



Theory of Sustained Change Guidebook for ILAB's Worker Rights Programs

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DATAELEVATES

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ACRONYM LIST

CAMEL	Complexity-Aware Monitoring, Evaluation, and Learning
DOL	Department of Labor
DRF	Data Reporting Form
FOA	Funding Opportunity Announcement
ILAB	Bureau of International Labor Affairs
ILO	International Labor Organization
LP	Leverage Point
MEL	Monitoring, Evaluation and Learning
OCFT	Office of Child Labor, Forced Labor, and Human Trafficking
OTLA	Office of Trade and Labor Affairs
PMP	Performance Monitoring Plan
SDG	Sustainable Development Goal
SFWI	Safe Farm Workers Initiative
SOIRS	Standard Outcome Indicator Reference Sheet
TOC	Theory of Change
TOsC	Theory of Sustained Change
TPR	Technical Progress Report

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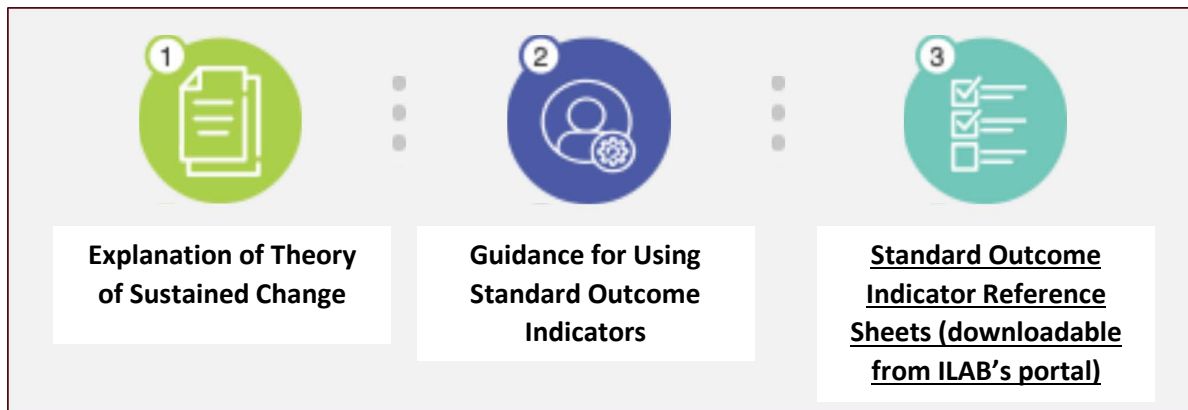


Theory of Sustained Change Guidebook for ILAB's Worker Rights Programs

INTRODUCTION

This guidebook provides an overview of the Theory of Sustained Change (TOSc), standard outcome domains, and indicators developed by the U.S. Department of Labor's (DOL) Bureau of International Labor Affairs/Office of Trade and Labor Affairs (ILAB/OTLA) for its worker rights programming. The document also includes guidance on how grantees and grant applicants can map their project outcomes to the ILAB TOSc; link their project indicators to the appropriate standard outcome indicators; set targets, analyze, and measure results; and report on and use these indicators for collaboration, learning and adaptation to advance worker rights. In **Figure 1**, we present an overview of the guidebook components.

Figure 1. Guidebook overview



Throughout the guidebook, a hypothetical example project is presented, *Safe Farm Workers Initiative (SFWI)*, to show how projects fit within the TOSc for ILAB labor rights programs and how they can use the standard outcome indicators. The background to *SFWI* is described in the box on the following page.



SAFE FARM WORKERS INITIATIVE

BACKGROUND

The country of Otlandia has a thriving agriculture industry that employs about half a million people, including a large population of migrant workers. However, labor and safety standards in the agriculture industry fell during the COVID-19 pandemic as workers were willing to accept worse working conditions given the poor economy and high unemployment rate. The government of Otlandia also provides few legal protections for collective bargaining, making it difficult for workers to demand better working conditions. Workers worked long hours, were paid low wages, and worked under inadequate safety standards. The key issues ILAB aims to address with a new project are:

- Decreased worker demand for safe working conditions; and
- Weak linkages/networks among agriculture workers.

ILAB issued a funding opportunity announcement (FOA) to address these issues through a new 4.5-year project.

Safe Farm Workers Initiative (SFWI) responded to the FOA and was awarded funding. In their proposal, *SFWI* detailed plans to implement activities aimed at increasing worker demand for safe working conditions and strengthening workers' networks.

Figure 2. Example of Actors in a Project System

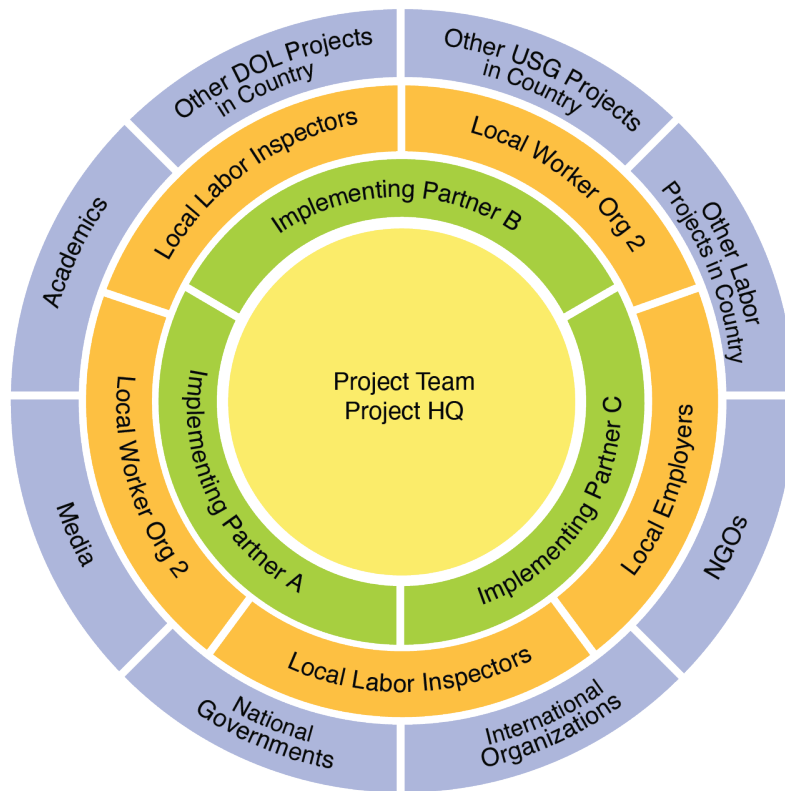


Figure 2 above represents a simplification of an elaborate system in which a worker’s rights project is implemented. The model locates the project team and its headquarters at the center, surrounded by rings of actors –3 in this case– according to their level of interaction with the core team, and the influence the project exerts on them. Normally, the implementing partners or sub-grantees are located in the closest ring as they directly receive resources and guidelines on activities and outputs. In the next level of interaction and influence, we find actors with which the implementing partners engage more directly than the project, including local worker organizations and employers, as well as local labor officials and inspectors. One level more distant from the project team and headquarters, the model shows actors that do not engage directly with the project or its implementing partners, but who are influenced by the project’s results, such as larger nonprofits in the labor sector, federal or national government agencies, the media, academia, other ILAB- and USG-funded projects in the country, and other international organizations.

APPLYING COMPLEXITY-AWARE AND SYSTEMS APPROACHES

Key Terms

Project Complexity	Set of conditions in a project in which uncertainty is high and the level of agreement about problems, goals and tactics is low. In such circumstances, decision-making requires awareness about the context, the changing dynamics within and surrounding the project, as well as the values and perspectives of relevant actors about the project.
System	An organized and interconnected group of interdependent actors and factors, both formal and informal, that work toward a common purpose. Many actors can influence the entire system towards systems change (e.g., changing actors' behaviors, changing power dynamics, etc.).
System Boundary	Separates the system from other systems and the rest of the external context. Although systems may overlap and system boundaries may not always be clear, a project using a systems approach will define the relevant system boundaries to differentiate what is deemed relevant for achieving results and what is not. This includes determining which interrelationships matter the most.

In complexity, when cause-and-effect relationships do not repeat, program planners and implementers cannot predict how their interventions may affect the context. Complexity may. Complexity is likely to be perceived in specific aspects or components of a project, while other components of the project behave in more predictable ways. Overall, complexity is present when both certainty and predictability are low, and their scarcity cause and effect relationships in the project theory of change.

Labor rights programs may experience complexity in a number of ways. Four core systems thinking concepts can help practitioners identify the elements of their projects that are sensitive to complexity.

- Project is subject to influence by **contextual factors**.
- Project is likely to contribute to **emergent or unpredictable outcomes**.
- Stakeholders bring **diverse perspectives**; goals and strategies are contested; consensus is impractical.
- The pace of **change is dynamic**; changes in the context lead to new opportunities and/or needs.

Examples of elements sensitive to complexity include: challenges to sustaining internal democratic practices at workplaces and worker organizations in the face of overt, violent oppression and geographic displacement; legislative and court decisions that preclude unauthorized migrant workers' rights to backpay in cases of labor law violations; and large and punctuated migration flows into non-border communities of project implementation, like those experienced since 2021 in large northern cities in the United States.

Systems thinking seeks to understand how systems behave, interact with their environment, and influence each other. ILAB projects often adopt a systems approach, which means:

- Seeking to understand how systems behave, interact with their environment, and influence each other.

- Looking at situations from a holistic view (i.e., seeing the whole system, including the context, dynamics and relationships associated with the system).
- Recognizing the uncertainty and complexity of systems and being flexible to change.
- Acknowledging that different groups have different perspectives on the system, which are valid and may impact the project's outcomes.

The role of a donor-funded project or activity in a systems approach is to facilitate and strengthen the assets and relationships that already exist in the local system. Projects can promote sustainability by strengthening the system's ability to produce results and its ability to be both resilient and adaptive in the face of changing circumstances.¹

Complexity-aware approaches, as described in the box below, consider the complexity of the systems projects operate in and affect. ILAB encourages grantees to consider how they can integrate a systems approach and complexity-aware principles (as described below) into their monitoring and evaluation processes. Throughout the guidebook, we note opportunities for grantees to use complexity-aware monitoring, evaluation, and learning (CAMEL).

¹ See [USAID's Engaging Local Systems Framework](#) for further information.

Together, Theory-Based MEL and CAMEL Tell a More Complete Project Story

Since the purpose of this guidebook is to explain the TOsC for ILAB worker rights programs and the related outcome domains and standard indicators, it focuses on a theory-based approach to monitoring, evaluation, and learning (MEL). However, OTLA acknowledges that project implementation often diverges from initial project plans and theories because planning documents reflect the best available information and context at the time of startup. Additionally, ILAB projects operate in countries and supply chains where the path to outcomes could look different depending on the context or system. Trying to evaluate progress using traditional means may miss the mark and not capture unforeseen outcomes or impacts of project interventions. Over the life of the project, the context is also likely to evolve, and new information and learning will become available. The project may encounter challenges and opportunities that were not foreseen and events that could not have been predicted. **Successful projects adapt to changes and new information to achieve and sustain outcomes.**

ILAB/OTLA encourages grantees to use **CAMEL** to inform agile adaptation. Together, theory-based MEL and CAMEL provide a more complete picture of the project and the system in which it operates. CAMEL complements theory-based MEL by tracking the uncertain, emergent, contested, and dynamic aspects of the theory of change and context. Projects may institute a variety of methods to support learning and adaptation other than monitoring indicators such as internal evaluations, periodic assessments, *Pause and Reflect sessions* or *After-Action-Reviews*. This guide acknowledges and encourages monitoring, evaluation, and learning (MEL) that reflects the complex environment that ILAB projects often operate in.

Theory-based MEL aims to answer the questions:

- Are we making progress towards our intended outcomes?
- Is progress faster or slower than expected?

CAMEL aims to answer the questions:

- What emergent or unpredicted outcomes is our project contributing to?
- What environmental actors and factors are likely to influence achievement of desired outcomes, either positively or negatively?
- How do others perceive and value the situation and the project? How will that influence their interactions with the project?
- What new opportunities or constraints may arise in response to changes in the environment?
- Is our intervention changing the dynamics of the system or problem it aimed to address?



Although not the focus of this guidebook, we inserted this icon throughout the document to note opportunities for complementing the standard outcome indicators with CAMEL.

For a graphical representation of the link between theory-based MEL and CAMEL, see the Infographic on ILAB's Approach to MEL for Worker Rights Programs available in [English](#) and [Spanish](#).

Additional MEL resources, including guidelines and promising practices related to CAMEL and other types of learning, can be found in **ILAB's MEL Resource Library**.

THEORY OF SUSTAINED CHANGE FOR ILAB WORKER RIGHTS PROGRAMS

ILAB is authorized to award and administer grants and cooperative agreements by annual Congressional appropriations to implement model programs that address worker rights issues through technical assistance in countries with which the United States has free trade agreements or trade preference programs. ILAB aims to impact worker rights in five main areas, which are in accordance with the five fundamental labor rights (as adopted by ILO member states in the 1998 ILO Declaration on Fundamental Principles and Rights at Work, and amended in 2022)²:

- a) Freedom of association and the effective recognition of the right to collective bargaining
- b) The elimination of all forms of forced or compulsory labor
- c) The effective abolition of child labor
- d) The elimination of discrimination in respect of employment and occupation
- e) A safe and healthy working environment and acceptable work conditions

ILAB expects all labor rights projects to work toward advancement of one or more of these rights. Although it is not always possible for a project to observe significant changes in these areas within the life of the project, ILAB intends for all projects to achieve outcomes that, if sustained, **will significantly contribute to and reinforce these impacts over time**. Thus, the sustainability of project gains on local stakeholders, workers, and system dynamics is crucial to the project's long-term success.

In 2016, Tufts University completed a study on the key factors required to ensure the sustainability of development gains achieved after projects end under the USAID Food and Nutrition Technical Assistance (FANTA) Project. The resulting report, *Sustaining Development: A Synthesis of Results from a Four-Country Study of Sustainability and Exit Strategies*, found that three factors are critical to sustainability: sustained source of resources, sustained technical and managerial capacity, and sustained motivation. Linkages to governmental organizations and/or other entities were also found to be central to sustainability in many circumstances.³ Building from the results of the FANTA study, ILAB developed their own *ILAB Sustainability Guide*⁴ in 2018. This guide provided suggestions for factors that projects could address to improve the sustainability of their results. Using the evidence published in the FANTA study and the guidelines in the ILAB Sustainability Guide, along with the results and recommendations of numerous ILAB synthesis evaluations and other resources,⁵ ILAB

² ILO Declaration on Fundamental Principles and Rights at Work, <https://www.ilo.org/declaration/lang-en/index.htm>

³ FANTA Project. (2016). Effective Sustainability and Exit Strategies for USAID FFP Development Food Assistance Projects. Gerald J. and Dorothy R. Friedman School of Nutrition Science and Policy at Tufts University. Available at: <https://www.fantaproject.org/research/exit-strategies-ffp>

⁴ ILAB Sustainability Guide: A Practical Tool for Sustaining Development Gains (2018). Available at: https://www.dol.gov/sites/dolgov/files/ILAB/Sustainability_Guide_Final_Report_08-22-2018.pdf

⁵ AED Synthesis Review of ILAB Projects (2006); ILO Better Work Global Cluster Evaluation (2012); ICF OCFT Synthesis Review (2012); IMPAQ Synthesis Review of ILAB Child Labor Projects (2019); Mathematica Synthesis Review of ILAB Worker Rights projects (2020); "Transforming Structures and Processes", Sustainable Livelihoods Guidance Sheets: Livelihood Assets, Department for International Development (DFID), April 1999; and "Leverage Points: Places to Intervene in a System" by Donella Meadows, 1999.

developed a TOsC to guide grantees toward creating impact that lasts. The TOsC is illustrated in **Figure 4**.

The TOsC for ILAB Worker Rights Programs identifies nine outcome domains, which are grouped by the type of change created. Outcome domains are more flexible than conventional outcomes and can fit many concepts being worked on by ILAB projects. Outcome domains are useful for the projects ILAB funds as these projects are often operating in complex environments. The nine outcome domains are grouped under three change categories: available capital, leverage points and causal mechanisms. **Figure 3** describes these outcome domains by type of change.



Throughout the guidebook, the term “services” is used to represent all services, benefits, protections, programs, and duties that support labor rights.

Figure 3. Change categories and outcome domains.

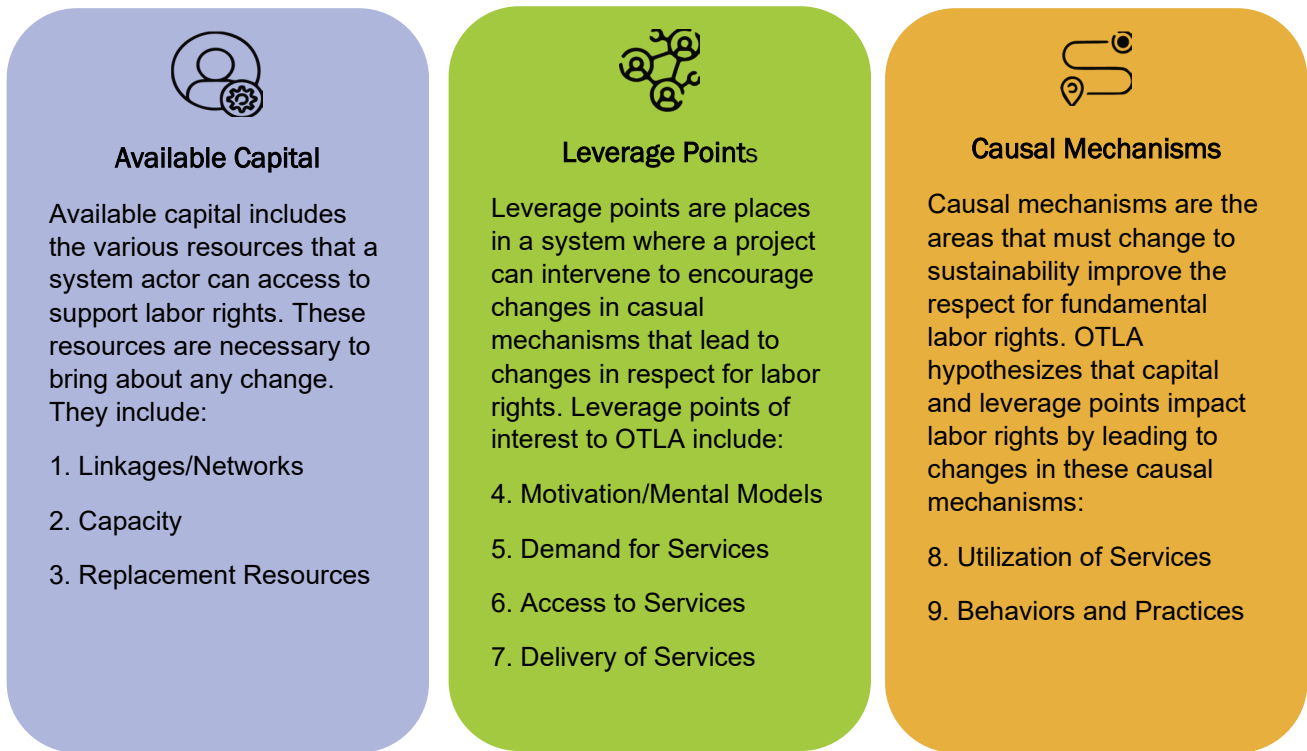
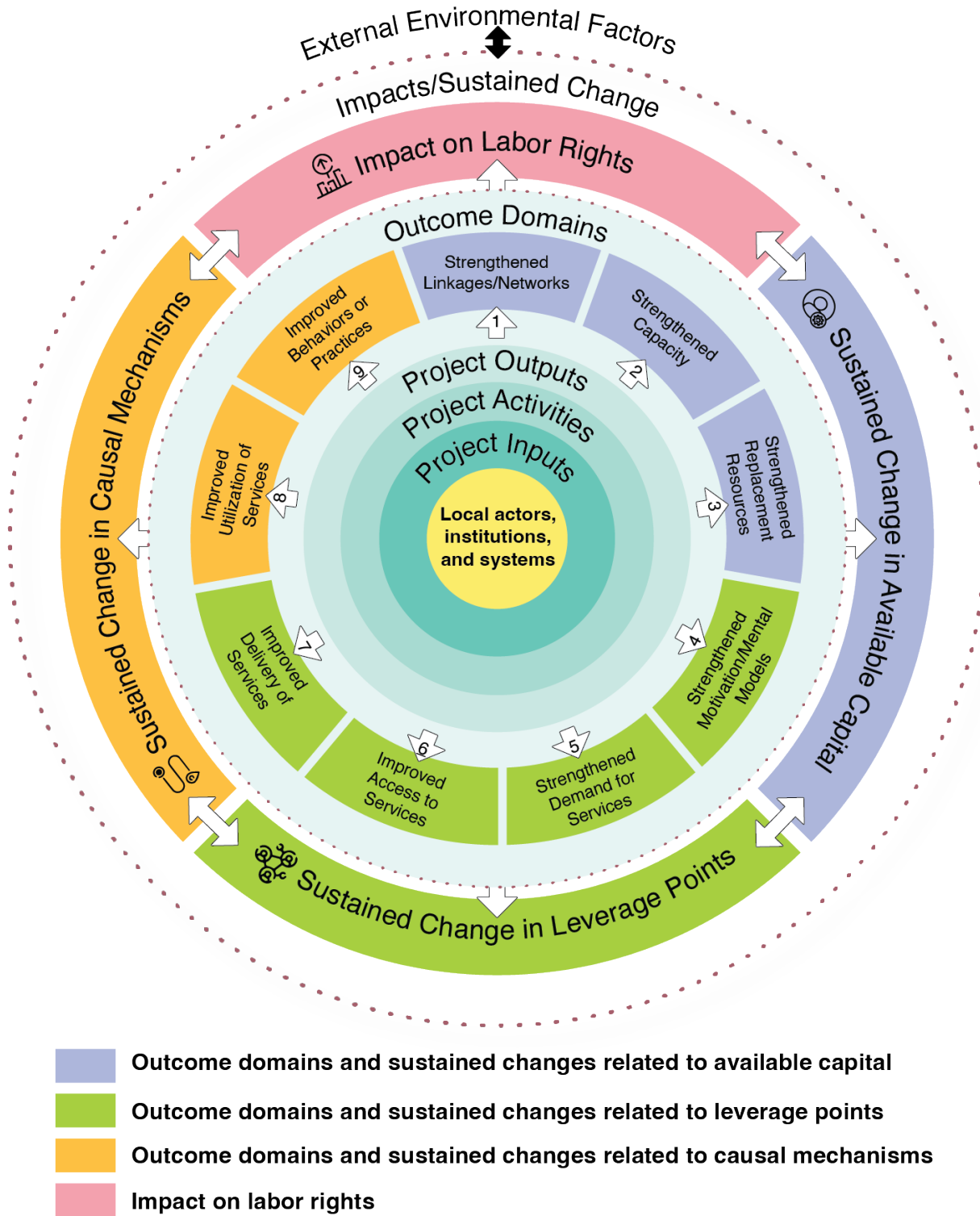


Figure 4. Theory of Sustained Change for ILAB’s Worker Rights Programs



The following pages provide a detailed explanation of the TOSc, starting with the center circle and working outwards.

The center circle represents the local actors, institutions, and structures that create and sustain systems change. These local actors may include project partners, project participants, institutions, and structures that are not directly involved in the project but nonetheless influence the project. To promote sustainability, projects will engage local actors, institutions, and/or structures from the beginning of implementation and continue regular engagement to progressively transfer responsibility of maintaining outputs and outcomes to them. Thus, the role of local actors will grow, and the role of the project will shrink over the period of performance. **Figure 5** shows the inner yellow circle where local actors, institutions, and systems reside growing over time.

Figure 5. Role of local system actors over time

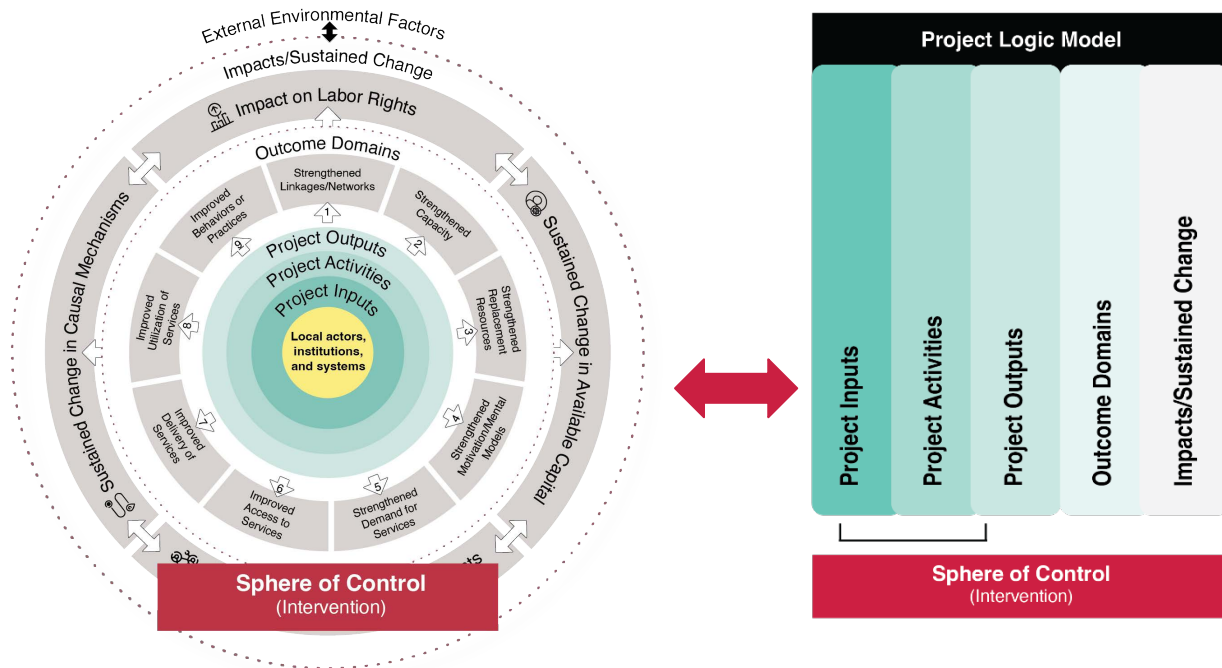


SPHERE OF CONTROL

Project inputs, activities, and outputs that make up a project’s intervention are within a project’s “sphere of control.” Projects can typically control how their resources are spent to conduct activities with certain outputs.

The second, third, and fourth circles (going from inside to outside) represent the project’s intervention, or their “sphere of control.” These circles align with the first three columns of a logic model. Project inputs lead to project activities, which lead to project outputs. In **Figure 6**, they are represented by the inner circles in green.

Figure 6. Sphere of control

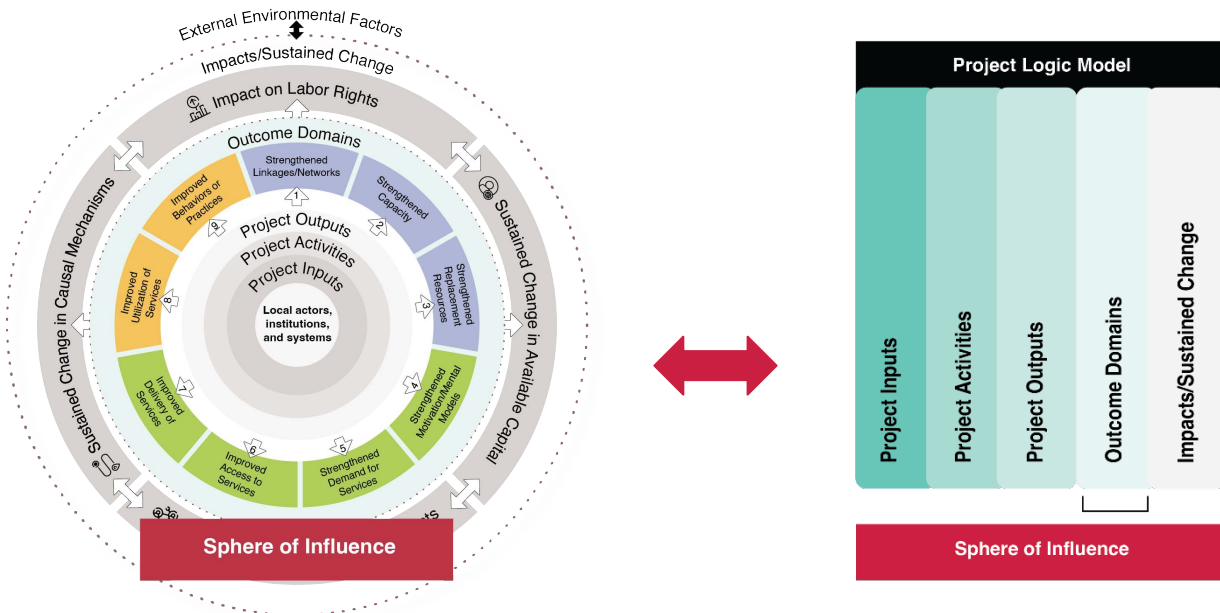


SPHERE OF INFLUENCE

Project outcomes are within a project’s “sphere of influence.” Even if a project is perfectly implemented and is based on a logically sound Theory of Change (TOC), projects cannot control the responses that people and institutions have to their interventions. Additionally, external factors will affect the project’s ability to achieve the desired outcomes. Thus, a project can influence, but not control, the project outcomes.

The fifth circle represents a project’s “sphere of influence.” It aligns with the fourth and fifth columns in the project logic model, representing the outcomes that a project contributes to achieving (see **Figure 7**). ILAB’s TOsC demonstrates that to sustainably improve respect for/realization of workers’ rights, projects need to change the available capital (i.e., linkages/networks, capacity, and replacement resources); the leverage points (i.e., motivation, demand for services, access to services, and delivery/supply of services); and/or the causal mechanisms (i.e., utilization of services) associated with improved labor rights. See **Table 1** (page 13) for a mapping of the changes represented in the TOsC to the outcome domains and standard outcome indicators.

Figure 7. Sphere of influence



Projects may directly work to change one or more of these outcomes, as illustrated by the arrows pointing outward from project outputs to each of the nine outcome domains. Because labor rights exist within complex social structures, the TOsC posits that changes to one of these outcome domains can contribute to creating and sustaining changes in other outcome domains, even if the project is not directly working to impact those other domains.



SAFE FARM WORKERS INITIATIVE

ALIGNING THE PROJECT LOGIC MODEL TO ILAB'S TOsC

SFWI's intervention (inputs, activities, and outputs) will begin with two activities within the project's **sphere of control**:

- Establish worker centers in central locations, where agriculture workers can come for leisure activities and networking.
- Advertise the worker centers through flyers, radio ads, and information sessions with agriculture workers.
- Hold regular meetings at worker centers to educate members through peer-to-peer trainings on topics, such as workers' rights and skills training; to discuss and analyze problems; and to create strategies for addressing those problems.

SFWI believes that the worker centers and regular meetings will provide a natural place in which workers can meet and network (a change in the "Linkages/Networks" outcome domain). They believe that the peer-to-peer trainings and discussions of problems and potential strategies for addressing problems will help workers understand that they can expect and fight for better working conditions (a change in the "Demand for Services" outcome domain; here, "services" refers to worker protections). These two outcomes are in the project's **sphere of influence**.

SFWI believes that changes in these two outcome domains will eventually result in workers being able to unite and take collective action to improve their working conditions. They have also planned activities in the second half of the project to train leaders among the workers to continue the workers' network after the program ends. They believe these activities will lead to institutionalization of the network, which will increase the likelihood of sustained change in Linkages/Networks and Demand for Services. These impacts and sustained changes are in the project's **sphere of interest**. In **Figure 8** we present an example of logic model, and in **Figure 9** we show how the logic model aligns with its spheres of control, influence, and interest.

At the top of each of its boxes, **Figure 8** shows instructions on what elements belong in each column aim to facilitate the comprehension of how to frame a project's logic model within the spheres of control, influence, and interest. The reader can find further support on pages 11-13 of ILAB's MEL guide, "MEL for Worker Rights Programs: Where do we start?"⁶.

⁶ Available at: <https://www.dol.gov/sites/dolgov/files/ILAB/merl/MEL-Plan-Template-OTLA-ME-Services-CLEAN-2-09-24-508-3.pdf>

Figure 8. SFWI’s complexity-aware logic model

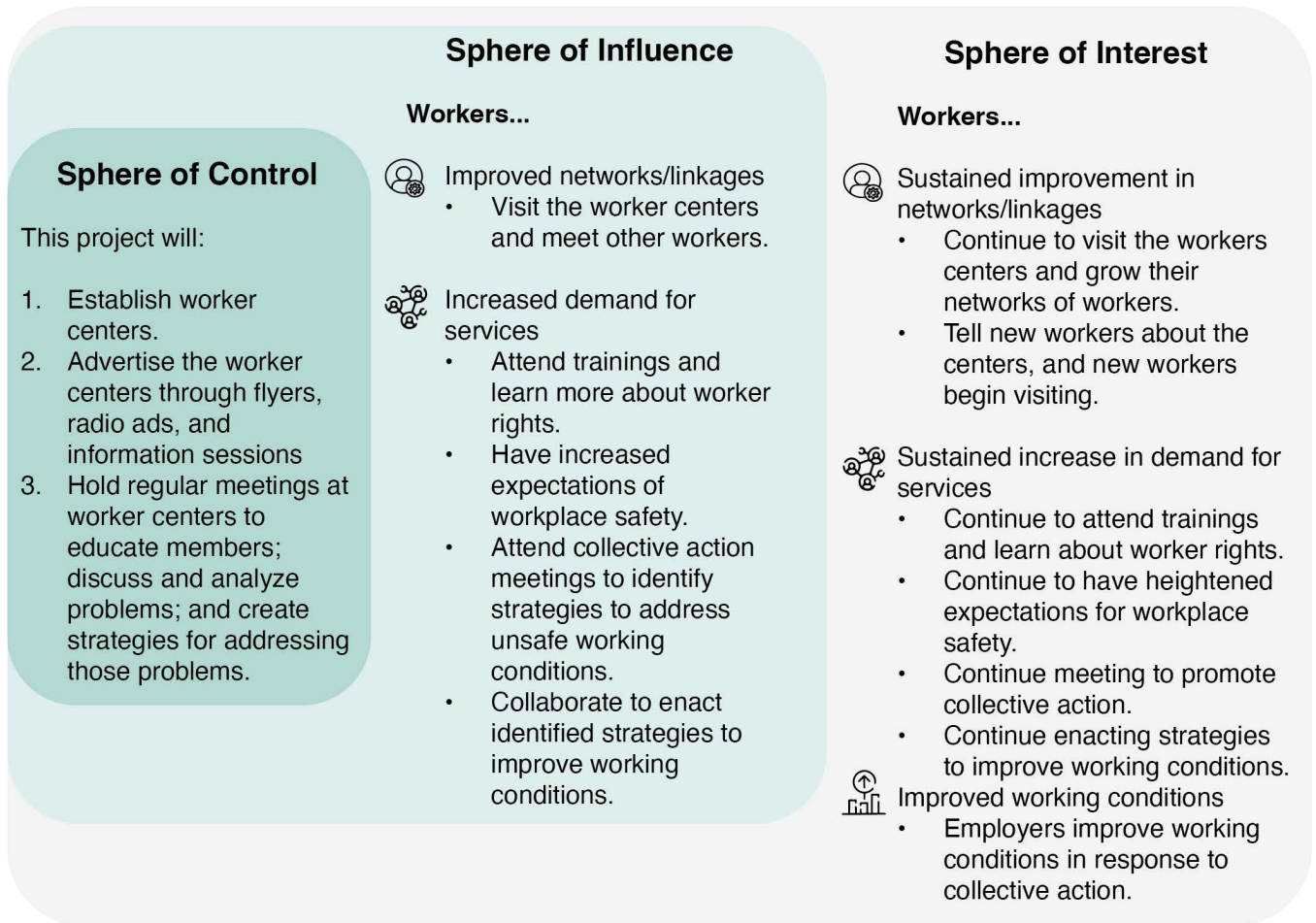
Project Activities/Outputs	Outcomes	Outcome Domains	Sustained Change	Impact
<p>This project will:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Establish worker centers. 2. Advertise the worker centers through flyers, radio ads, and information sessions with agriculture workers. 3. Hold regular meetings at worker centers to educate members; discuss and analyze problems; and create strategies for addressing those problems. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Workers visit the worker centers and meet other workers. Workers attend trainings and learn more about worker rights. Workers have increased expectations for workplace safety. Workers attend collective action meetings to identify strategies to address unsafe working conditions. Workers collaborate to enact identified strategies to improve working conditions. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Improved networks/linkages Increased demand for services 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Improved networks/linkages Workers continue to visit the worker centers and grow their networks of workers. New workers learn about the centers and begin visiting. Increased demand for services New visitors attend trainings and learn more about worker rights. Workers continue to have heightened expectations for workplace safety. Workers continue meeting to promote collective action. Workers continue enacting strategies to improve working conditions. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Improved working conditions Employers improve working conditions in response to workers’ collective action
Sphere of Control	Sphere of Influence	Sphere of Influence	Sphere of Interest	Sphere of Interest

Project Activities/Outputs	Outcomes and Outcome Domains	Sustained Change	Impact
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Key subgroups of agriculture workers (women, migrant workers) may be less interested/able to visit the worker center. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> If key subgroups fail to visit the worker centers, the project may inadvertently increase disparities between these subgroups, who will have smaller networks, less knowledge of their rights, and lower expectations for safe working conditions. 		
Sphere of Control	Sphere of Influence	Sphere of Interest	Sphere of Interest

Assumptions
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Sustained worker meetings and collective action will require volunteer leaders from within the worker groups to take over leadership. SFWI assumes it will be able to identify and train these volunteer leaders. SFWI also assumes these leaders will either be able to continue leading as volunteers or identify funding mechanisms to supplement their time. SFWI assumes it will be able to identify and overcome potential barriers to key subgroups participating in the worker centers.

Some projects may find it useful to elaborate on their project-level Logic Model with Actor-Based, Sector-Based, Place-Based, Intervention-Based or Structure-Based Theories of Change. **Figure 9** illustrates how to depict an actor-based TOC drawing attention to predicted changes for specific actors (Government, Employers, or Workers). Projects could also use these headings to reflect differentiation in outcomes by sectors, locations or in other ways.

Figure 9. SFWI's spheres of control, influence, and interest



SPHERE OF INTEREST

Sustained change and impact may begin during the life of the project, but they often are not confirmed until after the project is complete. Thus, sustained change and impact are within a project’s “sphere of interest.” ILAB and/or its grantee may want to follow up with the local system actors after the project has ended to learn whether the changes were sustained. But after the project has ended, the project no longer has any ability to influence the outcomes or impacts.

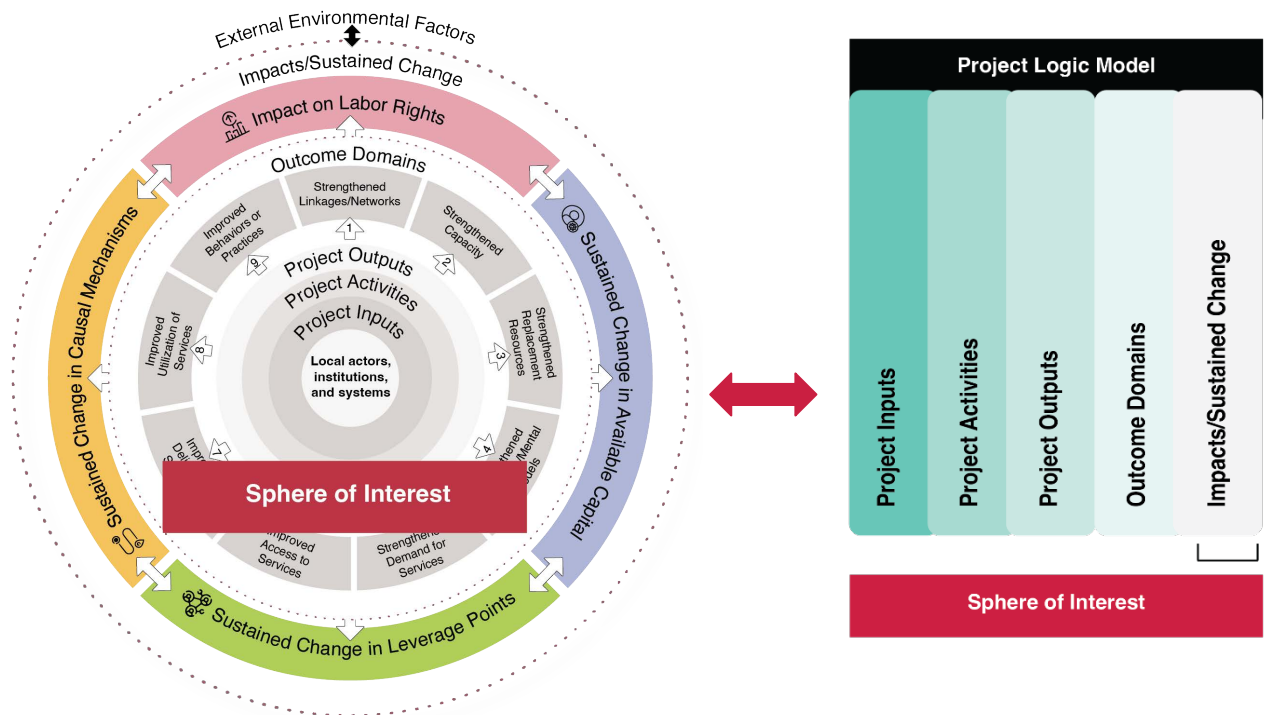
The sixth circle represents sustained changes in outcomes and impacts after the project ends, represented in **Figure 10**. These are in the project’s “sphere of interest.” The changes achieved during the life of the project may be sustained and/or may lead to long-term changes in workers’ rights, as represented by the arrows pointing from the outcomes circle to each of the sustained change/impact categories. Sustained changes in one outcome or impact category may also lead to sustained, or even more, changes in another outcome or impact category, as represented by the double-headed arrows pointing from one sustained change to another.

Finally, outside the circle, arrows pointing toward the circles show that external environmental factors can also exert a great deal of influence on systems change efforts. If environmental factors change in ways that support a project’s goals, the project may observe significantly greater outcomes and impacts than anticipated. However, if environmental factors that are outside the influence of the project change in a way that opposes a project’s goals, the project may observe less change in outcomes and impacts than expected.

☉ **CAMEL Reminder**

CAMEL can track actors and factors in the system to inform project adaptation, such as when the influences that actors and factors may have on the system are less understood.

Figure 10. Sphere of interest



The TOsC for ILAB’s worker rights programs may be refined as additional evidence is collected from both theory-based MEL and CAMEL. ILAB continuously reviews the data submitted by their projects, as well as new literature that is published, to learn more about what works to improve workers’ rights and sustain improvement over time. This document may be updated as new evidence emerges.

SECTION REVIEW: OTLA’S TOSC

Key Takeaways



ILAB’s TOsC includes **nine outcome domains** grouped **under three categories of change**: available capital, leverage points, and causal mechanisms.



There are three spheres depicted in the TOsC:

- **Sphere of control** includes project inputs, activities, and outputs.
 - **Sphere of influence** includes project outcomes.
 - **Sphere of interest** includes sustained change and impacts.
-




Over time, local actors, institutions, and systems should take **responsibility over more and more of the maintenance of project outputs and outcomes** to increase the likelihood of sustainable outcomes.


MAPPING THE TOSC TO OUTCOME DOMAINS AND STANDARD OUTCOME INDICATORS


Table 1 presents ILAB’s outcome domains and their corresponding standard outcome indicators, grouped by type of sustained change (change in available capital, change in leverage points, and change in causal mechanism). Grantees can use this table to quickly reference how standard outcome indicators are associated with outcome domains, and how their own project objectives may relate to the outcome domains.

➔ Each standard outcome indicator is hyperlinked to their Standard Outcome Indicator Reference Sheet (SOIRS) in [ILAB’s MEL Resource Library](#). Just click on the indicator, and it will take you to the SOIRS.

Table 1. Mapping the TOSc to outcome domains and standard outcome indicators

Change in Available Capital	Outcome Domain	Standard Outcome Indicator(s)
	Strengthened linkages/networks associated with systemic improvements in workers’ rights	<p>1A. Number of individual actors within a system with improved linkages/networks that enable them to better address labor rights issues, claim their rights or fulfill their duties</p> <p>1B. Number of collective structures or institutions within a system with improved linkages/networks that enable them to better address labor rights issues, claim their rights or fulfill their duties</p>
	Strengthened capacity associated with systemic improvements in workers’ rights	<p>2A. Number of individual actors within a system with increased capacity that enable them to better address labor rights issues, claim their rights or fulfill their duties</p> <p>2B. Number of collective structures or institutions within a system with increased capacity that enables them to better address labor rights issues, claim their rights or fulfill their duties</p>
	Strengthened replacement resources associated with systemic improvements in workers’ rights	<p>3A. Number of individual actors within a system with replacement resources that enable them to continue to address labor rights issues, claim their rights or fulfill their duties</p> <p>3B. Number of collective structures or institutions within a system with replacement resources that enable them to continue to address labor rights issues, claim their rights or fulfill their duties</p>

<p style="writing-mode: vertical-rl; transform: rotate(180deg);">Change in Leverage Points</p> 	Outcome Domain	Standard Outcome Indicator(s)
	<p>Strengthened motivation to adopt behaviors, institutionalize practices, utilize, deliver, or access services, benefits, protections, or programs associated with improved workers' rights</p>	<p><u>4A. Number of individual actors within a system with increased motivation to address labor rights issues, claim their rights or fulfill their duties</u></p> <p><u>4B. Number of collective structures or institutions within a system with increased motivation to address labor rights issues, claim their rights or fulfill their duties</u></p>
	<p>Strengthened demand for services, benefits, protections, or programs associated with improved workers' rights</p>	<p><u>5A. Number of individual actors within a system demonstrating increased demand for services, benefits, protections or programs associated with improved workers' rights</u></p> <p><u>5B. Number of collective structures or institutions within a system demonstrating increased demand for services, benefits, protections or programs associated with improved workers' rights</u></p>
	<p>Improved access to services, benefits, protections, or programs associated with improved workers' rights</p>	<p><u>6A. Number of individual actors within a system with improved access to services, benefits, protections, or programs associated with improved workers' rights</u></p> <p><u>6B. Number of collective structures or institutions within a system with improved access to services, benefits, protections, or programs associated with improved workers' rights</u></p>
	<p>Improved supply or improved delivery of services, programs or duties associated with improved workers' rights</p>	<p><u>7A. Number of unique touchpoints or leverage points within a system with improved delivery of services, programs or duties associated with improved workers' rights</u></p> <p><u>7B. Number of collective structures or institutions within a system with improved delivery of services, programs or duties associated with improved workers' rights</u></p>

Change in Causal Mechanisms	Outcome Domain	Standard Outcome Indicator(s)
	Improved utilization of services or processes associated with improved workers' rights	<u>8A. Number of individual actors within a system who have utilized more effective services, processes or programs associated with improved worker's rights</u>
	Improved adoption of behaviors or practices associated with improved workers' rights	<u>9A. Number of individual actors within a system who have adopted behaviors associated with improved workers' rights</u>
		<u>9B. Number of institutions, legal entities, or organizations that have collectively adopted practices associated with improved workers' rights</u>

Appendix B presents the five areas in which ILAB intends to impact workers' rights and the Sustainable Development Goal (SDG) indicators used to assess progress toward those impact areas. SDGs, along with their indicators and targets, were developed by the United Nations (UN) in consultation with member states and social partners. Using SDG indicators to assess impact (as opposed to developing ILAB-specific indicators) allows ILAB and its grantees to demonstrate contribution to the achievement of the SDGs and to engage with governments and other partners in working toward shared goals, using shared metrics for success. It also allows ILAB to use MEL resources wisely by making use of data others are committed to collecting and tracking. ILAB includes a range of SDG/impact indicators in each FOA and chooses the specific impact indicators to be assessed in consultation with the Grantee after award.

USING ILAB'S STANDARD OUTCOME INDICATORS

PURPOSE OF STANDARD OUTCOME INDICATORS

All ILAB funded recipients are required to measure and report on applicable standard outcome indicators based on the requirements of the Foreign Aid Transparency and Accountability Act of 2016 and the Evidence Act of 2018. This reporting allows ILAB to collect comparable data across projects and to aggregate data from multiple projects to inform ILAB's overall performance reporting and future strategies. Taken together, the indicators broadly measure the lasting contributions and outcomes of ILAB grant recipients as part of the office's efforts to systemically improve workers' rights. These data are closely integrated into DOL's planning and budget activities and they help to assess the effectiveness of equity efforts for ILAB and DOL. ILAB also uses this data to inform the validity of the TOsC. These standard outcome indicators are thus highly valuable to ILAB and ILAB constituents.

LIMITATIONS OF STANDARD OUTCOME INDICATORS

ILAB realizes that the standard outcome indicators will not always be the indicators best suited to evaluate the efficacy of a single project or to help the project learn and adapt its activities. For example, knowing the number of institutions that have increased capacity to address labor rights issues may be less helpful for program adaptation and decision-making than answering questions like:

- How much has capacity increased?
- What factors (both related to the program and external to the program) contributed to the increase (or lack of increase) in capacity?
- What are the institutions doing (or trying to do) with their increased capacity?
- What emergent or unpredicted outcomes did our capacity strengthening activities contribute to?
- What new opportunities or constraints may arise in response to institutions' increased capacity?

Thus, ILAB encourages grantees to complement their use of standard outcome indicators with 1) CAMEL approaches and learning activities that help to identify emergent outcomes and changes in the project context; and/or 2) custom indicators and disaggregation that fill in some details around the standard outcome indicators (e.g., number (#) of claims reported to employers, labor authorities, or the government).

To enable projects to invest resources in these other types of learning activities, ILAB encourages grantees not to report on standard outcome indicators from every outcome domain. Rather, grantees can focus standard outcome reporting on at least two to three outcome domains highlighted in the FOA and use their remaining MEL resources for project learning and CAMEL. The learning activities and CAMEL the project undertakes may relate to contextual factors, the intended outcome domains, or other outcome domains.

Grantees can report data on custom indicators in the Data Reporting Form (DRF) Template⁷. They can also share qualitative findings from their CAMEL and learning activities through semiannual Technical Progress Reports (TPRs) or through direct communication with ILAB staff.

Using ILAB's MEL Guide

The **Guide “MEL for Worker Rights Programs: Where Do We Start”**⁸ is a tool to integrate and guide the process of monitoring, evaluating, and reporting on project progress toward achieving intended results and outcomes. As a tool designed to inform management decisions, learning, and mid-course corrections, project teams can use this Guide at any stage on the project's life cycle to support and encourage project adaptation. The Guide includes practical advice on how to complement projects' use of standard outcome indicators through incorporating project aspects sensitive to complexity in the logic model, establishing an iterative action-oriented learning agenda for the project, and suggesting ways to customize and disaggregate indicators to adapt and expand the explanatory power of the project's Performance Monitoring Plan (PMP).

Collaborating with System Actors

ILAB encourages grantees to work closely with their partners and local actors to review and implement their Monitoring, Evaluation, and Learning Plan (MEL Plan) and learning activities. Collaborating with partners and stakeholders through the processes of selecting and defining standard outcome indicators can help to ensure that the specific indicators selected, as well as the definitions and measurement tools used to collect and disaggregate the data, are meaningful and feasible to measure. Working with partners and local actors to collect and use the data needed to measure standard outcome indicators and/or for project learning can help ensure the project's data represent key voices, while also helping to build the capacity of these partners and local actors.

SELECTING STANDARD OUTCOME INDICATORS

ILAB encourages partners to prioritize, select, measure, and report on the **TOSc standard indicators** related to each outcome domain highlighted in the FOA. Before selecting standard outcome indicators, grantees should develop a logic model⁹ and indicators the project will use to assess progress toward each outcome and impact. We recommend holding a workshop with key local actors to undergo this process. When selecting indicators, grantees must ensure that each indicator fulfills an important information need for project decision makers at ILAB and/or project management. Prior to selecting indicators, it may be helpful to collaborate with local actors and program staff to develop a Learning for Action (L4A) Agenda, which 1) identifies questions, knowledge gaps, assumptions, and emergent outcomes that may help inform program design, implementation, and adaptation; 2) identifies way(s) to fill those knowledge gaps; and 3) specifies how and who will use the knowledge

⁷ For more information on how to use the DRF, see the DRF frequently asked questions, available at <https://www.dol.gov/sites/dolgov/files/ILAB/Frequently-Asked-Questions-FAQs-about-the-DRF-v4-508.pdf>, and the training video, “Using the Data Reporting Form” available here: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=laORynd36Xs>

⁸ Access to ILAB's MEL guide in English here: <https://www.dol.gov/sites/dolgov/files/ILAB/merl/MEL-Plan-Template-OTLA-ME-Services-CLEAN-2-09-24-508-3.pdf>. And in Spanish here: <https://www.dol.gov/sites/dolgov/files/ILAB/MEL-Plan-Template-OTLA-ME-Services-CLEAN-1-30-24-spa-CAEE-508.pdf>

⁹ See the Complexity-Aware Logic Model fillable template (2024). Available at: <https://www.dol.gov/sites/dolgov/files/ILAB/Project-Logic-Model-Template-combined-page-CLEAN-508-1.docx>.

gained. Knowing what knowledge gaps need to be filled can help select key outcome indicators¹⁰⁻¹¹. Program managers will influence indicator selection, prioritizing indicators and disaggregation that will provide actionable information for decisions. Please ensure that the number of indicators are in line with MEL budget allocations. Identifying the indicators appropriate for the project will be a collaborative process between the project, ILAB, and other key stakeholders¹² during the development of the Project Document package. The MEL Plan¹³ review process is a good time to review the number of indicators and the project's overall MEL burden.

After developing a logic model and project indicators, the grantee should map out how their logic model and project indicators relate to ILAB's TOsC and standard outcome indicators. When doing this, grantees need to consider:

1. How does the project logic model relate to ILAB's TOsC? Which ILAB outcome domains are the project's outcomes aligned with? (See Figure 7 for an example.)
2. How do the project indicators relate to ILAB's standard outcome indicators? Which indicators can map to a standard outcome indicator? (Ensure project indicators that map to standard outcome indicators have the same unit of measure as their related standard outcome indicators.) Which indicators cannot map to a standard outcome indicator? Ideally, at least one indicator within each outcome domain will map to one standard outcome indicator.

Table 2 provides examples of project indicators that could map to each standard indicator.

¹⁰ For more information on how to create an L4A Agenda, see pages 15-17 of ILAB's MEL guide, "MEL for Worker Rights Programs: Where do we start?" available here: <https://www.dol.gov/sites/dolgov/files/ILAB/merl/MEL-Plan-Template-OTLA-ME-Services-CLEAN-2-09-24-508-3.pdf>.

¹¹ A fillable L4A Agenda template is available here: <https://view.officeapps.live.com/op/view.aspx?src=https%3A%2F%2Fwww.dol.gov%2Fsites%2Fdolgov%2Ffiles%2FILAB%2FLearning-for-Action-L4A-Agenda-Template-CLEAN-508.docx&wdOrigin=BROWSELINK>.

¹² Stakeholders include local and national institutional partners, which the project intends to carry on collecting and using the metrics and data to inform decisions, collaboration and actions, after the project ends.

¹³ See the Guide "MEL for Worker Rights Programs: Where do we start?" (2024). Available in English at: <https://www.dol.gov/sites/dolgov/files/ILAB/merl/MEL-Plan-Template-OTLA-ME-Services-CLEAN-2-09-24-508-3.pdf>. Available in Spanish at: <https://www.dol.gov/sites/dolgov/files/ILAB/MEL-Plan-Template-OTLA-ME-Services-CLEAN-1-30-24-spa-CAEE-508.pdf>.

Table 2. Examples of project indicators aligned with standard outcome indicators and outcome domains

Outcome Domain	Standard Outcome Indicator(s)	Example Project Indicators
Strengthened linkages/networks associated with systemic improvements in workers' rights	<p>1A. Number of individual actors within a system with improved linkages/networks that enable them to better address labor rights issues, claim their rights or fulfill their duties</p> <p>1B. Number of collective structures or institutions within a system with improved linkages/networks that enable them to better address labor rights issues, claim their rights or fulfill their duties</p>	<p>Number of workers within the agriculture industry who report being connected with other agriculture workers outside their workplace</p> <p>Number of fishers' organizations that are part of an association or coalition that continues operating after 1.5 years, as a result of the project's interventions</p>
Strengthened capacity associated with systemic improvements in workers' rights	<p>2A. Number of individual actors within a system with increased capacity that enable them to better address labor rights issues, claim their rights or fulfill their duties</p> <p>2B. Number of collective structures or institutions within a system with increased capacity that enables them to better address labor rights issues, claim their rights or fulfill their duties</p>	<p>Number of trained staff who show an increase in their knowledge of how to administer or use project-developed or strengthened labor inspection oversight tools</p> <p>-OR-</p> <p>Number of workers with increased capacity to organize, defend their rights, identify labor violation and/or file complaints</p> <p>Number of employers with increased institutional and operational capacity</p> <p>-OR-</p> <p>Number of state inspectorates with increased organizational capacity as per the organizational capacity assessment tool (OCAT)</p>
Strengthened replacement resources associated with systemic improvements in workers' rights	<p>3A. Number of individual actors within a system with replacement resources that enable them to continue to address labor rights issues, claim their rights or fulfill their duties</p> <p>3B. Number of collective structures or institutions within a system with replacement resources that enable them to continue to address labor rights issues, claim their rights or fulfill their duties</p>	<p>Number of labor officials subscribed to the new electronic case management system (ECMS)</p> <p>Number of organizations with resources that enable them to monitor working conditions</p>



Change in Available Capital



Outcome Domain	Standard Outcome Indicator(s)	Example Project Indicators
<p>Strengthened motivation to adopt behaviors, institutionalize practices, utilize, deliver, or access services, benefits, protections, or programs associated with improved workers' rights</p>	<p>4A. Number of individual actors within a system with increased motivation to address labor rights issues, claim their rights or fulfill their duties</p> <p>4B. Number of collective structures or institutions within a system with increased motivation to address labor rights issues, claim their rights or fulfill their duties</p>	<p>Number of individual stakeholders stating changes in their willingness to adopt safety and health practices</p> <p>-OR-</p> <p>Number of surveyed conciliation users (workers, employers, union reps) who report they engaged in a conciliation proceeding due to an increased confidence in the labor conciliation institutions (from e-trainings and awareness raising)</p> <p>Number of government institutions and social partners requesting official support for continued improvement of labor laws and legislation and alignment with international labor standards (ILS)</p>
<p>Strengthened demand for services, benefits, protections, or programs associated with improved workers' rights</p>	<p>5A. Number of individual actors within a system demonstrating increased demand for services, benefits, protections or programs associated with improved workers' rights</p> <p>5B. Number of collective structures or institutions within a system demonstrating increased demand for services, benefits, protections or programs associated with improved workers' rights</p>	<p>Number of workers reporting grievances and disputes at the workplaces</p> <p>Number of relevant authorities that increased interest for delivering protection to workers through adequate working conditions and better labor inspection</p>
<p>Improved access to services, benefits, protections, or programs associated with improved workers' rights</p>	<p>6A. Number of individual actors within a system with improved access to services, benefits, protections, or programs associated with improved workers' rights</p> <p>6B. Number of collective structures or institutions within a system with improved access to services, benefits, protections, or programs associated with improved workers' rights</p>	<p>Number of individual stakeholders participating in occupational risk prevention and health monitoring intervention programs</p> <p>-OR-</p> <p>Number of workers in pilot enterprises with improved access to services on gender equality, labor standards and occupational safety and health (OSH)</p> <p>Number of institutions or organizations participating in an OSH program in a Center of Excellence</p>

Change in Leverage Points



	Outcome Domain	Standard Outcome Indicator(s)	Example Project Indicators
	Improved supply or improved delivery of services, programs or duties associated with improved workers' rights	<p>7A. Number of unique touchpoints or leverage points within a system with improved delivery of services, programs or duties associated with improved workers' rights</p> <p>7B. Number of collective structures or institutions within a system with improved delivery of services, programs or duties associated with improved workers' rights</p>	<p>Number of unique leverage points with new milestone(s) met during the reporting period (disaggregated by leverage point type, e.g. ECMS, labor policy development, grievance handling mechanism, etc.)</p> <p>Number of relevant authorities that have improved labor inspection services</p> <p>-OR-</p> <p>Number of organizations that have improved delivery of monitoring services to promote appropriate labor conditions in the fishing sector</p>
<p style="writing-mode: vertical-rl; transform: rotate(180deg);">Change in Causal Mechanisms</p>	Improved utilization of services or processes associated with improved workers' rights	<p>8A. Number of individual actors within a system who have utilized more effective services, processes or programs associated with improved worker's rights</p> <p>8B. Number of collective structures or institutions within a system that have institutionalized more effective services, processes or programs associated with improved workers' rights</p>	<p>Number of staff who report using the project-developed or strengthened tools for their labor inspection oversight and enforcement purposes within their job responsibilities</p> <p>Number of counties using Strategic Compliance Plans (SCP) developed in consultation with social partners</p> <p>-OR-</p> <p>Number of organizations that have institutionalized more effective mechanisms to address labor violations to contribute to the fight against IUU fishing</p>
	Improved adoption of behaviors or practices associated with improved workers' rights	<p>9A. Number of individual actors within a system who have adopted behaviors associated with improved workers' rights</p> <p>9B. Number of institutions, legal entities, or organizations that have collectively adopted practices associated with improved workers' rights</p>	<p>Number of workers (fishers or in seafood processing plants) that have adopted a behavior to address labor violation in the fishing sector</p> <p>Number of partners that adopt measures which promote gender equality in the rural sectors</p> <p>-OR-</p> <p>Number of companies or workplaces whose managers, technicians and clinical staff use Domestic Abuse Intervention Services (DAIS) reports to support decisions to prevent or mitigate occupationally acquired illness and injury (OAIL).</p>



SAFE FARM WORKERS INITIATIVE

SELECTING STANDARD OUTCOME INDICATORS

In their logic model, *SFWI* indicated that they would measure outcomes in two outcome domains. In their MEL Plan, they chose the following project indicators for each outcome:

Outcome Domain	Outcome	Project Indicators
Improved networks/linkages	Improved networks/linkages between workers to allow for more collective action	1.1 Number of workers within the agriculture industry who report being connected with other agriculture workers outside their workplace
Increased demand for services	Increased worker demand for safe working conditions	<p>2.1 Number of agriculture workers who have attended at least one meeting at the worker center to discuss problems and brainstorm strategies to address them.</p> <p>2.2 Percent of agricultural workers attending peer-to-peer trainings on worker rights who report having increased expectations of safe working conditions after learning about their rights</p>

The *SFWI* project team then considered how their project indicators align with standard outcome indicators. They determined that indicator 1.1 aligns well with Standard Outcome Indicator 1A, “Number of individual actors within a system with improved linkages/networks that enable them to better address labor rights issues, claim their rights or fulfill their duties.” The standard outcome indicator’s “number of individual actors within a system” aligns well with the project indicator’s “number of workers within the agriculture industry,” where workers are the individual actors, and the agriculture industry is the system.

Indicator 2.1 aligns well with Standard Outcome Indicator 5A, “Number of individual actors within a system demonstrating increased demand for services, benefits, protections or programs associated with improved workers’ rights.” Again, the standard outcome indicator’s “number of individual actors within a system” aligns well with the project indicator’s “number of agriculture workers,” where workers are the individual actors, and the agriculture industry is the system.

Indicator 2.2 does not align well with either of the standard indicators for the “increased demand for services” outcome domain. Whereas the unit for 5A is “number of individual actors” and the unit for 5B is “number of collective structures or institutions,” the unit for indicator 2.2 is “percent.” Thus, indicator 2.2 will not feed into any standard outcome indicators. However, *SFWI* can use the numerator data from indicator 2.2 to create another indicator, “2.3 Number of agriculture workers attending peer-to-peer trainings on worker rights who report having increased expectations of safe working conditions after learning about their rights.” Indicator 2.3 is useful because it can feed into Standard Outcome Indicator 5A, demonstrating progress toward increased demand for services, in terms of the raw number of people with increased demand for services. However, indicator 2.2 is also useful because it shows the rate of success in increasing demand for services by comparing the number of workers with increased demand to the total number of workers attending training. Therefore, *SFWI* decides to keep both indicators.

DEFINING STANDARD OUTCOME INDICATORS

The process of defining indicators requires project staff to specify the exact meaning and measurement of all indicators. This will involve clarifying what counts toward the indicator and how indicator data will be collected, disaggregated, quality checked, analyzed, and reported. Depending on the indicator, this step may also require the grantees to develop or adapt data collection tools¹⁴.

The definition phase can take time as grantees work with their partners and stakeholders to ensure that projects are clear in what they intend to measure and have the tools and processes necessary to collect and report the data accurately. However, taking the time to work through all these details as a team can help grantees, their partners, and stakeholders in several ways:



All staff and partners can follow the plan

Creating detailed, documented indicator definitions, with plans for data collection, measurement, disaggregation, analysis, and quality assurance, ensures that the project will be able to measure the indicator consistently, even if the roles of some project staff change. For example, definitions to some terms, like “improved access to services” can be subjective. By documenting the specific criteria that the project will use to determine whether access has improved, then anyone should be able to evaluate the data to reliably and accurately determine whether access has improved and for whom.



Projects can recognize early if there are challenges to measuring an indicator

As grantees go through the process of clarifying how they will measure an indicator, they may identify challenges associated with its measurement. Recognizing these challenges early can help teams identify ways to overcome those challenges or determine that an indicator is unfeasible. Indicators that cannot be feasibly measured can be excluded from the MEL Plan and replaced with other relevant indicators that can be measured within the projects’ resources and constraints. This minimizes the likelihood that a grantee will realize half-way through their project that key indicators needed to determine their success are unmeasurable and have to identify new indicators.



Projects can measure and compare baseline and follow up data accurately

When indicators are not clearly defined at the beginning of the project, one of two problems may arise:

- 1) baseline data are not collected for the indicator, and change cannot be measured over time; or
- 2) baseline data are collected one way, but follow-up indicator data are collected in a different way, creating major limitations in the project’s ability to compare the results. However, when indicators are clearly defined at the beginning of the project, baseline and follow-up data can all be collected in the same way, and grantees can clearly track how their projects are contributing to the outcomes of interest.

¹⁴ For additional guidance and considerations on defining standard outcome indicators, see pages 18-20 of ILAB’s MEL guide, “[MEL for Worker Rights Programs: Where do we start?](#)” .



Projects can ensure indicators are aligned with learning goals

- With clearly defined, consistently applied, measurable, and accurate indicators, projects can better use the indicator data for collaboration, learning and adaptation. This can help projects maximize their effectiveness and improve service delivery.
- Clear learning goals can also support indicator definitions. For example, if a project wants to understand how their services impact certain populations (e.g., indigenous people), then they can specify that their indicators should be disaggregated by those populations. To build a purposeful and effective learning strategy, project teams may create a Learning for Action (L4A) agenda that helps projects revisit their learning goals throughout their lifecycle, update these goals, ensure selected indicators respond to the learning goals, and select measurement exercises that are rigorous enough within budget restrictions. The ILAB MEL Resource Library offers guidance on how a project may create its learning agenda in Section 2 of the [MEL Guide](#) and a [fillable template](#).

DEFINING INDICATOR TERMS

All the key terms in the standard outcome indicators are defined in the Glossary and Standard Outcome Indicator Reference Sheets (SOIRS), found on [ILAB's portal](#). Each term has standard definitions. However, equally important to these standard definitions are the definitions of the terms within the project indicator that aligns with the standard outcome indicator. These project indicator definitions are what will be used to ensure consistency of measurement, so it is critical that these definitions have adequate detail to allow anyone to clearly understand what is and is not included within each indicator. The grantee's project indicator definitions should align with the ILAB standard outcome indicator definitions but clarify how the broad definition will be applied within the grantee's specific context and project.



SAFE FARM WORKERS INITIATIVE

DEFINING STANDARD INDICATORS

SFWI measured and reported on “**Indicator 5A:** Number of individual actors within a system demonstrating increased demand for services, benefits, protections or programs associated with improved workers’ rights.” The indicator includes four terms. Each term has a standard definition that SFWI needs to clarify/refine for their specific context.

Definition(s):

“**Individual actors**” are the specific people being targeted by the project’s efforts to improve access. *[Grantees should document here the types of individual actors (i.e., the individual actors within which systems) that will be considered for this indicator.]*

SFWI definition: “**Individual actors**” are workers within the agricultural industry. These may include workers that perform tasks such as planting, harvesting, caring for animals, and maintaining equipment. (Reported indicator data will be disaggregated by gender and migrant status.)



SAFE FARM WORKERS INITIATIVE

DEFINING STANDARD INDICATORS (CONTINUED)

A **“system”** is a group of interdependent/interacting parts that form a unified whole to pursue a common goal. In systems thinking, a system is the group of interdependent actors and factors, both formal and informal, forming a complex social problem. No one person or organization has the ability to influence the entire system, but working together, the group can move towards systems change. For example, the labor rights enforcement system in a country may include the labor inspectorate, national and/or local police, prosecutors, and magistrates. A particular employment industry, such as agriculture or construction, may also be considered a system.

[Grantees should document here the specific systems that will be considered for this indicator.]

- SFWI definition: The **“system”** is the Otlandia agriculture industry, including farms and ranches.

“Increased demand for services, benefits, protections or programs” refers to improvements in the project participant’s or local actor’s demand for and use of services, rights, benefits, protections, programs or mechanisms. Project participants must perceive that the services meet a felt need. They should be able to see notable improvements in their wellbeing, status, power, voice or capabilities as a result of the services provided during the project and should understand what is required to maintain and/or see further improvements. For project participants to maintain “improved” behaviors promoted during a project or to continue using project-initiated services, the perceived benefits must outweigh the perceived costs (such as time and money). For example, an individual worker may demonstrate increased demand for services by reaching out to appropriate organizations to acquire or request these services. *[Grantees should document here how they will measure increased demand for services, benefits, protections, or programs associated with improved workers’ rights.]*

- SFWI definition: **“Increased demand for services, benefits, protections or programs”** will be measured by the number of agriculture workers who attend at least one meeting at the worker center in a given reporting period to discuss problems and brainstorm strategies to address them. SFWI considers attendance at these meetings to be a good proxy measure for demand because it demonstrates that the workers want to talk about their working conditions and work together to improve them. They want to see their working conditions improved and are willing to voice their concerns to bring about the desired change.

“Associated with improved workers’ rights” is a qualifier that indicates that only actors that demonstrate an increase in demand for services, benefits, protections or programs associated with improved workers’ rights should be included in this indicator. Demand for other services, benefits, protections, or programs not associated with improved workers’ rights should not be included. *[Grantees should document here which services, benefits, protections, or programs associated with improved workers’ rights are included]*

- SFWI definition: The services **“associated with improved workers’ rights”** that SFWI wants to see agriculture workers demanding are safe working conditions.

DEFINING OTHER ELEMENTS OF AN INDICATOR

After defining each of the terms in an indicator, grantees should fill in the DRF with the remaining information:

1. **Calculations:** How, specifically, will you measure each indicator? For example, if you are collecting data from a survey, which questions from the survey, and which response options to those questions, will you use to determine whether a person counts toward the indicator?
2. **Disaggregation:** How do you plan to disaggregate the data for reporting? (See the “Measuring Results” section in this guidebook, as well as Section 3 of the “MEL for Worker Rights Programs: Where do we start?”¹⁵ for additional details on recommended indicator disaggregation.)
3. **How will this indicator be used?:** What are the reasons this indicator is important for or relevant to project? How is progress related to the indicator understood, measured, and defined by local actors in the system? Which actors have an interest and use for collecting data related to this indicator?
4. **Data source:** Where will you obtain the data used to report on this indicator?
5. **Method of data collection and construction:** How will you collect the data? How can actors engage with data collection? (E.g., data collected by the project and stored in *[document where project stores the data]*; data reported by *[Government Agency]* in *[name of annual report]*, which is publicly available; data reported by *[Government Agency]*, which is available by request from *[contact information]*, and which *[Project Role]* will request at *[timeframe and frequency]*; data collected in survey of *[target population]* conducted *[how and with what frequency]* and stored *[place where project stores the data]*; data collected through conversations with *[names of partners and stakeholders]* collected at *[timeframe and frequency]*)
6. **Reporting frequency:** How often will you report on the indicator? (Most indicators will be reported biannually, but some may be reported more or less frequently, depending on project requirements and data availability. When determining the frequency of reporting, note that the higher the level of the outcome, the longer it will likely take to observe change. E.g., changes to institutions may take longer than changes to individuals.)
7. **Individuals responsible at grantee organization:** Which project roles will be responsible for collecting, analyzing, and reporting on the data? These may be separate people, e.g., MEL specialist, MEL manager, etc.

CAMEL Reminder

A variety of methods may be used to measure outcomes; all methods have strengths and limitations, so grantees are encouraged to select those best suited to their context and the information needed to steer project implementation. Some approaches commonly used in CAMEL, such as Most Significant Change and Outcome Harvesting, collect data on project outcomes regardless of whether they are included in the project design or logic model. When projects use approaches that capture both intended and emergent outcomes, the findings should be reported in the TPR.

¹⁵ Available in English at: <https://www.dol.gov/sites/dolgov/files/ILAB/merl/MEL-Plan-Template-OTLA-ME-Services-CLEAN-2-09-24-508-3.pdf>. Available in Spanish at: <https://www.dol.gov/sites/dolgov/files/ILAB/MEL-Plan-Template-OTLA-ME-Services-CLEAN-1-30-24-spa-CAEE-508.pdf>.

8. **Baseline timeframe:** When will you collect baseline data and what timeframe will those data represent? (If you are relying on other people’s data, the timeframe for the data may be earlier than the timeframe in which you collect it.)
9. **Rationale for targets:** What are the reasons you chose your targets? (See next section for guidance on target setting.)
10. **Dates of past and planned Data Quality Assessments:** When have you/will you check the quality of the data?
11. **Known data limitations:** What challenges may there be to collecting accurate data? Are there known inaccuracies in the data (e.g., certain populations that are not included in the results) that should be considered when interpreting the data?

More detailed general guidance on selecting performance indicators can be found in [ILAB’s MEL Resource Library](#).

SECTION REVIEW: SELECTING AND DEFINING STANDARD OUTCOME INDICATORS

Key Takeaways



ILAB encourages grantees to complement their use of standard outcome indicators with **CAMEL and learning activities** that help to identify emergent outcomes and changes in the project context; and **custom indicators and disaggregation** that fill in some details around the standard outcome indicators.



Before selecting indicators, grantees should undergo their own process of TOC development. We recommend grantees hold a workshop with key stakeholders to develop their TOC. Afterwards, grantees would select standard outcome indicators that fulfill an information need for key decision makers and/or for project management, learning or adaptation.



Grantees will need to define standard outcome indicators within the context of their own implementation. All the key terms in the standard outcome indicators are defined in the Glossary and Standard Outcome Indicator Reference Sheets (SOIRS), found in **Appendices A and B**.

SETTING TARGETS

Setting targets can be done in one of two ways:

1. **Looking Forward:** Think about the activities the project will be doing in each project reporting period and estimate the results the project can expect to achieve based on those activities.
2. **Thinking Backward:** Think about the outcome the project needs to accomplish so that it can reach the desired impact. Then work backward to determine what targets need to be each year to achieve the necessary outcome. Review the results and check whether they seem feasible, given the project scope of work, resources, and timeline. If not, consider revising the project's expected impact and readjust the targets to be more feasible.

Many projects may benefit from using both methods of target setting. When using either one of these methods, it is important to set realistic timeframes to reaching targets. It may be unreasonable to expect significant progress on outcomes in years 1 or 2 of the project as many aspects of a project take time to materialize. Grantees should carefully consider when they can expect change to occur, and at what magnitude.

When setting targets, it is important to consider issues related to equity and access for hard-to-reach or marginalized populations. Projects should work to ensure that their activities reach underserved communities and populations so that they do not unintentionally contribute to increased inequity (either directly or indirectly in a systemic way). Where possible, ILAB encourages projects to disaggregate targets, meaning that the total is broken down using different categories or characteristics of interest (e.g., by sex or race/ethnicity) as this can help to encourage strategies that will reach and benefit populations with diverse needs and experiences.



SAFE FARM WORKERS INITIATIVE

SETTING TARGETS

Looking Forward: SFWI expects that the first year of the project will be focused on relationship building with key stakeholders and setting up/staffing the worker centers. Awareness raising activities will then begin in Year 2, at which point SFWI expects to see slow and steady increases in demand for safe working conditions, as measured by the number of workers attending meetings at the worker center in a given reporting period.

Using the Looking Forward method, SFWI estimated the following targets for **Indicator 5A. Number of individuals with increased demand for services, benefits, protections, or programs.**

Y1	Y2	Y3	Y4	Y5
0	50	100	200	300

SFWI knows that although women and migrant workers make up a large portion of workers in the agriculture industry, their voices are often underrepresented in discussions about labor safety, and they have unique safety challenges due to discrimination/sexual harassment and the types of jobs they are usually asked to do. SFWI intends to focus its awareness raising activities specifically on these populations to encourage them to attend the meetings and demand safe working conditions. They will also look into the specific challenges these subpopulations may have with attending meetings (e.g., need to take care of children and attend to other expectations in the home) and provide ways to overcome these challenges (e.g., offering childcare) to encourage these subpopulations to attend. Although they will not set specific targets for the disaggregated groups (gender and migrant status), they do make plans to monitor the data closely to ensure they are reaching these populations. They suspect these marginalized populations will be harder to access, and thus make up a smaller percentage of attendees earlier in the project. But with increased awareness and efforts to overcome barriers, SFWI expects these populations to make up a larger share of the population served by the project.

Thinking Backward: SFWI does not think there is a certain number or percentage of farm workers that need to demand safe working conditions for the project to reach the goal of improving working conditions. Thus, they do not engage in the *Thinking Backward* method of target setting.

MEASURING RESULTS

ILAB uses standard outcome indicators to track and report on its outcome domains. Results data on standard outcome indicators provides evidence that ILAB can use to assess performance, validate project design, learn, and improve. There are four levels of results that are usually included in a project's logic model. These include:

- **Activities:** The set of actions taken by a project. *Example: conduct trainings for labor inspectors explaining key items to assess when conducting inspections of mines.*
- **Outputs:** Goods/products/services produced as an immediate result of project activity. *Example(s): Number of trainings.*

- **Outcome:** Changes in conditions, behaviors, attitudes, practices, skills, etc. that lead to the project objective being achieved. *Example: Labor inspectors are better able to assess the safety of workers in the mining industry.*
- **Project Objective:** The most ambitious result for which a project can influence change. *Example: Workers in the mining industry experience safer working conditions.*

The monitoring and reporting on outcomes first require a well-developed logic model or project-specific TOC which describes what outcomes the project intends to influence; *not* what activities or outputs will lead to specific outcomes or when the outputs be completed or undertaken.

When possible, indicators should be disaggregated by relevant sub-categories. It is recommended that grantees choose fewer indicators in favor of deeper disaggregation of these indicators. **Table 3** provides guidance on possible disaggregation for the types of data collected by ILAB partners. Disaggregation will be decided by the grantee, in collaboration with ILAB and key stakeholders based on the project’s objectives and scope. Where relevant, measures should also be disaggregated by category of worker rights, including Freedom of Association and Collective Bargaining; Non-Discrimination with respect to employment; and Acceptable Conditions of Work.

Table 3. ILAB indicator disaggregation options by data type

Individual-Level Data		Institutions, Organizations, or Structures	
Gender	Migration Status	Sector	Institution Type
Sector	LGBTQI+	Establishment or organization size	Type of Private Sector Organization
Age Group	Rural vs Urban	Type of Workplace	Level of Private Sector Organization
Union Status	Location	Type of Worker Organization	Type of Public Sector Organization
Race/Ethnicity	Category of Labor Rights	Employers’ organizations	Level of Public Sector Organization
Disability Status		Type of Other CSO (non-union)	Type of Bipartite or Tripartite Group
Affiliation		Enterprises, farms, factories and workplaces	Location
			Category of Labor Rights
			Government Agency
			International multi-stakeholder initiatives and coalitions
Leverage Points			
Sector/Supply chain		Type of Public Sector Organization	
Establishment or organization size		Level of Public Sector Organization	
Type of Workplace		Type of Bipartite or Tripartite Group	
Type of Worker Organization		Location	
Type of Other CSO (non-union)		Category of Labor Rights	
Type of Private Sector Organization		Level/Nature of leverage	
Level of Private Sector Organization		Power of leverage	

USING STANDARD OUTCOME INDICATORS

ILAB prioritizes learning and encourages grantees to provide ample resources (e.g., funding, staff time, etc.) to analyze, interpret, reflect on, share, and use data for collaboration and adaptation, including at a systems level. Projects should ensure that key decision makers have set aside resources, not just for collecting data, but for analyzing, learning from, sharing, and using the data for adaptation and improvement, as well. Prior to semi-annual reporting, ILAB encourages project teams to meet with key stakeholders to review the results of indicator data analysis and discuss lessons learned and strategies for adaptation based on the results.

REPORTING ON STANDARD OUTCOME INDICATORS

ILAB grantees will use the ILAB Grantee DRF to report on all standard outcome indicators and custom indicators, as per the reporting schedule of your grant. If a grantee's project covers multiple countries, then they need to complete a separate DRF for each country. Any qualitative information should be entered into the narrative of the Technical Progress Report (TPR) template.

The ILAB Grantee DRF consists of five worksheets, found on separate tabs within an Excel spreadsheet.

- **1st sheet - Instructions:** Contains guidance on how to fill out the spreadsheet. Grantees will not enter any information on this sheet.
- **2nd sheet - Grant Details:** Grantees will input basic information about the organization and grant (grantee, cooperative agreement number, project name, country, region, start and end dates, reporting calendar, sectors, labor rights, leverage points, and underserved populations).
- **3rd sheet - PMP:** Grantees will map their project indicators to their equivalent OTLA Standard Indicator. Guidance on what should be included in each column can be found in the Standard Outcome Indicators Reference Sheets (SOIRS) on [ILAB's portal](#). This page will likely only need to be completed once at the beginning of the grant but may be updated as needed.
- **4th sheet - Reporting Form:** Grantees will report baseline values (if applicable), targets and actual values, and disaggregation, for their indicators for each period within their period of performance. Grantees can use the "Reflections" column as an opportunity for interpretation and critical thinking about how to strengthen program results.
- **5th sheet Charts:** Provides automatically generated visualizations of targets and actuals for all ILAB standard outcome indicators. Grantees do not need to do anything to create these charts. They are provided to promote learning from the project data.



APPENDIX A. GLOSSARY OF TERMS

The following glossary of terms in combination with the Standard Outcome Indicator Reference Sheets on [ILAB's portal](#) can be used to support projects in understanding and defining ILAB's Theory of Sustained Change and associated standard indicators.

ACCESS

The ability to consistently and equally use services, benefits, protections, or programs and over time, to continue to use services that were previously supported by the project or program. These services, benefits, protections, or programs need to be available in an effective, predictable, reliable and user-friendly manner. It is important that these services are available to all users (including persons with disabilities, rural populations, and those with limited literacy or information and ICT skills, etc.). See [Get Georgia Reading's page on Access](#) for an example framework on Access.

ACCOUNTABILITY

While the United States' Office of Personnel Management defines it as a condition among individuals and groups of being held answerable for accomplishing a goal or assignment, in monitoring, evaluation and learning, accountability comprises several dimensions. In this TOsC, accountability in a systems framework constitutes a 'culture' of sorts that incorporates normative views on individual, organizational and societal behavior. A culture of accountability is built and strengthened through iterative process of dialogue and exchanges between individuals to agree in common values, and to ensure a shared understanding about goals and ways, to enlarge consensus and responsiveness. By broadening a culture of accountability through these learning processes, organizations can promote sustaining their capacity to comply and learn.¹⁶

ACTIVITY

A distinct, scheduled portion of work performed during the course of a project.

ACTOR

A person or entity that has an influence in the envisaged change process, but may be indifferent to its success, or even ignorant of the change initiative or process. See page 11 of the [Theory of Change Thinking in Practice: A Stepwise Approach](#) for a definition of stakeholder and actor.

ADAPTIVE MANAGEMENT

"An intentional approach to making decisions and adjustments in response to new information and changes in context." See USAID's Learning Lab: [Adaptive Management](#) for more information.

BEHAVIOR

Individual behavior refers to the way humans act and interact. It is based on and influenced by numerous factors, such as lived experience, culture and individual values and attitudes. Systems behavior describes how the system-of-interest responds to various types of triggers. These triggers align with specific types of

¹⁶ Lumino, R. & Gambardella, D. (2020). Re-framing accountability and learning through evaluation: Insights from the Italian higher education evaluation system. *Evaluation*, 26(2), 147-165.

processes of interacting system elements that create the systemic properties or cause specific changes in time and abilities. See [USAID's Primer on Social and Behavior change](#) for information on individual behavior. See Donella Meadows' Thinking in Systems Primer for information on systems behavior.

BIPARTITE/TRIPARTITE

The interaction of two (bipartite) or three (tripartite) parties as equal and independent partners to seek solutions to issues of common concern. Parties may include people, organizations, and/or institutions. In the context of labor rights, the parties involved typically include government, employers, and/or workers. See [ILO's National Tripartite Social Dialogue guide](#) for more information.

CAPACITY

Capacity refers to the knowledge, skills, information, or other forms of human capital among individuals that is necessary to perform a specific function. Organizations can also have "organizational capacity" which refers to their collective ability to use their resources (human, financial, or other) to effect positive change. See "organizational capacity" definition. See Pact's [Organizational Capacity Assessment Handbook](#) for more information on assessing capacity.

COLLECTIVE ACTION

An intentional and agreed-upon process that engages interested parties to take joint actions in support of shared objectives or a shared issue. Please see [USAID's resource on Collective Action](#) for more information.

COLLECTIVE BARGAINING

ILO Convention No. 154 (Article 2) defines [collective bargaining](#) as "all negotiations which take place between an employer, a group of employers or one or more employers' organizations, on the one hand, and one or more workers' organizations, on the other, for (a) determining working conditions and terms of employment; and/or (b) regulating relations between employers and workers; and/or (c) regulating relations between employers or their organizations and a workers' organization or workers' organizations."

COMPLEXITY

Definitions of *complexity* vary between fields. From an evaluation perspective, *complexity* refers to situations in which there is high uncertainty about how to produce desired results *and* great disagreement among stakeholders about the nature of the problem and what, if anything, can be done to address it. *Complexity* may also refer to situations in which change is not linear and/or where change emerges unintentionally from the actions of multiple actors. Such situations often require monitoring and evaluation to be adaptive and responsive to changes in the context. See [USAID's Complexity Aware Monitoring Discussion Note](#) for more information.

COMPLEXITY-AWARE MONITORING, EVALUATION, AND LEARNING (CAMEL)

Includes monitoring approaches that consider the inherently unpredictable, uncertain, and changing nature of complex situations. These approaches complement theory-based monitoring by tracking the uncertain, emergent, contested and dynamic aspects of programming. See this guide to [Complexity-Aware Monitoring Approaches for MOMENTUM Projects](#) for more information.

DEMAND

The [Tufts University FANTA study](#) identified both a supply and demand side to the sustainability of development interventions. That is, for project activities, outcomes, and impacts to continue, the study found that there must be sustained demand for, access to, and utilization of services. To sustain demand, the findings of this study suggest that project participants must perceive that the provided services meet a felt need and lead to

notable improvements in their well-being both during the project and post-project.

DUTIES

Refers to the legal obligations states and public officials have to protect and promote human rights and ensure that people can realize their rights without discrimination. [Within the UN system, each member state has a responsibility and duty to protect, promote and implement all human rights and fundamental freedoms](#), and ensure the due provision of benefits according to clear and transparent eligibility criteria and entitlements, and the proper administration of the institutions and services.

EQUITY

The term “equity” means the consistent and systematic treatment of all individuals in a fair, just, and impartial manner, including individuals who belong to communities that often have been denied such treatment. On February 16, 2023, President Biden issued Executive Order 14091: [Further Advancing Racial Equity and Support for Underserved Communities Through the Federal Government](#), which directs federal agencies to undertake additional efforts to advance equity and promote equitable development, including through foreign policy and foreign assistance. The term “equitable development” refers to a positive development approach that employs processes, policies, and programs that aim to meet the needs of all communities and community members, with a particular focus on underserved communities and populations.

FREEDOM OF ASSOCIATION

The right of workers and employers to organize to defend their interests, including for the purpose of negotiating salaries, benefits, and other conditions of work. It is a fundamental right that underpins democratic representation and governance. See [ILO Convention No. 87](#) for more information.

GENDER

Gender is a cultural construct that determines the characteristics of women, men, girls, boys, and gender fluid or nonbinary individuals. The definition of gender varies from culture to culture and changes over time and therefore must be defined within the specific country context in which ILAB projects operate. It is useful to think of gender as a spectrum, rather than a binary between women and men. Gender expression often includes the norms, behaviors, and roles that are socially attributed with one’s expressed gender and can differ from the sex assigned to that person at birth. Please see [USAID’s resource on gender terminology](#) for further information.

INPUTS

The resources invested that allow programs to achieve desired outputs. See USAID Learning Lab’s [Developing a Project Logic Model](#) guidance for more information.

INSTITUTIONS

Institutions can be interpreted two ways. First, they can be social structures that are collectively created and are continuously altered over time. Institutions can also be “a set of rules governing interpersonal behaviors” (sometimes called “the rules of the game”) that are not owned or possessed by a single actor; rather, they are shared by a larger group or society. See World Bank publication “[The role of institutions in development](#)” for more information.

LEGAL ENTITIES

Individuals, companies, or organizations that have legal rights and obligations.

LEVERAGE POINTS

[Places that you can intervene in a system to bring about change.](#) High-leverage points bring about lasting, system-wide change; low-leverage points bring about limited, temporary change. It is generally more effective and sustainable to act on system structures than respond to events or symptoms.

LINKAGES/NETWORKS

Horizontal linkages (e.g., farmers' co-op) or vertical linkages (e.g., supply chain) or networks can include *individuals, communities, groups, institutions, organizations, corporations, and states* who are interdependent in achieving their goals. This can also be understood as social capital, i.e., the social resources upon which people draw in pursuit of their livelihood and workers' rights objectives. Relationships of trust, reciprocity and exchanges facilitate cooperation, reduce transaction costs and may provide the basis for informal safety nets. Social capital, in the form of collective labor (power) is one of the most important assets for poor people. See [USAID's Resource on Networks](#) for more information.

MENTAL MODELS

Habits of thought or mindsets—deeply held beliefs and assumptions and taken-for-granted ways of operating that influence how we think, what we do, and how we talk. Mental models are how we simplify complexity, why we consider some things more relevant than others, and how we reason. A [mental model](#) is simply a representation of how something works.

MONITORING, EVALUATION & LEARNING (MEL)

Consists of three basic components—monitoring, evaluation, and learning—each of which serve distinct but complementary purposes.

- *Monitoring* is the ongoing and systematic tracking of data and information relevant to project outcomes, outputs, and activities to determine whether desired results are occurring as expected. Often but not always monitoring often relies on indicators, quantifiable measures of a characteristic or condition of people, institutions, systems, or processes that may change over time. Monitoring involves collecting data and information that indicate what is happening in a project and help determine if implementation is on track or if any timely corrections or adjustments may be needed to improve efficiency or effectiveness.
- *Evaluation* is the systematic collection and analysis of information about the characteristics and outcomes of programs and projects to assess program effectiveness, overall performance, and/or to inform decisions about current and future programming.
- *Learning* is a continuous collaborative process between stakeholders and the project by which monitoring and evaluation data is analyzed to identify new knowledge about the system which may not have been known at the beginning of project implementation. Learning plays a critical role in informing adaptive management.

See [USAID's MEL toolkits](#) for more information.

MOTIVATION

[Refers to the conscious and unconscious cognitive processes that direct and inspire behavior.](#) In the context of ILAB projects, motivation may refer to the awareness and recognition of a benefit or rationale to continue to adhere to rules, make use of services or apply practices learned during the project. It may also be understood as “political will”.

NON-DISCRIMINATION

[Freedom from discrimination](#) is a fundamental human right. It is essential for workers to be able to choose their employment freely, to develop their full potential and to be rewarded based on merit. The [1998 ILO Declaration on Fundamental Principles and Rights at Work](#) calls on all member States to promote and realize within their territories the right to be free from discriminatory employment practices. It identifies as fundamental conventions the [Discrimination \(in Employment and Occupation\) Convention, 1958 \(No. 111\)](#) and the [Equal Remuneration Convention, 1951 \(No. 100\)](#).

OCCUPATIONAL SAFETY AND HEALTH

Encompasses issues related to safe and healthy working environments and efforts to prevent workers from occupational injuries, diseases, and deaths.

ORGANIZATIONAL CAPACITY

Organizational capacity can be defined as the overall combination of an organization's ability to attract and sustain support, learn and adapt, align systems for agility, and produce sustainable results. See [MOMENTUM's Organizational Capacity: An Enhanced Framework](#) for more information.

OUTCOME

The higher-level results or effects achieved by project activities, typically in the medium-term or long-term timeframe of the project. See [Better Evaluation's Moving from Outputs to Outcomes guide](#) for more information.

OUTPUT

The direct and immediate products or consequences of a project activity or process. See USAID Learning Lab's [Developing a Project Logic Model](#) guidance for more information.

PARTICIPANTS

Individuals that have been provided with direct services. See the [participatory methods webpage](#) for information on levels of participation.

PRACTICE

Refers to actions or inactions by an organization. A "practice" outcome captures the adoption of actions (or the avoidance thereof) of an organization promoted by a project or program.

PROGRAM

A set of structured activities or a group of related services managed in a coordinated way that convey a benefit not available from managing, delivering or receiving them individually. A program is also a group of projects managed together in order to gain efficiencies on cost, time, technology, etc. ILAB manages foreign assistance projects through two program offices: (1) the Office of Child Labor, Forced Labor and Human Trafficking; and (2) the Office of Trade and Labor Affairs. Project-level evaluation results are used to inform other projects within these programs.

PROJECT

A set of complementary activities, over an established timeline and budget, intended to achieve a discrete result. In ILAB, foreign assistance projects are typically carried out through cooperative agreements. ILAB's MPGs state that monitoring and evaluation requirements apply at the project level.

PROJECT OBJECTIVE

The highest-level result that the project intends to achieve or substantially contribute to.

RESOURCES

Inputs and forms of natural, physical and financial capital (e.g., funding, computers/tech support, vehicles), which may initially be provided by the project or program, but eventually must be provided by local system actors, institutions or structures, that are equipped, capable and motivated to provide and maintain replacement resources. Over time, [a sustained source of resources](#) for each input previously provided by the project is required for sustainability.

RISK

Refers to an uncertain event or condition that, if it occurs, has a positive or negative effect on one or more project objectives. A risk that would have a positive effect on one or more project objectives is an opportunity. [Risk management](#) is a project management process whereby the project team acts to reduce the probability of occurrence or impact of a negative risk, or increase the probability of occurrence or impact of a positive risk.

SERVICE DELIVERY

Any interaction with the public administration or a service-providing NGO during which customers – citizens, workers, residents or enterprises – seek or provide data, handle their affairs, claim their rights or fulfill their duties. These services should be delivered in an effective, predictable, reliable and customer-friendly manner as well as supplied in a manner that is geographically and physically accessible for all customers.

SERVICES

Benefits, protections, or other forms of support provided by actors or institutions within a system. Throughout the guidebook, the term “services” is used to represent all services, benefits, protections, programs, and duties that support workers’ rights.

SEX

A set of biological attributes associated with physical and physiological features. The two main categories of sex are male, female, or intersex. Sex can differ from gender expression.

SOCIAL PROTECTION

Social protection is a human right and is defined by the ILO as the set of policies and programs designed to reduce and prevent poverty and vulnerability throughout the lifecycle. Social protection includes benefits for children and families, maternity, unemployment, employment injury, sickness, old age, disability, survivors, as well as health protection.

STAKEHOLDER / LOCAL ACTOR

An individual, group or organization who may affect, be affected by, or perceive itself to be affected by a decision, activity, or outcome of a project. See page 11 of [Theory of Change Thinking in Practice: A stepwise approach](#) for definitions of stakeholder and actor.

STRUCTURE

[Structure is the network of relationships that creates behavior.](#) As opposed to events and patterns, which are usually more observable, much of what we think of as structure is often hidden. Structures can be both internal, such as religious principles, cultural beliefs, or lived experiences,, as well as external and systemic, such as information and communications systems. Structures are maintained by the values, assumptions and beliefs people have.

SUPPLY

Refers to the geographic and physical accessibility and availability of services, benefits, protections or programs.

SYSTEM

A group of interacting, interrelated, or interdependent elements forming a complex whole. Almost always defined with respect to a specific purpose. The terms system and structure are sometimes used interchangeably. See [Introduction to Systems Thinking](#) for more information.

SYSTEM BOUNDARIES

The edge or limit of a system, as determined by the observer(s). It is what defines what is inside and outside of the system and should include only actors and factors necessary and sufficient for the system's purpose. Boundaries can shift over time and should be reassessed and adjusted when needed.

SYSTEMIC PROBLEM

A complex problem that is a consequence of issues inherent in the overall system, rather than due to a specific, individual, isolated factor. A systemic problem tends to meet a few key criteria: the relationships between the problem and its causes are indirect and not easy to identify; the problem persists or recurs despite our best long-term efforts to solve it; the actors and factors react and interact with one another and behave in different ways together than they behave individually when separate; and the problem itself reacts to our interventions, requiring us to adapt over time.

SYSTEMS CHANGE

Shifting the underlying conditions that are holding the problem in place. Those shifts might include changing actor beliefs, behaviors, and relationships, and/or changing some of the factors like rules, goals, power dynamics, resource flows, etc.

SUSTAINABILITY

“Sustainability” is achieved when outcomes and impacts (and sometimes activities) are maintained or even expanded after a project withdraws its resources through the exit process. A sustainability strategy should represent all the elements of project design that take sustainability into account and should increase the likelihood that project outcomes and impacts and (where relevant) activities continue. Sustainability plans are based on assumptions (which may be implicit or explicit) about mechanisms by which project activities and benefits will be sustained; the validity of these assumptions is a determinant of the success of a sustainability plan.

THEORY-BASED MONITORING AND EVALUATION

An approach to monitoring and evaluation that aims to determine not just *whether* a program works, but *why* it does or does not work. This approach includes mapping out the theoretical causal chain from inputs to

outcomes and impacts, including the underlying assumptions, and then tests that theory. See Better Evaluation's [page on theory-based approaches](#) to evaluation for more information.

TOUCHPOINTS

The individual points of contact between a civic entity or government agency and an individual or customer looking for information, services or support. “Customer journeys” are a set of end-to-end experiences that constitute a series of touchpoints over the life cycle of a customer relationship with a given agency or service. Mapping these journeys is essential to any effort designed to improve service delivery.

TRANSFORMING STRUCTURES AND PROCESSES

Represent the institutions, organizations, policies, power dynamics, legislation and culture that shape lives and livelihoods. They operate at all levels and effectively determine access, terms of exchange between different types of capital, and returns to any given livelihood strategy. *Transforming* structures and processes have a direct impact upon whether people can achieve a feeling of inclusion and well-being.

UNDERSERVED POPULATIONS

Populations sharing a particular characteristic, including geographic communities, which have been systematically denied a full opportunity to participate in aspects of economic, social, and civic life. These communities are defined by Executive Order 13985 titled “Advancing Racial Equity and Support for Underserved Communities Through the Federal Government.” The definition of who is underserved varies by country and should be considered when planning activities. See [executive order](#) for more information.

WORKER RIGHTS

For ILAB technical assistance projects, “worker rights” refers to both core international labor standards and acceptable conditions of work. The International Labor Organization (ILO) identifies five “fundamental principles and rights at work”:

1. Effective abolition of child labor;
2. Elimination of all forms of forced or compulsory labor;
3. Freedom of association and the effective recognition of the right to collective bargaining;
4. Elimination of discrimination in respect of employment and occupation; and
5. A safe and healthy working environment.

U.S. trade law adds to that list “acceptable conditions of work,” covering issues such as wages, hours of work, and occupational safety and health. U.S. trade law calls these “internationally recognized labor rights.” See ILO [Declaration on Fundamental Principles and Rights at Work](#) for more information.

WORKER VOICE

Worker voice is the ability of workers to come together, collectively articulate their demands, and seek better terms and conditions of work. It is a bedrock principle of labor relations. Freedom of association and the right to collective bargaining are core enabling rights that are essential to effective worker voice¹⁷.

¹⁷ For more information, please see page 36 at: <https://www.dol.gov/agencies/ilab/worker-voice>



APPENDIX B. SDGS ASSOCIATED WITH EACH ILAB WORKER RIGHTS THEME

Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), along with their indicators and targets, were developed by the United Nations (UN) in consultation with member states and social partners.¹⁸ ILAB encourages projects to use SDG indicators to assess impact (as opposed to developing ILAB-specific impact indicators). This allows ILAB and its Grantees to demonstrate contribution to the achievement of the SDGs and to engage with government and other funding partners in working toward shared goals, using shared metrics for success. It also allows ILAB to use MEL resources wisely by making use of data others are committed to collecting and tracking. ILAB's ToSC is aligned with a range of SDG impact indicators. The table below could be a useful tool for ILAB project managers and Grantees when selecting indicators that best measure the impact of project activities.

Worker Rights Themes	SDG Indicators
<div style="background-color: #c00000; color: white; padding: 5px; writing-mode: vertical-rl; transform: rotate(180deg); display: inline-block;">Impact on Workers' Rights</div> <p>Freedom of association and collective bargaining</p>	SDGi 8.3.1 Proportion of informal employment in total employment, by sector and sex
	SDGi 8.8.2 Level of national compliance with labor rights (freedom of association and collective bargaining) based on International Labor Organization (ILO) textual sources and national legislation, by sex and migrant status
	SDGi 16.3.3 Proportion of the (working age) population who have experienced a (labor rights) dispute in the past two years and who accessed a formal or informal dispute resolution mechanism, by type of mechanism
	SDGi 16.5.1 Proportion of (workers) persons who had at least one contact with a public official and who paid a bribe to a public official, or were asked for a bribe by those public officials, during the previous 12 months
	SDGi 16.5.2 Proportion of businesses that had at least one contact with a public official and that paid a bribe to a public official, or were asked for a bribe by those public officials during the previous 12 months
SDGi 16.10.1 Number of verified cases of killing, kidnapping, enforced disappearance, arbitrary detention and torture of trade unionists and workers' rights advocates in the previous 12 months	

¹⁸ To learn more about SDGs, visit <https://unstats.un.org/sdgs/>.

Worker Rights Themes

Non-discrimination with respect to employment

SDG Indicators

SDGi 2.3.2 Average income of small-scale food producers, by sex, disability, indigenous status, etc.

SDGi 5.1.1 Whether or not legal frameworks are in place to promote, enforce and monitor equality and non-discrimination in the workplace

SDGi 5.2.2 Proportion of women and girls aged 15 years and older subjected to sexual violence by persons other than an intimate partner in the previous 12 months, by age and place of occurrence (workplace)

SDGi 5.5.2 Increased proportion of women and other underrepresented, underserved or historically marginalized communities in managerial positions

SDGi 8.5.1 Reduced wage gaps for women and other underrepresented, underserved or historically marginalized communities (Average hourly earnings of employees, by sex, race, age, occupation and persons with disabilities)

SDGi 8.5.2 Unemployment rate, by sex, age and persons with disabilities

SDGi 10.2.1 Proportion of (working) people living below 50 per cent of median income, by sex, age and persons with disabilities

SDGi 10.3.1 Proportion of (working age) population reporting having personally felt discriminated against or harassed (in the workplace) in the previous 12 months on the basis of a ground of discrimination prohibited under international human rights law

SDGi 16.b.1 Proportion of (working age) population reporting having personally felt discriminated against or harassed (in the workplace) in the previous 12 months on the basis of a ground of discrimination prohibited under international human rights law

Worker Rights Themes

SDG Indicators

SDGi 1.2.1 Proportion of (economically active) population living below the national poverty line, by sex and age

SDGi 1.3.1 Proportion of population covered by social protection floors/systems, by sex, distinguishing unemployed persons, older persons, persons with disabilities, pregnant women, work-injury victims and the poor and the vulnerable

SDGi 1.a.2 Proportion of total government spending on essential services (education, health and social protection)

SDGi 2.3.1 Volume of production per labour unit by classes of farming/pastoral/forestry enterprise size

SDGi 8.3.1 Proportion of informal employment in total employment, by sector and sex

SDGi 8.8.1 Fatal and non-fatal occupational injuries per 100,000 workers, by sex and migrant status

SDGi 9.2.2 Manufacturing employment as a proportion of total employment

Decent working conditions

SDGi 11.7.2 Proportion of persons victim of physical or sexual harassment, by sex, age, disability status and place of occurrence (work), in the previous 12 months

SDGi 16.1.3 Proportion of (working age) population subjected to (a) physical violence, (b) psychological violence and (c) sexual violence in the (workplace) in previous 12 months

SDGi 16.3.1 Proportion of victims of (workplace) violence in the previous 12 months who reported their victimization to competent authorities or other officially recognized conflict resolution mechanisms

SDGi 16.6.1 Primary government expenditures as a proportion of original approved budget, by sector (or by budget codes or similar) (for Labor Administration/Inspection)

SDGi 16.6.2 Proportion of (working age) population satisfied with their last experience of public services (Labor Sector/Labor Administration Services)

SDGi 17.11.1 Developing countries' and least developed countries' share of global exports (by sector)