

INDEPENDENT EVALUATION

ILO's Strategy and Actions for Improved Youth Employment Prospects 2012-2017



International
Labour
Organization



1919-2019



Independent evaluation
of the ILO's strategy and actions
for improved youth employment prospects
2012–17

September, 2018

EVALUATION OFFICE

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CONTENTS

Abbreviations	v
Acknowledgments	ix
Executive summary	xi
Purpose and scope	xi
Findings	xii
Recommendations	xv
1. Introduction	1
1.1. Context	1
1.2. The evaluation – Type, purpose, scope and clients	1
1.3. Evaluation methodology	2
2. The ILO’s work in youth employment, 2012–17	7
2.1. The strategy – Its origin, nature and implementation arrangements	7
2.2. Strategy implementation	10
2.3. Resources allocated to the ILO’s youth employment work	21
3. Evaluation criteria – Findings	27
3.1. Relevance	27
3.2. Coherence	39
3.3. Effectiveness	52
3.4. Efficiency	66
3.5. Impact and sustainability	69
4. Conclusions and lessons learned	75
4.1. Conclusions	75
4.2. Lessons learned	75
4.3. Ratings	76

5. Recommendations	77
6. Office response	81

APPENDIX

Appendix I	Some YE Publications and Tools produced in the period of the evaluation	83
Appendix II	YEP Unit Work plan and Outputs	85
Appendix III	List of persons interviewed/consulted	95
Appendix IV	Evaluation Terms of Reference	100
Appendix V	Bibliography	110

ABBREVIATIONS

ACI	Area of Critical Importance
ACI2	Area of Critical Importance on Jobs and Skills for Youth
ACT/EMP	Bureau for Employers' Activities
ACTRAV	Bureau for Workers' Activities
ALMP	Active Labour Market Policies
AZD	Support Programme for the Development of Underprivileged Areas (project in Tunisia)
BRICS	Brazil, Russian Federation, India, China and South Africa (group of countries)
C-BED	Community-Based Enterprise Development
CEB	Chief Executives Board for Coordination (UN)
CIS	Commonwealth of Independent States
CPO	Country Programme Outcome
CTA	Chief Technical Advisor
DDG/FOP	Deputy Director-General for Field Operations and Partnerships
DDG/P	Deputy Director-General for Policy
DEVINVEST	Development and Investment Branch
DJEP	Decent Jobs for Egypt's Young People
DWCP	Decent Work Country Programme
DWT	Decent Work Technical Support Team
EBMO	Employer and Business Membership Organizations
EC	European Commission
EMPLOYMENT	Employment Policy Department
EVAL	Evaluation Office
EYE	Egypt's Youth Employment Programme
FUNDAMENTALS	Fundamental Principles and Rights at Work Branch
GAN	Global Apprenticeship Network
GED	Gender, Equality and Diversity Branch
GOVERNANCE	Governance and Tripartism Department
HLCP	High-Level Committee on Programmes (UN)
HLE	High-Level Evaluation
HQ	Headquarters

IFAD	International Fund for Agriculture Development
IFC	International Finance Corporation
ILC	International Labour Conference
ILO	International Labour Organization
INWORK	Inclusive labour Markets, Labour Relations and Working Conditions Branch
IOE	International Organization of Employers
IOM	International Organisation of Migration
ITC	International Training Centre (Turin)
ITUC	International Trade Union Confederation
KAB	Know About Business
LABADMIN/OSH	Labour Administration, Labour Inspection, and Occupational Health and Safety
LED	Local Economic Development
LEED	Local Empowerment through Economic Development (project in Sri Lanka)
MENA	Middle East and North Africa
MOICC	Ministry of Investment and International Cooperation (Egypt)
NAP	National Action Plan
NEET	Not in Employment, Education or Training
NGO	Non-Government Organization
OSH	Occupational Safety and Health
P&B	Programme and Budget
PAEJK	Programme d'Activités pur l'Emploi des Jeunes dans la province du Katanga
PARDEV	Partnerships and Field Support Department
PEJTUN	Promotion Emploi Jeunes en Tunisie
PES	Public Employment Service
PROMESS	Promotion of Organizations & Mechanisms of Social & Solidarity Economy (project in Tunisia)
RB	Regular Budget
RBSA	Regular Budget Supplementary Account
RBTC	Regular Budget Technical Cooperation
REAP	Regional Employment Action Plans
S4YE	Solutions for Youth Employment (World Bank initiative)
SDG	Sustainable Development Goal
SIDA	Swedish International Development Agency
SIYB	Start and Improve Your Business
SKILLED	Skills to Support Local Economic Development (project in Sri Lanka)
STED	Skills for Trade and Economic Diversification
SWTS	School-to-Work Transition Survey
TREE	Training for Rural Economic Empowerment
TVET	Technical Vocational Education and Training
UGTT	Tunisian General Trade Union of Workers
UN	United Nations
UNDP	United Nations Development Programme

UNIDO	United Nations Industrial Development Organization
USAID	United States Agency for International Development
UTICA	Tunisian Union of Industry Trade and Handcrafts
W4Y	Work4Youth (Project funded by MasterCard Foundation)
WORKQUALITY	Conditions of Work and Equality Department
XBTC	Extra-Budgetary Technical Cooperation
YE	Youth Employment
YEN	Youth Employment Network
YENA	Youth Employment in North Africa
YEP	Youth Employment Programme
YG	Youth Guarantee

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Any error and omissions are the responsibility of EVAL.

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

PURPOSE, SCOPE AND CLIENTS

This High-Level Evaluation (HLE) provides insight into the relevance, coherence, effectiveness, efficiency, impact and sustainability of the ILO's youth employment work from 2012 to 2017. Two strategic frameworks applied to this period – the Strategic Policy Framework 2010–15 and the Transitional Strategic Plan 2016–17. The resolution of the 101st Session of the International Labour Conference (ILC) in 2012 – “The youth employment crisis: A call for action” – and its seven-year follow-up plan endorsed by the Governing Body provided the operational framework for the ILO's actions in the period. It built on the Organization's long history working in the youth employment field, and on previous related resolutions.

The evaluation covered all efforts undertaken by the Office including: Outcome 2 of the Strategic Policy Framework 2010–15 (Programme and Budget (P&B) Indicator 2.5);¹ and Outcome 1 under the Transitional Strategic Plan 2016–17 (P&B Indicator 1.2)² and Outcome 4 (P&B Indicator 4.3).³ The evaluation also considered results relating to other Outcomes and Indicators.

Field visits were conducted in eight countries.⁴ An additional five countries⁵ were covered by a regional thematic evaluation on youth employment in Asia, which was organized in parallel. A total of 174 face-to-face interviews were conducted with ILO staff, constituents, United Nations (UN) partners and donors; and an additional 97 stakeholders participated through online surveys. Furthermore, a synthesis review of 30 evaluation reports on youth employment from 2012 to 2017 was conducted. Gender and other cross-cutting themes were considered throughout.

¹ Number of member States that, with ILO support, develop and implement integrated policies and programmes to promote productive employment and decent work for young women and men.

² Member States that have taken targeted action on decent jobs and skills for young women and men through the development and implementation of multi-pronged policies and programmes.

³ Member States in which public and private intermediaries have designed and implemented scalable entrepreneurship programmes aimed at income and employment creation with a focus on young people and women.

⁴ China, Egypt, Peru, Portugal, Sri Lanka, Switzerland, Thailand, and Tunisia.

⁵ Cambodia, Fiji, Kiribati, Samoa and Vanuatu.

FINDINGS

A. Relevance

The Call for Action remains as relevant as ever. Global youth unemployment rates remain high and are rising in some regions. The issue has received new prominence in the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, and the ILO's expertise is needed more than ever.

The emphasis placed by the ILO on identifying and disseminating information on “what works” was important as constituents sought more certainty in their policy responses. The ultimate relevance of this research will only be demonstrated when it leads to changes in countries' policies and programmes, and improved youth employment outcomes. Other significant research included the four *Global Employment Trends for Youth* reports published in the period under review, and the wealth of data on school-to-work transition generated by the ILO–MasterCard Foundation project.

The ILO's work was broadly relevant to the diverse needs of young people, including those disadvantaged in the labour market. Significant work has been done to identify good practice for some groups, but more advocacy for others is needed (for example, young people with disabilities, indigenous young people) to promote “what works” for them, and to target them in project delivery.

The ILO has extended its technical advice to new areas of work in youth employment, notably Youth Guarantee (YG) programmes in Europe. Its work in reaching out to those “not in employment education or training” (NEET) has potential application in other settings, and therefore positions the ILO to take a lead role in this area.

The ILO's work remained responsive to new developments, including Transition from the Informal to the Formal Economy Recommendation, 2015 (No. 204), Employment and Decent Work for Peace and Resilience Recommendation, 2017 (No. 205) and the SDGs. The ILO has played a convening role within the UN system and attempted more broadly to focus attention on the youth employment dimensions of these developments, notably through the Global Initiative on Decent Jobs for Youth. The world of work is changing and young people are likely to be at the forefront of these changes. How the ILO responds to the emergence of new forms of work – and the opportunities and risks they present to young people – will require some difficult strategic choices.

B. Coherence

The Call for Action gives the ILO and its constituents all the pieces needed to assemble a coherent mechanism to tackle the youth employment challenge. But putting these pieces together is a difficult task requiring political will, technical capacity and funding. Supporting the development of national youth employment strategies and action plans, as well as providing information on “what works” can help direct, inspire and motivate change; but real reform requires hands-on support at the country level. The ILO has had some success in this (for example, the Azerbaijan case study), but its resources to provide this level of hands-on support are limited.

Fragmentation of effort in youth employment development needs to be minimized. The ILO is trying to play a role in this (including through the Global Initiative and at country level). The ILO itself needs to be careful not to reinforce piecemeal approaches, mainly by focusing on the use of single tools instead of promoting holistic solutions.

The coherence between the Call for Action and the P&B was initially weak – what it was seeking to achieve through the former was inadequately measured by the latter. This situation improved somewhat during the 2016–17 period, but the P&B still only gave a partial picture.

The Youth Employment Programme (YEP) Unit brought together different parts of the Organization as envisaged in the strategy. However, the ILO still needs to exploit all the potential synergies in its work.

Tripartite involvement has generally been good and attention has been given to building constituent capacity. In the field, some constituents said they needed more involvement during the entire design and implementation of policies and programmes, not just at the beginning of the process. Constituents share a commitment to youth employment: this in itself is a force for cohesion and has opened some doors for the ILO to advance other parts of the Decent Work Agenda.

C. Effectiveness

P&B results exceeded global targets in all three biennia; most of the regional targets were met or exceeded. In terms of what could be measured, this was a very good result. Other measurement methods may be needed, however, to cover the full breadth of the ILO's effectiveness.

The ILO aligned its work with the “three pillars”⁶ of the Call for Action; within these, examples of effective interventions were identified. Among the more significant were those of the ILO–MasterCard Foundation project and the pivotal role the ILO played in the Global Initiative on Decent Jobs for Youth. At the regional level, key initiatives also aligned with the three pillars, such as the Youth Employment in North Africa activities, a partnership intended to develop a regional and systematic approach to youth employment.

A synthesis review of 30 youth employment project evaluations concluded that, despite some deficiencies, good results were achieved overall. These findings were confirmed by this evaluation in the cases wherein projects and other technical support were designed in line with the “multi-pronged” approach, leading to observable and tangible results. In the survey, staff generally rated the organization highly in meeting its strategic objectives.

The evaluation found that a better balance between supply-side and demand-side-driven initiatives was needed. The field visits highlighted some projects that achieved a good balance between growing new jobs and improving the employability of young job seekers. At the same time, the review of implementation reports suggested that such projects were not usual; and that projects involving entrepreneurship training were far more common. Concerns were expressed that this was putting too much of the responsibility for job creation on young people's shoulders and not enough on governments' commitment to pro-employment policies.

Apprenticeships are attracting global interest as a means of enhancing youth employability and meeting employers' skills needs. The ILO has supported institutional capacity to deliver “Quality Apprenticeships” in a number of countries, and has supported the Global Apprenticeship Network (GAN), a business-driven initiative, in its promotional efforts. Apprenticeships have proven their effectiveness in some countries, but local context needs to be considered. Policy intent is also a consideration. Many quality apprenticeship systems are founded on their ability to provide employers with highly skilled workers. While they can facilitate school-to-work transition for many young people, they are not a panacea for youth unemployment.

Good examples of gender inclusiveness and non-discrimination were found (including research on “what works” in employment for young women), but the synthesis review also noted that some projects treated these issues as an “afterthought”. More could be done to ensure that gender considerations are included throughout project delivery.

⁶ Knowledge development and dissemination; technical assistance and capacity building; partnerships and advocacy.

D. Efficiency

At the aggregate strategy level, efficiency is hard to measure: the ILO's systems do not allow an analysis of the costs associated with specific activities (or thematic areas) and their reported results. The fact that youth employment work is dispersed throughout the ILO makes this kind of analysis even more problematic.

However, at the level of individual youth employment projects, the synthesis review of 30 project evaluations gave efficiency a rather low score, mainly due to issues with the timeliness of implementation, budget management, communication, and coordination with stakeholders. In contrast, the staff survey was quite positive overall.

The YEP Unit within EMPLOYMENT is the key driver and coordinator of youth employment in the ILO. Given its outputs over the period and modest staffing profile, it appears to have operated efficiently. Demand for guidance and services from Headquarters (HQ) at the country level still exceeds supply.

E. Impact and sustainability

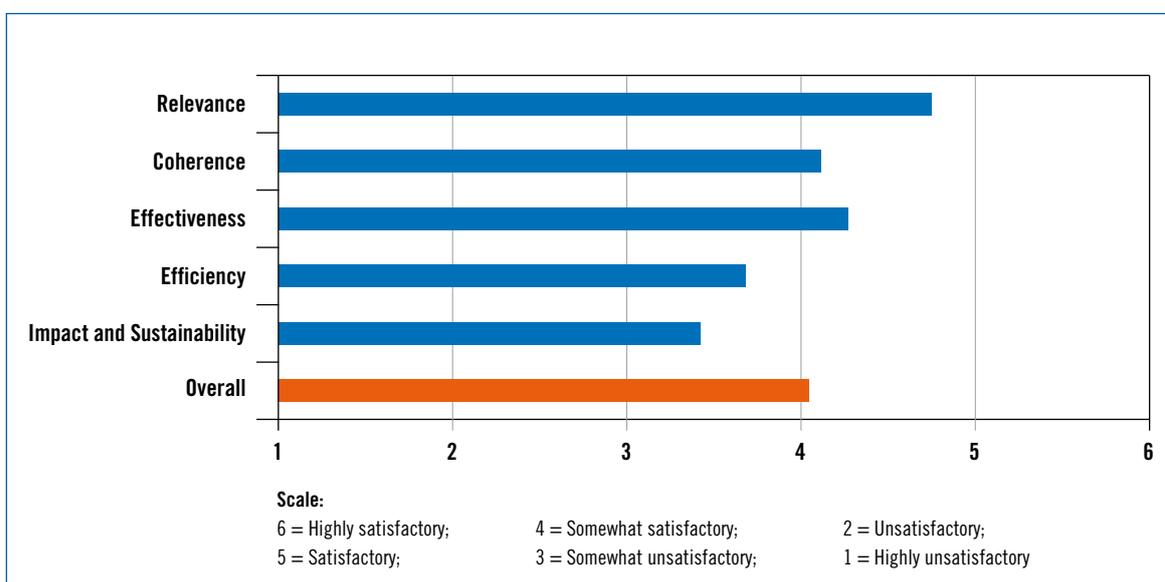
The field visits highlighted some projects that appear likely to have had a lasting impact: e.g., community infrastructure in Tunisia, and processes established in Portugal through its YG. In other countries, there is optimism about impact and sustainability, but only time will tell, e.g., Egypt's endeavours to align efforts through the Youth Employment Programme, or services put in place through Sri Lanka's Skills to Support Local Economic Development (SKILLED) project. In China, there is evidence of the impact and sustainability of past ILO actions (e.g., the institutionalization of Know About Business (KAB)) and, in Peru, an earlier joint UN project, which introduced a number of youth employment initiatives.

Staff believe that the ILO has made the most difference in two areas: putting youth employment on the development map, and providing information on youth employment trends. This is in contrast to the areas where they believe the least difference was made: youth rights at work.

Looking ahead, the ILO as custodian of SDG indicators on youth employment is in a key position to promote and monitor impact and sustainability over the SDG time frame. Its role in the Global Initiative can also support this, given its focus on maximizing impact.

Figure 1. Overall evaluation ratings by criterion

The ratings in figure 1 reflect both the performance of the ILO's strategy and actions for improved youth employment prospects.



F. Conclusions and lessons learned

The ILO has played a significant role in elevating youth employment as an international development priority. It has developed knowledge of the factors influencing youth employment outcomes, including the transition from school to work, and of “what works”. It now needs to apply this knowledge in its development cooperation work, and while mobilizing resources and leveraging partnerships. The Global Initiative provides an opportunity to do this in the context of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development. The ILO’s unique links to constituents and its deep understanding of the issues are assets that can be used to position the Organization as a global leader in the field.

New challenges are emerging, and levels of informality remain high among youth in some regions. The knowledge gained through the ILO’s investment in research could be used to position the Organization as a leader in developing innovative and evidence-based solutions in youth employment.

The need for enhanced youth engagement persists, and without mechanisms to hear from youth – in all their diverse circumstances and backgrounds, not just elite, highly-educated youth – there is a real risk that policy will be developed in a vacuum or that vital issues will be misdiagnosed.

The ILO’s results-based management system still does not paint a comprehensive picture of its work in youth employment.

However relevant its content may be, the publication of a report or the completion of an action plan are outputs of the ILO’s work, not outcomes. If the ILO wants to truly measure the value it adds, final project evaluations (conducted before the projects have even ended) should not be the end of their performance story.

RECOMMENDATIONS

Recommendation 1

Operationalize the lessons learned from the ILO’s past knowledge development work in the design of development cooperation projects and in the refinement of ILO tools and products. Focus new knowledge development work on responses to the situation of youth in the changing world of work.

The ILO needs to take stock of the key lessons from the research and seek increasingly creative ways to incorporate these into project design in order to maximize their effectiveness. These lessons should also inform the development of ILO tools and products, ensuring that they are optimized for young people. Future research needs to explore the opportunities and risks for young people posed by new developments in the world of work.

Responsible units	Priority	Time implication	Resource implication
EMPLOYMENT, Deputy Director-General for Policy (DDG/P)	Medium	June 2019	Medium

Recommendation 2

Give more attention to developing and applying practical tools and approaches that promote employment quality and equity.

The ILO is already doing some significant work in these areas, but more could be done. Promoting good practice in gender-inclusive youth employment project design and implementation should be ongoing, backed by “what works” findings if they are available. The same applies to strengthening understanding

of what works for the most disadvantaged young people and actively advocating for their increased participation. Close cooperation with the Conditions of Work and Equality Department (WORK-QUALITY) is needed to identify future areas of cooperation.

Responsible units	Priority	Time implication	Resource implication
EMPLOYMENT, WORKQUALITY, Governance and Tripartism Department (GOVERNANCE), DDG/P	Medium	December 2018 (to identify priorities)	Low

Recommendation 3

Give more attention to the issue of cost-effectiveness of interventions in future “what works” research and pilot projects and programmes.

Given the scarcity of resources available to many countries to address youth employment issues, the question for many is not just “what works?” but “how much is it and is it worth it?” Some items on the Call for Action menu may be more expensive, but the return on such investments in youth employment may (or may not) be justifiable. From the policy-maker’s perspective, more research on this could be useful.

Responsible units	Priority	Time implication	Resource implication
EMPLOYMENT, DDG/P	Medium	December 2019	Medium

Recommendation 4

Review and find opportunities to support youth engagement, especially at country-level in policy and programme development.

Understanding the aspirations and mind-set of young people is vital for the formulation of effective youth policies. Not all the countries visited in the evaluation had mechanisms in place to engage effectively with youth and in order to assimilate their input into policy and programme design. The ILO should promote effective models for this engagement through tripartite constituents and support development capacity initiatives to implement these.

Responsible units	Priority	Time implication	Resource implication
EMPLOYMENT, DDG/P, Regional/ country offices, Deputy Director-General for Field Operations and Partnerships (DDG/FOP)	Medium	June 2019	High

Recommendation 5

In the development and appraisal phase of new development cooperation projects, ensure that all relevant technical inputs are obtained, and ensure that the right choices are made in how project outcomes can best be achieved and what ILO programme approaches should be applied.

Careful consideration of the full range of programme approaches and tools that might be applied in interventions is needed. This allows for the best possible outcome, as opposed to a result of internal competition between different ILO units. Creative combinations of approaches should be encouraged,

which should then be supported by unit headquarters that would collaborate in the provision of technical support.

Responsible units	Priority	Time implication	Resource implication
EMPLOYMENT, DDG/P, Partnerships and Field Support Department (PARDEV), DDG/FOP	High	Immediate	Low

Recommendation 6

Establish a mechanism to systematically measure ex post the impact and sustainability of the ILO's "upstream" (policy and institutional development) work in youth employment.

The impact and sustainability of the ILO's development cooperation work in influencing policy and reforming institutions can only be assessed after some time has passed. The ILO should develop a list of projects that require follow-up to track results and sustainability. These should be followed up annually by means of a survey that poses questions relating to the specific long-term outcomes envisaged for each project.

Responsible units	Priority	Time implication	Resource implication
EMPLOYMENT, DDG/P, EVAL	Medium	June 2019	Medium

Recommendation 7

Renew the Call for Action, stress the importance of continuing action, and update its messages to address emerging issues in the youth labour market and the need to prepare young people for the changing future of work context.

The velocity of labour market change is such that past assumptions about youth employment already need to be challenged and reconsidered. The ILO's leadership position in youth employment is not guaranteed. It now needs to: build on its existing knowledge base; reframe its youth employment strategy to address current challenges; and continue to lead the debate even more vigorously on how best to ensure that young people can access decent work into the future. As the seven-year timeframe of the ILO's youth employment strategy ends in 2019, this is an opportune moment for the organization to recommit itself to renewed action on youth employment and ensure this responsibility is supported by appropriate resources.

Responsible units	Priority	Time implication	Resource implication
EMPLOYMENT, DDG/P	High	June 2019	Medium

1. INTRODUCTION

1.1. CONTEXT

In June 2012, responding to an unprecedented deterioration in youth employment prospects that occurred in the wake of the Global Financial Crisis, the 101st Session of the International Labour Conference adopted a resolution that urged immediate and targeted action – “The youth employment crisis: A call for action”. With some 75 million young people estimated at that time to be unemployed and more than 200 million young workers earning less than US\$2 a day, the resolution called for a “multi-pronged” approach – one that responded to the diverse situations of member States, fostered pro-employment growth and decent job creation through macroeconomic and labour market policies, enhanced employability and entrepreneurship, and protected rights at work for young people.

The resolution, together with its seven-year follow-up plan endorsed by the Governing Body in November 2012, provided a “menu” of policy and programme responses, and a strategic framework for the ILO’s actions. Building on conclusions set out in the 2005 ILC resolution concerning youth unemployment, this framework called for the ILO to focus its efforts in five policy areas:

- Employment and economic policies for youth employment;
- Employability (education, training and skills, and the school-to work transition);
- Labour market policies;
- Youth entrepreneurship and self-employment; and
- Rights at work for young people.

This work would involve three intervention types (or “pillars”): (a) knowledge development and dissemination; (b) technical assistance; and (c) partnerships and advocacy for decent work for youth.

1.2. THE EVALUATION – TYPE, PURPOSE, SCOPE AND CLIENTS

The conduct of this High-Level Evaluation was approved by the ILO’s Governing Body following consultations between the ILO’s Evaluation Office, senior management (through the Evaluation Advisory Committee) and constituents. HLEs are governance-level evaluations that aim to generate insights into organizational performance within the context of the results-based management system. Findings from HLEs contribute to decision-making on policies and strategies, and promote organizational accountability.

The purpose of the evaluation described in the Terms of Reference (see Appendix IV) is to provide insight into the relevance, coherence, effectiveness, efficiency and sustainability and impact of the ILO’s strategy, programme approach and interventions in the area of youth employment. It is also intended “to be forward-looking and provide findings and lessons learned and emerging good practices for informed

decision-making in relation to current and future ILO strategic and programming frameworks, as well as to the ILO contribution to the achievement of the relevant Sustainable Development Goals". The evaluation will also be used as an input in reporting to the March 2019 Governing Board meeting on progress in implementing the follow-up plan on the Call for Action.

The evaluation's scope includes all efforts of the Office across the results-based management system, with a particular focus on Outcome 2 of the 2010–15 Strategic Policy Framework (and to P&B Indicator 2.5),⁷ Outcome 1 of the Transitional Strategic Plan 2016–17 (P&B Indicator 1.2)⁸ and Outcome 4 (P&B Indicator 4.3 relating to youth entrepreneurship). Given that young people are a target group for the organization as a whole, the evaluation also considers results relating to other Outcomes and Indicators.⁹

As per the Terms of Reference, the evaluation also assesses the "ILO's contribution to global strategies, agendas and debates relating to youth employment and its coordination within the partners' cross-country and global peer networks, inter-agency cooperation across United Nations and other international agencies, and collaboration between private and public sectors at the international, regional and national levels." The ILO's work in "sharing experiences on youth employment" (i.e. the first "pillar" of its work under the Call for Action follow-up plan) is also considered.

The principal client for the evaluation is the Governing Body. Other clients include the Director-General, Senior Management at HQ, the Evaluation Advisory Committee, the YEP Unit of EMPLOYMENT and its branches and units, other ILO departments involved in youth employment, ILO field offices, the ILO Bureau for Workers' Activities (ACTRAV) and the ILO Bureau for Employers' Activities (ACT/EMP). It may also serve as a source of information for ILO donors, partners and policy-makers.

The time frame considered by the evaluation was 2012–17.

1.3. EVALUATION METHODOLOGY

The evaluation was conducted in accordance with EVAL Protocol No 1: High-level Evaluation Protocol for Strategy and Policy Evaluations¹⁰ and other relevant evaluation policies and guidelines.¹¹ Evaluation questions (see box 1) were grouped under Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development / Development Assistance Committee Evaluation Criteria.

Methods

Analysis of key documents and information resources include (but are not limited to):

- The Youth Employment Synthesis Review of 30 evaluation reports from 2012 to 2017 conducted by EVAL in preparation for the HLE¹²;

⁷ Indicator 2.5: "Number of member States that, with ILO support, develop and implement integrated policies and programmes to promote productive employment and decent work for young women and men."

⁸ Indicator 1.2: "Member States that have taken targeted action on decent jobs and skills for young women and men through the development and implementation of multi-pronged policies and programmes."

⁹ For example, Strategic Policy Framework 10–15 (outcomes 1, 3, 8, 9, 12, 16, 18 and 19) linked to thematic areas such as labour market policies targeting young people, skills development, youth entrepreneurship, sustainable enterprises, public employment programmes for youth, youth transition to formality, the protection of young workers' rights, OSH for youth and youth employment in fragile settings, et al.

¹⁰ Available at: www.ilo.org/global/docs/WCMS_215858/lang--en/index.htm.

¹¹ Including the ILO's Evaluation Policy, ILO Policy Guidelines for Evaluation (3rd edition), UN Evaluation Group Norms and Standards, Ethical Guidelines, and Code of Conduct.

¹² The synthesis review the Evaluation Office undertook looked at evaluation reports that cover the timeframe 2012–17 and that reflected on ILO's strategy to promote improved youth employment prospects. Findings from the synthesis review were used to inform the scoping of the high-level evaluation as well as a source of information on significant lessons learned or good practices. The report is available upon request to EVAL.

- Results reported in each biennium’s Programme Implementation Report (full versions) and the ILO’s Decent Work Results web-based “dashboard”;
- Review of YEP Unit workplan and reports;
- Review of research papers, reports, publications and tools produced by the ILO as part of its youth employment work;
- Analysis of selected individual project evaluations held on EVAL’s knowledge management system.¹³

Face-to-face and Skype interviews with ILO HQ staff and other stakeholders identified in the course of the evaluation. These included discussions with key HQ stakeholders as part of the project briefing in Geneva from 5 to 9 March 2018. Further contacts were made over the course of the evaluation to seek additional information.

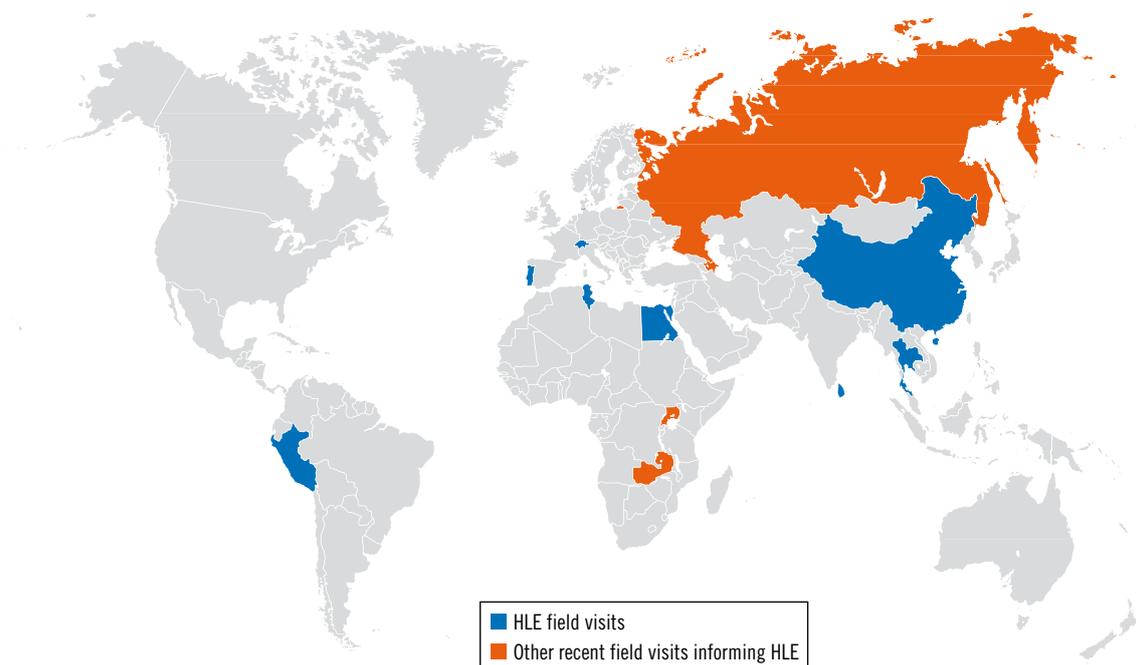
Country missions and case studies include the following:

- Eight countries were visited, including Egypt, Tunisia, Portugal, Switzerland (for a meeting of the Global Initiative on Decent Jobs for Youth), Sri Lanka, Thailand (Asia–Pacific Regional Office), China and Peru (see Figure 2). Countries were selected to include a mix of regions, development stages and youth employment interventions, and in consideration of factors such as the amount of Extra-Budgetary Technical Cooperation (XBTC) funds invested, the current ILO presence and tripartite relations/capacity. Insights from missions conducted by the evaluation consultant in late 2017 for other ILO youth employment evaluation projects (i.e. the Russian Federation, Azerbaijan, Uganda and Zambia) were also used in the evaluation.
- The country missions provided a field perspective for the evaluation, allowing case studies to be woven into the Evaluation Report that illustrate the ILO’s work “on the ground” in terms of relevance, coherence, effectiveness, efficiency, sustainability and impact.
- Regional thematic evaluations in Asia–Pacific, organized as a parallel exercise, were also used as inputs to the evaluation. A template was developed by the HLE consultant which was used to gather data by local consultants in Cambodia, Fiji, Vanuatu, Kiribati and Samoa. (Note: Pakistan and Indonesia were also included in this exercise, but findings were not completed in time).
- Through the country missions, attention was given to the regional and country perspective of the ILO’s results-based management system as it pertains to youth employment activities (in line with the required emphasis of HLEs). This included how well the development and reporting of Decent Work Country Programmes (DWCPs) and Country Programme Outcomes (CPOs) were seen to mesh with the “top-down” priorities and focus areas established through strategic policy frameworks, P&B targets and relevant policy instruments, and how well organizational performance indicators assessed results and progress.
- An online survey¹⁴ was conducted of ILO staff in HQ and regional offices, directors of country offices and DWTs, youth employment and skills specialists, and Chief Technical Advisor (CTA)/project staff working on projects related to youth employment. In addition, representatives of workers’ and employers’ organizations, government officials, donors and other partners who were interviewed as part of the country missions were also surveyed (along with representatives in Geneva of the International Trade Union Confederation – ITUC, and the International Organization of Employers - IOE). Purposive sampling was used in the identification of relevant stakeholders in the field of youth employment.
- A full list of persons interviewed is attached at Appendix III.

¹³ Available at: www.ilo.org/ievaldiscovery.

¹⁴ The survey received an overall 30 per cent response rate, which is broken down as follows: 23 per cent – ILO staff; 3 per cent – donors and partner agencies; 1 per cent – employers’ organizations; 1 per cent – workers’ organizations; and 2 per cent – government representatives.

Figure 2. HLE field visit countries and other field visits informing the HLE



BOX 1

Evaluation questions

Relevance

- To what extent have the ILO's strategy and actions addressed the priorities, needs and practical requirements of ILO constituents/ member States? Has the increased demand for ILO support from advanced economies raised any new issues for ILO strategy and actions (for example, "Youth Guarantees", identifying and addressing the needs of the hidden unemployed, etc.)?
- Have the ILO's strategy and actions adequately responded to the diverse needs and circumstances of young people (including disadvantaged young people)? Have young people themselves helped shape the ILO's work in youth employment globally and in country?
- Have the ILO's strategy and actions been responsive to developing trends in youth employment and to new and emerging global opportunities and challenges (for example, migrants and refugees, internally displaced people, young people in fragile situations, etc.)? Has the ILO been able to offer relevant guidance to countries facing these challenges?
- How do other development agencies, partners and donors perceive the ILO's work in youth employment? What drives donors to work with the ILO rather than other organizations?

Coherence

- How well have the strategic policy frameworks, P&B targets and relevant policy instruments cohered as mechanisms to guide the ILO's work in youth employment and to create synergies across the organization?
- Is the Theory of Change underpinning the strategy valid and well articulated?
- Have the principles of tripartism been adequately promoted and adhered to in implementing the strategy at a country level? Are all the social partners sufficiently involved?
- To what extent has the ILO's work in youth employment helped leverage support and action for the ILO's broader Decent Work Agenda?
- How well has the ILO's work in youth employment aligned with global strategies and initiatives, and complemented other efforts of constituents, the UN and partners?

Effectiveness

- To what extent did the ILO meet its strategic objectives in youth employment (as defined in the strategic policy frameworks, P&B outcomes and targets, and relevant policy instruments)?
- How has the ILO's strategy been translated into actions and initiatives at a country level? Have changes in youth employment policies and plans led to effective changes in implementing programmes and services?
- How have the ILO's external advocacy and partnership efforts at global level promoted the realization of improved youth employment prospects?
- In implementing the follow-up plan to the "Call for Action", was an appropriate balance of results achieved across the five policy areas and the three "pillars" (see section 1.1)? Was there an appropriate balance between "demand-side" and "supply-side" interventions and between long-term sustainable reforms and short-term "quick wins"?
- How well did the results contribute to the ILO's cross-cutting themes of gender and non-discrimination?

Efficiency

- To what extent have resources been used efficiently and the ILO's work been appropriately resourced in HQ and in the field?
- To what extent did the sources of funding, in particular the Regular Budget Supplementary Account (RBSA), influence results?

Impact and sustainability

- To what extent have ILO strategy and actions had a sustainable impact at a country level in increasing capability and in improving relevant policies and programmes?
- What actions and conditions are needed to achieve broader, long-term impact?
- How do the tripartite constituents perceive the impact and sustainability of the ILO's work in youth employment?

Methodological limitations

Given the breadth and complexity of the ILO's work globally, its overall results-based management and reporting system has limited capacity to capture details of actions that conform with "thematic" or "target group" strategies such as the Call for Action and its follow-up plan. While some key elements of these strategies find their way into the outcomes and performance indicators of the results-based management's reporting framework, the performance data collected through them do not give a complete picture.

Moreover, sometimes the "lens" applied through the results-based management focuses on results in a way that can also subtly distort this picture – for example, in the 2010–15 Strategic Policy Framework, youth employment was viewed through a skills lens (Outcome 2), while in the 2016–17 Transitional Strategic Plan the reverse was true, and the ILO's skills work was viewed through the youth employment lens. In both situations, some details of the ILO's work were obscured because they fell outside the focus of these lenses.

In a real sense, improving the quantity and quality of youth employment is a universal concern of the ILO. Given the demographics of the labour force in many of the locations where the ILO works, virtually everything it does can be tied to youth employment. The YEP Unit performs an important role in tracking work done in line with the three pillars of the Call for Action follow-up plan¹⁵, but its resources are limited and some work in other specialist areas of the organization may fly under its radar. Some work done at regional and country levels is especially difficult to track. In the process, sometimes opportunities to enhance synergy between work units can be lost (see section 3.2 *Coherence*).

In reviewing the actions taken by the ILO in line with the Call for Action, the evaluation therefore used a number of data sources to complement the "official" P&B Outcome results (outlined in section 3.3 *Effectiveness* of the present report¹⁶). These included information gathered in interviews at HQ and the

¹⁵ The seven-year follow-up plan to the Call for Action was approved by the Governing Body in November 2012 and sets out the key elements of the ILO's own response to the Resolution. As the HLE examines the ILO's work, references to the Call for Action in this report include the follow-up plan.

¹⁶ ILO, 2017, The ILO Youth Employment Technical Cooperation Portfolio: Current Status and Perspectives

field; an analysis commissioned by the YEP Unit of XBTC projects (called “development cooperation portfolio” by the YEP unit); the synthesis review of youth employment project evaluations; and a detailed review of the P&B Implementation Reports and the online “dashboard”, complemented with information shared by ILO’s Finance Department. This last review was an attempt to apply a new lens to the reported results to bring the implementation of the Call for Action into a somewhat sharper focus.

The response rate for the survey of constituents and partners was low (23 responses¹⁷ out of 135 targeted respondents and only 19 completed it in their entirety), so caution is needed in reading too much into the survey’s findings. The staff survey received 74 responses out of 192 targeted respondents (and 54 completed it in their entirety).

¹⁷ See footnote 14

2. THE ILO'S WORK IN YOUTH EMPLOYMENT, 2012–17

This chapter describes what the ILO's youth employment strategy in the period was, why and how it was developed, and how it evolved over time. It outlines its implementation and resourcing arrangements, including the coordinating role played by the YEP Unit in HQ. It then uses a number of information sources to present as detailed a picture as possible of the actions taken that were in line with the strategy – including descriptions of “keynote” projects and actions, a review of the YEP Unit's outputs over the period, an analysis of 73 youth employment development cooperation projects, and a re-examination of P&B Implementation Reports through the lens of the strategy.

2.1. THE STRATEGY – ITS ORIGIN, NATURE AND IMPLEMENTATION ARRANGEMENTS

The ILO's strategy and actions in the period were guided by the “Call for Action” resolution adopted at the International Labour Conference in 2012.

At the 101st Session of the ILC in June 2012, the broad strategic direction of the ILO's work in youth employment was confirmed when delegates adopted the resolution “The youth employment crisis: A call for action”. Its follow-up plan, approved by the Governing Body in the same year, and a subsequent 2014 document on the “Jobs and skills for youth” Area of Critical Importance (ACI),¹⁸ also approved by the Governing Body, provided more details of planned actions and approaches. Together with a number of other related policy instruments and international labour standards, these documents can be regarded as the ILO's “youth employment strategy” for the period under review.

The Call for Action by no means represented a radical deviation from the ILO's existing trajectory in youth employment promotion. It reiterated the key messages from an earlier ILC resolution concerning youth employment, adopted almost exactly seven years earlier in June 2005.¹⁹ This earlier resolution called for “an integrated and coherent approach that combines macroeconomic and microeconomic interventions and addresses both labour supply and the quantity and quality of employment” (p. 4). To give effect to this 2005 resolution, the ILO established a strategy based on three pillars – knowledge building, technical assistance to support ILO constituents, and advocacy and promotion of decent work for youth. These pillars and the key strategic elements they covered were all to be maintained in the Call for Action.

¹⁸ The ACIs constitute eight priority action areas that were given special prominence in the 2014–15 P&B.

¹⁹ Available at: www.ilo.org/public/english/standards/reim/ilc/ilc93/pdf/resolutions.pdf.

What was indisputably new in 2012, however, was the widespread recognition of a crisis in youth employment and the imperative to do something about it on a global scale. Youth employment was deteriorating worldwide as countries continued to deal with the after-effects of the Great Recession. Some advanced economies had seen their youth labour markets virtually collapse and their youth unemployment rates balloon to unprecedented levels. In Cyprus, for example, youth unemployment grew from a Europe-wide low of 7.1 per cent in April 2008 to a devastating 37.5 per cent in April 2013 (Corbanese and Rosas, 2014). The so-called “Arab Spring” added to the sense of urgency at this time as its nascent calls for democratic reform in the affected countries were accompanied by (and in some cases fuelled by)²⁰ demands for decent work for youth. Other social and political tremors were also being felt around the same time through youth-led protest movements in advanced economies. For example, the global “Occupy Movement” and Spain’s “Youth Without a Future” were both partly manifestations of youth frustration with unemployment and rising inequality.

In the face of these unprecedented circumstances, concerned constituents approached the ILO in the lead-up to the June 2012 ILC and urged renewed action on youth employment. According to a senior ILO manager involved in these discussions, the whole issue was successfully added to the ILC meeting agenda at a quite late stage, leaving little time for the ILO to do the preparatory work required for such a crucial discussion.

Despite this time constraint, a comprehensive report was prepared – “Report V – The youth employment crisis: Time for action” (ILO, 2012:7-29) – which outlined the key trends and challenges that needed to be addressed and lessons learned in the course of the ILO’s past work. The report did not mince words in its description of the gravity of the situation – no less than a “social and economic catastrophe” represented a global “threat to social cohesion and political stability”. It suggested a way forward that included efforts on both the demand side (job creation) and the supply side (skills and employability), gave attention to different groups within the youth cohort, and stressed the importance of focusing not just on the quantity of jobs but also on their quality. It also stressed the importance of the ILO developing a better understanding of what works in youth employment, and of playing a leading role in forming youth employment partnerships at the global level.

The discussion at the ILC was reported to have been “difficult” and to have exposed some differences in how constituents saw the way ahead. Some advocated an “any job is better than no job” approach, and pursued greater labour market flexibility in respect of youth wages and employment conditions. Some pushed for strong demand-side actions to grow new quality jobs. Others emphasized supply-side approaches that would build the skills, employability and entrepreneurship of young people. Conscious of the budgetary constraints imposed by the austerity measures prevailing in some countries at that time, some Governments were hesitant about the financial impact of some policy options.

Reaching a consensus was therefore a challenging task. It was clear that a “multi-pronged” approach was needed that reconciled constituents’ differing perspectives and remained financially and fiscally sustainable. The resolution that was ultimately passed acknowledged that there was no “one-size-fits-all” solution and reiterated and supplemented the guiding principles, policy recommendations and ILO actions set out in the 2005 ILC resolution. Above all, it represented a renewal of commitment to these principles and actions in the face of the crisis. As a “Call for Action”, it was therefore fundamentally an exercise in ensuring that the youth employment message was communicated, heard and given an appropriate response.

The ILO itself was called on to provide global leadership and act as a “centre of excellence” in youth employment. It needed to work with governments, social partners and the multilateral system to address

²⁰ The Tunisian uprising, for example, is said to have been triggered by the self-immolation of a young street vendor whose livelihood was taken from him by corrupt local officials. His plight inspired street protests throughout the country against high unemployment, poverty and political repression (available at: www.britannica.com/event/Jasmine-Revolution).

the crisis, while building its capacity across five policy domains²¹ and strengthening its monitoring and evaluation to ensure impact. Recognizing the operational span of the actions required (and, perhaps, past criticisms of the organization's tendency to work in policy "silos"), the ILO was also urged to improve coordination across its youth employment programmes and development cooperation activities.

Structured around the same three pillars of the 2005 ILC resolution – knowledge development and dissemination, technical assistance, and partnerships and advocacy – the Call for Action set out a list of work areas into which the ILO should invest its energy. It also proposed a resource mobilization strategy to "expand its development cooperation activities in support of youth employment priorities of Decent Work Country Programmes as well as for regional and global initiatives".

Subsequent to the adoption of the Call for Action, the October 2012 meeting of the Governing Body approved a seven-year "follow-up plan", which provided some additional details on the planned actions, and proposed new organizational arrangements to give it effect.²² The plan required the ILO to "take full account of the 2012 ILC conclusions" in the next three P&B biennia (2014–15, 2016–17 and 2018–19).

The strategy was further refined through the ACIs, eight priority action areas that were given special prominence in the 2014–15 P&B. The Area of Critical Importance on Jobs and Skills for Youth (ACI2), set out the "vision and strategy for implementation and the key deliverables" for this biennium. Its overall theme was "What works?", focusing the ILO's work across the Call for Action's three pillars on understanding, promoting and improving capacity to deliver policies and programmes that secure good youth employment results. The Oslo Declaration "Restoring confidence in growth and jobs" adopted at the Ninth European Regional Meeting (Oslo, April 2013) stated the common interest to elaborate sustainable approaches to promote jobs, growth and social justice, and recognized the ILO's role in assisting constituents in the design of sound and equitable reform policies.

The UN system as a whole was also reviewing its approach to youth employment and, in late 2014, the ILO was tasked to develop a strategy that would bring the UN system together and develop partnerships for action. This work was led by the Employment Policy Department, supported by the head of the YEP Unit, and led to the endorsement by the UN's Chief Executive Board for Coordination (CEB) of the Global Initiative on Decent Jobs for Youth (discussed later in this report).

The international adoption of the Sustainable Development Goals in 2015 also brought youth employment into focus. SDG 8 – "Promote sustained, inclusive and sustainable economic growth, full productive employment and decent work for all" – includes three targets that explicitly refer to young people, namely 8.5²³, 8.6²⁴ and 8.b²⁵ for which the ILO has been proposed as custodian agency. Youth employment is also reflected across the rest of SDGs, with specific targets including youth implicitly (for example, those relating to gender, migrant workers, child labour, precarious employment, entrepreneurship, etc.). For the 2016–17 biennium, P&B implementation reporting mapped results to SDGs, applying another lens to the ILO's work in youth employment.

Two other important policy documents also need to be mentioned as influencing (or having the potential to influence) the ILO's youth employment strategy and approach in the period – Transition from the Informal to the Formal Economy Recommendation, 2015 (No. 204) and Employment and Decent Work

²¹ These include: (a) employment and economic policies; (b) employability; (c) labour market policies; (d) entrepreneurship; and (e) rights at work.

²² Including the placement of the Youth Employment Programme in the Employment Policy Department, the establishment of an interdepartmental working group in HQ and similar groups in the field, and the designation of field staff as focal points for each country where youth employment was a DWCP priority.

²³ By 2030, achieve full and productive employment and decent work for all women and men, including for young people and persons with disabilities, and equal pay for work of equal value

²⁴ By 2020, substantially reduce the proportion of youth not in employment, education or training

²⁵ By 2020, develop and operationalize a global strategy for youth employment and implement the Global Jobs Pact of the International Labour Organization

for Peace and Resilience Recommendation, 2017 (No. 205). Both of these Recommendations highlight important new considerations for the ILO's work in youth employment, and will be discussed later in this report.

To summarize, the ILO's "strategy" in the period under review remained broadly consistent and maintained continuity with previous efforts of the organization. Its actions were in line with this strategy, though the intensity, focus and approach evolved over time and in response to changing circumstances and needs.

The YEP Unit in HQ drove, coordinated and monitored overall strategy implementation, and contributed to the ILO as a "centre of excellence" in youth employment.

From its establishment in 2006, the YEP Unit was intended to coordinate research into youth employment issues, provide policy advice and technical assistance to ILO constituents, and ensure greater synergy of effort at the country, regional and global levels. It was conceived as having an interdepartmental role, with the core of its work being the integration of youth employment across the different units of the then-"Employment Sector" within the ILO structure (which at that time included both the current Employment Policy and Enterprises departments).

Following the adoption of the Call for Action, the YEP Unit continued and built on this role, positioning itself as a "centre of excellence" for knowledge and technical guidance, keeping a finger on the pulse of the ILO to monitor youth employment activity across the house, and seeking to play a proactive role in identifying opportunities for interdepartmental collaboration, including ways to address new policy challenges through an integrated approach. For a variety of reasons (including staffing levels, internal communication issues and obstacles presented by the ILO's P&B and results-based management system), the unit was not always able to fully exploit all of these opportunities across the organization (see section 3.2 *Coherence*), but in general it added value by interweaving the various operational threads. Where a Youth Employment Specialist was part of the DWT in the field (for example, in the Asia-Pacific DWT in Bangkok), the evaluation learned that a similar interweaving role was also performed at a regional and country level.

2.2. STRATEGY IMPLEMENTATION

A number of "keynote" interventions were identified that illustrate the breadth of action taken across the three pillars of the strategy and the depth of involvement across all levels of the ILO.

The evaluation highlighted a number of projects and actions that are illustrative examples of the strategy in practice within the organization – across different technical fields and at HQ and regional and country levels. The evaluation has labelled these "keynote projects" and briefly describes them below, grouped under the three pillars of the Call for Action. (Some will also be discussed in later in the Findings section of this report.)

Knowledge development and dissemination

Global Employment Trends for Youth is considered a flagship publication of the ILO and a key mechanism for the dissemination of knowledge on youth employment trends and emerging issues at both global and regional levels. In the evaluation period, four editions were published (2012, 2013, 2015 and 2017), some with subtitles highlighting different dimensions of the current youth employment challenge: "A generation at risk" (2013); "Scaling up investments in decent jobs for youth" (2015); and "Paths to a better working future" (2017). In recognition of its expertise in youth employment, the YEP Unit within the Employment and Labour Market Policies Branch is directly responsible for the publication, rather than the

Research Branch, where most publications of this nature are produced.²⁶ The evaluation was told that the publication was highly regarded internationally as an authoritative source of information on the subject and was among the most viewed on the ILO website.

The biggest project globally under this pillar²⁷ was the completion of the Work4Youth (W4Y) project, funded through a partnership with the MasterCard Foundation. Operating from May 2011 to December 2016, this US\$14.6 million project provided technical and financial support for the implementation of 53 School-to-Work Transition Surveys (SWTS) in 34 countries. Globally managed by the YEP Unit, these surveys captured information on the educational and employment history of young people (15–29 year-olds) and provided insights into issues that were not available from the usual labour force surveys. W4Y also produced regional and thematic reports, as well as technical briefs on matters related to school-to-work transitions. The project sought to have this information become a foundation in each country for dialogue, advocacy and the development of evidence-based employment policies or strategies. Survey data were also used to populate a global interactive database of youth employment indicators (“Youth-STATS”, hosted by ILOSTAT), a global inventory of policies and legislation linked to youth employment (“YouthPol”) and to provide new information for the ILO publication, *Global Employment Trends for Youth* (see above).

In line with the Call for Action and the renewed impetus given to it through the ACI2 focus on “What works for youth employment?”, the YEP Unit devoted considerable effort to research and evaluation activities designed to support constituents to develop effective policies and programmes based on solid evidence. A list of relevant publications and policy development tools is included in Appendix I. Research covered the full range of policy domains envisaged in the Call for Action, including the impact of macroeconomic and industrial policies on youth employment, youth wages policy, skills policies and programmes, Active Labour Market Policies (ALMPs), international labour standards, rights at work and vulnerability in the youth labour market, youth and migration, youth self-employment and entrepreneurship, contractual arrangements for young workers, and the situation of disadvantaged youth, including the working poor. As value was seen in applying quasi-experimental methods, emphasis was placed on impact evaluations at the global and country levels, including a very ambitious, “systematic review” of the impact of youth employment interventions of various types. This was conducted in collaboration with other development partners, including the World Bank.

The focus on “What works in youth employment?” was also applied at a regional level, most notably in the North Africa subregion through the Taqueem Initiative, funded by the International Fund for Agricultural Development (IFAD). This project applied “an iterative cycle of capacity development, impact research and policy influence to improve evidence on ‘what works in youth employment’”. Through this project, a regional knowledge-sharing Community of Practice was formed of organizations focused on rural employment, nine impact evaluations were funded, and ten “what works” publications were produced. “Policy Labs” and “Evidence Symposia” were also organized in some countries to encourage the application of the project’s evidence to policy and programme design.

Similarly, in the Europe and Central Asia Region, through a project partnership with LUKOIL, a youth employment project established a “Regional Cooperation Network” among nine countries in the Commonwealth of Independent States (CIS). Over the course of the project, the network met regularly and provided a platform for knowledge sharing on such Call for Action youth employment priorities as vocational training systems, the impact of macroeconomic policy on youth employment, strengthening the Public Employment Service (PES) to better service youth, the situation of young people with disabilities,

²⁶ These include the *World Employment and Social Outlook* series of publications. The 2016 edition of the World Employment and Social Outlook itself examined “Trends for Youth” and drew on inputs from the YEP Unit and others.

²⁷ As this project worked to develop the technical capacity of participating countries in the conduct of these surveys, Work4Youth also made a contribution under the second pillar of the Call for Action, especially under the work areas of labour market information and profiling systems.

and youth working in the informal economy. Two Network meetings also hosted representatives from Brazil, India, China and South Africa (which, with the Russian Federation, form the BRICS group of countries). Also considered at these meetings were the results of high-level, intergovernmental “peer reviews” of youth employment policies and programmes²⁸ – an innovative approach that has been well documented and could be replicated in other regions.

To assist in the dissemination of the ILO's findings on “what works”, a website was developed with support from the Swedish International Development Agency (SIDA): www.wwine.org. This searchable database includes evaluation resources grouped according to theme as well as links to related ILO knowledge platforms such as Skills for Employment, YouthPOL, a “Good Practices Database” and, until recently, the “Youth Employment Inventory” (a database that was developed some years ago as an initiative attached to the Youth Employment Network (YEN)). The website is currently being reviewed to align it with the Global Initiative on Decent Jobs for Youth and, as of 25 June 2018, some features appear to be inactive.

Some regions were also active in web-based dissemination of knowledge and advocacy on youth employment. The ILO's Asia–Pacific Regional Office established APYouthNet (apyouthnet.ilo.org), a highly interactive Community of Practice platform that incorporated daily updates on youth employment from around the world, monthly video talk shows exploring youth employment topics, links to publications and statistics, country profiles and moderated online discussion platforms. Launched in 2008, the site was still very active up until 2015, but is now dormant.

One other youth employment knowledge dissemination initiative needs to be highlighted as an example of the highly relevant work often done in other branches of the ILO. Under the Regional Initiative Latin America and the Caribbean Free of Child Labour, the “Capacity Map to Accelerate the Elimination of Child Labour in Latin America and the Caribbean” is a “South–South” cooperation initiative supported by the ILO which enables participating countries to share their experiences and common challenges in eliminating child labour. Eight “acceleration factors” have been identified as playing an important contributing role in support of this goal, and quality youth employment is one of these. A website (www.iniciativa2025alc.org/acelerar) provides a mechanism to connect countries that have successfully used youth employment interventions to tackle the problem to others looking for ideas (for example, skills system enhancements, internships, PES, ALMPs etc.). Technical support for this regional initiative was provided through the ILO's Fundamental Principles and Rights at Work Branch (FUNDAMENTALS).

Technical assistance and capacity building

An existing cooperation programme between the ILO and SIDA went through three “outcome-based”²⁹ funding phases in the period covered by the evaluation, all seeking to advance youth employment strategic objectives. The first phase (2012–13) included a focus on Outcome 2 of the Strategic Policy Framework (related to youth employment policy and programme development) and work in four countries – El Salvador, Indonesia, Jordan and Zambia. The second phase involved work in ten countries (Burkina Faso, Ecuador, Jordan, Morocco, Samoa, Sri Lanka, Sudan, Uruguay, Zambia and Zimbabwe), and was designed to directly link to the Call for Action and to ACI2 through interventions that built capacity in youth employment policy and programme development, disseminated knowledge on “what works”, and sought to better understand the needs of the underemployed, low earners, the working poor and youth working in the informal economy. The third phase aligned with the Transitional Strategic Plan was also designed to advance Call for Action priorities, including developing youth employment policies, mainstreaming youth employment in the implementation of national employment policies, facilitating school-to-work

²⁸ Available at: https://www.ilo.org/wcmsp5/groups/public/—ed_emp/documents/publication/wcms_590095.pdf.

²⁹ In essence, an agreement in which the donor funds the ILO to implement actions that are in line with its strategic plan – linked in this case to the relevant P&B documents, strategic policy frameworks and the Call for Action.

transition, and researching and disseminating knowledge of “what works”. All three phases also included elements with a global focus on training and knowledge-sharing (see for example the “Academy on Youth Employment” below).

A similar cooperation programme and outcome-based funding agreement with the Government of Norway focused on enhancing skills systems in five East African countries (Malawi, Mozambique, Uganda, the United Republic of Tanzania, and Zambia), especially through quality apprenticeships and other forms of work-based training delivery targeting young people. This required work in developing national policy frameworks, building the capacity of local institutions and piloting the new arrangements. The project had a strong emphasis in some countries on the situation of youth in rural communities where the ILO's Training for Rural Economic Empowerment (TREE) programme was incorporated into its delivery. The project's management was largely decentralized to the relevant country offices, with technical support and coordination provided by the Skills and Employability Branch at HQ.

A joint European Commission (EC)–ILO action to enhance the national capacities of Latvia, Portugal and Spain³⁰ to develop and enhance their Youth Guarantee schemes represented new territory for the ILO's youth employment work, extending its technical assistance and capacity building to advanced economies that were experiencing the effects of the crisis. This 18-month action (€823,875 in funds, including €650,000 from the EC and the remainder from the ILO) aimed to improve YG performance by enhancing the capabilities of policy practitioners to monitor implementation and align delivery to planned results. Support for the enhancement of Quality Apprenticeship systems in these countries was also a part of the initiative. Tools and guides that would assist other countries in the delivery of YG programmes were also an output. The YEP Unit at HQ took the lead in implementing the programme.

The PAEJK project (*Programme d'activités pour l'emploi des jeunes dans la province du Katanga*) in the Democratic Republic of the Congo was a \$US5.35 million initiative funded by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Belgium. This innovative project adopted an integrated approach that set out to link national employment policy with the National Development Strategy. It included complementary interventions in improving youth employability, strengthening entrepreneurial skills, improving youth access to microfinance, and building the capacity of local institutions to support youth employment goals. Technical support for this project was coordinated through the Development and Investment (DEVINVEST) Branch of the ILO's Employment Policy Department.

The Youth 4 Occupation Safety and Health (OSH) project, funded by the United States Council for International Business and managed by the ILO's Labour Administration, Labour Inspection, and Occupational Safety and Health Branch (LABADMIN/OSH), is an initiative under the ILO's OSH flagship programme, but should also be viewed as an example of ILO work in providing technical assistance and capacity building to enhance the quality of youth employment. Young workers under 25 years old suffer up to a 40 per cent higher rate of non-fatal occupation injuries than older workers, and a key factor behind this is lack of awareness or workplace safety and workers' rights. The project targeted youth engaged in global supply chains in Indonesia, Myanmar, the Philippines and Viet Nam, using a number of awareness-raising strategies and generating public demand for improvements in national OSH systems.

The Support Programme for the Development of Underprivileged Areas (AZD) project in Tunisia, funded by the European Union (€6,495,048), is an example of a country-level intervention that simultaneously worked on labour supply and demand challenges. Implemented in the predominantly rural governorates of Gafsa, Siliana, Le Kef, Kasserine and Sidi Bouzid, the project integrated various elements of the Call for Action, combining elements of labour-intensive investment in community infrastructure, local economic development, business start-up and expansion, and youth skills development and placement. Grass-roots social dialogue underpinned design and implementation, an important consideration given the need to fully understand the unique challenges and opportunities present in each community (see case study 3).

³⁰ In 2012–13, unemployment hovered around 11 per cent and above 23 per cent for youth across the 28 members of the European Union, while GDP growth was negative.

The LUKOIL-funded project, Partnerships for Youth Employment in CIS (also mentioned above in “knowledge development and dissemination”) supported a number of regional and country-level interventions in line with the Call for Action, but its work in Azerbaijan is especially noteworthy, as it also illustrates the effectiveness of combining various elements of the strategy. These elements included building knowledge and capacity in pro-employment macroeconomic, industry and employment policies, enhancing the effectiveness of the PES, piloting and later significantly scaling-up entrepreneurship training and support (through the ILO’s products), and the creation of a permanent tripartite Commission on Labour, Economic and Social Affairs. The project was managed by the DWT and Country Office for Eastern Europe and Central Asia in Moscow, with technical support from the YEP Unit at HQ (see case study 2).

One final “keynote” capacity-building initiative, involving the collaboration of the YEP Unit with the ILO’s International Training Centre (ITC) in Turin, Enterprises Department, ACTRAV and ACT/EMP, was the Academy on Youth Employment. Conceived as a response to the Call for Action and developed through the global component of the ILO/SIDA programme of cooperation mentioned above, this two-week, fee-paying training course aimed to enhance the capacity of decision-makers to develop strategies to address “the multi-faceted dimensions of the youth employment challenge”.³¹ Participation was encouraged by representatives of governments, workers’ and employers’ organizations as well as youth organizations. Run for the first time in October 2016, the intention is to run the Academy every two years, and to ideally involve representatives of member States where youth employment results are being pursued in the P&B.

Partnerships and advocacy

The review period saw one partnership reach the end of its life and another begin. The Youth Employment Network was established in 2001 as a response to the Millennium Declaration, in which member States resolved to “develop and implement strategies that give young people everywhere a real chance to find decent and productive work”. A partnership between the ILO, the UN and the World Bank, financially supported mainly by SIDA, YEN initially focused on supporting governments to develop National Action Plans for Youth Employment and on engaging in dialogue with youth organizations. From 2008, its focus was changed to provide more “tangible products” supporting policy development, results-based measurement, innovation, youth participation and partnership development. Some valuable contributions were made in these areas in the period under evaluation – including its continuation of the Lead Country Network (in which countries benchmarked youth employment policies and programmes to identify and replicate the most effective), developing a (now defunct) knowledge-sharing platform, commissioning the “systematic review” of different intervention types and the Taqueem Initiative (mentioned earlier). YEN’s secretariat was hosted by the ILO from 2004 to 2014, at which time the partners decided to wind it up.

As discussions took place around the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and its Sustainable Development Goals, a new global initiative began to take shape in the period of the evaluation. Then-UN Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon had initiated in the UN the first-ever “system-wide action plan on youth” within which the ILO would lead the development of a strategy aimed at “increasing collaboration and cooperation on employment and entrepreneurship for youth”.³² Developed through the UN High-level Committee on Programmes (HLCP) and endorsed by the UN system Chief Executives Board for Coordination, a task team of UN agencies formed an “issue-based coalition” to work out how the UN as a whole might concentrate its efforts on youth employment. This voluntary coalition, led by the ILO, initially involved nine agencies, but this grew to 23 within its first year. As its focus turned to enhancing impact and scale, and mobilizing resources, membership was extended beyond the UN family to other development actors, non-government organizations (NGOs) and the private sector and, in 2016, Decent Jobs for

³¹ Available at: www.ilo.org/wcmsp5/groups/public/---ed_emp/---ed_emp_msu/documents/publication/wcms_516149.pdf.

³² Available at: www.ilo.org/global/about-the-ilo/multimedia/video/events-coverage/WCMS_247458/lang-en/index.htm.

Youth – The Global Initiative for Action was launched. The initiative was still in its formative stages in the evaluation period but is now focusing on eight “thematic priorities”,³³ developing “thematic plans” for each that highlight “what works”.

In terms of high-level advocacy work, other keynote actions in the period included the ILO’s awareness-raising activities in the lead-up to the 2012 ILC and its work in support of the G20 and the BRICS Employment Working Group. Early in the period, in 2012, the ILO also organized a series of 47 regional and national events as part of a youth employment awareness-raising campaign. This culminated in a global Youth Employment Forum in Geneva, involving young leaders from more than 60 countries to have their voices heard in the lead-up to the ILC (where the Call for Action resolution was accepted). This included presentation of a report on “Promoting better labour market outcomes for youth” at the meeting of G20 Labour and Employment Ministers in Melbourne, Australia, in 2014, and promotion of the Global Initiative at a session on rural youth employment at the G20 conference in Berlin in 2017.

Regional and national partnerships around youth employment were also evident. In Cambodia, for example, the aptly-named United for Youth Employment in Cambodia project, funded by the Swiss Agency for Development Cooperation, is based on multilateral cooperation between the Government of Cambodia and five UN agencies: (a) the ILO (as the administrative and convening agency); (b) the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP); (c) the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization; (d) the United Nations Children’s Fund; and (e) United Nations Volunteers. The partnership was negotiated as a country-level action of the Global Initiative with inputs from the Youth Employment Specialist and other specialists at the Bangkok DWT.

Though still in its infancy in the period of evaluation, Egypt’s Youth Employment Programme (EYE) is a notable effort to address the fragmentation of effort across many action areas in that country. A 2015 mapping exercise revealed that development partners were supporting 250 youth employment initiatives, each seen by their promoters as pilots that could be scaled up and institutionalized. EYE is an attempt to address this problem by creating a national programme or strategy that would provide a coordination mechanism for development partners. The Egyptian Ministry of Investment and International Cooperation signed up to the approach in 2017 with the aim of “creating a million jobs” under the EYE banner over the next three years while at the same time addressing underlying issues, such as a flawed Technical Vocational Education and Training (TVET) system. The UN Resident Coordinator has adopted EYE as one of five “transformative initiatives” in the country, but much work still needs to be done to get other partners to commit to the idea. Regardless, it is an example of what the Call for Action described, under “Global Leadership”, as “promoting alignment” (see case study 4).

Lastly, as an example of a regional partnership and advocacy initiative facilitated by the ILO, the DWT in Cairo worked with the Regional Office for Africa and the YEP Unit in HQ to hold a Youth and Employment in North Africa (YENA) Conference in Geneva in September 2017, with participants from Algeria, Egypt, Libya, Mauritania, Morocco, Sudan and Tunisia, as well as development partners and major stakeholders. The conference reaffirmed the participants’ commitment to the Call for Action’s core elements and “to move beyond short-term responses towards durable solutions at the scale of the youth employment challenge”.³⁴ The YENA Roadmap (2017–22) was the result, an action plan that sought to apply a “systematic approach to youth employment” across the subregion that addressed the key priorities of economic policies, labour market policies and social protection, employability, entrepreneurship and self-employment, and youth participation in the process and the protection of rights at work.

³³ Green Jobs for Youth; Digital Skills for Youth; Quality Apprenticeships; Youth in Fragile Settings; Youth Transitioning to the Formal Economy; Youth in the Rural Economy; Youth Entrepreneurship and Self-Employment; and Young Workers in Hazardous Occupations. Thematic plans developed by partners are available at <https://www.decentjobsforyouth.org/communications-material>.

³⁴ YENA Roadmap, p.2.

Implementation Reports suggest that most of the areas of work outlined in the strategy received attention at a country level, but entrepreneurship and skills system interventions were the most commonly reported.

The evaluation conducted a detailed review of the Consolidated Results Tables for each indicator in the Implementation Reports (for 2012–13 and 2014–15) and the Implementation Report “dashboard” (for 2016–17). This was intended to identify every reported youth-specific action of the type listed in the Call for Action follow-up plan and to re-categorize these according to that plan³⁵ (i.e. rather than under the Strategic Policy Framework or Transitional Strategic Plan indicators). A summary of results over the period of the evaluation (2012–17) is set out in table 1. These results are by no means comprehensive and should be regarded only as a broad measure of the emphasis of the ILO's work^{36 & 37}.

Table 1. Country actions reported in Implementation Reports mapped to Call for Action areas of work

	Africa	Arab States	Asia-Pacific	Europe & Central Asia	Latin America & Caribbean	TOTAL	%
Knowledge development & dissemination							
Analyse effectiveness of country policies & programmes	6	0	4	5	3	18	6%
Evaluation	1	0	0	1	0	2	1%
Mutual learning & South-South cooperation	0	0	0	2	0	2	1%
Databases, mechanism to disseminate good practice	0	0	0	0	0	0	0%
Publications on effective policies	0	0	0	0	0	0	0%
Technical assistance & capacity building							
Entrepreneurship, cooperative & social enterprise development	55	10	17	1	8	91	29%
Skills systems link training to labour market needs	24	7	10	2	3	46	15%
YE integrated into development/employment policy	18	3	5	3	3	32	10%
Better complementarity labour market & social protection	7	3	5	3	9	27	9%
Public employment services	9	0	5	6	4	24	8%
National YE action plans	6	2	3	5	2	18	6%
Comprehensive ALMPs	3	0	3	4	4	14	4%
Profiling systems**	3	1	1	4	1	10	3%

³⁵ Some action types, listed in the follow-up plan as subheadings, were included in the analysis as separate topics. This was to ensure that important elements of the ILO's work were brought into clearer focus. Specifically, “Better complementarity of labour market and social protection” was separated, as it was the only action type that linked to youth employment quality. “Macroeconomic policy options that favour employment creation” were also separated, as this was an important action related to the contentious “demand approach versus supply approach” policy debate.

³⁶ More detailed tables, including CPO and Outcome indicator cross-references, can be shared by EVAL upon request.

³⁷ The categorization of reported actions was not always straightforward and required some inferences to be made based on limited or ambiguous narratives included in the Implementation Reports. Furthermore, as these reports generally reflect only technical assistance work at the country level, they may understate other work done than that related to the “three pillars”. For this reason, the data presented should be considered to provide only a broad indication of effort and not a precise “audit” of activities.

	Africa	Arab States	Asia-Pacific	Europe & Central Asia	Latin America & Caribbean	TOTAL	%
Public investment & employment interventions for youth	6	0	3	0	0	9	3%
YE tools/capacity building for workers' & employers' organizations	3	0	2	1	3	9	3%
Macroeconomic policies favouring employment creation	3	0	0	2	0	5	2%
Strengthening governments M&E functions	0	0	0	1	0	1	0%
Labour market information systems	0	0	0	0	0	0	0%
Partnerships & advocacy							
National advocacy & awareness raising	1	0	1	2	2	6	2%
National partnerships	1	0	0	1	1	3	1%
Total Actions	146	26	59	43	43	317	100%
%	46%	8%	19%	14%	14%	100%	

Source: Implementation Reports (Consolidated Results Tables, 2012–15; ILO “dashboard” 2016–17)

** Includes actions related to Work4Youth school-to-work transition surveys (where reported).

The most commonly reported intervention type implemented in line with the strategy were actions relating to youth “entrepreneurship, cooperative and social enterprise development” (91 instances, 29 per cent of the total). These interventions were even more common in Africa and the Arab States, where they represented 38 per cent of actions. The ILO’s entrepreneurship tools were often used as the basis for this action (especially Start and Improve Your Business (SIYB), KAB, Get Ahead, My.COOP, Manage Your Business Better and, in Asia–Pacific, Community-Based Enterprise Development (C-BED)), but other supporting actions focusing on youth and relating to local economic development, value chain enhancement, Green Jobs and improving access to financing were also evident. Entrepreneurship and self-employment approaches were also applied in fragile, post-conflict and disaster recovery situations, and some employers’ organizations were also supported to play a role in promoting entrepreneurship and providing related services. Table 2 gives examples.

Table 2. Examples of youth entrepreneurship, cooperative and social enterprise development actions

Country and territory CPO Code	Description of action	Biennium P&B Indicator
Malawi (MWI801)	Collaboration with employer organization to promote youth entrepreneurship in sugar estate communities	2012–13 9.3
Rwanda (RWA101)	Support to the Ministry of Labour for a national programme in crafts sector in which young women and men were supported to work in cooperatives	2012–13 3.2
Viet Nam (VNM127)	Know About Business incorporated into the curriculum of all upper secondary schools in Viet Nam	2012–13 3.2
South Africa (ZAF101)	Training and research support for a government initiative to establish agriculture and waste management cooperatives	2014–15 3.2
Philippines (PHL104)	Government and NGOs adopt Community-Based Enterprise Development methodology to aid in youth post-disaster situation (Typhoon Haiyan)	2014–15 3.2

Country and territory CPO Code	Description of action	Biennium P&B Indicator
Occupied Palestinian Territory (PSE101)	Value chain development initiative in fishing sector enhanced opportunities for 30 youth	2014–15 1.4
United Republic of Tanzania (TZA102)	“Youth Entrepreneurship Facility” reported to have supported 30,000 youths (2010–15) by providing integrated services	2014–15 3.2
Zambia (ZMB133)	Project supported by Sweden supported 11 small-scale companies in soybean and fishing sectors to engage youth – including by “buying down” credit risk	2016–17 4.3
Sudan (SDN105)	ILO cooperative development tools used to train 72 trainers to engage vulnerable youth	2016–17 4.3
Solomon Islands (SLB903)	Institutionalization SIYB and C-BED; support provided for the establishment of a Young Entrepreneurs Council	2016–17 4.3
Brazil (BRA109)	Local economic development using value chain analysis used to identify enterprise opportunities for youth (and women) in conservation areas	2016–17 4.3

Actions related to skills development systems were the next most commonly reported (46 instances, 15 per cent of the total). Based on the actions reported, the focus on skills systems appears to have been driven by a number of factors, including (a) the need to modernize vocational training institutions, occupational standards and training curriculum to ensure that youth receive skills that are relevant to the labour market (14 references); (b) a growing interest in introducing or reforming structured work-based training programmes, especially “quality apprenticeships”, as a means of improving youth transitions to employment (12 references); and (c) finding ways of extending vocational training provision to young people in rural communities, through programmes such as the ILO’s TREE (seven references). Other skills system enhancement may also have youth employment links, including (a) support for the recognition of prior learning mechanisms (i.e. to allow young people to gain certification and thereby better access to formal sector employment); (b) upgrading “informal” apprenticeships to enhance learning and employment outcomes young people derive from these arrangements (five references); and even (c) the ILO’s support for economic and labour market diversification through programmes such as STED (Skills for Trade and Economic Diversification), which can create new entry-level job opportunities for youth (three references). See examples in table 3.

Interestingly, the number of skills-related actions for youth grew from 8 per cent of the total in 2012–13 to 20.3 per cent in 2016–17 – possibly because skills work had ceased to have its own specific P&B outcome and had been relegated to being indicators under either youth employment (1.2) or “institutional development and capacity-building programmes” (1.4). In this period, it is likely that some skills work could only find expression in the P&B in this way.

Table 3. Examples of youth-related skills development system actions

Country CPO Code	Description of action	Biennium P&B Indicator
Zimbabwe (ZWE101)	Adoption of TREE as broad strategy for youth economic empowerment	2012–13 2.2
Burkina Faso (BFA102)	Support for master craftspeople to increase youth employment in informal apprenticeships	2012–13 2.2

Country CPO Code	Description of action	Biennium P&B Indicator
China (CHN252)	Research into good practices for placing youth with disabilities into internships	2014–15 2.3
Malawi (MWI105)	Expanding the provision of “Work-Integrated Learning”	2016–17 1.2
Egypt (EGY103)	Pilot apprenticeship programme including use of on-the-job “skill scorecards” and the training of workplace supervisors	2016–17 1.2
Philippines (PHL101)	Skills training for internally displaced people (including youth) as part of joint UN peace and resilience initiative	2016–17 1.4

Actions in support of the integration of youth employment into national development frameworks and employment policy were also often reported (32 instances, 10 per cent). This mainly took the form of ensuring that the issue of youth employment was given priority status in overall National Employment Policies, Economic Development and Poverty Reduction Strategies, and National Development Plans. In some cases, specific youth employment issues were given attention in these policies, plans and strategies, such as the situation of “NEET” youth (not in employment, education or training) in Namibia and Zambia (2016–17), and youth with disabilities in Nigeria (2016–17).

The development of National Action Plans on Youth Employment is closely associated with these policies and frameworks, operationalizing them within a time frame of action. These figured prominently in the actions reported by countries in the first two biennia (being the fourth most commonly mentioned), but they had virtually disappeared by 2016–17. In the evaluation period, 16 countries³⁸ reported the development and/or adoption of these National Action Plans: Sudan, Uganda, the Comoros, the Philippines, the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, Peru, El Salvador, the United Republic of Tanzania, Zambia, Yemen, Papua New Guinea, Samoa, Kazakhstan, Cyprus, Sri Lanka and the Marshall Islands.

As will be discussed later in this report, the issue of improving the quality of youth employment was a recurring theme that was raised in the interviews and field visits. While there were a number of important initiatives undertaken at the HQ level that explored these issues, especially in its knowledge development and dissemination work, youth-specific activity undertaken at a country level was often submerged in each country’s broader work quality, social protection and fundamental rights at work agenda. Some specific work was done in the Asia-Pacific Region, including the adaptation and delivery of the “Rights@ work for youth” training package.

Because of this, the country-level actions related to youth employment quality that were detailed in the Implementation Reports cannot be said to have necessarily been driven by the ILO’s youth employment strategy (in the way that, say, the activities of the YEP Unit were), but it is important to draw the link just the same. For example, opportunities may exist to strengthen synergies between the ILO specialists involved in this work in the field with others focusing on broader youth employment goals.

The element of the follow-up plan that best covered these actions was “better complementarities of labour market and social protection issues”.³⁹ Twenty-seven relevant actions were found in the review representing 9 per cent of all reported actions. The review of Implementation Reports found a significant

³⁸ Three countries made reference to action related to these plans in more than one Implementation Report. Although not mentioned in the Implementation Reports, the YEP Unit provided the evaluation with two other plans – those of Rwanda and Togo.

³⁹ While the follow-up plan to the Call for Action did not include a detailed list of actions in respect of youth employment quality, the strategic intent to tackle this issue remained. Report V, presented to the 2012 ILC (ILO, 2012:7-29), gave attention to “the declining quality of jobs available to youth” and highlighted the need to address the exposure of young people to working poverty, low wages, informality, precarious employment and other decent work deficits.

number of these actions, listed in the results under Outcomes relating to work areas are presented below and examples are set out in table 4:

- HIV/AIDS responses in the workplace;
- the elimination of child labour;
- application of international labour standards;
- extending social protection flows;
- formalization of the informal economy;
- labour inspection; and
- protecting workers from unacceptable forms of work.

Table 4. Examples of youth-related actions addressing employment quality issues

Country CPO Code	Description of action	Biennium P&B Indicator
Ghana (GHA151)	Youth-friendly HIV service targeting informal sector workers	2012–13 8.2
United Arab Emirates	Input into Ministerial Order relating to hazardous work for youth	2012–13 16.2
Jordan (JOR151)	Input to Juvenile Law 32 (2014) including measures aimed at social protection of young workers	2014–15 18.1
Haiti (HTI105)	National Tripartite Action Plan on child labour – including provisions for TVET, apprenticeships and Start and Improve Your Business (SIYB)	2014–15 16.1
Nigeria (NGA153)	ILO input into programmes based on new National Social Protection Policy target youth in rural areas	2016–17 3.1
Kyrgyzstan (KGZ900)	Support for “No to child labour; yes to quality education” campaign and to opening pathways to TVET and decent work for vulnerable youth	2016–17 8.3

Other common activities highlighted in the review included those related to the enhancement of PES targeting youth (24 instances, 8 per cent), which were often linked to work on ALMPs for youth (14 instances, 4 per cent). These actions involved work in improving the career guidance, counselling and job matching services provided to youth, enhancing web-based job intermediation platforms, developing institutional capacity to deliver ALMPs, including training in entrepreneurship and “soft skills”. Work in supporting ALMP development also included some pioneering work in the field of “Youth Guarantees” – mentioned in the Implementation Reports as actions in Cyprus (CYP901, 2014–15, Indicator 2.5), the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia (MKD130, 2016–17, Indicator 1.2) and the Russian Federation (RUS902, 2016–17, Indicator 1.4). (Note: A European Union-funded project focused on supporting YG programmes in Portugal, Spain and Latvia will be discussed later in this report – see also case study 1). Work in analysing the effectiveness of country policies and programmes (18 instances, 6 per cent) was also often linked to ALMP and employment service development (as well as to policy reviews).

Relatively few actions focused on demand-side interventions were apparent. Support for pro-employment economic policies was mentioned just five times across the three biennia and this mainly took the form of training provided by the International Training Centre in Turin (for example, Sudan and Kazakhstan in 2014–15 and Azerbaijan in 2016–17). Some direct technical inputs provided to Egypt and Zambia were also mentioned. Employment creation for youth through public investment programmes (i.e. employment intensive investment projects) were highlighted nine times, sometimes in countries recovering from post-conflict situations involved in rebuilding community infrastructure (for example, Solomon Islands in 2012–

13, Myanmar and Sudan in 2016–17) or as part of an economic development strategy that combined skills, infrastructure construction and entrepreneurship (for example, Tunisia in 2016–17 – see also case study 3).

In terms of good practice in mutual learning and South–South cooperation, one final action is worthy of comment. Although referred to in the Implementation Reports in just two countries (Russian Federation and Kazakhstan), the youth employment policy “peer review” initiative introduced as part of the LUKOIL project was actually a regional initiative across a number of participating countries in Eastern Europe and Central Asia, and later also involved some BRICS countries as well. The YEP Unit at HQ has been very active in the Call for Action’s “Knowledge development and dissemination”, but this action illustrates the role that ILO country and regional offices can also play.

2.3. RESOURCES ALLOCATED TO THE ILO'S YOUTH EMPLOYMENT WORK

Using P&B-linked figures, the evaluation found that over US\$56 million of funds were mobilized for youth employment work in the period, with more than half attached to global projects and over one third applied in Africa. Outside the strict parameters of the P&B, youth employment project funding was probably much higher.

Current ILO management and reporting systems do not make it easy to measure the extent of youth employment-related project investment across all relevant outcome areas. The evaluation used P&B-linked data on Extra-Budgetary Technical Cooperation, Regular Budget for Technical Cooperation (RBTC) and Regular Budget Supplementary Account expenditure and mapped these to relevant outcomes and indicators,⁴⁰ but they understate the overall level of youth employment project expenditure, probably quite significantly.⁴¹ Getting a comprehensive picture of youth employment-related project investment – one that is based on actual activities – would currently require a detailed financial analysis of all of the CPOs and projects active from 2012 to 2017, a large task that was outside the scope of the evaluation.

Table 5 shows the total funding allocated to Outcome 2 (indicator 2.5) in 2012–15 and to Outcomes 1 and 4 (indicators 1.2 and 4.3, respectively) in 2016–17, as well as to global projects. It includes a breakdown of funding sources – XBTC, RBTC and RBSA. The total expenditure over the three biennia exceeded US\$56 million.

Table 5. Total funding to Outcome 2 (Indicator 2.5) and Outcomes 1 and 4 (Indicators 1.2 and 4.3) and global projects (2012–17)

Type of expenditure	2012–13	2014–15	2016–17	Total	% of Total
XBTC	14 859 281	13 645 892	24 508 784	53 013 958	94.6%
RBTC	243 252	231 151	1 086 628	1 561 032	2.8%
RBSA	-	675 625	807 336	1 482 961	2.6%
Total	15 102 534	14 552 669	26 402 748	56 057 952	100.0%

Source: Information provided by Finance Department.

⁴⁰ Outcome 2 of the 2010–15 Strategic Policy Framework (and to P&B Indicator 2.5: “Number of member States that, with ILO support, develop and implement integrated policies and programmes to promote productive employment and decent work for young women and men”), Outcome 1 of the Transitional Strategic Plan 2016–17 (and P&B Indicator 1.2: “Member States that have taken targeted action on decent jobs and skills for young women and men through the development and implementation of multi-pronged policies and programmes”) and Outcome 4 (P&B Indicator 4.3 relating to youth entrepreneurship).

⁴¹ Not all projects with a youth employment focus were linked to these Outcomes and Indicators – for example, in the first two biennia, as there were no youth-specific indicators included under the Enterprise Outcome, no projects providing youth entrepreneurship training were included in this period. This is a major reason for the apparent increase in funding in 2016–17.

Due largely to a single very large project funded by the MasterCard Foundation (the \$US14.6 million Work4Youth project, which funded school-to-work transition surveys in 34 countries), more than half of funds were invested in global projects. At 36 per cent, Africa received the next largest share of funds, followed by Latin America and the Caribbean (5.1 per cent) and Asia–Pacific (3.0 per cent) (see table 6). The relatively small share of projects for Asia is noteworthy,⁴² though this region did receive a very high proportion of skills-related XBTC funds in the period 2010–15,⁴³ which may indicate that this was the focus of that region's approach to youth employment.

Table 6. Total funding to Outcome 2 (Indicator 2.5) and Outcomes 1 and 4 (Indicators 1.2 and 4.3) and global projects by region (2012–17)

Region	XBTC	RBTC	RBSA	Total	%
Africa	19 412 101	509 546	245 762	20 167 409	36.0
Arab States	454 181	21 755	356 561	832 497	1.5
Asia–Pacific	1 125 109	575 107	-	1 700 216	3.0
Europe	439 225	111 635	-	550 860	1.0
Latin America and the Caribbean	2 427 719	248 915	195 170	2 871 804	5.1
Global	29 155 623	94 074	685 468	29 935 165	53.4
Grand total	53 013 958	1 561 033	1 482 961	56 057 952	100.0

Source: Information provided by Finance Department.

Analysis commissioned by the YEP Unit of 73 youth employment development cooperation projects aligned to the Call for Action showed a concentration of activity in Africa and on skills and entrepreneurship interventions.

A different perspective of project expenditure was provided in an analysis, commissioned by the YEP Unit, of XBTC-funded projects aligned to the areas of work set out in the Call for Action (Arancibia and Mazarrasa, 2017). By conducting a search of active projects (as at March 2017) and recently completed projects (in 2016 or 2017) that met certain criteria,⁴⁴ 73 such projects were identified and categorized for analysis. Data were extracted based on project document descriptions, rather than actual project achievements, but they provide a useful overview of where the ILO was applying its efforts and a point of comparison with the evaluation's analysis of the Implementation Reports.⁴⁵

The analysis found that 62 of the 73 projects were country-specific, five were regional, and six were global. Thirty-seven projects were implemented in Africa (51 per cent), eight each in Asia–Pacific, the Americas and the Arab States (11 per cent each) and six in Europe–Central Asia (8 per cent). There were six global projects (8 per cent). Though not directly comparable with the results of the Implementation

⁴² The proxy measures used in the YEP Development Cooperation Portfolio Analysis did not reflect this result – they showed instead that 11 per cent of funds flowed to the Asia–Pacific Region, second only to Africa. Reasons for the disparity in results are linked to footnote 40 and 41.

⁴³ Independent evaluation of the ILO's strategy and actions for skills development for jobs and growth, 2010–15, ILO, 2016.

⁴⁴ Including defined key words; the involvement of YEP as an administrative, technical backstopping or collaborating unit; connection to CPOs with relevant P&B outcome links; and other projects that were clearly tied to youth employment.

⁴⁵ These were based on project document descriptions and not actual expenditure figures. It estimated that more than US\$169 million of project expected expenditure related to youth employment. The discrepancy in the overall figure is mostly due to the range of selected indicators, which links to the finding (see section 3.2) on the weak coherence between the Call for Action and the P&B, and the use of figures on actual expenditure instead of budget allocation.

Report analysis (which covered multiple actions within countries), these results reinforce the finding that the ILO's youth employment work focused on Africa.

Within regions, the analysis also highlighted countries and subregions where projects were concentrated. In Africa, these were Tunisia and Egypt (and North Africa generally); in the Americas, Haiti; in the Arab States, Jordan; in Asia–Pacific, Sri Lanka; and in Europe, the Republic of Moldova. Some of these countries were facing or recovering from crisis situations, so this may have been a factor in the mobilization of donor funds for their benefit.

The funds attached to these projects showed an even greater focus on Africa – around US\$100 million of the funds (60 per cent of the total) were invested there. Global projects accounted for US\$29.5 million (18 per cent); Asia–Pacific US\$19 million (11 per cent); the Americas US\$9 million (5 per cent); Europe US\$6 million (4 per cent); and Arab States US\$4 million (2 per cent). This distribution is illustrated in figure 3.

The Call for Action follow-up plan sought US\$163.2 million in XBTC resources for the full period of the plan, 2013 to 2019. Together, the 73 projects identified in the analysis had, by March 2017, already exceeded this amount (US\$169 million).⁴⁶ However, at a regional level, the amount of funding flowing to Africa, Europe and to Global projects was shown to have been greater than anticipated, while the Arab States, Asia–Pacific and the Americas were significantly less.

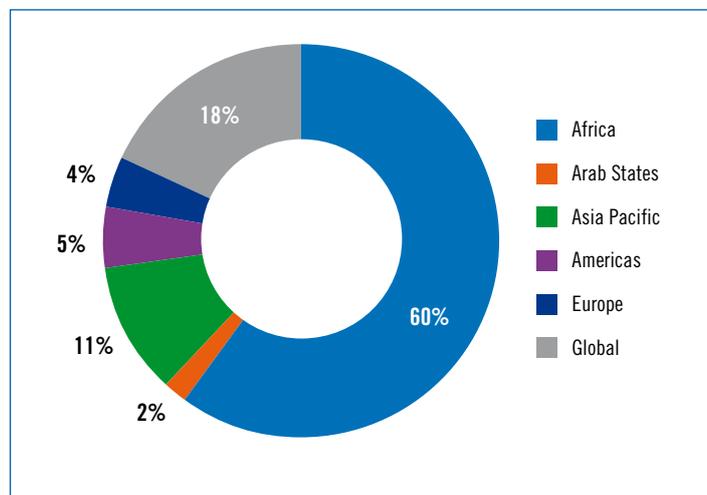
Looking through the lens of the 2016–17 P&B, the analysis found projects that linked to seven of the 13 Policy

Outcomes. Outcome 1, “More and better jobs for inclusive growth and improved youth employment prospects”, was by far the most common (41 projects, 56 per cent), as one would expect given its youth focus. Outcome 4, “Promoting sustainable enterprises”, was a clear second (17 projects, 23 per cent). Projects relating to Outcomes 7 (labour inspection) and 8 (unacceptable forms of work) each had 8 per cent, while single projects linked with Outcomes 2, 5 and A were also found.

The projects linked to Outcome 1 were analysed more closely to determine their focus. This showed a strong focus on youth skills – in the 41 projects, 22 expected results in “skills development systems” (Indicator 1.2, Criterion 3, which related to upgrading of skills systems, including apprenticeships, to facilitate school-to-work transitions); and 16 in “implementation of school to work transition measures” (Indicator 1.2, Criterion 2, which was about improving access to skills and decent jobs for disadvantaged youth).

The analysis did not unpack the details of the 17 projects linked to Outcome 4 in the same way, but it is highly likely that most, if not all, would have been linked to Indicator 4.3, which had two results criteria relating to the introduction, scaling up and resourcing of entrepreneurship programmes (mainly through ILO “products” such as SIYB and Get Ahead). Given that projects linked to Outcome 1 embrace a more diverse range of interventions across its three Indicators, the frequency of Outcome 4 projects further accentuates the prominence of entrepreneurship programmes in the ILO's youth employment work.

Figure 3. Percentage of total YEP-DC budget by region

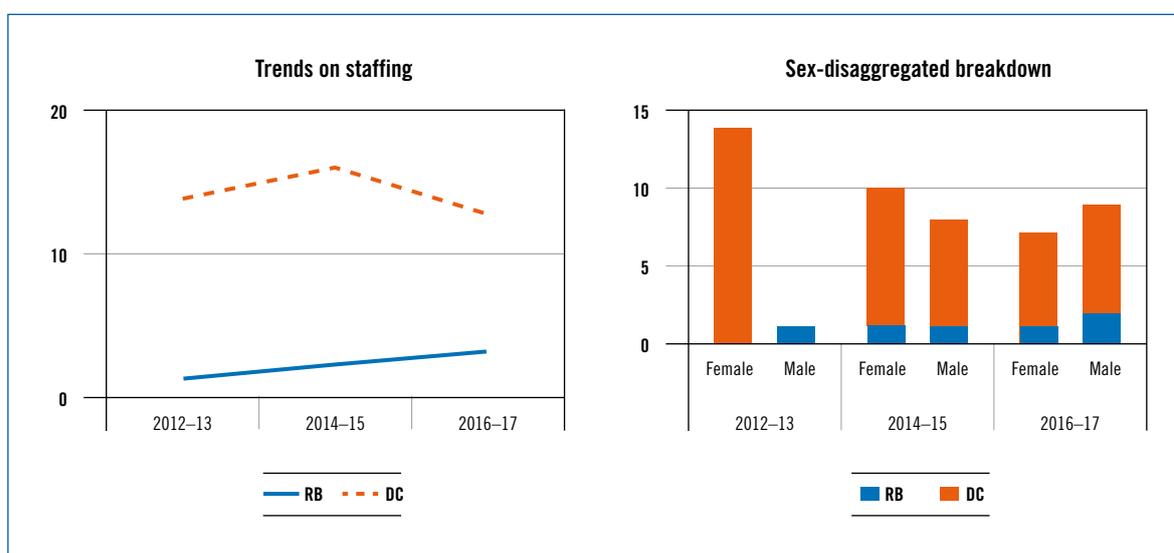


⁴⁶ As the value of the projects included in the portfolio that were approved prior to the Call for Action was not made clear in the report (i.e. the “recently completed” projects), this result may be inflated.

The number of specialist skills staff employed by the organization in the period remained stable in both headquarters and the field.

In 2012–17, under the Regular Budget (RB), there were up to three staff members employed in the Youth Employment Programme based in Geneva HQ. An average of 14 staff members were employed under development cooperation contracts. In 2014–15, the number of staff in the YEP Unit at HQ reached its peak, with 18 people employed (including seven part-time staff working on the Work4Youth project). Employment declined during the period 2016–17 to 16 staff. Outside Geneva HQ, there is currently only one full-time youth employment specialist employed in the field (in the Bangkok DWT) and a part-time resource (based in Peru, servicing Latin America and the Caribbean). Figure 4 shows staffing level changes over the period.

Figure 4. Staff (regular budget and development cooperation) of the Youth Employment Programme Unit



At the global and HQ level, the Youth Employment Programme in HQ acted as a point of coordination and as the ILO's engine room for the implementation of the Call for Action.

For such a small team, the YEP Unit in HQ has been very productive over the period of evaluation. Following detailed work plans prepared for each biennium, the Unit has coordinated or supported the development of an impressive range of outputs under each of the three pillars of the Call for Action, working across the organization as intended. A detailed list of these outputs is included in Appendix II. Some examples of its work are mentioned below.

Some of the work coordinated or supported by the YEP Unit in knowledge development and dissemination included:

- Managed the US\$14.6 million MasterCard Foundation Project, successfully conducting school-to-work transition surveys in 34 countries;
- Developed policy briefs and research papers on such issues as youth employability, disadvantaged youth, upgrading informal apprenticeships, skills mismatches, youth activation strategies, youth informal employment, outreach strategies for NEETs, macroeconomic policy impact on youth employment, labour market institutions and many more;
- Conducted evaluation projects including regional meta-evaluations of youth employment, evaluation of youth entrepreneurship programmes in East Africa, a “systematic review” of youth labour market programmes, and baseline reports of impact evaluations in the Middle East and North Africa region;

- Conducted a series of knowledge-sharing events on “what works in youth employment”, held in various locations around the world.

Technical assistance and capacity building included:

- Support for the development of National Action Plans on Youth Employment in nine countries;
- Various guidance notes and tools related to the design and delivery of labour market programmes, PES for youth, outreach strategies, entrepreneurship development and skills development;
- Training guides, facilitators’ handbooks and training courses related to programme design, youth rights at work, and International Training Centre–ILO youth employment courses for constituents (including the Academy on Youth Employment);
- Centrally managed global projects, including the MasterCard Foundation project mentioned above, the ILO-SIDA Partnership operating in (initially) ten countries, the ILO-IFAD Taqeeem Initiative in Middle East and North Africa countries, part of the LUKOIL project operating in CIS countries, and the ILO–EC YG project operating in Portugal, Spain and Latvia.

Partnerships and advocacy included:

- Playing a prominent role in the UN Inter-Agency Network on Youth Development including the UN System-Wide Action Plan on Youth (the ILO was twice a co-chair of the United Nations Inter-Agency Network on Youth Development, most recently in 2017–18), and the permanent chair of the Global Initiative on Decent Jobs for Youth;
- Organization or involvement in various global, regional and national consultations, forums and other events on youth employment. For example, the ILO is a member of the Steering Committee of the Youth Employment Funders Group, – alongside the United States Agency for International Development (USAID), MasterCard Foundation, Inter-American Development Bank, and the Citi Foundation – and is a member of the Board and Executive Committee of the World Bank-led Solutions for Youth Employment Coalition.

3. EVALUATION CRITERIA – FINDINGS

3.1. RELEVANCE

Although talk of a “crisis” seems to have abated somewhat, the focus on youth employment remains as relevant now as it was in 2012.

While youth employment had been a growing global concern for many years prior to 2012 (the “crisis before the crisis”, as it has been described) (ILO, 2012:1), by that time the case for action had become irresistible: (a) declining youth labour force participation rates and youth employment-to-population ratios; (b) new highs in youth unemployment rates, including in industrialized countries; (c) rising insecurity, vulnerability and working poverty among employed youth; (d) higher incidence of informality; (e) difficulties in school-to-work transitions leading many youth to give up altogether; (f) increasing unemployment among highly educated youth in some countries, leading to social unrest and sometimes a youth “brain drain”; and (g) a worsening of the situation of specific groups of disadvantaged young people, including those with disabilities, young migrants, indigenous youth, and young people living with HIV/AIDS (ibid:7–29).

Recognizing how much was at stake – not the least of which were social cohesion and political stability – the ILC’s adoption of the Call for Action was a rallying cry to translate the broad consensus of its Conference’s 2005 conclusions into large-scale action by the global community. This reaffirmed the need for a “multi-pronged” and integrated approach. The strategy it promoted broadly reflected this approach and provided a framework for action in the period.

Looking at the global youth employment outlook now, the language used to describe the challenges appears to be less apocalyptic in tone, but the situation remains a major problem globally and may be worsening in some regions. The observations made in *Global Employment Trends for Youth 2017* were depressingly similar to those made in 2012: sharp declines in youth labour force participation, the global youth unemployment rate seemingly stuck at 13 per cent (just below the crisis peak of 13.1 per cent and increasing in some regions), over-representation of youth among the unemployed, and continuing concerns over youth employment quality (working poor, informality, discouragement, etc.).

The relevance of a continuing ILO focus on youth employment is unquestioned. Demand for ILO support in youth employment, as measured by P&B target CPOs, is growing⁴⁷ and the field visits confirmed that youth employment remains of paramount concern. The elevation of youth employment as an SDG priority, including the implementation of a global strategy by 2020, reinforces the continuing need for action.

⁴⁷ From 15 in 2012–13 to 23 in 2014–15 to 35 in 2016–17. (Note: These figures are drawn from the differing P&B indicators in place under the Strategic Policy Framework 2010–15 and the Transitional Strategic Plan, and so cannot be considered exact)

The current ILO Strategic Plan 2018–21 captures the continuing challenge well:

“The prolonged failure to overcome decisively the negative impact of the crisis is evidence that something is wrong. This could be attributed to a failure of political will to apply the policies that could make a difference or, alternatively, to the absence of effective policies. The possession of a relevant mandate will not, by itself, guarantee the success of the ILO. It needs to prosecute that mandate by identifying what works in key policy areas under current world of work realities, and advocating persuasively to have them implemented.”

The quest to better understand “what works” in youth employment was relevant and focused on the practical needs of constituents. Findings also need to inform the ILO’s technical assistance in the field and be applied to the ILO’s own youth employment and entrepreneurship “products”.

The importance of identifying and disseminating information on effective practice or “what works” was highlighted in the Call for Action and given an added strategic focus in the context of ACI2 in 2014. The focus was based on constituent requests for guidance of this type, the recognition that there were gaps that needed to be filled in the ILO’s knowledge and experience, and demand from constituents for hands-on capacity building and a “mutual know-how learning process”.

As described in the previous section, the ILO’s work in this area was extensive, covered all of the key policy areas highlighted in the Call for Action and filled many of the research gaps that were identified in the ACI2 plan (such as the impact of macroeconomic, sectoral and fiscal policies on youth employment outcomes). Regional initiatives, such as Taqueem in North Africa and the cooperation and peer review processes established in the CIS, facilitated mutual learning among countries facing similar challenges, further enhancing the relevance of this aspect of the ILO’s youth employment work.

Although the evaluation was unable to get a clear picture of the extent to which the many different elements of this work – such as its research, tools, impact evaluations and communities of practice – have yet influenced policy and programmes at a country level, the interviews suggested that the ILO has developed a reputation for quality and relevance of its work in this field.

Given the frequency of use of some ILO “products” identified in the previous section – especially the SIYB family of packages, but also TREE and apprenticeship/work-based training approaches – applying the “what works” philosophy to these in-house packages would have been very relevant. The ACI2 plan presented to the March 2014 session of the Governing Body in fact promised just that – “deep and rigorous impact evaluation of policy packages and tools that are applied in a number of countries, in particular in the TREE and entrepreneurship packages”. Unfortunately, other than some country-specific studies and an SIYB “tracer study” that focused more on outputs (e.g. numbers trained) this “deep and rigorous evaluation” of the packages and tools was not delivered and instead only more general (albeit relevant) studies were done.

The lessons learned from these studies are also relevant to the ILO itself and, if it is to “practice what it preaches”, there needs to be a mechanism to use these findings to improve its own products and methods. For example, the study commissioned by the YEP Unit “Rising to the youth employment challenge – New evidence on key policy issues” (O’Higgins, 2017), presents findings and policy suggestions that are relevant to the ILO itself and to the Decent Work Agenda (see box 2). It was not clear from the evaluation whether these findings had led to any changes in ILO programme promotion or delivery, or even if they had stimulated any internal ILO policy discussion. If not, they need to do so (see Recommendation 1). Assumptions about the relevance and impact of ILO products and methods need to be continuously tested

or they risk becoming corporate “articles of faith”.⁴⁸ Some concerns were expressed in the field visits that the ILO was often “driven by its tools” rather than by a commitment to what is most likely to work in a particular context. This can be exacerbated when non-specialist staff promote a particular approach as a “one-size-fits-all” solution or where the project development process does not access the most relevant specialists’ input. (As one person told the evaluation in frustration: “Some specialist areas are off limits, but it seems that everyone thinks they’re an expert in skills and apprenticeships.”)

BOX 2

Relevance of “what works” to ILO’s own products and approaches

Excerpts from “Rising to the youth employment challenge” (O’Higgins, 2017)

This review of the evidence on different youth employment interventions raised important questions that can inform the continuous improvement of the ILO’s own products and the way it addresses the needs of constituents. Some examples are given below.

On self-employment and entrepreneurship:

- “Self-employment and entrepreneurship programmes have a useful role to play as one component of national youth employment strategies.”
- “Caution is, however, advisable in moving from these findings to the more general proposition that encouraging self-employment and entrepreneurship should be the mainstay of countries’ youth employment policy. Moreover, the impact of such programmes is highly heterogeneous, and better understanding is needed of which programme elements work in which contexts and for whom.”
- “It is not yet clear, on the basis of the evidence and data reviewed, that the schemes that have been tried actually created new self-employed jobs; nor is it clear whether these jobs are of sufficient merit to be worth creating.”
- “Lagged effects of interventions on psychological health, social capital and networks are often not measured. In terms of creating sustainable employment transitions into decent work, these are important influences and outcomes.”
- “It is reasonable to suppose that, in the future, schemes will be identified that work well to create ‘good’ or decent self-employed jobs in terms of income and sustainability; but to date, evidence remains limited.”
- “Interventions to create ‘quick entrepreneurs’ and increase rates of self-employment are unlikely to have positive long-term impacts.”

On apprenticeships and other forms of work-based training:

- “Work-based schemes that are called apprenticeships but are insufficiently regulated and/or exempt apprentices from the scope of labour law, cannot guarantee quality learning and are likely to become dead-end jobs. Instead of increasing the employability of young people who participate in them, such schemes will tend to lead them towards precarious work.”
- “Compared to both temporary work and apprenticeships, traineeships/internships seem to be the arrangements that are most at risk of pushing young people into persistent precariousness rather than supporting their entry into decent work.”

The strategy and actions of the ILO were generally relevant and responsive to the diverse needs and circumstances of young people, but more attention could be given to identifying “what works” for groups of disadvantaged youth and to actively encouraging countries to target these groups.

Young people are not a homogeneous group; they face different challenges in their pursuit of decent work. Some find themselves especially disadvantaged in the labour market due to such factors as low education and literacy levels, socio-economic background, discrimination, disability, migrant or refugee status, and location. While securing decent work is generally a challenge for young people, for disadvantaged youth

⁴⁸ The most recent overall assessment of SIYB appears to be a 2011 “tracer study”. It concentrated on programme outputs (numbers trained) rather than outcomes and impact.

the task is much harder still. Some give up the chase altogether and, so discouraged, become classified as “NEET” (not in employment education or training) and can drop off the “radar” of governments and the services they provide. As the report presented to the 2012 ILC put it in the context of weakening labour markets, “an ebbing tide lowers all boats and leaves some stranded in the mud” (ILO, 2012:25).

Reviewing the YEP Unit’s publications, tools and “what works” studies conducted in the period, there were some good examples of work that focused on disadvantaged youth. Recent “thematic plans” on youth in rural settings, fragile situations and the informal economy, released as part of the Global Initiative on Decent Jobs for Youth, provide a good model. There are other groups, not covered by this initiative’s “priorities for action”, for whom this type of targeted guide could be useful, such as youth with disabilities⁴⁹ (see Recommendation 2).

In its support of youth employment policy and strategy development, the National Action Plans on Youth Employment that were developed in the period identified disadvantaged groups as target groups to varying degrees. The YEP Unit indicated that eight of these plans were developed with ILO support from 2012 to 2017. Seven of these were reviewed by the evaluation and five included action aimed at disadvantaged youth.⁵⁰

In terms of development cooperation projects that had a specific focus on disadvantaged youth, the “key-note” projects described in the previous chapter include some relevant examples. ILO’s work with Portugal on its YG was a groundbreaking project addressing the transition to work of that country’s most disadvantaged and discouraged youth (see next section and case study 2). Similarly, the “Capacity Map to Accelerate the Elimination of Child Labour in Latin America and the Caribbean” also targeted a very vulnerable group using youth employment strategies as “accelerators” out of unacceptable conditions.

The extent to which project activity more broadly targets and benefits disadvantaged young people is difficult to measure using the ILO’s management information systems. Through interviews and web searches, the evaluation learned of projects in the period that had this focus (for example, the PROPEL project in Zambia, which focused on inclusive vocational training for youth with disabilities). It could also infer from the frequent use of some tools (for example, the TREE programme) that young rural youth and those working in the informal economy were beneficiaries. But a detailed analysis of all projects reaching these groups was not possible. Some important work with disadvantaged youth is likely to be hidden in the detail of projects that have a wider employment development focus – for example, in fragile States, the “Employment through Labour Intensive Infrastructure” project in Jordan is presumed to have supported young refugees, and the “Reinsertion and Reintegration Project” in the Democratic Republic of the Congo focused on ex-combatants, again presumably mostly youth.

Political will to focus on the needs of these groups is an important factor and the ILO has a duty to advocate for their inclusion. Among the countries visited in the evaluation, there was a strong focus evident on the needs of highly-educated youth – for example, unemployed university graduates in Tunisia, Egypt, Sri Lanka and China. This group could be said to be disadvantaged in its own way and there are valid labour market reasons for a focus on their needs (for example, the tendency in North African countries, unlike most others, for higher rates of unemployment among the most educated; and in China a significant recent increase in graduate supply that cannot be absorbed by existing employer demand). However, other factors are also at work. In North Africa, for example, these youths have been articulate advocates of their own cause and, with social stability a continuing concern in these countries, governments are motivated to give them priority in their plans – as a European Union representative in Tunisia told the evaluation: “There are many unemployed young people here without qualifications, but public policy focuses on

⁴⁹ A WORKQUALITY and ACT/EMP publication targeting employers was produced in 2014 – *Inclusion of Youth with Disabilities: The Business Case*.

⁵⁰ The former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia – youth with low levels of education, in poverty, working in informal sector; Samoa – youth with disabilities; Vanuatu – youth with disabilities, living in rural locations, “at-risk” youth; Zambia – youth with disabilities, other disadvantaged; Uganda – youth with disabilities.

graduates.” The ILO has done good work in advocating for a more balanced approach (for example, the example was given of the introduction of recognition of prior learning to improve disadvantaged youth access to the vocational training system in Bangladesh and elsewhere), but more attention could be given to this issue, perhaps by identifying these groups as a sub-target within the performance measures of the P&B. The SDG commitment to “reach first those who are furthest behind” reinforces this point.

As will be shown below in relation to Portugal’s experience, consideration should also be given in the future to continuing efforts to identify, profile and support the “NEETs”, a less visible disadvantaged group that has been given new attention in the SDGs. As one senior ILO manager put it: “Unemployment is just the tip of the iceberg when looking at the youth labour market” (see Recommendation 7).

The staff survey asked respondents to give a rating on a six-point scale in response to the question “How well have the ILO’s strategy and actions in youth employment responded to the diverse circumstances of young people (including disadvantaged young people) in the period 2012–17?” Results overall were mixed. The weighted average result for this question was positive – 3.55 – and equates to a “somewhat satisfactory” finding. At the upper and lower ends of the scale, 27.42 per cent gave ratings that equated to “satisfactory” or “highly satisfactory”, while the same percentage gave ratings that equated to “unsatisfactory” or “highly unsatisfactory”. The partner survey rated ILO performance somewhat more positively, at an average of 3.79 or “somewhat satisfactory”.

BOX 3

Some comments from the staff survey on responsiveness to the diverse circumstance of youth

- “To my knowledge, the ILO strategy is broad and lacks nuances to cater to disadvantaged young people such as disabled youth, young women in rural areas or youth in NEET situation.”
- “I believe our work is comprehensive and certainly does respond to diverse circumstances of young people.”
- “The ILO strategy has not worked very much in responding to diverse circumstances of young people, including the disadvantaged young people. This is because the implementation of these policies and programmes are mostly left in the hands of governments. In many of the countries in Africa, we have very weak legal and institutional frameworks that [don’t] recognize... disadvantaged young people. Hence, the programmes do not reach them. Sometimes the capacity of people to deal with the issues is very limited.”
- “Over the years, ILO activities have recognized and targeted different youth subgroups, including disadvantaged groups such as young women, rural youth, and young migrants and refugees. That applies to analytical studies on youth labour market aspects, as well as to policy-making (through the formulation of national employment strategies and action plans) and project implementation.”
- “I think that our organizations are quite satisfied but... lack of resources is a big problem and limits our action capacity.”
- “Youth with multiple disadvantages (gender, low caste, ethnic minority, low education) are distinctly different from those without these characteristics, and their starting position in LM will have profound life-long effects (irrespective of skills to do the job). How do we see these issues?”

The youth employment crisis resulted in the ILO being called upon to extend the provision of its technical assistance to advanced economies in Europe. Its ground-breaking work in these countries proved to be highly relevant and has implications for future strategy.

The high youth unemployment rates experienced in many advanced economies during the global financial crisis and its aftermath led some to seek ILO policy guidance and technical support for the first time – in a sense, to move from being just financial contributors to the ILO’s work to active consumers of its services.

This development was noted in the recurrent discussion on employment at the March 2014 session of the Governing Body (“European countries are now increasingly requesting policy advice and other ILO services”)⁵¹ and senior ILO staff told the evaluation that it was not unusual at this time for the Office to receive phone calls from European labour ministers seeking advice on youth employment issues. This is a very strong indicator of relevance and of the reputation the ILO had developed as a “Centre of Excellence” in this field.

Advice translated to direct development cooperation in one notable example – the EC–ILO Joint Action on the Youth Guarantee (mentioned as a “keynote” project earlier). This project was designed to improve the implementation of YG schemes in Portugal (see case study 1), Spain and Latvia, and to support the development of quality apprenticeship systems and programmes in key sectors through tripartite social dialogue. This involved advisory services, technical support and capacity-building in key areas relating to the implementation of YG. Attention was given to the design of outreach strategies that targeted a group regarded as the “hidden unemployed”, the so-called “NEETs”, young people “not in employment education or training”, who may not be registered as unemployed and can be beyond the reach of government services.

The participating countries were provided with advice on extending their reach to this group by cooperating with other organizations and services in the community, improving social dialogue, building partnerships to address the issue, and better defining quality service offers under the scheme. Establishing effective monitoring and evaluation mechanisms was also an important element of the project as was the production of knowledge-sharing tools and resources designed to assist other countries to implement their own schemes.

The focus on NEETs was especially relevant given that there is a target and an indicator attached to SDG 8 that refer to this group (Target 8.6 – “By 2020, substantially reduce the proportion of youth not in employment, education or training” – for which the ILO is the “custodian” agency). Combined with the data it has gathered through the Work4Youth project’s school-to-work transition surveys, the ILO is now well placed to offer its expertise and knowledge in this field. It should explore demand for NEET-focused support among its constituents and consider its place in future youth employment strategy (see Recommendation 7). It should be noted that there is some ambiguity in the use of the NEET term and that the ILO might also play an important role in bringing clarity to this issue.⁵²

Outside this project, the ILO also supported European Union member States in other ways in their establishment of the YG. For example, comprehensive youth employment policy reviews were conducted for Cyprus and Greece (as well as for Portugal and Spain) and a YG Implementation Plan was designed for Cyprus.

The ILO has also supported another initiative that has relevance for advanced as well as developing economies – the Global Apprenticeship Network. This business-led alliance promotes apprenticeship programmes worldwide to address youth unemployment and skills shortages. The ILO cooperates with GAN. For example, it partnered with GAN, the OECD and JPMorgan Chase Foundation to host the July 2018 International Conference on Innovations in Apprenticeships.

⁵¹ Available at: www.ilo.org/wcmsp5/groups/public/—ed_norm/—relconf/documents/meetingdocument/wcms_204976.pdf.

⁵² Elder (2015) highlights a number of misconceptions about the term and, in the context of the SDGs, “a great deal of work remains to be done in educating policymakers, international organizations and the public as to what NEETs mean”.

CASE STUDY 1

EC–ILO Youth Guarantee Project in Portugal

The Call for Action was timely and relevant to Portugal. Youth unemployment rates had escalated to unprecedented levels and many of the more highly educated were migrating as a result. As one stakeholder put it: “The most educated young people in the nation’s history were being forced by poor economic circumstance to migrate and were likely never to return.” More worrying still was the plight of the less well educated, especially the NEET group. Some of this group were not in contact with government employment, education or training services and therefore largely invisible, and more than half had completed less than nine years of schooling. Many had given up any hope of finding decent work.

In line with its April 2013 European Union commitment⁵³ to establish a YG, the Ministry of Labour approached the ILO for technical assistance. Following project scoping negotiations with the EC, an approach was developed that would be applied in three countries – Portugal, Spain and Latvia – involving a mix of support to institutions on YG design, implementation and performance monitoring as well as the development of resources as a legacy of the project that could be used elsewhere. Support for the development of quality apprenticeship systems was also included.

In Portugal, key achievements included:

Creation of a monitoring and evaluation framework that met EC and local requirements: The ILO’s work in this area was described by Ministry officials as crucial and involved highly complex analytical work covering geographic factors, a wide range of individual characteristics, and the family circumstances of the target group. The task was complicated through national privacy legislation that put limits on the sharing of information across ministries. Through the legislation’s research provisions, the ILO was able to circumvent these issues and mine microdata not otherwise available.

Support in estimating the costs and benefits of the YG: This was important given the prevailing economic climate of fiscal constraint and the perceived costs associated with such schemes. A tailored ITC–ILO course was delivered which improved the capacity of participants to measure these costs and benefits. This assisted the Ministry to promote the YG concept to stakeholders and the media.

Developing an overall YG implementation strategy: This was oriented around diagnosing the diverse needs of the youth cohort, improving intra-governmental coordination, sharing experiences, decentralizing services to local providers, developing an effective “signalling strategy” to reach out to young people, and using a multi-tiered partnership approach to assess, refer and deliver appropriate offers.

Support in addressing the needs of the most disadvantaged: Certain very disadvantaged groups required specific intervention strategies that involved linking multiple services to overcome barriers to participation. For example, some needed help or additional preparation before they could accept a YG offer (for example, to overcome health barriers, or to arrange alternatives when they had caring responsibilities). The strategy that was developed catered to this group by allowing for a “preface phase” through which longer periods of support could be provided, including through specialist agencies.

Though also relevant, the project’s planned work in Portugal in apprenticeship system enhancement made less progress. Initial consultations with Ministry officials and the social partners resulted in an early draft of a strategy, but there was ultimately no tangible output. Additional funding and technical expertise would have been required to make more progress in this area.

In summary, the ILO’s work in Portugal in supporting the design, implementation and monitoring of its YG was very relevant and has potentially opened up a fertile field for future work. The resources and tools developed as part of the project are also very relevant and can be used to help focus constituent attention on the situation of NEETs. A key lesson from the project was best summarized by a Ministry official:

“The problem with YGs is not so much the cost, but our ability to know the clients. NEETs are not a homogeneous group and we need to offer specific responses to different subgroups.”

⁵³ In response to the Council of the European Union recommendation 2013/C 120/01.

The ILO's youth employment strategy and actions remained relevant in the context of many of the new challenges and opportunities that emerged in the period.

As described earlier in this report, there were a number of important developments in the period under review that influenced the continuing evolution of the ILO's work, including Transition from the Informal to the Formal Economy Recommendation, 2015 (No. 204) and Employment and Decent Work for Peace and Resilience Recommendation, 2017 (No. 205) and the SDGs.

Recommendation 204 includes in its guiding principles the recognition that young people are “especially vulnerable to the most serious decent work deficits in the informal economy” (paragraph 7(i)) and advocates “comprehensive activation measures to facilitate the school-to-work transition of young people, in particular those who are disadvantaged” (paragraph 15(g)).

A 2018 ILO publication, *Women and Men in the Informal Economy: A Statistical Picture*, highlighted the startling figures associated with young people and informal work: 77 per cent of young people (362 million) globally are in informal employment compared with the average of 61 per cent for all workers and more than half of these live in sub-Saharan Africa or southern Asia. The overall youth informal employment rate in Africa is 95 per cent. In these countries, the problem is not unemployment per se – young people simply cannot survive if they are inactive and so informal work becomes a necessity.

The paper also raised important questions about the relevance of specific policy responses in advancing formalization goals. It observed that the main policy approaches related to “first job strategies” (especially through wage subsidies) and “first business strategies”. As discussed earlier, these are mainstays of the ILO's youth employment approach. However, the assumption that these strategies contribute to formalization goals needs to be tested – the paper points out that there is little evidence of this and that, through them, “more attention should be paid to the youth transition to formality”.

The recently published “thematic plan” on Youth Transition to the Formal Economy (part of the Global Initiative on Decent Jobs for Youth) sets out some ideas on how to do this, and the ILO should ensure that attention is given to the transition issue in its development cooperation projects and through its entrepreneurship training products (see Recommendation 2). Some research has also been completed that looks at increasing formalization at a sectoral level by combining compliance measures with incentives, for example in the domestic work sector⁵⁴ and the care economy⁵⁵, such as access to social security benefits, finance and other services. Work done to advance the formalization of informal apprenticeships and the launch of a “Quality Apprenticeship Toolkit” are also important steps taken by the ILO in this area.

Recommendation 205 also identifies young people as being “particularly vulnerable” in crisis situations (paragraph 7(h)) and encourages “national recovery programmes implemented through public and private investment in order to promote full, productive, freely chosen employment and decent work for all women and men, in particular for young persons and persons with disabilities” (paragraph 8(e)). It goes on to suggest a range of targeted employment and income-generation opportunities for young people including “integrated training, employment and labour market programmes that address the specific situations of young persons entering the world of work” (paragraph 13(a)) and youth-specific components in “disarmament, demobilization and reintegration programmes that incorporate psychosocial counselling and other interventions to address anti-social behaviour and violence” (paragraph 13(b)).

The ILO has a long history of working in crisis situations and providing employment-centred responses in the aftermath of conflict and catastrophe. Its current work has been given specific attention as one of the five ILO “flagship programmes” (Jobs for Peace and Resilience). In the period of the evaluation, the ILO offered relevant responses to young people affected by these situations. For example, recently published Global Initiative case studies (ILO, UNDP, UNHCR, 2017) included two ILO examples – “Entrepreneur-

⁵⁴ See for example ILO, *Formalizing Domestic Work*, 2016.

⁵⁵ *Care work and care jobs for the future of decent work*, 2018.

ship training for ex-combatants in the Democratic Republic of the Congo” and “Enhancing the employability of engineering students and graduates in Gaza through better linkages with the private sector” – but the evaluation learned of other examples (for example, (a) skills-related projects targeting ex-combatants in Sri Lanka; (b) emergency employment, skills and enterprise initiatives in response to Typhoon Haiyan in the Philippines; and (c) an employment centre for Syrian refugees in Jordan). A “thematic plan” covering crisis situations was also produced as part of the Global Initiative.

In terms of the SDGs, the ILO’s overall youth employment strategy remained relevant to the new development agenda. SDG 8 (“Promote sustained, inclusive and sustainable economic growth, full and productive employment and decent work for all”) has the closest link to the Call for Action. Of the 13 indicators across all SDGs for which the ILO is “custodian”, three are directly linked to youth employment:

- Indicators under SDG target 8.5: Achieve full and productive employment and decent work for all women and men, including for young people and persons with disabilities, and equal pay for work of equal value;
- Indicator 8.6.1: Proportion of youth aged 15–24 not in education, employment or training; and
- Indicators under SDG target 8.b: Existence of a developed and operationalized national strategy for youth employment, as a distinct strategy or as part of a national strategy.

It is important to note that the ILO’s work in youth employment and in generally advancing the Decent Work Agenda are also linked to other SDGs such as Goal 1 (No Poverty)⁵⁶, Goal 4 (Quality Education), Goal 5 (Gender Equality), Goal 9 (Industry, Innovation and Infrastructure), Goal 10 (Reduced Inequalities), and Goal 16 (Peace, Justice and Strong Institutions).

New and emerging challenges in the world of work – including new forms of work and trends in youth labour market participation – were frequently mentioned in the interviews and pose some difficult questions and strategic choices for the ILO’s future work in youth employment (see Recommendation 7).

Despite some important steps taken during the period of evaluation to reach out to young people and get their input into the ILO’s youth employment work, youth engagement was seen by some stakeholders as needing more work.

In the lead-up to the Call for Action in 2012, the ILO devoted considerable energy into engaging with youth and ensuring that their views were heard. Between March and May 2012, nearly 5,000 participants in 46 countries participated in events organized by the ILO to bring together young people, policy-makers and the social partners to consider the nature of the youth employment challenge and to identify good practices and new ideas to get results. A global report of these events was published which revealed many concerns that were shared across all regions.⁵⁷ These events culminated in a Youth Employment Forum, held at ILO HQ in May 2012. This was the first time that young leaders from more than 60 countries had come to ILO HQ to share their views on decent work for youth.

The Call for Action itself stressed the need to continue to engage with young people globally and in country: “Youth are part of the solution. Their voices should be heard, their creativity engaged, and their rights respected in dealing with the youth employment crisis.”

However, interviews conducted as part of the evaluation highlighted some difficulties in achieving an appropriate level of engagement with young people. Some questioned ILO constituents’ capacity to adequately represent the diverse needs of young people – for example, workers’ and employers’ organizations

⁵⁶ ILO’s work towards target 1.3 (“Implement nationally appropriate social protection systems and measures for all, including floors, and by 2030 achieve substantial coverage of the poor and the vulnerable”) is particularly relevant for youth workers, who lack social protection coverage. As one of the main contingencies faced by youth workers is employment injury, coverage of young workers by social protection employment injury compensation systems becomes a priority.

⁵⁷ Including the situation of youth in slow job-growth economies, the “low-quality jobs trap”, skills mismatches, inadequate job matching, lack of work experience, lack of access to capital and business training, and discrimination.

are often not well placed to represent unemployed youth or youth engaged in the informal economy. Some countries have formal consultative mechanisms in place, but the evaluation learned that these are not always sufficiently independent of government or able to speak for marginalized youth. Some, it was suggested, are in place “just for show” with no real influence. Some also questioned whether the ILO “knew how to communicate well with youth”, suggesting that having a social media presence was not enough and that quite specific strategies were needed to post material in a way that will prompt young people to engage.

The ILO should review its approach to youth employment communication and engagement to ensure that it provides sufficient opportunities for real input by youth into its own policy and programme development, as well as promote similar engagement at a country level (see Recommendation 4). As an example of good practice in this area, the UN Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific has developed a web-based platform – the Youth Policy Toolbox (available at yptoolbox.unescap.org) – designed “to enhance information sharing, communication and collaboration among policymakers and young people”. It is designed to drive youth engagement in policy-making.⁵⁸ In the same region, the ILO

BOX 4

From the interviews

“It is important [for youth representatives] to be there at the design stage of policy and programmes - it's too late to be consulted at the end. ILO has helped us to grow as an organization so we can now be at this point. ILO played a very important role in empowering youth here. We are very happy with the result.”

Youth organization representative, Portugal

“The youth voice is not well heard. Constituents can't always speak for them and the country lacks a strong youth network. Nor does the ILO communicate well with youth – Facebook and Twitter are not enough – it needs to know how to post and edit for this audience.”

ILO youth project staff member, Sri Lanka

“The Government has some ad hoc dialogue, but it is not well structured or contextualized. Youth faces are often just for show. Sometimes they have an elite young person who isn't really representative of most young people anyway.”

DWT member, North Africa

“Policies are still very top-down at all levels and the older perspective prevails. It is the same at regional level. People have their own fixed ideas and prejudices about young people. Youth go to the PES, are treated in a patronizing way and they don't come back.”

Youth organization representative, Portugal

“The youth voice is needed. Organizations can be found in-country, but these are not always representative. Some, for example, are politicized and linked to the Government.”

ILO HQ staff member

“We need to work much more in mainstreaming youth engagement in the design and implementation of youth employment solutions. The 2012 Youth Employment Forum and preceding country and regional consultations set the ground for a meaningful engagement with youth and served as benchmarks for youth participation in ILO's events and interventions. The website DecentWork4Youth.org helped to maintain the momentum but this gradually decreased and the blogs and online conversations ended in 2015.”

ILO Staff Survey comment

⁵⁸ For example, the “FAQ” section provides answers to such questions as: “I see some issues in my community and have some solutions: How can I work with the government to realize these solutions?” and “I'm a young person interested in getting involved in policy: What are all the different steps I should expect in the policymaking process?” The site also includes a number of case studies on young people influencing policy.

has its own youth employment platform – the Asia Pacific Youth Employment Network (APYouthNet, available at <http://apyouthnet.ilo.org/>) – which includes some highly relevant content for youth, but which was conceived more as a community of practice for those working in the youth field than as a youth engagement mechanism (it is still accessible, but its content is no longer regularly updated). Globally, the ILO did have a site of its own that was designed to facilitate youth policy discussion (decentwork4youth.ilo.org) but this is no longer active.

Better youth engagement can improve the ILO’s and constituents’ understanding of the needs, mindset and aspirations of young people – by misconstruing the nature of youth needs, there is a risk of applying the solutions that are not relevant or effective.

A recurring theme in the field visits was the frustration experienced by constituents when youth unemployment (or underemployment) persisted despite there being unfilled job opportunities in certain sectors. Sometimes this manifested itself in youth reluctance to consider construction, manufacturing or service sector jobs. Sometimes there was an almost obsessive fixation with securing public sector jobs, despite the comparatively low wages these offered. Sometimes it took the form of a rejection of the sort of employment that the parents of young people had, such as agricultural work.

For example, in Sri Lanka, new private sector opportunities in construction, tourism and hospitality were going unfilled, despite high youth unemployment. Employers were reported to be looking to import workers for even low-skilled jobs. Rather than take up these opportunities, many young Sri Lankan men were instead attracted to work driving three-wheeler taxis, despite the apparent saturation of the market, the meagre livelihoods they offered and the dead-end jobs they represented. Others were apparently willing to take the migrant worker path, working in the very same types of jobs that they refused to consider at home. Similar stories were heard in other countries visited in the evaluation.

These situations need to be fully understood before effective youth employment policy responses can be framed. They go beyond “skills gaps” – the term most often used to describe the challenge – and presumably require more than a skills development solution. They relate as much to youth aspirations as they do to skills and may require quite different solutions – it would seem that the generational differences often observed with “Millennials” could be a global phenomenon, albeit with regional differences. They also represent another reason to strengthen mechanisms to engage with youth in order to better understand the factors shaping these aspirations and mindsets. The ILO has done some research in this area (for example, its Global Commission on the Future of Work published an Issue Brief on “Addressing the situation and aspirations of youth” in early 2018) and conducted some national dialogues with youth

BOX 5

**Some findings from the Asia–Pacific Thematic Evaluation
on Youth Employment**

Vanuatu: “Starting and building businesses doesn’t always work in the Pacific context. Pacific societies (including Vanuatu) tend to work on *Kastom* and community linkages for social and economic relationships. The concept of capitalism and business generally is not ingrained into the community-based psyche.”

Samoa: “A key learning from all interviewed is that work with young people needs to be family oriented – especially for vulnerable and rural young people. If everyone in the family understands the initiative/project, they then provide support to the young people rather than seeing the project as taking young people away from family responsibilities.”

Kiribati: “There is a need to take more views of young people. ILO is generally working with government but has limited interactions with young people and youth groups. If the ILO is to continue support, they need to focus on government but hear from young people as well.”

participation in some countries⁵⁹, but more country-specific work is also needed as part of a broader strategy to encourage meaningful and systematic engagement with young people (see Recommendation 4).

The issue might also require a close look at youth employment through the sectoral lens. What could be done, for example, to improve the attractiveness of some sectors to youth? What are their concerns related to sectoral working conditions and their priorities regarding social protection benefits? How can the ILO work with constituents to facilitate such a sectoral response?

Based on the interviews with partners and donors conducted in the field visits, the ILO is highly regarded by development stakeholders for its expertise in youth employment, its commitment to social dialogue and its rigour in conducting relevant research.

The evaluation interviewed a range of partners and donors during the field visits and all were very positive about the role the ILO had played in youth employment in each country and its expertise. The quotes captured in box 6 paint a clear picture of the ILO's perceived expertise and unique positioning through its relationship with the social partners and its advocacy of international labour standards.

As countries enter new development phases, their thirst for ever-higher levels of technical advice can exceed what the ILO can offer. In China, for example, the ILO office reported that, despite that country's appreciation of the ILO's input, they were increasingly looking for more than the "general" advice on offer. Some of the advice they were currently seeking was at a level of technical depth that was beyond what the organization was able to provide.

BOX 6

From the interviews

"We have more than ten projects in place including with big donors like the European Union and World Bank. We are trying to push for the ILO to take more of the technical lead because of its expertise. Our relationship with the ILO is very important. Without them we couldn't reach our goals."

Ministry of Labour official, Tunisia

"The ILO is uniquely positioned through its employer links to engage the private sector – the Government can be too internally focused."

UN agency representative, Sri Lanka

"Why ILO? It has access to a stable of experts and in terms of positively affecting youth employment here, the ILO is the best. Some of its messages are not easy for the Government to hear, but the focusing on making politicians happy, as some others do, is not sustainable."

Donor, Embassy development specialist, Egypt

"They are a natural partner if we want to work on employment. They have some competitors when it comes to policy, but in maintaining standards, they are the most important."

European Union representative

"China looks to align its youth employment work with international standards. It sees the ILO as a window into international good practice – as a knowledge organization."

ILO staff, China

⁵⁹ In 2017, the national dialogues in India, Mexico, Paraguay, Peru and Uruguay focused specifically on youth and the future of work, with a high level of youth participation. Other dialogues – including those in the Arab States, the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, Sao Tome and Principe, the United Republic of Tanzania and Zimbabwe – held special sessions that included young persons.

3.2. COHERENCE

Opposing “forces” and “counter-forces” are at play at a country level that greatly influence the ILO’s youth employment work, and these are not always resolved in an ideal way. While pragmatic compromise solutions often result, continued effort is needed to improve overall coherence.

Few would argue with the desirability of “coherence” in the ILO’s youth employment work – it is “the quality of being logical and consistent” and of “forming a unified whole” (Oxford English Dictionary). Achieving it in practice is not so straightforward. The ILO often must deal with a range of opposing forces in pursuing its policy goals, implementing its strategies, and collaborating with other development actors. It is also not always easy to align its global planning and performance management systems with constituent demand at a national level. These tensions are by no means restricted to the ILO’s youth employment work – they are present in everything it does.

Any evaluation of the coherence of the ILO’s youth employment work needs to be understood in this context. Compromises are inevitable and adhering too strictly to policy coherence principles can result in inertia. Incremental steps in the right direction are better than standing still – or, as one DWT specialist put it, “You can only do what you can do.” Figure 5 sets out some of these tensions in a “force field” diagram and gives examples of the sort of trade-offs that can result (some of these will be discussed in more detail below.) The important thing from a coherence perspective is not that these trade-offs are undesirable or that they should be avoided at all costs, but that the ILO keeps its ultimate policy goals in mind and continues to provide impetus in the right direction.

Figure 5. Forces and counter-forces affecting cohesion and common trade-off results

Force		Examples of resulting trade-off		Counter-force
The acknowledged need for “upstream” work by the ILO in policy and systemic reform to achieve long-term impact and sustainability	→	Pilot projects are pursued that are intended to lead to systemic reform and scaling-up (but sometimes don’t)	←	The attractiveness to governments and donors of short-term “downstream” projects that offer visible “quick wins” and clearer outcome measures
The recognition that holistic, integrated approaches work best and that improved internal synergy within the ILO is needed to design and deliver “bespoke” interventions that are tailored to countries’ needs	→	Partially integrated approaches with one ILO area taking the lead while others play only a minor role, minor tweaking of standard products	←	The prevailing culture of narrowly-focused interventions based on specific outcome areas (for example, skills, enterprise, OSH); ILO technical specialists/units that promote their “off-the-rack” tools and products; lack of resources to tailor solutions
Continuing push for and rhetorical commitment to improved collaboration with other UN agencies to maximize synergy and results	→	Project components that run in parallel but do not exploit potential synergies	←	The reality of competition in attracting funding from donors, the lack of any incentives to collaborate, and the practical difficulties and increased transaction costs involved in working in this way
ILO commitment to tripartite processes in the development and implementation of its projects and overall programme of work	→	A pragmatic approach is adopted that has less than ideal tripartite involvement	←	Power imbalances and political climate within countries that constrain tripartite negotiations and limit the influence of constituents
DWCPs represent the “masterplan” for the ILO’s work in each country and reflect the results that the constituents most value	→	Incoherence between DWCPs (more bottom-up) and P&B (more top-down); the value of the results reported in the P&B do not tell an intelligible “performance story” that can form the basis for strategic decision-making	←	Current P&B planning and reporting represent an attempt to shape and monitor global results, aligning them with the SDGs
The need for agility and flexibility in implementing actions at a country level	→	Limited agility and flexibility prevent countries from quickly adapting to new challenges and opportunities	←	The need to maintain control, consistency and accountability in ILO’s administration
The need for creative, innovative approaches in addressing established and emerging policy challenges	→	Hard to get new ideas and approaches mainstreamed (or even tested)	←	The ILO’s natural orientation towards normative, standard-based action based on tried and tested intervention models

Broadly speaking, there was a sound “theory of change” behind the ILO’s approach which was articulated in both the Call for Action and the earlier 2005 resolution. The “what works” focus has also helped to clarify the theory of change behind some specific intervention types.

Although not presented in a “programme logic” format, the Call for Action presents a logical and consistent rationale for its core recommendations. Its guiding principles establish the need for a multi-pronged approach covering a range of demand-side and supply-side policies and programmes. The logical assumptions underpinning each are presented as well as the key inputs needed to achieve the desired outcomes. The extent to which these assumptions have proven to be valid in generating short-term results and long-term impact will be covered later in this report (see sections 3.3 *Effectiveness* and 3.4 *Impact and Sustainability*).

The range of specific interventions potentially covered by the strategy was very broad and so was not presented in any detail in the strategy itself. While these would normally be a part of the development of log-frame for each project, at a higher strategy level, it would be helpful if the ILO articulated a clearer theory of change for its approach to the youth employment challenges, one that made explicit how specific Call for Action interventions contribute to policy goals. For example, the “systematic review”⁶⁰ project did this for each of the four main intervention types it explored (see box 7).

BOX 7			
Simplified theory of change for common youth employment intervention types			
Intervention type	Constraint types faced by youth	Rationale	Services
Employment and intermediation services	Information gap (lack of adequate information about job opportunities and lack of information about skills of young applicants by employers), limited access to networks, obstacles to applying for jobs (for example, high transport costs)	Creating mechanisms that make information exchange between (for) employers and workers less costly	Information systems/counselling based on accurate labour market information, mentoring, training, job search assistance, support services
Youth entrepreneur promotion programmes	Limited access to credit; lack of financial capital; limited social networks; limited know-how in setting up a business, bookkeeping and similar skills; value chain exclusion or disconnect	Directly supplying young entrepreneurs with access to the specific inputs needed for a business to succeed	Microfinance, business skills training, financial education training, assessments by experienced professionals, facilitating access to value chains, mentorships that teach management and other know how (marketing, business registration)
Skills training for young people	Inadequate supply of skills – technical, cognitive, and non cognitive, low skill level, no or little work experience, skills mismatch (youth are not trained for the jobs requested by employers), missing “soft” non cognitive skills	Training workers with the technical, vocational, non cognitive skills that make them desirable to firms	Different types of training: technical and vocational skills, business skills, financial education, literacy and/or numeracy, behavioural and non cognitive skills that are implemented both in classrooms or on the job (on-the-job training)
Subsidized employment	Little or no work experience of youths’ minimum wages and mandatory benefits (for example, social security contribution); workers whose productivity is not high enough to outweigh the low productivity of youth with little or no work experience	Lowering hiring and labour costs of employing workers to allow them to gain work experience which makes them more productive and propels them into their career path	Direct payments to employers, tax deductions to employers, direct payments to workers.

Source: Kluge et al., 2016.

⁶⁰ Available at https://www.ilo.org/employment/Whatwedo/Publications/WCMS_508938/lang-en/index.htm.

The coherence between the Call for Action and the ILO’s broader strategic planning frameworks and P&Bs was initially weak. For much of the period under review, what the ILO was attempting to achieve in youth employment was not fully measured through its results-based reporting.

The ILO’s youth employment work in the period was delivered under two different strategic policy frameworks/strategic plans, each with their own array of outcomes and performance indicators. The 2010–15 Strategic Policy Framework was in force for more than half of the evaluation period. In this Strategic Policy Framework, youth employment was relegated to the status of an indicator⁶¹ attached to Outcome 2 (“Skills development increases the employability of workers, the competitiveness of enterprises, and the inclusiveness of growth”). Results measured and reported under this outcome focused on the integration of youth employment in national strategies and policies, the development of youth employment plans, the implementation of programmes, and awareness-raising activities. As a “net” to capture the wide range of actions and desired results set out in the Call for Action, this indicator may therefore have been too narrow. As one ILO manager put it, “It put something big into something small.”

The first P&B in the review period (2012–13) was conceived before the Call for Action, so it was silent on the strategy. The follow-up plan sought to address this (and the Strategic Policy Framework’s inattention to youth employment) by requesting that the Call for Action be considered in the 2014–15 P&B – as well as in the two subsequent biennia. This found expression in the form of youth employment’s inclusion as one of the eight ACIs. This, in a sense, added another dimension to the ILO’s results-based management system for this period and gave youth employment a prominence it was lacking in the existing framework. However, a lack of coherence between what the ILO was seeking to do in youth employment and what it was measuring in this framework remained.

In the Transitional Strategic Plan for 2016–17 and its related P&B, youth employment was finally elevated to “headline” status through Outcome 1 (“More and better jobs for inclusive growth and improved youth employment prospects”) and an Indicator (1.2) that gave more scope to record the “multi-pronged” approach set out in the Call for Action. Youth was also explicitly mentioned in Outcome 4 (“Promoting sustainable enterprises”) and in its Indicator 4.3 (relating to the use of ILO entrepreneurship products and programmes).

One specific area of youth employment where the P&B reporting framework has failed to adequately reflect a high-priority issue is the ILO’s work in fragile situations. A “flagship” programme (Jobs for Peace and Resilience), work in this area over the period of the evaluation (and beyond) was described by HQ specialists as revealing a “major disconnect” between P&B processes and the ILO’s agenda, making it difficult to focus planning on the issue and to report results: “First it was an outcome, then an indicator and then a measurement criterion – this does not reflect the level of attention this demands and it is an area where beneficiaries are mainly youth.”

The staff survey asked respondents to give a rating on a six-point scale in response to the question “How well have the various ILO planning and performance management mechanisms (including the Strategic Policy Framework 2010–15, Transitional Strategic Plan, P&B, and Decent Work Country Programmes) fitted together to guide the ILO’s work in youth employment in the period 2012–17?” The weighted average result for this question was positive – 3.74 – and equates to a “somewhat satisfactory” finding. At the upper and lower ends of the scale, 31 per cent gave ratings that equated to “satisfactory” or “highly satisfactory”, while 22.8 per cent gave ratings that equated to “unsatisfactory” or “highly unsatisfactory”.

⁶¹ Indicator 2.5 (“Number of member States that, with ILO support, develop and implement integrated policies and programmes to promote productive employment and decent work for young women and men”). Other Outcomes in this Strategic Policy Framework undoubtedly included action focused on young people as a target group (especially Outcome 1, “More women and men have access to productive employment, decent work and income opportunities”), but their indicators and measures did not make any specific references.

BOX 8**From the interviews and the staff survey**

“The P&B provides only a partial picture – its format is a straightjacket with limited words and narrow measurement criteria. It also doesn't get revised. The ILO is getting better at reporting, but it still doesn't capture everything.”

Senior ILO manager, HQ

“There was a history of past P&Bs reinforcing ‘silos’ and not giving attention to policy integration. The current format allows primary and secondary targets... though the primary target gets more attention.”

YEP Unit, HQ

“The previous P&B arrangements left no space for reporting overlaps – they assigned results to one outcome and this meant there was little appetite for working together. Double linking helped a bit, but there are still too many outcomes and indicators. Enterprise should be under an employment outcome. There are overlaps all over the place.”

Enterprise Branch, HQ

“They provide some guide. However, the fact that most ILO TC projects are donor-driven seems to have created a considerable disconnect between various ILO planning and performance management mechanisms and ILO's work in youth employment.”

Staff survey response

“Youth and skills seem to get clumped together. There needs to be a dimension that looks strictly at youth – for example, what are the structural disadvantages that characterize youth... Skills are one dimension and often not the only one.”

Staff survey response

The Call for Action defined a range of relevant policy and programme options to address constituent needs but provided only limited guidance on how to “put the pieces together” in a coherent whole. This requires intensive work at a country level, which was limited in the period due to resource constraints.

The 2012 resolution provided a strong rationale for action and defined the need for a “multi-pronged” response from member States that fostered pro-employment growth and decent job creation through macroeconomic policies, as well as employability and skills, labour market policies, entrepreneurship and rights at work. It also outlined the role the ILO should play in leading this response at a global level and in supporting action on the ground.

The subsequent follow-up plan outlined the approach the ILO would take to give effect to the resolution across the five policy areas and three pillars it covered. The key elements of this plan were presented as a list that included the “areas of work” and the units within the ILO that were expected to collaborate in implementation. This list was quite comprehensive, captured well the important themes and issues that required attention, and served as a strong basis for the YEP Unit's work planning over the period of the evaluation.

As a mechanism to guide policy and programme cohesion in the field, however, the Call for Action was somewhat lacking. The presentation of the elements in a checklist or “menu” format did little to reinforce the message that an integrated approach works best or to describe how such an approach might be achieved.

There were some very good examples of holistic approaches being implemented at a country level, but these required a lot of work over time. In Azerbaijan, for example, (see case study 2), the DWT in Moscow had to work across multiple ministries over an extended period before all the pieces came together – developing the commitment of local constituents to this course of action, working from the “bottom up” and marshalling expertise from a variety of sources. This intensive “bottom-up” approach was also essential to the success of another project in regional Tunisia (see case study 3), where detailed consultations at a community level were needed and partnerships had to be built involving different levels of government, the private sector, NGOs, sectoral bodies and training providers. The idea that a consultant can be engaged to quickly scope cohesive projects such as these on a “fly-in, fly-out” basis is fanciful – they require local knowledge, advocacy and relationship-building over time. As an employer organization representative in Tunisia said, “Decisions are made in Cairo or Geneva based on advice from foreign consultants who know nothing about local issues and have no time to learn.”

Where countries have none of these preconditions in place and are left more to their own devices, responses risk being limited to isolated actions drawn from the Call for Action “menu”. As the evaluation’s review of Implementation Reports seems to suggest, this often took the form of entrepreneurship training, apprenticeships or ALMPs, targeting “soft skills” to improve employability. All of these measures may, in themselves, be valid and relevant responses, but without the accompanying higher-level policy reforms described in the strategy, or effective linkages with other complementary interventions, they risk being “band-aid” solutions.

The YEP Unit has overseen the development of many highly relevant reports and tools that have been designed to provide practical support and knowledge to constituents and ILO field staff to develop different elements of these holistic responses (for example, tools such as “Guidelines for Reviews of Policies for Youth Employment” (2015) and research papers such as “Fiscal policy and the youth labour market”). However, incorporating these into country-level actions can be technically demanding and require a level of intensive local advocacy that country offices cannot always provide. DWT specialists also have limited capacity in this respect, as they service many countries. Getting governments to adopt these policies also often requires a level of political influence that goes beyond the ILO’s counterpart, the Ministry of Labour.

At the same time, the political imperative to be seen to be doing something about youth unemployment can result in strong local constituent demand for solutions that are both easier to put in place and more politically “visible” than policy reforms. As one ILO manager described it, “They choose the sugar pill rather than the balanced diet.”

Faced with this constituent demand, the ILO has an array of programme tools to offer. These tools are tried and tested, can produce good results and can be institutionalized and mainstreamed into national service delivery offerings. But unless they can be embedded in broader systemic and policy reforms, they are unlikely to attain the scale and durability to achieve the results required. The ILO’s strategy acknowledges the importance of this holistic approach, but needs to more clearly articulate the need to avoid piecemeal responses – including those that are driven by the ready availability of a relevant ILO tool that addresses only one dimension of a problem. Better monitoring of national youth employment strategies and plans, linked to SDG 8.b.1, may focus more attention on holistic reform.

It also needs to be recognized that the development of such holistic solutions at a country level takes time, local resources and access to different types of technical support. Given its coordinating role, the YEP Unit has played a role in helping to weave together the different strands of the Call for Action to form more integrated national strategies, but its resources were always too limited to provide this type of intensive support at the scale required at a country level. As one ILO staff member put it, “Even at its peak, riding the wave of the Call for Action and ACI2, the Unit’s capacity to work with countries to develop their strategies remained weak – its staff numbers grew at this time, but this was mainly on the research side.”

BOX 9

From the interviews

“The real question is the way we do business and are organized. Geneva produces documents and tools, but as a specialist, it is not easy to engage at the level required to apply these in each country. You can't do these things in every country – a local face is needed to drive things day-to-day on the ground and to contextualize them. Instead, we often just end up selling the ILO's tools, which risks further fragmentation when a truly contextualized, holistic solution is needed.”

DWT specialist

“The temptation is to quickly roll out a tool if there is an imperative to get a project moving and spend money. But it is vital that local realities are considered to create sustainable change in public policies and programmes.”

Youth Employment Project CTA

CASE STUDY 2

ILO/LUKOIL project in Azerbaijan

The ILO's work in Azerbaijan through a project funded by LUKOIL is a good example of its youth employment strategy being implemented in a holistic way.

The Government of Azerbaijan, seeking to diversify the economy and stabilize the labour market during an economic downturn, engaged with the ILO to develop a package of measures covering youth employment programmes, macroeconomic approaches, employment policy development, entrepreneurship training and modernization of the PES. This collaboration provided an ideal policy backdrop for the implementation of the Call for Action in Azerbaijan – in the words of an ILO specialist, it proved to be “a perfect match of commitment from the constituents and ILO support”.

Activities and achievements included the following:

- A comprehensive, country-specific report on macroeconomic trends and policies and anti-crisis measures was prepared by two international experts and presented to the Ministry of Labour. This was followed up by the participation of Azerbaijani representatives in a course on macroeconomic approaches to the labour market in November 2016.
- Delivery of a tailored course (February 2016) on employment policies in Baku to the Ministries of Labour, Economic Development and Finance; the PES; the Central Bank; and others involved in formulating comprehensive employment policy framework.
- A new National Employment Policy, aligned with the SDGs and including youth employment strategies, was endorsed by the Tripartite Commission (which the project also helped establish) and signed off by the Government.
- Reform of the Unemployment Insurance Law, including the creation of a fund that will support the delivery of employment programmes on a sustainable basis.
- Major reform of the PES – including a major investment in PES training at all staffing levels (including through a tailored course by ITC–ILO in Turin), a trebling of staff roles and job descriptions.
- The piloting of an entrepreneurship development programme (using the ILO's SIYB programme) in the Geychay region, involving 21 young people (four women, 17 men). From this, the Government committed to scaling up the programme to cover 10,000 households across all regions of the country, to be delivered through the PES and backed by a \$US4 million allocation from the Presidential Fund.
- Better coordination of UN programmes overall in Azerbaijan. A new inter-agency alliance between the ILO and the UNDP has emerged through which the two agencies are coordinating support in the implementation of the SDGs through a comprehensive employment policy framework.

CASE STUDY 3

The European Union–ILO Support the Development of Underprivileged Areas project in Tunisia

“A huge ‘bunch of roses’ was needed in this case – infrastructure development, labour-intensive investment, supply-side capacity development and training. All were achieved through social dialogue.”

Project CTA

Initiated in 2011, soon after the revolution and at a time when the country was in fragile social and economic circumstances, the AZD project targeted five disadvantaged governorates in the interior of Tunisia – Siliana, Kef, Kasserine, Sidi Bouzid and Gafsa. These regions were characterized by high levels of poverty and unemployment, lack of community infrastructure, isolation and growing insecurity. The project’s highest-level objective was “to promote the democratic transition in Tunisia through the reduction of social inequalities and regional disparities”. Young people and women were the target beneficiaries.

The project was conceived as a “multi-pronged” initiative that worked at both the demand and supply ends of the continuum. Through a consultative approach at the community level and the identification of local economic development opportunities, the project involved interconnected interventions including:

- Labour-intensive investment in community infrastructure
- Economic development and diversification
- New social enterprises to be developed
- Vocational skills training of local young men and women and placing them in productive employment

For example, in the village of Kesra, 160 km from Tunis, local consultations revealed a number of problems that were constraining development and productivity. The water infrastructure was deteriorating and this severely limited the amount of water available for local agriculture (mainly figs), and led to crop decline and the disappearance of previously viable activities such as market gardening. After a feasibility study, a young unemployed female hydraulic engineer was engaged to manage the infrastructure renewal, which included laying 1,700 metres of pipes to irrigate 20 hectares and constructing reinforced concrete irrigation channels, terraced landscaping, and stone control basins. Building materials were sourced locally to further contribute to the local economy and the young people trained in this work (and road upgrades) secured continuing work as local contractors.

With better irrigation, a significant expansion of fig production and a return to market gardening, employment in these activities increased. The project then conducted further community consultations to explore new opportunities for local economic development. This led to further investment in facilities to produce, package and sell fig jams, juice, syrup, dried fruit and pasta. Young women received technical training and certification, and established a cooperative to market their products.

The project worked within a consultation framework that brought together the public and private sectors, social partners and civil society in a partnership to coordinate action and identify markets. Some 200 young women have been certified in various skill areas. Projects in other governorates opened up employment opportunities in fields such as farming (90 youth trained) electric shearing of sheep (60) and livestock production (40).

The ILO CTA for the project stressed the need for detailed consultations to be undertaken in the development of projects of this sort:

- It required the local partners to come together to create a common vision for the area, to identify economic opportunities, set priorities and overcome barriers. Awareness of these barriers is sometimes lacking at a central level. Through the project, the ILO helped expose the real problems at the “coalface” – such as lack of understanding of the needs of unemployed youth because the local PES was not in touch with them.
- The ILO surveyed local agricultural enterprises to reveal employment creation possibilities that met the needs of local farmers. It designed training that met the practical requirements of the work (not existing theoretical options) and found actors who could deliver this training – in this case, the Union of Farmers.

Dialogue continued to be the key to improving the project’s coherence during implementation:

- The dialogue continued throughout to address the needs as they emerged – for example, the need for training, accommodation and transport. It turned out the Ministry of Development could provide support, but without the open dialogue, the project would not have known this. When it turned out its payment of allowances was made in arrears and this caused problems for the young participants, more dialogue resolved the issue.

Lack of cohesion is a concern that goes beyond the ILO's own work in youth employment – it is a problem that affects much of the development support provided at a country level. Among its partners, the ILO is playing a role in addressing this, but fragmentation of effort continues.

The need to foster better cohesion across UN agencies and other development actors has long been acknowledged. Overcoming “systemic fragmentation” has been a UN priority at least as far back as 2006, when the UN Secretary-General’s High-Level Panel presented its “Delivering as One” report.⁶² This led to the establishment of the One UN approach at a country level, including the establishment of a Resident Coordinator to improve overall policy coherence.

As was mentioned earlier, there were two notable global initiatives in the period of the evaluation that worked towards improved cohesion in youth employment work – the Youth Employment Network and the Global Initiative: Decent Jobs for Youth. The latter aims “to foster system-wide cooperation, strengthen policy coherence and coordination, mobilize and engage external partners”.⁶³ The ILO is playing a lead role in this initiative and, although still in its formative stages and not yet visible at a country level, it is expected to be a force for coherence at a global level.

That said, even at this global level, coherence remains an issue. The World Bank-led Solutions for Youth Employment (S4YE) is another global initiative that has a similar vision, priorities and action areas, and engages similar organizations as partners. This initiative predated Decent Jobs for Youth and its coexistence with it was reported to have led to confusion among funders and concerns about duplication. The ILO is represented on the board of S4YE and steps have been taken to define the demarcations between the two bodies. With S4YE now focusing on “pilot interventions and knowledge products”, the ILO sees the relationship as “a production process through which S4YE delivers evidence and knowledge and the Global Initiative scales up these actions at the country level”. How this relationship will work in practice is still to be tested and some questions remain.⁶⁴ As the ILO conceded, “there is an unavoidable degree of competition for resources”. Looking at the S4YE website, it does appear to be adopting a competitive stance in its strategic communication and positioning.⁶⁵

The field missions revealed varying levels of integration of the ILO’s work with other agencies, including UN partners. A representative from the United Nations Industrial Development Organization (UNIDO) indicated that the ILO was “one of our closest partners in the UN family”, but described the continued reality of “friendly competition” to capture limited donor funds. In both Egypt and Sri Lanka, there were projects where multiple UN agencies worked together, but in parallel – as the Project CTA in Egypt put it, to get the synergy originally envisaged: “All the wheels need to be going at the same speed, but instead there were timing gaps – in the end we decided to work towards agreed goals, but in parallel. A Project Management Unit met monthly but integrating operations in practice proved to be difficult.”

Similarly, in Sri Lanka, in a European Union-funded project involving five UN agencies and the International Finance Corporation (IFC), the donor said that the various components controlled by each partner worked well individually, but did not achieve the desired synergies: “There were difficulties in synchronizing different elements and some didn’t work in the way planned.”

⁶² UN, *Delivering as One – Report of the Secretary-General’s High-Level Panel*, November 2006.

⁶³ UN High-level Committee on Programmes Inter-Agency Task Team, *The Global Initiative on Decent Jobs for Youth – The strategy document*, October 2015.

⁶⁴ For example, what would the Global Initiative “scale-up” of S4YE pilot interventions involve? Another bigger pilot? To what end?

⁶⁵ For example, by differentiating itself as offering something altogether new through “2nd Generation Youth Employment” programmes (despite the fact that these just reflect the core message of the Call for Action about integrating supply-side and demand-side interventions).

In Egypt, the ILO has attempted to highlight the diffusion of effort across the development community in youth employment, and to improve overall coherence, by promoting a national youth employment strategy – Employment for Youth in Egypt (see case study 4).

The staff survey asked respondents to give a rating on a six-point scale in response to the question “To what extent has the ILO’s youth employment approach complemented the approaches used by partners, multilateral and bilateral organizations?” The weighted average result for this question was 3.55, which equates to a “somewhat satisfactory” finding. At the upper and lower ends of the scale, 26.7 per cent gave ratings that equated to “satisfactory” or “highly satisfactory”, while 23.3 per cent gave ratings that equated to “unsatisfactory” or “highly unsatisfactory”. The same question was asked in the partner/constituent survey and generated a similar result – an average of 3.5 (“somewhat satisfactory”), with 25 per cent of valid responses giving “satisfactory” (none giving “highly satisfactory”) and 25 per cent giving ratings that equated to “unsatisfactory” or “highly unsatisfactory”.

CASE STUDY 4

The ILO’s “EYE” approach in Egypt

In 2015, in cooperation with the Ministry of Investment and International Cooperation (MOICC), the ILO did a “stocktake” of youth employment initiatives being implemented in Egypt. Some 250 separate projects were found to be underway, many in similar policy areas and all seeing themselves as “pilots” to be hopefully “scaled up” to solve the big picture problems of youth employment in Egypt. This provided a backdrop to the development of a more coherent, strategic approach by ILO – Egypt Youth Employment.

Signed off by MOICC, EYE proposed to create 1 million jobs in three years while addressing key underlying issues. Four complementary pillars, based on tested practices on “what works” best for youth employment in Egypt and reflecting the Call for Action, underpin the strategy – employment in key economic sectors, enterprising youth, jobs for youth in poor areas, and pro-employment policy reform. The programme seeks synergies with other major initiatives in Egypt, including the Suez Canal economic zone, the Central Bank of Egypt’s credit line for small and medium-sized enterprise development, industrial city development, and social assistance programmes. The idea is to build consensus around the strategy and encourage national alignment of effort.

The UN Resident Coordinator has identified EYE as one of five “transformative initiatives” and the UN Partnership Development Framework Agreement will provide a mechanism for its implementation. The challenge now is to get other UN agencies to accept ownership of the strategy. The ILO said it is not “trying to call all the shots” in Egypt, but simply to promote better cohesion and coordination of effort. It is partly about “knowing who is doing what”.

MOICC has been organizing meetings and negotiations with donors, and there have been some early successes in securing funds. The ILO itself is aligning all of its youth employment development cooperation projects with the strategy and “branding” them as such (for example, “EYE Working Together in Qalyoubia and Menoufia” and “EYE Jobs and Private Sector Development in Rural Egypt”). A new project – “EYE Providing a Reason to Stay” – brings together the ILO, UNDP and UNIDO to address the needs of young women at risk of irregular migration.

The coordinating role played by the YEP Unit was a force for internal ILO cohesion, but there is scope to improve synergy across different work units and departments.

From its inception, the YEP Unit has had a coordinating role, but after the Call for Action, and especially at the time of ACI2, effort was intensified to better connect the different specialist areas of HQ around youth employment. As mentioned earlier, the P&B at that time looked at youth employment mainly through a skills lens, but ACI2 became a mechanism for the ILO to reflect more broadly on the scope of its youth employment work and look beyond skills. An interdepartmental taskforce was established to do this and the decision to adopt “What works?” as the central theme of ACI2 resulted from this process.

Judging from the various outputs from its workplans (see Appendix II) and the involvement of different collaborating units in the “keynote” projects described earlier, the YEP Unit has played an important

role in aligning and connecting different parts of the organization. There were, however, some examples highlighted in the interviews where these connections were weaker and where, perhaps, opportunities for enhanced synergy may not have been fully exploited. For a variety of reasons, some activities just do not appear on the YEP Unit's radar – including, as suggested by the Unit, because they involve “ticking different P&B boxes”.

For example, within WORKQUALITY Department, the Inclusive Labour Markets, Labour Relations and Working Conditions Branch-INWORK (which covers such quality of work issues as wages, working time, employment conditions and job security) indicated that it had only limited contact with the YEP Unit during the period of the evaluation, despite the many youth employment issues with which it had a direct involvement (for example, youth and apprenticeship wages, employment contracts, non-standard work, etc.). Its Gender, Equality and Diversity Branch (GED) suggested there could be more scope for engagement to improve access for different groups of disadvantaged young people and to integrate other quality of work elements into projects (for example, social protection, non-discrimination, caring responsibilities, etc.). While conceding that there are some difficult trade-offs to navigate around the quantity and quality of youth employment, there have been no global discussions about how to approach this at a strategic level (see Recommendation 2).

The Youth 4 OSH project, described as a “keynote” project earlier and delivered through the LABAD-MIN/OSH Branch, was reported to have had little if any contact with the YEP Unit. Perhaps the design of this project did not demand such links but, at the very least, it would have generated lessons on OSH that would be valuable in the design of youth employment initiatives generally. For example, in this case, it was suggested to the evaluation that, given the overexposure of young workers to non-fatal occupational injuries, synergies could also have been made by using the expertise of the ENTERPRISES department (specifically the Global Programme on Employment Injury Insurance and Protection), to foster, review or implement employment injury insurance schemes in targeted countries as part of YEP.

In the work performed by ILO FUNDAMENTALS, there are some important synergies with youth employment in such areas as child labour and forced labour, freedom of association, discrimination and collective bargaining. The key is often found in school-to-work transition, which can be a vital tool in providing pathways to decent work as alternatives to unacceptable forms of work. As a representative put, “There is a line that separates ‘the dark side’ from ‘the light side’.” In 2012, the ILO was urged by constituents to adopt a more integrated approach to addressing these issues across all the fundamental principles. For example, the YEP Unit provided inputs to the report “World Report on Child Labour 2015 – Paving the way to decent work for young people.” Since a 2017 global conference on child labour and forced labour in Argentina highlighted the role decent youth employment can play in “transitioning from the dark side”, the link with the YEP Unit has been further strengthened.

Within the Employment Policy Department, of which the YEP Unit is a part, the interconnections seem to have been stronger, but the interviews did highlight some coherence issues. For example, in identifying the relevant links required for development cooperation projects, there is sometimes ambiguity about whether a project is a “youth project” or a “skills project”, and this affects which unit provides technical support. Whereas a “work integrated learning” project might require an employment specialist, if it were called an apprenticeship project, a skills specialist might be required. Various factors are at play in this, including the processes around new project development overseen by PARDEV – initial comments on proposals are sought, but these do not always get to the most relevant specialists (see Recommendation 5).

This issue was also reported to be sometimes linked to ILO “product” decisions. It was suggested that choices made at the project design stage sometimes meant that a commitment is made to a specific “programmatic realm” of the ILO that may be disconnected from other areas from which support might be needed. The example was given of the different tools available for regional job creation – the ILO offers (or has offered) Local Economic Development (LED), TREE, Regional Employment Action Plans (REAP), value chain development, cluster development and possibly others. These products have different

strengths and weaknesses (for example, REAP were described as not giving sufficient attention to diagnosing the local economy), but are offered in a way that makes it difficult to incorporate useful elements from other tools (for example, LED was said to have good processes for diagnosing the local economy). It seems an “all or nothing” choice is required⁶⁶ – as a CTA said, “The tools don’t talk to each other.”

The involvement of the social partners in the ILO’s youth employment work has generally been good, although some concerns were expressed about insufficient involvement at different stages of the development and implementation of policies and programmes.

The evaluation interviewed representatives of the social partners in all of the countries selected for field visits as well as ILO specialists engaging with workers’ and employers’ organizations. Broadly speaking, the principles of tripartism were promoted and adhered to, but there were some concerns expressed. The political situation in some countries also imposed serious constraints.

In Tunisia, social dialogue is enshrined at the highest levels of government policy-making, including in employment policy. The role of the employers’ organization (the Tunisian Union of Industry, Trade and Handcrafts, UTICA) and the Tunisian General Trade Union of Workers (UGTT) in the democratic transition was recognized with the 2015 Nobel Peace Prize. An ILO–Norway-funded project led to a 2013 “social contract” that committed the partners to the institutionalization of social dialogue in employment policy and, in 2016, the UN Secretary-General, the ILO Director-General and the social partners committed to *La Déclaration Tunisienne pour l’emploi* to address unemployment, especially among young people.

The workers’ organization highlighted the important role the ILO had played in promoting social dialogue in Tunisia and in facilitating tripartite discussions and planning around youth employment. It expressed concerns about the number of programmes in place and said there was a need for better coordination among donors: “The union finds itself involved in many very similar projects – there’s no synergy.”

The employers’ organization highlighted a concern it had with a lack of responsiveness to the concerns they expressed at the design stage. For example, UTICA strongly advocated the involvement of service providers other than the PES in the delivery of projects, pointing to the employers’ lack of confidence in the PES and the better results achieved with a private provider in a USAID/IFC project. The unions and the Ministry of Labour (which runs the PES) would not accept this, and the implication was that the ILO could have done more to meet employers’ needs.

In contrast to Tunisia, the environment for tripartite dialogue in Egypt is very difficult and, according to the DWT Workers’ Specialist, “The biggest challenge is how to integrate the union voice in policy development.” Violation of international labour Conventions on freedom of association is an ongoing concern, and the independent trade union confederation (the Egyptian Democratic Labour Congress) has no official status in policy dialogue (although the ILO does liaise closely with it). Interviews with the employers’ organization, the Federation of Egyptian Industries, suggested that it was aware of the key youth employment challenges in Egypt and was engaged in the policy discussion.

In Portugal, discussions centred on the role of the social partners in the Youth Guarantee. Portugal has a very strong culture of tripartism and the ILO’s role in facilitating this was clearly respected by the partners. Union representatives said that their involvement in the YG’s initial design discussions was very good, but there had been less involvement in implementation. As one union representative said, “Being asked to attend a meeting is not the same as being asked to participate in the programme’s implementation.” Employer representatives also pointed to this weakness, suggesting that the government authorities needed to ensure employers played a bigger role in the scheme’s implementation.

⁶⁶ Continuity of support for these tools was also a concern. Though still alive in the field, Local Economic Development was said to no longer be supported by HQ. It was suggested (though not verified) that the interests of individual specialists sometimes influence what product is supported. What is more, when such changes occur, field staff are not always told.

In Sri Lanka, the level of engagement of the social partners was also strong. Discussions with the Employers' Federation of Ceylon revealed a high level of engagement across a range of youth employment policies and programmes, including direct involvement in service delivery through its Employers Network of Youth Initiatives service. Workers' representatives from the National Trade Union Federation and the Ceylon Workers' Congress acknowledged the important role the ILO played in promoting tripartism, but expressed frustration with blockages at the government level in implementing a strategy to address the youth employment issues.

In China, the All-China Federation of Trade Unions was clearly very actively engaged in youth employment issues and providing input to policy-making. For example, it conducted extensive research into the situation of young people engaged in emerging "platform-based" employment (for example, the Chinese equivalent of Uber), including intensive discussions with the ILO Social Protection Department. It indicated a strong appreciation for the ILO's work in tripartism and in cooperating with unions on a range of issues, including youth employment. The employers' organization, the China Enterprise Confederation, also worked with the ILO on youth employment, including research into apprenticeships and traineeships. It pointed out the need to extend social dialogue to other ministries: "A systematic tripartite response is needed to deal with youth employment."

In terms of building the capacity of constituents to engage in the development of youth employment policy and programmes, the Academy on Youth Employment (a "keynote" project described earlier in this report) is an example that seems to have been highly valued by participants. The October 2016 Academy included 56 representatives of workers', employers' and youth organizations from 27 countries, and evaluations were positive.

ACT/EMP specialists highlighted the critical role of employer and business membership organizations (EBMOs) and their enterprise members in advancing employment for young people. Their involvement can be seen in their engagement with education ministries and vocational training institutions in developing training curricula and programmes. ACT/EMP stressed the importance of providing more technical assistance and capacity building for EBMOs to enhance their role in developing effective youth employment policy, promoting employment-creating economic development for young people, and facilitating the entry of young people into working life.

Other relevant points made in the interviews on tripartism and social dialogue in the ILO's youth employment are captured in box 10.

BOX 10

From the interviews

"More should be done to embed tripartism early in the project design phase – a clear collaboration strategy needs to be included in the project documents that specifies who from the union side will be involved."

DWT specialist

"Involvement of the social partners is a missing link. Feedback is that workers organizations are not given an important enough role in policy and programme development. They are just on the fringes."

HQ Bureau for Workers' Activities

"Employers' and workers' organizations can sometimes demand that the ILO not go beyond them, but the measures required for youth employment really demand that those affected by the measures also be engaged [i.e. youth representatives]."

Country office director

“There’s a need to share good practice in organizing youth – for example, innovative approaches in the Philippines in reaching out to youth in communities, hosting activities in parks, etc. There’s a need to think outside the box.”

ITUC representative

“With the Global Initiative, we understand its intent, but are unclear what it is going to deliver at a country level. It also needs to enshrine the tripartite approach. What if a government “pledges support” to the Global Initiative, but is suppressing unions? How would the ILO respond to this within the broader partnership?”

ITUC representative

“On the quality side of youth employment, more attention is needed on what is happening at the country level. ‘Advocacy and awareness-raising’ is not enough. What practical steps are being taken to improve youth rights at work and to influence employers?”

ITUC representative

The ILO’s work in youth employment has in some cases helped leverage support and action for the ILO’s broader decent work agenda.

A number of staff members and stakeholders interviewed in the evaluation suggested that the ILO’s youth employment work had “opened doors” for its other work. Far from being a contentious issue, the need to address the youth employment challenge is almost universally acknowledged and so may represent common ground and a “good place to start a conversation”.

In Egypt, for example, the revolution caused great disruption to the work of the international development community, but while other projects and activities were being suspended, the ILO’s youth employment work continued. As an HQ specialist said, “It kept the door open for all of the ILO’s work.” As mentioned above, the operating environment in Egypt is very challenging, and the ILO’s continued engagement there has at times been uncertain. But shared concern on youth employment has been a stabilizing factor – as a project CTA in Egypt said, “It has changed the perception of the ILO in Egypt – it’s opened doors for advocacy on other issues.”

BOX 11

From the surveys – Examples of youth employment work leading to other decent work opportunities

“Working with young women in the rural areas has allowed for progress to be made on social protection, namely on OSH and HIV and AIDS... in Zimbabwe.”

“The inventory of supportive measures on youth employment provides a clear picture of areas for improvements, such as improving quality of public employment services and entrepreneurship programmes.”

“Most of the countries where the ILO has started with youth employment work (for example, African continent) have opened up collaboration in the area of overall employment policy.”

“Work on youth employment in Egypt led to donor interest to work on women empowerment and employment.”

“The Youth Employment for Sustainable Development in Kenya midwived the sectoral policy on cross-cutting social issues, gender, child labour, HIV/AIDS, community participation and labour standards in the infrastructure sector, which was adopted and rolled out nationwide.”

“In Azerbaijan, youth employment-related interventions triggered national efforts in establishing a comprehensive employment policy framework, including macroeconomic approaches to inclusive labour market, NES, strengthening of PES capacity, development of entrepreneurship and self-employment, and facilitating transition to formality.”

The staff survey asked the following question: “Can you think of any examples where the ILO’s work in youth employment in a country has opened up opportunities for the ILO to make progress in other areas of the Decent Work Agenda?” Examples drawn from the responses to this question show a wide range of ILO priorities that may have been given a boost through its youth employment activities. Some are included in box 11.

3.3. EFFECTIVENESS

Results reported in the period under review either met or exceeded P&B targets against all youth-specific indicators – globally and in most regions.

As discussed earlier, the P&B targets associated with youth employment work changed over time. Under the Strategic Policy Framework 2010–15 and the P&Bs aligned with it, youth employment was just an indicator under Outcome 2, which was related to skills. Following the Call for Action, the 2014–15 P&B gave more attention to youth employment as an ACI and in the descriptive text, but there were no changes to the relevant performance indicator (2.5), its country targets or its measurement criteria.⁶⁷ Compared with the range of policy directions and initiatives detailed in the Call for Action, these criteria were quite limited. They also offered a poor indication of the relative effectiveness of different contributions made through the ILO’s work in youth employment (for example, in theory, a one-line reference in a strategy combined with the production of a brochure could be as much of a “result” as a major systemic reform that placed 1,000 apprentices).

Putting these limitations aside, global P&B targets were exceeded in the first two biennia. In 2012–13, 15 results were achieved (target of 13), and in 2014–15, 23 results were achieved (target of 15). Nearly all regional targets were met or exceeded (see table 7).

In the third biennium under review (2016–17), a new strategic framework was in place, the Transitional Strategic Plan. In it, youth employment had its own Outcome 1, an indicator (1.2) that gave more scope to record “multi-pronged” approaches,⁶⁸ and a youth-specific indicator (4.3) attached to Outcome 4 covering youth entrepreneurship. Measurement criteria for 4.3 related to design, scaling-up and resourcing of entrepreneurship programmes “using ILO products”.

In this biennium, global P&B targets were again significantly exceeded across both indicators. In 2016–17, 34 Outcome 1 results were achieved (target of 26), and 30 Outcome 4 results were achieved (target of 24) (see table 7).

While these P&B-linked figures provide a quantitative measure of the ILO’s youth employment work relative to a target, as a true measure of effectiveness they tell us very little. They offer no meaningful insights into organizational performance nor any clues on how strategy or implementation can be improved. The detailed implementation reports that are prepared at the end of each biennium provide examples of significant activities (i.e. what was done), but little about what was achieved. There is a need for ILO’s reporting to tell more of a performance story at a global and national level (i.e. where it was, where it is now) if it is to be a useful tool for evaluations such as this.

⁶⁷ To record a result, two or more of the criteria needed to be met: (a) youth employment is a priority of national development strategies or employment policies; (b) national plans promoting youth employment are developed by the Government and the social partners, and contain priority measures as well as human and financial resources for their implementation; (c) national programmes promoting decent employment of disadvantaged youth are implemented by the Government with the support of the social partners; (d) an information dissemination, awareness-raising, training or outreach strategy on youth employment is implemented by one or more of the tripartite constituents, as documented through evidence of, for example, establishment of hotlines and brochures, training courses, services or recruitment campaigns.

⁶⁸ To record a result, one or more criteria needed to be met: (a) a multi-pronged strategy or action plan that promotes decent jobs for young women and men is developed or implemented; (b) school-to-work transition allowing disadvantaged young women and men to access skills and decent jobs are put in place and regularly assessed; (c) Government and social partners review and upgrade skills development systems, including apprenticeships, to facilitate school-to-work transitions.

Table 7. Programme and budget – Performance v. targets, 2012–17

Policy Result Framework	Youth-Specific P&B Indicator	Biennium	Reported P&B Results						
			Total	Africa	Americas	Arab States	Asia-Pacific	Europe-Central Asia	
Strategic Policy Framework 2010–2015	INDICATOR 2.5 Number of member States that, with ILO support, develop and implement integrated policies and programmes to promote productive employment and decent work for young women and men.	2012–13		Zambia Comoros Malawi Uganda	Ecuador El Salvador Nicaragua Peru Brazil Paraguay	Jordan	Indonesia Philippines	Russian Federation FYR Macedonia	
			Result	15	4	6	1	2	2
			P&B Target	13	3	3	1	4	2
		2014–15		Cameroon Egypt Morocco Rwanda Somalia Togo Uganda Tanzania Zambia	Brazil Ecuador Mexico Uruguay	Jordan Yemen	China Indonesia PNG Samoa Sri Lanka	Cyprus FYR Macedonia Kazakhstan	
			Result	23	9	4	2	5	3
			P&B Target	15	4	4	1	4	2
Transitional Strategic Plan 2016–17	INDICATOR 1.2 Member States that have taken targeted action on decent jobs and skills for young women and men through the development and implementation of multipronged policies and programmes	2016–17		Tunisia Egypt Algeria Mauritania Cote d'Ivoire Sao Tome & Principe Central African Republic Sudan Tanzania Malawi Zambia Zimbabwe Mozambique South Africa Madagascar	Mexico El Salvador Jamaica Antigua & Barbuda Brazil Paraguay	Yemen	Pakistan India Sri Lanka Bangladesh China Marshall Islands Samoa	Russia Federation Kazakhstan Azerbaijan Moldova FYR Macedonia	
			Result	34	15	6	1	7	5
			P&B Target	26	10	5	2	5	4
	INDICATOR 4.3 Member States in which public and private intermediaries have designed and implemented scalable entrepreneurship programmes aimed at income and employment creation with a focus on young people and women			Cape Verde Senegal Mali Morocco Algeria Tunisia Egypt Sudan Ethiopia Somalia Cameroon Cent. African Rep. Uganda Congo Zambia Malawi Namibia	Trinidad & Tobago Suriname Peru Brazil	Palestinian Territory Jordan Saudi Arabia Yemen	Solomon Islands Timor-Leste Philippines Laos Myanmar		
			Result	30	17	4	4	5	0
			P&B Target	24	10	5	3	5	1

Source: Programme and Budget Implementation Reports, 2012–13, 2014–15, 2016–17.

The synthesis review of project evaluation and the field visits showed that the effectiveness of the ILO's youth employment work was influenced by many factors and was not always easily assessed. Although results varied, there were many projects that achieved what they set out to achieve.

Any assessment of the effectiveness of the ILO's strategy and actions globally in a field as diverse as youth employment is subject to so many variables – such as type of intervention, country situation, time frame, even the individuals involved in implementation – that a conclusive judgment is very difficult to make. The methodology for this evaluation included the results of a synthesis review of 30 youth employment project evaluations and information gathered in the field visits, but these are just samples of the ILO's work and at best give us an indicative picture of effectiveness.

Youth Employment Synthesis Review

The synthesis review found that the ability of youth employment projects to achieve their intended results varied according to “the type of intervention and the methods incorporated, the country situation and external constraints, the time frame and especially the length of the implementation period”. It found that a “high proportion of, if not all projects ... demonstrated some flaws or had experienced problems during implementation”, though conceded that reviewers may have been inclined to focus on these issues rather than “look for patterns of success”.

The synthesis review gave examples of projects where effectiveness was hampered by unclear results frameworks, incorrect targeting of some efforts, too many initiatives, or inadequate engagement of partners. On a more positive note, the review also gave examples of projects that attained very high youth placement rates, institutional capacity-building results and successful policy development work. In other words, some projects were effective and some less so.

Overall, on a six-point scale, the synthesis review gave a composite score of 4.1 (which translates to “somewhat satisfactory”). Noting that objective assessments were less common due to the lack of baseline data and results frameworks, it concluded that “nevertheless, many of the projects did achieve good work and there were examples of notable gains in youth employment areas reported from the projects”.

Field visits

Egypt

In Egypt, the ILO worked across a wide range of youth employment policy and programme areas in the period, including (a) policy development; (b) labour market information systems; (c) institutional capacity building; (d) the introduction of ALMPs; (e) the promotion and institutionalization of entrepreneurship programmes (KAB and SIYB); (f) skills system and apprenticeship development; and (g) demand-side work, including a sectoral development approach implemented at the governorate level. Project resources were mobilized from such donors as Canada, Denmark, Switzerland, the Netherlands, Australia and the UN Trust Fund for Human Security.

Prior to the period under review, the ILO had supported for almost five years the development of a Youth Employment National Action Plan (NAP). Although the completed NAP, released in December 2010, set out most if not all of the policy and programme priorities that the ILO has subsequently pursued, it was never fully embraced by the Government of Egypt itself as a national strategy, nor was it integrated into broader development plans. The Ministry of Manpower and Migration was meant to “lead the way and coordinate the implementation of the strategy with other related ministries”, but this did not happen.

The ILO therefore had to continue to work within a highly fragmented policy environment. It has worked throughout the period to champion the NAP's approach and to seek improvements in policy coordination, but the political will to do so has been lacking so far. The situation of the Ministry of Labour has not

helped – it has had 11 Ministers since 2011. The promotion of the EYE initiative (discussed earlier – see case study 4) can be considered the ILO’s latest attempt to address the fragmentation issue.

The effectiveness of a number of projects and activities was highlighted in the field visits:

- Decent Jobs for Egypt’s Young People – Tackling the Challenge Together (DJEP) is a relatively long-term project for the ILO (2011–2019), allowing a range of relevant actions over an eight-year period (US\$15 million in total provided by Canada). Implemented initially in the governorates of Port Said, Minya and the Red Sea (and later in Luxor), the project included components targeting institutional capacity building (for example, PES, Ministry Vocational Training Centres and Youth Centres), ALMP delivery (for example, job-search training, job fairs in conjunction with PES), support for young people with disabilities (for example, inclusive vocational training capacity), entrepreneurship programmes (for example, training of trainers and institutionalization of KAB, SIYB and Get Ahead), and support for the development of enterprises through a sectoral development approach (for example, barley in Port Said, dairy and fresh food packaging in Minya and tourism in the Red Sea). The donor was very satisfied with the effectiveness of the project (“It was very effective in many ways.”), highlighting the adoption of SIYB and KAB in particular. (For example, in 2016 a Memorandum of Understanding was signed to roll out KAB to 2,000 technical secondary schools and 1.6 million students in Egypt.)
- A separate project, delivered on a similar basis as DJEP in Qalyoubia and Menoufia, proposed “an ambitious multi-dimensional and integrated approach to stimulating youth employment” in these two governorates. Funded by the Danish–Arab Partnership Programme (US\$6 million over four years), the project aimed to both support the development of local youth action plans and sectoral “jobs pacts”, and to enhance the capacity of local services to deliver job-search training and entrepreneurship training. According to its final evaluation, the project enjoyed significant success in the latter (for example, 500 trained youth were claimed to have created their own jobs), but was less effective in the former (i.e. institutional capacity was strengthened, but no local plans or jobs pacts were produced).
- The Human Security through Inclusive Socio-economic Development in Upper Egypt (Hayat) project was part of a joint UN project involving ILO, UNIDO, UN Women, UN-Habitat and the International Organization for Migration (IOM). The ILO component focused on youth and combined vocational and entrepreneurial training with activities designed to increase their engagement in local community building through social entrepreneurship. The project saw ten social enterprises created, and was especially effective in engaging young women and girls. A practical guide was produced to support social entrepreneurship and inclusiveness in rural communities more generally.
- Although not yet fully implemented in the period of the evaluation, the ILO’s work supporting the development of the “Forsa” programme – a new element of Egypt’s social protection system that targets the poor and vulnerable – should also be mentioned. With an overall objective of promoting sustainable, decent incomes and jobs for these groups, Forsa includes a target of 60 per cent youth among the beneficiaries. This would mean that, by 2020, 120,000 youths per year would receive support through such means as ALMPs, vocational training, subsidized apprenticeships and start-up business support. US\$50 million has been made available from the public budget, with services mostly provided through NGOs and local employers. The ILO will provide its tools and capacity building.

In summary, the effectiveness of ILO’s youth employment work in Egypt is most evident through its success in getting key institutions to introduce new methodologies and tools to enhance the employability and income generating potential of young people (for example, through SIYB, KAB and Job Search Clubs), stimulating youth employment demand to some extent through sectoral development in various governorates, and ensuring that attention has been given to gender and inclusiveness issues. For reasons outside its control, it has so far been less successful in its efforts to promote more effective and coordinated employment policy in Egypt, but continues to pursue this goal through its advocacy of the EYE and Forsa programmes.

Tunisia

The ILO was not a resident agency in Tunisia until after the 2011 revolution. Following two high-level missions and discussions with the social partners at the ILC, a “Roadmap for Recovery and Decent Work in Tunisia” was developed and, based on this, its development cooperation portfolio in the country has expanded significantly. Youth employment was afforded the highest priority and the Roadmap included a raft of key action areas on both supply-end and demand-end that would mirror those of the Call for Action. The ILO's activities have been in line with these – entrepreneurship development, local economic development, labour-intensive public works programmes, skills development and strengthening employment services.

Examples of project effectiveness highlighted in the field visits included the following:

- The Youth Employment Promotion in Tunisia (PEJTUN) project has been supported by Denmark since 2009 and has gone through a number of phases. Working in four governorates in north-western Tunisia, in the period of evaluation it included such elements as (a) enhancement of PES services; (b) design and implementation of local public investments that promote youth employment; (c) demand-side work in encouraging the development of agri-food value chains and products that have higher employment creation potential; (d) youth start-up business support; and (e) enhancements to youth employability, including skills training related to the new businesses established. Although the social partners indicated that this project was effective and had provided new opportunities for young people to start up niche businesses in the agriculture sector in regional Tunisia, where jobs are scarce, the overall scale of the project was very small.
- The Youth and Employability project, funded by the Netherlands, trained PES and independent advisors in the delivery of job seekers in “soft skills”. In 2017, for example, 58 PES staff and 30 independent coaches were trained by experts from Pôle Emploi (the French PES), who in turn trained 720 youths.
- The Promotion of Organizations and Mechanisms of Social and Solidarity Economy (PROMESS) project supported youths and women in four disadvantaged regions by assisting in the development of cooperatives and other social enterprises. One of the key challenges in this was the legal, regulatory and institutional framework for these enterprises, and the ILO has played an important role in facilitating the social dialogue required to ensure a more conducive environment for their successful establishment and operation. This has been reflected in national development policies through a chapter on this sector in the Government's 2016–20 five-year plan of economic and social development.
- The AZD project (outlined in case study 3) successfully integrated an ambitious programme of labour-intensive work with local economic development (on the demand side) with youth training and job placement.

In summary, the projects above seem to have generally achieved their objectives. They gave attention to gender issues, applied a range of approaches and often sought to do so in a way that integrated supply and demand (for example, local economic development with skills training and entrepreneurship training), and engaged with local institutions to build their capacity. Concerns remain about the sustainability of some of these measures and the ability of local institutions to increase the scale of their operation to make significant inroads into youth unemployment (see section 3.5 *Impact and Sustainability*).

Portugal

As discussed earlier (see case study 1), the ILO's work in Portugal in the period involved support for its introduction of a Youth Guarantee. Much of this work was innovative, breaking new ground in an important policy frontier for the ILO. In terms of effectiveness, stakeholders highlighted how the ILO played the role of independent “broker”, bringing together central and local authorities responsible for youth policy and services, and effectively advocating changes. It also helped develop an effective monitoring system

for the scheme and the results this identified helped mobilize additional funds – the scheme could “prove its worth”. Perhaps most importantly, the ILO’s support enabled refinements to the system to identify and meet the diverse needs of young people. This included the development and implementation of an outreach strategy to attract young discouraged workers and other inactive young people in the labour market.

Sri Lanka

In line with the “multi-pronged” approach advocated in the Call for Action, the ILO’s youth employment work in Sri Lanka included support for both high-level employment policy and planning work, and hands-on development cooperation projects that pursued a holistic approach. While the projects have achieved good results, the policy and planning work has so far had little practical effect.

The ILO invested considerable energy and time supporting the constituents to develop a National Human Resources and Employment Policy, a Youth Policy and Youth Employment Action Plan.⁶⁹ These documents set out the main issues in improving youth employment in Sri Lanka, describe an overarching policy framework to address these issues, including a detailed “Master Plan”, and a specific youth employment plan developed in the context of this broader plan. In theory, this kind of policy coherence should have formed a very solid basis for the ILO’s youth employment work.

At the time of the field visit, however, there was no evidence found that these documents had served any practical purpose or were likely to. The political will and bureaucratic machinery required to implement these policies and plans disappeared with a change of Government and there is no immediate prospect for their revival. While these things were largely outside the ILO’s control, the outcome does raise questions about what can be done to avoid such situations in the future. Around 15 years of work went into the development of these policies and plans and, while an output was produced (and recorded as a result in the P&B), it had no actual effect.

At the action end of the continuum, however, the ILO has implemented some projects in Sri Lanka which, though not exclusively focused on youth, have generated youth employment results. For example, the “Local Empowerment through Economic Development” (LEED) project identified youth as a priority group – specifically, ex-combatants and vulnerable young people whose education had been disrupted by the conflict. The project aimed to improve livelihoods through the revitalization of cooperatives in northern Sri Lanka, and its evaluation concluded that it was effective in helping vulnerable communities do this (for example, in fishing and farming).

A project with a stronger emphasis on youth employment was Skills to Support Local Economic Development. This multi-faceted project is described in case study 5.

In summary, while there has been an output from the ILO’s long-term efforts to create a coherent youth employment policy framework and plan in Sri Lanka, this has not yet had a demonstrable effect. In its development cooperation projects, youth employment goals have been advanced as part of broader activities, but significant ongoing challenges remain.

China

The ILO’s youth employment work in China in the period focused on a number of strategically significant policy and service delivery issues: (a) enhancements of PES service offerings for young people; (b) advice on improving monitoring and evaluation of youth employment initiatives; (c) awareness raising and training on the issue of youth rights at work and enhancing regulations to protect these rights; (d) research collaboration with the employers’ organization on improvements to internships and apprenticeships; and (e) continuing support to priority youth groups such as university graduates and internal migrant workers.

⁶⁹ Work on the National Human Resource and Employment Policy started in 2005.

CASE STUDY 5

The SKILLED project in Sri Lanka

The Skills to Support Local Economic Development project was a component of a much larger (€60 million) European Union-funded project that commenced in 2012 and involved six implementing agencies, including the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations, UNDP, the United Nations Children's Fund and IFC. The ILO took the lead on one element of the local economic development component of this project – “Improved access to quality vocational training through support to at least 60 per cent of the Registered Training Providers” in four target districts.

The SKILLED project achieved results across a number demand-side and supply-side areas:

- Support for demand-oriented vocational training courses – 44 vocational training centres received support to deliver 60 training courses in construction, information technology, tourism and light engineering. A total of 810 trainees completed this training (mainly youths) and 472 were reported to have found employment (including 97 females).
- Support for recognition of prior learning – 1,719 received a national qualification through a large-scale recognition of prior learning process supported through the project.
- Capacity building of vocational training providers – 178 trainers received training (including in teaching methodologies, institutional marketing, career guidance, OSH and SIYB).
- Establishment of PES at the district level – The project helped establish and equip PES centres in all four districts to provide recruitment services to employers and job seekers. A total of 4,000 vacancies had been received and 954 young people (including 542 females) had been placed in jobs.
- Initiatives to support out-of-school and unemployed youths from low-income households – The project reached out to these young people through such measures as career orientation services (through the PES and training providers) to connect them to appropriate training, and subsidies to cover out-of-pocket expenses of young people attending training.

Overall, the project was highly effective in what it set out to do. Some weaknesses were identified in the project's final evaluation – especially the relatively poor female participation rate in the vocational training courses provided, a result attributed to the fact that the demand-oriented courses selected were traditionally attractive more to males. Effectiveness was also hampered to some degree by the failure of the various components of the broader European Union project to achieve the synergies intended.

As no youth employment development cooperation projects were funded in China in the period, support was provided primarily through Regular Budget allocations (SIYB and KAB institutionalization are important outcomes from past work).

The effectiveness of many of these inputs is difficult to assess – as China rapidly changes and enters a new development phase, its thirst for knowledge and information on international good practice has replaced development cooperation projects, and the way the ILO adds value has also changed. Assistance seems now to mainly take the form of policy reviews, research collaboration, knowledge sharing and comments on policy proposals. Outputs have included reports (for example, (a) Report on China's Youth Public Employment Service Department; (b) Report on Interventions in Youth Employment Promotion – An Inventory of Interventions in China; (c) Effects of Youth Employment Policy: Good Cases in China; and (d) Research Report on Enterprise Youth Employment (Internship/Apprenticeship) and training programmes. This support is highly valued by constituents, who cited examples where lessons learned from this research and training have been incorporated into higher level policy papers or where new practices have been adopted, for example, by the PES.

Peru

Since 2008, Peru's development status has been classified as an upper-middle-income country, and international cooperation funding has significantly diminished. No youth employment development cooperation projects were implemented in the period under review. With very limited regular budget resources

(for example, US\$30,000 in the 2016–17 biennium), the ILO has restricted its work to technical advice to constituents and the generation of statistical information and studies.

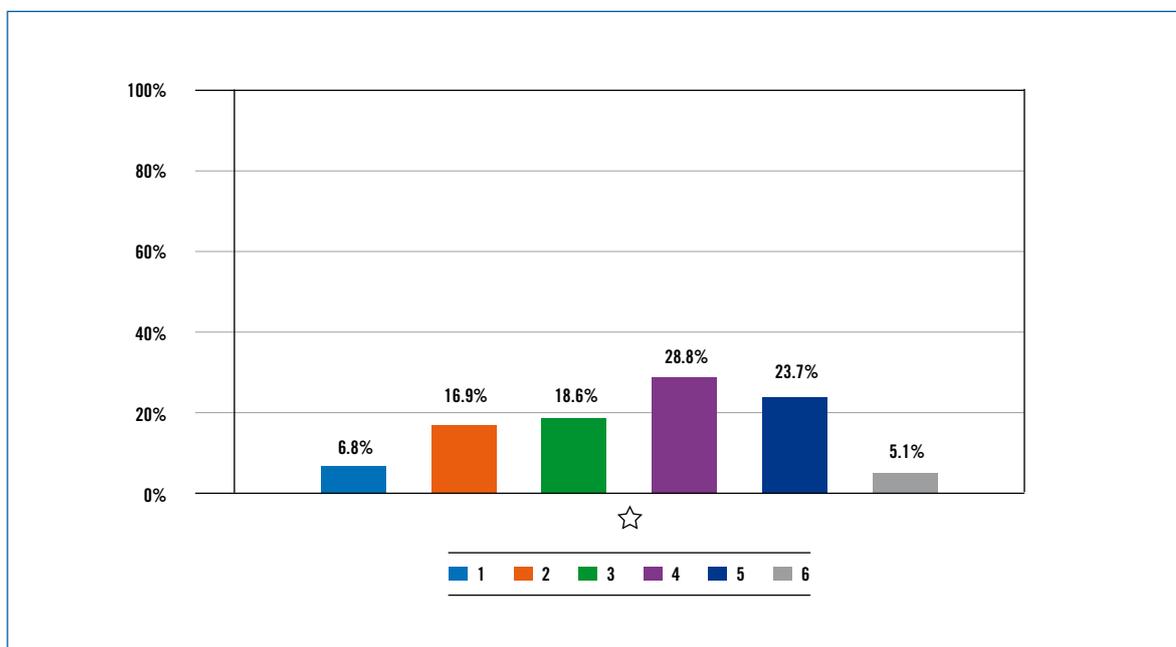
Outputs in the period include (a) Work4Youth school-to-work transition survey results (2014); (b) a case study on the effect of young people’s first jobs on employment trajectories (2016); (c) a distance learning course on addressing youth employment problems (2014); (d) elaboration of Regional Youth Employment Plans with a “green jobs” focus in three regions (2015, as part of global UN project); and (e) a number of other small research consultancy projects.

The effect of these various outputs is not clear. Constituents commented that the ILO’s technical capacity to generate quality research was valued, but there were concerns about the ILO’s current lack of capacity to help translate research into effective practice. (“Currently the ILO does not have anything to offer the Government – there are no funds and no innovative proposals.”) Similar concerns were expressed about Youth Employment Action Plans. (“If they are not accompanied with enough resources for implementation [or pilots] they have no purpose.”) The fact that there had been such action prior to the period of the evaluation – through a major Joint Programme on Youth Employment and Migration – perhaps cast the ILO’s more modest recent outputs in a less favourable light (see case study 6). That said, as an upper-middle-income country, Peru should now have more capacity to resource actions.

The staff survey results suggest that most ILO staff think the organization has done a satisfactory job in achieving its strategic objectives in youth employment, in seeing policies and plans lead to effective change and in achieving a balance across different intervention types.

The staff survey asked a number of questions that related to the effectiveness of the ILO’s youth employment work. The first of these asked respondents to give a rating on a six-point scale in response to the question “How well do you think the ILO met its strategic objectives in youth employment in the period 2012–17?” The weighted average result for this question was positive – 3.61, which equates to a “somewhat satisfactory” finding. At the upper and lower ends of the scale, 28.8 per cent gave ratings that equated to “satisfactory” or “highly satisfactory”, while 23.7 per cent gave ratings that equated to “unsatisfactory” or “highly unsatisfactory”. Results are displayed in figure 6.

Figure 6. Meeting strategic objectives in youth employment – Ratings of staff



BOX 12

Some comments from the staff survey – Meeting the ILO's strategic objectives in youth employment

“We could and should be more concrete, at least in specific countries – we are very good in advocacy, etc., but the litmus test is the number of youths coming into work, recognizing that we can't do it alone.”

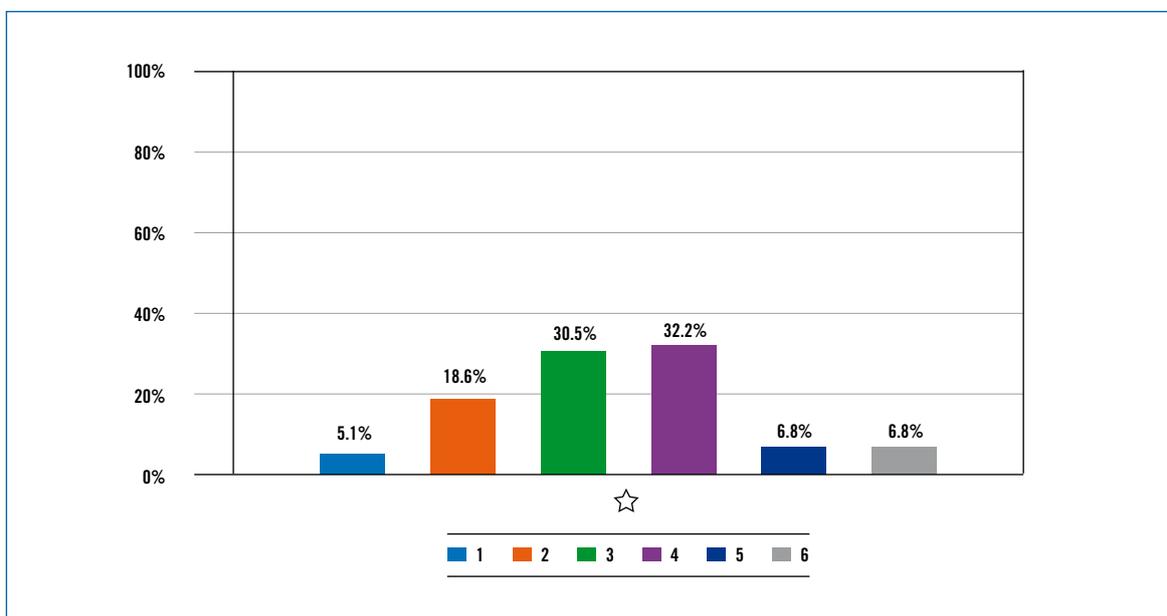
“ILO managed to bring the plight of the youth to the centre of the development agenda. But we have to work a bit more to ensure the benefit accrue to the youth.”

“The challenge remains immense.”

“In terms of the P&B, targets were achieved. Whether this is a good measurement of achievement is another issue.”

Respondents were asked to give a rating on a six-point scale to the question “How well have changes in countries’ youth employment policies and plans led to effective changes in implementing programmes and services on the ground?” The weighted average score was 3.4, which equates to a “somewhat satisfactory” finding. A majority of responses were in the “somewhat satisfactory” to “satisfactory” range (62.7 per cent), and significantly fewer people (13.6 per cent) gave ratings that equated to “satisfactory” or “highly satisfactory”. Results are displayed in figure 7.

Figure 7. Changes in policies and plans leading to changes on the ground – Ratings of staff



The next question asked respondents to assess whether they thought “the ILO’s work has achieved an appropriate balance in outputs and results” across five areas: (a) employment and economic policies for youth employment; (b) employability of young people; (c) labour market policies; (d) youth entrepreneurship and self-employment; and (e) rights at work for young people. For each, respondents were asked if they thought the ILO focused too much or too little (compared with other areas) or had the balance right.

BOX 13

Some comments from the staff survey – Changes in policies and plans leading to changes on the ground

“Changes take time, and often ILO programmers are funded rather precariously.”

“Not significantly. It seems we have been content with having the policies adopted and we were not that successful in rolling these out.”

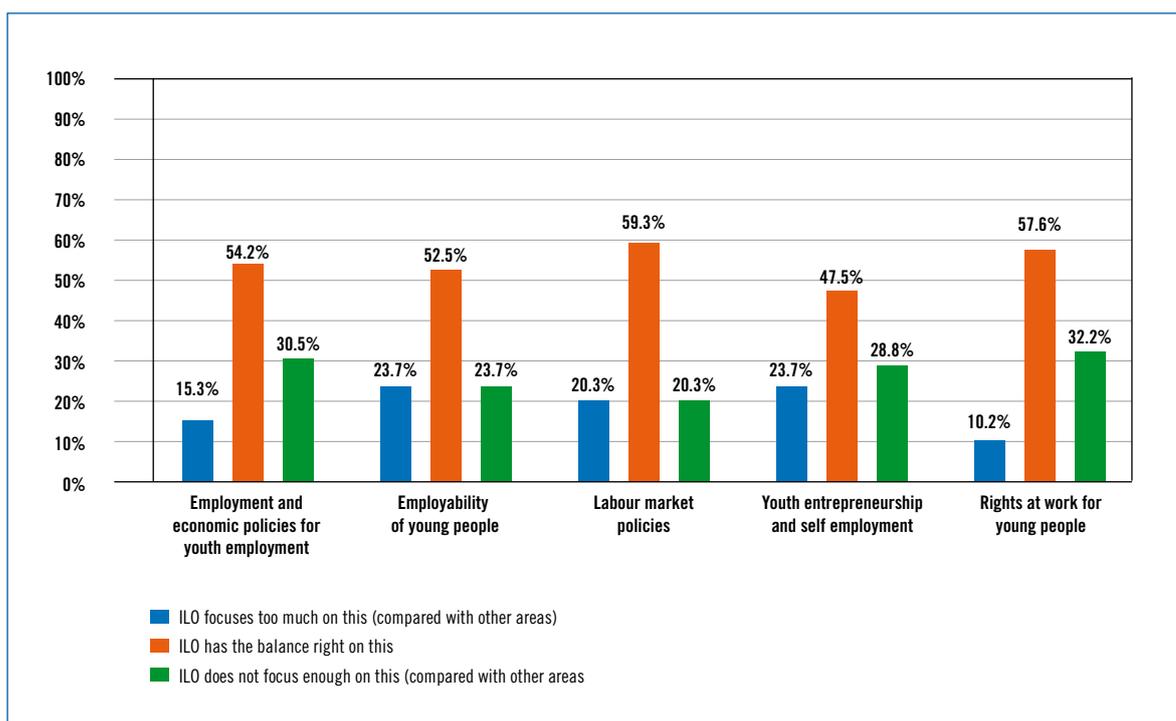
“Middle-income economies are faster at institutionalizing change than low-income countries are. For the latter, five years is a rather short period to observe this type of change.”

“The work of the ILO on supporting the development, implementation and monitoring of youth employment policies and plans is essential. However, more capacity is needed for ILO at HQ and field level to further support the implementation and monitoring.”

“Several countries have put in place programmes to translate policies into action and results on the ground. There is, however, scope to improve policy evaluation. The youth employment policy reviews conducted in countries like the Russian Federation, China, Indonesia and Nepal offer an interesting example to follow.”

The results revealed some quite stark differences in opinion. Youth entrepreneurship and self-employment had the lowest score for “balance is right” at 47.5 per cent, but opinion was divided on whether a greater or lesser focus was needed to remedy this (28.8 per cent versus 23.7 per cent). Labour market policies had the highest score for “balance is right” at 59.3 per cent, but the responses dissenting from this were evenly split between “too much” and “not enough” (20.3 per cent). Two areas with high “not enough” scores and low “too much” scores suggest a stronger case for more action: rights at work for young people, and employment and economic policies for youth employment. Results are displayed in figure 8.

Figure 8. Is the balance right? Staff survey ratings



The ILO has achieved results across the “three pillars” of its youth employment strategy, but more could be done to ensure that the effectiveness can be measured based on outcomes in the field, not just outputs.

The three pillars of the Call for Action – knowledge development and dissemination, technical assistance and capacity building, and partnerships and advocacy – shaped the ILO's actions in the period. The “keynote projects” and the various country-level development cooperation projects described in this report are evidence of the wide span of the ILO's work. Measuring the effectiveness of these different work types poses different challenges.

Measuring the effectiveness of many development cooperation projects can be relatively straightforward. At a country level, it can be easier to see how the hierarchy of objectives embedded in a project's theory of change fit together and to assess whether results for its intended beneficiaries have been achieved or are, at least, in sight. Was a quality apprenticeship model developed and successfully piloted? If yes, then some measure of effectiveness is visible.

In other areas of the ILO's youth employment work in the period of the evaluation, the outputs produced can be more distant from the results that matter most, or even from the next step needed to move closer to these results. The production of a Youth Employment Action Plan that is effectively placed on a shelf (as appears to have been the case in Egypt and Sri Lanka) can in no sense be considered an “effective intervention”. Such outputs should not be confused with outcomes, but sometimes that is as much of the project's performance story that is heard. Furthermore, through its choice of indicators, P&B reporting can sometimes inadvertently reinforce this output focus. Of course, there are limits to how far the ILO can go in ensuring that the plans and policies it has helped to develop are implemented, but more can be done to ensure that the extent of this implementation is systematically monitored, at least in its early stages, to keep attention on more tangible outcomes (see Recommendation 6).

When it comes to the ILO's research work, measuring effectiveness in terms of outcomes is even harder. High-level development objectives such as “generating and disseminating new knowledge about the challenges to youth employment” can be measured by outputs and, in some cases, access statistics (for example, website downloads), but effectiveness in terms of influence is extremely difficult. The extensive work done under the “what works” approach produced some highly relevant outputs, but whether constituents and practitioners have, as was intended, “a deeper evidence-based understanding of the most effective and promising approaches in selected policy areas” and “the capacity and know-how” to apply this is unknown. What is missing is the ability of the ILO to apply this knowledge in the field, though its resource constraints make this hard. The interviews in the field reinforced this need (see quotes below).

The Work4Youth “keynote” project was a huge youth employment research project which set out to support “the shaping of evidence-based policies and programmes”. According to the project's final evaluation, its results in this respect varied from country to country, but at least this outcome was built into the overall project design and was assessed.

The ILO's work in partnerships and advocacy, the third pillar, has seen some high-profile initiatives commenced. During the period of the evaluation, the ILO has been very effective in bringing global attention to the need for action in youth employment. The Global Initiative on Decent Jobs for Youth is the latest and biggest vehicle for partnerships and advocacy, and the ILO has played an important role in driving its formation and setting its agenda. At a country level there are examples of partner commitments under this initiative – the partners page of the initiative's website describes 28 activities as active or completed in the period 2015–17 and, while some of these are relatively small-scale bilateral partnerships between a donor and an implementing agency, others are quite ambitious in scope including some that bring together multiple stakeholders in an effort to maximize scale and impact. The field visits suggested a very low awareness of what the Global Initiative is and what it aims to achieve, but this may change as the results of these initiatives become known.

BOX 14**From the interviews**

“What works? Does the information collected just sit there? Shrinking resources mean that there is no knowledge broker.”

DWT specialist

“The ILO has a tendency to see publication as the end of the process. It is not good at knowledge management.”

Country Director

“‘What works’ is yet to show that it has provided value to constituents. This is despite the fact that donors like this sort of ‘proof’ if it is available.”

Regional Office

“High-level agreements don’t always flow down to operations. It’s often complicated by the multifaceted nature of changes required...The ILO needs to work with champions within government who can draw things together.”

HQ senior manager

“[The UN Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific] commented on the Global Initiative when it was first launched, but we haven’t heard anything since. It’s a great idea, very ambitious, but has never been discussed in-country or regional circles.”

UN Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific representative

“We are not getting any information on the Global Initiative – if it’s meant to be HQ’s way of linking up the world on youth employment, it is not working.”

Regional Office

More activities focused on increasing employment demand are needed to maximize the effectiveness of the ILO’s work in youth employment.

The need to balance demand-side and supply-side interventions was agreed at the 2012 ILC and was an assumption that underpinned the Call for Action. As Report V, prepared for the ILC (ILO, 2012:7-29), put it: “Most national programmes and schemes on youth employment are focusing principally on supply-side interventions. These, as important as they are in their own right, will not resolve the crisis. It is time to pay attention to demand management.” This message has been regularly reinforced over the period of the evaluation, including in some of the “what works” findings.

Many of the more effective interventions described in this evaluation have included elements that have had a demand-side focus – for example, the labour-intensive investment and local economic development elements of the AZD project in Tunisia, the demand-led training delivered in the SKILLED project in Sri Lanka, and support for the development of pro-employment macroeconomic policies in Azerbaijan. But, as this evaluation’s analysis of P&B Implementation Reports showed, this type of demand-side work is not as widespread as it could be. Labour-intensive investment in the context of youth employment was mentioned just nine times, and pro-employment macroeconomic policy development was mentioned five times.

Instead, supply-side interventions – which are often training-based (including in vocational, entrepreneurship and “soft” skills, as well as job-search training) – were more common. To some extent, the widespread use of entrepreneurship training in implementing the ILO’s strategy could also be seen as a type of demand-side intervention – in the sense that, through this approach, young people “create their own jobs” – but this is debatable, especially if these jobs do not provide decent work. Also, as a senior ILO manager in HQ put it, “The focus on entrepreneurship training could be seen as pushing all responsibility back on

the youths themselves.” In other words, they are efforts to mobilize people in the supply “queue” to solve the demand deficit problem themselves.

The problem with demand-side interventions – particularly those that involve infrastructure improvements through labour-intensive investments – is that they are expensive. Donors may come forward in crisis situations (for example, to fund reconstruction work following wars and natural disasters), but in most cases, such funds are hard to come by. Financial constraints also prevent governments from funding such initiatives themselves, so they fall back on what they can do, mainly supply-side work. As a DWT Director said, “If you cannot effectively manage monetary policy or fiscal policy because of the lack of a tax base, all you’re left with is using tools that affect supply.”

Despite these constraints, the ILO should wherever possible look to improve the balance between supply and demand-based approaches wherever possible, integrating both in its project designs as the “what works” research has recommended (see Recommendation 1). Other development actors are increasingly making this a central part of their promotional “pitch” – for example, the World Bank’s S4YE initiative is seeking to differentiate its approach as something new by focusing more on integrated approaches. Its Second Generation Youth Employment Programmes are presented in this way: “Part of the problem is that most programmes do not affect the processes of job creation or labour productivity growth, often at the core of the youth employment challenges. Going forward, addressing this challenge will require more comprehensive and integrated approaches that focus not only on connecting young people to jobs, but also on promoting the creation of new jobs and improving the quality of existing jobs.”⁷⁰

The ILO’s youth employment work gave attention to the cross-cutting themes of gender and non-discrimination, but there is scope to improve effectiveness by learning more about “what works” in situations where cultural traditions and belief systems inhibit the achievement of equity goals.

The projects highlighted in the field visits, and described earlier in this section, seem in general to have been sensitive to gender issues and to have set targets for female participation, though these were not always met. In its knowledge development work, gender issues are explored in the *Global Employment Trends for Youth* publications and in other research papers (including a Work4Youth paper on school-to-work transition). In identifying “what works”, the Taqeen Initiative has initiated some impact studies on the empowerment of women in Middle Eastern and North African countries.

The synthesis review of youth employment project evaluations provided a different perspective, and indicated that “where gender was mentioned, it was not usually a strong or consistent component in the project implementation”, though there were notable exceptions. It also mentioned that “gender issues and approaches often appeared to be afterthoughts” in projects.

Reviewing project documentation and reports, the evaluation found that projects often referred to the constraints that were imposed by cultural practices and belief systems in achieving targets. For example, in Sri Lanka’s SKILLED project, female participation was low because the growth occupations chosen for the project were not traditionally filled by women or, in the case of tourism jobs, were considered to place women in moral jeopardy. Given the ILO’s long history in promoting gender equity, it is likely to have identified good practices in addressing such barriers at both the design stage and the implementation stage of projects.

In the staff survey, respondents were asked to give a rating on a six-point scale to the question “How well has the ILO’s work in youth employment contributed to the cross-cutting themes of gender and non-discrimination?” The weighted average score was 3.27, which equates to a “somewhat satisfactory” finding. A majority of responses were in the “somewhat unsatisfactory” to “somewhat satisfactory” range (55.9 per cent). More people (27.1 per cent) gave a low rating (equating to “unsatisfactory” or “highly

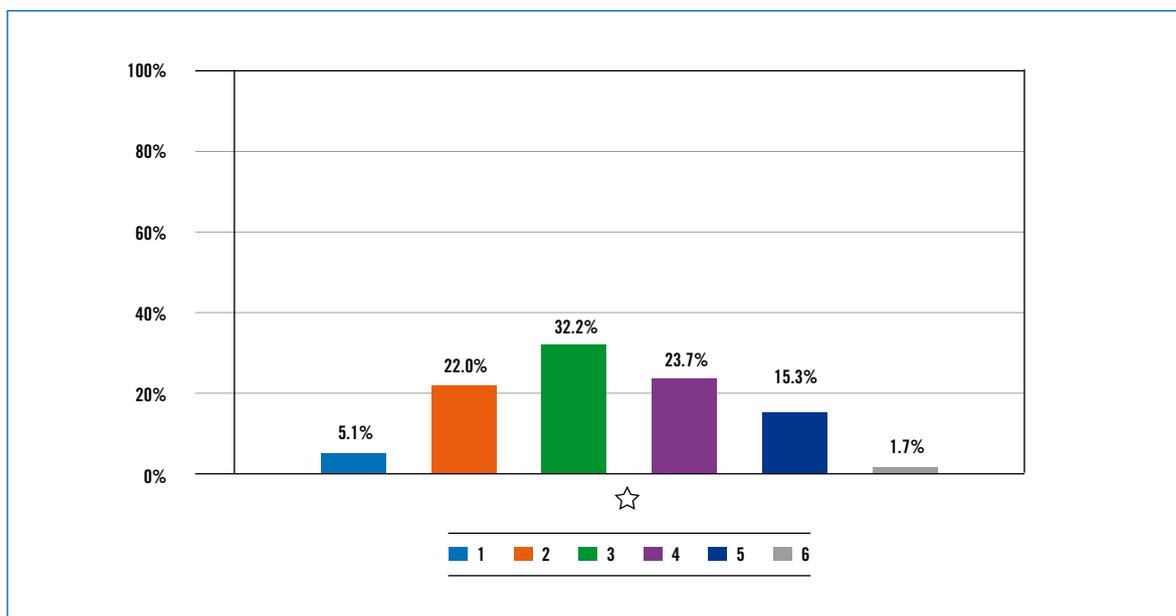
⁷⁰ Available at: www.s4ye.org.

unsatisfactory” than a high rating (17 per cent), equating to “satisfactory” or “highly satisfactory”. Results are displayed in figure 9.

The partner survey gave a more positive weighted average score of 3.79, with 68.4 per cent giving ratings of 4 or 5.

Comments made in relation to gender (in both this question and the question on disadvantaged young people) included a number of concerns about the need to do more to get better results. On the plus side, respondents praised the Taqeeem project’s attention to gender issues (see box 15).

Figure 9. Gender and non-discrimination rating



BOX 15

Some comments from the staff survey – Gender and non-discrimination

“The ILO strategy has not worked very much in responding to the needs of young women and girls ... Many of our countries in Africa are not showing genuine commitment to address the youth employment challenge for young women and girls. The traditions and beliefs systems in many African countries are a serious stumbling block. The ILO would have to devise new strategies in this area.”

“The focus of Taqeeem on young women in rural areas opened up an opportunity to build evidence in a region and among a target group for which there is little knowledge about what works. Results are yet to be seen as the project finalizes the main studies.”

“In the country I am in, female participation is relatively low, and it is difficult for young women and girls to actively enter the labour market.”

“The ILO’s research work on youth employment reflects the gender dimension, for example, *Global Employment Trends for Youth* series; the Taqeeem Initiative conducted a number of impact studies on women empowerment in the MENA [Middle East and North Africa] region; the *Work4Youth* series includes a thematic report on gender issues from school-to-work transition surveys.”

“We have created a lot of awareness at all stages, but the challenges of gender and non-discrimination are much bigger than that. They require a change in ownership of means of production, equal access to education and basic health services, cultural shift, etc. These need complete structural change. We may have helped in reducing the burden and improving their functionality within the status quo, but the weight will remain for some time.”

“In general, the ILO youth employment approach does not embrace the diversity of problems which ILO has to tackle.”

3.4. EFFICIENCY

At the aggregate strategy level, efficiency of the ILO's work in youth employment is hard to measure – data limitations do not currently allow a detailed analysis. The fact that youth employment work is dispersed throughout the ILO makes such an analysis even more problematic.

As has been noted in previous evaluations, the ILO's systems do not allow an analysis of the regular budget costs associated with specific activities (or thematic areas) and their reported results. This type of analysis would require data on the cost of all resources used to undertake activities, information on how these activities were linked to outputs, and how they contributed to the achievement of outcomes. The fact that youth employment work is dispersed throughout the ILO makes such an analysis even more problematic. It is a thread woven into the fabric of the organization and cannot be readily unpicked.

At the individual youth employment projects level, efficiency was given the lowest rating in the synthesis review of youth employment project evaluations.

In contrast to the quite positive rating through the staff survey, the synthesis review of 30 project evaluations gave efficiency the lowest score of all the criteria – 3.5, which is midway between “Somewhat Unsatisfactory” and “Somewhat Satisfactory”. Noting again the lack of robust monitoring and evaluation frameworks for many projects and the difficulty this posed in making efficiency assessments, it found that value for money was given scant attention in these evaluations. It found that delays in project commencement and during implementation were common, and that “project time extensions appeared to be almost the norm”. Management, staffing and budget issues also adversely affected efficiency and that the allocation and receipt of funds sometimes compromised implementation. Communications and coordination issues with project partners and other stakeholders were also noted as sometimes affecting efficiency.

The flexibility of outcome-based funding (through RBSA funding) provides opportunities to focus on agreed national priorities, to follow and build on previous and current activities in each country, and to maintain a continuity of effort.

Outcome-based funding (through RBSA) is relatively new for the ILO. It involves working with donors by “lightly earmarking” funds for expenditure in shared areas of interest, (for example, youth employment or apprenticeships). Two notable examples of this type of funding being applied to youth employment work were the partnership funding negotiated with SIDA in support of ACI2 (initially in ten countries) and the Government of Norway's partnership supporting skills systems and youth employment in five African countries. The independent evaluation consultant conducted field visits related to the evaluation of this latter partnership at the end of 2017, and its findings are relevant here.

This partnership demonstrated the advantages of this funding mode for ILO development cooperation projects. It operated in a way that provided a level of flexibility that allowed the ILO to focus on agreed priorities, to follow and build on previous and current activities in each country, and to maintain a continuity of effort targeting – in this case, apprenticeship and training system reform. It helps avoid the “stop-start” effect that can sometimes accompany other more restrictive forms of project funding and minimizes a problem that can sometimes occur where projects are funded that have a less-than-perfect alignment with ILO's own approach and country strategies. In this case, all participating countries indicated that they benefited from this flexibility and that project activities fitted seamlessly into their current efforts. This created a high level of constituent engagement and collaboration.

In some countries, the ILO–Norway partnership enabled the ILO to advance its work in technical areas where it had not previously had much local involvement. Despite its global expertise and experience in skills development, in some countries the ILO had been associated more with other technical fields – for example, in Malawi the ILO was mostly known for its work in child protection, but this project had

changed this perception. The ability to apply RBSA funding in a flexible way allowed the ILO to pioneer these new fields and to establish its local credentials.

Despite the flexibility this mode of funding provides, the evaluation did highlight that continuity of action is not always guaranteed beyond the period of the partnership. In Sri Lanka, for example, the SIDA partnership provided one year’s funding for a consultant to develop a youth employment action plan. No funding was allocated for any follow-up and, as has been pointed out, the plan has not been implemented.

A number of significant constraints on operational efficiency and effectiveness were identified through the survey.

The evaluation survey asked respondents to rate the extent to which 11 issues imposed constraints on the ILO’s ability to achieve its goals in youth employment. A five-point scale was used ranging from “not a constraint” to “very substantial constraint”. Results are set out in Table 8.

The most significant constraints identified by respondents were “number of staff in country/regional office with requisite technical expertise” (which had a weighted average score of 3.4 out of 5 and received “substantial constraint” or “very substantial constraint” ratings from 51.7 per cent of respondents) and “ability to secure XBTC funding” (which had a weighted average score of 3.2 out of an “substantial” or “very substantial” constraint ratings from 51.8 per cent).

Table 8. Constraints on operational efficiency and effectiveness

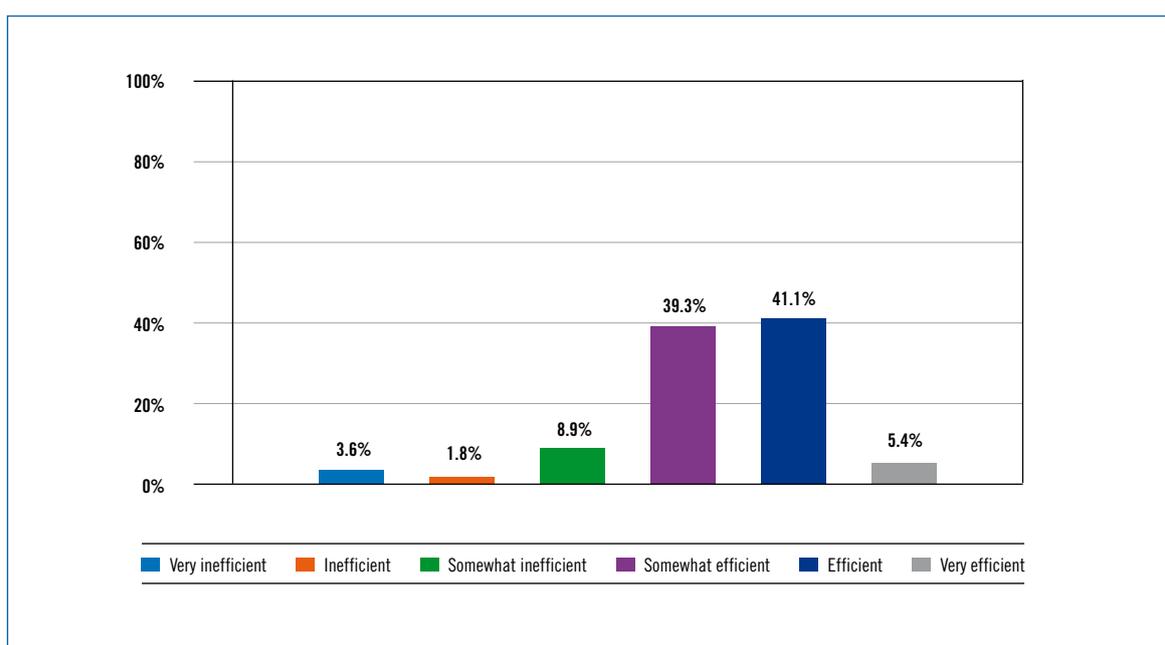
	Not a Constraint	Minor Constraint	Moderate Constraint	Substantial Constraint	Very Substantial Constraint
Number of staff in country/regional office requisite technical expertise	14.30%	7.10%	26.80%	32.10%	19.60%
Ability to secure Extra-budgetary Technical Cooperation (XBTC) funding	12.50%	17.90%	17.90%	39.30%	12.50%
Ability to secure Regular Budget Supplementary Account (RBSA) funding	12.50%	19.60%	21.40%	26.80%	19.60%
Ability to secure Regular Budget (RB) funding	8.90%	26.80%	21.40%	21.40%	21.40%
Number of staff in HQ technical units with requisite technical expertise	10.70%	23.20%	28.60%	21.40%	16.10%
Ability to effectively monitor and evaluate results	8.90%	23.20%	30.40%	25.00%	12.50%
Ability of staff in HQ technical units to commit sufficient time to providing assistance	12.50%	19.60%	28.60%	28.80%	12.50%
Time required for internal decision-making	14.30%	17.90%	37.50%	19.60%	10.70%
Ability to recruit qualified chief technical advisors (CTA)	14.30%	26.80%	33.90%	12.50%	12.50%
Ability to recruit qualified external collaborators (consultants)	17.90%	44.60%	16.10%	16.10%	5.40%
Ability to draw in ILO knowledge-base	23.20%	30.40%	30.40%	12.50%	3.60%

Funding constraints figured prominently, filling three of the top four highest-ranked issues. XBTC was the highest in this regard, but RBSA was next, perhaps reflecting its attractiveness in advancing ILO youth employment goals in a way directly linked to DWCP goals (see finding in section 3.3 *Effectiveness*).

Ability to draw from the ILO knowledge base and to recruit qualified external collaborators/consultants were the issues that seem to be causing the least concern as sources of inefficiency.

The staff survey provided another perspective of the issue of efficiency. Respondents were asked to provide a rating on a six-point scale in response to the question “How efficient overall were ILO support and technical cooperation projects in the youth employment field?” The weighted average result for this question was positive – 4.3 (somewhat efficient or efficient), with 80.4 per cent responding in this range. Results are displayed in figure 10.

Figure 10. Staff view on efficiency of ILO youth employment work



The YEP Unit within the Employment Policy Department is the key driver and coordinator of youth employment at HQ level. Given its outputs over the period (see Appendix II) and its quite modest staffing profile (four staff members funded by the regular budget), it seems to have operated in an efficient way. Outside HQ, there is only one full-time youth employment specialist (based in Bangkok and servicing Asia–Pacific) and a part-time resource (based in Peru, servicing Latin America and the Caribbean). This means that the YEP Unit relies on a variety of other DWT specialists to plan, coordinate and support activities in most regions – specialists in Employment, Skills, Employment Intensive Investment, and Enterprises. While three of these specialist areas are also part of the Employment Policy Department, Enterprises is in a different department. Some country office staff members hinted that there might be some structural inefficiencies in this arrangement – as a Country Director said, their being in a different branch “makes it hard to engage”, especially if holistic responses are needed.

At a country level, there is evidence of unmet demand for support from HQ and, in this respect, it could be argued that the Unit is inadequately resourced for the role countries expected it to perform. In the field visits, country office staff members indicated that they would benefit from more guidance from HQ on developing local youth employment strategies – especially in the complex task of developing “multi-pronged” approaches that involve both supply-side and demand-side interventions (as a CTA said, “more guidance on the ‘how to’ and not just on the ‘what’”). Others urged more services being provided to

country offices as “clients”, helping work at the country level in more practical ways (for example, a list of “vetted consultants” in youth employment, or a “toolbox of technical instruments” that could be used in local youth employment work) rather than “spending all its time on Geneva stuff”.

Determining the relative cost-effectiveness of different strategic approaches set out in the Call for Action could be a useful exercise in the future.

The exploration of “what works” in youth employment led to some conclusions regarding the relative effectiveness of different intervention types. While constituents and donors seek answers to such questions about programme effectiveness, they also have an understandable interest in the efficiency and cost-effectiveness of these measures. Future research should therefore also seek information on the cost-effectiveness and likely return on investments using different approaches. For example, employment-intensive public works projects targeting young people may be expensive, but maybe their long-term benefits outweigh these costs. The “systematic review” project found that, in designing youth employment interventions, the “how” seems to be more important than the “what”. To this, “How much?” could also be added (see Recommendation 3).

3.5. IMPACT AND SUSTAINABILITY

The impact and sustainability of much of the ILO’s youth employment work is not measured well and remains unclear.

As is the case with much of the ILO’s work, the long-term effects and durability of the ILO’s youth employment projects and activities are unclear and are not systematically measured. There are numerous reasons for this, including lack of attention given to impact and sustainability in the project design phase, poorly articulated “theories of change”, and lack of any clear performance indicators to assess progress. But perhaps the most important reason is that, in many cases, nobody seems to ask questions about projects beyond their final evaluations apart from the management follow-up process for recommendations.

The potential long-term impact and sustainability of many of the 30 youth employment projects covered by the synthesis review was either unclear or conditional on critical factors that were still uncertain at the time of their evaluation (such as the willingness of governments to adopt and fund intervention models themselves or to reform institutions and implement policies). The fact that these project evaluations were typically completed at the end of the projects’ implementation period, rather than at some time after the “dust had settled”, meant that most evaluators were cautious about predicting their impact and sustainability, and often could only draw vague or equivocal conclusions. In a sense, they were measures of optimism, not impact.

Unless they enter a second phase or are the subject of some other form of continuing work, the final evaluations of a projects are almost always the end of their “performance story” from the ILO’s point of view. The example described earlier of youth policies and action plans being developed in Sri Lanka and then left on a shelf is unlikely to be unique, but since there is no systematic follow-up, we cannot learn if interventions like this generally have impact and are sustainable. In this particular case, the project was put forward as a success story, when it was clearly not a success.

It is true that the ILO’s work is often more “upstream”, in the sense that it deals more with the development of policies, institutions and systems than with “downstream” impacts on individual beneficiaries. It is also true that this type of work does not lend itself to the rigorous “impact evaluations” based on quasi-experimental methods, control groups, counterfactual analysis and the like. The fact that so few ILO projects found their way into the “Systematic Review” exercise might partly be explained by this (and, perhaps, the cost of these impact evaluations). But there is scope to do more to measure the impact and sustainability of the “upstream” elements of the ILO’s project work in youth employment – and in

general. All that is required is a willingness to ask some direct questions on the impact and sustainability of past projects, but further down the track (see Recommendation 6).

For example, it would not be prohibitively expensive or time-consuming to conduct an annual exercise that investigates the status of past projects (for example, one, three and five years after their completion). Based on two or three unambiguous measures of impact and sustainability (explicitly defined as part of each project's final evaluation), regional offices or country offices could be asked to complete a short annual survey that asks clear questions ("Has this happened – yes or no?") about past projects. Questions would not focus on project minutiae, but on the "big picture" reform agenda that the projects aimed to advance: for example, "Was policy X ultimately adopted and implemented?" or "Has recognition of prior learning been fully integrated into the national training system?" or "Is the PES service for youth in the rural community still operating?" Other examples that relate to the field visit countries are listed under the next finding.

The information gathered in this way would be very useful. First, it would fill an important gap in the ILO's understanding of the long-term contributions its development cooperation projects make, and identify strategies to improve these. Second, it could assist its mobilization of donor funds by better establishing the link between the ILO's upstream work and the downstream beneficiary-focused results that many donors emphasize. Third, it can be used to trigger action or discussions that may address issues that are preventing the planned impacts. Lastly, it can help strengthen overall accountability – of the ILO and constituents – by reinforcing the message that the achievement of impact and sustainable results from projects will be monitored.

Where the ILO is involved in promoting tools that do have a more downstream impact – for example, youth entrepreneurship programmes – there is also room to do more to assess long-term impact. As this evaluation has shown, entrepreneurship training has been one of the most frequently applied youth employment strategies. Although some work has been done in the form of tracer studies and small-scale impact studies,⁷¹ the impact of SIYB training on the employment of young people is still not well understood. The need for an evaluation of this impact was included in the Call for Action (along with another ILO product, TREE) but has not yet been done. Given some of the new evidence presented by recent YEP Unit research (for example, O'Higgins, 2017) on the specific issues associated with youth entrepreneurship, this evaluation should now be a priority. It should also include in its scope a focus on the quality of employment results generated, including its role in promoting transition from the informal sector and the nature of new forms of self-employment, such as those offered through the "gig economy" and the "platform economy".

The field visits also demonstrated the difficulties in assessing the impact and sustainability of the ILO's "upstream" youth employment work, though there were some enduring impacts evident in some other projects.

The difficulties the synthesis review found in the measurement of impact and sustainability also applied in assessing youth employment work in the field visits. Interventions were relevant, often demonstrated results, and were implemented with reasonable efficiency, but impact and sustainability were still uncertain at this early stage. Examples from the field visit countries are given below. These illustrates the type of impact and sustainability issues faced more broadly in the ILO's youth employment work. Examples of the type of questions that need to be asked in future follow-up surveys (proposed above) are also given:

- **Egypt** – The ILO Country Office for Egypt in Cairo has recognized that there is a problem in the development assistance provided to youth employment in Egypt – it is highly fragmented, small in scale, duplicates effort and lacks sustainability. With the support of a key ministry, it has adopted and is promoting to other development partners a national strategy that offers a vehicle for the harmoniza-

⁷¹ For example, van Lieshout and Mehta (2017) and the studies it references.

tion of effort and improvements in scale – EYE. The logic is sound, but the initiative needs buy-in and shared ownership. An impact/sustainability question to be asked in future follow-up surveys might be: “Has EYE been formally adopted by the key stakeholders as a mechanism for policy cohesion and cooperation?”

- **Tunisia** – The AZD project implemented in four provinces of Tunisia has resulted in enduring enhancements to community infrastructure that have supported local economic development and diversification, increased production, seen new businesses established, and engaged more young people in continuing work. The model has been tested, institutional capacity to replicate it has been built and there is scope to apply the model elsewhere. However, it is currently unclear how dependent the model is on donor funds and external technical assistance (which have been in plentiful supply since the revolution). An impact/sustainability question to be asked in future follow-up surveys might be: “Has the model been funded and successfully implemented in any new locations without (or with considerably less) external support and resources?”
- **Portugal** – The ILO has supported Portugal in establishing a sustainable Youth Guarantee system that reaches out to disadvantaged young people, assesses their needs, identifies suitable employment or training offers, and evaluates results. The system will continue under an EC commitment entered into by the country, and the tools and good practices developed through the project have the potential to influence similar systems elsewhere. That said, the extent to which funding will continue to be invested in quality offers for young people and in preparatory programmes designed to help the most disadvantaged to become job-ready is not guaranteed now that youth unemployment rates have improved somewhat from the peak of the crisis still subject to the vagaries of politics. With the worst of the crisis over, there is a temptation to scale back. An impact/sustainability question to be asked in future follow-up surveys might be: “Have the quantity and quality of Youth Guarantee offers and preparatory support services been maintained over time?”
- **Sri Lanka** – The ILO’s SKILLED project has had short-term effect in four regions, developing the capacity of local training providers to meet employer needs through more relevant and effective training curriculum and delivery, and establishing new employment services where none existed previously. An impact/sustainability question to be asked in future follow-up surveys might be: “Are the training providers and employment services still active in the four regions and have their outputs and outcomes been maintained or increased?”
- **China** – The most significant examples of sustainability of ILO work in China have been the successful integration of ILO entrepreneurship products in the country, specifically SIYB and KAB. This development work fell outside the period of the evaluation. Despite participation rates being astronomically high in ILO terms (reportedly in the millions) there has been no rigorous impact evaluation. Regardless, stakeholders and constituents are rapturous in their praise of the products and believe it to be having an enormous impact.

As the country is now in a very different development stage, the ILO’s emphasis has now changed. Much of its work in the period involved collaboration on research projects (for example, youth rights at work and the apprenticeship system). An impact/sustainability question to be asked in future follow-up surveys might be: “Have there been any improvements to the apprenticeship system or to the protection of youth labour rights in China that can be linked in any way to the research projects (for example, recommendations implemented)?”

- **Peru** – As with China, the most significant example of the ILO’s youth employment work in action in Peru occurred outside the period of the evaluation (though it was technically still active in early 2012). The Joint UN Programme on Youth Employment and Migration, supported by funding from Spain, elevated youth employment as a national priority. Six years after its conclusion, the impact and sustainability of this project is still evident (see case study 6 below).

CASE STUDY 6

Sustainability of project results in Peru

The Joint Programme on Youth, Employment and Migration, funded by Spain (US\$3 million) and involving the ILO, IOM, UNIDO and the United Nations Population Fund, operated from February 2009 to May 2012. Recognizing the high youth unemployment rate at that time and surveys showing that just over half of the youth population would leave the country if given the opportunity, the project sought to promote employment and microenterprise for Peruvian youth, to manage their migration, and to create more and better opportunities for them to secure decent work.

Through national and regional government bodies and the private sector, the programme focused on increasing the coverage and efficacy of job placement, providing labour market information, managing labour migration, and providing start-up business support. It also had a strong gender focus.

The evaluation found that more than six years after its completion, its impact was still felt and that constituents saw it as a major turning point in government policy. Enduring results included:

- Diversification of youth employment interventions – Prior to the project, the focus of youth programmes was almost entirely on vocational training. Entrepreneurship and self-employment support were introduced through the project and this continues, with the Ministry of Labour playing a leading role in programme delivery.
- Establishment of the SIG-E Geographic Information System for Entrepreneurs – This is an information platform that provides market analysis for potential young entrepreneurs so they can assess likely supply and demand. The service is still active.
- The CertiJoven system – This provides young jobseekers with a one-stop shop to get all the necessary documentation they need to apply for work, such as previous work experience and police record checks. This has streamlined the process for young people and employers and is still in use.
- The institutionalization as part of public policy of earlier and longstanding ILO youth employment initiative, PROJOVEN, an employer demand-led national training programme targeting economically disadvantaged youth.
- Extension of youth employment policy advice to key decision-makers in regional governments – Since the project ended, this relationship has continued with the ILO regularly receiving requests for technical assistance from regions on the promotion of youth employment.
- Not all project initiatives were sustained. To give young people a voice in policy dialogue, a committee was formed where they could directly contribute, but this did not continue. A youth employment action plan was developed, but was not implemented. The collaboration between the UN agencies on youth employment also did not continue beyond the project.

The staff survey showed that ILO staff believe the organization is making a difference across all three pillars of the Call for Action and, in some specific areas, it is making a very substantial difference.

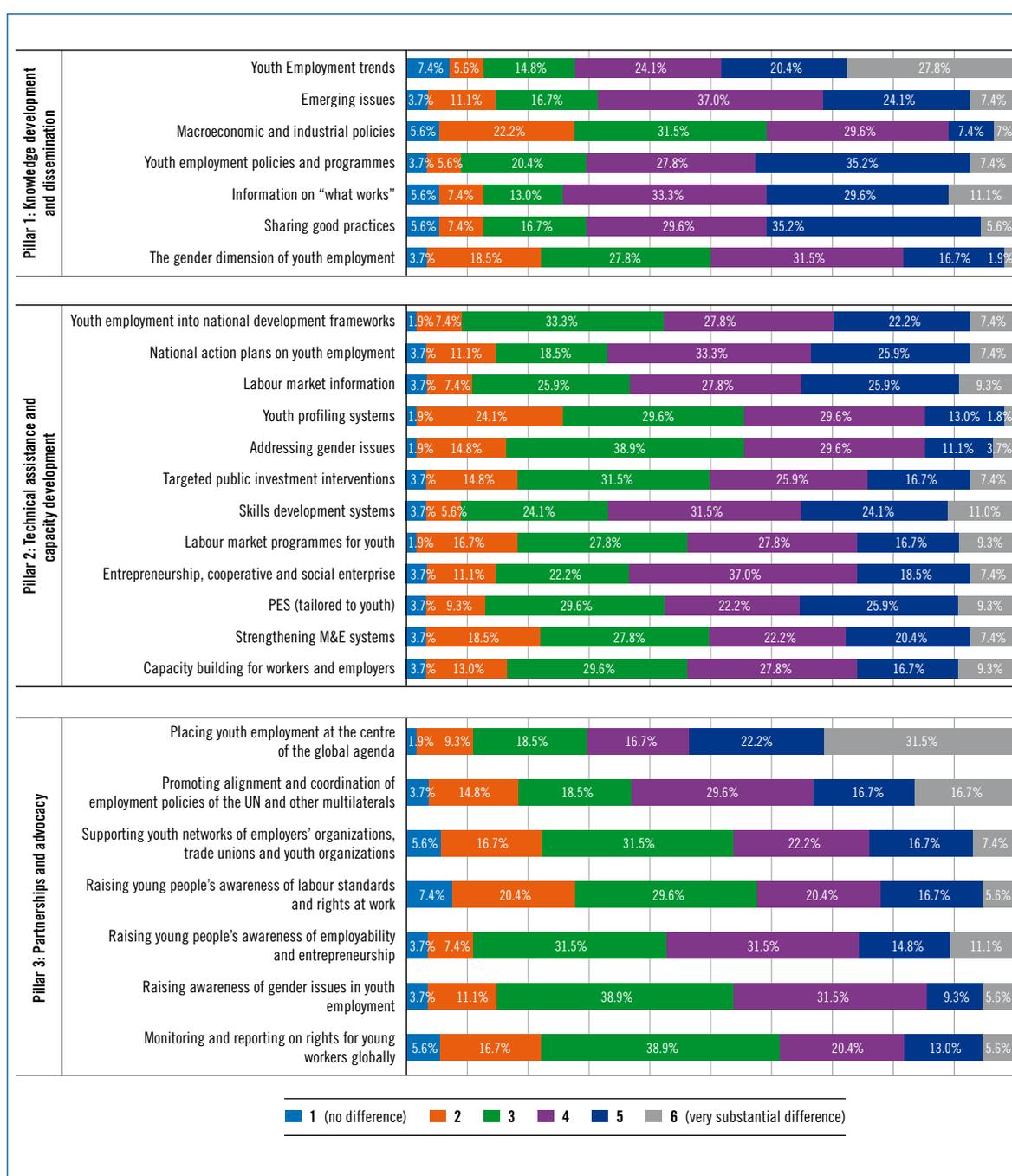
The staff survey listed all the pillars and areas of work set out in the Call for Action and asked respondents to indicate “how much of a difference” they thought the ILO had made using a six-point scale (from “no difference” to “very substantial difference”). Results are set out in figure 11.

The results showed that respondents saw the ILO as having made the greatest difference in two areas. Developing and disseminating knowledge on youth employment trends received a weighted average response of 4.28, with 27.8 per cent giving a rating of 6 or “a very substantial difference”. “Placing youth employment at the centre of the global agenda” received a weighted average response of 4.11, with 31.5 per cent giving it a rating of 6.

The next highest percentage of “very substantial difference” (6) ratings were “promoting alignment and coordination of employment policies of the UN and other multilateral institutions” (16.7 per cent), skills systems work (11.1 per cent, the highest such rating under the development cooperation and capacity-building pillar), information on “what works” (11.1 per cent) and “raising awareness of young people on the issues of employability and entrepreneurship” (11.1 per cent).

The areas of work in which staff members saw the ILO as having made the least difference were: (a) “raising awareness among young people of international labour standards and rights at work” (weighted average 3.3: 57.4 per cent gave a negative response of 3 or less, and 7.4 per cent gave the lowest “no difference” rating)⁷²; (b) “monitoring and reporting on rights for young workers globally” (weighted average of 3.3: 61.2 per cent gave a negative response of 3 or less, and 5.6 per cent gave the lowest “no difference” rating); and (c) knowledge development and dissemination relating to “employment impact of macroeconomic and industrial policies” (weighted average of 3.22: 59.3 per cent gave a negative response of 3 or less, and 5.6 per cent gave the lowest “no difference” rating).

Figure 11. Staff survey – The difference the ILO has made



⁷² Equal to the highest percentage of “no difference” responses along with “youth employment trends” which, as mentioned above, also scored the highest percentage of “very substantial difference” ratings.

4. CONCLUSIONS AND LESSONS LEARNED

4.1. CONCLUSIONS

Through the Call for Action, the ILO has played a significant role in elevating youth employment as an international development priority. It has developed knowledge of the factors influencing youth employment outcomes, including the transition from school to work, and of “what works”. It now needs to apply this knowledge in its development cooperation work, mobilizing resources and leveraging partnerships. The Global Initiative provides an opportunity to do this in the context of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development. The ILO’s unique links to constituents and its deep understanding of the issues are assets that can be used to position the organization as a global leader in the field.

New youth employment challenges are emerging (such as increasing levels of underemployment and the situation of NEETs) and the levels of informality remain extraordinarily high among youth in some regions (for example, 95 per cent in Africa). More could be done to promote work quality issues, including the promotion of youth rights at work, formalization, youth wages and conditions, and OSH. Assumptions about how current policy approaches affect the transition to formality need to be tested (for example, does entrepreneurship and self-employment training help?) and knowledge of effective practice promoted and applied in the field. The knowledge gained through the ILO’s investment in research could be used to position it as a leader in developing innovative, evidence-based solutions in youth employment. Equipped with this knowledge, the ILO should be in an ideal position to mobilize funds from donors.

4.2. LESSONS LEARNED

Youth engagement and relevance: While the Call for Action rightly identified the need to better engage with young people, and there were some very good examples of the ILO doing this (especially early in the period), more work is needed to ensure that the youth voice is heard. Without mechanisms to hear from youth – in all their diverse circumstances and backgrounds, not just elite, highly-educated youth – there is a real risk that policy will be developed in a vacuum or that vital issues will be misdiagnosed. The evaluation found that constituents were often frustrated by youth labour market problems (for example, inability to attract young people to some sectors despite high unemployment), but might be misguided in the assumptions they are making about their causes. As the Call for Action stressed: “Youth are part of the solution.”

Outputs versus outcomes in some ILO youth employment work: As some of the ILO’s work is more distant from the youth employment results that matter most, care is needed to ensure that this work at least does not lose sight of these results and, wherever possible, can materially contribute to their achievement. However relevant their content may be, the publication of a report and the completion of an action plan are outputs of the ILO’s work, not outcomes. Past P&B indicators may have reinforced an output focus

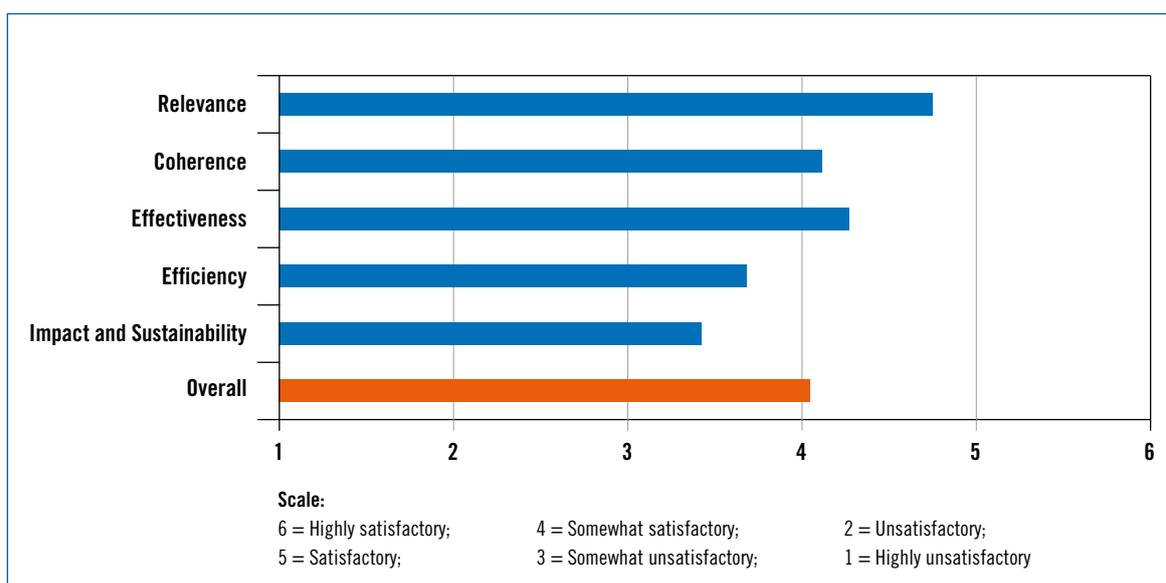
(for example, counting as results the completion of plans which, as the evaluation found, can sometimes be left to gather dust). The application of knowledge needs to be strengthened wherever possible. Key findings from research need to inform the development and review of the ILO's own products, underpin technical assistance, and be actively promoted to constituents. The implementation of action plans needs to be monitored and constituents held to account for commitments they have made.

“Upstream” policy work requires a longer-term view of performance: The ILO's measurement of the impact and sustainability of its “upstream” policy and institutional development work is a weakness that needs to be systematically addressed. There is no longer-term view taken of the impact and sustainability of this work, especially through development cooperation projects. If the ILO wants to truly measure the value it adds, final project evaluations (conducted before the projects have even ended) should not be the end of their performance story. Comprehensive longitudinal studies may not be feasible, but asking a few simple questions further down the track may be all that is required.

4.3. RATINGS

The following ratings take into account the independent consultant's assessment (50 per cent of total score for all criteria), the synthesis review of youth employment project evaluations (25 per cent for all criteria except effectiveness) and the average scores of the staff and partner/constituent surveys (25 per cent for all criteria except effectiveness). In the case of effectiveness, P&B results were also included – for these, the surveys, synthesis review and P&B together comprised 50 per cent of the score.

Figure 12. Overall evaluation ratings by criterion



5. RECOMMENDATIONS

Recommendation 1

Operationalize the lessons learned from the ILO's past knowledge development work in the design of development cooperation projects and in the refinement of ILO tools and products. Focus new knowledge development work on responses to the situation of youth in the changing world of work.

The ILO needs to take stock of the key lessons from the research and seek increasingly creative ways to incorporate these into project design to maximize their effectiveness. These lessons should also inform the development of ILO tools and products, ensuring that they are optimized for young people. Future research needs to explore the opportunities and risks for young people posed by new developments in the world of work.

Responsible units	Priority	Time implication	Resource implication
EMPLOYMENT, DDG/P	Medium	June 2019	Medium

Recommendation 2

Give more attention to developing and applying practical tools and approaches that promote employment quality and equity.

The ILO is already doing some significant work in these areas, but more could be done. Promoting good practice in gender-inclusive youth employment project design and implementation should be ongoing, backed by “what works” findings if they are available. The same applies to strengthening understanding of what works for the most disadvantaged young people and actively advocating for their increased participation. Close cooperation with the Conditions of Work and Equality Department (WORKQUALITY) is needed in order to identify future areas of cooperation.

Responsible units	Priority	Time implication	Resource implication
EMPLOYMENT, WORKQUALITY, GOVERNANCE, DDG/P	Medium	December 2018 (to identify priorities)	Low

Recommendation 3

Give more attention to the issue of cost-effectiveness of interventions in future “what works” research and pilot projects and programmes.

Given the scarcity of resources available to many countries to address youth employment issues, the question for many is not just “what works?” but “how much is it and is it worth it?” Some items on the Call for Action menu may be more expensive, but the return on such investments in youth employment may (or may not) be justifiable. From the policy-maker’s perspective, more research on this could be useful.

Responsible units	Priority	Time implication	Resource implication
EMPLOYMENT, DDG/P	Medium	December 2019	Medium

Recommendation 4

Review and find opportunities to support youth engagement, especially at country-level in policy and programme development.

Understanding the aspirations and mind-set of young people is vital for the formulation of effective youth policies. Not all the countries visited in the evaluation had mechanisms in place to engage effectively with youth and in order to assimilate their input into policy and programme design. The ILO should promote effective models for this engagement through tripartite constituents and support development capacity initiatives to implement these.

Responsible units	Priority	Time implication	Resource implication
EMPLOYMENT, DDG/P, Regional/ country offices, DDG/FOP	Medium	June 2019	High

Recommendation 5

In the development and appraisal phase of new development cooperation projects, ensure that all relevant technical inputs are obtained, and ensure that the right choices are made in how project outcomes can best be achieved and what ILO programme approaches should be applied.

Careful consideration of the full range of programme approaches and tools that might be applied in interventions is needed. This allows for the best possible outcome, as opposed to a result of internal competition between different ILO units. Creative combinations of approaches should be encouraged, which should then be supported by unit headquarters that would collaborate in the provision of technical support.

Responsible units	Priority	Time implication	Resource implication
EMPLOYMENT, DDG/P PARDEV, DDG/FOP	High	Immediate	Low

Recommendation 6

Establish a mechanism to systematically measure ex post the impact and sustainability of the ILO’s “up-stream” (policy and institutional development) work in youth employment.

The impact and sustainability of the ILO’s DC work in influencing policy and reforming institutions can only be assessed after some time has passed. The ILO should develop a list of projects that require follow-

up to track results and sustainability. These should be followed up annually by means of a survey that poses questions relating to the specific long-term outcomes envisaged for each project.

Responsible units	Priority	Time implication	Resource implication
EMPLOYMENT, DDG/P, EVAL	Medium	June 2019	Medium

Recommendation 7

Renew the Call for Action, stress the importance of continuing action, and update its messages to address emerging issues in the youth labour market and the need to prepare young people for the changing future of work context.

The velocity of labour market change is such that past assumptions about youth employment already need to be challenged and reconsidered. The ILO's leadership position in youth employment is not guaranteed. It now needs to build on its existing knowledge base, reframe its youth employment strategy to address current challenges, and continue to lead the debate even more vigorously on how best to ensure that young people can access decent work into the future. As the seven-year timeframe of the ILO's youth employment strategy ends in 2019, this is an opportune moment for the Organization to recommit itself to renewed action on youth employment and ensure this responsibility is supported by appropriate resources.

Responsible units	Priority	Time implication	Resource implication
EMPLOYMENT, DDG/P	High	June 2019	Medium

6. OFFICE RESPONSE

The Office acknowledges the findings of the independent evaluation pertaining to the ILO's overall strategy and action to enhance youth employment prospects. It welcomes the recommendations as useful advice to strengthen its response to a growing demand for support from constituents and, eventually, to renew the Call for Action in order to tackle a persistent global youth employment challenge. It also appreciates that some of the considerations in the evaluation report point to organizational issues which extend beyond the youth employment area.

Recommendation 1

The Office will continue to explore emerging issues in youth labour markets. It will also intensify its efforts to turn research outcomes into technical guidelines and training tools for project design and broader application, as demonstrated by the "Youth Employment Toolbox" (currently under development).

Recommendation 2

With regard to employment quality and equity, it is important to restate the scope of the work done by the Office on these issues through research, global advocacy, policy advice and training delivery and by bringing up job quality aspect in international debates (the Group of Twenty (G20), BRICS, the UN, and the European Union). The Office will build on these premises and reinforce intra-departmental collaboration in strengthening its action on decent work for youth, including for the most disadvantaged groups.

Recommendation 3

International literature remains relatively weak with regard to the cost-effectiveness of the various types of youth employment interventions. The Office will address this gap by building on previous work and undertaking new targeted research for more informed decision-making. The outcome of such research will be integrated in practical tools and approaches, as discussed under Recommendation 1.

Recommendation 4

As recommended, the Office will maintain and strengthen its dialogue with young people, including through tripartite constituents and youth-led organizations. Renewed efforts will be deployed to better reflect the diverse youth needs and aspirations in national employment strategies and programmes, includ-

ing in international commitments. The engagement platform devised by the Global Initiative on Decent Jobs for Youth will also facilitate a broader conversation with young people.

Recommendation 5

The ILO has been promoting a holistic approach to youth employment that cuts across different areas of expertise. In moving forward, it will pursue more integrated, innovative solutions in development co-operation, by adapting its intervention models and project management measures based on examples of good practice.

Recommendation 6

Renewed attention will be given to the ex-post assessment of the long-term effects of ILO interventions. In this respect, the Office has recently taken some initiatives, including the establishment of an Impact Assessment Task Force within the Employment Policy Department and the development of methodologies for tracking progress in SDG indicators relevant to youth employment.

Recommendation 7

The Office welcomes this recommendation. In alignment with the ILO's Future of Work Centenary Initiative, it will work to adjust its strategy and sustain resource mobilization efforts for renewed action on youth employment. The Global Initiative on Decent Jobs for Youth also offers opportunities to leverage ILO work and influence decision-making in the framework of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development.

APPENDIX I.

SOME YE PUBLICATIONS AND TOOLS PRODUCED IN THE PERIOD OF THE EVALUATION

2012	<p>Global Employment Trends for Youth 2012</p> <p>Surfing the labour market: Job search skills for young people [Corbanese & Rosas]</p> <p>Tackling the youth employment crisis: A macroeconomic perspective [Matsumoto; Hengge; & Islam]</p>
2013	<p>Global Employment Trends for Youth 2013</p> <p>Enhancing Youth Employability: The Importance of Core Work Skills</p> <p>Monitoring and evaluation of youth employment programmes: A learning guide</p> <p>Youth labour market analysis: A training package on youth labour market information</p> <p>Enhancing youth employability: What? Why? And How? Guide to core work skills [Brewer]</p>
2014	<p>Review of policies for youth employment in the Russian Federation</p> <p>Inclusion of youth with disabilities: The business case</p>
2015	<p>Global Employment Trends for Youth 2015</p> <p>Fiscal Policy and the youth labour market [Ebell & O'Higgins]</p> <p>What does NEETs mean and why is the concept so easily misinterpreted? Work4Youth Project [Elder]</p> <p>The Youth Guarantee programme in Europe: Features, implementation and challenges [Escudero & Mourelo]</p> <p>Guidelines for Reviews of Policies for Youth Employment [Corbanese & Rosas]</p> <p>Impact evaluation of active labour market programs in FYR Macedonia: key findings [Mojsoko-Blazevski & Petreski]</p> <p>Enhancing women's entrepreneurship in Kenya [Stangl; Farley; Sievwright; Brady & Fritz]</p> <p>Access to Finance and Enterprise growth: Evidence from an experiment in Uganda [Fiala]</p> <p>Self-employment programmes for young people : a review of the context, policies and evidence [Burchell et al.]</p>
2016	<p>Do Youth Employment Programs Improve Labor Market Outcomes? A Systematic Review [Kluve et al.]</p> <p>World Employment and Social Outlook 2016: Trends for youth</p> <p>Rights@work for youth: Decent work for young people: Facilitator's guide and toolkit [Corbanese & Rosas]</p> <p>Structural transformation to boost youth labour demand in sub-Saharan Africa: The role of agriculture, rural areas and territorial development [Losch]</p>

2017	<p>Global Employment Trends for Youth 2017</p> <p>Youth employment policy and implementation of the Youth Guarantee in Latvia, Portugal and Spain - Assessment of the technical support provided by the ILO</p> <p>Youth Employment in Europe: Catalogue of Products</p> <p>Rising to the YE Challenge – New evidence on key policy issues [O'Higgins]</p> <p>Labour market institutions and youth labour markets: Minimum wages and youth employment revisited [O'Higgins & Moscariello]</p> <p>Guide to International Labour Standards and Rights at Work Concerning Young People</p> <p>Survey on Youth and the Future of Work</p> <p>Toolkit for Quality Apprenticeships</p> <p>The impact of skills training on the financial behaviour, employability and educational choices of rural young people: findings from a randomized controlled trial in Morocco [Bausch; Dyer; Gardiner; Kluge; & Kovacevic]</p> <p>Empowering young women through Business and Vocational Training: Evidence from a field intervention in rural Egypt [Elsayed & Roushdy]</p> <p>Employment Situation in Latin America and the Caribbean - The transition of young people from school to the labour market</p>
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APPENDIX II. YEP UNIT WORK PLAN AND OUTPUTS

OUTPUTS		2014–15	2016–17
Knowledge development and dissemination	Employment trends		
	G20 Brief (June 2012), GET Jan 2013, GET Youth 2013	Global employment trends for youth (GET Youth) 2015 finalized and disseminated	"Global Employment Trends for Youth 2017" published and disseminated (EMPLOYMENT, RESEARCH, DCOMM)
	Work4Youth programme (W4Y): School-to-work transition surveys (STWS) in 28 countries	14 STWS reports produced and disseminated	13 STWS national reports (Colombia, Dominican Republic, FYR Macedonia, Madagascar, Malawi, Moldova, Montenegro, Palestine, Republic of Congo, Serbia, Togo, Uganda, Ukraine) published
	W4Y: Regional reports on youth labour market and STWS	3 STWS thematic reports (education; youth and rural development; youth and informal employment)	1 STWS regional report published (Middle East and North Africa)
	W4Y national validation/dissemination events	W4Y national validation/dissemination events in 19 countries	2 STWS global thematic reports published (young and female; youth financial inclusion). YEP and SOCIAL FINANCE UNIT
	W4Y first regional meeting in Addis Ababa on "Labour market transitions of young women and men in Sub-Saharan Africa"	W4Y: 4 regional workshops held	6 national STWS report validation/dissemination events convened (Dominican Republic, Macedonia, Montenegro, Republic of Congo, Serbia, Ukraine).
	Review of strategies to address adolescent workers in hazardous occupations (IPEC)	W4Y Global Research Symposium (including compendium of papers)	
	Research papers (2) on contractual arrangements for youth in Europe and Latin America	At work but earning less: trends in decent pay and minimum wages for young people (WP)	W4Y second Global Research Symposium
	Empirical research on impact of policy and regulatory measures on decent work for youth	YouthStat maintained	Employment Situation in Latin America and the Caribbean: The transition of young people from school to the labour market (ILO ROLAC)
	Comparative legal analysis on differentiated working conditions of young workers		Youth and the future of work survey (on youth aspirations and expectations)
	Global database on youth labour market indicators (YouthStat)		"Contractual arrangements for young workers"; in ILO publication "Rising to the youth employment challenge". YouthStat maintained

OUTPUTS		2012–13	2014–15	2016–17
Emerging issues	Framework for addressing child labour – youth employment linkages (IPEC)		World Report on Child Labour 2015 - Paving the way to decent work for young people	Major publication on "Rising to the youth employment challenge - New evidence on key policy issues" (YEP, CEPOL, INWORK, LABOUR-LAW). Covering, among others, (i) systems for learning and work, (ii) informality and job quality
	G20 paper on quality apprenticeships		Promoting youth employment through activation strategies (WP)	Work4Youth: Thematic report on "Youth and informal employment"
	"Enhancing youth employability: What? Why? And How? - Guide to core work skills		Educated unemployed (WP)	Policy brief: Early intervention measures and youth employment
	Skills for Employment Policy Brief - Enhancing youth employability: the importance of core work skills		Decent work for youth in the MENA (WP)	Policy brief: Outreach strategies for young NEEETs
	Skills for Employment Policy Brief - Increasing the employability of disadvantaged youth		Labour demand and social dialogue: Two binding constraints for decent work for youth in the Arab Region.	Policy brief: Activation strategies for youth employment
	Upgrading informal apprenticeship - A resource guide for Africa			
	Global alliance on apprenticeships (GAN) established. ILO associated.			
	Research on systems for youth learning and work (apprenticeships)			
	Handbook on targeted labour market policies for disadvantaged youth			
	Analysis of policies and programmes in Europe			
	Draft paper on social dialogue on youth employment			
	Paper on youth employment and green jobs			
	Empirical research on impact of demand-side interventions, fiscal policies and financial inclusion in five countries		WP on "Fiscal policy and the youth labour market"	WP on "Structural transformation to boost youth labour demand in sub-Saharan Africa: The role of agriculture, rural areas and territorial development"
	WP on "Tackling the youth employment crisis: A macro-economic perspective"			"Macroeconomic and sectoral issues in youth employment policy". In ILO publication "Rising to the youth employment challenge".
Macroeconomic and industrial policies				

OUTPUTS		2012-13	2014-15	2016-17
Youth employment policies and programmes	Regional platform for multi-country peer reviews (LUKOIL project)	WP on "What works in wage subsidies for young people"	Working paper on: "Labour market institutions complementarities and youth labour market outcomes" (INWORK)	
	Five country reviews of policies for youth employment (inception)	Youth guarantees of Cyprus and Portugal approved and implemented (inputs by YEP)	WP on "Labour market institutions and youth labour markets": Minimum wages and youth employment revisited"	
	Global database on policies for youth employment (YouthPol)	"Guidelines for reviews of policies for youth employment" (YEP)	Working paper on "Self-employment programmes for young people : a review of the context, policies and evidence"	
	Youth Employment Inventory - repository of youth employment programmes	5 "Jobs and Skills for Youth" policy reviews and 3 regional (AP, LAC, EUROPE) comparative analysis finalized and disseminated	Working paper on: "Meta-analysis of the effects of minimum wages on youth employment" (INWORK)	
		YouthPol - maintenance	3 technical briefs on : 1. "Youth informality: formalising the informally employed youth"; 2. "Boosting youth employment through public employment programmes"; 3. "The role of wage subsidies in promoting youth employment".	
		Youth Employment Inventory (new country studies added)	Two reports on evidence-based programming and policymaking for youth employment are published (Egypt and Jordan) - Taqeen initiative	
			"Jobs and skills for Youth: Review of policies for youth employment" 3 reviews printed and disseminated (China, Mongolia, Nepal)	
			YouthPol: 8 new countries are added to this global database on youth employment policies and 20 policy summaries are published (GATEWAY, INFOTEC, ROAP)	
			Youth Employment Inventory (new country studies added)	
	Evaluation	Meta-evaluation of youth employment programmes in LAC	A systematic review and meta-analysis of youth employment interventions is produced and disseminated (analytical work carried out; publication to be finalised in 2016)	"Interventions to improve the labour market outcomes of youth: a systematic review". Produced in collaboration with Humboldt University Berlin and RWI, The World Bank, and University of Oxford
	Meta-evaluations of youth employment programmes in other regions	Impact assessments of youth employment programs are designed and implemented, and their findings disseminated (ACIZ)		Two follow-up reports of impact evaluations of youth employment programmes are published (Morocco and Egypt)
	Evaluation of youth entrepreneurship education - Start and Improve Your Business Global Tracer Study 2011 (ENTERPRISE)	The Fund for Evaluation in Youth Employment is managed, maintained, and seed funding awarded for impact research that develops knowledge on youth employment.		

OUTPUTS		2012–13	2014–15	2016–17
Good practice	Evaluation of youth entrepreneurship programmes in East Africa (YEF)	The Youth Guarantee Programme in Europe: Features, implementation and challenges (RESEARCH)	Project-level Women's Empowerment in Agriculture Index (pro-WEAI) is piloted in an evaluation of a labour market programme	Start and Improve Your Business Global Tracer Study 2011–15 (ENTERPRISE)
	Good practice database	Good practice database	The European Youth Guarantee: A systematic review of its implementation across countries (RESEARCH)	New platform on What Works in Youth Employment (WWYE) established and maintained
	Youth Employment Inventory (YEI) – repository of youth employment programmes	YEI maintained	Good practices on youth employment and migration disseminated	YEI maintained. New country studies (e.g. China and Jordan)
	MDG-F on youth employment and migration / Knowledge Management Facility: to support mutual learning and South-South cooperation	AC/2: 'What works in youth employment' – A series of knowledge sharing events on "What works on youth Employment" to extract policy recommendations on the following themes: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What works on employment services for youth and why? Geneva, Switzerland. • What work on youth transition to formality? Lima, Peru • Boosting youth employment through public works. Addis Ababa, Ethiopia. • Quality apprenticeships and work experience measures to improve the school-to-work transition, Phnom Penh, Cambodia. • What Works to Boost Labour Demand for Youth: The Role of Structural Transformation, Livingstone, Zambia. • What Works for Youth Employment in the Transition to a Green Economy? Wuxi, China. 	1 regional workshop held on "What works to boost employability of youth and ease the school to work transition" (countries invited: Côte d'Ivoire, Ethiopia, Kenya, Nigeria, Rwanda, Senegal, Sudan, Tanzania, Zambia)	
	Global knowledge sharing workshop on youth employment and migration	Policy impact and influence plans are implemented in selected MENA countries to support dissemination of evidence and engagement with constituents (Taqeem initiative)	Policy impact and influence plans are implemented in selected MENA countries to support dissemination of evidence and engagement with constituents (Taqeem initiative)	ILO and INSEAD Evidence Symposium: Promoting Entrepreneurship for Inclusive Growth and Decent Jobs (Taqeem)
	Online platform of the Youth-to-Youth Fund disseminates good practice	EVIDENCE SYMPOSIUM: Increasing Youth Productivity in the Middle East and North Africa (Taqeem)		

OUTPUTS	
2012–13	2014–15
2016–17	
Technical assistance and capacity building	
National development frameworks and employment policy	<p>Guidance note on Mainstreaming Youth Employment in National Employment Policies (draft)</p> <p>Guidelines on reviews of policies for youth employment finalized</p> <p>Toolkit for Conducting Voluntary Peer Reviews on Youth Employment Policies</p>
National action plans	<p>Support offered to the formulation of NAP-YE (e.g. Uganda, Zambia, Samoa, Sri Lanka)</p> <p>Support offered to the formulation of NAP-YE (e.g. Ivory Coast, Macedonia)</p>
Comprehensive labour market programmes	<p>The Programme operations manual finalized and disseminated</p> <p>A guide for UN joint programming on youth employment and migration published (MDG-F programme)</p>
Labour market information	<p>See also under "knowledge"</p> <p>1 training workshop on "School to work transition data analysis for evidence-based policy" conducted at ITCILO</p>
Public employment services	<p>See also under "knowledge"</p> <p>1 training workshop on "School to work transition data analysis for evidence-based policy" conducted at ITCILO</p> <p>Guidance note on "Employment services that work for youth"</p>
Profiling systems	<p>Mobile app on job search skills for young people developed</p> <p>Guide for developing national outreach strategies for inactive young people (EC/ILO Action)</p> <p>Profiling youth labour market disadvantage: A review of approaches in Europe</p>
Public investment and employment programmes	<p>Capacity building training programme for improving targeting of youth employment programmes through profiling</p>

OUTPUTS		2012–13	2014–15	2016–17
Skills Development Systems	Various tools and services (SKILLS; YEP)	Various tools and services (SKILLS; YEP)	Various tools and services (SKILLS; YEP)	Various tools and services (SKILLS; YEP)
				ILO Toolkit for Quality Apprenticeship - Volume I Guide for Policy Makers Developing quality traineeships for young people (EC/ILO Action) Work Integrated Learning' model for vocational education designed and pilot tested in Malawi (SKILLS)
Entrepreneurship, cooperative and social enterprise development	Various tools and services (ENTERPRISE)	Various tools and services (ENTERPRISE)	Various tools and services (ENTERPRISE)	Various tools and services (ENTERPRISE)
	The YEN Marketplace (E-Coaching programme for young entrepreneurs)		The Youth-to-Youth Fund Toolkit (YEN)	
Comprehensive labour market programmes			International course on Decent Work for Youth developed and held at ITCILO (different ILO departments and units involved)	Toolkit on Decent Work for Roma Youth (ILO Budapest; with inputs by YEP)
				One regional Evidence Symposium and one country-level Policy Lab on youth employment are conducted to support hands-on technical assistance on design and implementation of youth employment interventions (Taqem)
Youth rights at work	Rights@work for youth - Facilitator's guide and toolkit	Rights@work for youth - Facilitator's guide and toolkit (enhanced, translated)	Rights@work training events at country level (e.g. China)	Rights@work for youth - Facilitator's guide and toolkit (enhanced, translated)
				"Guide to international labour standards and rights at work concerning young people" (joint effort by the ILS Department and Employment Policy Department).
M&E	"Measuring Success of Youth Livelihood Interventions - A practical Guide to Monitoring and Evaluation". YEN in collaboration with The World Bank, International Youth Foundation and Understanding Children's Work.		Technical assistance is provided for the design and implementation of impact assessments (Taqem: selected countries in MENA region)	Rights@work training events at country level (e.g. Cambodia, Indonesia)
	Monitoring and evaluation of youth employment programmes - A learning package. In the framework of the MDG-F programme		ITCILO int. training courses on performance monitoring and impact assessment of youth employment interventions	Training guide on monitoring and evaluation in youth employment is updated - The new "Guide on Measuring Decent Jobs for Youth" will be published in early 2018.
				Monitoring the performance of Youth Guarantees: A learning package (EC/ILO action)

OUTPUTS		
2012-13	2014-15	
2016-17		
ITCILO int. training courses on performance monitoring and impact assessment of youth employment interventions	Evaluation Clinics are conducted to provide hands-on training on evaluation techniques (Taqeem)	Towards a methodology to estimate the social costs and benefits of the Youth Guarantee. A background paper (EC/ILO Action)
		Capacity building on performance monitoring of Youth Guarantee in Portugal, Spain and Latvia (EC/ILO Action)
		Technical assistance is provided for the design and implementation of impact assessments (selected countries in MENA and China)
		ITCILO int. training courses on performance monitoring and impact assessment of youth employment interventions
		One Evaluation Clinic is conducted to provide hands-on training on monitoring and evaluation techniques (Taqeem)
		One Community of Practice Peer Learning Event is held for youth-serving organizations to improve results measurement practices (Taqeem)
		Training and technical assistance is provided to at least 6 organizations for the design and implementation of impact assessments and for improved results measurement practices (Taqeem)
		The training package on "Decent work for youth" updated, upgraded, and translated for use at international and regional levels.
		New "Academy on Youth Employment" developed and held at ITCILO in 2016. The Academy builds on the the DW4Y package. Involving different ILO departments and units. Good end-of-course evaluation results.
		YEP inputs to ITCILO courses for workers and employers
		Decent work for youth course for constituents from Portuguese-speaking countries (ITC/ILO)
		ITCILO training course on youth employment in fragile settings
		ITCILO training on "Mainstreaming youth employment into AfDB operations" (for AfDB staff)
Capacity building (general)	ITCILO: various training modules and international courses on youth employment promotion	
	A capacity building strategy for youth employment under the AC12 developed in collaboration with ITCILO	
	The training package on "Decent work for youth" developed in collaboration with ITCILO	
	International course on Decent Work for Youth developed and held at ITCILO (different ILO departments and units involved)	
	YEP inputs to ITCILO courses for workers and employers	
	ITCILO training on "Mainstreaming youth employment into AfDB operations" (for AfDB staff)	

OUTPUTS		2012–13	2014–15	2016–17
OTHERS (CPOs and centrally-managed projects framing service provision in different thematic areas)	CPO-related (Indicator 2.5) : Policy/technical advice and training services.	CPO-related (Indicator 2.5) : Policy/technical advice and training services.	CPO-related (Indicator 2.5: Policy/technical advice and training services.	CPO-related (Indicators 1.2 and 4.3): Policy/technical advice and training services. Results reported for 34 target countries. Support also provided to non-target countries, as appropriate.
	MDG Achievement Fund (MDG-F) Programme on Youth Employment and Migration	MDG Achievement Fund (MDG-F) Programme on Youth Employment and Migration	MDG Achievement Fund (MDG-F) Programme on Youth Employment and Migration	ILO and Mastercard Foundation Programme "Work4Youth": STWT research and knowledge dissemination
	ILO and Mastercard Foundation Programme "Work4Youth": STWT research and knowledge dissemination	ILO and Mastercard Foundation Programme "Work4Youth": STWT research and knowledge dissemination	ILO and Mastercard Foundation Programme "Work4Youth": STWT research and knowledge dissemination	The ILO/Sida Partnership on Youth Employment was active in 6 countries (Jordan, Morocco, Tunisia, Paraguay, Moldova, and Cambodia)
	LUKOIL project in CIS countries	LUKOIL project in CIS countries	The ILO/Sida Partnership on Youth Employment was active in 10 countries (Sudan, Zambia, Jordan, Burkina Faso, Morocco, Ecuador, Uruguay, Samoa, Sri Lanka, Zimbabwe) and supported the implementation of the strategy of AC12.	LUKOIL project in CIS countries
	Taqeem initiative in MENA region	LUKOIL project in CIS countries	LUKOIL project in CIS countries	Taqeem initiative in MENA region (ILO/IFAD)
		Taqeem initiative in MENA region (ILO/IFAD)	Taqeem initiative in MENA region (ILO/IFAD)	EC/ILO Action on Youth Guarantees in Spain, Portugal and Latvia

OUTPUTS		2012-13	2014-15	2016-17
Partnerships and advocacy	Global leadership	ILO played as an active member of the <i>UN Inter-Agency Network on Youth Development</i> (IANYD).	ILO played as an active member of the <i>UN Inter-Agency Network on Youth Development</i> (IANYD).	ILO as IANYD co-chair for the period March 2017 - March 2018, and among penholders of the new UN Youth Strategy.
		The UN-System-Wide Action Plan on Youth (Youth-SWAP) including a cluster on youth employment and entrepreneurship adopted in 2013.	ILO acted as lead agency for the Youth-SWAP cluster and working group on employment and entrepreneurship.	ILO acted as lead agency for the Youth-SWAP cluster and working group on employment and entrepreneurship.
		Global and regional partnerships for decent work for youth established within the multi-lateral system under ILO leadership	ILO involved in HLCIP joint initiative on decent jobs for youth (inter-agency)	Official launch of the <i>Global Initiative on Decent Jobs for Youth</i> in Feb. 2016. Secretariat established at the ILO HQs.
		UN Joint Programmes on youth employment and entrepreneurship implemented under ILO leadership in 15 countries (see TA sheet) (on youth employment and migration under MDG-F?)	ILO promoting decent work through international forums (G20/Y20, BRICS, others)	ILO promoting decent work through international forums (G20/Y20, BRICS)
Networking		Regional partnerships are set in place to promote youth employment and investments in understanding what works	Regional partnerships are set in place to promote youth employment and investments in understanding what works	Taqeem Council: collaboration is strengthened to promote regional partnerships on youth employment in the Middle East and North Africa
		Promoting alignment and coordination of employment policies of the United Nations and other multilateral institutions INTERAGENCIES		"United for youth employment in Cambodia": UN joint programme led by ILO and involving UNESCO, UNICEF, UNDP and UNV. Sponsored by SDC.
		Networked with youth-led organisations at global, regional and national level (e.g. MGCY, ICMYO, YMCA, OJ, EYF)	Networked with youth-led organisations	Networked with youth-led organisations
		Decent Work for Youth - a platform set for youth engagement	Decent Work for Youth platform (maintenance)	Decent Work for Youth platform (maintenance)
Advocacy		Attended events organised by/jointly with youth organizations	Attended events organised by/jointly with youth organizations	Attended events organised by/jointly with youth organizations
		2012: regional consultations and global <i>Youth Employment Forum</i> at ILO Geneva	ILO Website on youth employment platform maintained and constantly updated	National Youth Forums on Youth Employment carried out by the Ibero-American Youth Organization (OIU) in coordination with the ILO
		2012: ILC adopts "Call for action" on youth employment.	CD-ROM containing youth employment-related material finalized and disseminated to a mixed audience	ILO Website on youth employment platform maintained and constantly updated
		ILO Website on youth employment platform maintained and constantly updated	Advocacy through SAYE Initiative and Youth Founders Group	New set of communication materials: YEP brochure, presentations, leaflets, etc.
	Work4Youth global photo contest	Participation in major events e.g. ECOSOC Youth Forum	New ILO infoStories on youth employment	

OUTPUTS	
2012–13	2014–15
<p>World4Youth animated public service announcement (PSA) aired by CNN and Euronews</p>	<p>First Arab States Regional South-South Development Expo (Doha, 2014) - ILO Solution Forum: Promoting Youth Employment through South-South and Triangular Cooperation in the Arab States</p>
<p>Organised/attended youth employment-related events (see examples hereunder)</p> <p><i>World of Work Summit: Decent Jobs for Youth</i>. During ILC session 2016.</p> <p><i>The Future of Work We Want: A Global Dialogue</i> - The youth perspective. ILO Geneva. 2017.</p> <p><i>YEMA Conference: The Future of Youth and Employment in North Africa</i>. Held at ILO Geneva in 2017.</p> <p>Advocacy through SAYE Initiative and Youth Founders Group</p> <p>Participation in major events e.g. ECOSOC Youth Forum</p> <p>Participation in south-south and triangular cooperation activities</p> <p>Global South-South Development Expo 2017: ILO Solution Forum on Skills Development, Youth Employment in the framework of South-South and triangular Cooperation</p> <p>Call for action promoted through publications, conferences, training and knowledge-sharing events at various levels.</p> <p>Social media coverage</p>	<p>Media and social campaign implemented to spread messages of Call for Action</p> <p>Social media coverage</p>
<p>Media events and press featured messages from the Call for Action</p> <p>Social media coverage: Messages of Call for Action disseminated through YE Facebook and ILO Youth twitter account</p>	<p>Media events and press featured messages from the Call for Action</p> <p>Social media coverage: Messages of Call for Action disseminated through YE Facebook and ILO Youth twitter account</p>
<p>Promotion of the Call for Action</p>	<p>Promotion of the Call for Action</p>

APPENDIX III.

LIST OF PERSONS INTERVIEWED/CONSULTED

ILO – HEAD OFFICE (32)

Geneva HQ	
Sukti Dasgupta	Chief, Employment Policy Department
Valter Nebuloni	Head, Youth Employment Programme
Vic van Vuuren	Director, Enterprises Department
Sangheon Lee	Director, Employment Policy Department
Susana Puerto	Senior Youth Employment Specialist
Paul Comyn	Skills and Employability Specialist
Mohammed Mwamadzingo	ACTRAV
Ariel Castro	ACTRAV
Nancy Leppink	Chief of Labour Administration
Niall O'Higgins	Senior Research Specialist, Youth Employment Programme
Drew Gardiner	Youth Employment Specialist
André Bogui	Director, PROGRAM
Giovanna Rossignotti	Deputy Director, PROGRAM
Florencio Gudiño	Programme Analyst, PROGRAM
Federico Negro	Crisis Response Specialist
Maurizio Dierckxens	CEPOL
Brigitte Zug-Castillo	Senior Advisor, ILOAIDS
Gianni Rosas (phone)	Director, ILO Office for Italy and San Marino
Frederic Lapeyre	DEVINVEST
Aurelio Parisotto	Head, CEPOL
Michael Mwasikakata	Senior ALMP and PES Specialist
Jean Francois Klein	Employment department Management and Coordination Unit
Dorothea Schmidt-Klau	Employment department Management and Coordination Unit
Srinivas Reddy	Chief, Skills and Employability Branch
Jim Windell	Senior Skills and Employability Specialist

Valentina Barucci	Technical Officer, Skills and Employability Branch
Christine Hoffman	Skills and Employability Specialist
Azita Berar Awad	Past Director, Employment Policy Department
Philippe Marcadent (phone)	Chief, Inclusive Labour Markets, INWORK
Christine Hoffman	Skills Specialist (Formerly DWT, Cairo)
José María Ramirez (phone)	Senior Programme and Operations Officer, FUNDAMENTALS
Ricardo Furman	Senior Evaluation Officer, FUNDAMENTALS

ITUC AND IOE (3)

Ester Busser	Assistant Director, International Trade Union Congress, Geneva
Maria Tsirantonaki (phone)	International Trade Union Congress, Brussels
Shea Gopaul (phone)	Executive Director, Global Apprenticeship Network

THAILAND (12)

Matthieu Cognac	Youth Employment Specialist, DWT Bangkok
Graeme Buckley	Director, DWT Bangkok
Panudda Boonpala	Deputy Regional Director, Asia-Pacific
Pamornrat Pringsulaka	Regional Monitoring and Evaluation Officer
Akiko Sakamoto	Skills Specialist DWT Bangkok South East Asia and Pacific Islands
Pong-sul Ahn	Regional Specialist on Workers Education
Sara Elder	Head, Regional Economic and Social Analysis (former W4Y)
Charlie Bodwell	Enterprise specialist, Bangkok
Reiko Tsushima	Chief of Regional Programming
Marco Roncarati	UN Economic and Social Commission for Asia Pacific (UNESCAP)
Manon Bernier	UNV
Jo Sauvarin	UNFPA

EGYPT (21)

Peter van Rooij	Egypt Country Office Director, ILO
Amir Obeid	EYE Project, ILO
Luca Fedi	Youth Employment Specialist, DWT Cairo, ILO
Amal Mowafy	DJEP Project, ILO
Nashwa Belal	EYE (Jobs and Private Sector in Rural Egypt) Projec, ILO
Yasmine El Essawy	Programme Unit, DWT Cairo, ILO
Wafaa Abd el Kader	Workers' Specialist, DWT Cairo, ILO
Onsi Georgious	DJEP Project, ILO
Laurent DeBoeck	Director, UN IOM, Cairo
Manal Youssef	Deputy Minister, Ministry of Youth and Sports

Amira Dawoud	Deputy Project Manager, TVETII Project
Kahled Abd-Elazim	Executive Director, Federation of Egyptian Industries
Amal Hussein	Head of Foreign Relations, Ministry of Labour
Nada Massoud	Deputy Minister, Ministry of Planning
Dina Kafafay	Youth Employment Forum, National Competitiveness Council
Heda Zayed	Youth Employment Forum, National Competitiveness Council
Azza Reda	Youth Employment Forum, National Competitiveness Council
Annachiara Scandone	Project Officer, UNIDO
Ahmed El Gendy	Micro Small and Medium Enterprises Development Agency
Mohamed Ramadan	Advisor, Central Agency for Public Mobilization and Statistics
Solveig Schuster	Development Counsellor, Global Affairs Canada

TUNISIA (18 + 41 IN GROUP SESSIONS)

David Andrevon	Decent Jobs for Youth and Women Project, ILO
Nawel Marzouki	PEJTUN Project, ILO
Karim Toumi	PROMESS Project, ILO
Jad Boubaker	AZD Project, ILO
Samia Chouba	Social Dialogue Project, ILO
Nawel Tounsi	Coordination, ILO
M Fakherredine	Regional Coordinator, PROMESS Project, ILO
Nizar Terzi	Advisor, Ministère de la Formation Professionnelle et de l'Emploi
Fatma Moussa	European Union
Olfa Abichou	Agence Nationale pour l'Emploi et la Travail Indépendant
Radhia Ben Moussa	Agence Nationale pour l'Emploi et la Travail Indépendant
Feriel Ezzine Bouden	Agence Tunisienne de la Formation Professionnelle
Saloua Lachheb Fezzani	Director, Ministère de la Formation Professionnelle et de l'Emploi
Director, Regional Directorate	Department of Regional Development
Fatma Zarouke-Hrub	Coordinator for Rural Women, Regional Directorate
Majdi Shaniifi	International Projects Coordinator
Karim Trabelsi	UGTT (Tunisian General Labour Union)
Abdelaziz Halleb	UTICA (Employers)
Group Session – 8 Members	Regional Steering Committee
Group Session – 8 Stakeholders	Kesra Community Members (AZD Project)
Group Session – 25 Youth	Participants of Job Search Training Programme, Siliana Province

PORTUGAL (18)

Mafalda Troncho	Country Director, ILO
Albertina Jordaõ	Former ILO officer (covering Youth Guarantee)

Ana Fontes	Office of the Secretary of State for Employment
Pablo Cornide (phone)	European Union
Edgar Romão	C Conselho Nacional de Juventude
Paulo Feliciano	Vice President, Institute for Employment and Vocational Training
Victor Pinheiro	Executive Director, Youth Guarantee, IEFP
Ana Viera	Secretary General, CCP, Employers' Organization
Catarina Morais	CGTP-IN (Workers Organization)
Carlos Manuel Pereira	Instituto Português da Juventude
Pedro Pereira	Confederation of Farmers of Portugal (CAP)
Lia Pappámikail	Observatório Permanente da Juventude
Maria Manuel Vieira	Observatório Permanente da Juventude
Tatiana Ferreira	Observatório Permanente da Juventude
Sara Almeida	TESE
Vanessa Mendes	TESE
António Curto	CASES
Mariana Baptista	CASES

SRI LANKA (29)

Simrin Singh	Country Director, ILO
Thilini Fernando	National Project Coordinator, EQUIP Project, ILO
Asitha Seneviratne	ILO
Mr Skanthakumar	ILO
Azusa Hitotsuyanagi	ILO
Farzan Razzark	ILO
Ritsu Nacken	Country Director, UNFPA
Joern Sorenson	Country Director, UNDP
Harshini Halangoda	Programme Manager, European Union
Kanishka Weerasinghe	Director General, General Employers' Federation of Ceylon
Mr P Ranawakarachchi	General Secretary NTUF (Workers' Organization)
Mr K Marimuttu	Vice President, Ceylon Workers' Congress
Nihal Devagiri	National Project Coordinator, LEED Project, ILO
Shyama Salgado	Former ILO official
Nimal Saranatisa	Department of Labour
Mr A Wimalaweera	Department of Labour
Erandika Dissanayake (+ 4 others)	Department of Manpower and Employment
Sivapragasm Ramalingam	Coordinator, SKILLED Project, ILO
Benil Thavarasa	Head of Migration and Development, Embassy of Switzerland
T. Madushika Lansakara	Senior National Programme Officer, Embassy of Switzerland
Sunil Karanaratna (+ 3 others)	Director, National Youth Services Council
Mohan Thilakasiri	CEO, SIYB Association of Sri Lanka

CHINA (22)

Huang Qun	ILO
Dai Xiaochu	ILO
Li Qingyi	ILO
Gaoshan Junjian	UNYG youth subgroup coordinator, UNFPA
Huang Junmei	Director, Ministry of HR and Social Security (MOHRSS)
Bao Chunlei	Associate Research Fellow, Chinese Academy of Labour
Yao Xiaodong	Director, Department of International Cooperation, MOHRSS
Liu Min	Staff, Department of International Cooperation, MOHRSS
He Tianchun	Staff, Department of International Cooperation, MOHRSS
Wang Zuo	Rights Protection, All China Federation of Trade Unions
Zhao Zengwei	International Department, All China Federation of Trade Unions
Ma Chao	China Enterprise Confederation
Zeng Xiangquan	Professor, Renmin University
Dong Xia (+ 8 others)	Deputy Secretary General, All China Youth Federation

PERU (20)

Guillermo Dema	Youth Employment/Labour Migration Specialist, DWT Lima, ILO
Philippe Vanhuynegem	Director of the Andean Countries Office, ILO
Julio Gamero	Employment Specialist, DWT Lima, ILO
Cybele Burga	Regional Evaluation Officer, DWT Lima, ILO
Juan Chacaltana	Senior specialist (Joint Programme of Youth and Labour Migration)
Fernando Cuadros	Vice Minister of Employment, Ministry of Labour
Ronny Flores	Director Employment and Self-employment, Ministry of Labour
Milenka Eslava	Chief of the "Productive Young" Programme, Ministry of Labour
Luz Abanto	Manager "Productive Young" Programme, Ministry of Labour
Jesús Baldeón	Chief, International Cooperation Office, Ministry of Labour
David Alfaro	Former Director National Employment Service, Ministry of Labour
Elizabeth Cornejo	Normalization and Certification of Competences Office
Javier Barreda	Ex Minister and Vice Minister of Employment, Ministry of Labour
Juan Chang	Secretary, Workers' Organization
Omar Parco	Secretary of Working Youth, Workers' Organization
Mejía Perpetua	Department of Working Women, Workers' Organization
Manuel Coronado	Secretary of the Organization, Workers' Organization
Mirna Jara	Undersecretary of Gender and Vulnerable, Workers' Organization
Bernardo Córdoba	Secretary of Youth and Statistics, Workers' Organization
José Luis Altamiza	Manager of Regions and SEMs, Employers' Organization

APPENDIX IV. EVALUATION TERMS OF REFERENCE

ILO evaluation office

“ILO’S STRATEGY AND ACTIONS FOR IMPROVED YOUTH EMPLOYMENT PROSPECTS, 2012–2017”

Terms of Reference

BACKGROUND

1. Youth employment represents a global challenge in today’s world of work and remains a top policy concern in many countries across all regions. According to the common definition of the United Nations the term “youth” applies to the 15–24 age cohort which represents an important resource for society. They account for over 18 per cent of the world’s population as well as more than 15 per cent of the world’s labour force. Against this background their integration into the labour market, their education and skills development are all crucial to the realization of a prosperous, sustainable and equitable socio-economic environment worldwide. Accordingly, addressing labour market and social challenges faced by youth is imperative, not only for the well-being of our young people but also to ensure sustainable and inclusive growth and improved social cohesion worldwide.
2. In the aftermath of the global financial crisis in 2008, and as a result of continuing uncertainties in the global economy, the global youth employment rate has continued to remain at a high level during the past years. In 2017, the global youth employment rate increased slightly to 13.1 per cent or 70.9 million young unemployed. Although this number is well below the crisis peak of 76.7 in 2009, young people are still three times as likely as adults to be unemployed.
3. The quality of employment of young people also remains a concern. The income of 16.7 per cent of young workers in emerging and developing countries is below the extreme poverty threshold of USD 1.90 per day, partly because they often start their working lives in the informal economy.
4. Against this background, over time, the ILO has increasingly been requested to provide support in the field of youth employment to its member States. ILO’s Youth Employment Programme (YEP) provides assistance to countries in developing coherent and coordinated strategies and interventions on youth employment. Work in this area includes:
 - data collection on the nature and dimensions of youth employment, unemployment and under-employment;

- analysis of the effectiveness of country policies and programmes on youth employment;
- policy advice to strengthen in-country labour market policies and programmes for youth employment and capacity building for governments and employers' and workers' organizations;
- technical assistance in formulating and implementing national youth employment programmes that focus on employment-intensive investment, skills development, youth entrepreneurship, access to finance and other targeted active labour market measures;
- advocacy and awareness-raising activities to promote decent work for youth with a focus on employability, employment creation and workers' rights;
- strategic partnerships on youth employment through the promotion of cross-country and global peer networks, inter-Agency cooperation across United Nations and other international agencies, and collaboration between the private and public sectors at the international, regional and national levels.

THE RESULTS FRAMEWORK

5. During the period under review, ILO's work on improved youth employment prospects was guided by a number of strategic documents, the respective Programme & Budget (P&B) documents and Strategic Policy Framework represent the overarching results framework against which to assess performance. The adoption of the International Labour Conference (ILC) resolution entitled "The youth employment crisis: A call for action" in 2012 represents another key policy instrument in ILO's efforts to promote decent work for the youth. The call for action underlines the urgency of immediate, targeted and renewed action to tackle the unprecedented global youth employment crisis. It contains also guiding principles and a comprehensive set of policy measures to guide constituents in shaping national strategies and action on youth employment. Since the adoption of the call for action, its follow-up plan covering the period 2012–19 has, alongside the respective P&Bs and Strategic Policy Frameworks been driving the work of the ILO in this area. Another important strategic document to be considered is ILO's Strategy on "jobs and skills for youth" endorsed by the Governing Body (GB) in March 2014 formulated as part of strategic refocussing taking place in the Office during that time within the context of the Areas of Critical Importance (ACIs) initiative.
6. The work under review by this evaluation was guided by two different Strategic Policy Frameworks and three P&B documents. During the Strategic Policy Framework 2010–15 youth employment was explicitly covered in the P&B indicators of Outcome 2 "Skills development increases the employability of workers, the competitiveness of enterprises, and the inclusiveness of growth" (P&B Indicator 2.5) and was linked to other outcomes such as Outcome 1 "More women and men have access to productive employment, decent work and income opportunities", Outcome 3 "Sustainable enterprises create productive and decent jobs", Outcome 4: "More people have access to better managed and more gender equitable social security benefits" and Outcome 10: "Workers have strong, independent and representative organizations" which made reference to youth employment as part of their strategy. In the Transitional Strategic Plan for 2016–17 and its related P&B youth employment was mentioned in the outcome text and the indicators of Outcome 1 "More and better jobs for inclusive growth and improved youth employment prospects" (P&B indicator 1.2). The transitional Strategic Plan identified the expected changes related to youth employment under this outcome:
 - "effective and informed engagement of constituents in the formulation, implementation and monitoring of comprehensive employment policy frameworks, including youth action plans;"
 - "greater use of knowledge on labour market policies and institutions (collective bargaining, wage policy, working time, employment protection, equal opportunity, employment services and activation strategies targeting young people in particular) that support more and better jobs;"

7. Furthermore, youth employment was explicitly mentioned in the text of the indicators of Outcome 4 “Promoting sustainable enterprises” (P & B Indicator 4.3). It also had linkages to other outcomes such as Outcome 5 “Decent work in the rural economy”. During the scoping exercise of this evaluation these strategic and programme documents and other policy instruments will be further reviewed to refine and reconstruct a results framework on youth employment against which performance can be measured.
8. Looking forward, the formative part of this evaluation will also review the degree to which the new Strategic Plan (SP) for 2018–21 and the P&B 2017–18 addresses youth employment in a manner that is responsive to findings and lessons learned from the evaluation. In the ILO's P&B 2017–18 youth employment is mentioned in the outcome text and the indicators of Outcome 1 “More and better jobs for inclusive growth and improved youth employment prospects” (P&B Indicator 1.2). It is also linked to Outcome 4 “Promoting sustainable enterprises”.

PURPOSE OF THE EVALUATION

9. In October 2017, the ILO's Governing Body approved EVAL's work plan for 2018 which included an independent high level evaluation of “the ILO's strategy and actions for improved youth employment prospects, 2012–2017” . There has not been a high-level evaluation on this subject in more than eight years. The evaluation was selected for 2018 following a consultation process which also included ILO's constituents. As indicated above, the purpose of the evaluation is mainly summative with formative aspects. It is to provide insight into the relevance, coherence, effectiveness, efficiency and sustainability of the ILO's strategy, programme approach, and interventions (summative). It is also intended to be forward looking and provide findings and lessons learned and emerging good practices for improved decision-making within the context of the ongoing and next strategic frameworks and the Sustainable Development Goals (formative).

SCOPE

10. The evaluation will consider all efforts of the Office in promoting improved youth employment prospects particularly under Outcome 2 of the 2010–15 Strategic Policy Framework (P&B indicator 2.5) and Outcome 1 of the Transitional Strategic Plan 2016–17 (P&B indicator 1.2). This will include ILO's work on youth employment with a focus on job quality, working poverty, disadvantaged groups and the green economy, skills development systems and active labour market policies targeting young people and other disadvantaged groups and strengthening employment services. Policy coherence between the multiple programme documents and policy instruments covering youth employment will be an important area of review. Additionally, given the relatively substantial allocation of RBSA resources to youth employment, the question as to how effective this funding mechanism has been in supporting ILO in achieving its goals related to improving youth employment prospects will be an area of focus as well.
11. Given the breadth of action being taken, the scope of the evaluation will be narrowed to the time period from 2012–2017, which allows to align with the adoption of the Call for action as with its follow-up plan. While the focus will be on ILO's work on youth employment of global Outcomes 2 (2012–15) and 1 (2016–17) and increased youth employment prospects in member States the evaluation will also assess the ILO's contribution in global strategies, policies and debates relating to youth employment and its coordination within the partners cross-country and global peer networks, inter-Agency cooperation across United Nations and other international agencies, and collaboration between the private and public sectors at the international, regional and national levels. ILO's work in sharing of experiences on youth employment and using knowledge management appropriately through online platforms will also be examined.

12. During the scoping phase, the evaluation team will refine the scope and assess to which extent ILO's work on youth employment under other outcomes which are linked to the topic will be considered.

CLIENTS

13. The principal client for the evaluation is the Governing Body, which is responsible for governance-level decisions on the findings and recommendations of the evaluation. Other key stakeholders include the Director-General and members of the Senior Management Team at Headquarters, the Evaluation Advisory Committee, the YEP Unit of the Employment Policy Department (EMPLOYMENT) as well as the department's related branches, other ILO departments involved in the work on youth employment, ILOs field structure offices, ACTRAV and ACTEMP. It should also serve as a source of information for ILO donors, partners and policy makers.

KEY EVALUATION QUESTIONS

14. The evaluation questions are based on the OECD DAC evaluation criteria of relevance and coherence, effectiveness, efficiency, sustainability and impact. Outcome objectives created for the P&B strategy will serve as the basis for the evaluation questions. These questions will seek to address priority issues and concerns for the national constituents and other stakeholders. When designing the questions, the evaluation team will consider availability and reliability of data, how the answers will be used and if the data are regarded as credible.
15. Below are some examples of general evaluation questions:

Strategy context	Strategy implementation	Outcome
How does the strategy fit the needs of ILO constituents?	Are there adequate resources to implement the strategy as intended?	Can the indicators track progress towards meeting objectives for the strategy?
How does the strategy deal with other international agencies and development partners working on youth employment?	Who is involved in carrying out the strategy?	Is the intended target audience benefiting from the strategy?
Are key sectors, agencies, or individuals missing from the collaborative effort?	How are contributing outcomes being integrated in the strategy implementation?	What are unintended outcomes of the strategy?
How does the strategy address synergies and complementarities between P&B, SPF outcomes and other policy instruments?	Is the strategy meeting GB and ILC expectations and affecting the target population?	What are the successes in carrying out the strategy?
		Is the issue addressed by the strategy improving?

16. At this stage, the following questions have been identified which will be addressed during the evaluation:
- To what extent is the design of the ILO Strategy for youth employment under Outcome 2 (2010–15) and outcome 1 (2016–17) relevant to youth employment trends and needs? Does it address the needs of ILO constituents?
 - To what extent has the ILO fulfilled its objective in fostering improved youth employment prospects using the strategic policy frameworks, P&B targets and relevant policy instruments as a benchmark.

- To what extent have the ILO's strategy and actions been coherent and complementary (in design and implementation) with regard to the youth employment approach advocated by the Organisation?
 - To what extent has the programme been adequately resourced and have resources been used efficiently?
 - To what extent has RBSA as a funding mechanism been effective in supporting the ILO in achieving its goals related to improved youth employment prospects?
 - How has ILO external coordination (with constituents, UN partners etc.) and internal coordination (between sectors, technical departments, regions and sub regions) promoted the realization of the outcomes on youth employment?
 - To what extent have ILO actions had impact in the form of increased capacity, necessary tools and policy improvements needed to work towards the enhancement of youth employment prospects?
 - How well did the results contribute to the ILO's cross-cutting themes of gender and non-discrimination?
 - To what extent have ILO interventions been designed and implemented in ways that have maximized sustainability at country level?
17. Further evaluation questions related to efficiency and sustainability, subject to availability of data needed to generate reliable findings, will be proposed and refined by the evaluation team during the inception report phase.

METHODOLOGY

18. The evaluation will be conducted in accordance with Eval Protocol No 1: *High-level Evaluation Protocol for Strategy and Policy Evaluations*. This evaluation will be based upon the ILO's evaluation policy and procedures which adhere to international standards and best practices, articulated in the OECD/DAC Principles and the Norms and Standards for Evaluation in the United Nations System approved by the United Nations Evaluation Group (UNEG) in April 2016.
19. EVAL proposes a performance evaluation approach (also known as effectiveness evaluation or summative evaluation), which determines whether an initiative has achieved the intended outcome. To this end, the evaluation will seek to determine to what extent the ILO strategy and action have been instrumental in promoting/enhancing youth employment prospects. Further refinement of the methodology will be identified during scoping phase and the preparation of the inception report.
20. The evaluation will be participatory. Consultations with member States, international and national representatives of workers' and employers' organizations, ILO staff at headquarters and in the field, United Nations partners, and other stakeholders will be done through interviews, meetings, focus groups, and electronic communication.
21. The gender dimension will be considered as an important cross-cutting concern throughout the methodology and all deliverables, such as the final report of the evaluation. In terms of this evaluation, this implies involving both men and women in the consultation, evaluation analysis and evaluation team. Moreover the evaluators should review data and information that is disaggregated by sex and assess the relevance and effectiveness of gender-related strategies and outcomes to improved youth employment prospects for young women and men. All this information should be accurately included in the inception report and final evaluation report.
22. The details of the methodology will be further developed and fine-tuned by the selected team of evaluators on the basis of the Terms of Reference (ToR) during the scoping phase and the inception report. It is expected that the evaluation team will apply mixed methods which draw on both quantitative and qualitative evidence and involve multiple means of analysis.

23. These include but are not limited to:
- Desk review of relevant documents such as Strategic Policy Framework/SP and P&B strategies for the period covered by the evaluation; outcome-based work planning (OBW) and technical cooperation portfolios and related reviews; implementation planning, management and reporting reports (information from the IRIS Strategic Management Module); relevant global reports and meta evaluations; relevant DWCPs and logic models (results framework); relevant HLEs; country programme reviews which will have examined recent performance against stated outcomes, determined what has been achieved, and whether strategies being used are efficient and effective; National and sectorial strategic plans and reports related to youth employment, other relevant national, multilateral and UN policy and strategy documents;
 - reviewing evidence of follow up to relevant evaluation recommendations and use of lessons learned by ILO management;
 - interviewing key stakeholders which should reflect a diversity of backgrounds inside the Office, according to sector, technical unit, regions and country situations
 - conducting online surveys and other methodologies to obtain feedback and/or information from constituents and other key stakeholders;
 - field visits (5 countries); and
 - case studies of visited countries (5) plus desk review-only case study countries (3)

Synthesis study of project evaluations 2012–2017

24. A synthesis review of project evaluation reports on youth employment has been commissioned by EVAL to synthesize findings on the relevance, coherence, effectiveness, efficiency, and sustainability/impact of ILOs work through technical cooperation projects. The synthesis review will examine the types and thematic area of ILO's interventions related to youth employment. It will also assess which recommendations and lessons learned were reported by evaluators in the evaluation reports and whether there are any trends or recurring themes among them. Good practices will be identified as well.
25. The synthesis review covers the period of 2012 to 2017 and the sample was based on a key word search of EVAL's i-track database with project evaluations using key words relevant to youth employment in English, French and Spanish.
26. The findings of the synthesis study will feed directly into the high level evaluation and will be a source of input for the overall rating on the DAC criteria (see below). The synthesis review is currently being conducted and the final study is expected to be available End of February 2018.

Case studies

27. The purpose of case studies is to conduct in-depth analysis of the ILO's strategic and programme means of action aimed at improving youth employment prospects. The case studies seek to determine what happened as a result of ILO's interventions, and determine if these interventions had any observable immediate impacts, and to the extent possible determine the links between the observed impacts and the ILO interventions.
28. Possible themes of the case studies could be focussed on the following ILOs strategies on improving youth employment prospects: (to be further developed with evaluation team and key stakeholders)
- **Technical advice:** to identify the effectiveness of ILO action in providing policy guidance on improving youth employment prospects
 - **Capacity development:** ILO support to development of institutional mechanisms or capacity building of constituents

- **Knowledge sharing:** The case study on this mean of action will seek to assess how effectively ILO has promoted and applied knowledge sharing among constituents, ILO staff and its external partners (UN and multilateral institutions) through platforms and networks.
29. The case studies will consist of a combination of methods:
 - Interviews, field studies and participant focus groups;
 - desk reviews to synthesize and aggregate information such as technical studies, and DWCP reviews from the selected countries and programmes at different times. This will allow greater triangulation while minimizing cost and time being expended on new, possibly repetitive studies.
 30. A completed case study report will have detailed descriptions of what happened and the context in which it occurred. The report will feature a factual recounting as well as an analysis of events.
 31. Preliminary discussions on the selection of field visit countries have been undertaken based on which a preliminary selection has been made. This selection includes Cambodia, Bangladesh, Egypt, Tunisia and Azerbaijan. The final selection of countries will be made after the scoping phase together with inputs from the team of consultants and further feedback from relevant stakeholder. The selection of the field visits and the case studies will take into account budgetary expenditure in the country, proportion of budget to overall RB, RBSA and DC on youth employment work in each country, number and thematic area of interventions, embedment of interventions in regional and global programmes, balanced geographic spread, and other selection criteria to be decided in discussion with EMPLOYMENT and the evaluation team. Additional criteria may be added by the evaluation team.

Summary ratings

32. A summary rating shall be expressed by the independent evaluation team at the end rating the six evaluation criteria and the respective questions listed above. The evaluation team shall apply a six point rating scale ranging from “highly satisfactory,” “satisfactory,” “somewhat satisfactory,” “somewhat unsatisfactory,” “unsatisfactory,” to “highly unsatisfactory”.
 - **Highly satisfactory:** when the findings related to the evaluation criterion show that ILO performance related to criterion has produced outcomes which go beyond expectation, expressed specific comparative advantages and added value, produced best practices;
 - **Satisfactory:** when the findings related to the evaluation criterion show that the objectives have been mostly attained and the expected level of performance can be considered coherent with the expectations of the national tripartite constituents, beneficiaries and of the ILO itself;
 - **Somewhat satisfactory:** when the findings related to the evaluation criterion show that the objectives have been partially attained and there that expected level of performance could be for the most part considered coherent with the expectations of the national tripartite constituents, beneficiaries and of the ILO itself;
 - **Somewhat unsatisfactory:** when the findings related to the evaluation criterion show that the objectives have been partially attained and the level of performance show minor shortcoming and are not fully considered acceptable in the view of the ILO national tripartite constituents, partners and beneficiaries;
 - **Unsatisfactory:** when the findings related to the evaluation criterion show that the objectives have not been attained and the level of performance show major shortcoming and are not fully considered acceptable in the view of the ILO national tripartite constituents, partners and beneficiaries; and
 - **Highly unsatisfactory:** when the findings related to the evaluation criterion show that expected results have not been attained, and there have been important shortcomings, and the resources have not been utilized effectively and/or efficiently.

33. The ratings will be decided together with the external evaluators and the ILO senior evaluation officer.

EVALUATION TEAM

34. The Evaluation Office (EVAL) is mandated to manage the evaluation function and ensure proper implementation of the evaluation policy. EVAL's structure and modalities of operation are designed to protect its functional independence. EVAL reports directly to the Director-General and to the Governing Body through an independent process. EVAL assesses ILO policies, strategies, principles, and procedures as well as decent work country programs. The goals of evaluation in the ILO are to learn from experience, provide an objective basis for assessing the results of its work, and provide accountability in the achievement of its objectives. It also promotes knowledge sharing on results and lessons learned among the ILO and its partners.
35. In accordance with ILO guidelines for independence, credibility and transparency, responsibility for the evaluation will be based in the Evaluation Office in its capacity as an independent entity. The evaluation team will be composed of a Senior Evaluation Officer who will lead a team composed of international consultants with expertise in youth employment and evaluation. National research assistants may be recruited to support each case study. The Senior Evaluation Officer will play a critical coordination role and will be responsible for the evaluation implementation and the adherence to ILO's evaluation policy and guidelines. The EVAL director will have an oversight role during the process and provide guidance and inputs.
36. The international and national specialists will provide specific inputs based on the thematic case studies which provide the basis for the evaluation analysis. The case studies will analyse project contributions to the implementation of the Office's activities on youth employment and to the respective DWCP youth employment priorities.
37. This evaluation will be inclusive in nature and seek to involve all key stakeholders.

Timetable

ToR inception report finalized and selection of consultant	November/December 2017
Concept note shared with EMPLOYMENT and appointment of a focal point from the department for the evaluation	December 2017/January 2018
Inception report synthesis study drafted	January 2018
CEoI launched and evaluation team formed.	January/February 2018
First draft of synthesis study	Mid-February
ToR finalized and circulated to stakeholders	February 2018
Final synthesis study	Mid/end-February
Scoping mission to Geneva for one week by team and inception report drafted	Early-March 2018
Evaluation mission and case studies conducted.	April/May/June 2018
Stakeholders workshop in Geneva	June 2018
First draft circulated for comments	End June 2018
Final draft shared with stakeholders	Early July 2018
GB summary document completed	First week August 2018
Final Report	September 2018

MANAGEMENT AND RESPONSIBILITIES

38. The Evaluation Office (EVAL) is mandated to manage the evaluation function and ensure proper implementation of the evaluation policy. The evaluation team will be composed of a Senior Evaluation Officer who will lead a team composed of international consultants with expertise in youth employment and evaluation, and evaluation team members/national consultants to support the case studies. The director of EVAL will provide inputs and guidance throughout the evaluation process.
39. The Senior Evaluation Officer will play a critical coordination role and will be responsible for the evaluation implementation at the national and regional levels and will:
 - Conduct one case study of a country not selected for a field visit;
 - participate in at least two of the evaluation missions conducted by the international consultants; and
 - supervise the work of other evaluation team members, review and finalize the final evaluation report.
40. The external evaluator(s) will provide technical leadership and is responsible for:
 - Drafting the inception report, producing the draft reports and drafting and presenting a final report;
 - providing any technical and methodological advice necessary for this evaluation within the team;
 - ensuring the quality of data (validity, reliability, consistency and accuracy) throughout the analytical and reporting phases;
 - managing the external evaluation team, ensuring the evaluation is conducted as per TORs, including following ILO EVAL guidelines, methodology and formatting requirements; and
 - producing reliable, triangulated findings that are linked to the evaluation questions and presenting useful and insightful conclusions and recommendations according to international standards.
41. An officer from the EMPLOYMENT department/ILO's YEP Unit will be appointed to facilitate coordination with the department and field specialists and provide relevant documentation as requested by the team. This person will be the key technical liaison to the evaluation team, assisting in the identification of key stakeholders at Headquarters and the field and identification of key resources/documents.

QUALITY ASSURANCE

42. The international evaluator will be required to ensure the quality of data (validity, reliability, consistency and accuracy) throughout the analytical and reporting phases. It is expected that the report shall be written in an evidence-based manner such that all observations, conclusions, recommendations, etc., are supported by evidence and analysis.
43. The ILO senior evaluation officer will provide overall quality assurance on all key outputs.

QUALIFICATIONS OF THE EVALUATORS

44. This evaluation will be managed by EVAL and conducted by a team of independent evaluators with the following competency mix:
 - Prior knowledge of the ILO's roles and activities, and solid understanding of youth employment in international development cooperation and funding (essential);
 - demonstrated executive-level management experience in reviewing and advising complex organizational structures, preferably in the field of youth employment

- at least 10 years' experience in evaluation policies, strategies, country programmes and organizational effectiveness;
- proven experience in conducting and writing evaluation reports of large multilateral organizations for high level decision-making;
- fluency in English, spoken and written (essential); knowledge of French and Spanish would be highly desirable.

COMPENSATION AND PAYMENT SCHEDULE

45. The Evaluation Office will contract an international independent evaluator(s) or a company under an output-based contract modality. All travel expenses will be paid as a lump sum based on ILO travel regulations.

EVALUATORS' CODE OF CONDUCT AND ETHICAL CONSIDERATIONS

46. The ILO *Code of Conduct for independent evaluators* applies to all evaluation team members. The principles behind the Code of Conduct are fully consistent with the Standards of Conduct for the International Civil Service to which all UN staff is bound. UN staff is also subject to any UNEG member specific staff rules and procedures for the procurement of services. The selected team members shall sign and return a copy of the code of conduct with their contract.

EVALUATION USE STRATEGY

47. Efforts will be made to keep the employment department and specialists in the regions informed about the major steps of the evaluation process. Key outputs will be circulated for comments.
48. The following products are expected to enhance the use of the evaluation findings and conclusions by developing different products for different audiences:
- GB executive summary document for the GB 2018 discussion;
 - the full report available in limited hard copy and electronically available on the EVAL website;
 - key findings or table of contents presented with hyperlinks for readers to read sections of the report;
 - USB keys with e-copy of the report for dissemination to partners;
 - a powerpoint presentation or visual summary of the report will be prepared for EVAL's website and for presentations on the evaluation;
 - EVAL quickfacts on the HLE to be prepared;
 - A short video on the key findings and recommendations.

APPENDIX V. BIBLIOGRAPHY

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