A Synthesis of Interim Evaluation Results
from Workers Rights Projects **in Colombia, Honduras, and Mexico**

Evaluation Contractor: Sistemas, Familia y Sociedad Limited (SFS)

Summary of Generic Results, Generalizable Lessons Learned and Replicable Good Practices

Projects Objective and Long-Term Outcomes

⭕ **Workers' Rights Centers (WRC) in Colombia**

Project Objective: To improve compliance with Colombia's labor laws and standards, by improving the ability of workers to understand and exercise their labor rights.

⭕ **Strengthening Government Labor Law Enforcement in Honduras and Mexico**

Honduras Objective: To strengthen administrative labor law enforcement through improved compliance with the Labor Inspection Law.

Mexico Objective: Improved compliance with union democracy-related laws and standards through successful implementation of Mexico's constitutional labor justice reforms.

⭕ **Conciliation and Mediation Training for Conciliation Bodies in Mexico**

Objective: To strengthen the institutional capacity of conciliation bodies in Mexico, including the Federal Center for Conciliation and Labor Registration (CFCRL) and the (State and local level) labor conciliation centers (CCLs) to resolve collective labor disputes.

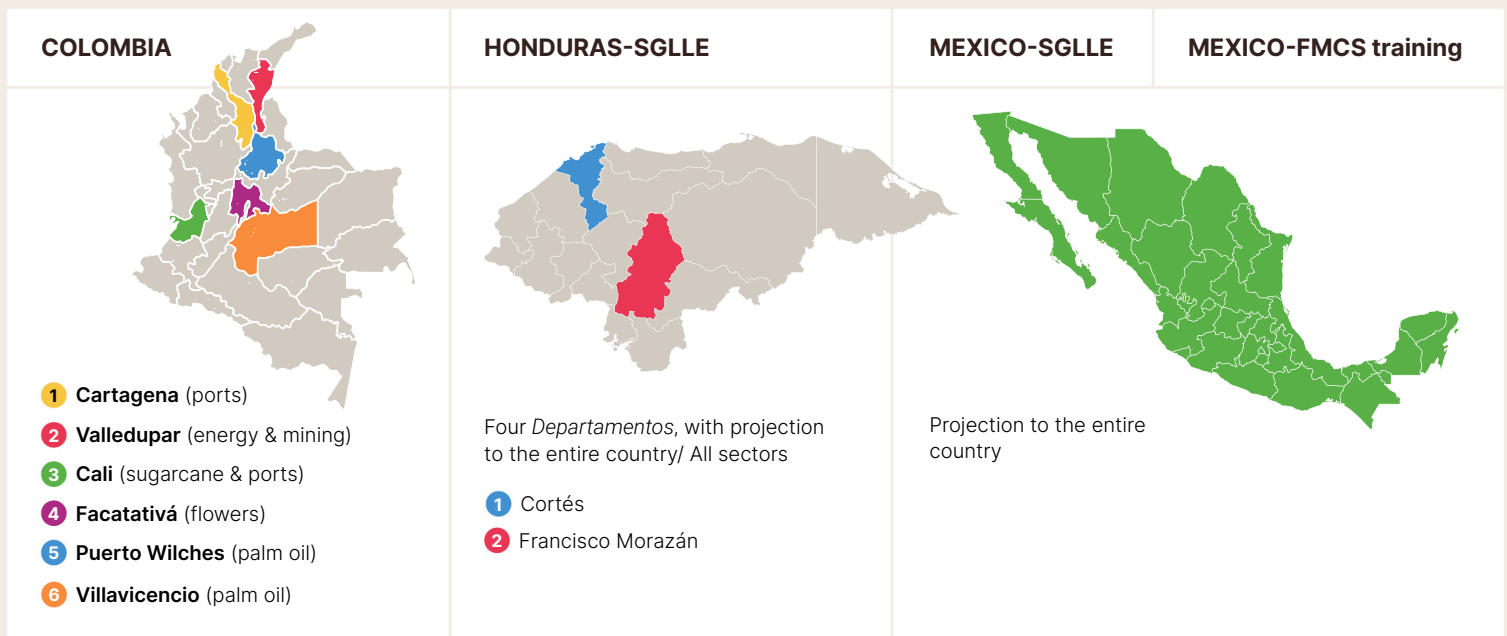|	💰 Funding	📅 Period of Performance
COLOMBIA – WRC	$3,997,766	October 2019 – September 2023
HONDURAS – SGLLE	$2,428,944	January 2019 – March 2024
MEXICO – SGLLE	$28,759,000	November 2018 – December 2026
MEXICO – FMCS training	$664,660	June 2019 – June 2023

(INTERIM EVALUATION)

Cooperative Agreement/MOU Numbers: IL339791975K / IL33979W99 (Colombia Workers' Rights Centers); IL-32809-18-75 K (Honduras-SGLLE and Mexico-SGLLE); MOU 230 -ILAB/FMCS (Mexico FMCS)

Implementers: Colombia: Escuela Nacional Sindical (ENS); **Honduras-SGLLE and Mexico-SGLLE:** American Institutes for Research (AIR); **Mexico-FMCS:** Federal Mediation and Conciliation Services (FMCS)

Workers at Monje mine shaft, Mexico
PHOTO CREDIT: Solidarity Center

Sectors/ Regions per Country addressed by the Three Projects

COLOMBIA

① **Cartagena** (ports)
② **Valledupar** (energy & mining)
③ **Cali** (sugarcane & ports)
④ **Facatativá** (flowers)
⑤ **Puerto Wilches** (palm oil)
⑥ **Villavicencio** (palm oil)

HONDURAS-SGLLE

Four *Departamentos*, with projection to the entire country/ All sectors

① Cortés
② Francisco Morazán

MEXICO-SGLLE **MEXICO-FMCS training**

Projection to the entire country

Implementing Partners addressed by the Three Projects ···

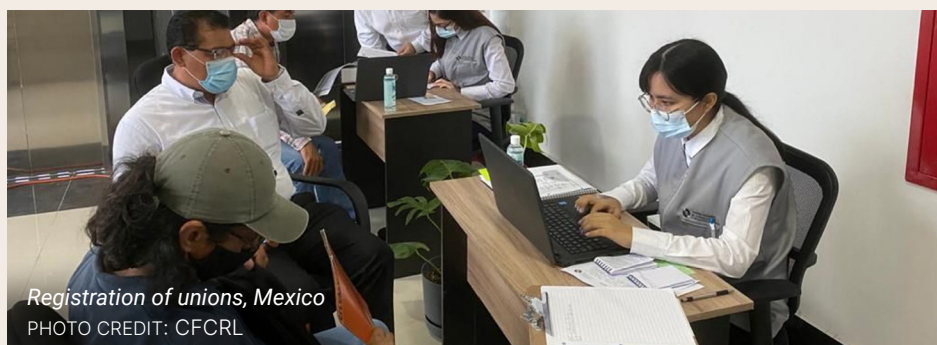| COLOMBIA	• Various sector-related unions • Several local universities supporting Law Enforcement Centers
HONDURAS - SGLLE	• **ATI** – Auditoría Técnica de Inspección (Technical Inspection Audit Unit) • **STSS** – Secretaría de Trabajo y Seguridad Social (Ministry of Labor and Social Security) • **PGR** – Procuraduría General de la República (Attorney General of the Republic) • **DGIT** - Dirección General de Inspección del Trabajo (Labor Inspection Directorate)
MEXICO - SGLLE MEXICO - FMCS training	• **CFCRL** - Centro Federal de Conciliación y Registro Laboral (Federal Conciliation and Labor Registration Center) • **CCL** – State (and local) level labor conciliation centers • **STPS** – Secretaría de Trabajo y Previsión Social (Ministry of Labor and Social Security)

PHOTO CREDIT: PNGWING

Achievements and Sustainability ···

Long-Term Outcomes (LTO) and rating

C Colombia   **H** Honduras   **M** Mexico

✔ WRC Project in Colombia

		LOW	MODERATE	ABOVE-MODERATE	HIGH
LTO #1	Increased referrals of workers in priority sectors to labor law enforcement centers (LECs) for information and legal services.	Achievement			C
		Sustainability C			
LTO #2	Workers accurately identify potential labor law violations in workplaces.	Achievement			C
		Sustainability C			
LTO #3	Labor law enforcement centers and/or workers and activists from the LECs, & grass-roots labor organizations submit well-supported, well-articulated, justiciable claims to initiate inspections and pursue legal remedies.	Achievement			C
		Sustainability C			
LTO #4	Labor law enforcement centers and/or workers effectively track the progress of claims to initiate inspections and pursue legal remedies.	Achievement			C
		Sustainability C			

✔ SGLLE Project in Honduras and Mexico

		LOW	MODERATE	ABOVE-MODERATE	HIGH
LTO #1	Government adoption and/or improved implementation of laws, regulations, and other legal instruments consistent with relevant labor standards.	Achievement H	M		
		Sustainability	H		M
LTO #2	Improved government identification and remediation of labor law violations.	Achievement H			M
		Sustainability	H		M
LTO #3	Improved prosecution of labor law violations.	Achievement H			
		Sustainability		H	

FMCS training activities in Mexico

		LOW	MODERATE	ABOVE-MODERATE	HIGH
LTO #1	Strengthened institutional capacity of conciliation bodies, including the CFCRL and Conciliation Centers, to resolve collective labor disputes.				
	Achievement				M
	Sustainability		M		
LTO #2	Conciliation bodies, including the CFCRL and Local Conciliation Centers, achieve and sustain high-quality conciliations.				
	Achievement		M		
	Sustainability		M		

Specific Accomplishments highlighted in each Project/ Country

Labor Law claim submission	In Colombia, due to LEC trainings and legal assistance provided by the Project, unions and workers submitted 4,096 claims to pursue legal remedies for alleged violations of applicable labor law (sugar cane sector: 1,567 cases; mining/energy: 298; palm oil: 998; ports: 537; flowers: 252; other: 443). The claims were well-supported and articulated, thus justiciable. The courts granted workers' petitions in 45% of cases (30% are still in process or yet to be filed).
ECMS, claims tracking or data sharing structures/ processes	In Honduras, in coordination with *Futuros Brillantes* and the *Procuraduría General de la República* (PGR), the Project is exploring the best technological design to connect the *Secretaría de Trabajo y Seguridad Social* (STSS)'s electronic case management system with the PGR systems.
Union registration and collective bargaining structures/ processes - Remediation structures/ processes	In Mexico, the SGLLE Project supported the signing of interinstitutional agreements between the CFCRL, the Mexican Social Security Institute (IMSS), Tax Administration Service (SAT), and National Population Registry (RENAPO). The agreements with IMSS and RENAPO should increase accessibility to data that verifies the identities and employment relationships of workers on union voting lists. The agreement with SAT should facilitate using existing electronic signatures to share relevant case information. SGLLE helped CFCRL improve the identification and remediation of labor law violations, in addition to developing and transferring the union and collective bargaining agreements (CBA) registration platform to CFCRL.
Conciliation and Mediation structures/ processes	By the time of the interim evaluation, FMCS had trained 222 persons and was on track to train a total of 450 persons before closeout, exceeding its initial target of 300 conciliators, mediators, and judges. FMCS also disseminated training materials, as planned.

Collecting palm fruit in Meta, Colombia
PHOTO CREDIT: AIL-ENS

Registration of unions, Mexico
PHOTO CREDIT: CFCRL

Textile and metal-mechanics workers in Honduras
PHOTO CREDIT: Fe y Alegría

RESPONSE TO COVID-19

✅ Colombia

The COVID-19 pandemic negatively affected the project by reducing the mobility of workers and project staff, which limited meetings, field visits, and other activities. Despite such challenging circumstances, the project adapted and continued providing services, mostly by replacing face-to-face interaction with virtual tools. For example, the project was able to remotely conduct 110 remote trainings reaching a total of 1,099 participants, including workers, union representatives, LEC staff and interns, and CSO members.

✅ Honduras

The lockdowns and travel restrictions resulting from the COVID-19 pandemic contributed to a significant slowdown of Project activities between 2020 - 2021. The Project shifted to virtual work modalities, which was challenging for national stakeholders, particularly within the STSS, due to poor IT infrastructure (many STSS staff did not have teleconference equipment or high-speed internet connection), low levels of computer literacy, and a lack of teleworking culture.

✅ Mexico

- **SGLLE:** In response to the COVID-19 pandemic, AIR implemented activities remotely. COVID-19 affected digitization in seven Conciliation and Arbitration Board centers, where the infection level was high. Travel restrictions delayed digitization for approximately 15 days. Afterwards, contractors were able to reengage and complete the process.

- **FMCS:** As training services were designed to be conducted virtually, the COVID-19 pandemic did not affect the roll out of FMCS' activities.

Sensitization of workers in Mexico
PHOTO CREDIT: CFCRL

Textile production in San Pedro de Sula, Honduras
PHOTO CREDIT: Centro de Comunicación y Capacitación para el Desarrollo

Key Leverage Points relevant to each Project

LEVERAGE POINT	Colombia	Honduras-SGLLE	Mexico-SGLLE	Mexico-FMCS
Oversight/ Audit structures/processes		✅		
ECMS, claims tracking or data sharing structures/ processes		✅		
Fine/ sanction collection structures/processes		✅		
Labor law violation identification	✅			
Labor violation claim submission	✅			
Labor violation claim handling	✅			
Collective Bargaining Agreement structures/processes			✅	
Union registration structures/processes			✅	
Legal accompaniment & other services for workers	✅			
Conciliation structures/processes				✅
Mediation structures/processes				✅
Remediation structures/processes		✅	✅	
Dispute resolution structures/processes			✅	

Leverage Points	Promising Practices	
Legal accompaniment & other services for workers	✅ **Access and Service Delivery** (WRC - Colombia)**:** • Establishing partnerships with universities that provide interns from law schools increases LECs capacity to provide legal services. This also helps foster a new generation of labor lawyers and labor law experts and contributes to sustainability of capacity/knowledge. • Mobile lawyers and/ or "legal caravans" are effective at reaching workers and providing counselling and legal assistance to workers and unions in specific geographic locations. • The use of virtual tools to expand project coverage and provide services for workers and unions.	✅ **Linkages:** Establishing partnerships with unions and CSOs to position the LECs in the targeted territories and attract workers to them (WRC - Colombia). *Sugarcane cutting in Valle del Cauca, Colombia* PHOTO CREDIT: AIL-ENS
Remediation structures/ processes	✅ **Resources:** Recruiting highly competent, recognized, and respected professionals to gain credibility with government partners (SGLLE - Mexico).	
Conciliation and Mediation structures/ processes	✅ **Demand:** Providing counseling services leads to the engagement of workers and unions in mediation processes with employers, which in turn have a high level of success among parties (WRC - Colombia).	✅ **Resources:** • Assembling a motivated training team consisting of experienced conciliators and mediators, who are also experienced trainers (FMCS - Mexico). • Using a variety of methods during different phases of the training process to assess training effectiveness, including pre and post-tests, on-going assessments of training by trainers, end-of-training evaluations, and online surveys (FMCS - Mexico).
Oversight/ Audit structures/ processes	✅ **Capacity:** The Project approach to the legalization of labor law procedures provided a logical workflow for capacity building. Institutions were able to subsequently develop planning tools for the technological platform needed for labor inspection audits (SGLLE - Honduras).	
ECMS, claims tracking or data sharing structures/ processes	✅ **Access and Motivation:** Developing flexible information technology (IT) solutions, tailored to recipients' institutional capacities maximized uptake and sustainability. These tailored systems fostered ownership and reduced maintenance costs (SGLLE - Honduras). ✅ **Capacity:** Working together with implementing partner's staff to build their capacity to maintain and update technologies (SGLLE - Mexico).	✅ **Resources:** • Licensing free open-source software that does not require license renewals (SGLLE - Mexico). • Developing an innovative, cloud-based, internal quality control system to expedite digitization (SGLLE - Mexico).

Recommendations 💬

I. RECOMMENDATIONS ON **PROJECT DESIGN, AND MONITORING AND EVALUATION (M&E)**	USDOL & other funders	Grantees & implementers	Public Sector	Private Sector	Civil Society Partners
1 **Avoid developing outcomes for global projects when the target countries are not known, and issuing Funding Opportunity Announcements (FOAs) that limit the scope of projects in ways that constrain project's effectiveness/impact.** When feasible, project design should be completed when country-specific needs and priorities are understood.	✅ USDOL & other funders				
2 **Include within USDOL funding opportunity announcements a mechanism to facilitate project revision,** allowing to flexibly adjust the interventions as needed during implementation, avoid overlapping and to complement/ contribute to collective impact/action (in a coordinated way as opposed to working in silos).	✅ USDOL & other funders				

	USDOL & other funders	Grantees & implementers	Public Sector	Private Sector	Civil Society Partners
3 Incorporate contract-like requirements in cooperative agreements, when **appropriate.** These might include pay for performance of specific deliverables and/or an incremental approach where interventions or geographical expansions are phased in over time.	✓ USDOL & other funders				
4 Use M&E data for learning and adaptation. The Office of Trade and Labor (OTLA) M&E team and project managers should work more closely together on the review of monitoring plans and progress **during implementation**, so OTLA M&E staff are able to coach and mentor project managers who lack M&E experience.	✓ USDOL & other funders	✓ Grantees & implementers			
5 Promote the development of integrated projects addressed to tripartite stakeholders.	✓ USDOL & other funders	✓ Grantees & implementers			
6 Improve institutional data collection and knowledge management processes. For example, in the case of **WRC-Colombia**, by strengthening data collection, organization, analysis of project information, and systematizing the gathered knowledge. In the case of **SGLLE-Mexico**, by ensuring that learning and continuous improvement processes are incorporated in the revised SGLLE M&E system.		✓ Grantees & implementers			

II. RECOMMENDATIONS ON **OVERSIGHT/ AUDIT STRUCTURES/PROCESSES**

	USDOL & other funders	Grantees & implementers	Public Sector	Private Sector	Civil Society Partners
7 Strengthen strategic advocacy with national stakeholders. SGLLE-Honduras should make strategic use of its participation in the MAP tripartite monitoring committee to advocate for STSS' commitment to support the improvement of ATI capacities and authority within STSS. USDOL should continue mobilizing STSS and PGR to generate ownership of the project and to foster SGLLE participation in the MAP tripartite monitoring committee.	✓ USDOL & other funders	✓ Grantees & implementers			
8 Expand the ATI staff training package. SGLLE-Honduras should equip the ATI with a stand-alone training package to be provided to new staff.		✓ Grantees & implementers	✓ Public Sector		
9 Reinforce procedures within ATI regarding its preventive and quality control role. SGLLE-Honduras should provide detailed, step-by-step guidance on how to conduct preventive and quality control audits, disseminate the results of the audits to DGIT and other relevant departments, and provide actionable recommendations for improvement.		✓ Grantees & implementers	✓ Public Sector		
10 Improve outcome measurement in the M&E framework in the SGLLE-Honduras Project. This can be done by including quantitative indicators that measure the contribution of ATI's oversight to the Labor Inspectorate's improved compliance with inspection procedures and labor law.		✓ Grantees & implementers			

III. RECOMMENDATIONS ON **CONCILIATION AND MEDIATION STRUCTURES/ PROCESSES**

	USDOL & other funders	Grantees & implementers	Public Sector	Private Sector	Civil Society Partners
11 Develop a methodology to assess client satisfaction with the conciliation **process.** SGLLE-Mexico should provide technical support to CFCRL to develop/embed this system within its procedures.		✓ Grantees & implementers	✓ Public Sector		

IV. RECOMMENDATION ON **SOCIAL COMPLIANCE STRUCTURES/PROCESSES**

	USDOL & other funders	Grantees & implementers	Public Sector	Private Sector	Civil Society Partners
12 Create/strengthen linkages to support compliance with labor law. For example, in the case of **WRC-Colombia**, initiate a dialogue with employers and explore possibilities for their inclusion in joint activities and exchanges, including the adoption of best practices that protect workers' rights. In the case of **SGLLE-Mexico**, create linkages between unions, organizations working with unions, and CFCRL within the new project component that aims to increase organizations' compliance with the labor law (Component 2). In the case of **SGLLE-Honduras**, the Project should expand its engagement with workers' organizations and advocate to include the three main national trade unions (CGT, CUTH, and CTH) on the MAP tripartite monitoring committee.		✓ Grantees & implementers	✓ Public Sector	✓ Private Sector	✓ Civil Society Partners

V. RECOMMENDATIONS ON **ECMS, CLAIMS TRACKING OR DATA SHARING STRUCTURES/PROCESSES**	USDOL & other funders	Grantees & imple-menters	Public Sector	Private Sector	Civil Society Partners
13 Improve IT departments' capacities for sustainability.		✓ Grantees & implementers	✓ Public Sector		

VI. RECOMMENDATIONS ON **LEGAL ACCOMPANIMENT & OTHER SERVICES FOR WORKERS**	USDOL & other funders	Grantees & imple-menters	Public Sector	Private Sector	Civil Society Partners
14 **Develop a protocol for addressing the risk of retaliation to workers,** project beneficiaries, and other LEC users, as originally planned in the project design. (Colombia)		✓ Grantees & imple-menters			
15 Encourage the use of alternative dispute resolution to mitigate labor-rela-ted conflicts between employers and workers.	✓ USDOL & other funders	✓ Grantees & imple-menters	✓ Public Sector	✓ Private Sector	✓ Civil Society Partners

VII. RECOMMENDATION ON **UNION REGISTRATION STRUCTURES/PROCESSES**	USDOL & other funders	Grantees & imple-menters	Public Sector	Private Sector	Civil Society Partners
16 **Assess trade union platform user experiences during the final evaluation of the Project.** Ensure that the SGLLE-Mexico final evaluation includes questions that address trade unions' use of the registration platform. These questions will track user experiences.	✓ USDOL & other funders	✓ Grantees & imple-menters			

VIII. RECOMMENDATION ON **ENHANCING PROJECTS' SUSTAINABILITY**	USDOL & other funders	Grantees & imple-menters	Public Sector	Private Sector	Civil Society Partners
17 **Develop a sustainability strategy and exit plan,** by evaluating the results achieved thus far, as well as the expected challenges and the updated status of the "enabling environment". - Identify changes from the projects' underlying assumptions, risks, and miti-gation strategies. - Consider how methodologies, knowledge, and procedures developed by the project will be embedded within institutional and professional development processes. - Identify pathways and milestones for the gradual transfer of responsibilities from the project to national and local institutions or networks. (Colombia, Honduras, Mexico)		✓ Grantees & imple-menters	✓ Public Sector	✓ Private Sector	✓ Civil Society Partners

Federal Mediation and Conciliation Service staff
PHOTO CREDIT: FMCS

Flower grower near Facatativá, Colombia
PHOTO CREDIT: AIL-ENS