



Evaluation Summaries

Developing the UN CEB Toolkit within the Decent Work Campaign

Quick Facts

Countries: *Inter-regional*, Argentina, Serbia, Tanzania, Vietnam
Final Evaluation: December 2010
Mode of Evaluation: Independent
Technical Area: Integration
Evaluation Management: INTEGRATION
Evaluation Team: Lead evaluator: Javier Varela. National evaluators: Gabriel Schneider, Argentina; Donatella Bradic, Serbia; Nguyen Huu Dung, Vietnam
Project Start: November 2008
Project End: September 2010
Project Code: GLO/08/11/EEC
Donor: European Community (EU 522,504)
Keywords: Mainstreaming of employment and decent work, CEB Toolkit, UN reform, knowledge sharing, capacity building.

Background & Context

Summary of the project purpose, logic and structure

The project was framed in the ILO's continued efforts to promote the Decent Work Agenda (DWA), adopted by the United Nations (UN), its inclusion in national development frameworks, and in the long standing collaboration with the UN and other multilateral organizations to promote and integrated approach to decent work. It fits within creation and implementation of the CEB Toolkit and the Decent Work campaign and the ILO 2010-15 Strategic Policy Framework, which included mainstreaming decent work into national and international

policies as an objective. It is also framed in the EC endorsement of the significance employment and decent work.

Within that context, the ILO has contributed with financial resources for the project staff before and during the life of the project, and to complement project activities, which are funded through the end of 2010-11 biennium, including the implementation of the toolkit in additional countries.

The project aimed at strengthening the knowledge base and understanding of the multilateral agencies and their national constituent on mainstreaming employment and decent work, in support also of the implementation of the European Union's policy commitments to decent work for all. This overall purpose was embedded in two project outcomes:

1. Multilateral agencies share policy and operational tools, experience and good practices and collaborate to strengthen the knowledge sharing platform and implement and disseminate the use of the Toolkit.
2. Experimenting of the Toolkit by UN Country Teams and national stakeholders in four selected pilot countries make it possible to draw lesson and develop tools for wider dissemination.

To achieve the first outcome, the project strategy was based on a combination of global and regional awareness raising and training activities targeting the UN agencies, constituents and ILO staff; on expanding the Toolkit through the elaboration of tailored tools in a range of thematic areas; and on

creating an internet-based knowledge sharing platform. For the second outcome the strategy devised the testing of the Toolkit in four pilot countries: Albania, Argentina, Tanzania, and Vietnam, though the provision of technical assistance and capacity building to the UNCTs, multilateral agencies and constituents. During the project onset, Albania was replaced by Serbia. The project has been managed by INTEGRATION at ILO HQ.

Present situation of the project

The project finalized its operations in September 2010. At the moment of the evaluation there were no significant pending activities or outputs.

Purpose, scope and clients of the evaluation

According to the nature of the project, along with assessing the project results, the evaluation purpose was producing key recommendations and suggestions on how to improve the integration of Decent Work in the policies, programs and projects of ILO constituents and UN agencies.

The main areas covered by the evaluation were: project design; project results, quality and opportunity of the outcomes; internal and external factors; lessons learned; main legacies and achievements; and sustainability.

The primary clients of the evaluation were the INTEGRATION, the relevant HQ departments, the ILO regional and country offices, the CEB agencies, the ITC and the Donor. Regarding the country pilots, the clients of the evaluation were the UNCTs, the RCs, UN field offices, and constituents on each of the four countries.

Methodology of evaluation

According to the qualitative nature of the outcomes, the evaluation was primarily based on qualitative methods, and used homogeneous data gathering and analysis tools for the global and country pilots to ensure comparability. The first stage of data collection comprised the revision of the relevant project documentation. It was followed by face-to-face and telephone interviews to key stakeholders and beneficiaries at agencies HQs and in the field, and included a mission to ILO-Geneva from 17 to 19 November to interview key ILO staff. A total of 56 informants were interviewed. The

tools applied included content analysis, open interviews, and quantitative analysis of the websites statistics and an ad-hoc survey for the website users.

The main limitation faced by the evaluation was the lack of an assessment of the pilot country experience in Tanzania, which was to a great extent compensated by the analysis of the other three pilot experiences. The broad scope of the project and diversity of stakeholders has also constituted a significant challenge for the evaluation. Triangulation of sources and informants was the main method used to ensure validity of the findings.

Main Findings & Conclusions

The project has partially met its objectives. According to its pilot nature, it has obtained valuable results in developing methods and tools to improve the knowledge and to build capacities of the UN agencies and constituents on mainstreaming employment and decent work, as well as in testing the application of the Toolkit at country level. It has been less effective on mobilizing the UN agencies and constituents to adopt those methods and tools to make real changes on the way decent work is mainstreamed in their policies and programmes.

The project strategy was fully coherent with the international development framework adopted by the UN system and the EU on promotion of employment and decent work. It was consistent with the key needs and gaps on mainstreaming employment and decent work in the multilateral system, and those needs were addressed with a coherent approach. Nevertheless the design was too optimistic, overestimating the agencies capacities to apply the Toolkit and engage on knowledge sharing and to collaborate. This has hindered to some extent the project ability to deliver, as well as has posed a significant burden on the project management.

Regarding the results obtained on the first outcome, the evaluation concludes that the project has made a significant contribution to raise awareness and improving the knowledge among the UN system on the DWA and on the

use of the CEB Toolkit. Its proactive attitude as a facilitator for partnering and collaborating with multiple UN agencies and ILO departments has been strategic for this. However, the project has been less effective on making the UN agencies apply the Toolkit in their policies and programmes and in triggering knowledge sharing and collaboration among them. This objective has proved to be too ambitious for the project resources and time-frame although, if compared with other UN mainstreaming processes, such as Gender or Human Rights Based Approach, the project results can be considered fairly satisfactory.

The project has adopted an “opportunity windows” approach, focusing in those target groups with greater demand for assistance. This has been adequate to test the response and potential of the different UN agencies, constituents, and ILO departments, and to experiment with a diversity of awareness, training and capacity building approaches. On the other hand it has partly dispersed the project energies into many simultaneous fronts. The project has developed a comprehensive Knowledge Sharing Platform (KSP) on mainstreaming employment and decent work, as one of the components of the CEB Toolkit. But the KSP has not achieved to draw the UN agencies interest, despite the project efforts, and is mostly used by ILO staff. Along with some technical features of the platform, and the preference of more traditional communication tools, the main factor for this low impact is that UN agencies still have not translated mainstreaming of employment and decent work into operational levels and therefore there is low demand for guidance from UN staff and in cases where this demand exists, they request practical tools that the KSP does not provide.

Regarding the tools developed for selected UN agencies and ILO departments, the consultative approach adopted by the project has led to the production of relevant and strategic products on key areas such as social dialogue, green jobs, rural development or HIV/AIDS, partially contributing to address a demand for practical tools, and filling key gaps

in terms of mainstreaming employment and decent work into the UN system and into the UN country programming, particularly the UNDAF.

The intense process of awareness raising and training activities addressed to a wide audience of UN agencies and the ILO has allowed the project to target a significant number of staff and, most importantly, develop and validate high quality face-to-face and online training packages with a good potential for up-scaling replication. The coordination with the International Training Centre (ITC) and its technical expertise has been essential in this regard. All these capacity building efforts have been instrumental to increase the awareness on the CEB Toolkit among the UN agencies and ILO field offices, and to launch initiatives to mainstream employment and decent work using the Toolkit in various countries.

In the case of constituents, the project has achieved good results with the workers organizations mostly thanks to the synergies established with a broad capacity building program being developed by ACTRAV/TURIN. Again, the project partnership approach has been a smart investment.

Regarding the employers’ organizations, the project inability to mobilize them, and the lack of significant results, seem to indicate that UN reform and the multilateral development frameworks is not a top priority in the global agenda of the employers’ organizations.

For the second outcome, the group of pilot countries selected by the project represented a good sample of different geographical, socio-economic, and development contexts. The models implemented for the pilot experiences were highly relevant for the countries needs, although they were too ambitious for the resources and time frame available. Overall, they have allowed the ILO to refine its knowledge on what works and what does not on supporting the UN agencies and constituents at country level to mainstream employment and decent work.

The results obtained by the project have varied significantly from country to country. The level of commitment of the national

constituents and the existence (or lack) of a demand for the UN system to include employment and decent work into the multilateral assistance framework are major explaining factors. The articulation of the assistance with the programming cycle of the policy and programmes of the multilateral agencies and national governments proved to be another essential factor. Also, the level of activity of the UN system at country level is another key aspect, particularly for the elaboration of the CEB Toolkit self assessments.

Recommendations & Lessons Learned

Main recommendations and follow-up

1. Design differentiated strategies according to the target groups

For future projects addressing the CEB multilateral system, it is recommended to devise tailored strategies according to the different levels of awareness, capacities, and commitment of the multilateral agencies.

2. Organize a meeting with the CEB members to assess the status of the KSP and decide further actions

The ILO should promote that the, that CEB, as the owner of the KSP, carefully analyze with a wide perspective the current situation of the KSP, its strengths, weakness and challenges, and decide the strategy for the future.

3. Prioritize the elaboration of practical, thematic tools

Future strategies should prioritize the production of practical and thematic tools linking the agencies mandates and their areas of action with the promotion of decent work.

4. Increase linkages between the online training and the KSP platform

The online training can be better linked with the KSP. The linkages can be in various forms, such as referencing the course bibliography to the KSP materials, etc.

5. Promote regional inter-agency workshops

It is recommended that the ILO uses regional training approaches to expand the training to agencies in other regions. Cost-sharing options with the UN agencies (i.e. combining this workshop with other agencies' workshops) should be explored.

6. Include training activities as part of other agencies meetings

For future initiatives on mainstreaming employment and decent work, it is recommended that the ILO continues with the approach of embedding training workshops into agencies regional meetings

7. Continue with the strategy on capacity building of workers' organization

The next steps on building workers' organizations capacities on mainstreaming employment and decent work should adopt the project approach and continue with the line of action initiated. It must be realistically considered the opportunities and limitations of the existing entry points for the workers' organizations into UNDAFs and other assistance frameworks, in order to avoid frustration.

8. Develop the employers' organizations capacity to mainstreaming employment and decent work

It is recommended that the ILO initiates a dialogue through the appropriate channels with the employers' at global, regional and country levels, to ensure that employers get on board of this process.

9. Incorporate tailored capacity building activities for the UN system at country level

Training activities should be tailored, according to the country context, to the UNCT as a whole, and to specific areas and themes addressed by the relevant assistance frameworks such as UNDAFs, joint programmes and other UN assistance frameworks at country level.

10. Expand mainstreaming of employment of decent work into other entry points beyond the UNDAFs

The UN joint projects and the Agencies' country programming processes (including their programming guidelines) are other entry points with good potential to build consensus for mainstreaming employment and decent work. In this respect, the role of the ILO country directors should be further stressed.

11. Promote involvement of agencies' headquarters and intermediate levels and coordination bodies to stimulate field offices commitment

For the CEB Toolkit to achieve its full implementation in mainstreaming employment and decent work, it is key that UN agencies at HQ and regional levels coherently support the UNCTs, the RCs and UN system at country level. The ILO, through its presence in the CEB, should mobilize the multilateral agencies in this regard.

12. Highlight the CEB label of the Toolkit

The ILO label of the CEB Toolkit needs to be less evident. The CEB should explore alternatives, such as having the document signed by all CEB member agencies heads as is the case for the UNDAFs at country level.

13. Address both high level policy-making officials and technical staff

In order to ensure solid mainstreaming of employment and decent work into the national policies, the provision of awareness capacity building and tools should address the decision-making levels as well as the research and policy planning officers from the government and social partners.

14. Develop the country level component of the Toolkit into user-friendly tools for practical application

It is recommended that the ILO complement the Toolkit with more user-friendly tools for national application.

15. Creation of national networks of focal points on mainstreaming employment and decent work

The ILO is in a privileged position to identify the key persons from the government, workers' and employers' organizations to create a network and support it with assistance and training. The existing social dialogue mechanisms could be used instead of creating new networks, if feasible.

Important lessons learned

Due to the pilot nature of the project, the evaluation has particularly emphasized the identification of good practices and lessons learned, summarized below

- Combining global, regional and national capacity building and assistance is mutually reinforcing.
- Thematic knowledge sharing sites on mainstreaming employment and decent work provide materials that are highly relevant for the agencies and the community of users.
- Development of tools in close collaboration between the agency and ILO departments is key to ensure products with a high quality and appropriation by the recipients.
- Combining ILO and UN programming staff in mixed training activities fosters a highly enriching and effective interaction.
- The alliance with the ITC, which has contributed with its training expertise and the online platform, has been essential for success.
- Cost-effective training modalities, such as adding a one day session to regional workshops on UN reform allows reaching a large ILO audience.
- Training of trainer workshops proved to be effective to build capacities at regional level. The training of trainers' model is also a good approach to build regional capacity.
- Supporting the national constituents on the application of the CEB Toolkit can yield

significant results when it is applied to the design, implementation or monitoring of national development plans.

- The organisation of periodical events on decent work for a mixed audience, UN agencies, EU, national and local partners contributes to raise awareness.
- Provision of translations of key documents to local languages is key for usability of the material by national partners.
- Training and capacity building activities with an active hands-on ILO involvement is a highly effective way to raise awareness and expand knowledge of decent work.
- Adopting an inter-regional and inter-agency approach on training and capacity building improves training results.
- Senior UN staff require individual tailored approach for awareness raising and training
- It is crucial to ensure that the national agencies responsible for policy design, implementation and monitoring are addressed and actively participate in the project activities and receive adequate assistance.
- Agencies are better mobilized when approached with a thematic perspective.
- Agencies workload or few field staff is a limiting factor to engage on mainstreaming efforts
- Support to the RCs, UNCTs and agencies' field offices from the UN system at headquarters and regional levels is essential.
- Application of the Toolkit requires intense ILO support and follow-up. Mainstreaming of employment and decent work at country level require strong coordination and teamwork among the ILO HQ, Regional and country offices, to provide timely support to the multilateral agencies and constituents.