



# Evaluation Summary



International  
Labour  
Office

Evaluation Unit

## *Promoting rights and opportunities for people with disabilities in employment through legislation (PROPEL) Midterm Evaluation*

### Quick Facts

**Countries:** Azerbaijan, Botswana, China, Ethiopia, Indonesia, Viet Nam, and Zambia

**Mid-Term:** October 2013

**Mode of Evaluation:** Independent

**Administrative backstopping:** GENDER

**Technical Backstopping Office:** EMP/SKILLS

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**Umbrella Code:** GLO/11/27/IRL

**Donor:** Irish Aid as part of Outcome-based Partnership Programme 2012-13 (Phase I), budget US\$ 2,663,091.59

**Keywords:** equal opportunity; non-discrimination; rights of persons with disabilities; legislation; employment; skills development; entrepreneurship; inclusion; poverty reduction; disability

### Background & Context

The thematic programme 'Promoting Rights and Opportunities for People with Disabilities through Legislation (PROPEL)' is funded under the 'ILO – Irish Aid: Development through Decent Work, Partnership Programme 2012 – 2015' with USD 2,663,087. The programme is implemented as a global product and in seven countries (Azerbaijan, Botswana, China, Ethiopia, Indonesia, Viet Nam, and Zambia). It focuses on contributing to achieving four P&B Outcomes and eight Country Programme Objectives, by helping to

strengthen the rights and access to rights of people with disabilities as well as their employability, entrepreneurship and access to decent work.

#### **Purpose, scope and clients of the evaluation**

As the first biennium 2012-13 comes soon to its end, an independent mid-term evaluation of PROPEL was carried out between July and September 2013. Its purpose was to determine, if value had been added and how Irish Aid's funding had helped to produce change. Ultimate beneficiaries, direct beneficiaries, national PROPEL coordinators, country directors, PROPEL Global coordinator, Outcome Coordinator, experts of ILO Geneva and representatives of Irish Aid have been interviewed in the context of this evaluation. The scope covered the alignment of PROPEL with relevant strategies and ILO and UN conventions, coherence of PROPEL's strategic planning and implementation, effectiveness, including cross-cutting issues. Also examined was impact, efficiency and synergies, sustainability of interventions and knowledge building. Evaluation clients are Irish Aid, as the donor of PROPEL, ILO as executor of the programme, PROPEL management and staff, and members of the national Project Advisory Committees.

Since the PROPEL programme is operational in seven countries in Africa and Asia as well as globally, the mid-term independent

evaluation combined a desk review of relevant project documentation and analysis of evaluation questionnaires, with findings from interviews with PROPEL management, and technical experts and management at ILO Geneva, telephonic interviews with ILO country office directors and PROPEL field-based staff in six countries. A field visit was made in Zambia to carry out interviews with ultimate beneficiaries, stakeholders and government partners, and to observe PROPEL activities and results on the ground.

## Main Findings & Conclusions

**RELEVANCE:** The logical and strategic fit within the planning hierarchy PROPEL – ILO and Irish Aid – UN is very good, even admirable looking at the number of variables in this hierarchy. Programme implementation thus heeded what an earlier evaluation recommended, a better ‘design validity’. PROPEL’s planned objectives as well as actual work in the seven target countries and PROPEL Global are relevant to the goals of Irish Aid, ILO and UN. The *planned and actual* contributions of PROPEL to the ILO Declarations, relevant ILO Conventions, UN CRPD and ILO strategies (e.g. DWP, SPF 2010 - 15, P&B 2012 - 13) are *mainly to P&B Outcome 17*, to which only two countries (China, Indonesia) are assigned. Three countries, Azerbaijan, China, and Zambia are assigned to P&B Outcome 2; Azerbaijan and Zambia are also contributing strongly to Outcome 17 without being assigned to it.

PROPEL’s activities as planned in its implementation strategy, the Logical Framework, and as implemented are coherent in design and implementation with the vertical elements of P&B Outcomes (e.g. DWA, Four Strategic Objectives, SPF) and the horizontal ones (other P&B Outcomes, Eight areas of critical importance). **STRATEGIC COHERENCE** has thus been achieved.

PROPEL is relevant to **CROSS-CUTTING ISSUES** gender, youth, reduction of poverty,

labour standards, and tripartism and social dialogue. The gender-mainstreaming concept of PROPEL needs to be based on a systematic analysis of power relations between men and women, and be practically implemented with a country-specific approach in all PROPEL countries. Ethiopia and Indonesia have an especially strong focus on women with disabilities, as they cooperated with disabled person organisations for women. Youth has been added as cross-cutting target group in several PROPEL countries (Azerbaijan, Botswana, China, Indonesia, and Zambia). PROPEL achieved the Key Outputs and Objectives planned in its Logical Framework to a large extent (70% - 90%).

Although the **EFFECTIVENESS**, defined as reaching objectives, outputs and indicators, is assessed to be relatively high, the outreach of these achieved effects is in most countries still fairly low (an exception here are Ethiopia and Indonesia). The challenge for the next phase of PROPEL is therefore, to scale-up the results achieved. The only **UNINTENDED OR UNEXPECTED EFFECTS**, the evaluator heard about, have been positive.

According to the evaluator’s assessment, PROPEL Global achieved estimated 75% of the Global product ‘Disability Inclusion’, with the challenge for the next phase to make positive changes being felt by the ultimate beneficiaries, people with disabilities. PROPEL Azerbaijan’s objective ‘Better integration of people with disabilities and other vulnerable groups in the labour market’ has been achieved by about 70% with the challenge to provide more access to inclusive vocational training in the next phase. PROPEL Botswana’s objective ‘Employment creation mainstreamed in national development frameworks’ has been attained to estimated 90% with the remaining task to train experts of the SADC countries’ statistics bureaus. PROPEL China’s objectives ‘Skills development increases employability of workers’ and ‘Enhanced advocacy for non-discrimination through equal employment opportunities policies and practices among

enterprises' have been reached by about 85 – 90%, with the remaining challenge to scale up pilot initiatives and expand. PROPEL Ethiopia's objective 'Enhanced capacity of constituents to develop and implement gender sensitive policies and programmes focused on productive employment and poverty reduction' has been achieved by estimated 85%, with the remaining challenge to disseminate its experience to other African countries. PROPEL Indonesia's objective 'Barriers to employment and decent work for persons with disabilities are addressed through capacity building of constituents and other stakeholders' has been achieved by estimated 90% with the challenge for the next phase to expand PROPEL's activities to other provinces. PROPEL Viet Nam's objective 'Effective formulation and implementation of local strategies for pro-poor employment-intensive economic development and sustainable business development' has been reached by about 80% with the remaining challenge to reach more entrepreneurs with disabilities. PROPEL Zambia achieved its objective 'Enhanced employment and self-employment opportunities for people with disabilities through access to skills development' by about 70% with the remaining challenge to reach out to more youth with disabilities accessing vocational training.

**KNOWLEDGE** on disability issues especially regarding the rights of people with disabilities, their skills development, employment and entrepreneurship is disseminated effectively through hard copy publications and on internet platforms and networks to ILO constituents and other disability stakeholders, and to the media by PROPEL. PROPEL Global and PROPEL country projects are able to leverage the learning from one country to other countries through the monthly internet-based Quality Circle meetings among PROPEL project coordinators and in other internal ILO meetings.

**SYNERGIES** have been created by PROPEL in cooperation with other UN agencies, through

which PROPEL could achieve a farther reaching effect than on a stand-alone basis. Very targeted synergies have been brought about by PROPEL's cooperation with other ILO projects. Some PROPEL projects have established linkages to other donors, and will in some cases not only enhance their activities through these cooperation, but also receive additional funding. Several PROPEL projects have applied for additional funds at the multi-donor trust fund of UN Partnership on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities.

**EFFICIENCY**: Value has been added because objectives as defined in the Logical Framework of PROPEL projects have been achieved on average by 81%, while 80% of PROPEL's budget has been used. PROPEL including PROPEL Global has made contributions to reaching the CPO's in the respective countries and to the four P&B Outcomes, it is assigned to, and has inspired some positive longer-term changes for direct and ultimate beneficiaries. This has been done efficiently, as the funds used to date (80% of the budget) and the extent to which objectives have been achieved match. The funding of PROPEL seems to have been adequate to produce effects and potential positive impact, but not to attain a bigger outreach and scale. The Irish Aid funding of PROPEL has produced change, an increase in funds would be necessary to multiply this change and make it more sustainable.

It is likely that PROPEL will achieve with its interventions **LONGER-TERM CHANGES** through

- raising the awareness and changing the mind-set of government officials and policy makers on inclusion of people with disabilities, their rights and work capabilities, in Botswana, China, Indonesia and Zambia, which will continue to see disability issues differently, in whatever capacity they work in;
- legal systems' changes, which are underway in Azerbaijan, Botswana, Ethiopia, Indonesia and Viet Nam, and which will continue to exert their positive

effects on people with disabilities seeking their rights;

- capacity building of stakeholders such as employers' organisations, disabled persons organisations, universities and vocational training colleges in China, Ethiopia, Vietnam and Zambia, which will continue to sensitise professionals and increase knowledge on disability issues, and to provide services to people with disabilities;
- increased and improved media reporting, portraying people with disabilities positively, which inspired some people with disabilities already and might have started to change the attitudes of some members of the public (no studies on the latter exist);
- more access to skills training for people with disabilities in Ethiopia, Viet Nam and Zambia, which has a lasting influence on the employability of the trained people with disabilities.

**SUSTAINABILITY:** PROPEL's approach of intervening in systems and building the capacity of systems' actors, rather than focusing its full attention on the ultimate beneficiaries at grassroots level, is geared towards sustainability. PROPEL helps to bring about the revision of laws and policies; supports building of implementation structures and the capacity of governments, disabled persons organisations, employers', and workers' organisation; helps modify university and vocational college curricula and inspires more and improved media reporting. With these interventions it is likely that long-term change will be achieved, and PROPEL inputs rendered sustainable.

### Recommendations & Lessons Learned

1. **Expand** existing interventions to other provinces in the target countries (except for Botswana) and scale-up employability and job placement interventions;
2. Increase efforts to create **linkages** and synergies with other employment creation projects, sectoral value chain projects, youth employment projects etc. to open up mainstream employment and business

services and entry points for people with disabilities;

3. Implement the planned capacity building of national **statistics** offices;
4. To **give time** for constituents mobilisation and meaningful involvement, and to ensure at the same time the engagement from ILO's side, plan outputs and indicators related to the mobilisation of constituents, and to the support given to constituents representatives to convince their own decision makers;
5. When only a **small budget** can be funded, it is recommended to **focus** on a few, targeted objectives;
6. **Replicate more little initiatives**, which worked in other PROPEL countries
7. Explore to which extent **standardised real-time management information** systems and **reporting formats** at the level of project coordinators could help to streamline follow-up and sharpen reports at this level;
8. Prepare analysis of effects on **gender equality** and develop a country-specific gender mainstreaming concept