ILO INDEPENDENT FINAL EVALUATION · MAY 2026

Productivity Ecosystems for Decent Work

PHASE I

Jan 2022 – Jul 2026 · USD 17.4M · ILO · SECO & NORAD · Ghana · South Africa · Viet Nam

RELEVANCE	EFFICIENCY	EFFECTIVENESS	SUSTAINABILITY	IMPACT
●●●●●●	●●●●●○	●●●●●○	●●●●○○	NOT RATED
Highly Satisfactory	Satisfactory	Satisfactory	Moderately Satisfactory	

Relevance — HIGHLY SATISFACTORY

STRENGTHS

- Strong alignment with national priorities, ILO frameworks and donor priorities.
- Demand-led, consultative design fostered genuine stakeholder ownership.
- Productivity as pragmatic, politically viable entry point for decent work.
- Sector selection based on rigorous diagnostics and stakeholder consultation.
- Design widely valued for addressing core structural constraints.

LIMITATIONS

- Unclear translation of productivity gains into decent work outcomes.
- Activity dispersion led to fragmentation across levels and actors.
- Ecosystem approach did not consistently translate into integrated implementation.
- Phase II: anchor adaptability within sharper strategic prioritisation.

Efficiency — SATISFACTORY

STRENGTHS

- Over 90% of expenditure to country level, enabling adaptive delivery.
- Staff expertise and responsiveness were a key efficiency driver.
- Strong ILO coordination supported knowledge-sharing across levels.
- PAC and GSAC functioned well as coordination and ownership platforms.
- Trust-based partnerships with national and development partners maintained momentum.

LIMITATIONS

- Resources weighted towards micro-level, underinvesting in policy dimensions.
- Disproportionate reporting burdens raised transaction costs.
- M&E system limited for demonstrating systemic impact beyond early results.

Effectiveness & Impact — SATISFACTORY / NOT RATED

STRENGTHS

- Formal targets met or exceeded in capacity-building and SME support.
- Strong enterprise-level improvements in management and working conditions.
- Sector-level results are in progress: Ghana's shea sector as a strong example of institutional development.
- Policy achievements represent important steps in reform processes.
- Gender equality well integrated: high female participation, inclusive workplace practices.
- Environmental sustainability: Viet Nam advanced; Ghana and South Africa more limited.

LIMITATIONS

- Policy-level change remains ongoing — not yet enacted or sustained.
- Weak cross-level integration limits compounding system-wide effects.
- Phase II: cross-level integration must be a deliberate design feature.

Sustainability — MODERATELY SATISFACTORY

STRENGTHS

- Enterprise-level practices internalised; firms independently deepening improvements.
- Ghana's shea value chain foundations provide real basis for continuity.
- Strong policy co-ownership reinforces sustainability prospects.

LIMITATIONS

- Interventions not yet institutionalised within sector structures for wider diffusion.
- Sector actors need stronger capacity to aggregate demand and feed into policy.
- Policy sustainability contingent on pending reforms and political commitment.
- Phase II: the approach works — next phase must prove it scales.

OVERALL CONCLUSION

The programme has demonstrated clear value. Its conceptual framework, linking enterprise performance to sector institutions and national policy within an ecosystem model, is validated as analytically sound and operationally relevant, and the evidence confirms real improvements for supported enterprises and workers. In Phase I, the programme has built relationships, generated evidence, and tested approaches that provide a solid foundation for Phase II. The key challenge for Phase II is to move from breadth to depth: while Phase I successfully established relevance across multiple levels and actors, this breadth limited the focus and continuity needed for scaling; meanwhile weak integration across policy, sectoral and enterprise interventions reduced the programme's systemic impact.

Lessons Learned, Emerging Good Practices & Key Recommendations for Phase II

Key Lessons Learned

CORE INSIGHTS

1. Productivity is an effective and politically viable entry point for advancing decent work, but translating productivity gains into decent work outcomes requires deliberate design.
2. A demand-led approach builds ownership but requires a strong strategic framework to prevent fragmentation.
3. Pilot-phase breadth is necessary for learning, but depth and focus are prerequisites for systemic impact.
4. Systemic change requires deliberate integration across levels — it does not emerge automatically from results at each level.

Emerging Good Practices

WHAT WORKED WELL

GH

GHANA

Building worker and employer organisations simultaneously in informal sectors, enabling social dialogue and collective bargaining where none existed before.

ZA

SOUTH AFRICA

Training of trainers to embed productivity approaches within national institutions, enabling independent delivery beyond project funding.

VN

VIET NAM

Integrating digital and green transformation at enterprise level, framed around concrete business benefits (cost reduction, energy savings, export readiness).

Key Recommendations for Phase II

PRIORITY ACTIONS

1 **REBALANCE INVESTMENT**

Rebalance resource allocation towards policy and meso-level engagement to build the institutional infrastructure necessary for long-term sustainability and scale.

2 **SHARPEN STRATEGY**

Develop and sharpen country-level Theories of Change (ToCs) grounded in Phase I evidence, with explicit cross-level logic and sequenced integration across enterprise, sector, and policy tiers.

3 **FOCUS FOR SCALE**

Prioritise deeper, more focused engagement on fewer priority constraints, with targeted support to fewer high-potential partners and stronger deliberate cross-level linkages.

4 **BUILD INSTITUTIONS**

Prioritise institutional strengthening of sector actors so they can independently aggregate demand, deliver services, and feed learning into policy beyond the programme cycle.