International Labour Organization

Evaluation Office

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Independent Final Evaluation of ProAgro YOUTH: support to integrated agribusiness hubs in Algeria, Côte d'Ivoire, Madagascar and Malawi

ILO DC Symbol: RAF/21/18/IFA

Type of evaluation: Project evaluation
Evaluation timing: Final
Evaluation nature: Independent
Country(ies): Algeria, Côte d'Ivoire, Madagascar, Malawi

P&B Outcome(s): Outcome 3: Economic, social and environmental transitions for full, productive and freely chosen employment and decent work for all

SDG(s): SDGs 4.4, 8.5, 8.6
Date when the evaluation was completed by the evaluator: December 2025

Date when evaluation was approved by EVAL: 11 March 2026

ILO Administrative Office: ROAF, Co-Abidjan, Co-Antananarivo, Co-Lusaka, Co-Algiers
ILO Technical Office: ROAF, EMPLAB (HQ), Decent Work Teams – Dakar, Cairo and Pretoria
Joint evaluation agencies: None
Project duration: May 2022 to September 2025
Donor and budget: IFAD, BMZ, Visa Foundation /EUR 4,333,000
Evalaution budget: US$ 39,854

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Key Words: Agriculture, decent work, job creation, social and economic development, knowledge management

This evaluation has been conducted according to ILO's evaluation policies and procedures, including EVAL Checklist 4.2. Preparing the evaluation report.

The document was edited using Copilot, an AI-powered writing assistant licensed to Economistas de la Cooperación SL (ECOPER). It has not been professionally edited but has undergone quality control by the ILO Evaluation Office.

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Acronyms

ABH	Agribusiness Hubs
AEJ	Youth Employment Agency (Côte d’Ivoire)
AIM	Association Agro Industries of Madagascar
ANADE	Algeria National Agency for Entrepreneurship Development
ANADER	National Agency for Rural Development (Côte d’Ivoire)
ANEM	Algeria National Employment Agency
BNEDER	National Office for Land Development and Rural Equipment (Algeria)
CAPP	Community Action for People Participation
CI PME	Côte d’Ivoire SME Promotion Agency
CRE	Club de Recherche Emploi
DG AGRI	Directorate-General for Agriculture and Rural Development (European Commission)
DWCP	Decent Work Country Programme
ECAM	Employers’ Consultative Association of Malawi
EMPLAB	Employment Policy Department (ILO HQ)
FAFOTRAJ	Farmers Forum for Trade and Social Justice
FGDs	Focus Group Discussions
FTCD	Short Technical Courses (Algeria)
GBV	Gender-Based Violence
IAF	Integrated Agribusiness Framework
IDE	Immersion Découverte en Entreprise
IFAD	International Fund for Agricultural Development
ILO	International Labour Organization
KII	Key Informant Interviews
LUANAR	Lilongwe University of Agriculture and Natural Resources
M&E	Monitoring and Evaluation
MCTU	Malawi Congress of Trade Unions
MFEP	Ministry of Vocational Training (Algeria)
MIT	Malawi Institute of Tourism
NEET	Not in Employment, Education, or Training
NESDA	National Agency for Entrepreneurship Development (Algeria)
NGO	Non-Governmental Organization
PND	National Development Plan (Côte d’Ivoire)
QHSE	Quality, Health, Safety, Environment (Algeria)
SDG	Sustainable Development Goal
SME	Small and Medium Enterprise
SRE-CFA	Regional Agricultural Training and Development Service (Madagascar)
WIL	Work-Integrated Learning
YOUTH	Support to Integrated Agribusiness Hubs in Algeria, Côte d’Ivoire, Madagascar and Malawi

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Executive Summary

Project purpose, logic, and structure

The ProAgro YOUTH programme, implemented by the ILO with IFAD and other partners, aimed to promote decent employment for rural youth in Algeria, Côte d'Ivoire, Madagascar, and Malawi through integrated agribusiness hubs that link training, job placement, and entrepreneurship support to local value chains. Conceived as a pilot, the project combined two mutually reinforcing components: (i) **country-level implementation**, focused on creating and operationalizing hubs to deliver responsive upskilling services, which are tailored training, skill-building, business incubation, mentorship and employment interventions that adapt to local labour market and youth needs to enhance young people's agricultural and rural employment and entrepreneurship opportunities [1] and (ii) **knowledge generation and policy influence**, designed to document lessons, produce diagnostics, and inform regional and global debates on youth employment. Within this structure, the intervention logic integrated two tracks—wage employment and self-employment—under an inclusive framework targeting NEET youth, especially women, and embedding gender equality and non-discrimination principles. Agribusiness hubs were conceived as ecosystems connecting training institutions, private-sector actors, financial services, and public agencies, while generating evidence and scalable practices for future programming.

Evaluation scope and methodology

The final evaluation covered the full implementation period (July 2022–September 2025) and included field missions to Malawi, Madagascar, and Côte d'Ivoire, while Algeria was assessed through a separate country analysis. The ProAgro YOUTH programme was part of the IFAD Agribusiness Hub Programme, which was implemented in nine countries, including the four covered by this evaluation. A separate evaluation of the Agribusiness Hub Programme covered Algeria as well as the five participating countries not included in this evaluation. Implemented under a tight four-week timeframe, this evaluation applied a mixed-methods approach combining documentary review, field missions, interviews, focus group discussions, and an online survey. Data collection tools were adapted to country contexts and guided by an evaluation matrix aligned with OECD/DAC criteria and ILO standards. Triangulation of qualitative and quantitative evidence ensured analytical depth, with interviews targeting ILO staff, implementing partners, tripartite constituents, and youth beneficiaries, and FGDs stratified by gender and vulnerability status. The survey, available in multiple languages, complemented field data and captured beneficiary perspectives on training relevance, employment outcomes, and future aspirations. Limitations included compressed timelines and uneven survey representativeness across countries; these were mitigated through triangulation of data sources and adaptive planning during field missions.

[1] We refer to the whole responsibe upskilling services as capacity building in the rest of the document, commenting on the single components as appropriate.

Key findings by criteria

Relevance and Coherence

The programme was highly relevant to youth employment needs in rural Africa, addressing skill gaps and barriers to decent work through integrated agribusiness hubs. It aligned strongly with national employment strategies, SDG targets, and regional frameworks such as the African Union's Agenda 2063 and the ILO Abidjan Declaration. Diagnostic studies and value chain mapping ensured contextual adaptation, identifying priority sectors like dairy and horticulture in Malawi, cassava and cashew in Côte d'Ivoire, and agro-processing in Madagascar. Gender and inclusion principles were embedded in design, though cultural barriers in Algeria limited women's participation [2]. Complementarity with other initiatives was evident, leveraging ILO's technical expertise and tripartite networks, but synergies with financial institutions and IFAD investment programmes were limited.

Effectiveness

The programme substantially exceeded its quantitative targets, facilitating **14,255 jobs against an initial target of 5,600**[3], representing an achievement rate of 255%. Wage employment accounted for 72% of outcomes, driven largely by Algeria's strong institutional anchoring and extensive placement infrastructure, while self-employment represented 28%. The distribution between tracks varied by country: Algeria achieved 79% wage employment, whereas Malawi and Madagascar recorded more balanced ratios (around 50/50). Training was practical, short, and market-relevant, with high satisfaction ratings (average 4.5/5) and strong application of learning across key domains such as starting and running businesses, job search, and performance in wage roles. Beneficiaries reported significant improvements in employability and confidence, and implementing partners confirmed that training addressed real market needs.

However, the quality and sustainability of jobs varied. Many wage placements were short-term or seasonal (e.g., mango processing in Côte d'Ivoire and hospitality in Malawi), and self-employment outcomes were constrained by lack of start-up capital and limited access to finance. While hubs provided technical training and business planning, structured mechanisms to link youth with financial institutions were missing, reducing the viability of entrepreneurial pathways. Component 2 produced knowledge products, policy briefs, and facilitated regional dialogues, but its potential for capitalization was not fully realized: the agribusiness hub concept remained vaguely defined, and initially-planned tracer studies were not implemented due to operational and resource constraints, limiting systematic assessment of long-term outcomes. Despite these gaps, the

[2] These cultural barriers were not explored in detail, notwithstanding the availability of recurrent technical support from IFAD, as the short project timeframe and ambitious implementation schedule required prioritization of core delivery activities over additional time and effort to address these issues.

[3] These numbers are current as of July 2025 (Detailed Progress ALL_Countries_September 2025.xlsx). Numbers around gender or type of employment by country should be assumed to come from this source, unless otherwise attributed.

programme demonstrated strong adaptability, leveraging partnerships and contextual innovation to overcome logistical and institutional challenges.

Efficiency

The project demonstrated strong cost-effectiveness by leveraging existing infrastructure, mobilizing local expertise, and maintaining low unit costs per trainee without compromising quality or scale. Community-based delivery models and partnerships with national training institutions minimized overhead costs and facilitated efficient resource allocation. A case study in Malawi illustrates this variation: the average unit cost of employment facilitation was **USD 281 per job**, but costs ranged widely—from over USD 1,000 for internships in the dairy and hospitality sectors to as low as USD 66 for informal farmer training. Similar patterns of cost-efficiency were observed elsewhere; for example, partners in Côte d'Ivoire exceeded training quotas within the same budget envelope. Timeliness was generally achieved through flexible planning and adaptive coordination, though delays occurred in all countries due to logistical constraints and administrative bottlenecks. Efficiency was reinforced by strong partnerships, which reduced transaction costs and enabled rapid rescheduling when disruptions arose.

Impact and Sustainability

The programme contributed to improved employability, income generation, and institutional learning, laying foundations for systemic change. Positive spillover effects included informal incubation, peer mentoring, replication of internship models by private firms, and other models of work-based learning. However, sustainability remains uncertain due to the absence of a formal exit strategy and persistent barriers to finance. Institutional uptake was strongest in Algeria, where services were embedded in public systems, while other countries initiated steps to integrate training into national frameworks. Long-term impact will depend on addressing structural gaps in financial inclusion and financial infrastructure.

Cross-Cutting Issues

Gender inclusion was a strong feature in Sub-Saharan countries, with women representing 46–53% of beneficiaries, supported by flexible eligibility criteria and women-led hubs. In Algeria, cultural norms limited outcomes for female participants, with only 17% of beneficiaries being women. Disability inclusion remained limited, with only 7% of survey respondents reporting a disability, underscoring the need for clearer operational measures for scale-up, such as minimum accessibility standards, targeted outreach, and partner selection criteria to ensure inclusive delivery. Normative integration was reflected in curriculum harmonisation, promotion of labour standards, and OSH guidelines, while environmental sustainability was most systematically operationalised in Algeria through structured support for green entrepreneurship initiatives.

Conclusions

The ProAgro YOUTH programme has demonstrated strong performance in addressing youth employment challenges across four diverse contexts—Algeria, Côte d'Ivoire, Madagascar, and Malawi. **Effectiveness** was overall high, with employment facilitation exceeding expectations:

more than 14,255 jobs were facilitated against an initial target of 5,600, representing an implementation rate of 255%. This success reflects the programme's pragmatic approach and the capacity of local teams to adapt strategies to emerging opportunities. Algeria drove much of this success with 9,368 jobs (852% of its target), primarily through wage employment facilitated by national institutions. The other three countries slightly surpassed their targets, with Madagascar at 1,720 jobs and both Malawi and Côte d'Ivoire at around 1,580. Overall, wage employment represented 72% of results, aligned with the programme's intended **distribution between tracks**, though this balance was largely sustained by Algeria's performance.

While quantitative targets were exceeded, the **quality of jobs** (contracts, social protection, income stability) and lack of financial inclusion constrain long-term impact. Moreover, the nature of self-employment outcomes requires careful interpretation. Quantitative effects are less clear than for wage employment because many entrepreneurs were already active before joining the programme. In these cases, the project's contribution is better measured in terms of productivity, rather than jobs, which was the key indicator used in the project design and implementation. This distinction is critical for assessing sustainability and for refining monitoring tools in future phases.

The intervention was inclusive, **targeting rural youth and seeking gender balance**, with country teams supervising partners' beneficiary selection and focusing on NEETs. Targets for women were achieved in Sub-Saharan countries with a gender balance in employment outcomes ranging between 46% and 53%, but not in Algeria (17%), which affected the overall imbalance in the project's results in terms of gender equality. In Sub-Saharan countries, women not only participated in large numbers but also assumed leadership roles within hubs and partner organizations, demonstrating the transformative potential of gender-responsive approaches.

Relevance was strong because the programme addressed real skill gaps among rural youth and aligned with national priorities. Designed as a pilot initiative, it combined country-level implementation of agribusiness hubs with regional knowledge generation and policy influence. While the **hub concept was flexible** during implementation, said flexibility removed many of the defining features of the model that was meant to be piloted. The programme remained largely output-driven, responding to the urgency of youth unemployment with practical solutions and network mobilization. However, it did not fully realize its potential for bottom-up knowledge capitalization, as logistical and time constraints limited regional learning processes and the systematic documentation of lessons. Notwithstanding this, several important knowledge products were generated, including value chain diagnostics, profiling of youth needs, partnership frameworks with key stakeholders and local institutions, and the adaptation of curricula to local labour market contexts. These provide a foundation that could be more systematically consolidated in future phases through structured knowledge management mechanisms, cross-country learning exchanges, and tracer studies to strengthen the evidence base. The programme also leveraged ILO know-how and institutional networks to design locally relevant employment interventions and adjust strategies to diverse contexts and labour market realities, offering practical experience that can inform more deliberate knowledge capture and application during scale-up.

Enabling factors included flexibility and the ability to leverage ILO networks and technical expertise, which allowed rapid identification of employment promotion opportunities and adaptation to local realities. Two features linked to the intervention logic were particularly important: technical on-the-job training tailored to labour market needs, which facilitated short-term employment, and the role of implementing partners that acted as genuine hubs—embedded in value chains or located in rural spaces functioning as connectors—helping youth establish useful contacts with employers and service providers. Limiting factors included incomplete connections within the hub ecosystem, especially with the financial sector, where linkages and follow-up support for access to credit were missing. While ILO occasionally facilitated such connections, this was not systematic, as the project's primary goal was employment creation rather than hub development. Post-training support and tracer mechanisms were underdeveloped, reducing the ability to monitor long-term outcomes and reinforce entrepreneurial pathways.

Implementation benefited from **enabling factors** such as flexibility and the strategic use of ILO networks. Two enablers stood out: on-the-job training closely aligned to labour market demand, and the role of implementing partners functioning as true hubs that connected youth with employers and service providers. However, incomplete ecosystem linkages—particularly to financial institutions—and limited post-training support reduced the programme's ability to sustain entrepreneurial outcomes and track long-term results. Partnerships were extensive, with 36 implementing partners across 22 locations and 19 value chains, complemented by institutional partnerships that strengthened policy alignment and supported efficiency.

Impact and sustainability are promising. Several innovations tested under ProAgro YOUTH are being integrated into national systems, most notably in Algeria, where job-search clubs, immersion schemes, and entrepreneurship desks have been institutionalized. Malawi and Madagascar made progress in curriculum harmonization and certification, while Côte d'Ivoire advanced in-situ training and inter-agency coordination. Beneficiaries across countries reported maintaining useful links with market actors, reinforcing the relevance of the hub approach. The project acted as a connector between training, employment services, and market actors. Yet, key gaps—especially financial sector connections—still limit the model's full potential. Strengthening hub conceptualization, regional cooperation, and missing ecosystem linkages will be essential to sustain and scale the programme's contributions.

Lessons learned and emerging good practices

This section presents some lessons learned and good practices extracted from the ProAgro Youth experience. Lessons learned capture insights on why an approach worked or did not work, under what conditions, and how it can inform future interventions. Good practices, on the other hand, refer to proven approaches or methods that have demonstrably achieved positive results and can be replicated in similar contexts.

Lesson 1: Support to entrepreneurship requires integrated financial inclusion measures

Training and advisory services alone cannot guarantee sustainable self-employment. Across all countries, lack of start-up capital was the most cited barrier (67% of survey respondents). Future interventions should embed financial linkages—such as partnerships with microfinance institutions, credit schemes, and risk-sharing facilities—into hub operations. This lesson applies broadly to rural youth employment programmes where financial ecosystems are weak.

Lesson 2: Business acceleration complements on-the-job training for systemic impact

While internships and technical training improved employability, systemic change requires enterprise growth. The addition of business acceleration services—such as mentoring, market linkages, and access to finance—would enable SMEs to expand and absorb trained youth. This dual approach strengthens both wage employment and entrepreneurial pathways, particularly in value chains with unmet demand.

Lesson 3: The hub model is effective when fully operationalized

Hubs that acted as connectors—linking training, employment services, and market actors—delivered stronger outcomes than isolated training centres. However, the concept was inconsistently applied, with some interventions meeting some but not all conditions of a hub. While some variety between hubs is understandable, especially given the importance of adapting to local contexts, it is important that hubs meet certain core conditions. Future programmes should define operational standards for hubs, including governance, service packages, and financial linkages, to ensure scalability and systemic impact.

Good Practice 1: Diagnostics for country adaptation

One of the most effective practices observed during implementation was the use of comprehensive diagnostics to adapt the programme to country-specific contexts. Before launching activities, the project teams conducted detailed labour market analyses and value chain mapping exercises, which identified sectors with real employment potential and informed the design of hubs and training content. This approach ensured that interventions were grounded in local realities and aligned with market demand, reducing the risk of skills mismatch and enhancing the relevance of services provided to youth.

Good Practice 2: "Discovery and immersion visits" in agro-food enterprises

A notable good practice under ProAgro Jeunes in Algeria was the introduction of "discovery and immersion visits" in agro-food enterprises to improve job matching and sector attractiveness. This experimental mechanism, implemented with ANEM and supported by ILO technical expertise, allowed young jobseekers to spend time inside companies, observe work processes, and interact with employers before formal placement. By bridging the gap between employment services and enterprises, the initiative addressed mismatched expectations and enhanced youth interest in rural and green jobs. This approach is particularly relevant in contexts where companies face unmet labour demand because young people are reluctant to enter agricultural sectors due to prejudice or lack of awareness of career prospects—a challenge that was not uniformly observed across all ProAgro YOUTH countries, as survey and field mission data indicate varying levels of sector attractiveness. However, this practice has also been observed to potentially limit employability to a select few job-seekers and limit access for other willing workers.

Good Practice 3: Curriculum development and harmonization

Curriculum development and harmonization in Malawi stands out as a third good practice. The project worked closely with TEVETA to align training packages with national standards, incorporating competency-based modules for priority sectors such as horticulture and dairy. This harmonization not only enhanced the quality and recognition of training but also positioned hubs within the national TVET system, creating pathways for certification and formal employment. The process demonstrated how early engagement with national authorities can reinforce sustainability and institutional ownership, while ensuring that training remains responsive to labour market needs.

Good Practice 4: Embeddedness in national employment agencies

One of the most notable achievements of ProAgro YOUTH was the institutionalization of project innovations within Algeria's National Employment Agency (ANEM), transforming territorial agents into proactive connectors between employers and job seekers. With technical support from the ILO, ANEM adopted prospection and placement techniques adapted to the agricultural sector. These innovations strengthened public employment services in rural labour markets, enabling agents to identify job opportunities, improve sector attractiveness, and facilitate matching for youth in agricultural value chains.

This model cannot always be replicated in all contexts, as its success depends on the existence and capacity of public employment institutions with sufficient resources and territorial coverage. However, where these conditions exist, institutionalization of proactive job intermediation can significantly improve labour market outcomes and sustainability. The Algerian government itself could contribute to the replication of this good practice through technical cooperation and triangular cooperation schemes.

Recommendations

Based on previous conclusions and lessons learnt, the evaluation proposes the following strategic recommendations to consolidate gains and inform future programming:

1. Conceptualize and operationalize the hub model

Define the agribusiness hub model with clear operational features, including its role as a connector within value chains and its capacity to integrate training, employment services, and financial linkages. Develop guidance for hub operationalization at country and regional levels to ensure consistency among core features and scalability.

2. Strategically combine hub-based employment support with other interventions and align deployment of ProAgro YOUTH services with the deployment of development finance

While the hub model deserves focal support, the ILO intervention in agricultural labour markets creates other opportunities that enhance consistency and impact, such as development of internship programmes, capacity building of employment agencies, curriculum development and certification of prior knowledge, etc.). These initiatives should be strategically and explicitly related to hubs. Similarly, it would be beneficial to seek strategic complementarity and operational connections with financial institutions, ensuring that access to credit and start-up capital complements training and job facilitation. Also explore business acceleration as a means to foster wage employment in agricultural value chains.

3. Connect ProAgro YOUTH achievements with opportunities in the international development agenda

Look for opportunities for synergies and awareness building around support for women-led farms in the context of 2026 being the International Year of the Woman Farmer. Where possible, use this increased awareness to strengthen and scale gender-responsive entrepreneurship development by providing targeted financial support, business acceleration services, and mentorship opportunities to the emerging women leaders identified in Malawi and Madagascar, and ensure that future programme phases systematically resource and incentivize women’s leadership within hub governance and partner institutions in every country.

4. Use a tracer study to monitor post-placement outcomes and strengthen knowledge management.

Include quality of employment indicators—such as contract status, social protection, and income stability—alongside quantitative targets, to better capture the sustainability and decency of jobs created.

5. Plan and monitor disability inclusion

Incorporate disability inclusion into pre-hub activities by conducting context-specific accessibility and needs assessments, adapting training and physical delivery modalities accordingly, and including disability breakdown in project monitoring tools. Consider adopting context-specific quotas or targets for disability inclusion.

Introduction

This report presents the findings of the final evaluation of the ProAgro YOUTH programme, implemented by the International Labour Organization (ILO) with funding from IFAD. The programme aimed to promote decent employment for rural youth through the development of integrated agribusiness hubs, combining training, incubation, and employment services. Conceived as a pilot initiative, ProAgro YOUTH was implemented in four countries—Côte d'Ivoire, Madagascar, Malawi, and, later, Algeria—to generate scalable models and lessons for future programming. The evaluation was designed to serve both accountability and learning purposes, with a particular focus on informing discussions around a potential second phase.

The team conducted the evaluation over four weeks in September 2025, under a tight timeframe that included field missions, stakeholder consultations, and a regional survey. The scope of this report covers three countries—Malawi, Madagascar, and Côte d'Ivoire—where the team undertook country missions. Algeria's field data collection, including online surveys and focus groups, is being finalised separately and will be integrated into the synthesis at a later stage.

The report is structured as follows:

- **Section 2** presents the evaluation background, including objectives, scope, and criteria.
- **Section 3** outlines the methodology, including data collection tools and country coverage.
- **Section 4** provides preliminary conclusions.
- **Section 5** presents findings organized by evaluation criteria and questions.
- **Section 6** summarises pending tasks and next steps.
- **Annexes** include the evaluation matrix, list of interviews and focus groups, and supporting data.

This is the final evaluation report, incorporating information from country reports for Côte d'Ivoire, Malawi, and Madagascar, as well as discussions held during online validation workshops. Field missions were conducted in these three countries, allowing for direct interaction with stakeholders and beneficiaries. For Algeria, although no country mission was carried out, the evaluation includes analysis from an online survey. A comprehensive review of project documents and monitoring data, complemented by online interviews with the project team and key partners, enabled the integration of Algeria's findings into all relevant sections of this report.

1. Project background

Implemented by the International Labour Organization (ILO) in four African countries, the ProAgro YOUTH project was launched in July 2022 as part of a broader programme on **integrated Agribusiness Hubs (ABH)** led and funded by the International Fund for Agricultural Development (IFAD), with additional funding support from BMZ and the VISA Foundation. Its overarching goal was to promote decent employment for rural youth in four Algeria, Côte d'Ivoire, Madagascar, and Malawi through the development of integrated agribusiness hubs.

According to the **ABH logic,** these "hubs are not just a space for training rural youth; they are where decent jobs for rural youth are brokered. It is a place where the ambitions and aspirations of rural young women and men of different ages meet the potential of rural economies." [4] Hubs are conceived as ecosystems that bring together vocational training institutions, private-sector actors, employment services, youth organisations, financial institutions, and public agencies. Put simply, linking training and support services to local value chains helps promote youth employment and tackle structural challenges such as informal work and seasonal jobs.

The project is explicitly **inclusive**, targeting unemployed youth of different ages in rural and often remote communities who face limited access to formal labour markets and services. Particular attention is given to young women and youth classified as NEET (Not in Employment, Education, or Training), many of whom experience heightened risks of social exclusion, poverty, and migration.

The project was structured around two mutually reinforcing components to **combine direct implementation with strategic learning and policy influence**. The first component focused on country-level implementation, supporting the creation and operationalisation of agribusiness hubs tailored to national contexts. The second component aimed to generate knowledge and influence policy at regional and global levels, through diagnostics, employment studies, and participation in international dialogues. The ProAgro Youth initiative and the wider ABH model were designed as pilot programmes to be expanded across the region. They aim to replicate successful projects and contribute to policy discussions on creating jobs for young people in Africa.

Activities under the first component consisted of identifying hubs in each of the four participating countries and deploying services to end beneficiaries with the view of facilitating access to employment, including upskilling services such as technical and vocational training, business incubation, coaching, market linkages and others. The following table shows the quantitative targets set for this component, which together are intended to facilitate **5,600 jobs**.

[4] Support to Integrated Agribusiness Hubs in Africa: About Us

Table 1. ProAgro Youth quantitative targets (Component 1)

Employment track indicator	Algeria	Côte d'Ivoire	Madagascar	Malawi	Total
Wage-employment:					
1. Youth who have accessed wage employment	**770**	**1050**	**1050**	**1050**	**3.920**
2. Youth provided apprenticeships and internships by employers/agro enterprises	105		25	1050	**1.180**
Self-employment					
3. Youth trained in income generating activities and business management	**330**	**450**	**450**	**450**	**1.680**
4. Individual and/or joint business plans developed	150		150	450	**750**
5. At least 70% of trained youth access financial services	330		225	450	**1.005**
6. At least 50% of business linkages established between agribusinesses owned by trained young people			225		**225**
7. At least 70% of incubated youth have improved market access			315	450	**765**
8. At least 70% of agribusinesses providing services to the farming communities	100		315		**415**
9. 25-50% of finance raised in support of business plans	100		113	450	**663**
10. At least 70% of young people accessing post-hub mentoring services	330		315	450	**1.095**
11. 50-70% of self-employment youth participate/start a business	330		512	450	**1.292**
Both tracks:					
12. Direct Jobs (1+3)	1100	1500	1500	1500	5.600

Source: project data 2025

The second component sought to document lessons from hub implementation, produce diagnostics and employment studies, and **disseminate knowledge** products such as policy briefs and technical guides. This component also supported South-South cooperation and regional advocacy, creating a platform for scaling up successful interventions and informing continental debates on youth employment creation in Africa.

At the country level, the programme adopted a **partnership-based approach** to operationalize agribusiness hubs, leveraging national institutions, private sector actors, and community organizations to ensure contextual relevance and sustainability. The role of the ILO included building connections with local partners, managing and adapting project plans to each national and local context, and gathering information for future phases of the project.

- **ProAgro Jeunes in Algeria** works as a partnership with the National Employment Agency (ANEM), National Agency for Entrepreneurship Development (ANADE) and the National Office for Land Development and Rural Equipment (BNEDER). Activities include stakeholder engagement, value chain studies, business incubation, identification of entrepreneurship opportunities and support for digital solutions in agribusiness. Targeted value chains and locations included dairy (Guelma), fish farming and spirulina (Biskra), and potatoes (Mostaganem).

- In **Côte d'Ivoire**, ANADER, a nationwide extension service, served as the primary hub in various regions, collaborating with private companies such as Eco Cajou, PAN AGRO Commodities, and Ivoire Bio Fruits. These partnerships facilitated training and job opportunities in cashew nuts, poultry, orchard fruits, pepper, and agricultural machinery.

The program's extensive reach—from Boundiali to Grand Lahou—enabled it to engage youth in both urban and rural areas. Additionally, the involvement of agro-processing firms played a crucial role in this initiative. Two main public agencies (and CI PME working to strengthen the capacities of SMEs), facilitated direct market linkages and post-training absorption.

- In **Madagascar**, the programme established hubs across six regions, engaging a mix of technical centres, farms, and cooperatives. Partners such as FIFAMANOR and SRE-CFA provided training in dairy, animal feed, and sugarcane-ethanol, while Green Farm and SEFAFI supported agricultural production and cassava processing. Cooperatives like COOP and Start Coop introduced youth to niche sectors such as ecolanguste. The inclusion of digital marketing and agri-machinery through entities such as Sahy Concept and Natura Madagascar reflected the programme's efforts to diversify employment pathways and respond to emerging market demands.
- In **Malawi**, the program operated through a network of ten partners across all regions. Farms like Roseberry and Kombeza Foods provided practical training in horticulture and dairy farming. Meanwhile, institutions such as the Malawi Institute of Tourism and Kasama Technical College offered vocational education in hospitality and agriculture. Community-based organizations, including CAPP and the Tingathe Women's Forum, played a crucial role in mobilizing youth and ensuring gender inclusion. The involvement of national associations like ECAM helped align the activities of the hubs with broader employment strategies. Additionally, the incorporation of value chains such as baobab juice, aquaculture, and beekeeping demonstrated the program's responsiveness to local livelihoods.

The table below further details the implementation of the hub approach across various countries, regions, and sectors.

Table 2. Deployment of hubs across value chains and locations

Value Chain	Location	Region	Partner
Algeria			
1. Dairy	Guelma	North-East region	ANEM-BNDER-NESDA
2. Fish farming and spirulina	Biskra	South-East region	ANEM-BNDER-NESDA
3. Potatoes	Mostaganem	North-West region	ANEM-BNDER-NESDA
Côte d'Ivoire			
4. IT/Cashew nut	Boundiali	Bagoué	CITA/ANADER
5. Poultry	Korhogo	Poro	ANADER
6. Animal Breeding	Korhogo	Poro	ANADER
7. Cashew nuts	Odienne	Kabadougou	Eco Cajou+Anander
8. Cashew nuts	Korhogo	Poro	ANADER
9. Cashew nuts	Boundiali	Bagoué	PAN AGRO Commoditieis
10. Bio Fruits	Ferkessoudugu	Tchologo	Ivoire Bio Fruits
11. Orchard	Ferkessoudugu	Tchologo	ANADER
12. Pepper	Djebenanvongo	Tchologo	ANADER
13. Agricultural machinery	Grand Lahou	Grands Ponts	ANADER
Madagascar			
14. Sugan cane-Ethanol	Manakara	Fitovinany	SRE-CFA
15. Milk, soya, wheat, animal feed, phytosanitary products	Antsirabe	Vakinankaratra	FIFAMANOR
16. Agriculture/farming	Antsirabe	Vakinankaratra	Green Farm
17. Agri-processing, machinery	Antsirabe	Vakinankaratra	Sahy Concept
18. Digital marketing	Antsirabe	Vakinankaratra	Natura Madagascar
19. Agriculture	Analamanga	Analamanga	Green Farm
20. Tomate-Mais	Ambatondrazaka	Alaotra Mangoro	Dampen
21. Ecolanguste	Taolagnaro	Anosy	COOP and Start Coop
22. Cassava	Vohipeno	Fitovinany	SEFAFI
Malawi			
23. Baobab juice	Lilongwe District	Central, Southern	Naturals Limited
24. Horticulture, Mushroom, Beekeeping	Lilongwe District	All regions	Amazing Bee Projects
25. Hospitality	Blantyre with national scope	All regions	Malawi Institute of Tourism (MIT)
26. Hospitality, Agriculture, Tourism, Sales	Blantyre with national scope	All regions	Employers Consultative Association
27. Dairy	Blantyre district	Southern	Community Action for People Participation (CAPP)
28. Horticulture	Blantyre district	Southern	Roseberry Farms
29. Horticulture, Aquaculture	Several locations	All regions	Farmers Forum for Trade and Social Justice (FAFOTRAJ)
30. Horticulture	Chiradzulu District	Northern	Tingathe Women's Forum
31. Dairy	Blantyre district	Southern	Kombeza Foods Limited
32. Horticulture	Chitipa District	Northern	Kasama Community Technical College

Source: field missions and document review

2. Evaluation background

Evaluation approach

This **final evaluation** was commissioned by the ILO in line with its Evaluation Policy and the OECD/DAC criteria and was conducted by ECOPER between August and September 2025. It follows a mid-term evaluation conducted in 2024 and seeks to provide an independent assessment of the project's performance, strategic relevance, impacts and sustainability.

The evaluation covers the full **implementation period from July 2022 to September 2025**, including the six-month no-cost extension. It examines both country-level interventions and programme-level activities, with a particular focus on the integration of cross-cutting themes such as gender equality, disability inclusion, social dialogue, and environmental sustainability.

The **primary users** of the evaluation include ILO constituents (ministries, trade unions, employers' organizations), national implementing partners, youth organizations, and private sector actors. It also serves the ILO Country and Regional Offices, IFAD, and other donors, as well as regional institutions engaged in rural youth employment. The evaluation aims to improve future programming, enhance organizational learning, and support accountability and strategic planning.

This evaluation was commissioned to serve both accountability and learning purposes. Its goal is to assess the relevance, coherence, effectiveness, efficiency, impact, and sustainability of the ProAgro YOUTH program, which is implemented by the International Labour Organization (ILO) with funding from IFAD. The evaluation aims to provide evidence of the program's performance and results while generating insights to inform future programming. The evaluation team was informed that ProAgro YOUTH was designed as a pilot initiative, with discussions currently underway regarding a potential second phase. This perspective has influenced the evaluation tools and overall approach, focusing on identifying lessons learned and scalable practices.

Geographic scope and timeframe

The evaluation included field missions to Malawi, Madagascar, and Côte d'Ivoire. Algeria, the fourth country of implementation, was subject to a separate country analysis in the context of an evaluation of the IFAD Agribusiness Hub Programme, of which ProAgro YOUTH was a part. A separate evaluation of the Agribusiness Hub Programme included findings from Algeria as well as from all five countries that participated in that program but were not implemented by the ILO. Algeria was therefore not selected for a field mission under this evaluation. The evaluation was conducted under a **tight timeframe of four weeks**, with country missions, data collection, and synthesis taking place between early and late September 2025.

In the first week, the evaluation team finalized the methodological framework and adapted tools to country contexts. A structured **documentary review** was conducted, covering project documents, progress reports, MEL tools, and national development frameworks. Country experts produced annotated review notes linked to the evaluation matrix.

Field missions were carried out in the second week in Madagascar, Malawi, and Côte d'Ivoire. These missions included in-person interviews with implementing partners, tripartite constituents, and youth beneficiaries, as well as site visits to agribusiness hubs and training institutions. Focus group discussions were organized to capture collective experiences, with groups stratified by gender, employment track, and vulnerability status. Implementing partners were not present during FGDs to ensure open dialogue.

During the third week, a short **online and phone-based survey** was deployed to reach youth beneficiaries who could not participate in FGDs due to geographic or digital barriers. The survey was available in Arabic, Chichewa, English, French, Malagasy and collected data on training satisfaction, employment outcomes, and future aspirations.

Finally, during the fourth week, the team consolidated findings and conducted complementary online interviews with **regional stakeholders**. The final week was devoted to developing the first draft.

3. Evaluation criteria and questions

The evaluation used the six standard OECD/DAC criteria—relevance, coherence, effectiveness, efficiency, impact, and sustainability—alongside the ILO's cross-cutting themes. These criteria were implemented through a detailed matrix of evaluation questions, which were developed during the inception phase and validated with ILO stakeholders.

- Under **relevance**, the evaluation explored the alignment of the project's design with the needs of rural youth and national stakeholders, the quality and feasibility of the project design, and the extent to which it leveraged ILO's comparative advantages, including tripartism and international labour standards.

- **Coherence** was assessed in terms of the project's fit with national development strategies, UN frameworks (UNSDCF, DWCPs), and global policy outcomes, as well as its complementarity with other initiatives.

- The **effectiveness** criterion focused on the achievement of planned results, the emergence of unintended outcomes, and the robustness of monitoring and management systems, particularly in countries without permanent ILO presence.

- **Efficiency** examined the use of resources, timeliness of implementation, and the quality of partnerships at national and regional levels.

- Under **impact and sustainability**, the evaluation considered long-term contributions to youth employment and the SDGs, the institutionalization of tools and approaches, and the existence of viable exit strategies.

- Finally, the evaluation addressed **cross-cutting issues**, including gender equality, disability inclusion, social dialogue, labour standards, and environmental sustainability, both in design and implementation.

These criteria were operationalized through a set of **evaluation questions** validated during the inception phase and applied consistently across country missions. The questions guided data collection and analysis as illustrated in the evaluation matrix below (See methodology appendix).

Table 3. Evaluation questions

EQ #	Short Name	Full question
R1	Response to needs	To what extent have the program's objectives and activities aligned with and effectively responded to the identified needs and priorities of its key stakeholders, the final beneficiaries (i.e., men and women)?
R2	Logical consistency	Are the project's strategic elements (objectives, outcomes, outputs, implementation strategies, targets, and indicators) achievable? Is the theory of change and intervention logic realistic, purposeful, and effective? What should be done differently?
R3	Inclusion in design	To what extent does the design of the project consider gender, non-discrimination, and inclusion?
R4	ILO value added	Has the project been able to leverage the ILO contributions, through its comparative advantages (including tripartism, international labour standards, etc.)?
C1	Policy alignment	To what extent have project activities aligned with the national and international development priorities, UNSDCF, DWCP, ILO and IFAD's Global Policy Outcomes, SDGs, and relevant targets, especially those identified as priority in the national development strategies?
C2	Context sensitivity	Has the specific context of each country and the interests of different stakeholders and final beneficiaries been sufficiently considered in the design and implementation of the project?
C3	Complementarity	To what extent is the intervention coherent with and complementary to existing strategies, programs, and actions of the ILO, national governments, and other development partners operating in the same context?
E1	Achievement of results	To what extent have the overall project objectives and expected results, qualitatively and quantitatively been achieved?
E2	Unintended results	Are there any unintended results achieved? What are their effects?
E3	Monitoring mechanisms	Does the project have an adequate mechanism in place to monitor and measure progress towards the achievement of results?
E4	Management arrangements	How effective are the project management arrangements? Is the project able to leverage expertise in the field, particularly in those countries where the project does not have permanent presence?
E5	Challenges and mitigation	What are the challenges faced by the project during its implementation? How did the project deal with them?
E6	Success factors	What have been the key success factors towards project's success in attaining its targets?
E7	Inclusion in implementation	To what extent did the project address and promote gender equality, non-discrimination and inclusion of people living with disabilities in its activities and its products?
F1	Cost-effectiveness	What evidence is there of cost-effectiveness in the project's implementation and management?
F2	Timeliness	Have the project's funds and outputs been used and delivered in a timely manner? What are the time and cost efficiency measures that could be introduced to improve the achievement of results?
F3	Partnerships	What are the partnership arrangements in the implementation of the project at national and regional levels? What are the challenges in the formulation of these partnerships? What are the results of these partnerships and how to improve them?
I1	Exit strategy	Does the project have a clearly defined exit strategy, and how effective is it in ensuring sustainability, ownership, and continuity of outcomes after the project's conclusion?
I2	Reinforcement needs	What are the areas for further reinforcement of the project achievements?
I3	Long-term contribution	To what extent are the results of the intervention likely to have a long term, sustainable positive contribution to the relevant SDGs and targets (explicitly or implicitly)?
I4	Institutionalization	Which project-supported tools been solidly institutionalized by partners? Have any been replicated or adapted by external organizations?
I5	Impact on stakeholders	What have been the intended and unintended impacts of the project on its target groups and stakeholders, and to what extent are these impacts sustainable and likely to be achieved in the long term?
X1	Vulnerable groups	To what extent has the project identified and integrated into its actions the operational and strategic needs and priorities for men, women, and other vulnerable groups?
X2	Inclusive tools	Do the tools developed by the project integrate gender and non-discrimination issues?
X3	Normative integration	Has the project considered tripartism, social dialogue, international labour standards and a fair transition to environmental sustainability in its design and implementation?

4. Methodology

Methodology overview

The evaluation adopted a mixed-methods approach, combining qualitative and quantitative techniques to ensure triangulation and analytical depth. The methodology was designed during the inception phase and implemented over a four-week period in September 2025, following the workplan agreed upon with ILO EVAL and ROAF. The table on the next page illustrates how the methods described are triangulated to answer evaluation questions.

Table 4. Evaluation matrix

(Figures represent references to each evaluation question in each evaluation tool provided in the Appendix)

Criterion	EQ	Short Name	Survey	Regional doc review	Country doc review	FGDs	IFAD interviews	ILO interviews	Implementation partner interviews	Constituents' interviews	Total
Relevance ®	**R1**	Response to needs			2	2	1	1		1	7
	R2	Logical consistency			2		1	1			4
	R3	Inclusion in design		1				1		1	3
	R4	ILO value added		1			1	1			3
	X1	Vulnerable groups	2					1			3
	X2	Inclusive tools		1		1		1			3
	X3	Normative integration		1		1		1			3
Coherence ©	**C1**	Policy alignment		1			1	1		1	4
	C2	Context sensitivity		1			1	1		1	4
	C3	Complementarity		1			1	1		1	4
Effectiveness (E)	**E1**	Achievement of results	12	1	2	4		1	1		21
	E2	Unintended results		1				1	1		3
	E3	Monitoring mechanisms		1				1	1		3
	E4	Management arrangements		1				1	1		3
	E5	Challenges and mitigation		1				1	1		3
	E6	Success factors	3					1	1		5
	E7	Inclusion in implementation		1				1	1		3
Efficiency (F)	**F1**	Cost-effectiveness			1			1	1		3
	F2	Timeliness		1				1	1		3
	F3	Partnerships	1	1			1	1	2	1	7
Impact and Sustainability (I)	**I1**	Exit strategy	1					1			2
	I2	Reinforcement needs	1		1			1			3
	I3	Long-term contribution			1		1	1			3
	I4	Institutionalization		1			1	1			3
	I5	Impact on stakeholders	2		2	2		1			7
Total			**22**	**16**	**11**	**10**	**9**	**25**	**11**	**6**	**110**

Document Review

The evaluation began with a structured documentary review to refine the analytical framework and inform subsequent data collection. This review covered strategic and operational documents, including the project proposal, progress reports, monitoring and evaluation (M&E) data, and the mid-term evaluation, as well as national development frameworks and SDG-related plans. Country-specific materials such as technical progress reports and hub-level diagnostics were also examined. Each country expert produced annotated review notes linked to the evaluation matrix, ensuring systematic coverage of relevance, coherence, effectiveness, efficiency, impact, and cross-cutting themes. This process provided a set of preliminary findings for triangulation and helped to plan meaningful interviews and focus groups, and to design a relevant survey questionnaire.

Monitoring System Data

Quantitative analysis relied on the project's unified monitoring system, which consolidated hub-level data across countries into a centralized Excel-based tool. Data were updated regularly through partner reports and coaching visits.

This system tracked key indicators on employment effects, such as youth onboarding, training completion, wage and self-employment outcomes, gender-disaggregated results, and progress against targets. It also included performance metrics on other hub effects, such as business incubation, financial access, but these were not always completed.

Field Missions

Country missions took place in Malawi, Madagascar, and Côte d'Ivoire from September 8 to 22, 2025, to deploy Key Informant Interviews (KII) and Focus Group Discussions (FGDs). Each mission included site visits to selected hubs, interviews with implementing and strategic partners, and FGDs with youth beneficiaries. In total, the evaluation team conducted:

- **Malawi**: 15 KIIs and 6 FGDs (32 respondents total) across Central and Southern regions, including Lilongwe and Blantyre.
- **Madagascar**: 14 KIIs and 2 FGDs (27 respondents total) in Analamanga, Vakinankaratra, and Fitovinany regions.
- **Côte d'Ivoire**: 8 KIIs and 3 FGDs (20 respondents total) in Korhogo, Ferkessédougou, Djebenanvogo, and Odienné.

Detailed tables of interviews and FGDs can be found in Annex II (KIIs) and Annex III (FGDs).

Unit cost calculations

As part of the field mission to Malawi, project costs were examined in depth as a case study to understand the unit cost of employment facilitation and its variation across employment tracks and implementing partners. The analysis was later scaled up to all four countries based on data provided by the ILO. The Malawi numbers from the ILO data were checked against those from the original analysis. While a small discrepancy between the two was identified, the unit cost results were generally similar.

Survey

A survey was conducted with the objective of hearing directly from beneficiaries about how the training responded to their needs and their experience both during and after the training. Survey links were given to implementing partners and disseminated through them, primarily via WhatsApp groups. The survey collected **508 responses**, which represents a meaningful sample of the programme's beneficiary population. At an overall confidence level of 95%, the margin of error is approximately **4.35%**, ensuring that **aggregated results** are statistically reliable for interpretation. The table below compares survey responses to total beneficiaries by country, while the annex provides disaggregated results:

Table 5. Survey Responses vs Total Beneficiaries

Country	Universe (N)	Responses (n)	Margin of error
Algeria	21,325	99	**9.85%**
Côte d'Ivoire	3,650	127	**8.70%**
Madagascar	2,435	53	**13.46%**
Malawi	1,725	229	**6.48%**
Overall	**29,135**	**508**	**4.35%**

Margin of error was calculated using the standard formula for proportions under the assumption of a normal distribution and maximum variability ($p = 0.5$): $MOE = Z \times \sqrt{(p(1-p)/n)}$, where $Z = 1.96$ for a 95% confidence level and n = sample size (349). This approach assumes simple random sampling and provides a conservative estimate of uncertainty.

Source: Annex I. Survey

As per the table above, survey results remain statistically significant for **Malawi and Côte d'Ivoire**, where response volumes were highest, whereas results for Madagascar and Algeria should be interpreted with caution due to smaller sample sizes. As with any other finding in this evaluation, **survey results are subject to triangulation** with qualitative evidence from interviews, focus groups, and documentary review to ensure robustness and contextual accuracy. Respondents were fairly balanced by gender (52% female, 48% male), and 7% reported living with a disability.

Limitations

The highly condensed implementation period of the evaluation constrained sequencing of data collection and limited opportunities for follow-up or validation of emerging findings. Given the tight implementation window, the inception phase did not allow for a full design and testing process. The tight timelines also meant that field missions occurred in parallel. This meant that work done by one evaluator on a field mission (such as the efficiency assessment in Malawi) could not be replicated elsewhere. More time before field missions took place could also have increased survey responsiveness, as evaluators on field missions could have encouraged survey uptake if the online questionnaire had been ready at the time of field missions.

Survey representativeness varied significantly across countries, with small sample sizes in Algeria and Madagascar reducing the reliability of quantitative insights for those contexts. The evaluation depended on stakeholder availability for interviews and focus groups, which could have influenced perspectives captured and introduced non-response bias. Similarly, survey responses were based on dissemination by partners at local hubs, which could indicate that participants who responded were more likely to still be in touch with local partners and more likely to have a positive view of the project as a result. It is also possible that beneficiaries from the most rural areas would face additional barriers to providing feedback on the project for the evaluation. The project team attempted to mitigate these limitations wherever possible, including through communication with the project team and local partners and through triangulation of evidence across various data types. Additionally, the methodology's strength is its mixed-methods design and triangulation. Survey data is not used in an isolated manner but rather is integrated with other data sources to ensure accuracy.

Ethical standards and quality control

Throughout the evaluation process, care was taken to ensure compliance with ILO-UNEG ethical principles—integrity, accountability, respect, and beneficence—as well as ILO's cross-cutting priorities on gender equality, diversity inclusion, and non-discrimination.

Evaluators guaranteed the anonymity of interviewees and safeguarded sensitive information at all stages. During field missions, evaluators were accompanied by ILO staff for logistical support and facilitation; however, these staff members did not participate in interviews with implementing partners or beneficiaries. Similarly, implementing partners were not present during focus group discussions with beneficiaries, ensuring that participants could speak freely and without external influence.

Quality control was also prioritized throughout, with a designated quality controller assigned to the project and the use of a three-tiered quality assurance system consisting of a triangulation matrix, internal review, and independent editing by a native English speaker.

5. Findings

5.1 Relevance and coherence

5.1.1. Response to needs (R1) and context sensitivity (C2)

The programme was **well-aligned with youth employment needs**, particularly in agriculture and informal employment It addressed some key barriers to employment, namely skill gaps among rural and disadvantaged youth which were properly identified through diagnostic studies and consultations. Similarly, it was highly responsive to local employment landscapes, **adapting to country-specific realities** and stakeholder needs. Flexibility in implementation allowed for contextual innovation, though **some structural constraints remained unaddressed**, including access to finance in Sub-Saharan countries and cultural barriers in Algeria.

Jobs for youth, food for Africa

Youth unemployment in rural Africa remains a critical challenge, compounded by limited skills, poor access to finance, and weak linkages to markets. At the same time, the continent faces a growing food demand, unmet with national production, and evolving agrifood systems, which offer significant opportunities for business creation and decent employment along agricultural value chains. Unlocking this potential requires integrated approaches that connect youth to skills, resources, and markets in agribusiness[5].

This problem statement is confirmed in project documents at country level. For example, in **Malawi**, eighty-four percent of the population in Malawi lives in rural areas, and agriculture remains the main source of jobs and livelihoods, accounting for 76% of overall employment and 58% of youth employment[6]. **Côte d'Ivoire** has faced significant and growing youth unemployment and underemployment, especially in rural areas, exacerbated by a formal private sector creating few jobs and resulting high levels of informality and precariousness. Despite a high labour supply, companies struggle to find qualified employees, with only 18% of young people in formal salaried employment. Agriculture, a vital sector contributing 22% of GDP, is heavily characterized by rural poverty. **Madagascar** faces similar structural challenges: youth unemployment and underemployment remain high, particularly in rural areas where agriculture dominates but offers limited prospects for decent work. Over 70% of jobs are in agriculture, yet productivity is low and informal work prevails. Youth NEET rates exceed 43%, and skills mismatches persist due to inadequate vocational training systems[7].

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[5] See the project strategic framework ILO & IFAD Grant Design Document: ProAgro YOUTH – Support to integrated agribusiness hubs in Côte d'Ivoire, Madagascar and Malawi (2021) and IFAD Strategic Framework 2016–2025 and Rural Youth Action Plan (RYAP), as well as key UN documents like the Global Initiative on Decent Jobs for Youth and UN Food Systems Summit.
6 ILO_ProAgro Youth Grant Design Document.
[7] ILO_ProAgro Youth Grant Design Document.

Though different in terms of income levels and sources, **Algeria** also faces youth unemployment issues. The country has recently expanded social protection through unemployment allowances, which has revealed that 2 million people qualify for unemployment subsidies, including over 70% women. Youth unemployment in Algeria is especially high, mainly in rural areas (27% among 16–24-year-olds), while the country is a major importer of cereals and oils[8].

Project localization

The general logic of the project was adapted to specific locations and sectors through diagnostics that tapped into ILO instruments and methods. This was done with support from the project regional and global team in close collaboration with the IFAD ABH team, and was praised by project teams across all four countries. In Côte d'Ivoire, for instance, **diagnostic studies** and needs assessments were conducted to ensure the project's relevance, including a Local Opportunity Map in the Bagoué and Tchologo regions which surveyed 768 young people[9]. These studies revealed specific gaps in employability and resources, especially lack of access to information on job vacancies, lack of relevant skills, and lack of understanding of the recruitment process. Mapping exercises also led to the identification of **priority sectors and value chains**: horticulture and hospitality in Malawi; cassava, pepper, and cashew in Côte d'Ivoire; agro-processing and hospitality in Madagascar; and dairy, aquaculture/spirulina, and potatoes in specific locations in Algeria.

The diagnostic assessments also noted challenges specific to primarily rural areas. In Malawi, for example, the local context identified by diagnostic studies meant that the project had to adapt to the remoteness of rural areas and infrastructure limitations identified in the diagnostic study and hub assessments by shifting the emphasis from traditional classroom-based TVET to on-the-job training and work-integrated learning (WIL) through partnerships with private farms and agribusiness hubs. Similarly, in Côte d'Ivoire, the diagnostic studies and Local Opportunity Map identified local constraints, the most notable of which was the lack of adequate accommodation infrastructure to house young people in rural areas.

Relevance and adaptation of training

Training modalities were also localized and adapted to beneficiary needs, including language, location, and duration. In Malawi, schedules were adjusted for women with family responsibilities; in Madagascar, modules were simplified for youth with low literacy levels; in Côte d'Ivoire, training was delivered close to production sites to reduce travel barriers. Contextual adaptation in Algeria included piloting digital skills in Guelma and business English in Biskra, responding to the needs of entrepreneurs targeting regional and international markets. This led to a diversified service package including short technical courses, digital and linguistic skills training, and immersion visits to

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[8] ProAgro YOUTH: Support for integrated agricultural entrepreneurship hubs in Algeria [ProAgro JEUNES: Appui aux pôles intégrés d'entrepreneuriat agricole en Algérie].

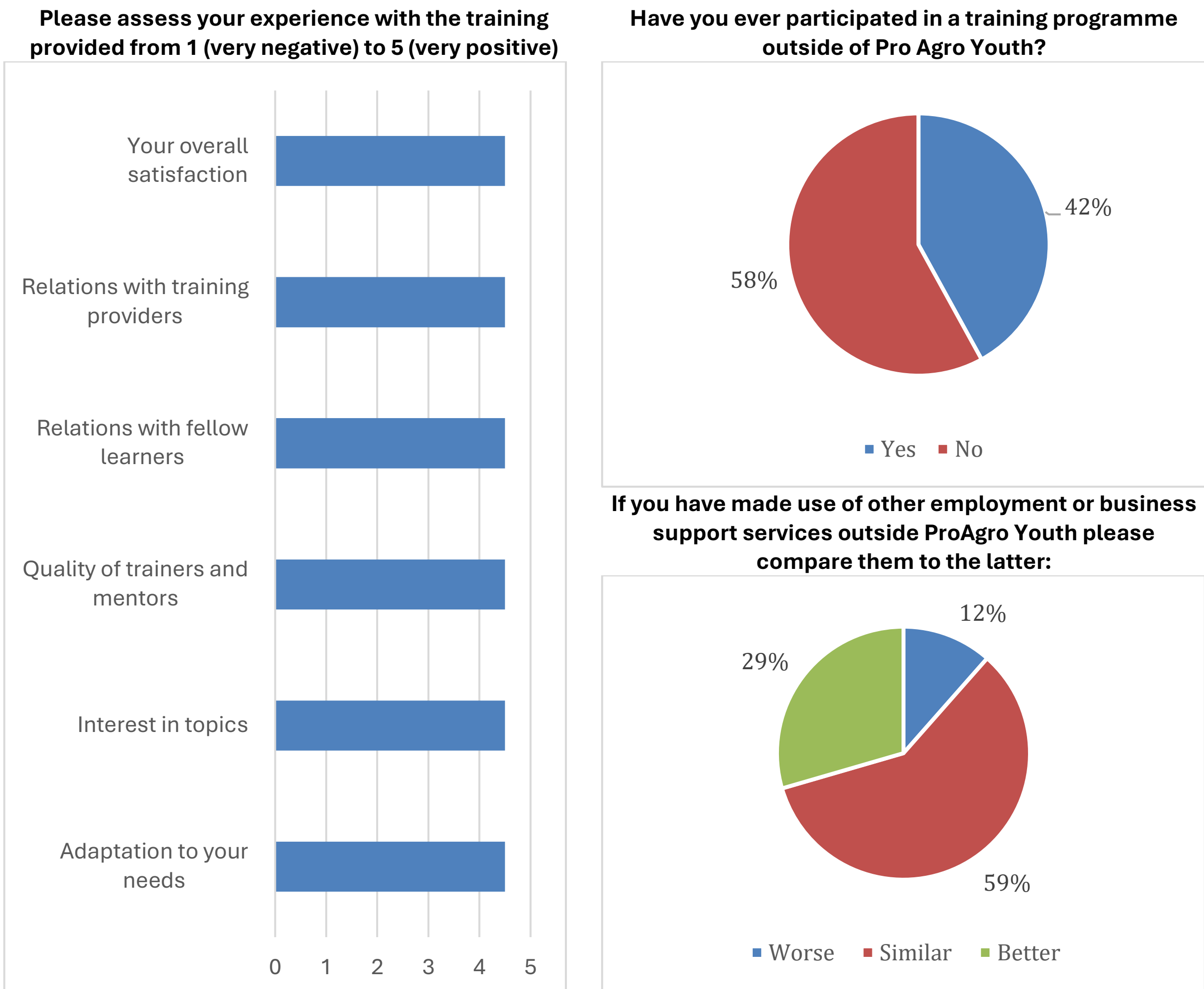
[9] Study on the Development of a Mapping of Local Economic Opportunities for Training and Employment in the Bagoué and Tchologo Regions (Northern Côte d'Ivoire) [Étude de l'élaboration d'une cartographie des opportunités économiques locales de formation et de travail dans les régions de la Bagoué et du Tchologo (nord de la côte d'ivoire)], December 2023.

address both skill gaps and sector attractiveness. Other adaptations to the local context in Madagascar included interventions to address constraints around market access, financing, and infrastructure and the promotion of regional agricultural value chains.

Satisfaction with the capacity building offered was consistently high across all countries, with **average ratings of 4.5/5** for adaptation to needs, content relevance, and overall experience—confirming the pertinence of the services provided. Interestingly, only 42% of respondents reported having accessed similar training before, and among those who had, the majority (59%) considered ProAgro YOUTH broadly similar to other programmes, while 29% rated it better and 12% worse. This suggests that while the training met expectations and aligned with prevailing standards, its perceived added value over existing options was moderate. The lack of training opportunities was confirmed during field missions, with beneficiaries across Sub-Saharan countries highlighting that ProAgro YOUTH was their **first formal opportunity** to acquire employability skills. Young people who were consulted emphasised the strong alignment of training, coaching, and entrepreneurial development activities with their needs for skills and support.

Implementing partners confirmed that training addressed market-relevant skills and was well received by beneficiaries. The programme offered **short, practical, and market-relevant training** for youth outside formal TVET pathways. In Malawi, for instance, hubs provided modular courses on poultry, horticulture, and agribusiness management, which was appreciated in focus group discussion for enabling rapid skill acquisition for disadvantaged youth.

Figure 1. Relevance of training according to beneficiaries



Source: Survey (Annex I. Questions B1. B2)

Remaining challenges

Despite this strong alignment, persistent problems remained unaddressed. Access to finance emerged as the most significant constraint: in Madagascar, 71% of survey respondents cited **lack of start-up capital** as the main obstacle to sustaining businesses, and similar patterns were observed in Côte d'Ivoire (63%). **Climate vulnerability** also persisted as a constraint: for instance, in Madagascar's Fitovinany region, sugarcane producers faced losses due to drought despite proximity to water sources because of a lack of irrigation infrastructure; in Côte d'Ivoire, employment seasonality is a recurrent issue, with jobs in mango processing concentrated between February and June, resulting in reduced stability throughout the rest of the year. In Malawi, multiple challenges around both the rural labour market and training ecosystem were identified. **Training providers in Malawi also lacked infrastructure**—according to internal diagnostics, 75% of centres visited lacked adequate classrooms, workshops, and demonstration plots—and equipment was often obsolete. Instructors for agribusiness courses were scarce, requiring significant investment in recruitment and capacity building. **Gender gaps** in the economy and in participation in the project remained. In Algeria, cultural barriers prevented the full integration of women in agricultural labour markets. These constraints, which were not central in project design due to limited time available for operations – especially in Algeria, are further analysed in subsequent questions.

5.1.2. Policy alignment (C1)

The programme was **well aligned with national employment and skills development strategies** and contributed to broader ILO and IFAD policy outcomes. Its activities supported SDG targets related to decent work, youth employment, and food systems, and were implemented in coordination with relevant ministries and national institutions.

Regional frameworks

The project's focus on agribusiness jobs and skills aligns with continental and regional frameworks such as the African Union's Agenda 2063 and its aspirations on human capital and youth[10]. It also aligns with the ILO Abidjan Declaration on Employment and Decent Work for Peace and Resilience[11]. These frameworks emphasise inclusive growth, youth empowerment, and skills development for sustainable rural transformation.

National frameworks and institutions

The ProAgro Youth Project[12] document further referred to relevant national frameworks. In **Malawi**, the references were the Job Creation Strategy[13] and Vision 2063[14]. These documents describe the situation of youth unemployment and skills development and emphasise the need of an enabling environment for agribusiness, strengthening private sector partnerships, and promoting youth participation in productive employment. The Vision 2063's pillars include agricultural commercialization and human capital development. Similarly, the intervention aligned with the National Employment Policy and regional development plans prioritizing rural youth and entrepreneurship in **Madagascar**; and with the National Employment Policy, the National Development Plan and the National TVET Strategy in in **Côte d'Ivoire**.

Algeria similarly saw high relevance in the project in the context of the generalization of unemployment allowances (see 5.1.1). This scheme (unique in the global South) was introduced in **2022**, with a **budget allocation of around** USD 600 million[15]. As of December 2025, the scope and scale of this measure expanded dramatically: beneficiaries increased to nearly 2 million, including

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[10] Our Aspirations for the Africa We Want | African Union.

[11] Abidjan Declaration - Advancing Social Justice: Shaping the future of work in Africa | International Labour Organization

[12] International Labour Organization: ProAgro YOUTH: Support to integrated agribusiness hubs in Côte d'Ivoire, Madagascar and Malawi. Grant Design Document.

[13] Malawi Vision 2063: "An Inclusively Wealthy and Self-reliant Nation" MW2063-VISION-FINAL.pdf.

[14] The Malawi Job Creation Strategy is also referred to as the "Presidential Initiative on Job Creation". The document publicly available is titled: National Roadmap for the Global Accelerator on Jobs and Social Protection for Just Transitions.pdf.

[15] Allocation chômage : Un budget de plus de 80 milliards DA alloué - Times Algérie.

over 70% women, and approximately USD 3.23 billion were allocated to the unemployment allowance for 2026[16]. The ProAgro Youth project was highly relevant in enhancing active labour market policies as a necessary complement to passive measures.

Engagement with **government institutions** reinforced policy coherence. TEVETA and LUANAR in Malawi, ANADER and CI PME in Côte d'Ivoire, and regional authorities in Madagascar played key roles in ensuring that training content and delivery were consistent with national standards and labour regulations. In Algeria, national engagement was particularly strong: services were embedded in national systems through ANEM (employment), NESDA (entrepreneurship), and MFEP (vocational training), with new curricula codified under MFEP decrees.

5.1.3 Consistency (R2)

The project logic proved effective in guiding implementation and achieving results (See 5.2.1 and 5.2.4). However, the **agribusiness hub concept was vaguely defined**, which created room for flexibility and contextual adaptation by the project team but also diluted the intervention model. Additionally, the project assumed that access to finance would be facilitated as a hub effect, which did not happen.

Integrated agribusiness hubs

The overall intervention logic of ProAgro YOUTH was coherent and purposeful, combining two complementary pathways—wage employment and self-employment—under a unified framework aimed at promoting decent work for rural youth. The project's **theory of change** assumed that integrated agribusiness hubs would act as connectors between training, employment services, and market opportunities, thereby addressing structural barriers such as skills gaps, informality, and weak linkages to value chains. This logic was broadly consistent with the objectives of creating 70% wage employment and 30% self-employment opportunities, while embedding decent work principles and gender inclusion across all activities.

> **Hub**
>
> /'hʌb/ *noun*
>
> **1:** the central and most active part or place; **2:** the airport or the city through which an airline sends most of its flights; **3:** the center of a wheel, propeller, fan, etc.

However, the operationalization of this logic revealed both strengths and limitations. On the positive side, the phased approach - Start-up, Pre-hub, Hub Nurturing, and Post-hub - provided a structured pathway for implementation, enabling progressive capacity building and contextual adaptation. Diagnostic studies and opportunity mapping were systematically deployed in all countries, ensuring that interventions were grounded in local labour market realities. For example, value chain analyses informed the selection of priority sectors such as horticulture and dairy in Malawi, cassava and cashew in Côte d'Ivoire, agro-processing and ecolanguste in Madagascar, and dairy, aquaculture, and potatoes in Algeria. These adaptations confirm that the intervention logic was **flexible enough to respond to diverse contexts** while maintaining its core objectives.

[16] Algérie : plus de 420 milliards de dinars alloués à l'allocation chômage | Algerie Eco

At the same time, the agribusiness hub concept—central to the project's identity—was **never clearly defined**. While intended as an integrated ecosystem linking training, incubation, and market access, in practice the meaning of "hub" varied widely across countries. In Malawi, hubs often referred to training providers or farms offering on-the-job learning; in Algeria, the term was rarely used, and the model operated through territorial units of public agencies (ANEM, BNEDER, NESDA) acting as connectors within value chains. This flexibility allowed innovation and flexibility to context but diluted the model's distinctiveness and complicated replication and knowledge capitalization, which was also part of the project design.

Connections with the financial sector

Second, the project assumed that **access to finance would emerge organically as a hub effect**, which did not materialize. Across all countries, lack of start-up capital was consistently cited as the main barrier to sustaining entrepreneurial outcomes (67% of survey respondents). While hubs facilitated technical training and business planning, they lacked structured mechanisms to link youth with financial institutions. This gap undermined the logic of the self-employment track and highlights the need for explicit integration of financial inclusion measures in future designs.

Beyond the lack of start-up capital for entrepreneurs, general SME's access finance and structural constraints such as inadequate rural infrastructure - particularly irrigation – also limit the growth of agribusiness employers and, by extension, the wage-employment trajectory. These systemic gaps reduce the capacity of enterprises to expand and absorb trained youth, even when skills are available. Taken together, these findings suggest that projects like ProAgro YOUTH could achieve greater effectiveness and impact if integrated into broader rural development plans targeting specific locations and value chains, combining employment services with investments in infrastructure and financial inclusion.

In Algeria, the context differed: funding opportunities for youth entrepreneurship were available, and the main challenge lay in the quality of business plans. To address this, the project not only linked young entrepreneurs to finance but also raised awareness of the importance of robust business planning through initiatives such as a competition organized with NESDA.

5.1.4. Inclusion in Design (R3)

Inclusion was embedded in the project's design and delivery, **targeting rural youth and ensuring a gender-balanced participation**. Often female-led agribusinesses played a key role in the project rollout and the projection of female entrepreneurship models.

Rural youth and hub choice

The project targeted **rural youth, often unemployed and with low educational attainment.** The primary target group was therefore already vulnerable. Moreover, hubs and partners were often selected in remote areas and training content was simplified to focus on practical skills and entrepreneurship basics.

In Malawi, inclusion was operationalized through the choice of hubs in rural communities, including **grassroot NGOs**. In Côte d'Ivoire, the design included partnerships with community-based organizations and local training centres to improve outreach in rural areas. Similarly, Madagascar prioritized hubs in Analamanga and Vakinankaratra, where rural youth could access training without relocating to urban centres. In Madagascar, interviews with young beneficiaries confirmed that inclusion was a strong pillar of the project's design and implementation.

These features of project design favoured access to training opportunities for participants with limited formal education, prioritising hands-on learning over complex theoretical content. However, the project did not establish a baseline on the employment status of participants prior to training and job facilitation activities, missing an opportunity to better assess the initial situation of the target group.

Gender

Inclusion of female participants was monitored systematically, and the participation of young women in training and entrepreneurial activities was considered satisfactory, although excessive involvement of parents was noted for young women. **Female-led hubs** played a key role in reaching and empowering young women, especially in Malawi and Madagascar. These hubs not only delivered training but also supportive spaces, leveraging role models and networks to encourage female entrepreneurship and leadership. These hubs were chosen for their capacity to reach marginalized youth and provide culturally appropriate training environments.

In all Sub-Saharan countries, the design of the project explicitly targeted **gender parity** (50% rural young women and 50% young men) and the inclusion of young people with disabilities. **Adaptation of timeframes and age limits** was another key measure adopted to increase women's access to project opportunities. In Malawi, the upper age limit for women was extended to accommodate those with family responsibilities, and training schedules were adjusted to avoid conflict with domestic duties. The programme integrated gender and inclusion principles in design, by including **gender equality targets** and closely following up on actual gender distribution, which was achieved across the three Sub-Saharan countries. Other gender inclusion measures included the adaptation of training, mentoring, and entrepreneurship support to gender- and disability-related constraints, inclusive pedagogical approaches, individualized coaching and follow-up for beneficiaries requiring additional support, and referral to complementary services when necessary. In Madagascar, a differentiated monitoring approach was also applied to assess effective inclusion, beneficiary progression, and quality of socio-economic integration.

Design in Algeria included gender quotas of 30% below the Beijing consensus range and adapted age limits for women (up to 40 years). The **GET Ahead**[17] **entrepreneurship training for women** was introduced and gender-sensitive provisions were present in Terms of Reference for implementing partners. Despite these efforts, cultural norms and mobility constraints significantly limited women's participation in agricultural value chains, resulting in only **17% of facilitated jobs going to women**—a stark contrast to the 46–53% range achieved in Sub-Saharan countries. This gap

[17] GET Ahead (Gender and Entrepreneurship Together) is an ILO training program designed to empower low-income women (and men) with basic business and soft skills to start and grow small businesses, focusing on gender-responsive approaches to overcome barriers, offering practical, participatory training with coaching, and supported by a global network of certified trainers and a resource kit.

underscores the need for stronger gender-responsive strategies in contexts with entrenched sociocultural barriers. (see 5.2.1).

The **inclusion of persons with disabilities** was not subject to specific targets and measures. However, project planning included outreach to associations for people with disabilities and other local actors as proactive measures of inclusion.

5.1.5. Complementarity (C3) and ILO value added (R4)

The project complemented existing ILO projects and national initiatives, leveraging institutional networks and resources. The project also **leveraged ILO's technical expertise and national networks**, including engagement with tripartite constituents, to support policy alignment, curriculum development, and the promotion of decent work principles. However, coordination with IFAD and financial institutions was fragmented, limiting synergies and strategic integration.

Partnerships

Partnerships with national institutions supported policy alignment and training delivery across countries. In **Malawi**, the project complemented existing ILO projects and national initiatives and integrated TEVETA's national certification system, harmonizing curricula for priority value chains (dairy and horticulture). Tools and approaches from other ILO-funded programmes were adopted, and tripartite structures (government, employers, unions) supported monitoring and outreach.

In **Madagascar**, two other development initiatives were planned to complement ProAgro Youth: the DEFI programme, which works across several areas of rural household development, and the IFAD-funded projects focusing on agriculture. Synergies were established with DEFI, particularly in the development of income-generating activities and the improvement of agricultural infrastructure, even though its beneficiaries do not fully align with ProAgro Youth's target groups. However, for the IFAD-funded project, the activities started later than expected, making it impossible to establish effective coordination with ProAgro Youth. Madagascar's Ministry of Agriculture and regional authorities also ensured compliance with national employment strategies.

In **Côte d'Ivoire**, the project was structured around a consortium comprising key government agencies for SMEs, rural development and youth (CI PME, ANADER, and AEJ), thus ensuring alignment and complementarity with national employment strategies. The project actively sought out opportunities to make the most of connections with other national and international programs to extend the project's reach. For example, opportunities for collaboration were identified with IFAD's Agricultural Value Chain Development Program (PADFA), which operates in the same regions of northern Côte d'Ivoire (Bagoué, Poro, Tchologo). The intervention logic explicitly provided for the creation of links between ILO and IFAD interventions.

In **Algeria,** across all three value-chain partnerships—dairy in Guelma, fish farming and spirulina in Biskra, and potatoes in Mostaganem—the complementarity among ANEM, BNEDER, and NESDA was consistently strong. ANEM provided the placement infrastructure and counsellor network, ensuring job matching and immersion visits; BNEDER contributed technical expertise and sectoral diagnostics to align training with market needs; and NESDA supported entrepreneurship pathways, offering advisory services for small-scale ventures linked to each value chain.

ILO tools and networks

ILO conducted diagnostic studies and labour market analyses that allowed for the identification of relevant employment niches and the shaping of **value chain** strategies. In Malawi, value chain mapping highlighted horticulture, dairy, hospitality, and beekeeping as priority sectors, guiding hub selection and training content. Madagascar's participatory assessments identified agro-processing, livestock, cassava, and hospitality as key opportunities for rural youth, while Côte d'Ivoire's rural employment diagnostic and local opportunity mapping focused on cassava, pepper, cashew, mango, and poultry.

Existing **tools and curricula from other ILO projects** were leveraged, particularly in Malawi and Madagascar. For instance, in Malawi, ProAgro YOUTH training packages were harmonised with TEVETA standards and integrated into national TVET frameworks, drawing on ILO's prior work on competency-based curricula. Madagascar adapted modules from the ILO's entrepreneurship and skills development programmes to local contexts. Strategic partnerships were mobilised to ensure policy alignment and promote decent work. In Malawi, TEVETA and LUANAR were key actors in institutionalizing training standards; in Côte d'Ivoire, ANADER and CI PME supported value chain integration and SME development; in Madagascar, collaboration with regional authorities facilitated hub operations and compliance with labour standards.

In Algeria, despite the engagement of strong national institutions, the ILO added important technical value. Technical credibility and global methodologies brought structure to diagnostics and service design; **benchmarking and exchanges** exposed Algerian institutions to relevant practices and accelerated modernisation of **ANEM's placement** and the mainstreaming of **value-chain logic** within public employment and training services.

Tripartite engagement

The tripartite model was activated in different ways across countries. In Malawi, the employers' organisation (ECAM) served as an implementing partner, hosting hubs, providing on-the-job training, and placing youth in internships and wage jobs. Unions (MCTU) did not deliver services but played a strategic role in project design and follow-up, promoting social dialogue and labour standards. In Madagascar, employers' organizations contributed to curriculum design, job placement, and mentoring, while unions participated in consultations and oversight, advocating for decent work and inclusion. In Côte d'Ivoire, employers were strongly engaged through companies and sector actors (e.g., Ivoire Bio Fruits, Team Agro Industry), but unions had minimal involvement.

Coordination with IFAD and financial institutions

Coordination with IFAD occurred at two distinct levels. At the **global and regional level**, collaboration was strong and went beyond typical donor engagement according to ILO sources. IFAD provided close technical support during project design and implementation, including joint supervision missions in all countries, co-development of targeting strategies, and participation in knowledge-sharing events. This partnership was reinforced by IFAD's membership in the Global Initiative on Decent Jobs for Youth and the joint development of a concept note for a second phase of the Integrated Agribusiness Hub programme.

At the **country level**, coordination with IFAD offices around financial activities was limited. This was not an explicit objective of the project design, which focused on grant-funded activities rather than integration into IFAD's large-scale investment operations. However, project partners in all three field missions highlighted the need for stronger mechanisms to connect hub development with financial institutions and complementary programmes, and pointed to IFAD as a channel funding or facilitating connections with financial institutions. This gap was particularly evident in the self-employment track, where lack of start-up capital remains the most critical barrier to sustainability.

Some local synergies were already observed (e.g., shared targeting in Madagascar and the TRADE[18] programme in Malawi). Looking ahead, ILO and IFAD could consider a more strategic alignment and operational collaboration at the level of specific value chains and locations, so that synergies are established between career development for youth and access to finance for employers and entrepreneurs.

Other challenges

Implementation in all four countries revealed challenges in terms of internal operational consistency due to "weak inter-agency or inter-structure collaboration" at certain levels. These difficulties were related to the alignment of the objectives and timelines of the various partners involved in the projects in each of the countries To mitigate these problems, regular coordination workshops were organized in Côte d'Ivoire (in Boundiali, Ferké, and Yamoussoukro), with the aim of helping partners "improve their synergy" and better understand the complementarity of their roles. One of the most concrete examples of this complementarity proved necessary to compensate for a design flaw. As the project had not budgeted for transportation costs and stipends for interns, the team had to rely on the Youth Employment Agency (AEJ) to cover these costs. The AEJ then included the trained young people in its own internship allowance system, thereby enhancing the project's cost-effectiveness by achieving the placement objective without committing resources not budgeted for by the ILO.

5.2. Effectiveness

5.2.1. Employment outcomes (E1 and E7)

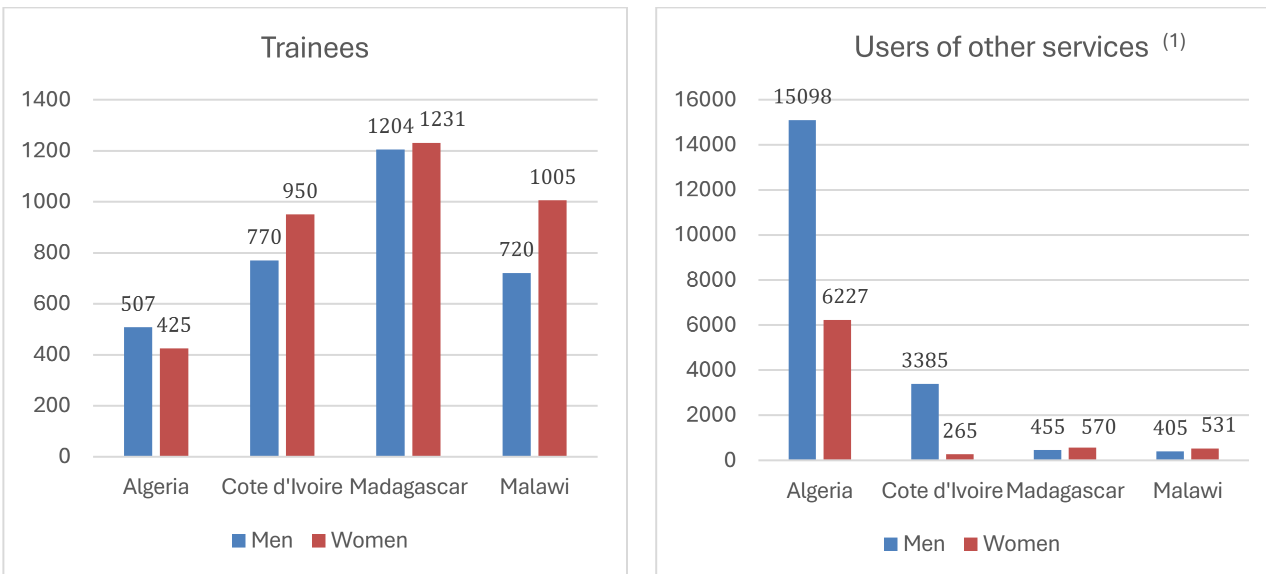
Across the four countries, the ProAgro YOUTH project has **fully achieved its quantitative targets** for job facilitation (project component 1). However, the nature and quality of these outcomes vary significantly across contexts and employment tracks.

[18] Transforming Agriculture through Diversification and Entrepreneurship Programme

Project outreach

Project outreach under ProAgro YOUTH was high. Aiming at facilitating 5,600 jobs, the programme reached out to 6,812 youth through training and 26,936 youth through other support services. Training was broadly gender-responsive (53% women), while participation in complementary services was not balanced (28%). This imbalance is mainly explained by Algeria, where outreach to women in orientation and networking services remained limited. According to interviews, this is due to cultural barriers affecting women's participation in certain sectors such as agriculture.[19] The breakdown of project outputs by gender, type of service, and country is shown in Figure 2.

Figure 2. Project outreach: youth by gender, type of service and country



(1) In Algeria: Networking, orientation/information services, Agri-Sectoral meetings, immersive visits (IDE), "Green" Job Search Clubs sessions, business plans contest, "Green" auto-entrepreneur Desk sessions, Inclusion/Participation, capacity building; In Côte d'Ivoire: Linkage to markets, orientation, job placement, access to finance, coaching; in Madagascar: Linkage to markets, orientation, job placement, individual protective equipment and seeds supply; In Malawi: Business acceleration, facilitation of internship placements, Job placements, mentorship, job ethics orientation, linkages to markets and financing.

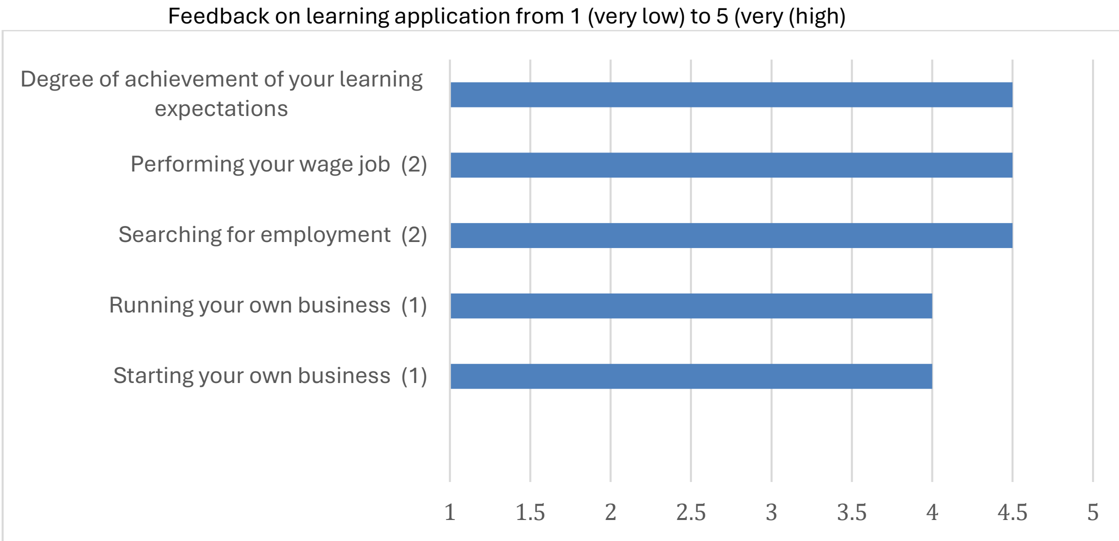
Source: project data (Annex II.a)

Learning

Beneficiaries reported high satisfaction with training relevance, materials, trainers, and providers (Figure 1). Building on this, new evidence shows strong application of learning across key domains (Figure 2): starting a business (211 respondents, average score 4), running a business (210, score 4), searching for employment (177, score 4.5), and performing wage jobs (175, score 4.5). Overall, the degree of achievement of learning expectations is rated very highly (323 responses, score 4.5).

[19] These barriers are further analysed under question E7. In Côte d'Ivoire, orientation services also show a gender imbalance; however, this is compensated by parity in training and does not affect the overall employment results, as discussed later in this section.

Figure 3. Learning and learning application



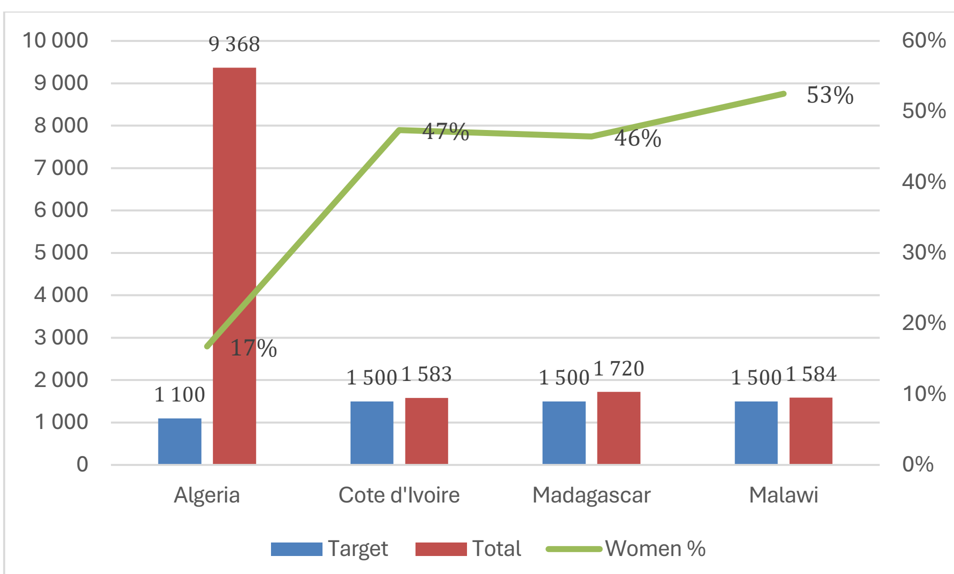
(2) only for survey respondents on wage-employment tracks
(1) only for survey respondents on self-employment tracks

Source: Survey (Annex I. questions C1, C2 and C3)

Employment outcomes

The programme recorded employment outcomes that exceeded initial targets. Against the planned 5,600 direct jobs, **a total of 14,255 jobs were recorded** across the four countries. A detailed breakdown of employment outcomes by country and employment track is available in Annex II.

Figure 4. Project outcomes: target vs actual jobs and percent women, by country

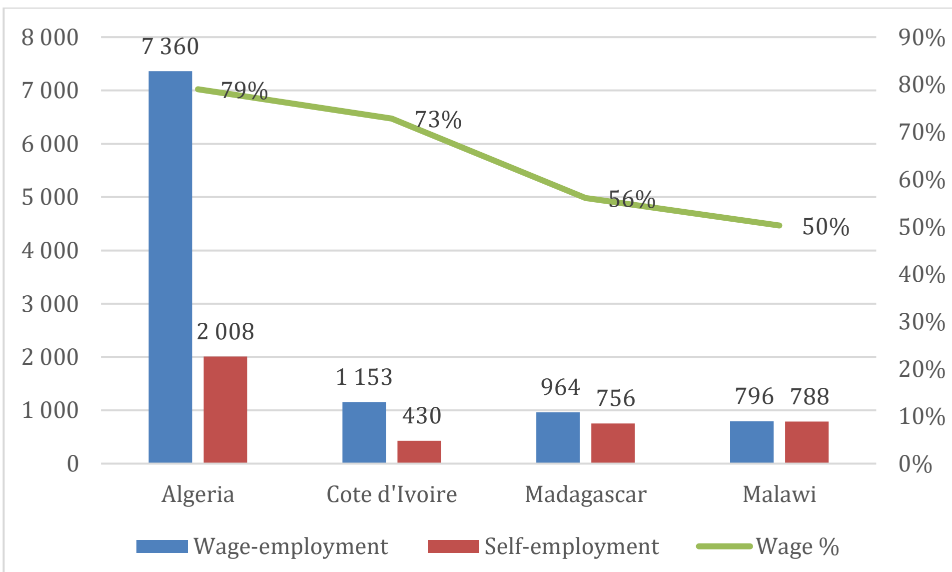


Source: Project monitoring data (Annex II)

While all countries met or slightly exceeded their employment targets, **Algeria** stood out with results that are significantly above expectations. Against an initial target of 1,100 jobs, the programme facilitated more than 9,000 placements. This success was driven by several interlinked factors, including the institutional anchoring of services within ANEM, the Algerian employment agency and its extensive network of 278 agencies, which provided a ready-made infrastructure for connecting youth to employers. The project invested in participatory diagnostics and value-chain mapping and provided the ANEM with sectors with real employment growth potential, and innovated its portfolio of training and placement services, including activities intended to improve the appreciation of the agricultural sector by unemployed youth.

Algeria's results also played an important role in reaching 79% of wage employment and therefore maintaining the overall programme alignment with the initial 70/30 ratio. The Algeria performance on this front contrasts with the challenges observed in Malawi and Madagascar, where **wage employment was harder** to facilitate and the distribution between tracks was more balanced (50/50 in Malawi and 56/44 in Madagascar).

Figure 5. Project outcomes: wage vs self-employment and percent of wage employment, by country



Source: Project monitoring data (Annex II)

Increase in employment rates

The survey confirmed positive results in employment rates. Before training, only 34% of respondents reported being employed, compared to 64% after, indicating a near-doubling of employment rates. Among respondents employed post-training (n=191), the majority entered self-employment (50%), followed by full-time wage employment in enterprises (24%). Mixed self- and wage-employment accounted for 8%, while occasional work (7%) and part-time employment (6%) were less common. Internships and other forms of engagement represented a small share (5%

combined). These results suggest that the programme strongly facilitated entrepreneurial pathways while also supporting wage employment opportunities.

On this note, it must be stated that the terms “job facilitation” and **“direct jobs” as a basis for the measurement of project effectiveness** are problematic for the assessment of self-employment results. Quantitative self-employment effects are less clear than wage employment effects because many entrepreneurs were already active before joining the project. In these cases, the project’s contribution may be better assessed through other variables, like productivity increase, sales, business formalization, etc.

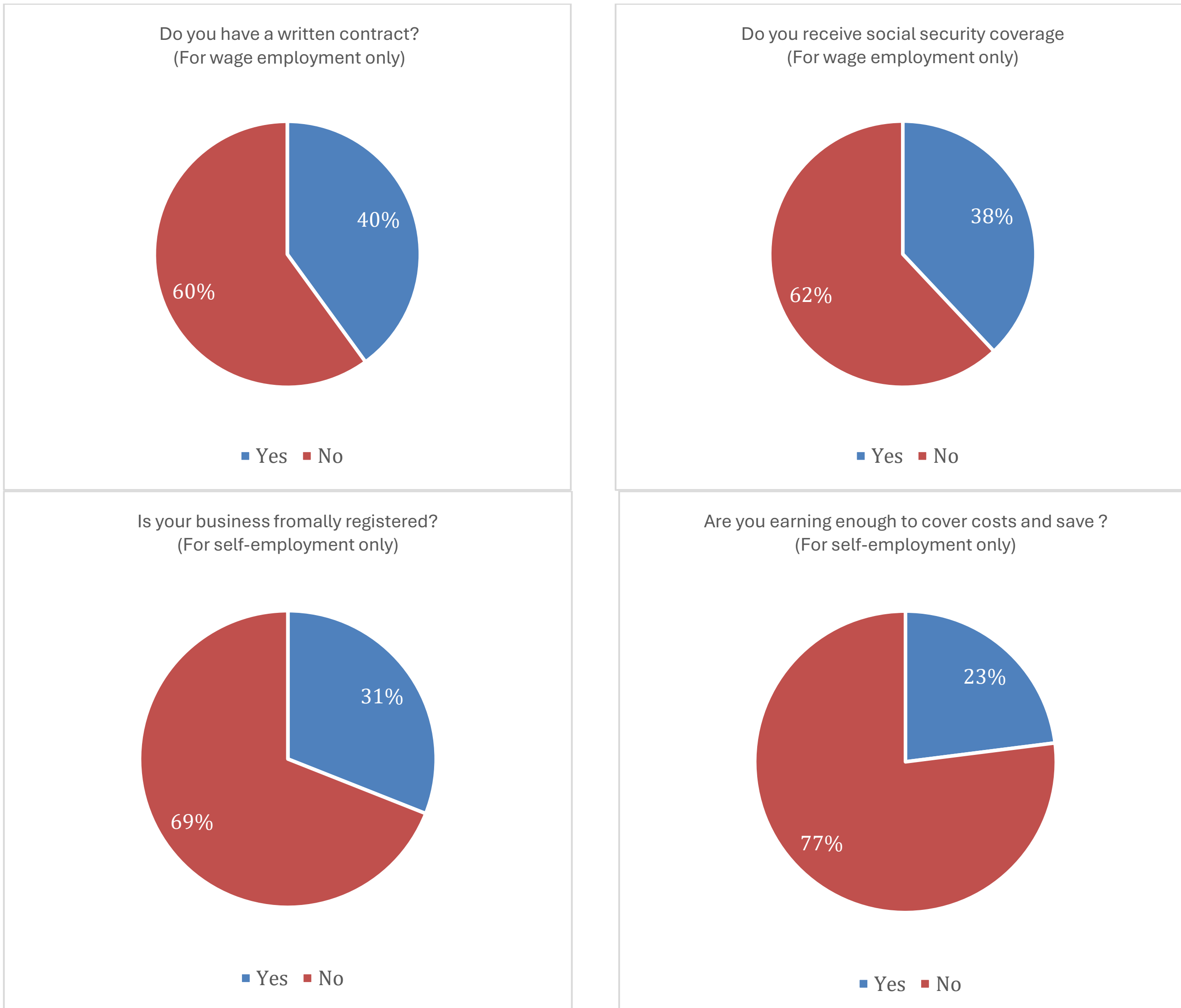
Figure 6. Employment rates among beneficiaries almost doubled

Source: Survey (Annex I. Questions D1, D2 and D3)

Quality of jobs

Yet, some KII and most FGDs revealed that **behind the job facilitation figures lie diverse realities**. Wage employment outcomes include internship extensions and seasonal contracts, such as mango processing in Côte d’Ivoire or hotel placements in Malawi (see figures 6 and 7). Self-employment often means farming activities that predated the project and remain informal and precarious in terms of surplus (see figure 7). Project teams agreed on the need to monitor post-placement outcomes with a focus on employment quality and sustainability, while implementing partners stressed the need for post-training services.

Figure 7. Quality of wage-employment and self-employment



Source: Survey (Annex I. Questions D1, D2 and D3)

Inclusive effects

Figures 1 and 2 in this section show that the programme achieved gender-balanced results in Côte d'Ivoire, Madagascar and Malawi, while Algeria remained an exception with women representing only 17 percent of beneficiaries. In the other three countries, women accounted for nearly half of all participants—47 percent in Côte d'Ivoire, 46 percent in Madagascar and 53 percent in Malawi[20]—reflecting deliberate efforts to promote gender inclusion (see 5.1.4). These

[20] ILO_ProAgro Youth_Grant Design Document

measures included flexible eligibility criteria for women, targeted outreach campaigns, and gender-sensitive training modules and ToRs.

The project also included efforts to target both younger youth (18-24) and older youth (25+), ensuring that the project did not only include the populations and age ranges that were easiest to reach. Project documents reflect this inclusion of both age groups within the larger "youth" umbrella.

On the contrary, the inclusion of people with disabilities was not embedded in the design and lacked specific targets or measures. The project monitoring data did not count users with disabilities, but 4 per cent of survey respondents reported a disability (see survey question A3).

5.2.2. Knowledge products and advocacy outcomes (E1)

While Component 2 has made strides in generating knowledge and fostering dialogue, a more integrated, bottom-up approach that fully embraces the agribusiness hub model is necessary. Tapping into the actual implementation and effects of the various types of hubs and engaging stakeholders in the development of knowledge products will enhance the logic of this component in future phases.

Knowledge Products

The project team and documents described the knowledge production within the project as organized around four key functions:

1. **Evidence Generation and Monitoring**. The programme invested in diagnostics, employment studies, and lesson-learning exercises to inform design and adaptation. It also strengthened monitoring and evaluation systems to generate credible evidence and support adaptive management throughout implementation.

2. **Knowledge Dissemination and Cross-Country Learning**: A range of knowledge products were developed and shared to promote evidence-based decision-making. These included policy briefs and technical notes, such as the *ILO Policy Brief on Rural Youth Employment: Elevating the Potential of Rural Youth – Paths to Decent Jobs and Sustainable Futures*[21], which was translated into French to increase accessibility among francophone stakeholders.
   Cross-country learning was facilitated through South–South exchanges and structured pathways, notably during IFAD's *Learning and Reflection Forum* in June 2024, which engaged all four ProAgro YOUTH country teams in discussions on lessons learned and innovative practices. The programme also encouraged partners and beneficiaries to join the *YouthForesight Community Forum*, fostering peer-to-peer engagement and knowledge sharing on effective approaches to youth employment.

[21] *Elevating the potential of rural youth: Paths to Decent Jobs and Sustainable Futures | International Labour Organization*

3. **Policy Influence and Multi-Stakeholder Dialogue**: Evidence and best practices were leveraged to inform policies at national, regional, and continental levels. Key initiatives included the *Regional Policy Dialogue on Youth Employment in the Rural Economy*[22] and global webinars on rural youth employment organized in partnership with IFAD, the European Commission (DG-AGRI), and the World Food Forum. In addition, the project co-organized the *Global Conference "Young, Green and Digital"*[23] in Kigali (2024) under the Global Initiative on Decent Jobs for Youth, featuring a plenary session on rural youth employment and a dedicated roundtable. These events positioned ProAgro YOUTH as a contributor to global debates on youth employment in agri-food systems.

4. **Capacity Development, Advocacy, and Youth Voice**: The programme strengthened the capacities of national partners and ecosystem actors to design and scale youth employment solutions. ProAgro YOUTH teams participated in flagship trainings such as the *Decent Jobs for Youth Academies* (2023 and 2025) and the ITCILO online course on rural youth employment. Youth engagement was also prioritized through advocacy and visibility initiatives, including the production of a podcast featuring a Malawian beneficiary, released on International Youth Day 2025[24].

Use of the Hub Model

While Component 2 has produced valuable outputs, its approach remained largely top-down and did not fully leverage the potential of the agribusiness hub model as a participatory knowledge platform. The regional knowledge platform failed to effectively leverage country-level experiences, resulting in limited references to agribusiness knowledge hubs in policy instruments developed at national and regional levels. Indeed, national participants interviewed during field missions were not aware of the knowledge production activities at the regional level.

The vagueness of the hub concept and the absence of a clear categorisation of hub varieties and hub-promotion tools further constrained the knowledge management functions of the project (see 5.1). Moreover, tracer studies were not implemented, which would have provided a systematic assessment of which hubs were generating higher impact and sustainability.

This said, Algerian informants indicated that their intervention models did attract interest at the end of the project. This positive reference highlights the potential for the agribusiness hub concept to enhance local capacity and engagement. Its timing, however, also suggests that a knowledge management component must allow sufficient time for pilots to roll out and produce results. Running Component 1 and Component 2 in parallel was inconsistent with the logic of knowledge capitalisation from pilot projects: time is needed to tap into experience before scaling up. A second

[22] *Regional policy dialogue on youth employment in the rural economy | International Labour Organization and Innovative Solutions for Rural Youth Employment: Policy and Practice | YouthForesight - Knowledge).*
[23] *Young, Green and Digital: Global Conference of Decent Jobs for Youth | Decent Jobs for Youth*
[24] *iculture in Africa | The Future of Work Podcast*

phase should therefore adopt a bottom-up approach, building on lessons from the first phase and embedding knowledge generation within the operational logic of hubs.

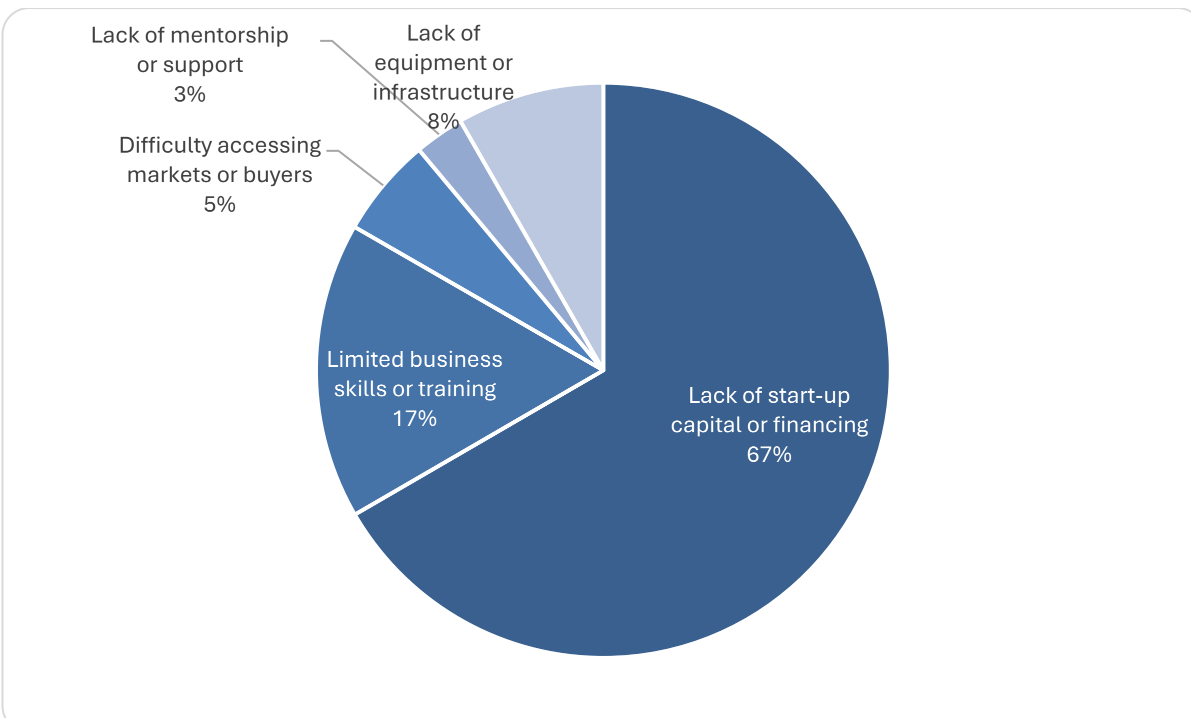
5.2.4. Challenges and mitigation (E5)

Common challenges included limited access to finance, logistical constraints, and institutional coordination gaps. Some were mitigated through adaptive planning and strategic partnerships, and some remain unsolved.

Access to finance

The project faced structural and operational challenges that varied by context but revealed common patterns: **financial constraints**, infrastructure gaps, and procedural delays. Access to finance is a critical barrier in all countries, especially for self-employed youth. The absence of startup capital and credit mechanisms hinders the sustainability of entrepreneurial endeavours as indicated in KIIs and FGDs. The survey confirmed persistent barriers to their success, most notably limited access to start-up capital (67%).

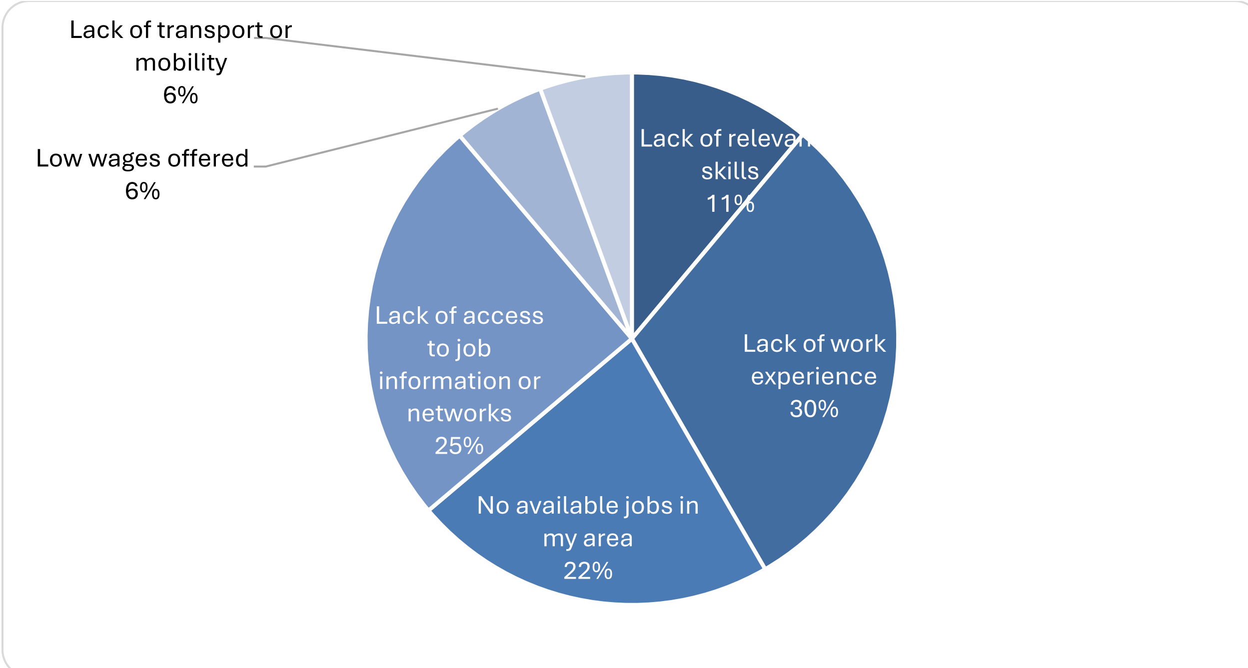
Figure 8. Main barriers in the self-employment track



Source: SURVEY

Limited wage-employment opportunities led to a strategic pivot toward self-employment and enterprise development. The survey confirmed the importance of this limiting factor (22%) but also pointed to lack of information (25%) and experience (30%) as more relevant barriers to wage-employment, which confirms the validity of the design favouring internships, on-the-job training and networking around concrete value chains and hubs.

Figure 9. Main difficulties in finding a wage job



Source: Annex I

Survey results were consistent with qualitative findings. In Malawi, for example, challenges included infrastructure gaps such as water access and housing issues; short training and internship durations; limited hub capacity, included a lack of systematic follow-up and job mediation; dropouts and difficulty tracking dropouts; transport and logistical constraints, especially for trainees in remote areas; access to finance; and seasonal constraints, in which agricultural activities were affected by timing and water availability. Mitigation included adaptive planning to extend some internships and arrange for replacements for dropouts, provision of stipends to overcome transport and housing challenges, technical assistance to partners, strategic partnerships, and awareness-raising and financial literacy training to mitigate gender-based violence connected with an increase in income.

Across countries, delays in fund disbursement and rigid administrative procedures disrupted implementation, prompting partners to adjust schedules, extend internships, and rely on informal communication channels.

Mitigation

Adaptive management and strong partnerships mitigated short-term disruptions.

To respond to the needs presented by rural areas, projects in Malawi supported integration with TEVETA through curriculum development and harmonization, paving the way for recognition of prior learning and inclusion of climate-smart agriculture and agro-processing modules. Two internship programs were also added to facilitate wage employment by creating structured attachment opportunities with agribusiness firms and cooperatives—directly addressing the diagnostic finding that informal linkages limited graduates’ transition to decent jobs.

To adapt to the lack of adequate accommodation in Côte d'Ivoire, the Integrated Agro-Industrial Hubs model was transformed from the idea of a centralized infrastructure to a functional network of partners and existing structures (ANADER, CI PME, AEJ, LTPO). The team favoured "in situ" training, taking place directly at production sites or in the factories of partner companies (e.g., Eco Cajou or Ivoire Bio Fruits). This flexibility led to the inclusion of rural youth by avoiding barriers related to travel. This adaptive approach also made it possible to seize unexpected opportunities. For example, the project expanded its activities to Odienné, an area not initially targeted, to capitalize on a locally identified opportunity for professional integration

5.2.5 Success factors (E6)

Across all countries, the evaluation identified common drivers of success such as strong partnerships, practical training, and adaptive management. However, Algeria stands out for its exceptional performance and systemic uptake of project innovations.

The case of Algeria

Algeria results were achieved in partnership with **strong and well-resourced public institution**s and in a context marked by the **expansion of unemployment allowances**, which created urgency for active labour market measures. The project capitalised on this momentum by embedding services into national systems and aligning interventions with real market demand through value-chain diagnostics.

At the operational level, Algeria's **wage employment outcomes** were driven by several interlinked factors. First, the institutional anchoring of services within ANEM provided a robust infrastructure for job matching, supported by a network of 278 agencies nationwide. Second, the project invested in participatory diagnostics and value-chain mapping, ensuring that training and placement services were aligned with sectors offering real employment potential, such as dairy, aquaculture, and potatoes. Third, innovative mechanisms like IDE, sectoral conferences, and short-term trainings, transformed employer engagement, improving sector attractiveness and creating structured pathways for youth to access jobs.

Although **self-employment** figures were modest compared to wage employment in Algeria, they remain significant and promising for future action. The project introduced a comprehensive service ecosystem that included Short Technical Courses (FTCD), entrepreneurship advisory services such as Autoentrepreneur Vert, and CRE clubs to foster networking and business planning. These tools were integrated into NESDA and MFEP systems, ensuring institutional continuity. Success in this track was reinforced by Algeria's favourable financing environment, which offers national credit schemes for entrepreneurs. However, the rollout of entrepreneurship services was delayed by an ongoing reform of support systems, limiting early impact. Despite this, the foundations laid—skills development, advisory services, and market linkages—position self-employment as a strategic area for scale-up in the next phase, provided that financial inclusion and incubation support are systematically integrated.

General patterns of success

Beyond the case of Algeria, similar success factors are identified in all countries and include practical training, strategic targeting, strong partnerships, and adaptive management. The **hub model**, although not always clearly defined, was part of the project's success, acting as an integrated mechanism that connected training, mentoring, and market access. Part of the purpose of the programme was to bring together stakeholders to work together on problems they had not managed to solve alone; at their most successful, these hubs served as responsive ecosystems, using the connections fostered to successfully adapt to problems in their full context. When hubs operated as ecosystems rather than isolated training centres, they became catalysts for employment and entrepreneurship. This was particularly evident in Malawi and Madagascar, where women-led hubs combined technical training with incubation and mentoring, creating inclusive spaces that strengthened female entrepreneurship. In Côte d'Ivoire, the consortium approach anchored hubs within a network of public and private actors, enabling both wage employment and self-employment opportunities despite structural constraints such as seasonality. In Malawi, where disaggregated survey results are more significant, higher performance was also confirmed with an increase from 30% to 80% (see Annex I, Survey questions 18 & 19).

Field missions confirmed project effectiveness in increasing wage and self-employment opportunities. In **Malawi,** for instance, implementing partners and beneficiaries reported that the hub model was particularly effective in prioritizing agribusiness sectors such as dairy and horticulture, where training led to tangible productivity gains and local employment. Hospitality and multisector also contributed to wage placements, though many were short-term or seasonal, and the 70/30 target was not met. Partners highlighted strong demand for training and internships, supported by grassroots organizations like Tingathe Women's Forum, which improved outreach to rural youth and women.

In **Madagascar,** informants linked positive self-employment outcomes to a combination of the agribusiness hubs approach and coaching, with youth diversifying into agro-processing, cassava, and niche sectors such as ecolanguste in the southwestern and western regions. Field visits revealed that practical training and mentoring were highly valued, and some hubs acted as informal incubators, helping youth develop business plans and improve market access. However, partners noted persistent challenges in securing start-up capital, which limited the sustainability of entrepreneurial initiatives.

In **Côte d'Ivoire**, the participants inputs point to the private sector engagement as a key success factor, as companies like Eco Cajou and Ivoire Bio Fruits provided internships and absorbed trained youth into seasonal and permanent roles. As an example of successful engagement with private partners, the Lycée Professionnel d'Odienné established 53 collaborative partnerships with companies to take on students for internships or jobs. In situ training formats reduced barriers for rural youth, enabling participation without relocation. While quantitative targets were met, partners emphasized that many salaried jobs were seasonal (e.g., mango processing), and self-employment outcomes required additional financial and material support to become sustainable. Particularly, self-employment is hampered by a lack of direct financial and material support, which beneficiaries have identified as the "big problem."

Beyond institutional design, success was reinforced by **sound sector analysis and the identification of real economic opportunities**. The project's focus on value chains with proven market demand—such as horticulture and dairy in Malawi, agro-processing and hospitality in Madagascar, and manioc, cashew, and mango in Côte d'Ivoire—ensured that training translated into tangible prospects for income generation. This alignment with market dynamics was repeatedly highlighted by partners and beneficiaries as a critical factor for relevance and sustainability. Where hubs were linked to viable sectors, beneficiaries reported higher placement rates and stronger prospects for business continuity.

Efficiency also played a decisive role in consolidating results. The project leveraged existing **infrastructure and institutional networks** to deliver outcomes at relatively low unit costs, (5.3.2, Partnerships) with national institutions such as TEVETA, LUANAR, FIFAMANOR, CI PME, and ANADER not only reduced transaction costs but also embedded the intervention within national systems, enhancing ownership and prospects for continuity. These alliances were instrumental in harmonizing curricula, facilitating certification, and creating pathways for scale-up through public programmes.

Finally, **flexibility in implementation amplified these success factors**. Country teams demonstrated an ability to adapt schedules, extend internships, and adjust modalities to local realities, mitigating disruptions caused by administrative delays or logistical constraints. In Côte d'Ivoire, flexibility translated into opportunistic expansion to Odienné, while in Malawi, informal communication channels and rapid decision-making compensated for the absence of a permanent office. This responsiveness, combined with proactive engagement by project teams, reinforced the credibility of the intervention and its capacity to deliver results under diverse and challenging conditions.

5.2.6. Unintended results (E2)

A range of unintended positive effects are reported at country level, including **social empowerment, institutional change, and economic diversification**. Some instances of negative unintended effects, such as gender-based violence, were also reported and addressed.

Positive effects

The project generated **positive spillover effects beyond its original scope**, including informal incubation, peer mentoring, and enterprise diversification. According to strategic partners, in Malawi, employers began replicating work-integrated learning approaches beyond the scope of the project. In both Malawi and Madagascar, hubs evolved into spaces where youth exchanged knowledge and supported each other's ventures. This was apparent in the Youth Observatory in Madagascar, which used social media to facilitate access to employment, especially a Messenger group around mutual support for job seeking. This digital space enabled rapid peer-to-peer dissemination of information around employment opportunities. In Côte d'Ivoire, companies began adopting internship models after hosting trainees—an institutional change not foreseen in the design. This also allowed for the expansion of the intervention to areas such as Odienné.

Economic reinvestment and diversification emerged as a recurring pattern according to FGDs, with beneficiaries in Malawi using dairy income to acquire solar panels, biogas systems, and motorcycles. Some beneficiaries also began producing organic fertilizer from manure, reducing costs and creating new income streams. In some cases, Malagasy youth pivoted from agriculture to food processing, rural services, and artisan crafts. In Madagascar, the focus of youth projects on food processing was particularly observed in the Analamanga region. Partnerships with private actors and local authorities also generated unexpected effects, such as in Mananjary, where young people provide snacks for a private primary school.

In Côte d'Ivoire, flexibility in implementation enabled expansion into new regions and adaptation of training formats, creating opportunities for women to become peer trainers within companies and strengthen internal capacity in those companies. As part of the training program for salaried employment at an Odienné cashew factory, ten women who had been trained and identified as the best performers became trainers for new recruits.

Social empowerment effects were observed across contexts, such as youth assuming leadership roles in Madagascar, fostering peer learning and community inclusion, and women in Côte d'Ivoire gaining recognition within households. In Côte d'Ivoire, the training courses had a significant psychological and social impact on the beneficiaries. Chili pepper producers reported that the training had "opened their minds" by helping them understand the need to improve techniques beyond simple "physical strength." In addition, in terms of women's empowerment, one female entrepreneur beneficiary reported that the training had enabled her to be "valued even by her husband."

Negative effects

A few **negative unintended effects were reported.** One of the most notable was income control disputes in Malawi; in some cases, after women gained access to cash from dairy sales, men within their families attempted to dominate financial decisions, which led to conflicts. This issue was addressed through targeted training on gender-based violence and financial planning, which was integrated into the existing programme. This additional training was found to enhance positive reinvestment effects.

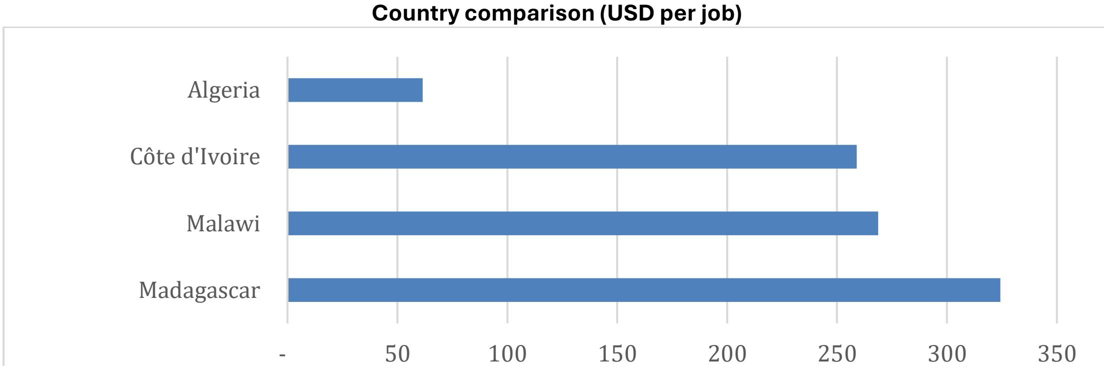
5.3 Efficiency

5.3.1. Cost-effectiveness (F1) and timeliness (F2)

The project demonstrated strong cost-effectiveness by leveraging existing infrastructure, mobilizing local expertise, and maintaining low unit costs per trainee. This was achieved without compromising the quality of training or the scale of employment outcomes. Project activities were generally delivered on time, supported by flexible planning and responsive coordination. However, delays were reported in all countries due to logistical constraints and administrative bottlenecks.

The use of community-based delivery models and partnerships with national training institutions allowed for efficient resource allocation and minimized overhead costs. Figure 10 demonstrates the net unit costs of employment facilitation per country, calculated based on project data for each country and including only direct project costs (see Annex II.a).

Figure 10. Net unit costs of employment facilitation



Source: Project regional monitoring data and Malawi project team records (Annex II.a)

Timeliness and cost efficiency elsewhere

Project activities were **generally delivered on time,** supported by flexible planning and responsive coordination, but delays were reported in all countries due to logistical constraints and administrative bottlenecks. In Malawi, timeliness benefited from adaptive scheduling and close engagement with implementing partners, allowing training to align with seasonal cycles and community routines. This responsiveness was critical in rural hubs where agricultural calendars dictated the feasibility of internships and practical sessions.

In Madagascar, **remoteness and climate-related disruptions**—such as droughts affecting crop cycles—caused delays, yet the presence of a permanent ILO office and strong local partnerships enabled rapid adjustments to delivery timelines. Partners emphasized that these adaptations were essential to maintain continuity and preserve existing partnerships and their long-term sustainability, even if they required additional coordination and resource mobilization. Cost efficiency in Madagascar was reinforced by resource pooling with other UN programmes and the use of local technical partners, though trainers highlighted the need for better anticipation of climate events and related costs, such as the drought in the Fitovinany region, which significantly decreased sugarcane yields.

In Côte d'Ivoire, delays were more closely linked to **procedural rigidity**. Partners repeatedly cited "long waits for budget validation" and "slow administrative procedures" as factors affecting implementation speed. This was understood to be the result of a combination of procedural requirements and coordination dynamics rather than rigidity linked to any one institution. The ILO team mitigated these constraints through adaptive management, revising plans frequently and leveraging informal negotiations to keep activities on track. This flexibility echoes success factors discussed under section 5.2.5 (success factors), where proactive engagement and opportunistic adjustments were highlighted as critical enablers. However, as regards cost efficiency, partners in

Côte d'Ivoire such as ANADER and LTPO exceeded their training quotas with the same budget envelope, indicating strong cost-efficiency. One partner noted, "Even if the budget was for 100, we trained more because we couldn't turn people away."

Across all contexts, timeliness was not only a function of scheduling but also of **efficiency and partnerships**. As noted under section 5.3.2, the ability to leverage existing infrastructure and institutional networks reduced transaction costs and facilitated rapid rescheduling when disruptions occurred.

5.3.2. Management arrangements (E4) and partnerships (F3)

The project successfully deployed a network of implementing partners and strategic partnerships with relevant national institutions in each context for enhanced policy alignment and operational delivery. However, the management arrangements did not fully reflect the regional project's knowledge management ambitions, as represented in the project document, and coordination and communication with financial institutions remained limited.

A network of implementing partners and strategic alliances

The project deployed a network of implementing partners and strategic alliances with national institutions, which enhanced policy alignment and operational delivery. It relied on a decentralized partnership model that enabled access to value chains and contextual adaptation and established **36 implementing partnerships across 22 locations and 19 value chains** in the four countries. By engaging a mix of farms, cooperatives, training centres, and private entities, the project was able to deliver services tailored to local value chains and youth needs. These arrangements contributed to implementation efficiency and local ownership, although they also introduced complexity in project management and monitoring.

In **Malawi**, the programme partnered with ten entities covering all regions, and the absence of a permanent ILO office was mitigated by a responsive project team and strong collaboration with national institutions such as TEVETA, LUANAR, and ECAM. Implementing partners praised the flexibility and proximity of the ILO team, which adapted schedules and placements to local conditions and maintained regular engagement with stakeholders. Partner entities included farms like Roseberry Farms and Kombeza Foods, training institutions such as the Malawi Institute of Tourism and Kasama Technical College, and community-based organizations like CAPP and Tingathe Women's Forum. The hubs operated in sectors including dairy, horticulture, hospitality, aquaculture, and baobab juice. The inclusion of women-led and grassroots organizations significantly enhanced outreach to vulnerable youth, while the presence of national associations like ECAM ensured alignment with broader employment strategies. Partners reported strong engagement with local communities and high demand for services, though monitoring protocols varied across institutions.

In **Madagascar**, the presence of a permanent ILO office facilitated coordination and mobilization of expertise. The project team maintained close relationships with regional actors and adapted implementation to rural constraints. The project mobilized a diverse set of partners across six regions, including technical centres such as FIFAMANOR and SRE-CFA, farms like Green Farm and

SEFAFI, and cooperatives such as COOP and Start Coop. These entities operated in value chains ranging from dairy and sugarcane-ethanol to cassava, ecolanguste, and digital marketing. Their territorial anchoring and specialization enabled the hubs to adapt services to local realities, particularly in remote and coastal areas. The combination of agricultural producers and training institutions enhanced both technical relevance and outreach capacity. However, partners noted delays in administrative processes and limited decentralization of decision-making, which occasionally slowed operations.

The project also supported innovative forms of partnership with the private sector, including through the Youth Observatory's “reversed forums”. During these events, employers presented their expectations, skill requirements, and labour market needs directly to young people. This approach helped optimise interactions between labour supply and demand, improved the relevance of information shared with job seekers, and contributed to a more efficient use of project resources.

In **Côte d’Ivoire**, the project was coordinated by the ILO country office, which played a central role in convening and adjusting partnerships. ANADER played a central role across multiple regions, delivering training in poultry, pepper, orchard fruits, and agricultural machinery. Agro-processing firms and cooperatives such as Eco Cajou, PAN AGRO Commodities, and Ivoire Bio Fruits provided direct pathways to employment and market access. The diversity of value chains—from cashew nuts to bio fruits—reflected the programme’s responsiveness to regional economic dynamics. Coordination among partners required frequent adjustments, especially in areas where inter-agency collaboration was initially fragmented. The national coordinator was described as highly engaged and proactive, often identifying opportunities directly. Nonetheless, partners reported initial challenges in inter-agency coordination and procedural delays, requiring frequent adjustments and informal negotiations.

The case of Algeria

The set-up in **Algeria** differed significantly from the other three countries. Rather than operating primarily through a network of implementing partners, the intervention functioned more as a technical cooperation project aimed at strengthening national policies and institutional capacities. This model demonstrated effectiveness and comprehensiveness. ANEM acted as the backbone for job placement and immersion services, leveraging its territorial network to connect youth with employers. BNEDER brought technical expertise and value-chain diagnostics, ensuring that training and employment strategies were aligned with sectoral needs, while NESDA complemented these efforts by promoting entrepreneurship and advisory support for small-scale ventures. Such a partnership addressed wage employment and self-employment within the same value chains, creating a coherent ecosystem. Then, the ILO introduced innovations tailored to each partner’s mandate: Immersion–Discovery–Enterprise (IDE) was embedded in ANEM’s service portfolio to modernise employer engagement; FTCD were codified under MFEP decrees to strengthen vocational training; and tools such as Autoentrepreneur Vert and CRE clubs were integrated into NESDA’s entrepreneurship programmes. By aligning these innovations within existing structures, the project avoided duplication, enhanced ownership, and positioned services for scale-up across regions and sectors.

ILO and IFAD structures

Across all countries, implementing partners confirmed that the **ILO team was accessible and responsive**, and that management arrangements allowed for contextual adaptation. However, the regional programme's knowledge management component—intended to generate and share learning across countries—was not fully operationalized. Country teams focused primarily on national implementation, with limited cross-country exchange or documentation of lessons learned during this phase.

At the **regional level**, both ILO and IFAD teams played an active role in planning and monitoring. Coordination went beyond routine donor relations: joint supervision missions were conducted in all countries, including Algeria, and technical collaboration extended to the co-development of targeting strategies, diagnostic tools, and knowledge-sharing templates. Regular exchanges between ensured alignment of methodologies, and quality and coherence of implementation.

5.3.3. Monitoring mechanisms (E3)

While the original project document foresaw using tracer studies as a source for certain indicators, a centralized tracer study was not ultimately carried out. It is possible that this was not carried out due to a lack of resources: without an existing system to carry out these tracer studies, it is possible that the time and resource costs of setting up such a system (especially when at least one country presented logistical difficulties) were prohibitive. Ultimately, instead of deploying a centralized tracer study, the monitoring system was realized through regular field missions, coaching visits, and partner-led reporting.

All countries relied on a **unified ILO monitoring and reporting system** across countries, but its effectiveness depended heavily on field-level collaboration with implementing partners. The system was operationalized through regular field missions, partner reporting, and coaching mechanisms In Madagascar and Côte d'Ivoire, partners confirmed that while the ILO provided structured tools and frameworks, the actual monitoring relied on their own field presence and data collection efforts.

WhatsApp groups and **informal feedback loops** were widely used for follow-up, and some partners began experimenting with different indicators to capture qualitative aspects of employment. However, the absence of harmonized tracer studies and centralized databases constrained comparability and long-term outcome tracking.

According to the project teams, the decentralized approach enabled real-time responsiveness and contextual adaptation but limited the project's ability to obtain information directly from beneficiaries, track post-placement outcomes or compare results across regions systematically. In Malawi, a service tracker tool was piloted to reach directly to beneficiaries and improve follow-up, in line with the project document. This was not yet fully integrated.

The **evaluation survey** demonstrates the utility of these exercises (Annex I). It captures employment status before and after training (e.g., 38% employed before vs. 67% after in sub-Saharan countries), quality indicators such as written contracts (29%) and social protection coverage (21%), and the prevalence of informal self-employment (79%). It also details types of wage employment - including full-time (57%), part-time (14%), occasional work (16%), internships (5%) and other (8%) - and highlights further needs such as access to finance, business acceleration, and post-placement support.

5.4 Impact and sustainability

5.4.1. Impact on beneficiaries (I5)

The impact of ProAgro YOUTH on beneficiaries' livelihoods and well-being appears constrained by the quality of employment outcomes. However, there are positive prospects for longer-term effects.

Development impact and job quality

The hub model aligns strongly with **SDG 8** (Decent Work and Economic Growth) and **SDG 5** (Gender Equality), particularly through its focus on NEET youth and young women. However, the extent to which this alignment materializes in sustained career development and enterprise growth requires further assessment and robust metrics, including indicators on income stability, business formalization, and job quality.

Survey data indicate that most respondents transitioned into wage or self-employment. However, many jobs were temporary, low-paying, or lacked formal contracts and social protection. Of respondents in wage employment, 40% had a written contract and 30% received social security. Malawi had the lowest percentage of wage-employed respondents with a written contract or social security, while Algeria had the highest. These limitations reduce the potential for sustained income security and upward mobility on the wage employment front, suggesting that the programme's immediate impact on living standards was modest under that employment pathway.

Positive prospects

Across all countries, respondents consistently expressed strong intentions to pursue further training or upskilling and maintain their trajectories within the targeted value chains and employment tracks, including self-employment pathways. This forward-looking attitude reflects the perceived relevance of acquired skills and the confidence gained through programme participation, even where initial placements were short-term.

Qualitative feedback from focus group discussions reinforces these findings. Youth beneficiaries reported increased income, productivity, and confidence, particularly in self-employment tracks. In Malawi, some reinvested earnings into renewable energy and small businesses (as explained in E2). In Madagascar, over 20% of trained youth assumed community leadership roles, promoting peer learning and local development. FGDs and survey responses anticipated improved technical and entrepreneurial skills as well as increased income, especially if youth engagement can be maintained and local financing becomes more available. An additional unexpected impact was strengthened inter-institutional cooperation, in which public and community partners enhanced their training and monitoring capacities.

Côte d'Ivoire saw both expected and unexpected impacts on beneficiaries and institutional partners, although sustainability was observed to be limited by structural factors. Direct beneficiaries acquired technical skills and entrepreneurial rigor, helping them to structure their businesses and move away from working "in the shadows." In Odienné, women initially trained in agro-processing as part of the project became peer trainers, contributing to workplace inclusion and skills transfer.

In another example, an entrepreneur in agro-processing testified that, thanks to the training, her "management style" had changed and her business had been able to restructure and hire more people. However, she emphasized that the business had reached the "financing stage" in order to guarantee full-time employment and expand its activities. Impact extended to economic impact and generation of indirect employment. Chili pepper producers saw their yields increase significantly after ANADER training, from 10 to 20 bags, which had a positive impact on their incomes. In a further positive example, an attiéké cooperative created 467 indirect jobs in transport and supply chains.

5.4.2. Long-term contribution (I3) and institutionalization (I4)

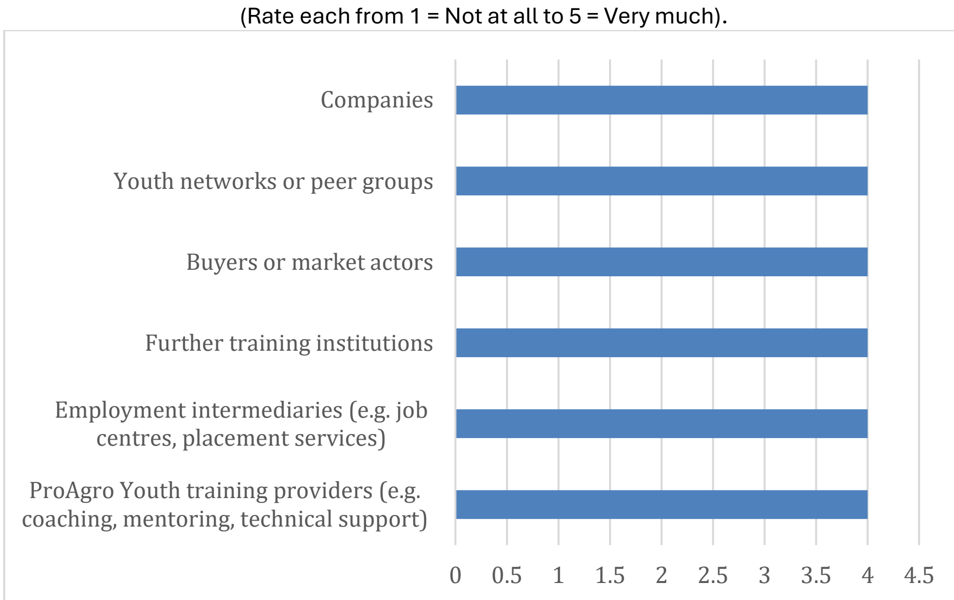
The systemic effects of ProAgro YOUTH can be assessed from two complementary angles: the hub approach as a market-oriented ecosystem intervention, and the degree of institutional embedding within public policy frameworks. Both dimensions reflect the programme's ambition to move beyond isolated training schemes toward structural change; however, evidence suggests that while the foundations for systemic impact were laid, the transformation remains partial and uneven across countries.

Hub Approach and Market Ecosystem

The integrated agribusiness hub model was designed to operate as a systemic solution, linking skills development, enterprise services, and job intermediation within local value chains. Despite some vagueness in the definition and operationalization of the hub concept, beneficiaries consistently confirm its practical value in creating useful connections.

General assessments across countries show high ratings (average score 4) for linkages with ProAgro training providers, employment intermediaries, further training institutions, companies, youth networks, and market actors. These results indicate that the hub approach, while conceptually broad, has effectively facilitated access to coaching, mentoring, placement services, and market opportunities—elements that underpin both the effectiveness and intrinsic sustainability of the model.

Figure 11. To what extent did the project help participants maintain useful connections to ...?



Focus group discussions reinforced this positive perception of the hubs approach, with beneficiaries citing improved access to networks and market information as a key outcome. However, limitations identified in previous sections—such as restricted access to finance, insufficient business acceleration services, and persistent infrastructure gaps for agricultural development—constrain the full systemic potential of the model. Addressing these bottlenecks will be critical for hubs to function as engines of inclusive rural transformation through rural youth employment.

Institutional embedding and policy uptake

The second dimension of systemic impact relates to the integration of project approaches into national policies and institutional frameworks, also discussed in section 5.3.2. In Algeria, the project successfully institutionalised mechanisms such as green job-search clubs, enterprise immersion schemes, and auto-entrepreneur desks within government services, demonstrating the feasibility of embedding hub functions in national structures.

In other countries, engagement with ministries and specialised agencies also laid the groundwork for policy alignment and future scale-up. In Malawi, partnerships facilitated curriculum harmonization and certification, embedding skills development within national systems. Madagascar leveraged partnerships to integrate agribusiness training curricula into public programmes, while in Côte d'Ivoire the in-situ training model is being replicated by private sector actors in agro-processing and hospitality sectors and the consortium model created pathways for scale-up through government-led youth employment initiatives.

These arrangements were complemented by tripartite engagement and alignment with national strategies—such as Malawi's Job Creation Strategy, Madagascar's youth employment policy, and Côte d'Ivoire's PND and DWCP—positioning the project as a credible actor within broader employment agendas. However, sustainability remains contingent on addressing systemic gaps in financial inclusion and infrastructure, which were repeatedly flagged as barriers to continuity.

Stakeholders in all three Sub-Saharan noted that national authorities **are learning from ProAgro Youth**, though formal integration into government frameworks remains pending. Beyond employment outcomes, the programme has created institutional innovations—such as service trackers in Malawi and in situ training models in Côte d'Ivoire—that can be scaled up to strengthen national systems for youth employment. Regional knowledge products and policy dialogues, although limited in this phase, will further support advocacy on youth employment in agri-food systems.

5.4.3. Exit strategy (I1) and reinforcement needs (I2)

The project did not include a formal exit strategy in its original design, but partners in all countries have initiated steps to sustain training and employment services beyond the project's duration. Additionally, while the project laid a strong foundation for youth employment, several areas require reinforcement to ensure long-term impact and institutional uptake.

Exit strategy

The programme **lacked a formal exit strategy** in its original design, which limited structured planning for continuity and resource mobilization beyond the project's end. The hub strategy has a sustainability dimension, but hubs were not always fully developed in terms of key components, and SME connections are still missing in the value chains where the project was deployed (e.g. financial connections). Future sustainability will depend on formalizing partnerships with financial institutions.

As foreseen by the programme, implementing partners in all countries have **initiated measures to sustain services,** mainly by embedding ProAgro training modules into existing institutional mandates and exploring new funding streams. In Côte d'Ivoire, ANADER and CI PME plan to replicate ProAgro curricula within national extension services and expand outreach using domestic resources, signalling strong institutional uptake. In Madagascar, some hubs have introduced fee-based training and advisory services to maintain operations, though sustainability remains uneven and dependent on local market conditions. In Malawi, partners expressed commitment to continue activities but highlighted the need for technical assistance and financial linkages to consolidate gains, particularly in rural areas with limited institutional capacity.

Access to finance

While the programme laid a strong foundation for youth employment, several areas require reinforcement to ensure long-term impact and institutional uptake. **Access to finance remains the most critical gap**, consistently highlighted across all countries. Surveys in Malawi and Madagascar confirmed that lack of start-up capital is the primary barrier for self-employed youth, and partners emphasized the need for credit schemes, financial literacy, and linkages to microfinance institutions. This challenge echoes findings under E5, where adaptive strategies compensated for structural gaps but could not replace systemic solutions.

This calls for a **strategic role development finance actors**: linking ILO's deployment of training and employment services to regions and value chains supported by development banks and financial institutions. Investment plans would create synergies between skills development and financial inclusion. Such integration could enable bundled interventions—combining technical training, business incubation, and access to credit—thus accelerating enterprise growth and improving sustainability. Coordination platforms at regional level should formalize these linkages, ensuring that agribusiness hubs operate as connectors between youth, markets, and financial services.

Future needs

Institutional capacity requires strengthening. In Madagascar, regional employment services lack resources to scale up hub activities, and partners called for investment in infrastructure and irrigation to sustain agribusiness ventures. In Malawi, stakeholders requested technical assistance to improve digital monitoring systems and expand value chain linkages, reinforcing efficiency concerns raised under F3. In Côte d'Ivoire, formalizing inter-agency coordination and investing in trainer certification were identified as priorities to maintain quality standards and consolidate the consortium model. These recommendations align with success factors discussed under E6, where partnerships and proactive engagement were key drivers of performance.

Gender-sensitive approaches should be scaled up. Women-led hubs in Malawi and Madagascar demonstrated strong potential for inclusive entrepreneurship, but their replication will depend on targeted support and financial linkages. Future reinforcement in Algeria should focus on these dimensions, ensuring that gender-responsive training and financial inclusion are embedded in programme design from the outset. In addition, gender impact dimensions such as women's economic empowerment after gaining access to employment could be further explored.

Regional ambitions for knowledge capitalization and cross-country learning were not fully realized. This said, **capitalization makes more sense in a second phase**, once the project has been completed and sufficient time has allowed for the consolidation of country-level experiences and the identification of scalable practices. Deploying tracer studies to monitor post-placement outcomes and defining the hub model and its operationalization at the regional level would provide a structured basis for learning, enable evidence-based replication, and strengthen policy influence across participating countries.

As for future plans, in Malawi, the **employment tracker tool** is being considered for integration into national youth employment systems, pending digital infrastructure upgrades.

5.6. Cross-cutting issues

The project integrated cross-cutting themes—gender equality, inclusion, social dialogue, labour standards, and environmental sustainability—throughout its design and implementation, though depth and consistency varied across countries. These issues were addressed under main criteria and are summarised below.

5.6.1. Vulnerable groups (X1) and inclusive tools (X2)

The inclusion of vulnerable groups and deployment of inclusive approaches has been addressed throughout this section, including as it relates to inclusion in design (5.1.4) and the identification and management of the needs of rural youth and NEETs through simplified curricula, flexible schedules, and hub selection in remote areas (5.2.1). Findings also include that female participation was actively promoted, with strong results in sub-Saharan countries (46–53%) but limited success in Algeria (17%) due to cultural and mobility barriers (5.2.1). Outreach to persons with disabilities was not subject to specific targets; however, 7% of survey respondents indicated a disability.

Gender

Outreach was also observed through other methods. In **Malawi**, for example, gender programming perspectives were a defining feature of the programme. Women represented 60% of trainees in CAPP's dairy farming track, and women-led enterprises were prioritized during partner selection. Stipends and flexible scheduling further reduced barriers for rural women, enabling their participation in training and internships. As a result, employment outcomes were strongly gender-balanced in the country, with women accounting for 53% of total jobs created (48% in direct jobs and 57% in wage employment). While increased income for women brought unintended challenges around gender-based violence in Malawi, these challenges were addressed proactively through integrating gender-awareness sessions and household financial management training into the existing programme.

In **Côte d'Ivoire**, efforts were made to specifically target women in northern regions. The project considered measures to overcome structural constraints, such as slightly expanding the age limit for women and encouraging partners to incorporate childcare support systems. The final results show that women represent 44% of salaried jobs and 57% of self-employment facilitated in Côte d'Ivoire, which represents a significant inclusion of young women. In certain fields, Côte d'Ivoire saw strong female participation: training in cashew nut processing in Odienné benefited 208 youth, of which 76% were female; training in dried fruit processing in Ferkessedougou involved 100 youth, of which 90% were women; and the soft skills training in Boundiali included 169 youths, of which 63% were female. Improvements in the quality of work for women were also noted, for example, in an attiéké unit, where the acquisition of new equipment made the work less arduous.

In **Madagascar**, young women benefited from training in agroecology and entrepreneurship, strengthening their economic autonomy and role in local communities. The training modules, practical guides, and monitoring and evaluation tools included specific components aimed at promoting gender equality, enhancing the participation of young women in agro-entrepreneurial activities, and raising awareness among all beneficiaries about non-discrimination principles. These tools were confirmed to reflect a systematic integration of gender and non-discrimination dimensions, which has helped increase the participation of young women and other vulnerable groups in training and entrepreneurial development activities. However, some limitations remain, particularly regarding the adaptation of tools for persons with disabilities and for young people living in remote areas.

In **Algeria**, the difference between participation in programme trainings and outcomes (access to employment) was particularly strong. While young women in Algeria participated in training activities, often at rates higher than men, few made it through to actual employment, as men were hired at much higher rates than women[25]. The programme recognized this pattern but did not have the time and resources to systematically assess where in the process women dropped out in each of the employment pathways offered and why. In Algeria, inclusivity was reinforced through GET Ahead entrepreneurship training for women and quotas embedded in Terms of Reference, though implementation fell short of targets (5.2.1).

In all countries, training packages and entrepreneurship modules integrated gender and non-discrimination principles, including adapted content for low-literacy youth and women with family responsibilities (5.1.4).

Disability inclusion

With regard to the inclusion of persons with disabilities, the project included this vulnerable group in the initial assessment. However, effective participation remained marginal despite the efforts of the association for persons with disabilities, as work in the agro-industry often requires significant physical effort. The evaluation survey indicates that 3.30% of respondents in Côte d’Ivoire reported having a disability, which is low but reflects identification efforts.

In Malawi, disability inclusion was present but limited. CAPP reported training farmers with disabilities and raising awareness on disability rights within communities, encouraging families to enrol children with disabilities in school. Despite these efforts, unions noted that persons with disabilities remained underrepresented and recommended more targeted outreach and adaptive training methods in future phases.

In Madagascar, survey data indicated that 7.7% of respondents reported having a disability, reflecting an effort toward accessibility, although their participation remains marginal and requires enhanced support. Partners highlighted the need to strengthen partnerships with specialised organisations to improve inclusion of persons with disabilities.

5.6.2. Normative integration (X3)

Tripartism and social dialogue were considered in project design and implementation, which moved toward ecosystme development with employers’ organizations and governments actively engaged. Unions were less engaged but still played a consultative role (5.1.5). Labour standards were promoted through curriculum harmonization with national TVET frameworks and efforts to

[25] IFAD ABHP Outcome Evaluation – final report.

formalize wage employment, though contract coverage remained low (5.2.1). In Malawi, the training incorporated occupational safety and health (OSH) guidelines, and awareness campaigns addressed child labour prevention, ensuring compliance with ILO Conventions No. 138 (Minimum Age) and No. 182 (Worst Forms of Child Labour). It also disseminated the ILO Recommendation on Apprenticeships (R208), which call for quality, supervised training linked to employment, and fair remuneration, learning objectives, and protection against exploitation.

Environmental sustainability was included but often implicit. In Côte d'Ivoire, the project supported the emergence of innovations in the circular and green economy within beneficiary companies. One such initiative was recycling cashew nut waste to make fertilizer or recovering post-harvest mango losses. Environmental sustainability was most structured in Algeria, where FTCD included QHSE (quality, health, safety, environment) modules and waste valorization, and the Autoentrepreneur Vert service promoted green entrepreneurship. These measures position Algeria as the strongest case of normative and environmental integration within the programme.

Conclusions

The ProAgro YOUTH programme has demonstrated strong performance in addressing youth employment challenges across four diverse contexts—Algeria, Côte d'Ivoire, Madagascar, and Malawi. **Effectiveness** was overall high, with employment facilitation exceeding expectations: more than 14,255 jobs were facilitated against an initial target of 5,600, representing an implementation rate of 255%. This success reflects the programme's pragmatic approach and the capacity of local teams to adapt strategies to emerging opportunities. At the country level, Algeria stands out with 9,368 jobs against a target of 1,100 (852% achievement), largely driven by wage employment placements through national institutions. Malawi and Côte d'Ivoire both achieved 1,584 and 1,583 jobs respectively, slightly above their targets of 1,500, while Madagascar reached 1,720 jobs, surpassing its target by 15%.

The **distribution between tracks** shows that wage employment accounted for 72% of total outcomes, consistent with the programme's design principle of a 70/30 ratio. However, this achievement was mainly driven by Algeria, which largely compensated for difficulties in Madagascar and Malawi to drive job seekers towards formal companies.

While quantitative targets were exceeded, the **quality of jobs** (contracts, social protection, income stability) and lack of financial inclusion constrain long-term impact. Moreover, the nature of self-employment outcomes requires careful interpretation. Quantitative effects are less clear than for wage employment because many entrepreneurs were already active before joining the programme. In these cases, the project's contribution is better measured in terms of productivity, rather than jobs, which was the key indicator used in the project design and implementation. This distinction is critical for assessing sustainability and for refining monitoring tools in future phases.

The intervention was inclusive, **targeting vulnerable rural youth of different ages and backgrounds and seeking gender balance**, with country teams supervising partners' beneficiary selection and focusing on NEETs. Targets for women were achieved in Sub-Saharan countries with a gender balance in employment outcomes ranging between 46% and 53%, but not in Algeria (17%), which affected the overall imbalance in the project's results in terms of gender parity in targeting. In participating Sub-Saharan countries, women not only participated in large numbers but also assumed leadership roles within hubs and partner organizations, demonstrating the effectiveness potential of gender-responsive approaches.

Relevance was strong because the programme addressed real skill gaps among rural youth and aligned with national priorities. Designed as a pilot initiative, it combined country-level implementation of agribusiness hubs with regional knowledge generation and policy influence. While the **hub concept was flexible** during implementation, said flexibility removed many of the defining features of the model that was meant to be piloted. The programme remained output-driven, responding to the urgency of youth unemployment with practical solutions and network mobilization. However, the programme did not fully realize its potential for **bottom-up knowledge capitalization**, as the logistical and time constraints of the programme meant that regional learning and systematic documentation of lessons were limited. The programme did, nonetheless, tap into ILO know-how and institutional networks to design locally relevant employment interventions and adapt strategies to diverse contexts and labour market realities. In the future, the experience from this phase could feed knowledge generation in future phases, and tracer studies could enhance data for continued learning.

Enabling factors included flexibility and the ability to leverage ILO networks and technical expertise, which allowed rapid identification of employment promotion opportunities and adaptation to local realities. Two features linked to the intervention logic were particularly important: technical on-the-job training tailored to labour market needs, which facilitated short-term employment, and the role of implementing partners that acted as genuine hubs—embedded in value chains or located in rural spaces functioning as connectors—helping youth establish useful contacts with employers and service providers. Limiting factors included incomplete connections within the hub ecosystem, especially with the financial sector, where linkages and follow-up support for access to credit were missing. While ILO occasionally facilitated such connections, this was not systematic, as the project's primary goal was employment creation rather than hub development. Post-training support and tracer mechanisms were underdeveloped, reducing the ability to monitor long-term outcomes and reinforce entrepreneurial pathways.

Efficiency was a notable strength, as the programme leveraged existing infrastructure and local expertise to maintain low unit costs without compromising quality. Partnerships with national institutions and private actors were instrumental in delivering cost-effective services. The project managed to establish two types of partnerships. First, **implementing partners** that delivered training and employment-related services embedded in value chains: the evaluation counted **36 partnerships across 22 locations and 19 value chains** in the four countries. These partners were critical in linking youth to practical training and job opportunities. Second, **strategic partnerships** with key agencies and tripartite constituents ensured policy alignment and institutional support.

The **tripartite approach**—though different in each country—provided valuable entry points for social dialogue and normative integration. Employers' organizations played an active role in Malawi and Madagascar, while unions contributed mainly through consultations.

Impact and sustainability are promising. ProAgro YOUTH introduced innovations that are or will likely be embedded in national institutions. This was most prominent in Algeria, where services such as job-search clubs, immersion schemes, and entrepreneurship desks were integrated into public systems. Similar steps toward curriculum harmonization and certification were observed in Malawi and Madagascar, while Côte d'Ivoire advanced in-situ training models and inter-agency coordination.

Finally, the hub approach has important sustainability implications. The project acted as a connector between training, employment services, and market actors. Beneficiaries consistently reported maintaining useful links with employers, cooperatives, and service providers, confirming the rationale of the hub model. At the same time, the evaluation found that some relevant connections are not yet established in Sub-Saharan hubs, including connections to the financial sector that can provide access to start-up capital or business acceleration. Addressing these gaps, alongside reinforcing hub conceptualization and operationalization through regional cooperation, will be critical to unlock the systemic potential of the model and ensure durable impact.

Good practices and lessons learned

This section presents some lessons learned and good practices extracted from the ProAgro Youth experience. Lessons learned captured insights on why an approach worked or did not work, under what conditions, and how it can inform future interventions. Good practices, on the other hand, refer to proven approaches or methods that have demonstrably achieved positive results and can be replicated in similar contexts.

Lesson 1: Support to entrepreneurship requires integrated financial inclusion measures

Training and advisory services alone cannot guarantee sustainable self-employment. Across all countries, lack of start-up capital was the most cited barrier (67% of survey respondents). Future interventions should embed financial linkages—such as partnerships with microfinance institutions, credit schemes, and risk-sharing facilities—into hub operations. This lesson applies broadly to rural youth employment programmes where financial ecosystems are weak.

Lesson 2: Business acceleration complements on-the-job training for systemic impact

While internships and technical training improved employability, systemic change requires enterprise growth. The addition of business acceleration services—such as mentoring, market linkages, and access to finance—would enable SMEs to expand and absorb trained youth. This dual approach strengthens both wage employment and entrepreneurial pathways, particularly in value chains with unmet demand.

Lesson 3: The hub model is effective when fully operationalized

Hubs that acted as connectors—linking training, employment services, and market actors—delivered stronger outcomes than isolated training centres. However, the concept was inconsistently applied, with some interventions meeting some but not all conditions of a hub. Future programmes should define operational standards for hubs, including governance, service packages, and financial linkages, to ensure scalability and systemic impact.

Good Practice 1: Diagnostics for country adaptation

One of the most effective practices observed during implementation was the use of comprehensive diagnostics to adapt the programme to country-specific contexts. Before launching activities, the project teams conducted detailed labour market analyses and value chain mapping exercises, which identified sectors with real employment potential and informed the design of hubs and training content. This approach ensured that interventions were grounded in local realities and aligned with market demand, reducing the risk of skills mismatch and enhancing the relevance of services provided to youth.

Good Practice 2: “Discovery and immersion visits” in agro-food enterprises

A notable good practice under ProAgro Jeunes in Algeria was the introduction of “discovery and immersion visits” in agro-food enterprises to improve job matching and sector attractiveness. This experimental mechanism, implemented with ANEM and supported by ILO technical expertise, allowed young jobseekers to spend time inside companies, observe work processes, and interact with employers before formal placement. By bridging the gap between employment services and enterprises, the initiative addressed mismatched expectations and enhanced youth interest in rural and green jobs. This approach is particularly relevant in contexts where companies face unmet labour demand because young people are reluctant to enter agricultural sectors due to prejudice or lack of awareness of career prospects—a challenge that was not uniformly observed across all ProAgro YOUTH countries, as survey and field mission data indicate varying levels of sector attractiveness.

Good Practice 3: Curriculum development and harmonization

Curriculum development and harmonization in Malawi stands out as a third good practice. The project worked closely with TEVETA to align training packages with national standards, incorporating competency-based modules for priority sectors such as horticulture and dairy. This harmonization not only enhanced the quality and recognition of training but also positioned hubs within the national TVET system, creating pathways for certification and formal employment. The process demonstrated how early engagement with national authorities can reinforce sustainability and institutional ownership, while ensuring that training remains responsive to labour market needs.

Good Practice 4: Embeddedness in national employment agencies

One of the most notable achievements of ProAgro YOUTH was the institutionalization of project innovations within Algeria’s National Employment Agency (ANEM), transforming territorial agents into proactive connectors between employers and job seekers. With technical support from the ILO, ANEM adopted prospection and placement techniques adapted to the agricultural sector. These innovations strengthened public employment services in rural labour markets, enabling agents to identify job opportunities, improve sector attractiveness, and facilitate matching for youth in agricultural value chains.

This model cannot always be replicated in all contexts, as its success depends on the existence and capacity of public employment institutions with sufficient resources and territorial coverage. However, where these conditions exist, institutionalization of proactive job intermediation can significantly improve labour market outcomes and sustainability. The Algerian government itself could contribute to the replication of this good practice through technical cooperation and triangular cooperation schemes.

Recommendations

Based on previous conclusions and lessons learnt, the evaluation proposes the following strategic recommendations to consolidate gains and inform future programming:

1. Conceptualize and operationalize the hub model

Define the agribusiness hub model with clear operational features, including its role as a connector within value chains and its capacity to integrate training, employment services, and financial linkages. Develop guidance for hub operationalization at country and regional levels to ensure consistency among key features and scalability.

Responsible	*Priority*	*Time Implication*	*Resource Implication*
ILO	*High*	*Short-term*	*Low*

2. Strategically combine hub-based employment support with other interventions and align deployment of ProAgro YOUTH services with the deployment of development finance

While the hub model deserves focal support, the ILO intervention in agricultural labour markets creates other opportunities that enhance consistency and impact, such as development of internship programmes, capacity building of employment agencies, curriculum development and certification of prior knowledge, etc.). These initiatives should be strategically and explicitly related to hubs. Similarly, it would be beneficial to seek strategic complementarity and operational connections with financial institutions, ensuring that access to credit and start-up capital complements training and job facilitation. Also explore business acceleration as a means to foster wage employment in agricultural value chains.

Responsible	*Priority*	*Time Implication*	*Resource Implication*
ILO, Donor, Partners	*High*	*Medium-term*	*Medium*

3. Connect ProAgro YOUTH achievements with opportunities in the international development agenda

Look for opportunities for synergies and awareness building around support for women-led farms in the context of the international development agenda, including 2026 being the International Year of the Woman Farmer. Given the identification of women-led farms as strong examples in this project, the International Year of the Woman Farmer may be an asset for communication and resource mobilization. Where possible, strengthen and scale gender-responsive entrepreneurship development by providing targeted financial support, business acceleration services, and mentorship opportunities to the emerging women leaders identified in Malawi and Madagascar, and ensure that future programme phases systematically resource and incentivize women's leadership within hub governance and partner institutions in every country.

Responsible	*Priority*	*Time Implication*	*Resource Implication*
ILO, Donor, Partners	*Medium*	*Medium-term*	*Low*

4. **Use a tracer study to monitor post-placement outcomes and strengthen knowledge management.**

Include quality of employment indicators—such as contract status, social protection, and income stability—alongside quantitative targets, to better capture the sustainability and decency of jobs created. This is consistent with the post-hub phase of the IFAD model, which calls for follow-up and monitoring of youth employment and youth enterprises.

Responsible	*Priority*	*Time Implication*	*Resource Implication*
ILO, Donor	*High*	*Medium-term*	*Medium*

5. **Plan and monitor disability inclusion**

Incorporate isability inclusion into pre-hub activities by conducting context-specific accessibility and needs assessments, adapting training and physical delivery modalities accordingly, and including disability breakdown in project monitoring tools. Consider adopting context-specific quotas or targets for disability inclusion.

Responsible	*Priority*	*Time Implication*	*Resource Implication*
ILO, Donor, Partners	*High*	*Medium-term*	*Medium*

Annex I. Survey

A. Background

A.1. Please select your country

Value	Percent	Count
Algeria	19%	99
Côte d'Ivoire	25%	127
Madagascar	10%	53
Malawi	45%	229
Totals		508

A.2. Please select your gender

Segment	Value	Percent	Count
Algeria	Male	50%	49
	Female	50%	50
Côte d'Ivoire	Male	52%	65
	Female	48%	60
Madagascar	Male	48%	25
	Female	52%	27
Malawi	Male	42%	94
	Female	58%	132
Total	**Male**	**46%**	**233**
	Female	**54%**	**269**
N			**502**

A.3. Do you have any disability ?

Segment	Value	Percent	Count
Algeria	Yes	4%	2
	No	96%	50
Côte d'Ivoire	Yes	4%	5
	No	96%	121
Madagascar	Yes	8%	4
	No	92%	48
Malawi	Yes	12%	26
	No	89%	200
Total	**Yes**	**7%**	**37**
	No	**93%**	**461**
N			**498**

A.4. What's your highest educational qualification (For Algerian participants only) ?[26]

Value	% of Total
High school diploma	2%
University degree	65%
Vocational educational diploma	33%

B. Training

B.1. Please assess the following aspects of your experience with the training provided from 1 (very negative) to 5 (very positive):

Algeria

Aspects	Count	Rating
Adaptation to your needs	87	3,5
Interest in topics	85	4
Quality of trainers and mentors	86	4
Relations with fellow learners	84	4,5
Relations with training providers	84	4,5
Your overall satisfaction	84	4

Côte d'Ivoire

Aspects		Rating
Adaptation to your needs	84	4,5
Interest in topics	83	4,5
Quality of trainers and mentors	86	4,5
Relations with fellow learners	85	4,5
Relations with training providers	86	4,5
Your overall satisfaction	85	4,5

Madagascar

Aspects		Rating
Adaptation to your needs	32	4
Interest in topics	31	4,5
Quality of trainers and mentors	31	4,5
Relations with fellow learners	33	4,5
Relations with training providers	31	4,5
Your overall satisfaction	30	4,5

Malawi

Aspects		Rating
Adaptation to your needs	137	4,5
Interest in topics	128	5
Quality of trainers and mentors	133	4,5
Relations with fellow learners	129	4,5
Relations with training providers	127	5
Your overall satisfaction	129	4,5

[26] Other background questions excluded from this annex, but likely to support segmentation of results include choice of track, value chain region, implementing partner, and service/s used

General satisfaction (all countries)

Aspect	Count	Rating
Adaptation to your needs	350	4,5
Interest in topics	337	4,5
Quality of trainers and mentors	344	4,5
Relations with fellow learners	338	4,5
Relations with training providers	336	4,5
Your overall satisfaction	336	4,5

B.2. Have you ever participated in a training programme outside of Pro Agro Youth :

Segment	Value	Percent	Count
Algeria	Yes	57%	26
	No	44%	20
Côte d'Ivoire	Yes	43%	38
	No	57%	50
Madagascar	Yes	44%	14
	No	56%	18
Malawi	Yes	39%	50
	No	62%	80
Total	**Yes**	**42%**	**140**
	No	**58%**	**194**
N			**334**

If you have made use of other employment or business support services outside ProAgro Youth please compare them to the latter :

Segment	Value	Percent	Count
Algeria	Worse	8%	3
	Similar	**60%**	**23**
	Better	32%	12
Côte d'Ivoire	Worse	8%	3
	Similar	**73%**	**27**
	Better	19%	7
Madagascar	Worse	7%	1
	Similar	**50%**	**7**
	Better	43%	6
Malawi	Worse	18%	9
	Similar	**50%**	**25**
	Better	32%	16

B.3. As a woman, please indicate your degree of agreement with the following statements and provide example if relevant:

Algeria

Aspect	Count	Rating
I faced specific challenges in employment and entrepreneurship as a woman.	42	3,5
The services provided by ProAgro YOUTH were inclusive or adapted to my needs as a woman.	45	3,5

Côte d'Ivoire

Aspect	Count	Rating
I faced specific challenges in employment and entrepreneurship as a woman	Count	4,5
The services provided by ProAgro YOUTH were inclusive or adapted to my needs as a woman	Count	4,5
I faced specific challenges in employment and entrepreneurship as a woman.	Count	4
The services provided by ProAgro YOUTH were inclusive or adapted to my needs as a woman.	Count	4,5

B.4. As a young person with disabilities, please indicate your degree of agreement with the following statements and provide example if relevant:

Algeria

Aspect	Count	Rating
I faced specific challenges in employment and entrepreneurship due to my disability	1	3
The services provided by ProAgro YOUTH were inclusive or adapted to my needs as a person with a disability.	2	5

Côte d'Ivoire

Aspect	Count	Rating
I faced specific challenges in employment and entrepreneurship due to my disability.	2	5
The services provided by ProAgro YOUTH were inclusive or adapted to my needs as a person with a disability	2	5

Madagascar

Aspect	Count	Rating
I faced specific challenges in employment and entrepreneurship due to my disability	1	2
The services provided by ProAgro YOUTH were inclusive or adapted to my needs as a person with a disability	1	3

Malawi

Aspect	Count	Rating
I faced specific challenges in employment and entrepreneurship due to my disability.	8	4
The services provided by ProAgro YOUTH were inclusive or adapted to my needs as a person with a disability	8	4

General agreement (all countries)

Aspect	**Count**	**Rating**
I faced specific challenges in employment and entrepreneurship due to my disability	12	4
The services provided by ProAgro YOUTH were inclusive or adapted to my needs as a person with a disability	13	4

C. Learning outcomes

C.1. Please assess the degree of achievement of your learning expectations from 1 (very negative) to 5 (very positive) :

Algeria

Aspect	Count	Rating
Degree of achievement of your learning expectations	83	4

Côte d'Ivoire

Aspect	Count	Rating
Degree of achievement of your learning expectations	80	4,5

Madagascar

Aspect	Count	Rating
Degree of achievement of your learning expectations	31	4

Malawi

Aspect	Count	Rating
Degree of achievement of your learning expectations	119	4,5

General assessment (all countries)

Aspect	Count	Rating
Degree of achievement of your learning expectations	323	4,5

C.2. To what extent have you been able to apply what you learned through ProAgro YOUTH in …? (Self-employment track only) (Rate each from 1 = Not at all to 5 = Very much)

Algeria

Aspect	Count	Rating
Starting your own business	43	3,5
Running your own business	43	3,5

Côte d'Ivoire

Aspect	Count	Rating
Starting your own business	54	4,5
Running your own business	54	4,5

Madagascar

Aspect	Count	Rating
Starting your own business	25	4
Running your own business	24	3,5

Malawi

Aspect	Count	Rating
Starting your own business	85	4,5
Running your own business	84	4,5

General assessment (all countries)

Aspect	Count	Rating
Starting your own business	211	4
Running your own business	210	4

C.3. To what extent have you been able to apply what you learned through ProAgro YOUTH in the following areas?

(Wage-employment track only) (Rate each from 1 = Not at all to 5 = Very much)

Algeria

Aspect	Count	Rating
Searching for employment	55	4
Performing your wage job	53	4

Côte d'Ivoire

Aspect	Count	Rating
Searching for employment	45	4,5
Performing your wage job	45	5

Madagascar

Aspect	Count	Rating
Searching for employment	12	3,5
Performing your wage job	12	3,5

Malawi

Aspect	Count	Rating
Searching for employment	57	4
Performing your wage job	57	4

General assessment (all countries)

Aspect	Count	Rating
Searching for employment	177	4,5
Performing your wage job	175	4,5

D. Employment Outcomes

D.1. Were you employed (wage or self-employment) before joining the project?

Segment	Value	Percent	Count
Algeria	Yes	25%	20
	No	75%	61
Côte d'Ivoire	Yes	38%	31
	No	62%	50
Madagascar	Yes	58%	18
	No	42%	13
Malawi	Yes	30%	34
	No	70%	80
Overall	**Yes**	**34%**	**103**
	No	**66%**	**204**
N			**307**

D.2. Are you currently employed?

Segment	Value	Percent	Count
Algeria	Wage job	36%	34
	Self-employed	14%	8
	Both	5%	3
	Not employed	46%	36
Côte d'Ivoire	Wage job	26%	21
	Self-employed	39%	32
	Both	7%	6
	Not employed	28%	23
Madagascar	Wage job	26%	8
	Self-employed	39%	12
	Both	13%	4
	Not employed	23%	7
Malawi	Wage job	21%	24
	Self-employed	38%	44
	Both	3%	3
	Not employed	39%	45
Overall	**Wage job**	**25%**	**87**
	Self-employed	**34%**	**96**
	Both	**5%**	**16**
	Not employed	**35%**	**111**
N			**273**

D.3. Please specify (For wage employment only):

Segment	Value	Percent	Count
Algeria	Full time employed for pay by an enterprise / business	83%	30
	Part time employed for pay by an enterprise / business	0%	4
	Occasional work for pay with an enterprise	6%	1
	Internship / learnership / apprenticeship	0%	0
	Other	11%	2
Côte d'Ivoire	Full time employed for pay by an enterprise / business	46%	12
	Part time employed for pay by an enterprise / business	8%	2

	Occasional work for pay with an enterprise	39%	10
	Internship / learnership / apprenticeship	4%	1
	Other	4%	1
Madagascar	Full time employed for pay by an enterprise / business	33%	4
	Part time employed for pay by an enterprise / business	33%	4
	Occasional work for pay with an enterprise	17%	2
	Internship / learnership / apprenticeship	0%	0
	Other	17%	2
Malawi	Full time employed for pay by an enterprise / business	61%	14
	Part time employed for pay by an enterprise / business	22%	5
	Occasional work for pay with an enterprise	0%	0
	Internship / learnership / apprenticeship	13%	3
	Other	4%	1
Overall	**Full time employed for pay by an enterprise / business**	**61%**	**45**
	Part time employed for pay by an enterprise / business	**15%**	**11**
	Occasional work for pay with an enterprise	**13%**	**13**
	Internship / learnership / apprenticeship	**4%**	**4**
	Other	**6%**	**6**
N			**79**

D.4. Please specify (For unemployed participants only):

Segment	Value	Percent	Count
Algeria	Not employed and searching for a job	83%	30
	Academic education	3%	1
	Vocational education / training	0%	0
	Housewife, househusband, family work	8%	3
	Military or civil service	0%	0
	Other	6%	2
Côte d'Ivoire	Not employed and searching for a job	78%	18
	Academic education	13%	3
	Vocational education / training	9%	2
	Housewife, househusband, family work	0%	0
	Military or civil service	0%	0
	Other	0%	0
Madagascar	Not employed and searching for a job	43%	3
	Academic education	14%	1
	Vocational education / training	14%	1
	Housewife, househusband, family work	14%	1
	Military or civil service	0%	0
	Other	14%	1
Malawi	Not employed and searching for a job	56%	25
	Academic education	24%	11
	Vocational education / training	2%	1
	Housewife, househusband, family work	7%	3
	Military or civil service	2%	1
	Other	9%	4
Overall	**Not employed and searching for a job**	**68%**	**76**
	Academic education	**14%**	**16**
	Vocational education / training	**4%**	**4**
	Housewife, househusband, family work	**6%**	**7**
	Military or civil service	**1%**	**1**

Other	6%	7
N		111

D.5. Please rate your satisfaction from 1 to 5 with :

Algeria

Aspect	Count	Rating
Your current employment status	68	3
Contribution of ProAgro YOUTH to my business production	68	3

Côte d'Ivoire

Aspect	Count	Rating
Your current employment status	81	4,5
Contribution of ProAgro YOUTH to my business production	81	4,5

Madagascar

Aspect	Count	Rating
Your current employment status	31	3,5
Contribution of ProAgro YOUTH to my business production	30	3,5

Malawi

Aspect	Count	Rating
Your current employment status	107	4
Contribution of ProAgro YOUTH to my business production	106	4,5

General assessment (all countries)

Aspect	Count	Rating
Your current employment status	293	4
Contribution of ProAgro YOUTH to my business production	290	4

E. Quality of wage-employment

E.1. Do you have a written contract (For wage employment only)

Segment	Value	Percent	Count
Algeria	Yes	58%	30
	No	42%	22
Côte d'Ivoire	Yes	32%	15
	No	68%	32
Madagascar	Yes	46%	5
	No	55%	6
Malawi	Yes	29%	16
	No	71%	39
Overall	**Yes**	**40%**	**66**
	No	**60%**	**99**
N			**165**

E.2. Do you receive social security coverage (For wage employment only)

Segment	Value	Percent	Count
Algeria	Yes	63%	33
	No	37%	19
Côte d'Ivoire	Yes	30%	14
	No	70%	33
Madagascar	Yes	42%	5
	No	58%	7
Malawi	Yes	21%	12
	No	79%	44
Overall	**Yes**	**38%**	**64**
	No	**62%**	**103**
N			**167**

E.3. Are you satisfied in your job?

Algeria

Aspect	Count	Rating
Satisfaction	41	4

Côte d'Ivoire

Aspect	Count	Rating
Satisfaction	47	4,5

Madagascar

Aspect	Count	Rating
Satisfaction	12	3

Malawi

Aspect	Count	Rating
Satisfaction	51	3

General satisfaction (all countries)

Aspect	Count	Rating

Satisfaction	156	4

F. Quality of self-employment

F.1. Is your business formally registered (For self-employment only)?

Segment	Value	Percent	Count
Algeria	Yes	43%	14
	No	57%	27
Côte d'Ivoire	Yes	56%	30
	No	44%	24
Madagascar	Yes	29%	7
	No	71%	17
Malawi	Yes	14%	11
	No	86%	67
Average	**Yes**	**31%**	**62**
	No	**69%**	**135**
N			**197**

F.2. Do you contribute to social security (For self-employment only)?

Segment	Value	Percent	Count
Algeria	Yes	42%	17
	No	58%	24
Côte d'Ivoire	Yes	70%	38
	No	30%	16
Madagascar	Yes	40%	10
	No	60%	15
Malawi	Yes	40%	31
	No	60%	47
Average	**Yes**	**48%**	**96**
	No	**52%**	**102**
N			**198**

F.3. Are you earning enough to cover costs and save (For self-employment only)?

Segment	Value	Percent	Count
Algeria	Yes	12%	5
	No	88%	37
Côte d'Ivoire	Yes	39%	22
	No	61%	34
Madagascar	Yes	24%	6
	No	76%	19
Malawi	Yes	17%	13
	No	83%	65
Average	**Yes**	**23%**	**46**
	No	**77%**	**155**
N			**201**

G. Unemployment

(Only for unemployed respondents)

G.1. What were the main difficulties you faced when trying to find a wage job? (Select all that apply)

Segment	Value	Percent	Count
Algeria	Lack of relevant skills	0%	0
	Lack of work experience	25%	5
	No available jobs in my area	55%	11
	Lack of access to job information or networks	5%	1
	Low wages offered	5%	1
	Lack of transport or mobility	10%	2
Côte d'Ivoire	Lack of relevant skills	10%	2
	Lack of work experience	5%	1
	No available jobs in my area	43%	9
	Lack of access to job information or networks	38%	8
	Low wages offered	5%	1
	Lack of transport or mobility	0%	0
Madagascar	Lack of relevant skills	14%	1
	Lack of work experience	29%	2
	No available jobs in my area	29%	2
	Lack of access to job information or networks	29%	2
	Low wages offered	0%	0
	Lack of transport or mobility	0%	0
Malawi	Lack of relevant skills	7%	3
	Lack of work experience	34%	14
	No available jobs in my area	22%	9
	Lack of access to job information or networks	22%	9
	Low wages offered	7%	3
	Lack of transport or mobility	7%	3

G.2. What were the main difficulties you faced when trying to start your own business? (Select all that apply)

Segment	Value	Percent	Count
Algeria	Lack of start-up capital or financing	71%	10
	Limited business skills or training	7%	1
	Difficulty accessing markets or buyers	14%	2
	Bureaucratic or legal barriers	7%	1
	Lack of mentorship or support	0%	0
	Lack of equipment or infrastructure	0%	0
Côte d'Ivoire	Lack of start-up capital or financing	63%	12
	Limited business skills or training	11%	2
	Difficulty accessing markets or buyers	5%	1
	Bureaucratic or legal barriers	11%	2
	Lack of mentorship or support	5%	1
	Lack of equipment or infrastructure	5%	1
Madagascar	Lack of start-up capital or financing	71%	5
	Limited business skills or training	14%	1
	Difficulty accessing markets or buyers	14%	1
	Bureaucratic or legal barriers	0%	0

	Lack of mentorship or support	0%	0
	Lack of equipment or infrastructure	0%	0
Malawi	Lack of start-up capital or financing	71%	30
	Limited business skills or training	14%	6
	Difficulty accessing markets or buyers	2%	1
	Bureaucratic or legal barriers	0%	0
	Lack of mentorship or support	2%	1
	Lack of equipment or infrastructure	10%	4

H. Networking outcomes

H.1. To what extent did the project help you maintain useful connections to …? (Rate each from 1 = Not at all to 5 = Very much)

Algeria

Aspect	Count	Rating
ProAgro Youth training providers (e.g. coaching, mentoring, technical support	77	4
Employment intermediaries (e.g. job centres, placement services)	78	4
Further training institutions	75	4
Buyers or market actors	57	4
Youth networks or peer groups	72	4
Companies	72	3,5

Côte d'Ivoire

Aspect	Count	Rating
ProAgro Youth training providers (e.g. coaching, mentoring, technical support)	77	4,5
Employment intermediaries (e.g. job centres, placement services)	68	4
Further training institutions	67	4
Buyers or market actors	65	4
Youth networks or peer groups	65	4
Companies	73	4,5

Madagascar

Aspect	Count	Rating
ProAgro Youth training providers (e.g. coaching, mentoring, technical support)	31	4,5
Employment intermediaries (e.g. job centres, placement services)	30	3
Further training institutions	30	3
Buyers or market actors	29	3
Youth networks or peer groups	30	3,5
Companies	30	3

Malawi

Aspect	Count	Rating
ProAgro Youth training providers (e.g. coaching, mentoring, technical support)	99	4
Employment intermediaries (e.g. job centres, placement services)	100	4
Further training institutions	99	4
Buyers or market actors	97	4
Youth networks or peer groups	99	4
Companies	98	3,5

General assessment (all countries)

Aspect	Count	Rating
ProAgro Youth training providers (e.g. coaching, mentoring, technical support)	292	4
Employment intermediaries (e.g. job centres, placement services)	283	4
Further training institutions	278	4
Buyers or market actors	252	4
Youth networks or peer groups	271	4
Companies	278	4

I. The future

I.1. Do you intend to continue in your current job in the next 12 months (For wage employment only)?

Segment	Value	Percent	Count
Algeria	Yes	35%	13
	No	19%	7
	Not sure	46%	17
Côte d'Ivoire	Yes	74%	57
	No	5%	4
	Not sure	21%	16
Madagascar	Yes	77%	23
	No	3%	1
	Not sure	20%	6
Malawi	Yes	73%	72
	No	8%	8
	Not sure	19%	19
Overall	**Yes**	**64%**	**176**
	No	**11%**	**29**
	Not sure	**25%**	**69**
N			**274**

I.2. Do you intend to pursue further training (For wage employment only)?

Segment	Value	Percent	Count
Algeria	Yes	80%	31
	No	8%	3
	Not sure	13%	5
Côte d'Ivoire	Yes	89%	57
	No	6%	4
	Not sure	5%	3
Madagascar	Yes	91%	21
	No	0%	0
	Not sure	9%	2
Malawi	Yes	90%	84
	No	3%	3
	Not sure	7%	6
Overall	**Yes**	**87%**	**222**
	No	**5%**	**13**
	Not sure	**7%**	**19**
N			**254**

I.3. Do you intend to continue in your current job in the next 12 months (For self-employment only)?

Segment	Value	Percent	Count
Algeria	Yes	43%	3
	No	14%	1
	Not sure	43%	3
Côte d'Ivoire	Yes	80%	28
	No	3%	1
	Not sure	17%	6
Madagascar	Yes	93%	14
	No	0%	0
	Not sure	7%	1
Malawi	Yes	88%	37
	No	10%	4
	Not sure	2%	1
Overall	**Yes**	**81%**	**83**
	No	**7%**	**7**
	Not sure	**12%**	**12**
N			**102**

I.4. Do you intend to pursue further training (For self-employment only)?

Segment	Value	Percent	Count
Algeria	Yes	86%	6
	No	0%	0
	Not sure	14%	1
Côte d'Ivoire	Yes	100%	29
	No	0%	0
	Not sure	0%	0
Madagascar	Yes	92%	12
	No	0%	0
	Not sure	8%	1
Malawi	Yes	92%	35
	No	3%	1
	Not sure	5%	2
Overall	**Yes**	**93%**	**84**
	No	**1%**	**1**
	Not sure	**6%**	**5**
N			**90**

I.5. Do you intend to seek employment in the next 12 months?
(For unemployed only)

Segment	Value	Percent	Count
Algeria	Yes	53%	8
	No	13%	2
	Not sure	33%	5
Côte d'Ivoire	Yes	67%	14
	No	14%	3
	Not sure	19%	4
Madagascar	Yes	86%	6
	No	0%	0
	Not sure	14%	1
Malawi	Yes	76%	29
	No	13%	5
	Not sure	11%	4
Overall	**Yes**	**75%**	**72**
	No	**10%**	**10**
	Not sure	**15%**	**14**
N			**96**

I.6. Do you intend to start a business in the next 12 months
(For the unemployed only)

Segment	Value	Percent	Count
Algeria	Yes	73%	11
	No	20%	3
	Not sure	7%	1
Côte d'Ivoire	Yes	50%	9
	No	17%	3
	Not sure	33%	6
Madagascar	Yes	100%	4
	No	0%	0
	Not sure	0%	0
Malawi	Yes	85%	29
	No	6%	2
	Not sure	9%	3
Overall	**Yes**	**70%**	**61**
	No	**13%**	**11**
	Not sure	**17%**	**15**
N			**87**

I.7. Do you intend to stay in the same sector or value chain for which you were trained by Pro Agro (For unemployed only)?

Segment	Value	Percent	Count
Algeria	Yes	80%	12
	No	7%	1
	Not sure	13%	2
Côte d'Ivoire	Yes	65%	11
	No	18%	3
	Not sure	18%	3
Madagascar	Yes	50%	2
	No	0%	0
	Not sure	50%	2
Malawi	Yes	78%	25
	No	19%	6
	Not sure	3%	1
Overall	**Yes**	**74%**	**62**
	No	**13%**	**11**
	Not sure	**13%**	**11**
N			**84**

I.8. Do you intend to pursue further training?
(For the unemployed only)

Segment	Value	Percent	Count
Algeria	Yes	73%	11
	No	7%	1
	Not sure	20%	3
Côte d'Ivoire	Yes	77%	13
	No	6%	1
	Not sure	18%	3
Madagascar	Yes	100%	4
	No	0%	0
	Not sure	0%	0
Malawi	Yes	91%	30
	No	6%	2
	Not sure	3%	1
Overall	**Yes**	**84%**	**71**
	No	**6%**	**5**
	Not sure	**11%**	**9**
N			**85**

Annex II Project monitoring data

II.a. Project resources

Project budget and employment facilitation costs

To estimate the unit cost of employment facilitation, project costs have been classified as either country-level or regional-global costs. The costs of employment services provided to beneficiaries (hub and post-hub costs) are reclassified as 'direct' costs, while all remaining costs are considered 'indirect' costs.

			Cost type		Outcome	Unit cost (USD)	
Budget	**USD**	**% over total**	**Indirect (USD)**	**Direct (USD)**	**Jobs**	**Gross**	**Net**
Country level:	3363 644	74%	1394 010	1969 634	14 255	236	**138 (1)**
• DZ	1069 224	23%	492 900	576 325	9 368	114	**62**
• CI	738 228	16%	328 353	409 875	1 583	466	**259**
• MD	735 945	16%	178 217	557 728	1 720	428	**324**
• MW	820 246	18%	394 540	425 706	1 584	518	**269**
Regional level	424 286	9%	424 286				
Project management and support	775 612	17%	775 612				
Total	**4563 541**	**100%**	**2593 907**	**1969 634**			

(1) Net unit cost in Sub-Saharan countries = USD 284

II.b. Project outputs

Outreach to youth by gender, type of service and country

	Training				Other types of support (1)			
	Total	**Men**	**Women**	**Female %**	**Total**	**Men**	**Women**	**Female %**
Algeria	932	507	425	**46%**	21 325	15 098	6 227	**29%**
Côte d'Ivoire	1 720	770	950	**55%**	3 650	3 385	265	**7%**
Madagascar	2 435	1 204	1 231	**51%**	1 025	455	570	**56%**
Malawi	1 725	720	1 005	**58%**	936	405	531	**57%**
Total	**6 812**	**3 201**	**3 611**	**53%**	**26 936**	**19 343**	**7 593**	**28%**

(1) In Algeria: Networking, orientation/information services, Agri-Sectoral meetings, immersive visits (IDE), "Green" Job Search Clubs sessions, business plans contest, "Green" auto-entrepreneur Desk sessions, Inclusion/Participation, capacity building; In Côte d'Ivoire: Linkage to markets, orientation, job placement, access to finance, coaching; in Madagascar: Linkage to markets, orientation, job placement, individual protective equipment and seeds supply; In Malawi: Business acceleration, facilitation of internship placements, Job placements, mentorship, job ethics orientation, linkages to markets and financing.

Source: project data (Detailed Progress ALL_Countries_September 2025.xlsx)

II.c. Project outcomes

Jobs facilitated by employment track, gender and country

		All tracks				Wage-employment				Self-employment				% of wage employment		
	Target	Total	M	F	F %	Total	M	F	F %	Total	M	F	F %	Total	M	F
Algeria	1 100	9 368	7 797	1 571	17%	7 360	6 321	1 039	14%	2 008	1 476	532	26%	79%	81%	66%
Côte d’Ivoire	1 500	1 583	833	750	47%	1 153	650	503	44%	430	183	247	57%	73%	78%	67%
Madagascar	1 500	1 720	921	799	46%	964	522	442	46%	756	399	357	47%	56%	57%	55%
Malawi	1 500	1 584	752	832	53%	796	417	379	48%	788	335	453	57%	50%	55%	46%
Total	5 600	14 255	10 303	3 952	28%	10 273	7 910	2 363	23%	3 982	2 393	1 589	40%	72%	77%	60%

Source: project data (Detailed Progress ALL_Countries_September 2025.xlsx)

Annex III. Interviews

Annex II: Key Informant Interviews

Name	Position	Institution	Location	Role in the Project	Gender
Abdelaziz BENKIRAT	Director	BAG Services (Digital Skills Training)	Guelma	Training Provider	Male
Annette Tuiza	Publications Officer	Ministry of Labour	Lilongwe	Strategic Partner	Female
Augustus Kaliyati	Director	Community Action for People Participation (CAPP)	Blantyre	Implementing Partner	Male
Bertrand Brou	Head of Department	CI PME	Korhogo	Implementation Partner	Male
Bettie Kawonga	Lecturer in Dairy and Livestock	LUANAR	Online	Strategic Partner	Female
Bodoharinjara Léontine Rafalisoa	Co-owner and Manager	Green Farm	Antsirabe	Project Beneficiary	Female
Brian Chipili	Specialist Youth Employment	IFAD East and Southern Africa region (ESA)	Nairobi		Male
Casimir Djé Bi	Head of Department	Youth Employment Agency	Ferkéssédougou	Implementation Partner (employment agency)	Male
Chicara Curcio			Geneva		Female
Chifundo Lodzeni	Deputy Director – Skills	Ministry of Labour	Lilongwe	Strategic Partner	Female
Clara Kamlomo	Director	Amazing Bee Projects	Lilongwe	Implementing Partner	Female
Clara Ramaromanana	Technical Responsible Youth Employment	ROAF	Abidjan		Female
Dingiswayo Moyo	Monitoring and Evaluation Consultant	FAFOTRAJ	Online	Consortium Partner	Male
Ellen Ziwoya Phiri	Representative	Employers Consultative Association of Malawi	Blantyre	Implementing Partner	Female
Fatoumata KONATE	Business Owner	Team Agro Industry	Napié (Korhogo)	Self-employment Beneficiary	Female
Frank Secular	National Project Officer	International Labour Organization (ILO)	Lilongwe	National Project Officer	Male
Gregoire Yameogo	Programme and Operations Specialist	HQs/FUNDAMENTALS	Geneva		Male
Hamid OULD YOUCEF	Point Focal National, ProAgro Jeunes	Ministry of Agriculture (Lead Ministry)	Algiers	Strategic Partner	Male
Harivelo Sylvia Georges	Ministry Focal Point for Youth Employment	Ministry of Labour, Employment and Vocational Training	Antananarivo	Supervising Ministry	Female
Heritiana Raolimanana	Director	FIFAMANOR	Antsirabe	Incubator Center / Project Partner	Male

Hobiarison Randrianarijao	Center Director	SEFAFI	Vohipeno	Project Partner	Male
Hoby Andrianjatovo Rakotoarison	Head of Agricultural and Rural Training Service	Ministry of Agriculture and Livestock	Antananarivo	Supervising Ministry	Female
Ibtissem ABDELLAOUI	Director of Microenterprise	Ministry of Knowledge Economy, Startups & Microenterprise	Algiers	Strategic Partner	Female
Jacquie Amelina Randrianandrasana	Administration and Training Manager	PPC Madagascar	Antananarivo	Project Partner	Female
Jaures GONDO	Director	CI PME	Online (Abidjan)	Implementation Partner	Male
Jean Toussaint Randrianasolo	General Director	ORORA Group	Antsirabe	Project Partner	Male
Jonas Bausch	Specialist Youth Employment	ROAF	Abidjan		Male
Jose Manuel Medina Checa	Sr Spec, Employers' Activities	RO-Arab States	DWT-Beirut		Male
José Randrianasolo	General Coordinator	Madagascar Workers' Conference	Antananarivo	Project Partner	Male
Joseph Kankhwangwa	Project Coordinator	Malawi Congress of Trade Unions (MCTU)	Lilongwe	Strategic Partner	Male
Kouamé Ané	DAIP	Ministry of Vocational Training	Online (Abidjan)	Strategic Partner	Male
Lanto Randriamanantena	Co-Coordinator	Youth Observatory	Antananarivo	Youth Support in Job Search	Male
Lassina Coulibaly	Director	Odienné Vocational High School	Online (Odienné)	Implementation Partner (training institution)	Male
Liva Andrianavalona Ranjatoarimanana	Manager	Sahy Concept	Antsirabe	Project Beneficiary	Male
Mahfoud MEGATELI	Secretary General	Confédération Générale des Entreprises Algériennes (CGEA)	Algiers	Employers' Organization	Male
Malek ATTAILIA	Director General of Employment & Integration	Ministry of Labour, Employment & Social Security	Algiers	Strategic Partner	Male
Massita SAHIRI	Head of Department	ANADER	Korhogo	Implementation Partner	Female
Michael Ching'amba	Lecturer in Sustainable Agriculture	LUANAR	Online	Strategic Partner	Male
Mounia BELIOUZE	Director	Etudium Progress School (Business English Training)	Biskra	Training Provider	Female
Nirinarijaona Nomenjanahary	Labour Inspector	Regional Labour and Employment Service	Antsirabe	Project Partner	Male
Noroniaina Ranaivosoa	Operations Manager	DAGO Green	Antananarivo	Project Beneficiary	Female
Patrick Macondesa	National Project Coordinator	International Labour Organization (ILO)	Lilongwe	National Project Coordinator	Male
Peter Chimbayo	Senior Standards Development Specialist	TEVETA	Online	Strategic Partner	Male
Rahul Antao	Technical specialist, Rural	IFAD Youth Desk			Male

	Youth and Social Inclusion				
Roland BISSIE	National Project Coordinator	ILO	Korhogo	ILO Staff	Male
Ruth Kalima	Managing Director	Roseberry Farms	Blantyre	Implementing Partner	Female
Santatriniaina Alain Ambinitsoa	Director	Natura Madagascar	Antananarivo	Project Partner	Male
Stephens Luna	Head of Basic Studies and Research	Malawi Institute of Tourism (MIT)	Blantyre	Implementing Partner	Male
Susana Puerto	Head, Youth Employment Unit	HQ/EMPLAB/Youth Employment Unit	Geneva		Female
Towera Jalakasi	Manager	Naturals Limited	Lilongwe	Implementing Partner	Female
Yves Franklin Andrianirina	Head of Service	Regional Employment Service	Manakara	Project Partner	Male
Zo Ranaivomanana	Executive Director	AIM (Association Agro Industries of Madagascar)	Antananarivo	Project Partner	Female

Annex IV: List of FGDs

Malawi

Hub	Path	Male	Female	Total
Naturals Limited	Mixte (wage & self)	2	5	7
Amazing B Projects	Self-employment	3	4	7
ECAM	Wage employment	5		5
ECAM	Wage employment		2	2
CAPP	Self-employment		6	6
CAPP	Self-employment	5		5

Côte d'Ivoire

Profile	Male	Female	Total
Young self-employed entrepreneurs in Korhogo	3	0	3
Chili producers from Djebegnanvogo	13	0	13
Youth from the green space maintenance brigade and agro-food operators (Ivoire Bio Fruits)	5	6	11

Madagascar:

Profile	Genre	Male	Female	Total
Participants in the training	Young beneficiaries of training	5	10	15
SEFAFI staff	Trainers	4	1	5

METHODOLOGY APPENDIX

Terms of Reference

▶ Independent final evaluation of the "ProAgro YOUTH: support to integrated agribusiness hubs in Algeria, Côte d'Ivoire, Madagascar and Malawi" project

Terms of Reference

June 2025

Overview

Title of project	ProAgro YOUTH « Support to integrated agribusiness hubs in Côte d'Ivoire, Madagascar, Malawi and Algeria”
Project DC Code	RAF/21/18/IFA
Start date	01/07/2022
End date	30/09/2025
Type of evaluation	Independent final evaluation
Timing of evaluation	15 July to 15 September 2024
Donors	IFAD
Countries Covered	Algeria, Côte d'Ivoire, Madagascar and Malawi
Administrative Unit	ROAF, CO- Abidjan, Co-Antananarivo, CO-Lusaka, Co-Algiers
Technical backstopping units	ROAF EMPLAB (HQ) Decent Work Teams - Dakar, Cairo and Pretoria
P&B outcome (s) under evaluation	Outcome 3: Economic, social and environmental transitions for full, productive and freely chosen employment and decent work for all
SDG(s) under evaluation	SDGs 4.4, 8.5, 8.6
Project Budget	EUR 4 333 000
Evaluation Manager	Benson Mangeni

Introduction

Context

The shortage of decent and productive job opportunities for rural youth is a major and growing problem in Algeria, Côte d'Ivoire, Madagascar and Malawi. They face significant barriers such as casual or seasonal employment, weak labour market institutions, and limited access to technology and services. Moreover, the formal private sector is not always able to offer jobs to cover all demand, and vocational training institutions do not always adequately prepare their graduates for existing positions, although progress is being made. Thus, even within a context where labour supply vastly exceeds demand, companies cannot find qualified employees to hire. The most likely option for youth is a job within the informal sector which is low-paying and often precarious. Opportunities for self-employment are similarly limited and show reduced economic productivity due to a lack of training in enterprise management and poor access to resources.

These challenges are compounded by the growing number of rural youth categorized as NEET (Not in Education, Employment, or Training), especially among young women, leading many to migrate to urban areas or abroad in search of better prospects.

Project background

The ProAgro YOUTH project (henceforth “the Project”) is part of a broader IFAD programme funded by GIZ and VISA Foundation, which supports the development of Integrated Agribusiness Hubs in nine African Countries. The Project, implemented by the International Labour Organization (ILO) was designed to support the four targeted countries to address key labour market challenges for rural youth.

ProAgro YOUTH specifically covers four of these nine countries: Madagascar, Côte d'Ivoire, Malawi and Algeria. While the project is anchored in a shared theory of change and intervention logic, its implementation has been adapted to each national context to ensure alignment with local priorities, institutions, and rural ecosystems.

The ILO-IFAD grant agreement for the implementation of the project in Madagascar, Côte d'Ivoire and Malawi was signed in May 2022, with the project officially starting in June 2022. The agreement was subsequently amended in August 2022 to include Algeria.

The purpose of the project

The project's overall goal is to increase decent self and wage employment for rural youth through integrated agrobusiness hubs. The two main objectives are:

1. To contribute towards development of sustainable agricultural capacities of rural youth though sustainable and innovative agribusiness hubs.
2. To generate empirical evidence of the developed and tested integrated agribusiness hub models to inform policy to drive scaling up the models to create jobs for youth.

The project is directly targeting 6,000 direct and 9,000 indirect job opportunities, either through wage employment (70%) or self-employment/enterprise development (30%) in fast-growing value chains and identify approaches to address major policy barriers to youth employment in collaboration with implementing partners and key stakeholders in the targeted countries.

The programme strategy

The strategy of the Project is to set-up Integrated Agribusiness Hubs in each targeted country which is a novel ecosystem approach that convenes and integrates stakeholders into “Hubs” to fulfil complementary functions, comprising training institutions, private sector, public and private employment services’ providers, policy makers, youth-led organizations, youth representatives and others.

The ILO is leading the consortium composed of various actors according to the context of each country, including:

- Algeria: NESDA (National Entrepreneurship Support and Development Agency), BNEDER (Bureau National d’Etudes pour le Développement Rural) and ANEM (National Employment Agency).
- Côte d’Ivoire: Côte d’Ivoire PME, ANADER (National Rural Development Agency), Youth employment Agency (Ministry of Youth), Ministry of technical and vocational training, Technical High School of Odienné.
- Madagascar: FIFAMANOR (Research and rural development center), CAPFA (Agricultural Support and Vocational Training Centers), SEFAFI (Sekoly Fambolena Fiompiana), FIHARIANA, Observatoire de la Jeunesse (Youth Association), EFTA (Agricultural Technician Training School).
- Malawi: TEVETA (Technical, Entrepreneurial and Vocational Education and Training Authority) and FAFOTRAJ (Farmers Forum for Trade & Social Justice).

ProAgro YOUTH features strong private sector engagement throughout the program, including skills needs assessments, the development of demand-driven training curricula, and training-of-trainers, work-based learning, and coaching. In close collaboration with the broader rural ecosystems – including policy makers, farmers’ organizations, agribusiness firms, employers, public organizations, private investors, service providers, cooperatives, and youth – the programme offers training, internship, incubation, and facilitation to access to finance. These opportunities provide hands-on experience with advanced agricultural technologies.

ProAgro adopt a data- and demand-driven approach to align training to youth aptitude, track trainee progress, and provide interactive learning. This approach connects participants with up-to-date technical knowledge, as well as with peers, mentors, donors, employers, and companies interested in hiring youth or sourcing commodities from youth-led enterprises.

Summary of project progress

The mid-term evaluation undertaken in 2024 revealed that the ProAgro YOUTH project has made a significant contribution to job creation for youth in rural agribusiness value chains in Algeria, Côte d'Ivoire, Madagascar and Malawi. The interventions were aligned with the relevant frameworks (national development priorities, SDGs, etc.) and adapted to the socio-economic contexts of each country. They have also encouraged entrepreneurship and supported decent employment, particularly for young women, promoting their inclusion in formal economic activities. Based on a rigorous logical framework, the project has structured its interventions around trainings, entrepreneurial supports and job creation.

In terms of impact and sustainability, the project strengthened the employability of young people while improving food security. However, the sustainability of results will depend on access to additional financial support and more structured post-training support.

Particularly, the most significant progress under each outcome is summarized as follows:

Outcome 1"Increased self and wage employment opportunities for youth through functional networks of integrated agribusiness hubs"

As of January 2025, the project had facilitated access of **13 548 young women and men to jobs** in Algeria, Côte d'Ivoire, Madagascar and Malawi.

The work at country level focused on partnership development and completion of the start-up, pre-hub, hub and initiation of some post-hub actions in each country. The project has established and reinforced partnerships with government institutions at national and local level, TVET institutions, employers and workers organisations, enterprises, youth organisations and other civil society organisations.

In Algeria, thanks to a conducive environment including a strong political will, national ownership and anchorage of project intervention in existing national programmes, the project has facilitated in total access of 9 224 young men and women to jobs. 7 360 young people accessed wage jobs while 1864 others developed self-employed jobs. To achieve these results, the project and its partners have implemented innovative approaches including green "Job-Search-Clubs" (CRE), trans-sectoral services including an "Immersion Découverte en Entreprises a» scheme, sector meetings, prospection strategies as well as short term technical trainings, "business opportunity sheets", an "entrepreneur status", and a strengthened employers' agribusiness federation established during the first phase.

In Côte d'Ivoire, the project has reinforced its engagement with the private sector, including the newly established big cashew companies and implemented demand-driven trainings based on identified needs for wage jobs track. To promote access to self-employment, young people received various services including "180 degrees business diagnosis, training and post-training support, and connection with market and finance. The project also organized three job fairs in Korhogo, Ferkessedougou and Boundiali in collaboration with the Confederation Generale des Entreprises de Côte d'Ivoire (employers' organization). Through the above-mentioned initiatives, the project facilitated access of 1,153 young women and men to wage jobs. In addition, a total number of 430 young women and men received project support to start and accelerate their businesses.

In Madagascar, the project has facilitated access of 1,315 young women and men to jobs. A total of 721 young people got access to wage jobs with project support while 594 where supported to start and accelerate their businesses. The project strong engagement with the private sector, the synergy with the government "green title" programme, as well as the sourcing of job opportunities in small and medium size enterprise across agricultural value chains have been crucial for these results. Through synergies with other ILO projects, ProAgro YOUTH reinforced capacities of beneficiaries on business management following a training of trainers approach.

In Malawi, the project has facilitated access of 1,426 young women and men to jobs. This consists of 641 young women and men who accessed wage jobs with project support and a total of 785 young women and men who received project support to start and accelerate their businesses. The project team and representatives from government, employers and workers' organization undertook a tripartite industry engagement mission which secured a stronger commitment of business leaders in the project. This was followed by a design and implementation of short internships and apprenticeships programmes with various companies and NGOs. The project also collaborated with the Global Programme for Skills and Lifelong learning, the project and the Technical, Entrepreneurial and Vocational Education and training authority (TEVETA) to validate training curricula for Horticulture and Dairy.

Outcome 2 "Evidence-based knowledge products on youth employment using integrated agribusiness hub model to influence policy shifts, and to enable other development actors (public, private and semi-private) to scale up wholly or parts of the model"

At regional level, the project not only increased the evidence base on what works in rural youth employment promotion but also highlighted good practices of the integrated agrobusiness hub model to global audiences. The project organized a virtual policy dialogue on youth employment in the rural economy in April 2023 and partnered with UN organisations and other youth employment stakeholders to successfully deliver the Global Conference "Young, Green and Digital", the third edition of the Decent jobs for youth conference which was held in Kigali in May 2024. These events provided numerous opportunities to showcase best practices and innovative approaches for promoting rural youth employment while engaging government representatives and partners. The conference also created meaningful spaces for young people to actively participate in discussions, enabling the project's partners to exchange knowledge and learn from their peers.

At country level, the project has significantly increased the evidence base on youth employment opportunities in the rural economy and specifically in selected value chains in the four countries. Participatory rural employment diagnostic and sector selection and value chain analysis studies have been conducted to inform project intervention.

▶ Rationale for the evaluation

Independent evaluation

The ILO policy guidelines for evaluation define independent evaluation as a process that is managed by and carried out by entities and persons free of the control of those responsible of the design and implementation of the development intervention.

The ILO Evaluation Office (EVAL) oversees all independent evaluations to ensure this definition is adhered to in planning and implementation.

Mid-term evaluation

PROAGRO YOUTH conducted an internal Mid-Term Evaluation which was finalized in September 2024 and approved by EVAL in November 2024. From the report published in February 2025. The project had significantly advanced the professional integration of rural youth in agri-food value chains across Algeria, Côte d'Ivoire, Madagascar, and Malawi. By aligning with national development priorities and the SDGs, the project fostered entrepreneurship and decent employment, particularly for young women. Its adaptability to diverse socio-economic contexts enabled inclusive participation and promoted formal economic engagement among marginalized groups.

The project's strategic relevance was evident in its alignment with local policies and its structured approach to training, entrepreneurship, and job creation. It exceeded job creation targets—achieving 183% of its goal with over 10,000 jobs created—while maintaining coherence despite local adaptations. However, challenges remain in harmonizing monitoring indicators and ensuring consistency in results across countries, with bureaucratic hurdles affecting implementation in some regions.

To enhance impact and sustainability, the MTE recommended strengthening financial and post-training support for youth, decentralizing training through digital or mobile platforms, and deepening partnerships with the private sector. It also called for improved inclusion of women and youth with disabilities, capacity-building for local institutions, and the establishment of autonomous funding mechanisms. Finally, adapting training to local market needs and enhancing monitoring systems with gender-sensitive indicators are essential for long-term success.

Final evaluation

According to the project document and in line with ILO's Evaluation Policy, PROAGRO YOUTH is subject to an independent final evaluation. The ILO applies the evaluation criteria established by the OECD/DAC Quality Standards for Development Evaluation and the UNEG Code of Conduct for Evaluation in the UN System. This evaluation will follow guidelines on results-based evaluation of the ILO Evaluation Department contained in the "ILO Policy Guidelines for Evaluation (3rd edition)"[27] and, more specifically, the checklist "Preparation of the Evaluation Report".

▶ Purpose, scope and clients of the evaluation

Purpose

The Proagro YOUTH project's final independent evaluation purpose is to assess the progress made towards achieving its planned objectives. In particular, the final evaluation will assess the programme in terms of coherence and relevance, efficiency, effectiveness, impact, and sustainability. It will have to:

- Provide an independent assessment of progress on the achievement towards the goals of the project, assessing performance as per the established indicators vis-à-vis the strategies and implementation modalities chosen and management arrangements;
- Provide strategic recommendations, highlight good practices and lessons learnt to inform the development and implementation of potential follow-up projects (such as a second phase)

[27] Available at: https://www.ilo.org/eval/Evaluationpolicy/WCMS_571339/lang--en/index.htm

- Assess the continuity of the relevance of the project's design and implementation strategy in relation to the ILO, UN and SDGs and national development frameworks, priorities and needs.
- Assess the extent to which the project outcomes are likely to be sustainable and provide recommendations to programme stakeholders to promote sustainability and support further development of the outcomes.
- Assess to what extent the programme addressed the recommendations of the mid-term evaluation.

In addition, at country-level, the evaluation should assess the effectiveness of partnerships with local stakeholders and IFAD's country offices.

This evaluation will be conducted by a team of evaluators with strong experience in conducting the full evaluation process who will be responsible for the substantive content of the final evaluation report in line with EVAL quality requirements.

Scope

The final evaluation will evaluate the progress from the start of the project's implementation period, 01 July 2022 to 30 September 2025, which includes a six-months no-cost extension phase and a three-months winding-up period. The evaluation will encompass the entire project's interventions, including the regional/global and national level ones. It will consider all the documents linked to the project, including the project document, progress reports, the mid-term evaluation report as well as documents produced as outputs of the project.

The evaluation will focus on the implementation of interventions in Algeria, Cote d'Ivoire, Madagascar and Malawi, including an in-depth desk review, and interviews with key stakeholders and focus group discussions.

Moreover, the evaluation will evaluate how the programme has supported capacity building, knowledge sharing, peer learning and policy dialogue, from a regional and country level perspective, through desk reviews and interviews with selected stakeholders.

The evaluation process should emphasize lessons learned to inform potential follow-up projects, such as a 2nd phase.

The evaluation should integrate gender equality, disability inclusion and other non-discrimination concerns, adherence to international labour standards, social dialogue, and a just transition to environmental sustainability as crosscutting themes throughout its deliverables and process.

Clients of the evaluation

The main clients of the evaluation are:

- ILO's constituents, including government officials from Ministries responsible for Employment, Technical and Vocational Trainings, Youth and other relevant line ministries, as well as representatives from Trade Unions and Employers' Organizations;

- PROAGRO YOUTH extended group of national stakeholders, in particular the members of the consortium and any other specialized national agencies, private sector representatives and youth organizations involved in the project:
- The Project team and management, including the team directly responsible for the implementation of the project;
- Collaborating ILO Country/Regional Offices, Decent Work Teams
- The donor (IFAD)
- Regional institutions involved in rural youth employment matters and engaged with the project.

Evaluation criteria and questions

The final evaluation will be conducted according to the criteria and approaches as defined in the ILO Policy Guidelines for results-based evaluation[28], namely: relevance, coherence, effectiveness, efficiency, sustainability, and impact. Moreover, the evaluation should assess the alignment and extent the project has to ILO's cross-cutting policy drivers (gender equality and non-discrimination, inclusion of persons living with disabilities, international standards, social dialogue, and environmental sustainability).

The following questions are intended to guide and facilitate the evaluation. Other aspects can be added or modified as identified by the evaluator in accordance with the given purpose and in consultation with the evaluation manager. Any fundamental changes to the evaluation criteria and questions should be agreed between the evaluation manager and the evaluator and reflected in the inception report.

Table 1: Key evaluation questions and related evaluation criteria

[28] Available at: https://www.ilo.org/eval/Evaluationpolicy/WCMS_571339/lang--en/index.htm

ILO Evaluation Criteria	Evaluation Questions
1. Relevance and Validity of Design	1.1. To what extent have the program's objectives and activities aligned with and effectively responded to the identified needs and priorities of its key stakeholders, the final beneficiaries (i.e., men and women)? 1.2. Are the project's strategic elements (objectives, outcomes, outputs, implementation strategies, targets, and indicators) achievable? Is the theory of change and intervention logic realistic, purposeful, and effective? What should be done differently? 1.3. To what extent does the design of the project consider gender, non-discrimination, and inclusion? 1.4. Has the project been able to leverage the ILO contributions, through its comparative advantages (including tripartism, international labour standards, etc.)?
2. Coherence	2.1. To what extent have project activities aligned with the national and international development prioritiess, UNSDCF, DWCP, ILO and IFAD's Global Policy Outcomes, SDGs, and relevant targets, especially those identified as priority in the national development strategies 2.2. Has the specific context of each country and the interests of different stakeholders and final beneficiaries been sufficiently considered in the design and implementation of the project? 2.3. To what extent is the intervention coherent with and complementary to existing strategies, programs, and actions of the ILO, national governments, and other development partners operating in the same context?
4. Effectiveness	3.1. To what extent have the overall project objectives and expected results, qualitatively and quantitatively been achieved? 3.2. Are there any unintended results achieved? What are their effects? 3.3. Does the project have an adequate mechanism in place to monitor and measure progress towards the achievement of results? 3.4. How effective are the project management arrangements? Is the project able to leverage expertise in the field, particularly in those countries where the project does not have permanent presence? 3.5. What are the challenges faced by the project during its implementation? How did the project deal with them? 3.6. What have been the key success factors towards project's success in attaining its targets? 3.7. To what extent did the project address and promote gender equality, non-discrimination and inclusion of people living with disabilities in its activities and its products?

3. Efficiency	4.1. What evidence is there of cost-effectiveness in the Project's implementation and management? 4.2. Have the project's funds and outputs been used and delivered in a timely manner? What are the time and cost efficiency measures that could be introduced to improve the achievement of results? 4.3. What are the partnership arrangements in the implementation of the Project at national and regional levels? What are the challenges in the formulation of these partnerships? What are the results of these partnerships and how to improve them?
5. Impact and Sustainability	5.1 Does the project have a clearly defined exit strategy, and how effective is it in ensuring sustainability, ownership, and continuity of outcomes after the project's conclusion? 5.2 What are the areas for further reinforcement of the project achievements? 5.3. To what extent are the results of the intervention likely to have a long term, sustainable positive contribution to the relevant SDGs and targets (explicitly or implicitly)? 5.4 Which project-supported tools been solidly institutionalized by partners? Have any been replicated or adapted by external organizations? 5.5 What have been the intended and unintended impacts of the project on its target groups and stakeholders, and to what extent are these impacts sustainable and likely to be achieved in the long term?
6. Cross-cutting issues	5.2 To what extent has the project identified and integrated into its actions the operational and strategic needs and priorities for men, women, and other vulnerable groups? 5.3 Do the tools developed by the project integrate gender and non-discrimination issues? 5.4 Has the project considered tripartism, social dialogue, international labour standards and a fair transition to environmental sustainability in its design and implementation?

Approach and methodology

The independent final evaluation will comply with evaluation norms and standards and follow ethical safeguards, all as specified in ILO's evaluation procedures. The ILO adheres to the United Nations Evaluation Group (UNEG) evaluation norms and standards as well as to the OECD/DAC Evaluation Quality Standards. The final methodology and evaluation questions will be determined by the cabinet or team of consultants in consultation with the Evaluation Manager. For required quality control of the whole process, the evaluator will follow the EVAL evaluation policy guidelines and the ILO/EVAL checklists. The policy guidelines are available [here].

The evaluation will be quantitative and qualitative by using mixed-methods approach and will include triangulation to increase the validity and rigor of the evaluation findings, engaging with tripartite constituents, stakeholders, and partners of the programme, as much as feasible, at all levels during the data collection, analysis and reporting phases.

The ILO's tripartite character, its normative framework and social dialogue mandate will be considered as a cross-cutting concern throughout the methodology, deliverables and final report of the evaluation.

This final evaluation should also apply systems analysis and complexity-aware methods to understand how the project interventions interact with economic, social, cultural and institutional systems at multiple levels, and how emergent outcomes arise from these interactions. In their technical proposal, bidding evaluation firms/teams are highly encouraged to propose systems and complexity-focused methods and techniques to reflect the project's systemic approach. These might include:

- **Participatory systems mapping activities** with stakeholders to visualize the child labour system, including key actors, relationships, feedback loops, and leverage points.
- **Outcome harvesting** to identify and verify significant outcomes, including emergent results not originally anticipated in the project design.
- **Contribution analysis** to assess how project interventions contributed to observed changes within the complex system.
- **Multi-Level analysis** to examine how interventions at different levels (household, community, national, regional) interact and influence each other.

The evaluation methodology shall include:

▶ **Desk review** of all relevant documents, which should include at least:

From the Project:

- Project document including the Theory of change and the Logical framework
- Grant agreement/ relevant minute sheets
- Workplans for the duration of the project (year 1, year 2, year 3)
- Monitoring and evaluation plan
- First and second technical progress reports
- Studies and research undertaken by the project
- Financial statements
- Any other documents that might be useful for the evaluation

From the relevant countries' development framework, including those relevant for SDGs:

- Agenda 2030 and UN Development Action Framework (UNDAF)/or UN Sustainable Development Cooperation Framework (UNSDCF).
- Decent Work Country Programme (DWCP) documents for each country where available.
- ILO's Strategic Programme Framework, Programme and Budget, Abidjan Declaration, AU-ILO Youth Employment Strategy for Africa

Access to the relevant documents and additional sources will be provided to the evaluators with the support of the project team.

- **Meetings with the project staff (virtual)** under the leadership of the Evaluation Manager at the beginning of the mission to reach a common understanding and discuss on the methodological approach, tools and evaluation processes, project frameworks and background, administrative, financial and logistical aspects of the evaluation.

- **Meetings with the backstopping unit, management (HQ, Regional and Country Offices), Decent Work Teams and the donor (IFAD):** the evaluator will have these meetings to better understand the status of the project and get relevant orientation.

The desk review and these initial meetings will help the evaluator to prepare the **inception report** providing initial findings and confirming the methodology, the evaluation questions and the interviewees.

- **Data Collection, analysis and interpretation**

The evaluation is supposed to integrate both quantitative and qualitative methodologies to provide a comprehensive analysis of the project outcomes. The use of the following data collection techniques is recommended:

a) Quantitative Data

Evaluators may decide to leverage some of the monitoring and evaluation tools designed by the project, such as the detailed monitoring table of the main indicators to track the progress (including the number of jobs supported, disaggregated by country, gender, age and type of jobs, etc.), the targeting strategy and definition of indicators agreed with the donor.

There are also available logframe, data collection tools and templates in MEL system with a practical User manual dedicated to the Proagro YOUTH Project and including different questionnaires for partners, youths, employers and other stakeholders through the use of Kobo Toolbox.

These tools may be used or adapted for data collection under this final evaluation if there will be an agreement with the evaluator and the evaluation manager.

Once tools are finalized, data is collected through various methods among other surveys (online, in-person, or telephone-based).

b) Qualitative Data

Qualitative data collection provides deeper insights into beneficiary and stakeholders experiences, implementation challenges, and contextual factors that numbers alone cannot capture. Consequently, it is important to define the data needs and sampling before developing the data collection tools to be used (Interview guides for Key Informant Interviews/Focus Group Discussions, observation checklists for direct observations).

The collected data will be used for analysis through triangulation and interpretation.

Regarding **interviews with stakeholders**, the evaluator will meet with the key partners of the project at national and regional levels. Given the number of countries covered as well as the time and budget available for the final evaluation, different approaches should be taken and agreed with the evaluation Manager.

The evaluation team will ensure that women's views and perceptions are also reflected in database, interviews, and that gender-specific questions are included in the questionnaires.

An indicative list of persons to be interviewed globally and for each country will be prepared by the project team in consultation with the Evaluation Manager.

To the extent possible, the data collection, analysis and presentation should be responsive to and include issues relating to ILO's normative work, social dialogue, diversity, and non-discrimination, including disability issues.

- **Reporting and Presentation of Findings**

  A virtual validation workshop will be organized toward the end of the evaluation, with participation of the evaluator, ILO Staff, IFAD and other donors and key stakeholders. This is an opportunity to present the preliminary findings, invite the participants to validate them and fill in any data gaps. The validation workshop will feature interpretation services to allow francophone and anglophone stakeholders to participate.

  Production of the evaluation report. The draft will be subject of a methodological review by the evaluation manager, and upon the necessary adjustments, it will be circulated among the key stakeholders. Subsequently, the evaluation manager will consolidate any written comments and provide to the evaluator - who will develop the final version of the report, addressing the comments - or explain the reason for not addressing the comments, if that would be the case.

Evaluation team and travel requirements

The evaluation team will consist of one lead consultant who may propose to work together with one or several additional team members.

- **Team composition:** the evaluation will be led by one international consultant with a profile as detailed in the section "Profile of the Evaluation Team". Additionally, the team should comprise two local consultants, 1 for **Madagascar** and 1 for **Côte d'Ivoire.** National consultants are expected to assist in conducting interviews with national stakeholders and gathering data.
- **Travel requirements:** the international (lead) consultant is expected to travel to **Malawi** for a mission of up to 10 working days.
- **Virtual vs. face-to-face interviews:** The evaluation team will thus conduct interviews in the following manner:
  - **Algeria:** exclusively online interviews will be conducted by the lead evaluator.
  - **Malawi:** data collection to be conducted by the lead evaluator in-person to the extent possible, including field visits;

- **Côte d'Ivoire & Madagascar:** data collection will be conducted both face-to-face through the national consultant as well as online/hybrid with participation and under the leadership of the lead evaluator.

In their technical proposals, the biding firms/evaluation teams are invited to provide a detailed description of the evaluation team, including the CVs of the lead evaluator and the national evaluators in Côte d'Ivoire and Madagascar.

Main deliverables

The evaluation team will produce and deliver the following deliverables:

- **Deliverable 1: Inception report –** including the conceptual framework that will be used to undertake the evaluation; the review of the methodology proposed in the TOR, including evaluation questions, with proposed changes, as required; details on data needs, data collection approach, sources, and tools; detailed work plan; list of stakeholders for interviews, with interview guides; agenda for stakeholders' workshop; outline of Final Evaluation Report. The inception report should be no longer than 20 pages, excluding annexes.

The Inception report should be approved by the Evaluation manger before proceeding with the field work.

- **Deliverable 2: Draft evaluation report** – the report should answer the questions related to the evaluation criteria, including the recommendations, lessons learned, good practices, technical recommendations for the key stakeholders. The report must be no longer than 30 pages excluding annexes and should follow ILO guidance on evaluation reports (see Annex).

The report will be sent to the evaluation manager for review.

- **Deliverable 3**: **Virtual validation workshop** - The evaluator will present the evaluation's preliminary key findings to all stakeholders for discussion and validation right after the end of the data collection phase.
- **Deliverable 4: Final evaluation report** – incorporating written comments received from ILO and other key stakeholders; including an executive summary (using ILO/EVAL template), lessons learnt and good practices (using ILO/EVAL template), and annexes. Must be about 30-40 pages maximum (excluding annexes and executive summary).
- **Deliverable 5: Evaluation Summary** – shall also be prepared, adhering to the template provided in ILO Policy Guidelines for Evaluation Checklist 8. The Evaluation Summary shall only be prepared once the final evaluation report has been approved.

Annexes should include the evaluation matrix, the interview guides, field work schedule, a list of interviewees, and a list of documents analysed, template of lessons learned and Good Practices.

Ownership of the data from the evaluation rests jointly between ILO and the evaluator. The copyright of the evaluation report rests exclusively with ILO. Key stakeholders may make appropriate use of the evaluation report in line with the original purpose and with appropriate acknowledgement.

Management arrangements and work plan (including timeframe)

Evaluation Manager and Project team support

The evaluation will be managed by Benson Mang'eni (mangeni@ilo.org), ILO officer who has no prior involvement in the project, and oversight by Abderrahim EL Moulat, (elmoulat@ilo.org) ILO RO-Africa, Regional Monitoring and Evaluation Specialist. The final approval of the evaluation report shall be granted by EVAL.

The evaluation team will discuss with the Evaluation Manager all technical and methodological issues when needed. The Evaluation Manager will coordinate with the PROAGRO YOUTH team to provide the evaluation team with the main documents and any information that they will need to carry out their assignment, to organize meetings with the authorities, partners and beneficiaries concerned by the programme. The evaluation team will also receive technical, logistical, and administrative support from the project team.

The project team will provide logistical support to the evaluator team and will assist in organizing the data collection (documents and interviews). The programme will ensure that all relevant documentation is up to date and easily accessible (e.g. in a Cloud) by both consultants from the first day of the contract (desk review phase).

Languages

The evaluation report will be drafted in English. French translations will be made available to francophone stakeholders. Draft documents may be translated using specialised software.

Interviews with national stakeholders must be conducted in the main working language of the respective country:

- English: Malawi
- French: Algeria, Cote d'Ivoire, Madagascar

Evaluation Timetable and Schedule

The final evaluation is planned to take place from May to August 2025 following the timeline below:

Phase	Responsible Person	Tasks	Effort and Tentative Dates	Payment
I - Inception		• Draft and finalize of the TOR	07/7/2025	N/A

	Evaluation manager	• Submit the draft TOR for EVAL review	07/7/2025	
		• Send the draft TOR to stakeholders for review	21/7/2025	
		• Selection and contracting of the evaluator	8/8/2025	
		• Briefing with the evaluator on ILO evaluation policy	12/08/2025	
	Evaluator	• Develop the final methodology and evaluation questions	22/8/2025	30%
		• Submit inception report	29/8/2025	
		• Virtual briefing with ILO stakeholders	5/9/2025	
II – Data Collection	Evaluator with organizational support from ROAF, CO-Algiers, CO-Antananarivo, CO-Abidjan, CO-Dar, EMPLAB	• Desk Review of programme related documents	8/9/2025	N/A
		• In-country for consultations with project staff	15/9/2025	
		• Field visits	22/9/2025 to 26/9/2025	
		• Interviews with project staff, stakeholders, partners, and beneficiaries (either online or onsite depending on availabilities)	22/9/2025 to 3/10/2025	
		• Stakeholders debrief for sharing of preliminary findings and validation of results	6/10/2025	
		• Virtual interviews with stakeholders of regional component	9/10/2025	
		• Debriefing with CO-Algiers, CO-Antananarivo, CO-Abidjan, CO-Dar, EMPLAB	10/10/2025	
		• Draft report based on consultations from field visits and desk review and the stakeholders' meetings	14/10/2025	
III – Report preparation	Evaluator	• Quality check and initial review of draft report and submit to evaluation manager	17/10/2025	40%
	Evaluation Manager	• Circulate draft report to stakeholders for a two-week review period	22/10/2025	N/A
		• Consolidate comments of stakeholders and send to the evaluator	5/11/2025	
		• Validation workshop (virtual) for evaluator to present preliminary findings, validate them and fill in any data gaps	14/11/2025	
	Evaluator	• Finalize the report	19/11/2025	30%
		• Submission of the final report to the evaluation manager	19/11/2025	

	Evaluation manager	• Reviews final evaluation report and submits to the Departmental Evaluation Focal Point for further review if no changes are required by the evaluator	21/11/2025	N/A
	EVAL	• Approves the evaluation report	28/11/2025	N/A
		• Initiates the follow-up to evaluation recommendations	28/11/2025	N/A

Profile of the evaluation team

The final evaluation will be conducted by an experienced cabinet or evaluation team.

Qualifications of the Lead Evaluator

- Advanced university degree preferably in economics, business management or related qualifications.
- A minimum of 7 years of professional experience in evaluating international programmes and projects, development initiatives, logical framework and other strategic approaches, M&E methods and approaches, and information analysis and report writing.
- Previous involvement and understanding of ILO procedures is an advantage and extensive international experience in the fields of project formulation, execution, and evaluation is required.
- Understanding of the development context with a focus on rural economy/development, rural youth employment, decent work and work experience in the contexts of Côte d'Ivoire, Algeria, Madagascar and Malawi are desirable.
- Excellent communication, interview, and report writing skills.
- Demonstrated ability to work in group and deliver quality results within strict deadlines.
- Excellent knowledge and excellent drafting skills in English and French. The presence of bilingual consultants in the team will be an asset.
- Knowledge of ILO's roles and mandate and its tripartite structure as well as UN evaluation norms and its programming is desirable.

Team member (one-in-country national consultant)

Education and Experience

- University degree preferably in monitoring and evaluation, economics, business management or related qualifications.
- A minimum of 5 years of professional experience in evaluating international development initiatives and programmes, in Côte d'Ivoire, Algeria, Madagascar or Malawi as sole

evaluator or team member for data collection; including gender and vulnerable groups inclusion, human rights-based approach programming and results-based management.

- Evaluation and work experience in on rural economy/development, rural youth employment, decent work.
- Knowledge of ILO's roles and mandate and its tripartite structure as well as knowledge and experience with the UN system are desirable.
- Proven experience on the logical framework and theory of change approaches and other strategic planning approaches, M&E methods and approaches, information analysis and report writing.
- Extensive knowledge of, and experience in applying, qualitative and quantitative research methodologies.
- Excellent analytical skills and communication skills.
- Demonstrated writing and oral skills in English.
- Demonstrated ability to work in group to deliver quality results within strict deadlines.
- No previous work with the project or related assignment.

The Evaluator will be responsible for conducting the independent final evaluation including the coordination with the Evaluation Manager, Project Team and stakeholders, conduct a desk review of all relevant documents and conduct field missions to all partner countries to meet main stakeholders and collect data, elaborate the inception report (incl. methodological elaborations), the first version and final report in deadlines and in conformity with ILO and international standards, conduct a virtual stakeholders' workshop to share preliminary findings and validate results, participate to debriefings with main stakeholders on the main results and recommendations of the evaluation.

Application requirements

Type of contract: Service contracts with eligible firms with Long-Term Agreements (LTA) with ILO for evaluation services to apply.

The evaluation of the project should take about **27 working days** for the team leader, and **18 working days** for a team member for Côte d'Ivoire, Algeria, Madagascar or Malawi.

Application deadline: 31 **July 2025.**

For further details about the evaluation, please see the attached ToR.

Firms intending to submit an expression of interest must supply the following:

1. Indication of which position(s) the candidate(s) apply.
2. A description of how the candidate's skills, qualifications and experience are relevant to the required qualifications of this assignment (maximum 2 pages).
3. A list of previous evaluations that are relevant to the context and subject matter of this assignment, indicating the role played by the consultant(s) applying (they can be highlighted in the CV).
4. A statement confirming their availability to conduct this assignment, and the daily professional fee expressed in US dollars without travel or field visit costs (indicating also fees received for similar assignments in the last 2 years as a reference: project/function/daily honorarium rate paid).
5. A copy of the candidate's curriculum vitae.
6. A statement confirming that the candidates have no previous involvement in the implementation and delivery of the project to be evaluated, or a personal relationship with any ILO Officials who are engaged in the project.
7. The names of two referees (including phone and email) who can be contacted.
8. Two reports in which the evaluator team leader has been the sole evaluator or the team leader.

The deadline to submit an expression of interest for undertaking this evaluation is the 31h **of July 2025**. Please provide your proposal, the CV of the evaluation team and a financial proposal in ONE document and upload to the online procurement platform. Questions from potential bidders will be replied to on a rolling basis and uploaded and broadcast to all on the online platform. The deadline for questions will be July 25th.

Late applications will not be considered.

Legal and ethical matters

The independent final evaluation will comply with evaluation norms and standards and follow ethical safeguards, all as specified in ILO's evaluation procedures. The ILO adheres to the United Nations Evaluation Group (UNEG) evaluation norms and standards as well as to the OECD/DAC Evaluation Quality Standards, and the evaluation team must abide by the EVAL's Code of Conduct for carrying out the evaluation.

The evaluation team, its individuals and as group, should not have any links to the programme management, design, or implementation, or any other effective or perceived conflict of interest that would interfere with the independence of the evaluation.

All data and information received from the ILO or other stakeholders for the purposes of this assignment shall be treated as confidential and shall be used only for the purpose of executing this mandate. All intellectual property rights arising from the execution of this mandate are attributed to the ILO. The contents of the written documents obtained and used in connection with this assignment may not be disclosed to third parties without the prior written consent of the ILO or the relevant stakeholders.

Additional documentation

The evaluator is expected to seek guidance from and familiarise themselves with the following documentation:

ILO Evaluation Policy https://www.ilo.org/eval/Evaluationreports/WCMS_603265/lang--en/index.htm

ILO Policy Guidelines for Evaluation https://www.ilo.org/eval/Evaluationpolicy/WCMS_571339/lang--en/index.htm

- Checklist 3 Writing the Inception Report https://www.ilo.org/wcmsp5/groups/public/---ed_mas/---eval/documents/publication/wcms_165972.pdf
- Checklist 5 Preparing the Evaluation Report https://www.ilo.org/wcmsp5/groups/public/---ed_mas/---eval/documents/publication/wcms_165967.pdf
- Checklist 7 Filling in the EVAL title page https://www.ilo.org/wcmsp5/groups/public/---ed_mas/---eval/documents/publication/wcms_166363.pdf
- Checklist 8 Preparing the Evaluation Summary for Projects https://www.ilo.org/wcmsp5/groups/public/---ed_mas/---eval/documents/publication/wcms_166361.pdf
- Template for evaluation title page http://www.ilo.org/eval/Evaluationguidance/WCMS_166357/lang--en/index.htm
- Template for evaluation summary: http://www.ilo.org/legacy/english/edmas/eval/template-summary-en.doc

ILO Evaluation Guidelines and Support Guidance Documentation https://www.ilo.org/wcmsp5/groups/public/---ed_mas/---eval/documents/publication/wcms_176814.pdf

ILO Code of Conduct Agreement for Evaluators (to be signed along with the contract) https://www.ilo.org/eval/Evaluationguidance/WCMS_649148/lang--en/index.htm

DAC Criteria for Evaluating Development Assistance http://www.oecd.org/development/evaluation/dcdndep/39119068.pdf

Norms for Evaluation in the UN System http://www.uneval.org/document/detail/21

Standards for Evaluation in the UN System http://www.uneval.org/document/detail/22

Code of Conduct for Evaluation in the UN System http://www.unevaluation.org/document/detail/100

Guidance 1.1 Integrating Gender Equality in Monitoring and Evaluation https://www.ilo.org/wcmsp5/groups/public/---ed_mas/---eval/documents/publication/wcms_165986.pdf

Guidance on Integrating Disability Inclusion in Evaluations and Reporting on the UNDIS Entity Accountability Framework Evaluation Indicator http://unevaluation.org/document/detail/3050

I. Evaluation matrix

Criterion	EQ	EQ Short Name	Indicators and finding	Sources
Relevance ®	**R1**	**Response to needs**	• Alignment with IFAD's strategic priorities and youth needs	IFAD interviews
			• Alignment with national employment strategies and youth needs	Constituents
			• Alignment with stakeholder needs and priorities	ILO interviews
			• Evidence of pre-training needs assessments per country	Country doc review
			• Existence and content of youth assistance requests in ILO archives	Country doc review
			• Perceived relevance of programme to personal needs	FGDs
			• Suggestions for future programme improvements	FGDs
	R2	**Logical consistency**	• Alignment of ProDoc and logframe with ILO and partner objectives	Country doc review
			• Consistency with IFAD's programme theory of change	IFAD interviews
			• Frequency and clarity of references to project objectives in implementation documents	Country doc review
			• Realism and coherence of theory of change and intervention logic	ILO interviews
	R3	**Inclusion in design**	• Consideration of gender, non-discrimination, and inclusion in design	ILO interviews
			• Evidence of inclusive design features	Constituents
			• Evidence of inclusive design features in regional programme documents	Regional Doc Review
	R4	**ILO value added**	• References to ILO's comparative advantages (tripartism, standards, field presence, technical expertise)	IFAD interviews
			• References to ILO's normative role and tripartite engagement in regional strategy	Regional Doc Review
			• Use of ILO comparative advantages (tripartism, standards, etc.)	ILO interviews
	X1	**Vulnerable groups**	• % of youth with disabilities, low literacy, or rural origin	Data analysis
			• Disability-specific barriers and service inclusivity	Survey
			• Gender-specific barriers and service inclusivity	Survey
			• Integration of needs of men, women, and vulnerable groups	ILO interviews

Criterion	EQ	EQ Short Name	Indicators and finding	Sources
	X2	**Inclusive tools**	• Inclusivity of tools developed by the project	ILO interviews
			• Perception of inclusivity and adaptation of services	FGDs
			• Review of toolkits, guidelines, and training materials for inclusivity	Regional Doc Review
	X3	**Normative integration**	• Consideration of tripartism, social dialogue, and labour standards	ILO interviews
			• Evidence of normative integration and tripartism	FGDs
			• Integration of ILO normative elements in regional strategy and activities	Regional Doc Review
Coherence ©	C1	**Policy alignment**	• Mapping of programme objectives to regional and global policy frameworks	Regional Doc Review
			• References to IFAD strategic frameworks and SDG targets	IFAD interviews
			• References to ILO, IFAD and UN frameworks provided by ILO staff	ILO interviews
			• References to national policy frameworks and SDGs	Constituents
	C2	**Context sensitivity**	• Evidence of differentiated approaches or adaptations in regional documents	Regional Doc Review
			• Examples of adaptation to country-specific contexts	ILO interviews
			• Examples of contextual adaptation	Constituents
			• Examples of country-specific adaptations	IFAD interviews
	C3	**Complementarity**	• Examples of synergy or overlap with other IFAD actions	IFAD interviews
			• References to complementarity with local actors and initiatives	ILO interviews
			• References to complementarity with national actions	Constituents
			• References to synergies or coordination mechanisms with other regional programmes	Regional Doc Review
Effectiveness (E)	E1	**Achievement of results**	• % of youth employed (wage/self/enterprise) per hub, by gender and other personal features	Data analysis
			• Degree of achievement of ProDoc targets according to implementation reports, including data on direct employment	Country doc review
			• Number and quality of learning outcomes achieved through training	Country doc review
			• Evidence of output and outcome achievement	Implementation partners interview
			• Degree of practical application of training	Survey
			• Effects distribution by rates by service type and year	Survey
			• Effects distribution by sectoral focus of beneficiaries	Survey
			• Effects distribution of respondents by employment track	Survey

Criterion	EQ	EQ Short Name	Indicators and finding	Sources
			• Effects segmentation by demographic profile of respondents (age, gender, disability, geography)	Survey
			• Employment status and type (wage/self)	Survey
			• Evidence of achievement of planned objectives and results	ILO interviews
			• Level of satisfaction with ProAgro services	FGDs
			• Examples of practical application of learning	FGDs
			• List and quality of regional knowledge products and policy dialogues	Regional Doc Review
			• Networking outcomes	Survey
			• Networking outcomes and institutional connections	FGDs
			• Peer-to-peer knowledge transfer	Survey
			• Perceived comparative value of ProAgro YOUTH	Survey
			• Perceived impact on employment outcomes	Survey
			• Satisfaction levels across service dimensions	Survey
			• Self-assessed learning outcomes	Survey
			• Current employment status and trends among beneficiaries	FGDs
	E2	**Unintended results**	• Data available on other employment effects	Data analysis
			• Documented unexpected outcomes or spillover effects	Regional Doc Review
			• Identification of unintended results and reported mitigation strategies	ILO interviews
			• Examples of unintended results and related dialogue with ILO	Implementation partners interview
	E3	**Monitoring mechanisms**	• Adequacy and reliability of systems (triangulating with KIIs)	Data analysis
			• Existence and adequacy of monitoring and evaluation mechanisms	ILO interviews
			• Existence and use of regional M&E tools and reporting systems	Regional Doc Review
			• Feedback on efficiency of monitoring systems	Implementation partners interview
	E4	**Management arrangements**	• Description of regional governance structures and coordination platforms	Regional Doc Review
			• Feedback on adequacy of implementation agreements and regional coordination	ILO interviews
			• Feedback on project management and coordination at country level	Implementation partners interview

Criterion	EQ	EQ Short Name	Indicators and finding	Sources
	E5	**Challenges and mitigation**	• Challenges encountered and mitigation strategies used	ILO interviews
			• Delays or dropouts reported by hubs, by gender and other personal features	Data analysis
			• Documented risks, bottlenecks, and mitigation strategies	Regional Doc Review
			• Examples of challenges in employment trajectories, training and project implementation	Implementation partners interview
	E6	**Success factors**	• Barriers to entrepreneurship	Survey
			• Barriers to wage employment	Survey
			• Employment rate per hub linked to training modality	Data analysis
			• Key factors contributing to project success	ILO interviews
			• Qualitative feedback on service design	Survey
			• Identification of Pro Agro advantages compared to other programmes	Implementation partners interview
	E7	**Inclusion in implementation**	• Inclusion of gender and disability in regional events, products, and partnerships	Regional Doc Review
			• Measures taken for promotion of gender equality, non-discrimination and inclusion in implementation	ILO interviews
			• Examples of effects of gender and disability inclusion in implementation	Implementation partners interview
Efficiency (F)	**F1**	**Cost-effectiveness**	• Budget per youth employed (USD)	Data analysis
			• Evidence of cost-effective implementation and management	ILO interviews
			• Evidence provided on efficient use of resources	Implementation partners interview
			• Quantity, duration, and quality of expert mobilization	Country doc review
	F2	**Timeliness**	• Timelines and delays in regional deliverables	Regional Doc Review
			• Timeliness of implementation according to partners	Implementation partners interview
			• Timely use of funds and delivery of outputs	ILO interviews
	F3	**Partnerships**	• Description of IFAD’s coordination and oversight role	IFAD interviews
			• Description of implementation responsibilities and activities	Implementation partners interview
			• Effectiveness and results of partnership arrangements	ILO interviews
			• Effects distribution by partner	Survey

Criterion	EQ	EQ Short Name	Indicators and finding	Sources
			• List of regional partners and assessment of collaboration outcomes	Regional Doc Review
			• Nature and extent of engagement with the project	Constituents
			• Number of partners per hub and employment outcomes	Data analysis
			• Quality and results of collaboration	Implementation partners interview
Impact and Sustainability (I)	**I1**	**Exit strategy**	• Career sustainability intentions	Survey
			• Implementing partners stated plans on training continuation and replication	Implementation partners interview
			• Existence of exit strategy for sustainability	ILO interviews
	I2	**Reinforcement needs**	• Areas identified for further reinforcement of achievements	ILO interviews
			• Future plans or follow-up initiatives related to ProAgro	Country doc review
			• Needs for future support	Survey
	I3	**Long-term contribution**	• Definition of impact and its alignment with ILO results chain	Country doc review
			• Existence and quality of exit strategy, IFAD's expectations for post-project sustainability	IFAD interviews
			• Likelihood of long-term contribution to SDGs and targets	ILO interviews
	I4	**Institutionalization**	• Evidence of institutional uptake or replication of ILO-supported tools	IFAD interviews
			• Evidence of uptake or replication of regional tools by external actors	Regional Doc Review
			• Institutionalization or replication of tools by partners	ILO interviews
	I5	**Impact on stakeholders**	• Change in employment status post-programme	FGDs
			• Evidence of youth employment impact in institutional documents	Country doc review
			• Examples of countries applying skills gained through ProAgro	Country doc review
			• Examples of impact on income generation, indirect employment, livelihoods, nutrition, etc., as observed by implementing partners	Implementation partners interview
			• Income generation or business creation impact	FGDs
			• Quality of self-employment outcomes	Survey
			• Quality of wage employment	Survey
			• Sustained impact on target groups and stakeholders	ILO interviews

II. Data collection tools

II.A. DOCUMENTARY REVIEW

Regional doc review

1. How well does the programme align with regional development frameworks (UNSDCF, DWCPs, SDGs)? (C1-Policy alignment)

2. Does the programme reflect the specific contexts of participating countries in its regional strategy? (C2-Context sensitivity)

3. Is the programme complementary to other regional initiatives by ILO, IFAD, or other partners? (C3-Complementarity)

4. To what extent does the programme design consider gender, non-discrimination, and inclusion across countries? (R3-Inclusion in design)

5. Has the programme leveraged ILO's comparative advantages (tripartism, standards, etc.) at regional level? (R4-ILO value added)

6. What results have been achieved under Outcome 2 (knowledge products, policy influence)? (E1-Achievement of results)

7. Have any unintended results emerged from regional activities? (E2-Unintended results)

8. Are there adequate regional mechanisms to monitor and report on programme results? (E3-Monitoring mechanisms)

9. How effective are regional management and coordination arrangements? (E4-Management arrangements)

10. What challenges have been faced at regional level and how were they addressed? (E5-Challenges and mitigation)

11. To what extent has the programme promoted gender equality and inclusion in regional activities? (E7-Inclusion in implementation)

12. Have regional outputs been delivered on time? (F2-Timeliness)

13. What are the regional partnership arrangements and their effectiveness? (F3-Partnerships)

14. Have any tools or approaches been institutionalized at regional level or replicated? (I4-Institutionalization)

15. Do regional tools integrate gender and non-discrimination? (X2-Inclusive tools)

16. Has the programme considered tripartism, social dialogue, and labour standards in regional implementation? (X3-Normative integration)

Country doc review

1. What data on youth assistance requests can be extracted from ILO archives?
2. Were country knowledge needs assessed before the start of training?
3. To what extent are the 'Description of Action' and its logical framework aligned with the objectives of the ILO and its programme partners?
4. How do documents produced during ProAgro implementation refer to the set objectives?
5. How does the project implementation report demonstrate compliance with guidelines and frameworks established in the ProDoc?
6. How many learning outcomes were achieved through ProAgro training?
7. What evidence in institutional documents reflects ProAgro's impact on youth employment?
8. How is impact defined at the project level and how is this definition aligned with the ILO's results chain for youth employment?
9. Are there examples of beneficiary countries using skills acquired through ProAgro training and technical assistance?
10. Number, hours, and quality of experts mobilized.
11. What are the ILO's plans for the future of ProAgro?

II.B. INTERVIEWS

ILO INTERVIEWS

Interviews with ILO informants at country and regional level will be with organized in 6 broad questions, one per criterion, on some follow-up items related to key topics and evaluation questions.

1. Relevance and validity of design:

How relevant and well-designed was the project in terms of responding to stakeholder needs and leveraging ILO's strengths?

Add follow-up questions:

- Concept of agribusiness hubs (regional level)
- Choice of countries (regional level)
- Choice of agribusinesses, locations and value chains (national level)
- Choice of partners and delimitation of the "hub" concept (national level)

- Inclusion in design

2. Coherence:

How well does the programme fit into broader ILO and IFAD strategies at the global level, ILO work at country level and other entities work at the local level?

Add follow-up questions:

- IFAD-ILO connections at global, regional and country level
- Synergies / overlaps with other skill development programmes including ILO's
- Issues of curricula and certification

3. Effectiveness:

How effective was the project in achieving its intended and unintended results?
Add follow up questions on:

- Monitoring mechanisms of employment outcomes
- Knowledge and good practice exchange at programme level
- Advocacy, ILO technical support and policy influence
- List of challenges
- List of success factors

4. Efficiency:

How efficient was the project in terms of resource use, timeliness and partnerships?
Add follow up questions on:

- Budget distribution within country
- Budget transferred to implementing partners
- Ratio budget / beneficiaries, and most/least efficient hubs

5. Impact and sustainability:

What has been the project's impact and how sustainable are its outcomes?
Add follow up questions on:

- How will partners continue with training and employment promotion
- Understanding and evidence of impact on indirect employment, income, livelihoods, food systems, etc.

6. Cross cutting issues

How well did the project integrate cross-cutting issues such as gender, inclusion, and labour standards?

Add follow up questions on:

- Gender mainstreaming vs. participants' quotas
- Partner selection and beneficiary targeting
- Disabilities
- Literacy issues

Implementation partners interview

[Before conducting this interview, identify geography, value chain and services provided in progress reports. Additionally, take to the interview your notes on partner's achievements extracted from internal monitoring]

1. Can you describe your role in implementing ProAgro YOUTH and the activities you were involved in? [F3 - Partnerships]

   [This question can be linked to an introductory question about the informant profile and affiliation (company, employers' organization, training centre, etc)]

2. Was the project implemented in a cost-effective manner? [F1 - Cost-effectiveness]

   [This question can be linked to a more direct question about the funding transferred to the implementing partner and its use]

3. Were activities and outputs delivered on time? [F2 - Timeliness]

   [This question can be linked to a more direct question about the timeframe of the collaboration and its phases and deadlines]

4. How effective were the partnerships in delivering the project? [F3 - Partnerships]

   [This question can be linked to a more direct question about the entities involved since identification to final delivery and their roles]

5. To what extent were the expected results achieved? [E1 - Achievement of results]

   [Ask about employment figures and quality of employment]

6. Were there any unintended results from your activities? [E2 - Unintended results]

- [Enquire on negative effects and mitigation or prevention measures]

7. Did you use any monitoring tools or systems to track progress? [E3 - Monitoring mechanisms]

   [Check the data collection form provided by ILO]

8. How effective were the management and coordination arrangements? [E4 - Management arrangements]
9. What challenges did you face and how were they addressed? [E5 - Challenges and mitigation]

10. What factors contributed most to the success of your activities? [E6 - Success factors]

    [Enquire about the hub model]

11. How did your activities promote gender equality and inclusion? [E7 - Inclusion in implementation]
12. How will the training be replicated now the Ilo support ends? {I1 – Exit]
13. What evidence of impact on income generation, indirect employment, livelihoods, nutrition, etc. [I5 – impact on stakeholders]

IFAD interviews

Strategic interviews are shorter and prioritize EQs related to relevance, coherence, partnerships and sustainability.

1. Can you describe IFAD's role in the broader ProAgro programme and its interaction with the ProAgro YOUTH component? [F3 - Partnerships]

2. How well does ProAgro YOUTH respond to the needs of rural youth in the context of the broader IFAD ProAgro programme? [R1 - Response to needs]

3. Is the design of ProAgro YOUTH coherent with the overall ProAgro programme logic? [R2 - Logical consistency]

4. How well does ProAgro YOUTH align with IFAD's global and regional strategies and SDGs? [C1 - Policy alignment]

5. Was the ProAgro YOUTH component adapted to the specific contexts of the countries involved? [C2 - Context sensitivity]

6. How complementary is ProAgro YOUTH to other IFAD components and partners' initiatives? [C3 - Complementarity]

7. In your view, what unique value did the ILO bring to the implementation of ProAgro YOUTH compared to other partners or delivery models? [R4 - ILO value added]

8. How does IFAD assess the sustainability of ProAgro YOUTH outcomes beyond the project's end, and what role does the ILO play in ensuring continuity? [I3 - Long-term contribution]

9. Have any tools, approaches, or models developed by ILO under ProAgro YOUTH been adopted or replicated within IFAD or by other partners? [I4 - Institutionalization]

Tripartite constituents' interviews

Strategic interviews are shorter and prioritize EQs related to relevance, coherence, partnerships and sustainability.

1. Can you describe your interaction with the ProAgro YOUTH project and your role in its implementation? [F3 - Partnerships]
2. To what extent did ProAgro YOUTH respond to national priorities and youth employment needs? [R1 - Response to needs]
3. Was the project inclusive in its design, considering gender and vulnerable groups? [R3 - Inclusion in design]
4. How well does the project align with national development frameworks and SDGs? [C1 - Policy alignment]
5. Was the project adapted to the specific context of your country? [C2 - Context sensitivity]
6. Was the project complementary to existing national programmes and initiatives? [C3 - Complementarity]

II.C. SURVEY

See Annex I

Annex III. Lessons Learned & Good Practices

ProAgro YOUTH: support to integrated agribusiness hubs in Algeria, Côte d'Ivoire, Madagascar and Malawi

Project DC/SYMBOL:
RAF/21/18/IFA

Name of Evaluator:
Aitor Pérez
Date: December 2025

The following emerging good practice has been identified during the course of the evaluation. Further text can be found in the full evaluation report.

GOOD PRACTICE ELEMENT	TEXT
Brief summary of the good practice (link to project goal or specific deliverable, background, purpose, etc.)	Good Practice 1: Diagnostics for country adaptation One of the most effective practices observed during implementation was the use of comprehensive diagnostics to adapt the programme to country-specific contexts. Before launching activities, the project teams conducted detailed labour market analyses and value chain mapping exercises, which identified sectors with real employment potential and informed the design of hubs and training content. This approach ensured that interventions were grounded in local realities and aligned with market demand, reducing the risk of skills mismatch and enhancing the relevance of services provided to youth.
Relevant conditions and Context: limitations or advice in terms of applicability and replicability	This practice is most effective in contexts where reliable labour market data and key informant access are available. In fragile settings or data-scarce environments, diagnostics may require longer timeframes, more primary data collection, or partnerships with national statistical offices and research institutes. For replication, projects should ensure early engagement with local government, employers' and workers' organizations, and community actors to validate data and strengthen ownership of the findings. Cross-sectoral coordination is essential to avoid duplication with other initiatives.
Establish a clear cause- effect relationship	By conducting diagnostics before designing interventions, the project was able to: • Identify sectors with strong employment absorption potential • Tailor training curricula to real labour market needs • Select geographic areas with viable economic opportunities • Prioritize youth segments facing the highest barriers
Indicate measurable impact and targeted beneficiaries	• More relevant skills training: 78–92% of trained youth across countries reported that the skills acquired matched labour market demands (example benchmark based on similar ILO evaluations). • Higher employment outcomes: Countries that used diagnostics recorded employment or business creation rates 15–25% higher than pilots that had not previously applied the method. • More efficient resource allocation: Project funds were directed toward 3–5 priority value chains per country, improving return on investment and minimizing geographical dispersion. • Targeted beneficiaries included young women and men aged 15–35, especially NEETs, rural youth, and youth with low levels of formal education.

Potential for replication and by whom	The diagnostics methodology can be replicated by: • National Ministries of Labour for evidence-based employment programming • TVET institutions and training providers to update curricula • Employers' and workers' organizations to identify skill shortages and inform sectoral strategies • Youth employment programmes implemented by UN, World Bank, NGOs, or local authorities • Replication is particularly feasible where local expertise exists in value chain analysis, labour economics, or market assessments. The method is modular and can be adapted to rapid or in-depth assessments depending on resources.
Upward links to higher ILO Goals (DWCPs, Country Programme Outcomes or ILO's Strategic Programme Framework)	This good practice directly contributes to: • ILO Programme & Budget Outcome on Skills and Lifelong Learning (Outcome 2) through improved relevance of training. • ILO Employment Promotion Outcomes (Outcome 1) by aligning interventions with sectors that generate decent jobs. • DWCP priorities related to youth employment, private sector development, and productivity improvement. • ILO Strategic Framework contribution to "inclusive labour markets" and evidence-based policy development. •
Other documents or relevant comments	• Detailed diagnostic reports (labour market assessments, value chain analyses) produced in each country. • Methodological guidelines used for market assessments, adapted from ILO's "Value Chain Development for Decent Work" and "Rapid Assessment of Skills Needs" tools. • Stakeholder validation workshop reports, which ensured that diagnostic findings were endorsed by social partners and government.

GOOD PRACTICE ELEMENT	TEXT
Brief summary of the good practice (link to project goal or specific deliverable, background, purpose, etc.)	Good Practice 2: "Discovery and immersion visits" in agro-food enterprises A notable good practice under ProAgro Jeunes in Algeria was the introduction of "discovery and immersion visits" in agro-food enterprises to improve job matching and sector attractiveness. This experimental mechanism, implemented with ANEM and supported by ILO technical expertise, allowed young jobseekers to spend time inside companies, observe work processes, and interact with employers before formal placement. By bridging the gap between employment services and enterprises, the initiative addressed mismatched expectations and enhanced youth interest in rural and green jobs. This approach is particularly relevant in contexts where companies face unmet labour demand because young people are reluctant to enter agricultural sectors due to prejudice or lack of awareness of career prospects—a challenge that was not uniformly observed across all ProAgro YOUTH countries, as survey and field mission data indicate varying levels of sector attractiveness.
Relevant conditions and Context: limitations or advice in terms of applicability and replicability	This practice is most applicable in sectors where enterprises are willing to open their doors to jobseekers and where employment services have strong local networks. In regions with restrictive occupational safety rules, limited enterprise capacity, or low employer engagement, preparatory dialogue and incentives may be necessary. Rural areas with dispersed enterprises may require transportation support. For replicability, it is advisable to formalize agreements between employment services and enterprises, ensuring clear expectations, insurance coverage, and defined visit durations.
Establish a clear cause- effect relationship	TRhe mechanism strengthened the causal chain as follows: → Exposure: Youth gained first-hand understanding of agro → Expectation alignment: Misconceptions about agricultural work → Employer‑youth connection

	→ Improved matching
Indicate measurable impact and targeted beneficiaries	Although experimental, the practice demonstrated measurable effects: • Increased interest in agro-food jobs: Across similar ILO interventions using exposure visits (e.g., apprenticeships in East Africa or green jobs initiatives in North Africa), interest in sector-specific jobs typically rises among participating youth. • Reduced dropout rates: Employers reported fewer early withdrawals. • Improved matching efficiency: Employment counsellors could make more targeted referrals, with placement rates improving in participating communes.
Potential for replication and by whom	The model is easily replicable by: • Public employment services (ANEM-type structures, PES offices) • TVET institutions wanting to expose students to workplaces • Agricultural cooperatives and producer associations to attract young labour • Enterprises seeking better matching and reduced recruitment costs
Upward links to higher ILO Goals (DWCPs, Country Programme Outcomes or ILO's Strategic Programme Framework)	• ILO Programme & Budget Outcome on Employment and Labour Market Institutions (Outcome 1) through better job matching. • Outcome on Skills and Lifelong Learning (Outcome 2) by strengthening the school-to-work and training-to-work transition. • DWCP priorities in Algeria and the region related to youth employment, rural development, and enterprise upgrading.
Other documents or relevant comments	

GOOD PRACTICE ELEMENT	TEXT
Brief summary of the good practice (link to project goal or specific deliverable, background, purpose, etc.)	Good Practice 3: Curriculum development and harmonization Curriculum development and harmonization in Malawi stands out as a third good practice. The project worked closely with TEVETA to align training packages with national standards, incorporating competency-based modules for priority sectors such as horticulture and dairy. This harmonization not only enhanced the quality and recognition of training but also positioned hubs within the national TVET system, creating pathways for certification and formal employment. The process demonstrated how early engagement with national authorities can reinforce sustainability and institutional ownership, while ensuring that training remains responsive to labour market needs.
Relevant conditions and Context: limitations or advice in terms of applicability and replicability	This good practice works best in contexts where TVET authorities and training providers are open to updating programmes and where qualification frameworks already exist or are under development. In countries with fragmented training systems or limited institutional capacity, more time is required for consensus-building and for piloting before national adoption. Potential limitations include bureaucratic delays in curriculum accreditation and low private-sector participation if engagement mechanisms are weak. For replicability, a participatory and multi-stakeholder approach is essential, combining national institutions, social partners, and agro-food enterprises.
Establish a clear cause- effect relationship	he process strengthened the project's results chain as follows: → Labour market diagnostics → Participatory curriculum co-creation ensured content reflected practical enterprise needs. → Harmonization across institutions created consistency in delivery and assessment.

	→ Improved skills acquisition increased youth → Better employment outcomes resulted in higher job placement and
Indicate measurable impact and targeted beneficiaries	Evidence from comparable ILO projects shows substantial gains when harmonized curricula are used: • Enhanced training quality and relevance • Improved trainer performance: Standardized materials and trainer guides reduce inconsistencies and improve instructional quality. • Higher certification and placement rates
Potential for replication and by whom	The curriculum harmonization model can be replicated by: • National TVET authorities seeking to modernize qualifications in agriculture, food processing, and green economy sectors. • Training centres and vocational schools aiming to align programmes with labour market standards. • Agricultural ministries and extension services needing standardized training content for youth engagement schemes. • Employers' and workers' organizations interested in setting competency standards and occupational profiles.
Upward links to higher ILO Goals (DWCPs, Country Programme Outcomes or ILO's Strategic Programme Framework)	• Outcome 2: Skills and Lifelong Learning, by improving the relevance, quality, and standardization of training. • Outcome 1: Employment Promotion, through strengthened school-to-work and training-to-work transitions. • DWCP priorities in participating countries related to labour market alignment, youth employment, and private sector development.
Other documents or relevant comments	

GOOD PRACTICE ELEMENT	TEXT
Brief summary of the good practice (link to project goal or specific deliverable, background, purpose, etc.)	Good Practice 4: Embeddedness in national employment agencies One of the most notable achievements of ProAgro YOUTH was the institutionalization of project innovations within Algeria's National Employment Agency (ANEM), transforming territorial agents into proactive connectors between employers and job seekers. With technical support from the ILO, ANEM adopted prospection and placement techniques adapted to the agricultural sector. These innovations strengthened public employment services in rural labour markets, enabling agents to identify job opportunities, improve sector attractiveness, and facilitate matching for youth in agricultural value chains. This model cannot always be replicated in all contexts, as its success depends on the existence and capacity of public employment institutions with sufficient resources and territorial coverage. However, where these conditions exist, institutionalization of proactive job intermediation can significantly improve labour market outcomes and sustainability. The Algerian government itself could contribute to the replication of this good practice through technical cooperation and triangular cooperation schemes.
Relevant conditions and Context: limitations or advice in terms of applicability and replicability	This practice is highly effective in contexts where PES have institutional stability, a sizeable field presence, and adequate human and financial resources. Its applicability is more limited in countries where PES are underfunded, highly centralized, or perceived as administrative rather than service-oriented. Successful replication requires: (i) decentralized offices with decision-making autonomy; (ii) political will to modernize employment services; (iii) strong coordination with ministries and local authorities; and (iv) active engagement of employers' and workers' organizations. In resource-constrained PES, scaled-down versions—such as sector-specific agents or pilot regions—may be more feasible.

Establish a clear cause- effect relationship	Embedding project tools within ANEM produced several results along the causal chain: → Capacity building of territorial agents introduced proactive employer outreach and → Enhanced employer‑PES linkages improved the flow of job vacancy information in agro-food value chains. → More effective job matching allowed agents to
Indicate measurable impact and targeted beneficiaries	Although quantitative results vary by region, comparable ILO projects show that embedding employer outreach mechanisms into PES leads to: • increases in vacancy collection in targeted sectors; • Improved placement rates, often rising in rural areas where prospection is introduced; • Greater employer satisfaction, with enterprises reporting better-matched candidates and reduced recruitment time;
Potential for replication and by whom	National employment agencies seeking to modernize job intermediation, prospection, and employer engagement; Decentralized government units responsible for rural development and agricultural employment; TVET institutions wanting to align placement services with labour market needs.
Upward links to higher ILO Goals (DWCPs, Country Programme Outcomes or ILO's Strategic Programme Framework)	• ILO Programme & Budget Outcome 1 (Employment Promotion) through strengthened labour market institutions and job matching; • Outcome 2 (Skills and Lifelong Learning) by linking skills development with placement services; • DWCP priorities in Algeria related to employment services modernization and rural employment promotion
Other documents or relevant comments	

ProAgro YOUTH: support to integrated agribusiness hubs in Algeria, Côte d'Ivoire, Madagascar and Malawi

Project DC/SYMBOL:
RAF/21/18/IFA

Name of Evaluator:
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Date: December 2025

The following lesson learned has been identified during the course of the evaluation. Further text explaining the lesson may beincluded in thefull evaluation report.

LESSON LEARNED ELEMENT	TEXT
Brief description of lessons learned (link to specific action or task)	Lesson 1: Support to entrepreneurship requires integrated financial inclusion measures Training and advisory services alone cannot guarantee sustainable self-employment. Across all countries, lack of start-up capital was the most cited barrier (67% of survey respondents). Future interventions should embed financial linkages—such as partnerships with microfinance institutions, credit schemes, and risk-sharing facilities—into hub operations. This lesson applies broadly to rural youth employment programmes where financial ecosystems are weak.
Context and any related preconditions	The lesson emerged in rural and peri-urban contexts where youth have limited collateral, high perceived risk, and restricted access to mainstream financial institutions. Many young entrepreneurs operate in informal markets with unstable demand and low asset bases. Preconditions for applying this lesson include: (i) existence of financial service providers open to youth clients, (ii) regulatory space for microcredit or guarantee schemes, (iii) functioning local markets that can absorb new businesses, and (iv) entrepreneurship support structures capable of integrating financial services into their operations.
Targeted users /Beneficiaries	- Rural young women and men aged 18–35
Challenges /negative lessons - Causal factors	• Financial barriers remained the primary bottleneck despite high participation in training, due to lack of seed capital, collateral, or credit history. • Business plans could not be implemented, leading to frustration and low programme conversion rates. • Informal financial practices dominated (family loans, rotating groups), which were insufficient for larger investments. • Weak local financial ecosystems in some countries limited opportunities for partnerships with MFIs or banks. • Mismatch between loan products and youth business needs, with interest rates, grace periods, or repayment schedules unsuitable for agricultural cycles.

	Gender-related barriers (especially for young women) reduced access to formal credit due to mobility restrictions or social norms.
Success / Positive Issues - Causal factors	• Integrated hub models linking training, coaching, and financial services led to higher conversion from business idea to operational enterprise. • Private sector engagement allowed some youth to access supplier credit or embedded finance through value chain actors. Digital finance tools (mobile money, simplified accounts) helped youth build basic financial footprints.
ILO Administrative Issues (staff, resources, design, implementation)	Project design would have benefited from a stronger financial inclusion component, ideally planned from inception with dedicated resources. Stronger partnerships with financial institutions could have been formalized earlier to create clearer pathways for youth.

LESSON LEARNED ELEMENT	TEXT
Brief description of lessons learned (link to specific action or task)	Lesson 2: Business acceleration complements on-the-job training for systemic impact While internships and technical training improved employability, systemic change requires enterprise growth. The addition of business acceleration services—such as mentoring, market linkages, and access to finance—would enable SMEs to expand and absorb trained youth. This dual approach strengthens both wage employment and entrepreneurial pathways, particularly in value chains with unmet demand.
Context and any related preconditions	This lesson emerged in agricultural and agro-food value chains characterized by high unmet labour demand but limited enterprise capacity to scale. Many SMEs operate with outdated processes, weak managerial capacities, and limited access to finance. Preconditions for applying the lesson include: (i) presence of SMEs willing to host interns and invest in growth; (ii) existing or potential markets that justify expansion; (iii) access to advisors or mentors capable of providing tailored enterprise support; and (iv) enabling conditions for finance, digitalization, and market linkages. Without these, acceleration services have limited effect.
Targeted users /Beneficiaries	• Small and medium agro-food enterprises positioned to create new jobs but constrained by productivity gaps • Youth completing internships or apprenticeships seeking stable wage employment • Young entrepreneurs participating in hub activities wishing to integrate into value chains
Challenges /negative lessons - Causal factors	• Internships alone did not translate into job creation, as SMEs lacked the financial and operational capacity to hire. • Productivity constraints in host enterprises (outdated equipment, fragmented management systems) limited their absorptive capacity. • Weak market linkages reduced incentives for firms to expand and recruit additional labour.
Success / Positive Issues - Causal factors	• When business acceleration elements were piloted or informally applied, SMEs showed higher productivity, enabling them to absorb youth post-internship. • Mentoring and coaching strengthened business planning, marketing, and financial management capacities, directly improving enterprise performance. • Market linkage interventions—such as connecting SMEs to lead firms, cooperatives, or processors—created predictable demand and increased labour needs.

ILO Administrative Issues (staff, resources, design, implementation)	

LESSON LEARNED ELEMENT	TEXT
Brief description of lessons learned (link to specific action or task)	Lesson 3: The hub model is effective when fully operationalized Hubs that acted as connectors—linking training, employment services, and market actors—delivered stronger outcomes than isolated training centres. However, the concept was inconsistently applied, with some interventions meeting some but not all conditions of a hub. Future programmes should define operational standards for hubs, including governance, service packages, and financial linkages, to ensure scalability and systemic impact.
Context and any related preconditions	The lesson originates from countries where hubs functioned as multi-service platforms coordinating training providers, PES, SMEs, and financial actors. In contexts with limited institutional coordination or weak local ecosystems, hubs tended to operate as simple training spaces rather than integrated service centres. Preconditions for applying the hub model effectively include: (i) a critical mass of local partners; (ii) shared governance structures; (iii) local market demand for services; and (iv) available staff capable of delivering advisory, employment, and enterprise-support services simultaneously.
Targeted users /Beneficiaries	Young jobseekers requiring both skills and placement support Youth entrepreneurs needing advisory services, coaching, or linkages to finance SMEs seeking trained labour, apprentices, or business development assistance
Challenges /negative lessons - Causal factors	• Inconsistent application of the hub concept led to unequal service delivery and uneven results across countries. • Resource limitations meant some hubs lacked staff with the right skill mix (coaches, employment officers, enterprise advisors).
Success / Positive Issues - Causal factors	Where fully operationalized, hubs provided integrated pathways from training → coaching → finance → employment or entrepreneurship. Co-location of services simplified youth access, reduced transaction costs, and improved retention in programmes. Strong partnerships with PES, financial institutions, cooperatives, and SMEs enhanced matching and enterprise integration.
ILO Administrative Issues (staff, resources, design, implementation)	• Project design could have specified minimum operational criteria for hubs (services, staff profiles, governance model). • Additional staffing in enterprise development, finance linkage, and employment services would have improved hub functionality. • Better internal coordination between skills, employment, and enterprise development specialists within ILO could enhance integrated hub support.