



Evaluation Summary



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Skills Development for the Renewable Energy Sector (SkiDRES), Public-Private Development Partnership – Final Evaluation

Quick Facts

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| Countries: | Zambia |
| Final Evaluation: | July-August 2020 |
| Evaluation Mode: | Independent |
| Administrative Office: | ILO Country Office, Lusaka |
| Technical Office: | DWT/CO-Pretoria |
| Evaluation Manager: | Ricardo Furman |
| Evaluation Consultants: | Lotta Nycander (team leader) and Mushiba Nyamazana |
| Project Code: | ZMB/18/02/SWE |
| Donor(s) & Budget: | Sida/Sweden, 803,762 |
| Keywords: | <i>Renewable energy, energy efficiency, energy savings, hydropower, energy sources, climate change, capacity building, self-reliance, business plan, training institutions, gender integration, gender equality, diversity/vulnerability.</i> |

Background & Context

Summary of the project purpose, logic and structure

The SkiDRES pilot Project based in Zambia, aimed at poverty reduction and improved livelihoods in the long term through access to affordable reliable and sustainable energy, while its immediate objective was testing and preparing for skills development.

It was designed to assess market needs and develop partnerships with private sector actors/operators in Zambia *and in the sub-region*, and has create a foundation for a follow-up three-year Public Private Development Partnership (PPDP). Six outputs were to produce the immediate objective (also named outcome):

- 1) Agreements with private and public sector actors on commitments, roles and responsibilities;
- 2) A market systems analysis (MSA);
- 3) A Sustainability and capacity building plan for Kafue Gorge Regional Training Centre (KGRTC) as a Centre of Excellence on skills training in the renewable energy and energy efficiency (RE/EE) sector;
- 4) Reports by KGRTC on at least two pilot training programmes in renewable energy and energy efficiency;
- 5) A proposal for a continued skills development programme for RE/EE; and
- 6) PPDP project design validated by key stakeholders.

The KGRTC is the key implementing partner. The key stakeholders contributing to the objectives were KGRTC (the key implementing agency); Sida (donor agency); Government ministries; Academia, State owned companies, Southern

African Development Community (SADC) - Centre for Renewable Energy and Energy Efficiency (SACREEE); Zambia Federation of Employers (ZFE); Zambia Congress of Trade Unions (ZCTU); ITC-ILO, Italy, *and last but not least the private sector, including Swedish companies.*

The **ILO project team**, headed by a National Project Coordinator, is based in the ILO Country Office for Zambia, Malawi and Mozambique (in Lusaka), providing overarching coordination and supervision to the Project as a whole. At KGRTC, a consultant has been assigned the role of being the SkiDRES Focal Point (others involved are the Head of Training and Consultancy; and the Head of Finance and Investment). A Project Steering Committee was set up with representation from all key stakeholders was established.

Present Situation of the Project

The Project ended 31 August 2020. The ILO has submitted a project proposal to Sida (present donor agency) for a new 3-years project expected to follow suit, with the title: “*Skills for Energy in Southern Africa – a Public-Private Development Partnership for Skills in Renewable Energy, Energy Efficiency and Regional Energy Integration (SESA)*”.

Purpose, scope and clients of the evaluation

The purposes were accountability, learning, planning and building knowledge. The scope included all parts and phases of the project (design, organization, implementation and management). The clients of the evaluation are ILO, Sida and the key project stakeholders mentioned above.

Methodology of evaluation

The evaluation applied standard evaluation criteria for development projects; including relevance and strategic fit; validity of project design; project progress and effectiveness; efficiency of resource use; and impact orientation and sustainability. The methodology of data collection included a mix of various data collection approaches and methods to collect primary and secondary quantitative and qualitative data.

The evaluation team used purposive sampling, to ensure representation, for the interviews and Focus Group Discussions (FGDs). The data collection phase was participatory throughout the process. Gender dimensions have been considered ensuring that gender-disaggregated information was gathered and analysed to the extent it was available in the documentation.

The key data collection tools were: 1) comprehensive review of relevant documentation; 2) Semi-structured in-depth interviews; 3) Focused Group Discussions; and Questionnaire survey.

Data main sources were national policy documents; ILO, UN and Sida policy and strategy documents; SkiDRES Project key documentation (project document, progress reports, work plans, budgets and results based logical structure matrices) as well as information gathered via interviews and other interactions with the stakeholders.

Main Findings & Conclusions

The evaluation found that the pilot Project was very relevant vis-à-vis ILO Programme and Budget, on Outcome 1: “More and better jobs for inclusive growth and improved youth employment prospects”. It was also well in line with national, UN and Sida policies – and very relevant in the eyes of the key stakeholders. Regarding effectiveness, the evaluation’s assessment is that to some extent the Project has been effectively implemented – in terms of producing most of its outputs which is a good achievement, however not fully effective due to delays and issues related to management, and the adjustments that had to be made related to the COVID-19 pandemic – the latter which was out of the control of the Project.

Regarding efficiency, it was found that the project was not been fully efficient in terms of using the available resources (funds) timely at the time of the data collection but was likely to improve towards the Project’s closing date. The evaluation found that for a pilot project, that is exploring something new (a preparatory phase project), impact and sustainability need not be as important as for a full-fledged project. KGRTC has only just

started to adapt to the requirements of the new business strategy with the help of ITC-ILO, and it will take time to integrate RE/EE skills training into the core of the institution. However, the evaluation found that *signs of impact and sustainability can be identified* in the fact that KGRTC has committed itself to embark on a process to change its business environment and create a training institution that will create knowledge in the RE/EE field - and be more attractive for private sector inputs. This has been done through close cooperation with the KGRTC itself, ITC-ILO and the SkiDRES project staff, as well as the ILO technical units, including the DWT (the latter who have been involved to a certain extent in providing inputs to the SESA Project Proposal).

It was **concluded** that the Project (its theme/focus) was relevant. If the new Project SESA gets approval – it is important that its new/revised PSC (or advisory board) is not seen as government steered as this might deter the private sector actors to be actively on board. The conclusion regarding the extent it had addressed gender equality and mainstreaming gender in the programme, is that the Project has managed to bring up these issues as important and ensured the integration (mainstreaming) of gender issues in the new project SESA.

Recommendations

These are the evaluation's recommendations:

1. Sida should endorse the new SESA project proposal to scale-up and continue the work that has been prepared. (*High priority, Level of resources: High, Time line: High*)

2. LO should make much effort in recruiting a well experienced CTA (when/if the new SESA project is endorsed) i.e. a well experienced woman or man who is willing to reside at KGRTC (located in a remote area) on at least a half time basis. This is very important in order to develop and maintain a close working relationship with the KGRTC management and staff. (*High priority, Level of resources: Low-Medium, Time line: High*)

3. KGRTC and ILO should be prepared to plan and implement initial activities to be carried out prior to the CTA's arrival in the forthcoming SESA project - for instance preparing for the mapping and demand survey in the sub-region – and even starting the recruitment process through the drafting of job descriptions and advertising and even pre-selecting staff (but the *contracts* cannot be issued until the funds from the donor are received by the ILO and financial agreements are signed). This is necessary as recruitment processes take time following ILO's procedures. (*High priority, Level of resources: Low, Time line: Medium*)

4. ILO should avail resources as bridging funds from Project funds (if still remaining) and/or from ILO internal resources (such as Regular Budget Technical Cooperation funds) and make efforts to retain SkiDRES project staff in employment under the ILO office in Lusaka until the new project SESA starts so that ILO does not lose more capacity and people who are well familiar with the project. If not possible for some reason, they should be encouraged to apply for positions in the new project as they have knowledge, experience and have built some working relationships and contacts with the relevant private sector and other stakeholders. (*High priority, Level of resources: Medium, Time line: High*)

5. Sida and ILO should already foresee that the planned follow-up SESA three years project duration – driven largely by Sida's budget constraints – may not make any real difference on account of the fact that building Public-Private partnerships would require more time. (*High priority, Level of resources: High, Time line: High*)

6. KGRTC and ILO should be very strategic in forming/establishing the Project Steering Committee for the new SESA project (and technical work groups) that represents not only Zambia but other countries and institutions in the region and give this urgent thought and attention *even before the Project starts* – and consider the possibility of having a PSC Chairperson by SADC organ like the SADC Centre for Renewable Energy and Energy Efficiency (SACREEE). (*High priority, Level of resources: low, Time line: High*)

7. If the budget for the new SESA project permits, ILO and Sida should ensure a budget allocation for periodic short-term consultancy services for a Communication Expert who also has additional expertise in gender equity and equality plus diversity issues. The experience from other ILO technical assistance projects show that having Communication

Specialist posts can contribute a lot, not only to a successful joint implementation and partnership, but also in spreading awareness to the public– thus although the budget may be limited for a full time post, short-term consultants can help to fill the gap. (*High priority, Level of resources: High, Time line: High*)

8. KGRTC should renew its efforts to actually target (look for) young people, specifically women, to participate in the RE/EE courses and other events – and seek out potential interested participants within the private energy sector and civil society, and the local public universities. (*High priority, Level of resources: low, Time line: Medium*)