



# Evaluation Summary



International  
Labour  
Office

Evaluation Unit

## *Youth employment for sustainable development in Kenya – Final Evaluation*

### Quick Facts

**Country:** Kenya

**Type of Evaluation:** End-Term

**Mode of Evaluation:** Independent

**Technical Area:** Employment Creation

**Lead Office:** ILO Area Office-Dar es Salaam

**Evaluation Team:** Stanley Karuga

**Project Start Date:** 1<sup>st</sup> January 2012

**Project End Date:** 31<sup>st</sup> December 2012

**Project Number:** KEN/120/1/JPN

**Donor:** Government of Japan. US\$1,610,000

**Keywords:** Youth employment

### Background & Context

Youth unemployment and poverty are serious and growing challenges in developing countries that pose a real threat to political stability and peace. Over the last decade or so, the problem has been exacerbated by persistent drought situations that have afflicted the Eastern African region, the global financial crisis which started in 2007 and whose adverse effects still lingers on. The 2007/2008 post election violence further added to the problem in the case for Kenya.

It is against this background that the Government of Kenya, the Government of Japan, and the ILO jointly initiated the “Youth Employment for Sustainable Development Project” (YESD) with the aim of addressing the escalating youth unemployment in Kenya through empowering the youth with skills to

participate in the rehabilitation and maintenance of roads by using two techniques known as “Cobblestone paving<sup>1</sup>” and “Do-nou<sup>2</sup>” technologies-which are low cost technologies for infrastructure (roads) development that have successfully been used in other countries. The technologies have demonstrated vast potential in improving urban and rural infrastructure while engaging the youth productively. Launching of the project in early 2012 coincided with the ILO worldwide campaigns on youth employment.

The overall development objective of the project was “to establish viable micro and small enterprises (MSEs) owned by the youth to build their involvement and contribution towards realizing sustainable socio-economic, political and environmental development in Kenya”. The immediate objectives of the project were: (i) “Employment opportunities created for youth in selected target areas through MSE development using Cobblestone and Do-nou technologies”; and (ii) “Strengthening capacity of partners to adopt green jobs approaches”.

The main project outputs comprised: (i) Domestic private MSEs provided with Business Development Support (BDS) services and skills to execute labour-based cobblestone works and

<sup>1</sup> Cobblestone paving technology is new to Kenya and has vast potential in improving urban and rural infrastructure. Experiences of the ILO in the neighbouring countries have shown that the technology is a cheaper alternative to conventional paving techniques and is quickly being taken up by the Governments and embraced by the private sector.

<sup>2</sup> Do-nou technology (a Japanese word which refers to use of gunny bags filled appropriately with either sand, farm soil, gravel and the opening properly secured) and laid in rows within the excavated sections of roads and compacted (<http://michibushinbitto.ecnet.jp/Do-nou.html>)

maintenance of roads using Do-nou technology; (ii) Training capacity for the planning and implementation of employment intensive works (in this case cobblestone works, Do-nou technology and green jobs) enhanced; (iii) 45,000 and 90,000 person-days of employment or a total of 135,000 person-days of employment created through road pavement and maintenance activities using the Cobblestone and Do-nou roads development technologies respectively; (iv) Knowledge sharing platform and training materials produced on Green Jobs and Employment Intensive Investment; and (v) Project impact and lessons captured for knowledge sharing, up-scaling/replication;

Based on the available information, the Mission firmly concluded that project performed quite well despite limitations in terms of the available budget, time line allocated for the implementation phase of the pilot project, and staffing. Some of the key achievements included the following:

**Output 1:** “Domestic private MSEs provided with business development support and skills to execute labour-based CS works and maintenance of roads using Do-nou technology”: (i) A total of seven hundred and fifty (750) youth from across seventy (70) MSEs have received training on Cobblestone paving works (250 youth) and road maintenance using the Do-nou technology (500 youth)-thereby surpassing the target of 55 MSEs trained on Cobblestone and Do-nou road construction and maintenance technology by 27%, and the target number of individual youth target of 500 by about 50%; (ii) A total of seventy (70) youth self help groups/MSEs accessed business training-with a total of one hundred and fifty (150) individual youth from these MSEs have undergone business planning and management using the ILO Start and Improve Your Business module-thereby surpassing the target of 130 self-help MSEs/individual contractor trained by about 15%; (iii) A total of fifty (50) MSEs and five hundred (500) individual young people have so far received business mentorship support;

**Output 2:** “Training capacity for the planning and implementation of Employment Intensive works (CS, Do-nou technologies and green jobs) enhanced”: (i) Labour-based training

curriculum was reviewed and a new curriculum for CS technology developed; (ii) Three (3) training institutions (KIHBT, KTC and Kiwanja Youth Polytechnic) for CS technology and one (1) for Do nou technology were identified approved by the PSC including facilities and project trial sites; (ii) Training materials for CS and Do nou training for youth developed in consultation with NITA (formerly DIT) and testing specifications developed; (iii) Seventeen (17) TOTs comprising thirteen (13) individuals and four (4) MSEs were trained in CS-thereby attaining about 85% of project target of 20 TOTs; (iv) Fourteen (14) trainers trained as business management trainers; (v) Twenty (20) MSEs trained in performance-based contract and maintenance of roads under the Do-nou technology-thereby attaining only 50% of project target of forty (40); (vi) One hundred and thirty (130) youth-owned MSEs established and strengthened through training using the SIYB training module and through mentorship; (vii) Enhanced training uptake of Kenya Institute of Highways and Building Technology and Kenya Training Centre combined by about 30%-thereby surpassing project target of 20% by about 50%; and (viii) study tour and attachment of trainers to the CS project in Addis Ababa (Ethiopia) was organized for staff of participating institutions (KIHBT, KTC, DIT and Directorate of Youth Training);

**Output 3:** “Forty five Thousand (45,000) and ninety thousand (90,000) person day (PD) of employment created directly by the project related to the road pavement activities and road maintenance using Do-nou respectively”: Under this output whose key major indicator of achievement was “number of worker days created”, the project created an estimated 67,150 PDs of employment comprising about 27,150 PDs for Cobblestone and 40,000 for Do-nou-thereby under-performing by approximately 52%. This underperformance was primarily due to two main reasons. Firstly, delay in project start up-and therefore in actual training that in turn delayed MSE engagement in productive work after completion of their training and thereby create employment opportunities for themselves and others; and secondly the failure by Road Authorities to identify and prepare suitable roads for CS paving trial projects forcing the implementation

staff to re-work and form the roads from the sub-base before paving.

**Output 4:** *“Knowledge sharing platform and training materials produced on Green Jobs and Employment Intensive Investment”.* The project fulfilled the four planned indicators of achievements as follows: (a) formulation of project communication strategy on green job; (b) preparation of a report on international best practices and distribution to stakeholders; (c) conducting of high level campaigns including a debriefing meeting with His Excellency the President of the Republic of Kenya-Mr. Mwai Kibaki on 18th September 2012 and other meetings involving senior staff in government ministries particularly the MoRs, Road agencies and other potential clients for the road rehabilitation; (d) increased awareness and participation of local implementation partners in the promotion of Green Jobs through a variety publicity materials

**Output 5:** *“Project Impact and Lessons Captured for Knowledge Sharing Up-scaling/ Replication”.* In this regard, the project achieved following: (a) several relevant reports were compiled and shared with various implementation partners through the Project Steering Committee (PSC); (b) a notable number of promotional materials were produced and shared with various stakeholders including government, other United Nations (UN) agencies and the general public; (c) enhancement of visibility of the ILO and the Government of Japan both in the project areas and at the national level<sup>2</sup>-through a variety of information sharing channels including meetings, workshops, electronic and press media.

## Main Findings & Conclusions

The objective, activities and outputs of YESD project has been of great importance and relevance to target beneficiaries, ILO constituents, the Government of Kenya and other stakeholders while the project's design

<sup>2</sup> This conclusion was based on views of various respondents met during field interviews and independent observations by the Mission.

was generally coherent and logical-but rather hurriedly done.

Despite limitations in terms of the short implementation time line (effectively 6 months), limited budget and staffing, the project did quite well and in fact surpassed some of the target achievements by significant margins. This is for example MSE training in cobblestone and Do-nou road construction and maintenance technologies training whereby the target of MSE trained was surpassed by 27% and individual contractor training by about 50%; business training where the target was surpassed by about 15%; training of trainers whereby the project planned to train 12 and 4 TOTs for CS and Do nou technology respectively but managed to train 13 and 4 TOTs for CS and Do nou technology respectively-thereby attaining about 85% of the project target of 20 TOTs; and project contribution to training uptake at the Kenya Institute of Highways and Building Technology and Kisii Training Centre where the target was surpassed by about 50%. However, the project under-performed in the area job creation primarily due to the delay in release of funds and therefore late start up of some project implementation activities and the failure by Road Authorities to identify and prepare suitable roads for CS paving trial projects forcing the implementation staff to re-work and form the roads from the sub-base before paving.

Project organization and management arrangements, especially the involvement of local stakeholders through the PSC and other organizations and provision for support by DWT –Pretoria was generally effective.

Financial limitations (the small size of the budget and delays in initial release and subsequent disbursements) were major challenges to project performance. The project team however utilized the resources prudently and efficiently which contributed to the achievements observed in this report. Despite being lean, the staff were not only qualified but committed to project deliverables.

## Recommendations & Lessons Learned

In terms of good practices, the main lessons learned included the following: (i) Relevance of interventions to target beneficiaries,

Government and other national institutions (in this case capacity building/skills development, employment creation, affordable infrastructure development technology)-which was critical with respect to quick and broad-based “buy-in” of project objectives. (ii) Both Cobblestone and Do-nou labor-based technologies have great potential for employment and asset in Kenya and indeed other countries facing unemployment problems through boosting increased socio-economic activities when applied in rural and urban feeder roads paving and rehabilitation. (iii) Use of broad-based participatory approaches in project design and implementation, capacity building and institutionalizing of technical and business training in relevant institutions is clearly a strategy that has great prospects for enhancing sustainability for training of youth in labor-based methods and impact in terms of job-creation and employment.

In terms what should have been different, the Mission observed the following: (i) The time line for the project should have been at least 2 years for the pilot phase given the importance and relevance of project objective, number of planned activities and outputs, the depth and breadth stakeholder consultations needed to get the project up and running; as well as the need to adequately provide BDS support especially with regard to business linkage and financial access; (ii) The budget should have been higher given the actual costs associated with project activities, planned target beneficiaries and the geographical coverage; (iii) Project funds should have released early enough to allow for adequate time to carry out preparatory activities such as mobilization of beneficiaries, development of training materials and training; (iv) A stronger and adequately-financed publicization component should have been included at project design for wider popularization of project interventions.

The following should be avoided in phase II: (i) Delay in the release of project funds; (ii) Over restriction of project time line-which is likely to result in rushed activities (the time line for phase II should be at least 3-4 years); (iii) Ambition in terms of geographical coverage to avoid spreading resources too thinly and facilitate more effectiveness by way of impact (though it is understood that the pilot phase

was largely driven by the need to cushion the effect of drought and PEV);

The Mission observed very high expectations from virtually all stakeholders regarding the roll out phase of the project (phase II). There is therefore need to do everything possible to ensure that there is a second phase to avoid disillusionment on the part of trained MSE/individual contractors (and prospective trainees) and eventual fall-out from the programme-which would mean money wasted. The Mission recommends the finalization phase II proposal document (which is currently in very raw draft form) incorporating the following:

- Longer time line for implementation (at least 3 years) to ensure adequate time for planned activities and outputs, sustainability and impact;
- Engagement of trainee beneficiaries over a longer period to allow for longer incubation period/mentorship and their engagement on trial roads project and on a flat fee contract as part of training;
- Assessment of budget based on detailed evaluation of activities to be carried out during the roll out phase (which according to some stakeholders should be at least US\$ 6.0 million) to ensure effective and timely delivery of outputs;
- Emphasis on market linkage and financial access as part of wider BDS support to facilitate effective kick of the young MSE/individual contractor trainees - otherwise now many of them feel incapable of securing meaningful contracts and resources such contracts may call for;
- Elaborated and clear gender mainstreaming and equality, as well as sustainability and exit strategies.