



Final independent clustered evaluation of ILO ROAF RBSA interventions on formalization – Evaluation Report

Evaluation process

Project periods: 2021-2025, 20 to 24 months, with varying start dates. Budget: RBSA Chad USD 450,000, Guinea-Bissau USD 450,000, Tanzania USD 400,000; The Gambia USD 500,000

34 stakeholders consulted

44% female, 56% male.



Evaluation period: June 2025 to August 2025



Desk review, virtual inception calls, virtual interviews and field visits to Guinea-Bissau and Tanzania

Intended evaluation users

ILO Country Offices, national governments and ministries of Tanzania, Guinea-Bissau, The Gambia, and Chad, ILO technical units, and tripartite constituents.



Evaluation purpose



Support accountability for results and to enable learning. Relevance, project design, coherence, efficiency, effectiveness, progress of impact and sustainability

Key findings



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● Achieved ● Not achieved

Relevance

- Strong Alignment with Country and Beneficiary Needs;
- Strong gender responsiveness
- Consistency with ILO Normative Frameworks: Recommendation 204
- Validity of project design: a fully-fledged logframe was only for Tanzania available; Project designs emphasized feasible and high-leverage entry points



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● Achieved ● Not achieved

Effectiveness

- Most intended outputs were achieved, particularly in terms of diagnostics, strategy development, and awareness-raising, validating the reconstructed Theory of Change.
- Pilot initiatives and digital tools showed high potential for scalability
- Quantitative assessment varied depending on the availability of indicators and baseline data.



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● Achieved ● Not achieved

Coherence

- Strong normative coherence by aligning with key ILO instruments, primarily Recommendation 204 (transition to formal economy) but also Recommendation 202 (social protection floors)
- Strong alignment with national priorities, and SDGs (1, 3, 5, 8, and 10).
- Generally complementary to ongoing ILO and UN efforts



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● Achieved ● Not achieved

Potential impact

- The projects contributed to increased visibility and legitimacy of informal workers
- Evidence of positive change at beneficiary level was clearest in Tanzania and Guinea-Bissau
- Institutional impacts: adoption or drafting of national social protection strategies (e.g. in Guinea-Bissau and The Gambia), and the revitalization of social dialogue mechanisms.



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● Achieved ● Not achieved

Efficiency

- Administrative bottlenecks and delays in fund disbursement: Chad and Guinea-Bissau
- Tanzania and The Gambia: leveraged in-kind support and complementary resources from partners such as UNCTAD, UNDP, and the UN Kigoma Joint Programme/Belgian Development Cooperation,
- Staffing constraints, such as absence of dedicated administrative support and system access for Project Managers (Guinea-Bissau)



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● Achieved ● Not achieved

Likelihood of sustainability

- Local ownership and institutional commitment varied
- The sustainability of interventions depends heavily on continued government engagement
- Lack of dedicated financial resources and limited institutional capacity
- Where projects were linked to broader donor or UN initiatives sustainability prospects improved due to continued technical support and policy coherence.

Success factors and challenges

- Strong alignment with national priorities and ILO standards, effective partnerships, and a gender-responsive, evidence-based approach
- Challenges in staffing, administrative bottlenecks, and short project duration constrained outcome-level achievements.

ILO positioned

Guinea-Bissau: RBSA project manager with SDG 3 leadership in UNCT, representing the ILO

Funding leveraged

The Gambia: USD 0.94 follow-up funding from UNCTAD (450K) and UNDP (20 K) for each USD of ILO funding invested

Reach enhanced

Tanzania: # of first-time formalization and license renewals. Increase from 490 through direct RBSA funding to 2600 through using ILO project tools in Joint UN programme

"The enforcement agencies reportedly transition from punitive to supportive roles concerning informal businesses in Tanzania."

Selected recommendations

1 For new formalization projects, adopt an integrated and context-sensitive approach to formalization: combine policy and institutional support with targeted capacity building and tripartite plus stakeholder engagement

2 Systematically map and align projects with existing national and international initiatives to build synergies and avoid fragmentation.

3 Combine technical tools with capacity-building and tailored communication to maximize results and reach.

4 Ensure basic administrative infrastructure and system access are in place before deployment of field staff.

5 Promote behavioral change through peer-to-peer learning and role models from the informal economy.

6 Embed project outputs within institutional frameworks and reinforce tripartite structures to support long-term ownership.

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