



Evaluation Summary



International
Labour
Office

Evaluation Unit

Education and Skills Training for Youth (EAST) Final Evaluation

Quick Facts

Countries: *Indonesia*

Final Evaluation: *September-October 2011*

Mode of Evaluation: *independent*

Technical Area: *Youth employment, Skills development, Child Labour*

Evaluation Management: *Regional Programming Unit (Pamornrat Pringsulaka)*

Evaluation Team: *Dr. Anthony Dewees, Dr. Clara Ajisukmo, Mr. Mashari Sudjono*

Project Start: *1 November 2006*

Project End: *31 October 2011*

Project Code: *INS/06/15/NET*

Donor: *The Netherlands (US\$ 22,675,772)*

Keywords: *Youth employment, child labour, enterprise development, skills development, entrepreneurship education*

Background & Context

The EAST project modelled a comprehensive upstream and downstream approach for both preventing early school leaving and expanding quality opportunities for out of school youth to develop skills that improve their employability and productivity in self-employment. New more active and inclusive teaching methodologies and materials as well new models for life skills and career orientation were intended to make schools more attractive and relevant to youth at risk for early school leaving. EAST technical and financial

resources also supported coalition building and awareness raising necessary for identifying out of school children and returning them to formal or non-formal education settings.

To improve access to quality and relevant skills training for out of school youth the EAST project provided technical support and financial incentives for the elaboration and/or delivery of short term skills training that incorporated a competency based methodology and demonstrated careful consideration of local labour market demand. EAST resources were also used to subsidize access to this training for disadvantaged out of school youth in the project target areas. In addition EAST human and financial resources supported reform programs in three formal public skills training institutions (BLKs). These reform efforts were intended to strengthen the management of training services and improve the quality and relevance of course offerings.

The project was executed under the responsibility of the Ministry of National Education and the Ministry of Manpower and Transmigration and coordinated by BAPPENAS – the National Development Planning Agency. Financial and technical support was provided by the Netherlands Government and project implementation and funds management was provided by the ILO. The implementing agencies (such as Ministry of Manpower and Transmigration, Ministry of Education, other government entities, NGOs,

and private training providers) were provided with funds on the basis of specific ‘Action Programmes’ with detailed budget and outputs.

A National Steering Committee (NSC) as well as Provincial Steering Committees were formed and convened once a year to review and discuss results of the project. A Project Support Unit (PSU) was formed at ILO Jakarta and 6 field offices were established. Each field office (6 provinces) was staffed by a local project coordinator, a local project officer and an administrative assistant. In 3 project areas an additional vocational and technical education staff member was included to support component 5 – the revitalization of the BLKs.

Present situation of project

The project ended in October of 2011 with excellent performance against quantitative targets specified in the original project document. The project has raised the level of awareness on child labour issues in project areas and left behind a strong network of institutions and individuals with new knowledge and experience in addressing child labour and youth employment issues. Through EAST a number of already proven materials were successfully adapted for use in Indonesia and new materials (for example a 4 in 1 training methodology manual and a Job and Education Counselling module) have been developed through EAST experiences and in collaboration with EAST partners. The human and material resources left behind by EAST (modules, materials, instruments, etc.) represent investments that can be recruited for improving on-going efforts to address child labour and improve opportunities for out of school youth.

The project was implemented in a very efficient manner with significant logistical challenges due to the distribution of the project sites and in areas of Indonesia where implementing partners tended to have less experience and capacity than in other parts of the country.

Purpose, scope and clients of the evaluation

The purpose of the evaluation expressed in the TOR is to assess project achievements as well as efforts to promote the sustainability of those achievements. The TOR defines the scope of the evaluation as all components (7) of the EAST project over the entire implementation period and across the project sites (more than 30 districts in 6 provinces).

In addition to evaluation questions identified in the ILO guidelines and the TOR, additional themes emerged from preliminary conversations with the Director of the ILO office in Jakarta and the UN Resident Coordinator for Indonesia. The ILO has an extensive history of engagement in Indonesia. For the Jakarta office how this history – especially in the areas of child labour and youth employment - enabled ILO to execute the EAST project and how this history as well as ILO expertise and global/regional linkages may present opportunities to build upon EAST, are of considerable interest.

From the perspective of the overall role of the UN in Indonesia the value of a project like EAST is its contribution to supporting GoI efforts to “change the way business is done.” Influence on policy, strategies and practices have potential for important and sustainable impacts while UN funded or executed service delivery can make only minimal and unsustainable contributions in a country the size of Indonesia.

The clients of the final evaluation are the relevant government entities at the national and subnational level (Education, Manpower and Transmigration, and the Development Planning Agency). A final evaluation of the EAST project also provides the opportunity for insights into how the ILO and the UN system can best structure cooperative agreements to provide support government efforts to achieve meaningful and sustainable reforms.

The magnitude of the EAST project was also significantly greater than previous initiatives implemented by the ILO in Indonesia. An

evaluation of EAST provides the ILO country office and opportunity to reflect on how to mobilize to meet the management and technical demands of implementing large national scale projects.

Methodology of evaluation

The evaluation team was composed of three professionals. None of the evaluators had any prior connection with the EAST project. The size, complexity (7 components) and geographical dispersion of the project limited field visits to just a very few of the literally hundreds of schools and training programmes and other project sites supported by EAST. With such a small sample of direct observations generalizations from field visits must be interpreted with caution. The evaluators do not attempt to extrapolate impact or quantitative project outcomes from the few sites that could be visited but rather used the field visits to supplement other sources of information in order to address the evaluation themes provided by the ILO (from the independent evaluation TOR):

- Design:
- Managing for results
- Synergy among components and with other interventions
- Substantive results
- Constituents and partners capacity
- Gender mainstreaming
- Exit /Transition/Post-project strategy

To assess these aspects of EAST the final evaluation team:

- Reviewed project documents: TPRs, TCPs, Research products and policy briefs produced, materials/modules developed and tracer study impact reports.
- Interviewed key informants and partners at national level (as well as telephonic conversations with ILO regional experts and consultants working on the project)
- Conducted field work in 5 of 6 provinces of EAST implementation: Consultants made 3 to 4 day visits to 5 of 6 each provinces of EAST implementation (one site was not visited due to security concerns),

Main Findings & Conclusions

The EAST project was extremely ambitious in both its technical and geographic scope. At the end of the project EAST had:

- strengthened official bodies addressing child labour at provincial and district levels,
- provided capacity and materials for schools to make children aware of their rights and responsibilities and creating school environments that are child centred and attractive to children,
- created and implemented a new approach to fostering personal and social skills through pre-vocational activities to improve chances for success in school and at the workplace,
- integrated formal counselling on educational and career choices into secondary school programmes,
- out-of-school disadvantaged youth were provided opportunities for vocational training relevant to local labour market needs and of good quality,
- facilitated the revitalization process at 3 BLKs,
- supported the development of systems and strategies for improving productive self-employment opportunities for youth and
- produced relevant research and policy briefs in the areas of child labour and youth employment.

The evaluation team was particularly impressed by the quality of the network developed through the project. While the team had the opportunity to visit just a small number of project sites in almost every case it was clear that EAST was leaving behind a cadre of extremely knowledgeable and committed persons (government officials, NGOs, private training providers) who had benefited from and made important contributions to EAST.

What is less clear is how this network can be mobilized now that EAST has come to an end. The project design seemed to incorporate the

idea that the good practices modelled by EAST would be integrated into on-going practice and expanded to other parts of Indonesia. While there were some clear examples of this type of replication, the evaluation team saw the assertion that practices would be more widely replicated as unsubstantiated.

The evaluation team did not see this as weakness or failure in implementation but rather a faulty assumption embedded in the project design. Furthermore we do not see these challenges to sustainability or expansion of the EAST achievements as the result of choices that were made in implementation but rather as indications that further actions are required to fully realize the returns to the investment in the EAST project.

Recommendations & Lessons Learned

The extremely ambitious scope of the project left little financial and human capacity available for documenting or evaluating impact. The effort to undertake tracer studies at the very end of the project was hampered by a lack of investment in evaluation earlier in the project – a finding that was also emphasized in the Mid Term Review.

Without a basis for making more concise claims about the effectiveness of the various strategies implemented in EAST it is difficult to make a strong case for government or other stakeholders to continue these investments. To fully capitalize on EAST achievements the ILO country office can take a number of steps. These steps would further strengthen ILOs capacity as an important and strategic collaborator in supporting GoI policy and strategy development. The recommendations presented would likely require some modest amount of additional resources and are briefly summarized below:

1. Identify the EAST initiatives (components or practices) that are the most strategic and where ILO has a comparative advantage

2. Undertake a systematic and rigorous assessment of these strategic initiatives
3. ILO should develop and implement a strategy for promoting these best practices from EAST.

Important lessons learned

The ILO Jakarta country office (systems and human capacity) was clearly strengthened by responding to the challenges of implementing EAST. While these lessons were not the focus of the evaluation it is important to recognize that this important knowledge is now embedded in the country office.

An important lesson to take away from the EAST experience is that good ideas/practices and excellent management are necessary but insufficient to “change the way business is done.” A sufficiently compelling case for mobilizing support for a particular innovation requires that stakeholders have some clear and intuitive evidence that the efforts to overcome the inertia of current practices and policies will be rewarded by palpable benefits.

EAST promoted and efficiently delivered a number of promising and innovative strategies for addressing child labour and youth employment. However, the demands of meeting implementation targets left little room for establishing early on the means to assess the impact of these innovations. This is an especially complex issue when dealing with a programme of cooperation financed by donors that have their own imperatives to demonstrate “results” based on large numbers of beneficiaries relative to project spending.

Proactive engagement with funders promoting the incorporation of impact evaluation as a high return investment can be made more effective as ILO develops and disseminates to country offices examples of how projects that invest in examining impact have wider and more sustainable benefits than projects that invest more narrowly in delivering services.