



Evaluation Summary



International
Labour Office

Evaluation Office

Public Private Development Partnership for Renewable Energy Skills Training and Women Economic Empowerment in Somalia

Quick Facts

Countries: Somalia

Final Evaluation: April - July 2022

Evaluation Mode: Independent

Administrative Office: CO-Addis Ababa for Ethiopia, Somalia, Sudan, South Sudan and Djibouti

Technical Office: ILO-DWT Cairo and HQ Geneva

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Project Code: SOM/17/02/SWE

Donor(s) & Budget: Government of Sweden-SIDA
USD 5,968,715

Keywords: *Renewable Energy; Skills Training; Women's Economic Empowerment; Evaluation; Private Implementing Partners*

Background & Context

Summary of the project purpose, logic and structure

The Public Private Development Partnership for Renewable Energy Skills Training and Women's Economic Empowerment (PPDP) project aimed at enabling women owned growth-oriented businesses to expand and by doing so create jobs, improve the value and productivity of their operations and be part of socioeconomic growth in Somalia. By supporting skills development in the electrical sector, electricity access will increase, supporting job creation and growth across most sectors in Somalia's economy. The PPDP project had two components: 1) Women's Economic Empowerment (WEE) Component and 2) Renewable Energy (RE) Component. It had two development objectives; 1) Women-owned growth-oriented

businesses contribute to job creation, value addition and socioeconomic growth, and 2) Improved access to reliable, affordable and good-quality energy infrastructure contributes to job creation, value addition and socioeconomic growth.

Target of the Project

The project targeted 500 women entrepreneurs as individual beneficiaries of the project, supported to substantially expand their businesses to create improved livelihoods and employment; and over 800 electrical skills trainees who were expected to gain skills and certifications for employment and self-employment in Energy production sector. Individuals included those who were to be employed in the energy sector; training providers; and organizations in the electricity sector including IPP's, project developers, industry associations and worker organizations. Business Development Service Providers (BDSPs) and Civil Society Organizations (CSOs) that provided business development services were the other main targets for the project. At least 100 organizations were targeted for improvements in their services to women entrepreneurs. Training providers targeted included both in-house capacity at IPP's, solar PV developers, and specialist training providers. Somalia's IPPs and renewable energy project developers were key beneficiaries as they were expected to be able to access a supply of skilled employees needed to support further development. The four-year project was launched in May 2018, with a six-month pilot period and four years' full implementation (2019-2022).

Purpose, scope and clients of the evaluation

The main purpose of this Final independent evaluation was to provide an independent assessment of the progress to date towards accountability, learning, planning, and building knowledge. The scope of the final evaluation covered the period May 2018 to December

2020 and encompassed a review of all the planned outputs and outcomes under the project, including contribution to national policies and programmes. The geographical coverage of the project evaluated was Garowe, Puntland and Mogadishu, in Somalia, with longer-term impacts affecting the whole of Somalia, specifically in terms of enhanced access to renewably-sourced electricity. The primary participants in the evaluation were the government, social partners, the ILO and the Donor.

Methodology of evaluation

The Final Evaluation employed a collaborative and participatory approach using a theory-based approach which entailed elaborating and testing the project theory of change through a structured contribution analysis as well as a process evaluation which assessed the extent of project delivery of intended objectives compared to what was originally planned. A large part of primary data collection was done remotely, in respect to current COVID-19 pandemic restriction on mobility in the country. Key data collection methods used included documents/desk review; Key Informant Interviews (KIIs), Focus Group Discussions (FGDs) and observations. Relevant literature including the project document, project monitoring plans, progress reports, MTE report and reports from various activities were reviewed. A total of twenty (20) interviews and discussions were held. Four (4) group discussions were held. The sample size was determined in consultation with ILO after which the individual beneficiaries sample was randomly picked from the list provided by the project team. The data was analysed for similarities in themes, certainty, and according to objectives, scope and questions. Triangulation facilitated the validation of data through cross verification from two or more sources. The COVID-19 situation remained the greatest risk to the execution on the Final evaluation, however the evaluation was conducted in the context of criteria and approaches outlined in an ILO internal guide as well as by observing the WHO and Somali government advisories. Limited information was enhanced through multiple data collection and analysis approaches to enable an in-depth understanding of the evaluation questions.

Main Findings & Conclusions

Relevance

The project's expected results were to a large extent aligned to the DWCP of Somalia and United Nations Sustainable Development Cooperation Framework for Somalia, the SDGs and the implementation plan of the

Abidjan Declaration. The project results conformed to the National Sector priorities (DWCP, UNSDCF, SDGs). It was also aligned to the objectives, particularly as spelt out in the Strategy for Sweden's development cooperation with Somalia.

Coherence and Strategic fit

The project's ToC was well articulated with well-defined result levels. The targeting approach of beneficiaries fitted well with the local context in Somalia considering the gender and youth dynamics in the country. The implementation focused largely on capacity building, using a human centred approach, besides partnership approach with key stakeholders from the public and private sectors (PPDPs). The key strategy was to engage and synergize with the relevant government agencies and departments, social partners, private sector players and SIDA (donor) to co design, pool resources, and coordinate the implementation of the project.

Overall, the project aligned with all the four key priorities of the previous DWCP of Somalia and contributed to the National Development Plan (NDP-9) priorities, contributed to the pathways to peace and economic prosperity which the UNSDCF 2021-2025 seeks to address. It created linkages with UN and other Non-UN international aid organisations such as GIZ (TVET project) and GEEL USAID (RE) component.

Validity of design

The project design was preceded by a reflection on lessons learnt from previous similar interventions by SIDA. A pre-implementation needs assessment informed the focus on unemployment among women and women owned businesses and addressing challenges of RE skills gaps in the Somali power sector. Key government agencies (Ministry of Labour and Social Affairs and Ministry of Woman and Human Rights Development); trade unions (Federation of Somali Trade Unions (FESTU); Somali Chamber of Commerce and Industry) were engaged.

The design missed out on the opportunity to embed results-based approach and less of supply driven approach whose focus was training without clear path towards the desired outcomes in implementation. The capacity building required integrated approach including access to markets, links to financial providers and investors, and improvement of operations and production over and above the thematic trainings for the targeted entrepreneurs.

There was misalignment of the indicators and the ToC in some cases, for instance, omission of an indicator that targeted the surveyed and selected value chains. An indicator relating to sectors/value chains reciprocating to creating incomes and opportunities was also highlighted as an indicator at results level. The design missed out on defining the metric for the increase in incomes by percentage.

The project was designed to largely address Gender issues, with a hindsight that the inequalities are overcome through targeted actions in both components. The key step of WED assessments for examining how women in business are affected differently than men by the national business environment envisaged to identify specific issues that women entrepreneurs face.

Project effectiveness

The project interventions presented varied degrees (partial and non-achievement) of achievement of the two planned objectives. The targeted 500 growth-oriented WEs had been trained on entrepreneurship tools in SIYB modules; Only eight (8) BDSPs against the target 100 were trained on WE self-check tool (FAMOS). Service providers came together regularly and shared their challenges, but also their successes in supporting WEs, for instance ZamZam and IBS shared with the other service providers their best practices and experiences of what worked for them. Online training was conducted for eight (8) organizations with 30 (16M&14F) team members surpassing the targeted four (4) BDSPs and CSOs for gender action plans after FAMOS check training. Only 21 (10 trainers on SIYB and 11 trainers on IYES) from target of 100, had been certified for the training package. BDSPs and CSOs reported having experiential learning of new skills in marketing, record keeping and stock management. Only 370 (212 in IYB and 159 in IYES) out of the 1,000 entrepreneurs were trained on entrepreneurship tools. Participating organizations reported improved awareness and gender responsive programming; Setting up of an inclusive advisory team to guide Zamzam in implementing gender equity across the organization; Improved communications and data management processes around WE followed by establishment of a common database for all women's entrepreneurship activities; Strategic inclusion of gender at policy and operational levels which resulted in Increased number of female staff and participation at higher decision-making levels; Improved gender policies; The WEE check report resulted appointment of a new woman chancellor for the university and departmental head. It was notable that the

university had enrolled approximately 4,000 students with 39% females;

The university also saw improved M&E and reporting of gender related activities across departments as a result of an online directory developed for WEs to showcase their businesses online. On the RE component, two well equipped training centres were established in Mogadishu and Garowe. The university worked with Strathmore REC in Nairobi to train 18 technicians as ToTs.

Efficiency

The key resources considered for establishing efficiency of this project included human resources, time, expertise and funds allocated and used to provide the necessary support to achieve the broader project objectives. Delays were experienced in payment of entrepreneurs' transportation or fare refunds and delays in the project facilitating access to finance; failure to adhere to set training timelines; quite a bureaucratic feedback process, thus delay in implementation timelines; WEE Check resulted in the project consolidating centralized and updated information; the Goobal platform introduced in the project enhanced technical support to employer organizations in the rollout, for instance IBS or Zamzam which supported women entrepreneurs to be champions of gender equality; Alignment of project activities, disbursements and project expenditures with workplans enhanced efficiency in resource use.

Impact of the project

The project had notable long-term changes among the populace with all the 500 targeted women trained across various facets of entrepreneurship. There was remarkable improvement and transformation in Knowledge, Attitude and Practice (KAP) aspects which enhanced formalization of business practices around record keeping and business planning among the BDSPs. The participants also noted ability to develop business visions and learnt risk prevention which increased their business incomes. ToTs reported enhanced professional competence ensuring job security, translating into improved quality of services to the community. The capacity building plan for the local communities ensured continuity of the skills shared and handing down of knowledge and tools, a human centered approach. Partnership with both private and the private sector in implementation through key government ministries, non-government and private sector organizations, complimented with capacity building and skills transfer, curriculum developed for collective actions saw great impact.

Sustainability

This project promoted the application of a number of key ILO instruments including Recommendation 195 Human Resources Development, 2004, the ILO Strategy on Women's Entrepreneurship Development, 2008, and Recommendation 189 Job Creation in Small and Medium-Sized Enterprises, 1998. The project contributed to two main themes, i.e., promotion of RE and enhancing women empowerment through employment and entrepreneurship. The Government fully engaged in the development of this project and through various departments for continuity; The PPDP approach; Established Network of BDSPs (Financial & Non-Financial); formation of Cooperatives of WEs and linkage to the Cooperatives Union for enhancing social and economic solidarity; Promotion of clean and affordable RE. These will ensure continuity of some of these activities.

Best Practice

1. **Synergy building:** Service providers came together regularly and periodically and shared their challenges, but also their successes in supporting women entrepreneurs.
2. **Tapping into private sector funding;** This and leverage was as a good practice.
3. **Innovation:** Innovative approaches were employed in designing the project especially the choice of the two components of WEE and RE.
4. **Evidence based Programming:** The assessments and studies undertaken in the project for instance the WE- Check tool and the value chain analysis.

Lessons Learned

1. Development of livelihoods focused on hands on trade crafts and blending with business management skills is a recipe for success and buy-in fragile habitats.
2. Working with and through the private sector in form of PPPs enhances efficiency of resource use and delivery of results.
3. Strategic partnerships should be accompanied with clear communication structures for seamless flow of actions.
4. Evidenced based programming ensures sustainability and effective project implementation.

Conclusions

1. There were delays attributed to the COVID-19 pandemic and poorly coordinated orientation process resulting in structural delays leading to poor relationships with the donor;

2. The project was designed with smart sustainability measures like IPPs, Government, universities and innovation like working on the two components of entrepreneurship and RE to support the women;
3. The staffing component was not commensurate with the workload especially on the part of the project implementation teams on the ground;
4. The project made concerted efforts in championing gender mainstreaming, though missed out by focusing largely on gender targeting.
5. The role of the private sector in enhancing efficiency cannot be overemphasized as seen in the training on RE for the WEs by BECO.

Key Recommendations

1. The project should be up-scaled to leverage the strong linkages with local, regional national strategies and hasten formation of cooperatives and subsequently strengthen them through organizational capacity strengthening plans.
2. There should be more specific focus on gender equity by addressing existing gender biases that exist in the communities for instance cultural biases, and promote women entrepreneurship.
3. The trainings offered by the project need to be accompanied by start-up capital through either provision of grants or access to financial institutions.
4. Strong research and documentation components should also be undertaken to enhance knowledge management and documentation.
5. A lot more needs to be done at individual business levels, practitioners and stakeholders in the project areas so as to consolidate the gains especially around Knowledge, Attitude and Practice.
6. Trainings for similar projects should be stretched to include coaching and mentoring sessions for at least six months post training to hone the skills learnt by the recipients.
7. Crisis management skills can help mitigate the effects of periods of slowdown on business activities, for instance COVID-19 pandemic.
8. ILO should facilitate follow-up workshops for development of appropriate curricula and modes of support in relation to accessing digital services for both financial management and record keeping and risk analysis and management,