



Evaluation Summary



International
Labour
Office

Evaluation Unit

Port Work Development Project Phase 1: Promotion of Decent Work in South Africa Transport Sector – Final Evaluation

Quick Facts

Countries: *South Africa*
Final Evaluation: *25th Feb.-28th March 2013*
Mode of Evaluation: *Independent*
Technical Area: *Employment promotion through enterprise development (EMP/ENT).*
Administrative Unit: *ILO-Area Office for Botswana, Lesotho, Namibia, South Africa and Swaziland;*
Evaluation Manager: *Carmen Armstrong-ILO Office ; Pretoria*
Evaluation Team: *Stanley Karuga*
Project Start Date: *December 2010*
Project End Date: *March 2013*
Project Budget: *SAF/10/02/MUL, US\$ 1.27 m.*
Donor: *Flemish and Dutch Governments*

Background & Context

Creation of sustainable employment and decent work for women and men is a core major agenda of the ILO and its constituents across the globe. Decent work deficits, unemployment and job losses have been a major challenge for South Africa. The DCWP for South Africa identifies labour market governance, employment promotion, and extension of social protection coverage and strengthening of HIV/AIDS workplace responses as priority areas. It is against this background that the Port Work Development project was designed as a pilot project to demonstrate the systemic approach to the promotion of decent work focusing on an employment-intensive service industry with

decent work deficits-in this case the South Africa transport industry.

The development challenge which the project aimed to address was decent work deficit in the South African transport industry and in particular lack of quality jobs in the ports of Durban and Richards Bay. The project aimed at boosting competitiveness of TPT-specifically DCT through a combination of interventions determined by way of social dialogue and ranging from workplace improvement measures to functional and technical/vocational skills training and further on to the facilitation of access to social protection. The overall objective of the project was “to create decent employment for women and men”. The immediate objectives of Phase I of the project were: (i) “To promote a more dialogue-driven mediation of stakeholder interests in the Port of Durban; (ii) “To create a more conducive policy and regulatory framework for ‘doing business’ in these two Ports, with emphasis on human resources development and management in line with the transformation agenda of the South African Government”; (iii) To strengthen the capacity of local Business Development Service (BDS) providers, among them prominently the School of Port Operations (SOPO) to in turn provide port stakeholder groups with a range of workforce-centred training and advisory services”; and (iv) “To enable port workers to fully unlock the benefits of the staff development effort”. Corresponding immediate outcomes were: (i) “The stakeholder groups making up the social system of the Ports of Durban and

Richards Bay emphasize on social dialogue rather than industrial action or other forms of disruptive protests to mediate their vested interests”: (ii) “Human resource development policies of both Ports emphasize a rights-based approach that seeks to empower rather than merely manage staff, in line with international best practice in the transport sector”; (iii) “Local BDS provider organizations –among them prominently the Port of Durban Training Academy – have sustainable in-house capacity to develop the human resources of the Ports through a range of training and advisory services”; and, (iv) “Port workers have long-term and intimate employment relationships with portsnet”.

Evaluation approach & methodology

The approach was participatory while the methodology entailed review of key relevant documents, field interviews independent observations by the Mission and a stakeholders’ validation workshop. Time limitation was the biggest challenge for the Mission as only one week was allocated for field work.

Main Findings & Conclusions

Despite the unforeseen challenges including the delay in project start up; the shortened project time line (22 months) even after being granted a “no-cost extension” of four (4) months; the general negative mindset towards change; the apparent inter-party mistrust and suspicion among and between stakeholders at the DCT; high turnover of DCT management staff; and the continued restructuring of SOPO; the project still managed to deliver and even surpass the set targets by impressive margins.

Effectiveness of Project Management Arrangements & Efficiency of Resource

Management Arrangements: This was perceived by virtually all respondents to have been good and to have served project implementation quite well. In particular, the establishment of the PSC-with its multi-stakeholder representation was seen as having been a big asset, especially in terms of enhancing broad-

based ownership and support of project objectives and activities and also in terms of providing the PMU with overall guidance on project implementation-which the Committee undertook quite effectively. DWST backstopping role was described by PMU staff to have been excellent in that it provided sufficient and regular guidance and on a timely basis.

Monitoring and Evaluation: In this regard, the Mission observed that while generally stated clearly, some indicators of achievement were not specific enough, while others were too unrealistic. Virtually all indicators of achievement had no specified targets and were not time bound- though the PMU subsequently set the time lines for each of the activities and specific output and outcome targets as part of their work planning, albeit gender-specific targets were omitted. The project had a very good monitoring and evaluation tool in the form the “traffic-lights” based strategy map which was used effectively for tracking project performance. The Mission was however seriously concerned with the narrow and weak information sharing systems of the project-which contributed to the apparent misconceptions about the project-especially among the lower cadre staff at DCT.

Human and financial Resources: In this respect, the view of the Mission, and indeed a significant number of respondents, is that the 3 PMU members of staff would have found it extremely difficult to deliver had the PSC not introduced strategic changes mentioned earlier. In the view of the Mission and indeed that of a notable number of respondents, locating the CTA at the Durban port was a nifty decision but situating in Pretoria the National Programme officer was inapposite. While the PMU spent the project resources quite prudently, many respondents felt that the budget was adequate only in light of the strategic changes that were introduced by the PSC as mentioned earlier. Financial resources were also strategically allocated and utilized-with close to 67.8% of the total budget going towards supporting beneficiaries directly by way of wide range activities including seminars, in-service training and study tours, among others. The project also leveraged some external resources with Transnet contributing close to US\$ 240,719. Although the project’s burn rate or expenditure as a percent of total

budget was estimated at about 78.3% by the time of the Mission, it is expected to exceed the 96% by 31st March 2013-after payment of remaining activities. According to the PMU, financial disbursements were generally on time.

Impact Orientation & Sustainability

The Mission firmly believes that there are high prospects for sustainability and impact of project activities beyond its life, on account of relevance and strategic fit of its interventions to livelihood and development needs of target stakeholders; stakeholder ownership and institutionalization of project activities especially with respect to the PSC, TPT/DCT, workers unions and SOPO; capacity building activities –especially in terms of training of DCT and labour unions staff as well as SOPO which is expected to benefit from multiplier effects; increasing acknowledgement of potential mutual benefits of project interventions-albeit slowly; improvement of enabling environment through HRD policy and regulatory reforms-again albeit slowly; and the replicability of the ILO systemic enterprise development approach with minor adjustments.

While full impact is expected in the medium to longer term, the project has had notable impacts including full (100%) retention of jobs and creation of an additional 106 employment at DCT over the two years of the project; reduction of work days lost to industrial action at DCT; enhancement of employment for women having increased their share of DCT total employment opportunities by about 3%; and significant savings on the part of DCT through the use of TOTs generated through project intervention. This is however likely to be undermined by the apparent continued misconceptions about the project objectives and approach; continued high turnover of middle and senior staff at DCT/Transnet; lack an appropriate communication strategy to support information flow and dissemination; institutional instability-especially on the part of SOPO due to its continued restructuring; slow and progress on the part of some of the key stakeholders-including Transnet with respect to project related reform interventions especially with regard to HRD policies.

Overall Conclusion

The PWD project has performed quite well despite the short time that was available for implementation (22 months); the general negative mindset to change among some of the staff in DCT & workers unions; poor inter-party relations at DCT and weak institutional and HR technical capacity ,among others.

Emerging Lessons Learned

- While the ILO-Systemic Enterprise Approach to development works quite well even under complex situations, it must be backed by adequate information which should be collected during project conceptualization and design as well as during implementation;
- Experiential learning, including through study tours and exchange visits, is an effective way of fast-tracking knowledge acquisition, attitude change and capacity building in general;
- Allowing for some degree of flexibility plays a vital role in ensuring effective delivery in a situation where targets might be unrealistic given the project timeline, human and financial resources;
- Building capacity of local institutions to in turn build the capacity of ultimate target beneficiaries enhances project performance and effectiveness through multiplier effects, as well as sustainability;
- Maintaining the PMU “open-door” policy played a useful role in enhancing stakeholder trust, ownership and support.

What should have been different?

- The inception phase should have provided adequate time to set up project infrastructure and recruitment of staff;
- Adequate data and information should have been gathered during project design to facilitate sufficient understanding of social dynamics at DCT, determine pertinent issues and therefore project focus and sequencing of interventions;
- A broad-based and joint consultation approach should have been adopted throughout the project cycle (i.e. during design and implementation phases)-to facilitate common understanding, avoid

misconceptions, enhance broad-based “buy-in”, ownership and support;

- While it has shown that social dialogue-oriented interventions require patience, such patience requires not only to be strategic but should also be complemented with some degree of assertiveness on the part of implementation team- to avoid undue delays in bringing about the required change;
- An appropriate communication strategy should have been developed and operationalized right at the beginning of the implementation phase to guide and facilitate effective information sharing with various stakeholders;

What should be avoided in the next phase?

- For effective delivery, it would be better to have a less ambitious geographical scope, stakeholder coverage, and fewer indicators of achievement and targets.
- Allocating less than 24 months for the implementation phase (for Phase II) should be avoided-so as to avoid the kind of rush witnessed during Phase I.
- For effective and timely support of the CTA, situating the NPO in Pretoria (outside project area) should have been avoided.
- Omission of gender-specific targets should be avoided so as to hold the project accountable to relevant deliverables.

Main Recommendations

1. The timeline for Phase II should be at least 24 months (excluding time required for staff recruitment and establishing a project infrastructure);

2. For greater effectiveness, Phase II should *avoid being too ambitious* in terms of planned outputs, geographical and stakeholder coverage; and in this regard should only focus on deepening project activities at DCT, and roll out only in Maputo port;

3. An appropriate *project communication strategy for Phase II should be developed in consultation* with stakeholders and operationalized to support and enhance information sharing;

4. Phase II should emphasize *joint consultative meetings and training* to facilitate effective and open inter-party (employers and

workers) interactions towards sustainable social dialogue during Phase II;

5. Ensure that the log frame for Phase II has specific, measurable, realistic and time bound indicators of achievement including *targets for gender mainstreaming and equality*;

6. Provide for staff positions for two (2) NPOs in the proposal for Phase II (one each for DCT and Maputo) and ensure that each is situated at the project site so as to ensure adequate interaction with stakeholders and effective support to the CTA;

7. Establish sub-committees or thematic working groups to focus on relevant project intervention areas (e.g. social dialogue, skills development, HRD policy & reforms, publicity and information) and support the PSC through provision of evidence-based inputs;

8. *Boost capacity building and training component of the project* through updating of the Port Development Program (PDP) master training module to make it relevant to present day situation (also local capacity expertise); broadening delivery of key training interventions beyond the supervisory level to include senior management staff (short sessions of 1-2 days for senior managers) and workers; stepping up capacity building of SOPO and expanding social dialogue to its PDP training programme; increasing experiential learning through study tours (proven to be quite effective); inclusion of technical skills, mentors and Adult Basic Education Training courses in the project training packages; and increasing the period for Basic/Advanced Planner Training & Social Dialogue from 2 to 3 weeks;

9. *Explore, through a consultative process, the possibility establishing a “basket fund”* to provide a mechanism for project support by willing stakeholders including Transnet and other local and external organizations;

10. *Seek greater commitment from Transnet Senior Management* (regarding HRD policy reforms and financial support);

11. *While embracing patience with stakeholders* during project implementation, the PMU should ensure that such it is not only guided but also strategic-to avoid unnecessary drag of project activities as witnessed with some stakeholders during Phase I of the project.