



Evaluation Summary



International
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Youth Entrepreneurship Facility in Uganda – Final independent Evaluation

Quick Facts

Countries: Uganda

Final Evaluation: April 2017

Evaluation Mode: Independent

Administrative Office: ILO Country Office Dar es Salam

Technical Office: SME

Evaluation Consultant: Katerina Stolyarenko

Project Code: UGA/12/03/EEC

Donor & Budget: European Union/ EUR 3 million

Keywords: Decent Work, Youth, Entrepreneurship, Business Development Services, Finance, training, skills, Employment, Self-Employment, Job Creation, Economic activities

Background & Context

Summary of the project purpose, logic and structure

The Youth Entrepreneurship Facility is a partnership between the European Union (EU) and the International Labour Organization (ILO) to address the high youth unemployment rates in Uganda. The EU sponsored the second phase of the project (2014-2017). The first phase was sponsored by the Danish Africa Commission (2010-2014). The main objective of the YEF is “to contribute to the creation of decent work for young Ugandans both as means of self-employment and as job creation for others”.

The immediate objectives of the YEF-EU project are five-fold: (1) improved attitudes towards entrepreneurship among young women and men, (2) the education system produces more entrepreneurial graduates with pertinent skills; (3) youth employment policy makers and

promoters make evidence-based decisions for better resource allocation and program design; (4) youth organizations deliver innovative youth entrepreneurship and employment solutions and (5) youth start and improve their businesses.

Present Situation of the Project

The Contribution Agreement between the ILO and the EU for the implementation of the project was officially signed in April 2014. However, the actual implementation of the Project started in August 2014. The total budget of the project for the period May 2014-November 2016 was EUR 2,9mIn, while the actual spending equals EUR 2,3mIn as of February 28, 2017, i.e. the budget utilization rate constitutes 79 per cent.

Purpose, scope and clients of the evaluation

Purpose: The final evaluation aimed to assess the performance of the project over its thirty-one-month period, as well as its success in achieving its planned results and objectives

Scope: The final evaluation covers the project implementation starting from May 1, 2014 to November 30, 2016.

Clients: The principle audiences for this evaluation are the ILO YEF project team, ILO CO-Dar es Salam, DWT/CO-Pretoria, ILO technical unit at HQ, the ILO tripartite constituents and national project partners in Uganda, the EUD in Uganda, as well as other interested parties and stakeholders.

Methodology of evaluation

The evaluation had a participatory character and was based on a mixed-method approach. Data collection procedures included: (i) a desk review of literature; (ii) preparation of an evaluation matrix with related evaluation questions; (iii) semi-structured interviews with key informants and stakeholders; (iv) focus group discussions with beneficiaries of the Y2Y Fund, individual entrepreneurs and SIYB Trainers; (v) surveys among key project partners and beneficiaries; (vi) media analysis of online media outlets and social media; (vii) direct observation during field visits to Uganda (Kampala, Jinja, Mbale, Soroti, Lira, Oyam); and (viii) a stakeholder's workshop with the ILO YEF project team, tripartite constituents, implementing partners and beneficiaries on the last day of the mission.

In total, more than 70 project documents have been reviewed, 28 interviews with key project informants and project staff have been held, focus group with 37 Y2Y Fund beneficiaries in Jinja, Soroti, Oyam, 36 individual entrepreneurs and 28 SIYB Trainers in Jinja, Mbale, Lira, and 99 project beneficiaries of Y2Y Fund and SIYB programme, and 6 implementing partners took part in the surveys.

Major limitations to the methodological approach included: (a) attribution of the project's results, (b) sample size, (c) response rate to the surveys, and (d) availability of final reports of some implementing partners.

Main Findings & Conclusions

Relevance: On the whole, the project enjoys high relevance, which remained throughout the project's lifespan. The overall directions laid out in the project document are entirely consistent with the priorities affirmed by the Government of Uganda, ILO and UN programming documents, which aim to promote youth employment, skills development and access to the finance. The project also fitted closely with other ILO and UN programmes and projects active in Uganda during 2014-2016. For the EU, it was the first intervention targeting specifically employment and creation of meaningful jobs for the youth in Uganda. The YEF-EU project was strategic, demand driven and timely as assisted the state authorities to address the 2013 series of violent protests of youth against the high unemployment rates in the country through youth entrepreneurship development.

Validity of design: The YED-EU project was an all-embracing intervention designed in the same way as the regional YEF-Danida project; this is clearly its main point of strength, but it conversely represents also its main design weakness as the project has broad work agenda with limited time and resources. The project outputs were causally linked to the intended outcomes that were well placed to feed into the realization of broader development goals, although some of its components were not well interconnected. In terms of logic, the outcome and output indicators were logically framed along the assumed chain of cause-and-effect underpinning the programme design; however, the project's Logframe lacked gender sensitive indicators and indicators which measure the project's effects on earnings and consumption of the young people as well as impact on business performance outcomes.

Project effectiveness: In general, the YEF-EU project was effective, in that the planned activities were implemented, in some cases beyond what was envisioned in the project document. However – due in part to the design weaknesses – the degree of achievement of the project's expected outcomes as per the ProDoc and Logframe was only relatively high. The projects' greatest effects in respect to its scope were under Component 4 'Youth to Youth Fund' and Component 5 'Access to Business Development Services and affordable finance'; to a lesser extent under Component 1 'Promoting Entrepreneurship Culture', Component 2 'Entrepreneurship Education' and Component 3 'Evidence Based Advocacy'. The project faced a number of challenges, including delays in the disbursement of funds by the EU to the ILO and by the ILO to implementing partners, lack of staff in the ILO Kampala field office, timely technical and financial reporting by the ILO to the donor because of the lack of previous experience of collaboration with the EU as a donor and different level of institutional development of implementing partners. In all, while not being able to meet all its intended outputs, the available data (qualitative and quantitative) strongly suggest the project's progress towards meeting its objective.

Efficiency: The YEF-EU project was in overall efficient and was accomplishing well with respect to resources used (inputs) as compared to qualitative and quantitative results (outputs). In spite of having

limited resources, the project was very successful in complementing the project's resources through cost-sharing and in-kind contributions from implementing partners and sister projects for reaching the anticipated number of beneficiaries in targeted districts. The actual average cost per beneficiary constituted 157 EUR, where the highest cost per beneficiary was under Component 3, while the lowest under Component 1. The project had delays in its implementation; however, in overall delivered under some components more than it was initially planned. The project's M&E system was only partly effective as lacked the M&E Plan, good documentation system and proper quality assurance of the implementing partners and grantees. The project team paid insufficient attention towards ensuring good visibility of the YEF-EU project as the developed project's communication strategy was partially implemented.

Effectiveness of management arrangements: The actual project management structure was only partly effective as lacked staff in the ILO field office, although allowed reaching sustainable and meaningful results. The project received adequate political, technical and administrative support from almost all counterparts and human resources at various levels of ILO were engaged in project implementation with balanced use of national, international and ILO specialists. The project governance structure was moderately effective as required more frequent meetings to ensure better project's phase out, especially in the last year of its implementation. ILO had working and systematic partnerships with tripartite constituents and other stakeholders on the national level, while insufficient direct collaboration was established with the local authorities in all targeted districts as well as other regional existing programmes.

Inclusiveness: The project design was shortened as the EU joined the existed project. As a result, the YEF-EU project involved only the Ministry into the design of the project, meanwhile conducted consultations with social partners, local BDS providers, CSOs and beneficiaries just on the stage of project implementation. ILO tried to involve different categories of beneficiaries not only youth aged 18-35, but also young people living with disabilities and HIV/AIDs. Nevertheless, the gender balance was not achieved as the overall women participation in the YEF-EU project was on the level of

34% with the highest under Component 4 due to the lack of clearly stated targets of gender mainstreaming for different components on the output and outcome levels.

Impact orientation: The YEF-EU project was an important initiative which allowed to promote the principles of sustainable enterprises and decent work for all with a focus on youth, to create new businesses and jobs in Uganda. The project demonstrated a number of positive short-to-medium term impacts under each component, although relatively small number of districts were covered and youth reached in comparison with the existed demand. The YEF-EU project shows a considerable impact under Component 2 'Entrepreneurship Education', Component 3 'Evidence Based Advocacy' and Component 4 'Youth to Youth Fund', while tangible impact could be seen under Component 1 'Promoting Entrepreneurship Culture' and Component 5 'Access to Business Development Services and affordable finance'. The project had also several unintended results pertaining to the increase in memberships workers' organizations, employers' organizations and financial institutions participated in the project and improvement of visibility of implementing partners. Nonetheless, further support is needed to ensure long-term impact under Component 1 'Promoting Entrepreneurship Culture', Component 2 'Entrepreneurship Education' and Component 5 'Access to Business Development Services and affordable finance'.

Sustainability: The project does not have a strong phase out strategy developed in participatory way with tripartite constituents and partners. The most sustainable are the results under Component 3 'Evidence Based Advocacy' and Component 4 'Youth to Youth Fund', however, further support is required to ensure the institutionalization of practices piloted/created by the project under Component 1 'Promoting Entrepreneurship Culture', Component 2 'Entrepreneurship Education' and Component 5 'Access to Business Development Services and affordable finance'. As Uganda is a low-income country, for the tripartite constituents and partners, sustainability is very much dependent on their ability to mobilize resources and still for the majority of them the external support is required to ensure follow up. In addition, the climate change and constant increase of the costs of doing business in Uganda are the major threats for the sustainability of

the created and/or expended businesses by the young entrepreneurs.

Conclusions

The YEF project was an important initiative which allowed to promote the principles of sustainable enterprises and decent work for all with a focus on youth, to create new businesses and jobs in Uganda. The YEF project was the biggest youth programme in Uganda and acted as a role model for the development of the state youth programmes like Youth Livelihood Programme. The YEF project piloted a number of unique tools, like SIYB and Y2Y Fund. The project was highly relevant and very useful for both tripartite constituents and direct beneficiaries, *but has not yet generated models for replication and requires follow up for proper phase out*. The most notable achievements can be observed under Components 4 and 5.

Recommendations

1. Due to the importance of youth employment for Uganda consider extension of the project for at least 2 more years for ensuring sustainable impact of the results achieved under ILO YEF-EU project.
2. The design of any subsequent Phase of the Project in the youth employment sector should focus more on: (a) operationalization of the national youth policies on the local level; (b) adding value to educational systems through development of BTVET curriculum for diploma courses; (c) put more focus on addressing youth financial inclusion from a macro level by establishing a link between financial access and financial inclusion for young people; (d) exploring further the potential for using the mobile technology for improving access to financial, employment and entrepreneurial services, especially for rural or other hard-to-reach youth populations; (e) introducing innovative approaches to financing like micro-consignment which is a low-risk and flexible sales model that can be used to identify, train and inspire young entrepreneurs and educate consumers about low-cost, socially beneficial products and increase access to those products; (f) developing gender integrated youth projects to benefit equally both women and men and meet their needs.
3. To integrate the learning from the ILO YEF-EU project during development of the next Decent Country Programme for Uganda (2018-2022) and expand the programme coverage for growth-

oriented entrepreneurs and green businesses due to its importance to economic development, social and political peace in the country.

Specific recommendations

1. To facilitate linkages with other institutions which will be still in Uganda for another 5 years for ensuring the continuity of the started/piloted by the YEF tools and make the follow up of the started discussions with those agencies during the YEF-EU project's lifetime.
2. To hold consultations with the Ministry of Gender, Labour and Social Development to include prepared by the YEF-EU project SIYB trainers into the relevant state Youth Programmes.
3. To explore the possibility of institutionalization of the SIYB training programme within the financial institutions.
4. To find the ways to follow up on the started but not yet completed initiatives, in particular under Component 2.
5. To consider the ways for institutionalization of the piloted Youth Loan Revolving Fund which provides an access to finance window for young people at the Wazalendo SACCO.
6. To consider EU the provision of the remaining funds under the project agreement to ensure consolidation of some of the successful interventions.

Important lessons learned

1. Realistic project objectives, time frame, and scope are crucial to success
2. Policy review and development based on evidence as well as introduction of entrepreneurship education and training curriculum into business, technical and vocational education training curricula are important tools for effective youth employment programming and supporting youth employment promotion
3. Engaging the media in raising awareness among young women and men on the merits of entrepreneurship considerably broadens the impact and contributes to the enhancing of entrepreneurship culture

See the full report for all recommendations, lessons learned and good practices.