



Evaluation Summary



International
Labour
Office

Evaluation Unit

Youth employment support: Jobs for unemployed and marginalised young people – Final evaluation

QUICK FACTS

Countries: *Kenya and Zimbabwe*

Final Evaluation: *April 2012*

Mode of Evaluation: *Independent*

Technical Area: *Employment Creation,
INTEGRATION*

Evaluation Manager: *Gugsa Yimer Farice (ILO
ROAF Addis Ababa)*

Evaluation Team: *Stanley Karuga*

Project Start Date: *March 2009*

Project End Date: *March 2011*

Revised Project End Date: *March 2012*

Project Codes: *TC Symbols: RAF/09/50/FRG*

Donors: *Germany (US\$ 1,299, 274) and the ILO
through the RBSA (US\$ 512,134)*

BACKGROUND & CONTEXT

Unemployment, especially for young women and men, has been and continues to be major challenge particularly in developing countries including Kenya and Zimbabwe. The unemployment problem was exacerbated by the global financial crisis which started around 2007 and is yet to end to date.

ILO initiated the YES-JUMP pilot project for implementation in selected districts both Kenya and Zimbabwe as part of its participation towards addressing the unemployment crisis under the auspices of “Decent Work Agenda in Africa 2007-2015. The initiative was essentially part of ILO’s response to the Decent Work Country Programme (DWCP) adopted by the respective tripartite ILO constituents in both Kenya and Zimbabwe.

The YES-JUMP Project was designed as a two (2) year initiative scheduled to run from 1st March 2009 to 31st March 2011 and later a no-cost extension to 30th June 2011. However with support by the ILO through the Regular Budget Supplementary Account (RBSA), the project completion date was extended by nine (9) months to March 31st 2012.

Methodology of Evaluation

YES-JUMP was implemented by the ILO Regional Office in Addis Ababa (Ethiopia) through a Chief Technical Adviser (CTA), in cooperation with the ILO Offices in Dar es Salaam and Harare; and Youth Employment Focal Point person in the Employment Sector in Geneva. At the national level, the project was implemented by ILO staff in the name of National Project Coordinators (one in each country) with support by a finance and administration in each country, and a driver in the case of Zimbabwe.

The evaluation was carried out in a participatory manner to ensure that the findings represent the views of the various key stakeholders, while methodology comprised: (i) literature review key relevant documents; (ii) field interviews key stakeholders across all the two countries and (iii) field level observations. A total of 84 stakeholders were met and interviewed across the two countries.

Overall, the project performed very well quite well in relation to decent job creation where it surpassed project targets by remarkable margins and fairly well in terms of capacity building of national and local partners. This was despite financial limitations even with the additional and laudable ILO financial injections through the RBSA.

Relevance and Strategic Fit

Based on both secondary and primary sources of information, the mission unequivocally concluded that the overall objective of YES-JUMP was fundamentally relevant to the needs of young women and men who were the target beneficiaries; and strategically in line with development agenda of ILO constituents and a host of other development partners. This conclusion was based on findings by the Mission through literature review of key documents and declarations on employment and youth development at global, regional and national levels which included the Millennium Declaration 2000; Resolutions of the 93rd International Labour Conference 2005; Youth Employment Summit 2002; Africa Union Declaration 2004; Kenya Vision 2030, Kenya National Employment Policy 2008; Kenya National Youth Policy 2003; Zimbabwe National Employment Policy Framework 2009; Zimbabwe Medium Term Plan-2011/2015; Zimbabwe National Youth Policy 2011; the Kenya and Zimbabwe United Nations Development Framework and Decent Work Country Programmes. The target beneficiaries also overwhelmingly confirmed the relevance and

strategic fit of YES-JUMP objectives to their livelihood needs. The sample verbatim statement by one of the respondents met during the Mission is only meant to demonstrate the general view of the target beneficiaries.

The objective and activities of YES-JUMP were also strongly complementary to employment and youth development agenda of other ILO initiatives including the “COOP Africa Programme, the “Youth Entrepreneurship Facility”, the “Skills for Youth Employment and Rural Development Program”, and the “Women Enterprise Development and Gender Equality” initiative; and also to wide range of other donor funded projects and programmes.

Validity of Project Design

Project design was logical and coherent. This conclusion is based on the fact that a significant amount of background problem analysis work and consultations had been undertaken prior to project commencement. The YES-JUMP project had very well defined and unbundled activities, outputs, outcomes and indicators. The project log frame identified two immediate objectives as indicated earlier. It also had identified eight (8) outputs which the Mission observed were not disaggregated by project objectives or outcomes- perhaps because of the strong inter-relationship between the two project objectives or outcomes.

Some of the key factors underlying the above-listed impressive achievements included broad-based and effective “buy-in” of the project largely due to the relevance of its ideals, the participatory approach adopted by the project, injection of additional funding by the ILO, and effectiveness of technical and administrative backstopping by the ILO regional and sub-regional offices. The project however faced negative external factors that influenced its performance, notably the general weak capacity of partner organisations and target beneficiaries especially in Zimbabwe, which

necessitated greater effort towards capacity building than was initially anticipated.

The Mission also noted that the project team satisfactorily acted on the recommendations of the self-evaluation missions of the project (August 2010 in Zimbabwe and October 2010 in Kenya).

Efficiency of Resource Use

The Mission's observation is that the YES-JUMP implementation team in each country comprised only one technical person-which was indeed lean given the number of stakeholder organisations the team was supposed to mobilize, the weak capacity of some of the organisations, and the geographical spread of the pilot phase. Nevertheless, the national project coordinators were not only technically qualified to deliver on project objectives, but also exhibited passion and commitment to their work.

Although the Mission did not carry out "value for money" audit as such, the overall observation is that the project management used project funds quite prudently and efficiently. The project budget amounting to US\$ 1,299,274 for both countries was no doubt inadequate given the huge demand for business financing by the target beneficiaries and capacity building needs for both the implementation partners and target beneficiaries. Many respondents, especially the grantees and borrowers viewed the available financial resources as a drop in the ocean. Many respondents felt that it was the ILO's injection of US\$ 512,134 through the Regular Budget Supplementary Account that enabled the project to attain and indeed surpass project targets.

Effectiveness of Project Management

The YES-JUMP project was implemented by the ILO Regional Office for Africa (Addis Ababa) through a Chief Technical Adviser (CTA), and in cooperation with the ILO Offices in Dar es Salaam and Harare

and Youth Employment Focal Point in the Employment Sector in Geneva. At the country level, project implementation was undertaken by the respective ILO recruited national project coordinators in collaboration with locally constituted national and community-based organisational structures including a national steering Committee, a technical working group and community-based implementation committees.

Project targets and indicators were clearly and sufficiently defined. They generally complied with the principles of being Specific, Measurable, Attributable Realistic and Time-bound (SMART). The project had a well-defined monitoring and evaluation system and was indeed collecting relevant data and information on regular basis (monthly, quarterly, bi-annually and annually) with support of the LCFs and Grantees. It was also noted that the project team has endeavoured to disaggregate data where possible especially in terms of gender, sector, region and age. However, the mission observed two issues:

Firstly, the monitoring system has not been very effective in terms of collecting impact level indicator data, which to some extent, was attributed to the relatively small budget that was allocated to monitoring and evaluation activities of the project. Secondly, while the project had a variety of platforms through which information was shared, the Mission observed that some of the innovative technologies initiated in some areas (e.g. the waste management based floor and shoe polish, and paraffin projects in Goromozi in Zimbabwe) were not yet known in Kenya.

Impact Orientation & Sustainability

Three main features of the project give it a sound basis for sustainability of activities beyond its life. These includes the apparent strong ownership and institutionalization of project activities in the agenda of local and national organisations; improved technical and business management

capacity through training whose positive results are already emerging; and the collaborative framework established with support of the project where the different partners within the program are actively interacting.

Main Comments and Recommendations

The view of virtually all respondents is that the objective of the YES-JUMP pilot project was, and still remains relevant to the needs to target beneficiaries. It was, and still remains strategically in line with development aspirations of ILO constituents and complemented quite well projects and programmes of the ILO and other United Nations agencies. The stakeholders are desperately yearning for the continuation of the project. The general concern is that while the project is well placed for take-off, by way of rolling out to other areas, and most likely, at a lower administrative cost given the lessons already learned, there are yet no concrete financial provisions from any source including the ILO and other partners. There is therefore need to do everything possible to ensure that a second phase starts as soon as possible. Project design was valid, coherent and founded on solid information base. The participatory approach adopted is worth emulating in future project for sustainability.

The project has surpassed key project targets by impressive margins-for example job creation for young women and men by 47.8%. This is largely attributed the commitment of the ILO implementation team, effective support by ILO constituents owing to the relevance of project ideals, effective administrative and technical support by the ILO regional office for Africa in collaboration with the sub-regional offices in Dar es Salaam Pretoria, and above all, the injection of additional funding by the ILO through its RBSA.

Project resources were used prudently and efficiently. The project also leveraged well on government, partners and community resources

especially in the areas of mobilization and capacity building. Project management arrangement was good and effective. It played an important role in enhancing stakeholder participation, ownership and offers a strong basis for sustainability.

Main Recommendations

The ILO should strengthen the phase II proposal document by incorporating:

1. An elaborated monitoring and evaluation to ensure that project impact is effectively captured-which was a weak point under the pilot phase and which probably resulted in under stating project achievements;
2. An elaborated knowledge management and information sharing component to ensure more effective innovation and technology transfer;
3. Increase the proposed time frame for the project to at least 4 years so as to give enough time for impact and additional lesson learning;
4. The ILO to ten actively solicit funding from a wider scope in terms of potential financiers of the proposed second phase;
5. That for starter SMEs, facilitating market access is a very important intervention and should always be assessed and where deemed necessary (as will often be the case) explicitly incorporated in the project performance monitoring and evaluation systems (i.e. outcome and output and impact levels);
6. That project M&E component should be adequately funded to ensure that the project is able to effectively capture not just outputs and outcomes, but also first level impact (at least);
7. That use of micro-finance institutions for on-lending grant funds results in multiplier effects of financing interventions; inculcates the culture of saving and credit among the youth; and enhances sustainability of intervention.