



# Evaluation Summary



International  
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## *SIDA-ILO Partnership Programme 2014-17 Phase I (2014-15): ACI 2: Jobs and Skills for Youth Final independent evaluation*

### Quick Facts

**Countries:** Burkina Faso, Ecuador, Jordan, Morocco, Samoa, Sri Lanka, Sudan, Uruguay, Zambia, Zimbabwe

**Final Evaluation:** May 2016

**Evaluation Mode:** *Independent*

**Administrative Office:** EMPLOYMENT, DWT/CO-Dakar, DWT/CO-Lima, RO-Arab States/DWT-Beirut, CO-Algiers, CO-Suva, CO-Colombo, DWT/CO-Cairo, DWT/CO-Santiago, CO-Lusaka, CO-Harare

**Technical Office:** YEP, CEPOL, DWT/CO-Dakar, DWT/CO-Lima, RO-Arab States/DWT-Beirut, DWT/CO-Cairo, DWT/CO-Santiago

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**Evaluation Consultant(s):** Rafael Muñoz Sevilla

**Project Code:** GLO/14/72/SID; BKF/14/50/SID; ECU/14/50/SID; JOR/14/50/SID; MOR/14/50/SID; SAM/14/50/SID; SRL/14/52/SID; SUD/14/50/SID; URU/14/50/SID; ZAM/14/54/SID; ZIM/15/50/SID

**Donor(s) & Budget:** Swedish International Development Cooperation Agency (US\$ 3,861,646)

**Keywords:** Employment, employment policy, national employment policy, youth, youth employment, tools, capacity-building, government, social partners, inclusive growth

### Background & Context

In 2012, the ILC adopted the resolution “The youth employment crisis: A call for action”, which underlines the urgency for immediate and targeted action to tackle the youth employment crisis. The ILO developed an implementation strategy to support action by governments and social partners in addressing the youth employment crisis, outlined in the document of the Governing Body “Area of critical importance on jobs and skill for youth”

Ten country-level initiatives (Burkina Faso, Ecuador, Jordan, Morocco, Samoa, Sri Lanka, Sudan, Uruguay, Zambia, Zimbabwe) were put in place, and consisted of: (i) an institutional development component that aims to assess policies and programmes, strengthen institutional capacity, reform existing policies or develop new ones, and develop strategies and/or plans of action for the implementation of policies and programmes; and (ii) a direct support component for piloting youth employment interventions with a view to assessing results and expanding their scope and outreach. These initiatives were implemented through broad-based partnerships that involved several government institutions, the social partners and other actors.

The programme was complemented by a global product that served as umbrella and connected the ten country-level interventions and aimed at strengthening national capacities in developing and implementing action-oriented interventions on youth employment, disseminating knowledge on what works on youth employment and strengthening knowledge on effective approaches to improve labour market outcomes of under-employed and low earners,

including young people engaged in the informal economy and working poor.

## Methodology of evaluation

The evaluation was conducted between February 1 and April 20, 2016. The evaluator reviewed project documents, developed data collection instruments, and prepared for the fieldwork between February 1 and 12. Interviews with ILO staff in Geneva were conducted on February 9-10. Fieldwork was conducted in Uruguay, in the week of February 22, and in Morocco in the week of March 7. Remote interviews with key stakeholders from Samoa, Jordan and Zambia were conducted in the week of February 15.

The evaluator interviewed representatives from the International Labour Organization (ILO) in Geneva; project management staff and national partners in Uruguay and Morocco; and key stakeholders in Samoa, Jordan and Zambia through remote conferences using telephone/Skype; and utilized secondary data that refer to documentary evidence that has direct relevance for the purposes of the evaluation and that have been produced by the ILO, other individuals, or agencies for purposes other than those of the evaluation.

## Main Findings & Conclusions

**Validity of the Project's Design:** country proposals took into account specific country requests and on-going initiatives on youth employment. The evaluation found strong linkages between the Programme and: Country Programme Outcomes (CPOs); Programme and Budget (P&B) 2014-15 Outcomes (1 and 2) and Indicators (1.1., 2.2., and 2.5); the Area of Critical Importance 2 (ACI 2); and the Call for Action on the Youth Employment Crisis.

A common Programme Log Frame and a global monitoring system were not developed. The Sida/ILO partnership was thus managed and monitored as 10 different and independent interventions or projects (plus one Global Product). While the programme monitored progress towards CPOs and provided inputs for the ILO Implementation Report regarding progress towards the achievement of the project-related P&B Indicators and Outcomes, there is still room to reinforce the Programme design towards a more results based management and reporting-oriented approach.

**Project Management:** The division of duties in project management between CEPOL and YEP resulted in diluted and unclear management, coordination and reporting responsibilities. Also, the programme lacked a “visible” and “officially” designated programme coordinator. These factors affected action and decision making and directed efforts away from a more operational and strategic implementation. Notwithstanding, the project delivered the expected products on time. Overall, ILO staff in the countries showed a high level of satisfaction with the technical support received, although, some were of the opinion that communication between countries and project management was not optimal.

The Outcome based funding modality contributes to reinforcing ILO work in core areas and allows for resources to be grouped in order to reach the P&B outcomes while the decentralization of funds facilitated adapting activities to each country's needs and context.

Although some monitoring tools were put in place at HQ level, data collection and analysis were not systematically conducted and internal monitoring reports –to inform and be used by the programme management- were not put in place. A similar situation was found to be true for monitoring reports at the country level.

**Relevance and Strategic fit:** Globally, the evaluation found the project particularly relevant. The Programme's focus on youth employment is based on shared objectives and principles between Sweden and the ILO. The evaluation also found that the Sida/ILO Partnership responds to the “call for action” and is well aligned with the Area of Critical Importance 2: “Jobs and skills for youth”.

National interventions were demand-based and proved relevant in order to address the youth employment challenges identified in each country. On the other hand, the Sida/ILO Partnership supports and complements prior/on-going ILO youth employment initiatives in the targeted countries.

In the renewed global development agenda defined by the Sustainable Development Goals, the ILO has a key role to play and its potential to contribute to the youth employment-related goals gains significance.

**Effectiveness:** The SIDA-ILO Partnership 2014-15 made an important contribution in supporting P&B Outcomes 1&2 and ACI 2: Jobs and Skills for youth, as it assisted targeted countries to: mainstream youth employment in sectorial and/or national development plans; contribute to making skills training more relevant and accessible; strengthen employment services; develop policies and action plans and programmes that meet the youth employment challenge; and develop knowledge and capacities for youth employment.

**Efficiency:** The evaluation's assessment of the Sida/ILO Partnership's efficiency is very positive, based on the good relationship between the resources spent and the high quality products which were generated. This was possible thanks to a very good articulation between ILO efforts and national priorities in the countries and the high quality of ILO staff and its coordination with national partners. Additionally, the standard of support offered by ILO at Head Quarters (HQ) and Regional Offices (RO) levels was high and based on substantial prior experience. Furthermore, at various points, the Sida/ILO Partnership was able to link to other ILO projects and resources, and interventions funded by other donors which led to synergies and cost-sharing, thereby leading to improved efficiency.

**Potential Impact:** Decent work and youth employment have gained in importance in national development agendas in countries like Sudan, Morocco, Zambia, Uruguay, Ecuador or Samoa. National Employment Strategies (NES) and Youth Employment Plans (YEP) have the potential to promote job creation in the medium to long term. Informal apprenticeship frameworks and skills training and certification schemes can contribute to facilitate the youth to access the labour market. The support provided to public employment services has the potential to help job searchers and employers in enabling linkages between supply and demand.

Capacity-building activities resulted in increased capacity to address youth employment challenges and reinforced skills for engaging in the policy shaping processes. Also, Knowledge development and research have the potential to strengthen the capacity of ILO and its constituents to identify interventions that "work for youth employment" and to implement effective strategies in their specific context.

**Sustainability:** The projects' timeframe is an important factor in sustainability. Tackling the youth employment crisis requires long-term processes that cannot be summarized in the short-term timeline of the Sida/ILO Partnership 2014-15. The project has taken important steps to achieve sustainability. These include adapting activities to national contexts; developing close relationships with national actors and involving them in project activities; and strengthening national institutions. The project has also established complementarity and synergies with other ILO projects and initiatives that could help contribute to sustainability.

Overall, sustainability will depend on the level of ownership and political will; the capacities installed at the national level; availability of funding; and the involvement of constituents and key economic/labour market actors in addressing the youth employment challenge.

## Recommendations

1. **Addressed to: ILO, national partners and donors.** *Maintain support to national efforts in current countries.* To the extent possible continue to support countries under the current phase to further mature and develop the achieved results. Further interventions might also consider recommendations 2, 3, and 4.
2. **Addressed to: ILO, national partners and donors.** *Support to NES<sup>1</sup>/NAP<sup>2</sup> implementation and monitoring* by: (i) reinforcing communication in order to disseminate the different initiatives among the population in general and youth in particular. (ii) Providing further support to strengthen national capacities in implementing, monitoring and evaluating policies, plans and programmes; and reinforcing the Ministries of Labour' institutional capacities to pilot the process. (iii) Promoting the inclusion of job-creating measures in sectorial plans and strategies of public and private institutions, and also in national/regional budgets; and strengthening advocacy to mobilize economic actors in supporting the implementation of job creation oriented measures. (iv) Mainstreaming youth employment into workers' and employers' organizations strategic/sectorial plans.

<sup>1</sup> NES: National Employment Strategies

<sup>2</sup> NAP: National Action Plans

3. Addressed to: ILO, national partners and donors. *Assess the results of selected interventions* by: (i) Developing monitoring and evaluation methodologies and conducting training workshops. (ii) Conducting assessments of selected Sida/ILO Partnership interventions. Also, Uruguay seems to offer a good opportunity to document the preliminary results of the Youth Employment Law.
4. Addressed to: ILO, national partners and donors. *Provide additional support to labour market inclusion initiatives* by: (i) Further reinforcing labour market intermediation services. (ii) Further supporting successful pilot initiatives on job creation developed under the current programme. (iii) Strengthening informal apprenticeship frameworks, certification schemes and skills training initiatives.
5. Addressed to: ILO. *Formulate a common Programme Document, (instead of 11 different project documents)* based on a sound theory of change and a global results framework. Countries and RO could elaborate and submit brief concept notes to inform the global pro-doc and, once approved, elaborate national pro-docs and work-plans (log frames). It would be wise to define outcomes and deliverables that could realistically be achieved in a 12 to 16 month timeframe.
6. Addressed to: ILO. *Appoint a Programme coordinator/team.* A person/team should be officially appointed as Programme Coordinator(s), and be given strong responsibilities to coordinate and monitor the Programme. It would also be advisable to place the Programme coordination directly under the Employment and Labour Market Policies Branch (EMPLAB) Director.
7. Addressed to: ILO. *Define clear and agile procedures for reallocating funds.* When working with decentralized funding it is essential for the ILO to define clear and agile procedures for reallocating funds in cases of political instabilities or unfavourable enabling environments.
8. Addressed to: ILO and Sida. *Strategic and long-term Sida/ILO Partnership.* The 2016-17 Phase could offer the opportunity to establish the foundation of a future *strategic and long-term Sida/ILO Partnership*, based on the future ILO Strategic Plan and Swedish Cooperation priorities.
9. Addressed to: ILO and Sida. *Adopt a “programmatic approach” Rather than focusing on separate CPOs, the ILO/Sida Partnership on youth employment should adopt a long-term and strategic array of specific, yet interconnected (by a robust global component) interventions that contribute to higher objectives: P&B outcomes, Call for Action and Sustainable Development Goals.* This approach would further contribute to recommendations 10, 11 12 and 13.
10. Addressed to: ILO. *Strengthen Results Based Management.* This could be done by promoting horizontal (ILO HQ) and vertical (ILO HQ - RO/CO) integration of global and regional/national youth employment issues into decision making, while at the same time reinforcing collaboration, coordination and synergies among ILO departments, experts and offices. This would also strengthen monitoring through the development of *Programme and country level* comprehensive monitoring systems.
11. Addressed to: ILO. *Consolidate multidisciplinary teams of experts around youth employment initiatives.* Combine expertise, experience and resources that contribute to improve the “ILO added value” of the interventions and to increase the effectiveness, efficiency and impacts of its results.
12. Addressed to: ILO. *Reinforce capacity building and knowledge dissemination.* Through the exchange of experiences and cross-fertilization among countries and regions; reinforcing/adapting training; and systematizing and disseminating “Sida/ILO” experiences and good practices on “what works” for youth employment.