



Evaluation Summaries

Support to the implementation of the Expanded Public Works Programme, Limpopo Province

Quick Facts

Countries: South Africa

Final Evaluation: 25 October – 09 December 2010

Mode of Evaluation: Independent

Technical Area: Job Creation and Enterprise Development

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Project Start: 1 January 2005

Project End: 31 December 2010

Project Code: SAF/04/M53/SAF;
SAF/04/M50/UKM

Donor: South Africa & DFID [US\$5,023,514
[Amendment 1] + US\$640,500]

Keywords: employment creation;
infrastructure development; labour intensive
employment; road transport

Background & Context

Summary of the project purpose, logic and structure

The project was designed by the ILO in collaboration with the Government of Limpopo Province to provide technical support the implementation of the Expanded Programme of Public Works Programme (EPWP), by the fielding of five (5) experts who were later reduced to four (4) in 2009 due to resignations. Overall, the project was designed to assist the Limpopo Provincial Government fulfill the goals and objectives of the EPWP in the creation of decent work opportunities for the unemployed that will contribute towards the government's objective of poverty reduction, improved livelihoods of the target beneficiaries and skills development.

The project is aimed at providing support to the Limpopo Department of Public Works (LDPW) that will facilitate the smooth implementation of the infrastructure component of EPWP using Employment Intensive (EI) methods in the province. In addition, the ILO agreed to provide direct support to a number of EPWP initiatives identified by the Limpopo Department of Public Works (LDPW).

Major activities consisted of technical assistance to the Government of Limpopo Province in the following areas:

- The establishment of functional Training Centre and development of the necessary training programme and curriculum;
- The coordination and participation of training activities to various target groups;
- Promotion of employment intensive work methods and procedures with emphasis on quality and productivity;
- The compilation of multi-sectoral (non-road infrastructure works) technical Guidelines;
- Provision of technical and managerial assistance to Departments and municipalities on the use of Labour Intensive Construction (LIC) work methods and procedures;
- The development of monitoring systems for LIC works based on existing National systems;
- Programme management and development of strategies for the increased involvement of emerging entrepreneurs in all types of infrastructure works, and

- Knowledge and technology transfers to local counterparts through on-the job training and interaction.

Some outputs in the project document have been defined with reference to the provincial EPWP (LEPWP) rather than the ILO project, with the result that the specified output indicators are not relevant to the project. This undermined the validity of project design. The ILO team later identified Technical Assistance Functions in four areas, which provide the basis for evaluating project achievements: Training and capacity development; ii) Technical Advisory Support; iii) Advocacy and; iv) Research and Development.

Present situation of project

The contractual basis of the ILO technical assistance is the Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) dated 14th January 2005 covering the period January 2005 to December 2008. The MoU was subsequently amended in June 2007, extending the scope and project period to August 2010, and a further no-cost extension to 31st December 2010.

Purpose, scope and clients of the evaluation

The main purpose of the evaluation was to provide independent assessment of the technical assistance input provided by the ILO to the implementation of EPWP, assess the appropriateness of design as it relates to strategic and policy framework and to give directions for effectively utilizing ILO's inputs in the second phase of EPWP.

The clients of the evaluation are (i) ILO Pretoria Office and the technical unit in Headquarters (EMP/INVEST), project partners namely NDPW, LDPW, the donor – The Limpopo Provincial Government, the Government of South Africa and the tripartite constituents.

Methodology of evaluation

The evaluation, which was carried out between 25 October and 09 December 2010, covered all the technical and management support provided by the ILO to the EPWP in the Limpopo Province since January 2005. The evaluation methods involved, among others:

i) desk study of all relevant project documents and Memoranda of Understanding, EPWP policy and implementation guidelines, Provincial 5-year Business Plans, Sector Plans, technical manuals, progress reports and work plans and; ii) assessment of the effectiveness and efficiency of the ILO Technical Assistance input into the national EPWP through meetings with the relevant authorities at National, provinces hosting the TAs, Provincial Roads Authorities and Municipalities.

Main Findings & Conclusions

In view of the LEPWP's objective of contributing to poverty reduction through the creation of employment and infrastructure development, based on labour intensive approaches, the immediate objectives of the project under investigation were valid, and the interventions in different areas were mutually reinforcing and critical to achieving the aim of this project.

The goal of creating one million job opportunities during the 1st Phase of EPWP spanning the period 2005 – 2009, was achieved by the end of the financial year ending 31 March 2008, one full year ahead of schedule. Such an encouraging performance prompted the Government to move swiftly to the 2nd Phase of EPWP, raising the programme target to creation of 4.5 million Work Opportunities (or 2 million Full-Time Equivalent) for the period 2010 – 2014. During Phase 1 of EPWP, the contribution of Limpopo Province as at end of March 2009 was estimated at 144,472 job opportunities created, or 14.4% of the national target. LEPWP plans to create additional 441,993 job opportunities or 10% of national target during EPWP Phase 2 ending in 2014.

In order to build capacity of EPWP implementing partners and that of project beneficiaries (re-orientation of existing contractors, engineers, mentors, etc. and training of emerging actors in infrastructure) the project strategy has placed emphasis on training. The project developed and delivered EPWP/LIC training interventions to different

categories of project beneficiaries and target groups, including women and men. These include: a) awareness seminars for Senior Managers; b) re-orientation workshops for implementing Agency staff; c) re-orientation workshops for Technical Support Advisers; d) re-orientation workshops for Project Managers and Consultants; e) re-orientation workshops for Mentors and Trainers; f) implementation of Learnership Programmes through accredited Training Service Providers with ILO support and assistance when required; g) organization and facilitation of senior officials from various Departments and Municipals to attend relevant external short courses at the ILO ITC in Turin, Italy; h) facilitation of Study Tours for Senior Government officials to expose them to LIC practices in selected countries abroad. Most of the training activities targeted adults and the TAs used a range of active participatory and practice-oriented training techniques to ensure effectiveness of the strategy. Project reports show that Municipalities and Departments with trained managers required progressively less support, and some of those managers trained are applying for new jobs and joining consultants.

In the different areas of infrastructure activities, the project TAs provided support to Senior Management at provincial and local Municipality levels. Such support interventions include realigning Tender Documents for Municipalities and Government Department to EPWP requirements, and preparation of concept and strategy documents; process analysis and coordination documents; operational documents, and consolidation of reports and presentations. In addition, the ILO team provided technical support to Management and District Coordinators in preparation of sector plans, and follow-up of process analysis for District and Local Municipality Projects. The ILO project also supported the Department of Roads and Transport in the development of a number of technical documents; namely: Concept Note on Road Maintenance Management System and developed draft maintenance Tender/contract

documents; Business plan for 2010/11 up-scaling projects implemented under the DoRT; etc.

Another important area of technical support by the ILO team has been in the production of technical documents; output indicators in this area (apart from business plans, TORs and technical concept notes) include: 4 Technical Guidelines documents produced; 9 Business Plans produced (covering LEPWP 1 and 2; Greening Limpopo, Environment; Emerging Contractors; Alternative Building materials; Food for Waste; VIP Toilets); 3 Technical Concept Notes developed on Contractor/Enterprise Development; Youth Skills Development; and LIC Training Centre of Excellence; 1 Training Manual developed and; 1 EPWP Promotional Video produced (see a full list of documents produced in Annex 3 of this report). These documents were produced under the Limpopo project of EPWP; however, in order to assure national reach and use, the EPWP ILO project management should consider a review of the documents by all the EPWP ILO TAs and related experts and their publication and dissemination during EPWP Phase 2.

Apart from technical advice, the project supported the Government of Limpopo province through contributions of a gap-filling nature, made upon request. Overall, Government expressed satisfaction with the quality and relevance of the inputs (both technical and administrative) by the ILO technical project team in Limpopo. The wish is that the ILO team should remain throughout the duration of EPWP Phase 2, which ends in 2014. However, considering the lean support provided at national level, management may wish to take another look at the current strategy for the deployment of its experts under EPWP.

Beyond plan expectations, the ILO LEPWP Project also provided technical assistance to the Indonesia, Ache rural road Project through: i) Attachment of their Engineers to Limpopo project sites for one month to understudy LIC sealing techniques; ii) Several

missions by one of the project team staff to assist with the initial project setup and; iii) Sharing of technical documentations and lessons learnt. In addition, the ILO LEPWP project provided site-level technical support in LIC road sealing through sharing of documentation and the fielding of two trained technicians to the Kenya Roads 2000 Programme for two months. These two external support provided by the project demonstrates the veracity of the project outputs beyond Limpopo province. An impact study would reveal the full dimension of the good practices generated by the project.

In terms of financial resource utilization, the Limpopo ILO project has recorded an overall implementation rate of 93% during the Phase 1 period. This is highly commendable given the administrative constraint experienced in processing project transactions.

Critical to sustainability of project activities under LEPWP is political support at all levels of governance; political support has been clearly demonstrated by the large amount of budget, over US\$5 million, set aside by the Government in support of LEPWP (2005-2010). This assures project and programme ownership by all the sectors and at all levels from provincial to the municipality. The Government's decision to use its line budget, to the tune of R19 billion, to maximize job creation is a major factor towards sustainable financing. Participation of target communities in the selection and monitoring of projects through the Integrated Development Plan (IDP) process assures local ownership and therefore sustainability.

From the standpoint of technical assistance, the key to sustainability is effective transfer of skills. Although significant technical skills transfer through training of various categories of programme beneficiaries has been achieved sustainability can best be achieved if counterparts are adequately assigned by Government to work with the ILO TAs. Five years into the implementation of LEPWP by the LDPW, counterparts are yet to be assigned to under-study the ILO TAs. Even if

counterparts are available and trained, the high staff turn-over which characterizes official appointments across the sectors has the potential for undermining any programme of on-the-job training designed to strengthen capacity.

Under this project the ILO was to hold annual Programme Review Meetings, to be convened in the last quarter of each calendar year. In addition, the ILO took responsibility for project monitoring and evaluation. Management meetings during Phase 1 of the ILO project were quite regular. Incidentally, the project management witnessed serious lapses in project administration particularly by the ILO. At their meeting on 29 September 2010, the two parties acknowledged these shortcomings and committed themselves to a more efficient management of the project henceforth.

Recommendations & Lessons Learned

Main recommendations and follow-up EPWP Limpopo

- a) The use of the current EPWP output indicator, based on number of employment opportunities created, is rather narrow; an impact evaluation would reveal a more robust programme indicator and therefore show the full effect of EPWP interventions on the community.
- b) The re-establishment of the LI Training Centre of Excellence is paramount in ensuring effective coordination and quality assurance of LI training delivery
- c) LDPW's filling of vacant EPWP Directorate posts including technical counterparts for the ILO officials is essential for project sustainability

ILO Limpopo project

- a) In view of the shortcomings of the ILO project document (Re: Annex 2 to the Memorandum of Understanding, 2005), it is recommended that a project document should be developed to

reflect the major elements of EPWP Phase 2, and which will take into consideration the specific limitations of the project document, including the Logical framework and the budget.

- b) All the ILO projects addressing employment issues in South Africa, including the national and Limpopo EPWP, should have a common platform for exchange of ideas, information sharing and technical cooperation in order to achieve synergy and enhance the overall quality of the ILO support to the country.
- c) From the standpoint of technical assistance, the key to sustainability is effective transfer of skills; this can best be achieved if counterparts are assigned by Government to work with the ILO TAs. Five years into the implementation of LEPWP by the DPW counterparts are yet to be assigned in adequate number and quality to understudy the ILO TAs; this situation should be addressed without any further delay.
- d) Overall, Government expressed satisfaction with the quality and relevance of the inputs (both technical and administrative) by the ILO technical team in Limpopo. The wish is that the ILO team should remain throughout the duration of EPWP Phase 2. However, considering the lean support provided at national level, management may wish to take another look at the current strategy for the deployment of its experts under EPWP.
- e) The LEPWP project has produced a number of technical documents on different aspects of EPWP and LIC; in order to assure national reach and use, the EPWP ILO project management should consider a review of the

documents by all the EPWP ILO TAs and related experts and their publication and dissemination during EPWP Phase 2.

- f) The exposure of some Government officials to the ILO training programme in Turin has proved remarkably useful to the beneficiaries and many more would like to take advantage of the training; however, since it will not be feasible to support so many officials to train in Turin, Government would like to suggest that arrangements for bringing the trainers in Turin to South Africa should be explored by the ILO.
- g) Aspects of project management that require closer scrutiny by the ILO (Pretoria/ Geneva) during the EPWP Phase 2 include project backstopping; coordination of EPWP projects; financial reporting and management; provision of administrative support to the TAs; and general oversight.
- h) Collaboration between the Limpopo and National ILO EPWP TAs should be structured and strengthened, particularly in addressing research, production of technical documents and training in order to avoid duplication/overlap of functions.

Important lessons learned

- Poorly defined project outputs and indicators without baselines and targets constitute a challenge to project implementation and rob project evaluation the rigor of performance analysis.
- Increasing the scale of the EPWP to the size proposed in the Draft Anti-Poverty Strategy would require mobilization of additional resources.
- Low-level Workers' Training targets in the first phase were not being met largely because of limited existing DoL training capacity and funding to

- implement the massive training requirements of the programme.
- The Economic Sector, which was meant to address the development and needs of Small, Medium, and Micro Enterprises (SMMEs), as a specific objective of the first phase of the programme, was not very effective as a stand-alone sector.
 - Stretching the ILO support to other sectors beyond infrastructure sector would require more resources than currently available.
 - Temporary employment opportunities being created in massive numbers under the EPWP could in the end prove disastrous socially and economically unless the process is supported by additional training of the temporary workers in artisans/trades skills, small scale enterprise development or other forms of employment.
 - The continued use of the ILO TA for gap-filling in administrative and other support services on an elaborate scale, if unchecked, could be detrimental to the realization of the overall project objective.