



Evaluation Summaries

Scaling up HIV and AIDS responses among employers and workers and their organizations in Zimbabwe

Quick Facts

Countries: *Zimbabwe*

Final Evaluation: *August 2009*

Mode of Evaluation: *independent*

Technical Area: *ex.: HIV and AIDS*

Evaluation Management: *ILOSRO HARARE*

Evaluation Team: *Dr Watch Ruparanganda
(Team Leader) Mercy Nyikadzino*

Project Start: *July 2007*

Project End: *December 2009*

Project Code: *ex: ZIM/07/01/SID*

Donor: *Sida (US\$ 744,525.00)*

Keywords: Social Protection, HIV and AIDS

Background & Context

Summary of the project purpose, logic and structure

The purpose of the project was to strengthen the capacity of employers and workers to develop and implement workplace policies and programs that reduce high risk sexual behaviours, facilitate universal access and reduce the impact of HIV and AIDS at the individual, family and enterprise level.

The specific objectives are:

- 1) To strengthen the capacity of employers and worker organizations to develop sector specific, union level and enterprise level policies and programs consistent with national policies and legislation.
- 2) To strengthen the institutional capacity of employers and workers organizations to coordinate workplace actions, lobby for action and leverage resources for comprehensive program responses.
- 3) To conduct knowledge, attitudes, beliefs and practice surveys (KABPs) and assess the

economic impact of HIV and AIDS among workers and employers and their organizations.

- 4) To support initiatives that increase access to ARVs treatment, care and support for workforce and their families through both public and private sector systems.
- 5) To reduce employment related stigma and discrimination against persons living with HIV and AIDS.

Project implementation was at various levels, within the Zimbabwe national HIV and AIDS policy frameworks, the *Zimbabwe National Strategic Framework for the Private Sector Response to HIV and AIDS (2007-2010)*, and also in the context of the ILO's decent work agenda. The approach optimized the workplace as critical place for information dissemination and access to services for prevention, treatment, care, and support and impact mitigation.

The project was a partnership of labour, represented by the Zimbabwe Congress of Trade Unions (ZCTU), though at the workplace the programmes implemented benefitted all workers regardless of Union affiliation, or lack thereof. Employers were represented by the Employers' Confederation of Zimbabwe (EMCOZ). The International Labour Organisation (ILO) managed the programme and provided technical backstopping.

The project implementation primarily covered ZCTU and its 36 affiliated industrial unions and EMCOZ and its 47 employer affiliates. The project design was based on the client needs and priorities as identified during the consultative meetings.

Present situation of project

The ILO partly agrees with the observations and conclusions of the evaluation as some of the findings clearly reflect the work on the ground which is in response to the objectives as stated in the project document. However, the ILO notes that the evaluation team did not have a thorough comprehension of the project document prior to the field assessment. Hence, some of their expectations and recommendations are not in line with the deliverables of the project document. For example, the report states that *“However, the role of ILO needs more definition as well as its responsibilities and boundaries; whether ILO should go into program activity or not, whether they should work with partners only and not direct activities?”*. This shortfall has compromised the evaluator’s judgement and opinion on the implementation.

The recommendations are generally good as they have a futuristic outlook for the project. However, some of the recommendations did not indicate whether they were commenting as shortfall in meeting the current project objectives or as a proposal for future project planning.

It should be noted that the two year implementation period of 2007 – 2009 was the same period the country was going through the worst economic crisis. However, a lot was achieved under the project regardless of these challenges. The main highlights are:

- Capacity building of employers and workforce to develop gender sensitive workplace policies and programme. 3 sector policies for the Energy, Motor and Textiles sectors were developed, printed and launched by the Minister of Labour
- Direct training contact with 1060 workers and more than 100 businesses
- A training manual for workplace HIV/AIDS policy and programmes developed
- A KAPB study and impact assessment conducted

Purpose, scope and clients of the evaluation

The overall objective of this end-of funding evaluation review is for SIDA and ILO to assess the results accomplished through the SIDA support, appropriateness of interventions, the effectiveness of systems in place for effective service delivery and assess whether what was agreed between SIDA and ILO has been achieved.

The purpose of the evaluation is to come up with:

A clear answer to the question: Is ILO doing the right things in the right way to achieve the defined objectives? This judgment is well sustained by factual data and conclusions.

Helpful and feasible recommendations: What can be done to improve the quality of the work and the sustainability of the project and ultimately increase the positive impact on the target communities?

Methodology of evaluation

The methodological package for the evaluation was highly participatory and variegated and used multiple data collection methods. The data participatory collection methods were intended to generate information relevant in answering the evaluation questions above linked to the evaluation objectives. This evaluation largely collected qualitative information from a variety of sources as well as some statistical data. The data collection methods used for the evaluation includes first the review of relevant documents to have an understanding of the project background and activities by the consultants; then participatory group and individual in-depth interviews conducted; observations and focus group discussions (FGDs) were also conducted. The following paragraphs describe each of the data collection methods in detail, as well as the information collected through the use of each method and the information sources

Main Findings & Conclusions

The ILO project on scaling up HIV and AIDS responses for the private sector in Zimbabwe started in July 2007 and was due to end in July 2009. This program has been implemented in

collaboration with EMCOZ and ZCTU. The project is funded by Sida.

The evaluation reveals that moderate progress has been made in the project as the project is still to achieve the overall set objectives. It was observed that implementing partners are still at policy formulation stage of the project that is the entry point of the other project objectives. The purpose of the evaluation is to assess the achievements, appropriateness of the strategies, the effectiveness and efficiency of management and administration systems of the project. The evaluation is also aimed at assessing the gaps in the current programming and implementation as well as the sustainability of the program beyond Sida funding. As is the case with any evaluation, references were made to overall lessons learned with regard to the way forward.

The goal of the project has been to contribute to the reduction of the incidence of HIV and AIDS in the world of work. The project aimed to strengthen the capacity of employers and workers and their organizations in Zimbabwe to develop and implement workplace policies and programs that reduce the high risk sexual behaviours, facilitate universal access and reduce the impact of HIV and AIDS at the individual, family and enterprise level.

For the moderate progress made so far it was observed that there have been signs of success in a number of areas, although progress has not been accelerated at the desired rate, and some of the project's objectives are still to be realized. The overall impact of the project has also been difficult to detect and assess in the short term lifespan of the project given. For the two years the project has been running the project activities are still midway as the project is in its last month of implementation. Achievements of results are also observed to be based on the capacity of the implementing partners, i.e. EMCOZ and ZCTU in terms of coordination, complementarity and staff capacity. HIV and AIDS is not the core business of the implementing partners and it has been observed that there is a tendency to

marginalize it especially where resources are scarce, rendering activities' implementation slower than intended.

This is a highly qualitative study and thus consultants mainly used this methodology. The methodological package for this evaluation was therefore variegated and used multiple data collection methods that generated information relevant to answering the evaluation questions, linked to the evaluation objectives. The data collection methods included desk review of relevant documents that comprised of proposals, progress reports, work plans to enable evaluators have an understanding of the project background and activities; individual in-depth interviews with ILO staff and management, ZCTU staff, worker beneficiaries and EMCOZ staff, key stakeholders in the program and Sida; and observations. Despite a few logistical problems with getting the respondents, there was no inhibition in the collection of data. The information was gathered and compiled to provide a good and correct overview of the project performance and conclusions.

The main findings in this evaluation are grouped and discussed under two categories which are effectiveness and efficiency. Aspects on effectiveness addressed issues on the performance of the project in relation to the aim, objectives and key result areas/outputs as given in the original project application document. The objectives on each key result area contributing towards the primary objectives of the ILO project have been assessed in relation to the desired project outcome. Efficiency issues were looked at in relation to the degree to which the project is being implemented focusing on cost effectiveness, injection of financial resources and the efficiency of the project to deliver the appropriate services. Sustainability issues are discussed based on whether the ILO's various activities are sustainable. Accountability issues are looked at from the governance and management perspective but being guided by the terms of reference.

The ILO project under evaluation is based on the project applications made to Sida. The objectives contained in the application documents were agreed upon by Sida and ILO to be achievable within a project implementation period of two years starting from July 2007 to July 2009. The objectives have not been achieved in the prescribed two years and the ILO proposal can be perceived to have underestimated the amount of work involved given that this was to have an umbrella approach as opposed to a single organization approach.

Recommendations & Lessons Learned

Main recommendations and follow-up

The project has potential to achieve intended results if it is run under a basket funding mechanism that reduces the political and power dynamics at play with implementing partners. The current project design and arrangement has a lot of management loopholes such as limited management, monitoring and evaluation as well as supervision and is embedded in a lot of bureaucracy hence limited progress in achieving the desired results.

1. It is recommended that a basket fund should either be developed within ILO or be given to another fund manager to ensure that funds reach to the intended ZCTU 36 members and 47 EMCOZ employer organizations who received very little in the current project resulting in limited progress of the project in achieving results.
2. The project is recommended to continue but subject to the proposed structural and operational changes that should ensure its sustainability and effectiveness to intended beneficiaries. Evidence for interventions and project impact has been noted by the evaluation, however; this can be improved if more contact time with the implementing partners and target group is increased to more regular visits for consolidation and monitoring of project activities.

3. Potential to achieve more observed can be maximized if more appropriate collaborations and partnerships with, both government departments and other non – governmental organizations in areas the ILO is not covering are established to complement current activities.
4. External training expertise has brought quality knowledge and awareness to the employers and employees alike. For sustainability and cost effectiveness the project implementers need to continue to hire more qualified personnel and build their capacity to ensure continuity and sustainability even if funding is withdrawn. Recruiting full time technical and professional personnel on strategic positions such as counselling (and testing) at the drop in centres currently occupied by inadequately trained personnel should be the first step.
5. In the project, the role of the ILO was defined as technical backstopping and direct support for specific aspects for example, surveys, capacity building in management and project training using specialist resource persons for various subject matters such as prevention. However, the role of ILO needs more definition as well as its responsibilities and boundaries; whether ILO should go into program activity or not, whether they should work with partners only and not direct activities? Separation of duties is not evident; it is therefore recommended that duties of each partner on the structure be clear cut to improve the efficiency of the organizations in implementing the project.
6. The project is recommended to extend the reach of HIV and AIDS interventions through private sector networks and NGO contracting – conduct assessments of innovative networks and performance based contracting approaches to increase the scale of private sector interventions.

The type of the project requires a lot of knowledge development within the labour market sector by conducting different assessments to inform implementation and the appropriateness of strategies and information disseminated. Such assessments will be benchmarks in measuring impact and even the total reach. This has been observed to a big gap in the project.

7. The project should have programs that help employees learn their HIV status, help high risk HIV negative persons avoid infection, support prevention services for employees living with HIV infection and for their partners and link them to appropriate care and treatment services to reduce risk behaviours, prevent further transmission of new HIV infections, and help track the course of the epidemic and identify new and enhanced interventions.
8. ILO is recommended to address and mainstream HIV and AIDS prevention through an array of public health activities including monitoring the disease's impact, facilitating and supporting partnerships, implementing prevention programs, conducting intervention research and program evaluation, providing technical assistance to build the capacity of individual companies to offer prevention services and develop policy and communications to support HIV and AIDS prevention. These activities can be conducted with a wide range of public – and private – sector partners, including state and local health departments, community based organizations and other non-governmental organizations, businesses and the media.
9. Since ILO has identified the gaps in its implementation partners (i.e. core business of the organizations is affected, organizations tend to take partnership resources to run core business, and amount of time allocated

to partnership business is compromised), ILO should consider putting activities direct to the companies. The partners have realized that it is not in their strict mandate to implement activities hence the need for role definition and ultimately for a basket funding. This ambiguity adversely impact on efficiency. The operating partners should be neutral or ILO can get commitment from the representing body that they will service

10. There is an urgent need to strengthen work place programs within the private sector, especially the small businesses. ILO has a full-time project manager who is responsible for everything but with loose coordination efforts with the EMCOZ and ZCTU project coordinators.

Important lessons learned

The project was successful in achieving the intended result of sensitization of management since many companies now recognize the HIV and AIDS epidemic as a serious threat to productivity and profitability and are ready to adopt practical steps for developing and implementing workplace prevention and care programs that will serve both employees and managers. There was meaningful involvement of management in the policy draft stages and there is a potential to have their capacity enhanced in the policy implementations. Objective one and two of the overall project were achieved although programmatic and organizational systems were not yet fully in place. The partners also focused on gender and ensured training of women peer educators and counsellors. This consideration will further provide opportunities to engage and empower women. Significantly increased financing is critical to expanding service capacity and quality, making necessary infrastructure improvements. At the same time, significant expansion of resources requires accompanying efforts to support increased training opportunities and financing human resources generally. The ILO project is one of the best in addressing HIV and AIDS issues at the

workplace and for this reason has the potential to change and improve not only the level of relief of its beneficiaries, but for business as well. Participants noted the need for research into the management of the project e.g. what are the best practices for managing partner relations. The issue of project sustainability beyond the SIDA funding is mainly an economic question. Once the economy stabilizes then the interventions become sustainable as organizations and sectors will be able to fund their own programs. Over and above all, this is a good project which can benefit the workers and their families when fully implemented. However, as noted above this project needs to be properly administered and coordinated to ensure efficiency and effectiveness. The evaluators felt compelled to recommend that a basket fund model could be considered which may or may not be administered by ILO.