process with multiple layers of approval needed. As such, it's not currently clear if this target can be achieved or not in this phase of the project.

3.6 Sustainability

Sustainability is the extent to which the net benefits of the intervention continue or are likely to continue. In the SIMS project, sustainability can be viewed through a variety of lens, including the lasting impact on the individual migrants and their families, how well these benefits will be felt by others in the community, the institutionalisation of the capacity building and training of duty-bearers including local government, service providers and civil society, and the level to which policy or guideline changes are embedded within the government system. As this is a mid-term review, it is difficult to fully assess the likelihood of the intervention being sustainable as this will depend on developments for the remainder of the project. However, the MTR was able to gather data about the level of ownership shown by community members, community leaders, government officials, and the project partners.

Acquiring of knowledge: From a knowledge perspective, the project has good potential for the training of aspirant migrants and spouses left behind to have significant sustainability. The life skill of financial management is one which the FinLit graduates should be able to retain for a long time, and if they share this knowledge with others in the community, sustainability will be further increased. The PDMO graduates should also be able to retain both the knowledge on safe migration, and potentially the skill of conducting cost benefit analyses which can be applied to decisions beyond the decision to migrate. As many migrant workers migrate more than once, the knowledge they have gained from the PDMOs may be useful to them in the future, with the caveat that should the migration governance system and rules change in Bangladesh, there would need to be a process for updating them of the changes. As with the FinLit, there was some evidence of graduates sharing the knowledge with their families and others in the community.

Sustainability of businesses set up as a result of entrepreneurial training: Assessing the sustainability of the entrepreneurial training and the businesses which are set up as a result is harder at this stage. If many of the graduates set up successful businesses as a result of the project, this would strongly support sustainability and would be relevant to the Government of Bangladesh's goal to strengthen the rural economy. However, this will need to be measured on an ongoing basis to see how successful the businesses are and ensure that graduates are not losing money from bad investment and business decisions, or by flooding the market with the same products which drives down prices. Another challenge to sustainability which the entrepreneurial training faces is the local service provider (LSP) model does not necessarily respond to the individual business needs of many of the trainees. A regular response from the graduates during the MTR was that they would like training on the more technical aspects of running a particular business. For example, those who were interested in chicken farming wanted more details on vaccinations, types of feed, marketing strategies etc. The LSPs leading the training may or not be experienced in the individual type of business a particular graduate is interested in. For those graduates who want to run businesses which the LSP does not have experience in, the mentorship the LSP can provide would only be linked general business advice and not specific technical advice. As such, the model may not be of interest to a large of the graduates moving forward, unless changes can be made, such as facilitating LPCs from other Upazilas with particular technical skills to visit neighbouring Upazilas.

Duty bearers: Sustainability among the duty bearers is unclear at the moment. As noted in impact, the work on many elements of the project linked to duty bearers began in earnest in 2022. There are some reflections the MTR is able to make though. The fact the local government authorities recognise the need to address the problems migrants and their families face, and their enthusiasm for working with the project partners are good indicators of initial ownership of the project. One initial example of the potential for sustainability was one Union Parishad shared with the MTR team that they had set aside 50,000 taka in their annual budget for migration related issues. They have not yet decided how to spend this, although believed using it for recognising the International Migrants Day in December might

be the best use of the funds. They requested support from the project partner with technical advice on this. Although a small step, this does give an indication that local community structures have been convinced of the importance of the project by the SIMS team.

It will be important for the project to continue to work to develop local capacities to address these challenges. The model set up by the project supports sustainability. Structures such as the Union and Upazila parishads, the GMCs and CTCs, and the migrant fora, are led by community members who it would be expected will remain in the local area for a considerable period. While there will be turn-over of some of the parishad members and the GMC/CTCs through elections, the core membership in many project areas is likely to remain fairly consistent for a significant period of time. Previously established migrant fora have demonstrated a generally stable membership and supported the building of trust in the community, which bodes well for both the newer and ongoing fora in the future. If the project can get these entities to the position where they have the knowledge of migration and capacities on topics such as mediation and awareness raising, to operate fairly independently, then a good level of sustainability should be possible.

Sustainability of the benefits at the higher levels of government such as the district and national level is possible but given the limitations of resources, institutionalising changes may be challenging. The success of the advocacy of the project will impact potential for sustainability. Advocacy initiatives such as persuading BMET to assign full-time staff for grievance case management, pushing for the decentralisation of case hearing to the district DEMOs, and pushing the clearing of backlogs and bottlenecks at the WEWB, would all ensure the project had long lasting impacts. However, these need to be accepted by the government and where relevant go through the process of cabinet approval and departmental budgeting. It is not yet clear how much influence the project can have on these issues.

At a national policy level, one area where the project has focused on contributing to the national discussion is the registration of middlemen. RMMRU has worked on this issue for a number of years and the SIMS project supports this effort through the engagement of dialogue with middlemen, training them in safe migration and appropriate documentation, and holding national level events with parliamentarians. Should this policy change be approved and properly implemented, this would also provide long-term benefits, which the project will have contributed to. It is though also too soon to say whether there will be adjustments in government policies, although the revision of the 2013 Overseas Employment and Migration Act includes a provision for this in the final draft of the revised Act includes this provision, and thus provides a strong opportunity for this.

While some of the actions the project is working on have the potentially to be institutionalised within government structures, other activities of the project are beyond what would usually be identified as the remit of the government. For example, while the Government of Bangladesh has included providing financial literacy training for families left behind in its 8th five year plan, providing FinLit training over 17 sessions would normally be beyond the scope and length of training normally provided by a government (outside of the argument that this should be included in the school curriculum). SIMS has made recommendations on how to implement this at the local level, but the final modalities have not been arranged. It could be envisaged though that civil society would play a considerable role in this activity. As such the role of civil society is also crucially important in providing longer term sustainability for the action. The forming of partnerships with the three MNGOs, the provision of resources, and the building of capacities to provide such support in future is a strength of the project and should contribute to sustainability. The selection of the partners has supported sustainability. All of the national NGOs the project partners with are well established members of Bangladesh civil society, and while Helvetas has been able to build capacities in certain areas, the project has also relied on the injection of the technical expertise and experience of the three MNGOs and one LANGO into activities and open sharing of learning between all partners. The contribution of all has strengthened the overall delivery of the project, and should also strengthen sustainability, as each partner has benefited not just from the expertise of Helvetas (and SDC) but also from three other national NGOs.

4. Conclusions, Recommendations, and Lessons Learned

4.1 Conclusions

The SIMS project has made a solid start in its goal of improving the well-being of migrant men and women due to safer migration practices and better migration governance despite having faced delays due to the COVID-19 pandemic.

The project demonstrated alignment with the goals of the Government of Bangladesh's 8th Five Year Plan, as well as international frameworks such as the GCM and SDGs. It is relevant to the needs of aspiring migrants for improved knowledge of safe migration and families left behind for financial literacy training, as well as migrants who want to access redress for fraud and rights violations. The project engages both men and women through its activities but attention to the differences of women and men in the migration experience and for those left behind would strengthen its gender responsiveness.

The project builds well on previous interventions on migration and the existing capital the project partners have in the local communities, as well as linking with ongoing projects. There are some areas where synergies could be improved though. The project has also begun to build partnerships with government duty bearers, although much of this activity was delayed until after the 2021 local elections, and thus it is quite early to see progress.

The project has made progress in achieving the outcomes and outputs of the results framework. However, as a result of the COVID-19 pandemic and the lengthy partner recruitment process, some of the targets are challenging and will be difficult to achieve. Agreeing a trade off between quantity, quality, and staff numbers should be a priority for SDC, Helvetas, and the project partners. The strengths of the project considerably outweigh the weaknesses, but Helvetas and the project partners should reflect on the findings of the SWOT analysis and the MTR to ensure the weaknesses are addressed where possible.

Good communication and project management, and effectively using the time during the pandemic related lockdowns, means the project scores highly on the efficiency criteria. The diversity and quality of partners selected for the project also strengthens efficiency. However, allowing more flexibility for partners to adopt different implementation approaches may strengthen learning and long-term efficiency.

Assessing impact and sustainability is difficult at this stage of the first phase of a project. Initial changes can be seen more at the service provider than the duty bearer level. FinLit and PDMO graduates both shared examples of behavioural change as a result of the project. Enthusiasm for the project among local government officials offers opportunities for sustainability of the intervention but this will require continued capacity building and support. If the project can leverage its findings to strengthen its advocacy, this may also lead to contributions to policy change at the national level. The involvement of civil society organisations with good connections at the grassroots level in the implementation of SIMS should also strengthen sustainability.

Overall, the project has made a good start in the first phase of the project, despite the challenges posed by COVID-19. Should the good collaboration between SDC, Helvetas, and the project partners continue and there are not further external delays, SIMS should be able to achieve a good level of impact by the end of the project.

4.2 Recommendations

Recommendations	Priority and Timeframe	Resource Implications
1. Review the results framework and agree with SDC, Helvetas, and the partners the best balance of quality and quantity. Review and revise where necessary the	High ASAP	May impact approaches to allocation of staff responsibilities.

assumptions and risk matrix.		
2. Linked to the revision of the results matrix, identify areas in Section 4 of the grant agreement where there will be underspend on activities and consider how to realign the budget to include more staffing. The MTR's recommendation would be to add an Access to Justice Officer for each organisation.	High ASAP	Potential for budget realignment
3. Ensure the next phase of the project is designed in a participatory manner with all the project partners. Work on designing the next phase should begin by the start of 2023 at the latest.	High Starting by the end of 2022	Staff time
4. Implement the recommendations of the Gender and Social Equity Analysis paying particular attention to how to increase numbers of women attending PDMO and men attending FinLit. Women only sessions for PDMO should be expanded where possible. SIMS should consider either designing a specific module for domestic workers or revising existing modules if they can be identified. Considering changing the FinLit approach for men from 1717 two hours sessions, to 1 full day each week for 2-3 weeks attract more men.	High Ongoing	Staff time
5. Formalise into an advocacy strategy, the discussions the project had with all partners on opportunities for advocacy and CSO engagement at both the national and local levels. This would include reviewing the networks of influence the project has and considering if there are key individuals the project has not yet engaged with.	High Ongoing	Staff time
6. Integrate more emphasis on risk management in the FinLit and entrepreneurial training. This should include an emphasis to the trainers that a key message should be that not everyone needs to set up their own business- simply having a trainee focus more on better financial planning and use of remittances is an important impact. For those that do want to set up businesses, providing examples of business plans which are not successful, discussing the risks, and transmitting the message of starting small and working up, should all be integrated into the training.	High ASAP	Staff time Training costs
7. Allow more leeway to the MNGOs to implement the different activities using different approaches. Ensuring good baselines and monitoring systems when different approaches are used, would support lesson learning for all partners in this and the next phase of the project.	Medium Ongoing (possibly with more emphasis on the second phase)	Staff time for monitoring differences
8. Disseminate examples of good paperwork, invoices, and contracts, which migrants should be obtaining from middle-men and recruitment firms to community leaders such as Union and Upazila Council members, migration forum	Medium Ongoing	Staff time Printing costs

members, and the GMCs. This would support the sharing of this information among the community.		
9. Engage closely with the new Upazila TTCs where they overlap with the project area. Consider pilot capacity building with them which can be used in other areas when the TTC roll out expands	Medium As they are launched	Staff time Meeting costs Training costs
10. Strengthened engagement with the Union Parishad. This would include providing all council members and secretary to the council with safe migration messages and orient them on necessary steps of migration which would empower them to guide aspirant and departing migrants. Currently the project provides orientation to 5 members. Expanding to all interested members would help mitigate problems caused by turn-over	Medium Ongoing	Staff time Training costs
11. Conduct a mapping of Organisations of Persons with Disabilities in the project areas, and consider how the project can engage them more in various activities, particularly with a focus on the next phase.	Medium Focus on the second phase	Staff time Meeting costs Potential consultant costs
12. Review the definition of completion for training so it is more than 50% attendance (recommend 80%) and ensure it is monitored. Adapt the database so it can run reports to produce these figures	ASAP High	Staff time Consultant database fees
13. Identify which groups will have a small sample size in the overall monitoring sample group and conduct qualitative research with them to understand more clearly the impacts of the project of them.	Ongoing Medium	Staff time
14. Ensure the risk matrix and assumptions of the results framework are regularly updated. This could be done annually in the annual report and reviewed quarterly at the partners' meeting.	Initially ASAP and then ongoing Medium	Staff time
15. Ensure period context analyses are undertaken to support project amendments where necessary	Ongoing Medium	Staff time

4.3 Lessons Learned

- Community acceptance- strategic communication is necessary to build trust with key stakeholders such as the community itself. Emergency support at the beginning of COVID-19 helped SIMS project to gain acceptance. From that learning, project may consider strategic intervention in case of any changes happen in future.
- Developing strong guidelines and manuals before implementation begins helps strengthen the quality of delivery of the project. The project did not have an inception period built into for developing manuals and technical resources, but the delays caused by the need to tender for project partners and the COVID-19 lockdowns were used effectively by Helvetas to develop good quality materials. Ensuring there is time allowed at the start of the project to develop technical resources before projects start field level implementation will help support standardise the quality of implementation.

- Periodic context analysis will help support project adaptations where context changes. As it is evident that Union Council election affected the implementation of some activities, periodic context at both national and local level would allow the project to strategize its delivery plan. The national elections in 2023 present another point in the project where this will be relevant.
- Access to justice work needs to analysis the protection of justice seekers. Cases the project visited showed there may be either risks and threats to the justice seeker from the powerful sources, or the mediation approaches (through local leadership) may provide outcomes not in the best interests of the justice seeker.

Annex 1: Evaluation TOR



Schweizerische Eidgenossenschaft
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Confederazione Svizzera
Confederaziun svizra

Terms of Reference for Midterm Review

Strengthened and Informative Migration Systems (SIMS) project

Background

The Strengthened and Informative Migration Systems (SIMS) is a four year project, which works to promote safe and informed migration from the grassroots level. The project is being implemented by Helvetas Swiss Intercooperation in three high migration districts of Chattogram, Cumilla and Narsingdi in Bangladesh. The impact of the SIMS project is to improve the well-being of migrants, particularly marginalised men and women, through safer migration practices and strengthened service delivery from both public and private actors. In order to contribute to this impact, three main areas of change are required: 1) enhanced information and awareness of migrants and their families at home, 2) improved quality and enhanced outreach of service delivery to migrants and their families, and 3) greater resilience of migrants and family members through effective use of remittances. The project will reach out to 1'000'000 potential migrant workers or their family members with awareness campaign highlighting the importance and process of safe migration. Within this group, 100'000 potential migrant workers and their family members will be guided in taking an informed decision whether migration is the right choice for their particular situation, for instance by making a cost benefit analysis of their intended migration as part of pre-employment migrants. About 12'000 interested migrant workers will be encouraged and referred to undertake skills training through recognised training service providers. Finally, a minimum of 2'000 cases will be identified within this group or outside and provided with access to effective grievance redressal mechanism.

The SIMS project is built on the impact hypothesis that access to greater level of information and better quality of services on safe migration will support migrant workers and their families in making informed choices about migration as well as having a productive migration experience.

Switzerland supports the Phase I of the SIMS Project through a mandate agreement with Helvetas Swiss Intercooperation. The objective of the externally commissioned midterm review is to assess how the project is progressing, considering the context and reaffirming whether the current approach is fit for purpose or requires modifications to achieve the desired goal. The midterm review will cover the project progress from January 2020 to June 2022.

Methodology

A team of two consultants (one international and one national consultant) will carry out the midterm review. The international consultant will lead the assignment and have the overall responsibility for ensuring a thorough analysis of the data, quality of the report and submitting all deliverables. The national consultant will assist the international consultant with the data collection from the field, through interviews and document reviews, gathering all the country-specific contextual information and with the overall analysis and preparing of the deliverables.

Both consultants will be contracted by the Embassy of Switzerland in Bangladesh and will report to the Embassy directly. All reports and documents prepared, during the assignment, will be treated as the property of the Embassy of Switzerland in Bangladesh. The reports and/or documents or any part,

therefore, cannot be sold, used /shared and reproduced in any manner without prior approval of the Embassy of Switzerland in Bangladesh.

The assignment will be conducted through document reviews, virtual and in-person consultations and field visits. The national consultant will arrange the field visits, under the supervision of the international consultant and undertake all necessary precautions that are necessary under the COVID-19 pandemic context. The team of consultants will use qualitative and quantitative methods to gather relevant information to address the scope of work. Helvetas and local partners of SIMS project will assist the consultants to organise the in-person and virtual meetings for consultations, field visits and provide all relevant documents.

The midterm review should be guided by the OECD/DAC Criteria¹ for evaluations:

- **Relevance:** Identify the relevance of the SIMS project, in the current context of labour migration in Bangladesh, Swiss Cooperation Programme for Bangladesh 2022 – 25 and the 8th Five Year Plan of the Government of Bangladesh.
- **Coherence:** Assess the extent to which the intervention is compatible with interventions of other actors, projects in the country in the area of labour migration (complementarity and synergies) as well as with other Swiss funded projects
- **Effectiveness:** Assess to what extent the objectives of SIMS have been achieved or are likely to be achieved
- **Efficiency:** Critically review the project (i) structures and resources (management, monitoring, steering, coordination); (ii) systems and policies and (iii) monitoring system; and (iv) conduct an economic and financial analysis of the project, according to SDC's guidelines.
- **Impact:** What are the intended and unintended effects of SIMS interventions, including the effects on the beneficiaries and others?
- **Sustainability:** Assess to what extent the positive results will be continued beyond the end of the funding support

Scope of Work

The review will assess how the project is tracking against the defined outcomes in the current context, identify the key bottlenecks and challenges, provide recommendations for overcoming these challenges and document the key lessons learned that may be used to adjust and improve the implementation approach in the coming years. The review will provide concrete, actionable and operational recommendations for the remaining duration of the project. The scope of work includes, but is not limited to:

- A desk review of all project information to date, including the key documents such as the project document, all operational and financial progress reports, internal and external audit reports, and any analyses, guidelines, and studies
- Interviews with the SIMS team to collect information on project management and implementation aspects
- Interview with partner NGOs who are implementing the project at the grassroots levels including OKUP, RMMRU, Protyashi, BNWLA and WARBE
- Interview relevant personnel from the Ministry of Expatriates' Welfare and Overseas Employment, Bureau of Manpower Employment and Training, Chairperson of Project Advisory Committee, District Administration officials from the working districts of the project and Parliamentary Caucus on Migration and Development

¹ OECD/DAC Network on Development Evaluation: [Better Criteria for Better Evaluation. Revised Evaluation Criteria Definitions and Principles for Use \(2019\)](#)

- Interviews with the key stakeholders and other relevant actors to assess the degree to which the project has had the intended impact; and what could have been done differently or better, so that the lessons learned can be documented/actioned
- Interview of partners from Civil Society Organisations/Non-Government Organisations, UN agencies, who are implementing relevant interventions either directly or indirectly in collaboration with SIMS
- Interview of beneficiaries (potential migrants, families, returnees) supported for by the project
- Critically review the organisational strength and capacity of Helvetas Swiss Intercooperation to implement such a project, including recommendations on organisational rearrangement (and building on the Partner Risk Assessment done by SDC) if required
- Review the Gender Assessment done by the SIMS project and assess whether the recommendations made are relevant and appropriate for achieving the objectives of the project.
- Assess the current relationships with Ministry of Expatriates Welfare and Overseas Employment and analyse the coordination/relation with other projects implemented by other development partners (such as EU, IOM, ILO, UN Women, and other NGOs).
- Assess how the project operated during the pandemic (i.e. from January 2020 to Dec 2021) and if appropriate strategies were adopted to balance health concerns and project deliverables.
- Analyse how the project has coordinated with other projects in Bangladesh (included Swiss funded projects) in labour migration and identify areas to strengthen collaboration, especially for efficiency gains

Timeline

The assignment will be for a total of up to 39 days (22 days for the international and 17 days for the national consultant), within the timeframe of July 2022 to August 2022:

Tasks	Number of Input Days Allocated	
	International	National
Kick-off meeting (virtual) with the Embassy of Switzerland in Bangladesh	0.5 days	0.5 days
Preparatory tasks, development of the workplan and document review	3 days	2 days
Consultations and field visit	10 days	10 days
Debriefing with the Embassy of Switzerland in Bangladesh and project team (in-person)	0.5 days	0.5 days
Analysis and drafting the report	5 days	3 days
Revisions and submission of the final report	3 days	1 days
Total	22 days	17 days

Deliverables

- A virtual kick-off meeting with the Embassy of Switzerland in Bangladesh to discuss expectations and present the planned approach of the assignment;
- A detailed work plan including the key deliverables, joint work plan, including the methodology and processes to be undertaken;
- Tools and defined techniques to be used for primary information and data collection;
- Submission of the final report as specified in the scope of work, including up to at least two feedback loops

with revisions. The report should be a maximum of 20 pages (A4, Normal margin, Arial 11, single space) with an executive summary of a maximum of three pages, which reads as a standalone document. All other information should be annexed;

- The Assessment Grid of the DAC Criteria (Annex 1) must be completed and attached to the final report;
- List of persons interviewed, minutes of meetings, summary of the discussions in the focus group discussions, case studies, etc., must be annexed to the final report;
- Analysis of the LogFrame: extent to which objectives have been achieved, must be annexed to the final report;
- Presentation of the final report to the Embassy team that highlights key preliminary findings and recommendations. The MS PowerPoint slides must be annexed to the final report;
- Recommend additional and/or supporting analyses and follow up actions, if required; and
- Capturing of lessons learnt from the experiences of the project.

Profiles of the Team of Consultant(s)

International Consultant

- Minimum 8 years of relevant professional work experience on labour migration with a specific focus on community based interventions, referrals and access to justice;
- Demonstrate professional experience and skills in robust evaluation methodologies and in evaluating labour migration projects;
- Strong analytical skills, sound judgement, the capacity to think strategically, including the ability to produce high quality and strategic reports for development implementation;
- Good understanding of bilateral donor projects and management procedures relating to project cycle management;
- Demonstrate understanding of partnership modalities, institutional strengthening, multi sectoral partnership;
- Competency with gender, social inclusion and 'Leave no one behind (LNOB)' issues;
- Excellent analytical, research and writing skills;
- Knowledge of Switzerland's working principles and methods is highly desirable; and
- Knowledge of South Asia and/or Bangladesh development issues is highly desirable.

National Consultant

- Minimum 05 years of relevant professional work experience on labour migration and financial literacy in Bangladesh;
- Demonstrated professional experience and skills in evaluation methodologies;
- Understanding of partnership modalities and institutional strengthening;
- Understanding of the Government of Bangladesh, Ministry of Expatriates' Welfare and Overseas Employment, Bureau of Manpower, Employment and Training and local administration;
- Excellent computer literacy in MS Office programmes and organizing and facilitating virtual, in- person and hybrid meetings;
- Knowledge of the donor landscape on labour migration in Bangladesh; and
- Social competence including intercultural sensitivity and ability to work with varied stakeholders.

Application Procedure

Individual consultants are requested to apply with the following:

- Resume/CV
- An expression of interest, not more than three pages, confirming availability in July and August 2022 to undertake the review and daily consultancy fees in US dollars. This statement should include the relevant expertise and how the scope of work will be addressed
- A sample of project evaluation report conducted individually or in a team (with the agreement of the client).

The documents may be emailed to Nazia Haider, Programme Manager, Embassy of Switzerland in Bangladesh (nazia.haider@eda.admin.ch) by **Saturday, 30 April 2022**.

The Embassy's norms and criteria will apply for consultant's fees, and fees are reimbursable upon completion of the assignment. For local travel, the national and international consultants are expected to arrange and settle their own transportation costs, and these may be reimbursed upon presentation of the original bills only. Details of the budget will be part of the contract, based on final agreements between the Embassy of Switzerland in Bangladesh and the consultants.

Annex 2: Evaluation Matrix

Question / Sub-Question	Secondary Lines of Enquiry	Indicators	Data Sources	Method
Relevance: Identify the relevance of the SIMS project, in the current context of labour migration in Bangladesh, Swiss Cooperation Programme for Bangladesh 2022 – 25 and the 8th Five Year Plan of the Government of Bangladesh.				
Has the design of the project addressed the identified needs of key stakeholders?	Does the project align with the 8 th 5 year plan? Does it align with international normative frameworks? Does it support SDC's approach to migration?	Evidence of alignment with GoB policies, including 8 th 5-year plan, overseas employment and migration act, skill development policy. Examples of alignment with the SGDs, Colombo Process, and the GCM.	Project documentation Government Officials Potential migrants and their families Community leaders Project partners	Document review KIIs FGDs
Are the key needs still relevant in light of the COVID-19 pandemic?	How much has the context changed since the design of the project and has the project adapted to any changes?	Documented evidence of adaption to the COVID-19 pandemic Examples of ongoing re-view of stakeholder needs as the project has progressed.	Project documentation Government Officials Potential migrants and their families Helvetas staff Community leaders Project partners	Document review KIIs FGDs
Does the project meet the needs and priorities of different groups of stakeholders, particularly women migrants, and the most vulnerable and marginalised?	Does the project ensure gender responsiveness in the design of its activities? Are the recommendations of the gender assessment relevant for objectives of the project? Are other marginalised groups such as persons with disabilities	Evidence of project meeting priorities and needs of different groups of potential migrants and their families	Potential migrants and their families Potential women migrants Community leaders	FGDs

	considered in the design of project activities?			
Coherence: Assess the extent to which the intervention is compatible with interventions of other actors, projects in the country in the area of labour migration (complementarity and synergies) as well as with other Swiss funded projects				
How effectively has the project built on previous interventions (both those implemented by Helvetas and its partners, and projects implemented by other NGOs and UN agencies) and leveraged resources of other projects?	How effective is the communication with other partners implementing labour migration projects?	Examples of using lessons learned from previous interventions Evidence of utilisation of existing resources	Project documentation Partners such as ILO SDC staff Helvetas staff	Document review KIIs FGDs
How effective have been the development of partnerships with government duty bearers?	How are government agencies, relevant to the SIMS, are responding to the target population and/or project partners?	Examples of government duty bearers initiatives/policies/projects which support the project's objectives	Project documentation Government Officials Helvetas staff Community leaders Project partners	Document review KIIs
Effectiveness: Assess to what extent the objectives of SIMS have been achieved or are likely to be achieved				
Is implementation of the project in line with the original plan?	Where delays have occurred, what plans and mitigation strategies have been employed? Is progress even among the different implementing partners, and if not, why not? Will the project be able to make up for the losses that took place during the pandemic? What strategies need to be undertaken to make up for lost target?	Planned vs actual progress Evidence of workplan adaptation	Project documentation Helvetas staff Partner staff	Document review KIIs

What have been the strengths and weaknesses of SIMS?	Are there ways to mitigate any weaknesses?	Refer to data collected for other questions	Other evaluation data SWOT analyses	Document review KIIs FGDs
Do project outputs and outcomes to-date benefit/affect women and men differently?	If so, why and in which way?	Evidence of disaggregated data being collected and assessed Examples of different experiences of women and men	Project documentation Potential migrants and their families Community leaders	Document review KIIs FGDs
Are the theory of change and results framework logical? Are the indicators for measuring progress SMART?	Are any changes to the results framework or theory of change recommended? Is the new sampling plan sufficient to measure impact?	Existence of M&E plan Evidence indicators are understood and measured	Project documentation Helvetas Staff Partner Staff	Document review KIIs
Efficiency: Critically review the project (i) structures and resources (management, monitoring, steering, coordination); (ii) systems and policies and (iii) monitoring system; and (iv) conduct an economic and financial analysis of the project, according to SDC's guidelines.				
Are the necessary project structures in place to ensure smooth management and monitoring of the project?	Are the structures clearly understood by each partner? Is the context being sufficiently monitored?	Evidence of updated management plans, monitoring and oversight	Project documentation Helvetas Staff Partner Staff	Document review KIIs
How effective are the different implementation approaches of the project's partners in the areas of implementation?	What lessons can be learned from the different approaches?	Examples of different approaches being used and analysis of the effectiveness	Project documentation Helvetas Staff Partner Staff	Document review KIIs
Has the project been able to adapt to the COVID-19 pandemic efficiently?	What changes in project approaches were used? Is the project prepared for future surges/new variants?	Evidence of adaptive management being employed in the project	Project documentation Helvetas Staff Partner Staff	Document review KIIs
Is the project cost-effective?	Being conducted internally by SDC- to be annexed in the final report	How will the new targets (that are being proposed by SIMS and their partners) effect the efficiency of the project?		

Impact: What are the intended and unintended effects of SIMS interventions, including the effects on the beneficiaries and others?				
What initial evidence of impact/change can be seen for the targeted families and communities? Are their impacts on government duty bearers which can be identified?	Have the changes been put into practice yet or currently mainly attitudinal or knowledge based? Is there one particular outcome where impact is higher to date? Are the effects positive or negative?	Examples of changes in attitudes and knowledge Examples of these being put into practice Evidence of changes in the implementation of policy or guidelines	Government Officials Potential migrants and their families Community leaders	KIIs FGDs
Will the project be able to achieve its planned impact by the end of the project?	Link to question in efficiency on project progress			
Sustainability: To what extent will the positive results be continued beyond the end of the funding support?				
What level of ownership of the project can be identified among project stakeholders?	Are any changes in approach/policy by the government likely to be implemented? Will changes at the individual and family level be retained long-term? Have implementing and other project partners made plans for continuing the activities after the project ends? How have the formal (UP, UDC, etc.) and informal (migration forum, GMC) systems shown early sign of supporting for migrants' causes	Evidence plans or commitments made by the government duty bearers Existence of future plans by project partners Existence of an exit strategy	Government Officials Potential migrants and their families Community leaders Partner Staff Helvetas Staff	KIIs FGDs
Are there any changes which should be implemented to increase the likelihood of sustainability?	Refer to findings of previous question			

Annex 3: Assessment Grid for project/programme evaluations of the SDC interventions

Note: this assessment grid is used for evaluations of SDC financed projects and programmes (hereinafter jointly referred to as an 'intervention'). It is based on the OECD Development Assistance Committee evaluation criteria. In mid-term evaluations, the assessment requires analysing the likelihood of achieving impact and sustainability. All applicable sub-criteria should be scored and a short explanation should be provided.

Please add the corresponding number (0-4) representing your rating of the sub-criteria in the column 'score':

0 = not assessed

1 = highly satisfactory

2 = satisfactory

3 = unsatisfactory

4 = highly unsatisfactory

Key aspects based on DAC Criteria	Score (put only integers: 0, 1, 2, 3 or 4)	Justification (please provide a short explanation for your score or why a criterion was not assessed)
Relevance Note: the assessment here captures the relevance of objectives and design <i>at the time of evaluation</i> . In the evaluation report, both relevance at the design stage as well as relevance at the time of evaluation should be discussed.		
1. Has the design of the project addressed the identified needs of key stakeholders?	1	The project is designed to have a migrant centred approach and the service users of the project shared several examples of how the project meet their needs or addressed gaps in the current provision of services.

		The project also addresses identified gaps in local, district, and national level government capacities.
2. Are the key needs still relevant in light of the COVID-19 pandemic?	1	As the world moves towards learning to live with COVID-19 and it becomes more endemic than pandemic, the appetite for migration and the demand for migrant workers has returned to pre-pandemic levels. The needs of potential migrant workers, families left behind, and the duty bearers who provide services remain the same as prior to the pandemic.
3. Does the project meet the needs and priorities of different groups of stakeholders, particularly women migrants, and the most vulnerable and marginalised?	2	SIMS conducts specific outreach to certain vulnerable groups such as the Char community and the rural poor. The project has also conducted a Gender and Social Equity Analysis which has made several recommendations to improve the gender responsiveness of the intervention. Currently the two of the main services for local community members, the FinLit training and PDMO, do not address differences in gendered experiences or needs, and adjusting them accordingly could improve the gender responsiveness of the action. The action also does not address barriers faced by persons with disabilities.
Coherence		
4. How effectively has the project built on previous interventions (both those implemented by Helvetas and its partners, and projects implemented by other NGOs and UN agencies) and leveraged resources of other projects?	1	The project has utilised both the past and current interventions of the project partners effectively, both through connecting with them and leveraging the relationships and resources they have developed in the local community. The project has also built on the successes of other projects such as the PROKAS project, and partnered with existing projects, including SKILLS 21 and Ashshash.
5. How effective have been the development of partnerships with government duty bearers?	2	The project has developed good relationships at the national and the local level. However, due to the (justified) decision to not conduct training with the local duty bearers until after the elections in 2021, the interaction is in its early days and thus difficult to assign a higher score than satisfactory to.
Effectiveness		

6. Is implementation of the project in line with the original plan?	2	The project has experienced delays, mainly due to the COVID-19 pandemic and the procurement process for local partners. As such, some of the targets will need to be revisited. The project is proceeding according to plan with the types of interventions, it is just the numbers are somewhat behind what they would need to be to ensure complete achievement of original targets by the end of the project.
7. What have been the strengths and weaknesses of SIMS?	0	While the strengths of the project outweigh the weaknesses, this is not a question which lends itself to scoring.
8. Do project outputs and out-comes to date benefit/affect women and men differently?	2	Migration is quite a gendered phenomenon in Bangladesh, with a large majority of migrant workers being male. This is reflected in the disaggregated numbers the project is reaching. Additionally, the project almost exclusively reaches women for the FinLit training. However, the project could look into strategies to make it more gender responsive, such as adapting the PDMO training for specific groups, such as migrant domestic workers, and adjusting the time and modality of the FinLit training to better suit men left behind when their wives migrate.
9. Are the theory of change and results framework logical? Are the indicators for measuring progress SMART?	1	The theory of change and results framework follow logical pathways for achieving the planned outcomes. The majority of indicators are SMART, although reflection on what constitutes the completion of training for PDMO and FinLit needs to be undertaken by Helvetas and SDC.
Efficiency		
10. Are the necessary project structures in place to ensure smooth management and monitoring of the project?	1	Communication between Helvetas and the project partners is excellent. All parties seem to be aware of their responsibilities in reporting. A M&E database has been set up which tracks participant numbers and other indicators on a regular basis and can be reviewed and amended by key authorized project personnel.
11. How effective are the different implementation ap-	0	The MTR was unable to identify significant differences between the project partners and in face a recommendation is

proaches of the project's partners in the areas of implementation?		to allow more flexibility for different approaches to encourage more learning on the best modalities to use.
12. Has the project been able to adapt to the COVID-19 pandemic efficiently?	1	The project utilised the lockdown periods (as well as the time needed to procure the partners) to develop technical guidance and manuals. Remote trainings were also conducted although not considered as effective as face to face. The use of COVID-19 relief provided supported to families left behind of migrant workers who had lost jobs or limited hours abroad but were not eligible for support in Bangladesh. The relief also provided a key entry point for project partners with local leaders. The major challenge the project faces linked to the pandemic is the targets were optimistic even without the delays the pandemic has caused, and will now need to be adjusted to ensure the quality of the product remains at a high level.
13. Is the project cost-effective?	0	This is being assessed in a different study by SDC.
Impact		
14. What initial evidence of impact/change can be seen for the targeted families and communities? Are there impacts on government duty bearers which can be identified?	1	There is good evidence of impact on the services users, including FinLit graduates changing their household budgeting and spending habits, as well as setting up new income generating opportunities, and PDMO graduates re-evaluating their decision to migrate based on a cost-benefit analysis. Impact on government duty bearers is less advanced, which is partly linked to the delays in engaging them due to the local government elections in 2021. The enthusiasm for the project and requests for more support and training to a broader group of local government officials is encouraging. There has been some progress in engaging the BMET in moving forward on access to justice cases, but this remains a long-term challenge linked to available resources of the government.

15. Will the project be able to achieve its planned impact by the end of the project?	2	Most of the outcome indicators demonstrating the planned impact should be achievable by the end of the project. However, there are a few areas of concern, most notably the referrals for skill training and the subsequent impact from those, as well as how quickly the government will move in the policy and process changes the project is targeting.
Sustainability		
16. What level of ownership of the project can be identified among project stakeholders?	2	Sustainability among service users should be strong in terms of knowledge retention and also based on testimony that stakeholders are disseminating the information they learn to others in their community. Sustainability among local governance structures is less clear. While there was strong enthusiasm for the project for local leaders, which suggests a good level of ownership, it is not yet clear if the necessary level of knowledge and skill in issues such as mediation can be achieved, and the limited resources available at the district level of governance, make institutionalising changes more difficult.
17. Are there any changes which should be implemented to increase the likelihood of sustainability?	0	As a question linked to recommendations, this isn't a question which can be scored on this scale.

Title of the intervention: Strengthened and Informative Migration Systems (SIMS) Project

Assessor(s): Chris Morris

Date: ...03 October, 2022

Signature:

Annex 4: Evaluation Schedule – REMOVED DUE TO MENTION OF NAMES

Annex 5: List of documents consulted

Project Documents

- PRODOC
- Results Framework
- SIMS Budget
- Annual Narrative Reports 2020 and 2021
- Semi-Annual Reports 2020 and 2021
- SIMS Baseline
- Knowledge Management and Learning (KML) Strategy
- Annual Plans of Operation 2020, 2021, & 2022
- Gender and Social Equity Analysis of SIMS Project Documents
- Various training manuals produced for all three outcomes of the project

International Frameworks and Reports

- Global Compact for Safe, Orderly, and Regular Migration
- Asia-Pacific Regional Review of Implementation of the Global Compact for Safe, Orderly and Regular Migration. An Analysis of its Main Findings and Recommendations
- The Sustainable Development Goals: <https://sdgs.un.org/goals>
- Jeevan Baniya, Prajesh Aryal and Amit Gautam (2022). Assessment of GCM Implementation in Bangladesh, India, Nepal, Pakistan, and Sri Lanka. SARTUC. <https://www.sartuc.org/issue/migration/>
- Bangladesh Planning Commission (2020). '8th Five Year Plan- Promoting Prosperity and Fostering Inclusiveness'

Annex 6: SWOT Analyses

Helvetas Swot Analysis

Strengths	Weaknesses
Migrant centred approach- puts the migrants into the centre of the activities- SIMS tries to work through the migration cycle. Work on a rights based approach- rights holders and duty bearers. Very good partners- leaders in the migration sector in Bangladesh- mix of grass root and national advocacy links and women focused Good team work- both the colleagues and partners Good rapport with the stakeholders and trust from the community Synergies with other projects (ILO and others) Working in the community on remittances and safe migration- relevant topics, welcomed by the government Demand is present from the local government Seeing mindset changes after the PDMO on decision to migrate Good set up in the field Links between the thematic areas Helvetas has good experience in different sectors- skills, financial market analysis etc Used the COVID lockdown to ensure a sound and quality preparation for most of the component- did hybrid training modality Follow a participatory approach- good community feedback	COVID- SIMS started when COVID started- grassroots implementation quite affected- have to reach the targets in 2 and a half rather than 4 years. Real challenge was training for partners in online mode with new partners who don't know each other. Targets weren't shaped to include an inception period Distance between Upazilas and Unions Challenges and threats in the local community The referral approach needs funding, project resources etc- target of 25,000, of which 8,000 will receive training- without budget line Demand side- is the skill training valued by the beneficiaries? Supply side- do the TTCs and training institutes have the capacity to provide the year-round skill training- individuals in an Upazila need to travel a long distance for training. Don't have staff who can directly deal with advocacy Gender work in terms of systematic change Limitation in some of the areas in women's participation (PDMO)
Opportunities	Threats
Development of partnerships which go beyond the project. Synergies with other projects Online platform and advocacy linkage Gender disaggregated data Government provides PDO video- SIMS have the opportunity to contribute for PDO trainers	Need to be aware of the partners capacity in governance and project management Elections- all activities are put on hold- in 2023 there is a parliamentary election Push to meet targets may led to a loss in quality- potentially loss in follow up support. Trade off between reaching targets, number of staff and the quality

Local services providers come from the local area- strengthens their capacity for future services Will be important that SIMS expands in advocacy (beyond channelling data to ILO)- needs to work to promote civil society advocacy Sustainability of the GMCs on the ground- what is the best modality?	Sustainability of the GMCs on the ground what is the best modality?
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SWOT Analysis OKUP

Strengths	Weaknesses
Good cooperation and technical support from partners Comprehensive approach-migration cycle- effective for family and MWs-3 components Systematic approach with TTC/DEMO Good sharing with the 4 implementing partners- QPM A2J component is exclusive (unique)- free cost and easily accessible The training modules and capacity building of partners is structured Good community response Good information flow (dissemination mechanism)- (large number of PDMOs) Working to include marginalised people-(chars and disadvantage beneficiaries) Strong acceptance of finlit in the community- 18 sessions and long term approach Skill training referral- is good for the community Big outreach; multi-channels Working with national level actors- strong project advisory committee Community acceptance of OKUP	Too larger number of MWs Budget constraints in some of the activities due to price hikes Workload of the field staff High targets vs staff vs quality of follow up and mentoring 5 unions- 4 community mobilisers No direct assistance (health, counselling) for returnees A2J- huge, different demand from beneficiaries, 2 districts (192 cases, GMC training, quarterly meetings)- need a PO A2J Lack of multi-media for PDMO sessions (videos etc) Slow case follow up Impact of job fair was limited (only 8 people were placed in jobs)
Opportunities	Threats
Huge number of migrant workers PAC- advice from experts OKUP has other projects- opportunities for synergies with other project- eg in SIMS there is no opportunity for health support- last year	Price hikes Where there is no local office, lack of trust in community Loss of trust of community when there is slow case follow up

they referred 10 beneficiaries for health support from their other project. More referrals to the UZ and District level departments for skill training Advocacy with the govt on rules around BMET card and improved services by WEWB Leaflet/summary on laws regulation to better sensitise sub-agents Learn from each other on the different strengths of the partners	Referrals made to some departments and then being told there is no service available at that time- reduces trust and motivation BMET position on needing a card to access services (challenging for people who migrated before 2008) Due to lack of documents, many times they can't submit cases to the various government agencies Sub-agents are not willing to discuss law related issues National elections in 2023- political clashes COVID and other pandemic
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RMMRU SWOT

Strengths	Weaknesses
Community support- awareness in the community Access to justice component- good trust in the community Good team Changes for the Fin Lit graduates Sub-agents trust them Smooth to implement People get lots of information which they didn't necessarily know before. Giving lots of services to the community- free of cost Working for the community People are more interested to learn about safe migration Have also managed to include the women beneficiaries Interventions connect with the community well, Local government officials are engaged in the project	Not enough space in the FinLit training to meet demand Distance between the project locations Workload is a challenge/Low staff Difficult to confirm loan from the Government migrant bank to the workers The travel cost the project pays to the beneficiaries to attend the training is very low- 200tk for two days Not working in all of the Upazila- UZ chairman asking why Challenging to involve the sub-agent in the training COVID-19- lots of people are returning due to COVID and different services are needed Complicated intervention and huge targets Budget and staffing is low Documentation gap of victims is a challenge for access to justice Continuous intervention is required- sustainability is a challenge We are giving information to the community but people want direct services After FinLit training, people want specific training on certain issues to be an entrepreneur. Access to justice victims don't get results on time

Opportunities	Threats
Getting the returnees involved in entrepreneurship training Increase the project area Participants are very interested to start businesses Increased community interest Create an effective cell at BMET- for case follow up Can make MOU with TTC and other training centres to give opportunities to the PDMO graduates Skills training Create helpdesks for migrant families at local police station Include more returnees to give information to the potential migrants in future	Sub-agents are powerful- they may feel threatened and may threaten the project staff Sub-agents may use the name of the project to fulfill their own agenda COVID-19 and other pandemics Natural disasters Some UZ chairmen work as sub-agents Dealing with LGI can provoke political issues Election in 2023- will be difficult to work in the field Price hike of the different products Unsolved cases from BMET- if not solved, they may lose the trust Lack of immediate results Referral linkage- not able to refer people to the TTC due to their limited seat capacity Female workers face challenges in the country of destination- may reduce female migration. Local leaders may hijack courtyard sessions and other info events for their political campaigns Turnover of local government staff Last few batches won't have as much follow up

RMMRU SWOT

Strengths	Weaknesses
Community support- awareness in the community Access to justice component- good trust in the community Good team Changes for the Fin Lit graduates Sub-agents trust them Smooth to implement People get lots of information which they didn't necessarily know before.	Not enough space in the FinLit training to meet demand Distance between the project locations Workload is a challenge/Low staff Difficult to confirm loan from the Government migrant bank to the workers The travel cost the project pays to the beneficiaries to attend the training is very low- 200tk for two days Not working in all of the Upazila- UZ chairman asking why

Giving lots of services to the community- free of cost Working for the community People are more interested to learn about safe migration Have also managed to include the women beneficiaries Interventions connect with the community well, Local government officials are engaged in the project	Challenging to involve the sub-agent in the training COVID-19- lots of people are returning due to COVID and different services are needed Complicated intervention and huge targets Budget and staffing is low Documentation gap of victims is a challenge for access to justice Continuous intervention is required- sustainability is a challenge We are giving information to the community but people want direct services After FinLit training, people want specific training on certain issues to be an entrepreneur. Access to justice victims don't get results on time
Opportunities Getting the returnees involved in entrepreneurship training Increase the project area Participants are very interested to start businesses Increased community interest Create an effective cell at BMET- for case follow up Can make MOU with TTC and other training centres to give opportunities to the PDMO graduates Skills training Create helpdesks for migrant families at local police station Include more returnees to give information to the potential migrants in future	Threats Sub-agents are powerful- they may feel threatened and may threaten the project staff Sub-agents may use the name of the project to fulfill their own agenda COVID-19 and other pandemics Natural disasters Some UZ chairmen work as sub-agents Dealing with LGI can provoke political issues Election in 2023- will be difficult to work in the field Price hike of the different products Unsolved cases from BMET- if not solved, they may lose the trust Lack of immediate results Referral linkage- not able to refer people to the TTC due to their limited seat capacity Female workers face challenges in the country of destination- may reduce female migration. Local leaders may hijack courtyard sessions and other info events for their political campaigns Turnover of local government staff Last few batches won't have as much follow up

Annex 7: Example Interview Guides

FGD Guide for Financial Literacy Training Recipients

Number of Participants

Women	Men

Informed consent:

My name is _____. We're here today because Helvetas and (insert name of relevant implementing partner) conducting an evaluation of its SIMS project to understand how effective the project is in helping individuals and families in Bangladesh considering migration options. We are also speaking with people who received services through the project in various other communities in Bangladesh as well as other stakeholders who have participated in the project.

Nothing you say will be attributed personally to you, we'll anonymize the findings. Your answers will only be identifiable by the evaluators and your identity and privacy will be protected. Your name will not appear in any reports. If you say something and then later decide you don't want that recorded, then please speak to me after the meeting and I will ensure it is crossed out from the notes. Nothing you say will impact on any future services you may receive from the project or any of the implementing partners.

Are you happy to continue?

Rules:

There are a few ground rules we should follow:

- Please respect everyone else's confidentiality. For example if 'Sharmin' says something, please don't tell people outside of the room what 'Sharmin' said.
- Please put phones on silent and if you need to take a call, go outside the room.
- Please respect everyone's contribution. There is no wrong answer to a question. We want to hear the different experiences of everyone.
- Please don't interrupt someone when they are speaking. Let them finish and then speak.
- (For FGDs being interpreted into English)- Please remember the interpreter has to interpret what you say so try to speak 2-3 sentences, let them translate it, and then carry on. This will ensure that they can accurately reflect to me what you have said.

(similar context introductions are included with every guide, but for the purposes of space in the inception report, are not included in the other guides)

Questions

1. Can you all briefly introduce yourselves- who you are, who is in your family, how many children you have etc? Who in your family has migrated (or is planning to)?
2. Why did your family member decide to migrate?

3. What sessions have you attended?
4. What are the key messages you have learned from the training?
5. Why did you attend the sessions?
6. How satisfied have you been with the training and support you have received
7. What are the key challenges you face with financial management?
8. What impact has the COVID-19 pandemic had on you and your family?
9. Have the sessions helped address these challenges?
10. Thinking about how you manage your financial planning now and how you managed it prior to the training, can you give examples of the changes you have implemented as a result? Are there specific stories you would be able to share? (if there are specific individuals which have interesting stories which could be used as a small case study/example, they can be asked to stay at the end to give more detail on the example)
11. Are there any recommendations you have for the future for the trainers for these sessions?

FGD Guide for PDMO Graduates

Questions

1. Can you all briefly introduce yourselves- who you are, who is in your family, how many children you have etc? Who in your family has migrated or is planning to?
2. What are the reasons you have for considering migration?
3. What are the key challenges in getting information about migration?
4. What sessions have you attended?
5. What are the key messages you have learned from the training?
6. Had you heard this information before? Was there any new information you heard?
7. How satisfied with the information you received?
8. Did the PDMO led to you changing your decision about anything (decision to migrate, timing of migration, using a sub-agent, obtaining new skills etc)?
9. What would make women more likely to attend the PDMO sessions? Would a women only group be helpful in ensuring more women come?
10. What impact has the COVID-19 pandemic had on you and your family?
11. Are there any recommendations you have for the future for the trainers for these sessions?

FGD Guide for Migration Forum Members

Questions

1. Can you all briefly introduce yourselves- who you are, who is in your family, how many children you have etc? Who in your family has migrated or is planning to?
2. What is the role of the migrant forum?
3. When was the migrant forum set up?
4. What the key challenges migrants face?
5. Do men and women face different challenges during migration? If so what are the differences?
6. Has the COVID-19 pandemic affected these challenges?
7. How does the migrant forum address the challenges?
8. What training/support have you received from the project?
9. What did you learn from the training?
10. Had you heard this information before? Was there any new information you heard?
11. How satisfied with the information you received?
12. Can you think of examples of change you have seen among community members concerning migration since the project started? Please give specific details.
13. Have plans do you have the Migration Forum in the next few months? What activities will you undertake?
14. Have you developed plans for continuing the Migration Forum after the project ends?
15. Are there any recommendations you have for Helvetas and their project partners?

FGD Guide for Case Management Legal Cases

1. Can you all briefly introduce yourselves- who you are, who is in your family, how many children you have etc? Who in your family or is planning to?
2. Could you explain your case? What happened, why you wanted to seek legal redress or mediation etc?
3. How did you learn about the support given by Helvetas/local partner/BNLWA?
4. What support have they given you? Explain what steps you had to take and which parts you were given support with
5. Were you aware of the steps you needed to take prior to being given this support? If so, what was the barrier to taking these steps?
6. Were you aware of your rights (with regards to recruitment, pay, working conditions etc) before?
7. Have you had a satisfaction conclusion to your case? If yes, how was it resolved? If no, is it still ongoing and if so what progress has been made? If it is finished and you weren't happy with the outcome, why not?
8. Are there are negative experiences from the counselling or the process you followed afterwards.
9. What difference has the resolution of/progress in the case made to you and your family?
10. Do you have recommendations for Helvetas, BNWLA, and ?? (the relevant partner)

Focus Group Discussion Guide for Sub-Agents: Recruitment

Questions

1. Can you all briefly introduce yourselves?
2. Please explain your job
3. What involvement have you had with the project? (what training/discussions etc have you attended)
4. What are the main challenges you face in your work?
5. What are the main challenges which migrants face?
6. Do men and women face different challenges during migration? If so what are the differences?
7. What have you learnt from your participation in the project?
8. Can you give some practical examples of how you have applied this learning in your day-to-day work?
9. How do you think sub-agents are able to be positive change makers to help migrants address the challenges they face?
10. What interaction and support do you get from government officials and offices? Has this changed at all since the project started?
11. Do you have any recommendations for Helvetas and ??? (add in name of MNGO depending on location)

Focus Group Discussion Guide for GMC Members

Questions

1. Can you all briefly introduce yourselves?
2. Can you explain the purpose and remit of the GMC?
3. What are the cases which the GMC can address?
4. What are the main challenges which migrant workers face with regards to access to justice?
5. Do men and women face different challenges during migration? If so what are the differences?
6. Has the COVID-19 pandemic had an impact on these challenges?
7. What training has been provided to you by the project?
8. What did you learn from the training? How much of the training covered information you already were aware of?
9. Can you give practical examples of anyway in which you have been able to utilise the training in the operations of the GMC?
10. Do you have plans for continuing the work of the GMC after the project?
11. Do you have any recommendations for Helvetas, BNWLA and ??? (add in name of MNGO depending on location)

Interview/Focus Group Discussion Guide for DEMO

1. Can you all briefly introduce yourselves?
2. Can you explain the purpose and remit of DEMO?
3. How have you been involved in the project to date? What training have you been part of, what activities have you been involved in?
4. What are the key needs of migrants in your area? How does DEMO respond to these needs?
5. Do men and women face different challenges during migration? If so what are the differences?

Access to Justice:

6. How does the referral mechanism for grievance cases work?
7. What sort of challenges still exist for migrants trying to access justice?
8. How can these be overcome?

General:

9. How has the COVID-19 pandemic affected your work? How have you adapted to it? Has Helvetas and the partners provided the necessary support?
10. Are you happy with the interaction with Helvetas and the local partner (insert name)? Are there any improvements you would like to see?
11. In general, do you have any recommendations for Helvetas and the local partner (insert name)?

Interview/Focus Group Discussion Guide for TTC

1. Can you all briefly introduce yourselves?
2. Can you explain the purpose and remit of the TTC?
3. What type of training do you offer?
4. How have you been involved in the project to date? What training have you been part of, what activities have you been involved in?
5. What are the main training needs of migrants (and potential) in your area? How does the TTC respond to these needs?
6. Do women and men have different training needs?
7. How does the referral process for potential migrant trainees work?
8. What are the main challenges migrants face regarding accessing relevant skills training?
9. Has the project helped you support migrants to overcome these?
10. How has the project supported the PDO sessions to date?
11. Does the project align with the policies of the Government of Bangladesh regarding skills training? If so which ones?
12. How has the COVID-19 pandemic affected your work? How have you adapted to it? Has Helvetas and the partners provided the necessary support?
13. Are you happy with the interaction with Helvetas and the local partner (insert name)? Are there any improvements you would like to see?
14. In general, do you have any recommendations for Helvetas and the local partner (insert name)?

FGD Guide for Partner Project Teams

Purpose of the Workshop:

- Understand impressions of the partner staff on the strengths and weakness of the SIMS project.
- Identify initial thoughts as to the changes in individuals and communities which the SIMS project is contributing too.
- Understand how the implementation of the particular partner works
- Understand if COVID-19 has had an impact on the project

Questions:

Question	Method	Purpose
What are the key strengths and weaknesses of the project?	Conduct a SWOT analysis	Initial understanding of partners staff opinion of the project
What are the key objectives of the SIMS project	Group discussions	Understand how well the partner staff agree on the ToC and project objectives
What are the key challenges facing migrants?	Initial group brainstorm on the most likely changes (prompt beyond the three themes is necessary-eg does the obtaining of documents have additional impacts and what are these)? For each of the following questions, break into groups to get discussion and then have the groups present. Groups could be per location. If there are significant differences then have the overall group vote on the most significant	Get an understanding of what partner staff consider to be the challenges facing migrants and the major changes the project contributes to.
Are their any changes in individual and communities attributable to the project in since it began?		
Are their any significant changes in government officials and institutions attributable to the project in since it began?		
Have there been any negative changes as a result of the project?		
How is the work structured? Who does what, who monitors progress, who interacts with the government etc?	Group discussion	Understand different approaches from different partners.
What impact has COVID-19 had on the project? How have you responded to this?	Group discussion	Understand how the individual partners have reacted.

Agenda for End of Mission Debrief

1. Presentation of the key findings and feedback (30 mins)
2. Review of theory of change, results framework and assumptions in light of the findings presentation (1 hour)
3. Feedback and discussion on the more strategic recommendations (30 mins)
4. Feedback and discussion on the operational/ technical recommendations (45 minutes)

Annex 7: Draft Economic and Financial Analysis

The EFA was conducted by SIMS. It was not part of the evaluation conducted by the evaluation team. The draft of the analysis is included here for reference.

EFA – Economic and Financial Analysis

Socio-economic benefit of SIMS interventions

October 2022

Apart from the financial benefits from SIMS interventions, individual beneficiaries and communities are expected to get additional socio-economic benefits. These benefits can be summarised as follows:

Choosing reliable agencies reduces risks

It is observed that along with PDMO (pre-decision making orientation) training, awareness raising activities help aspirant migrants to look for trustworthy recruiting agencies. This significantly reduces the likelihood of becoming victims of fraud or trafficking. It also increases their chances to secure payments as per their employment contract. Having a stable salary also helps migrants to remit back to their families, with direct benefits for the families left behind, thus in turn also supporting their communities and the rural economy. It also relieves migrants and their families from possible mental stress that may affect victims of fraudulent practices of untrustworthy (sub)agents.

Obtaining contract paper ahead of departure

It is common practice that departing migrants receive their employment contract only at the eleventh hour – i.e., at the airport before departure. This forces them to sign papers without understanding their content, which may put them at risk in the country of destination. SIMS interventions provide aspirant migrants with advice to ask for contract paper beforehand. This empowers them to be aware about the job, and most importantly, to know their entitlements, e.g., health benefit, working hours or overtime payment.

Keeping evidence of financial transaction

Another common practice is that aspirant migrants pay sub-agent for their services without asking or receiving a service contract, or even a receipt of their payment. SIMS is raising the awareness of aspirant migrants about the possible negative consequences of this practice. As a consequence they now ask for a receipt or even transfer the money through bank. This contributes to reducing fraudulent practices and empowers them to recover the money in case of any failure or fraudulence.

Cost-benefit analysis benefitting migrants and their family

In the PDMO training aspirant migrants learn about cost-benefit analysis that helps them taking a better informed decision. In the training session, they analyse their strengths and weaknesses, opportunities and threats of migrating, and estimate costs of migration vs possible benefits in a given migration period. Using the tools provided during the PDMO trainings, aspirant migrants thus analyse costs and benefits of migration for the first time in a comprehensive way. Based on the results of this analysis, some have changed their mind and have decided to remain in the country and pursue alternative career paths (e.g. starting a business), or have decided to receive

a skills training before starting the migration process, thus investing in a potentially more lucrative prospects as migrants.

Migrants' Forum – a local support group for aspirant and returnee migrants

Migrants' Forum (MF) / Migrants' Rights Protection Committee (MRPC) have been formed at the community level with the support of SIMS. They support aspirant and returnee migrants to communicate with the District Employment and Manpower Office (DEMO), PKB (Migrants' Welfare Bank), Local Government Institutions (LGI), Technical Training Centre (TTC) and other relevant service providers that help secure government services.

Union Parishad (UP) showed proactive support to migrants

Six Union *Parishad* (Council) allocated budgets with a total of BDT 230,000 for the Fiscal Year 2022-23 to undertake initiatives for disseminating safe migration information in the community. SIMS interventions have contributed to bring this change which is indicating a sustainable local solution for promoting safer migration.

Remittance transfer using formal channel helps migrants and the country

SIMS encourages aspirant migrants and left behind family members to use official banking channels to send remittances back to Bangladesh. This has two main benefits: 1) it ensures safety of transfer of their money; and 2) it helps the country's economy, in terms of foreign currency reserve.

Supporting victims in getting legal remedy

With the assistance of legal aid partners, SIMS is facilitating a process through which victims (migrants and/or their families) can ask for remedy of their grievances. This has multiple benefits: it helps individuals getting money back from subagents in case of fraudulence; such cases set a precedence and help raising the awareness among all stakeholders of the existence of these remedy mechanisms; they create a sense of justice in the community; and lastly, they should induce subagents to refrain from fraudulent practices. Ultimately it should thus help to reduce the number of victims and thus the number of cases.