

Annex 8 Initiative 5a: Promoting post-primary education and research (Skills for Youth)

Description of the initiative and its current state¹

The initiative

“The energy and talent of the continent’s young women and men could be a force for positive change, if harnessed wisely. Africa’s countries face a considerable challenge in transforming the potential of youth into growth and development. Today, young Africans have far fewer opportunities, in terms of political influence and access to resources such as land and finance, than adults. In most places young women have fewest opportunities. Poor living conditions, lack of basic services and decent jobs, and widely different levels of income could lead to social destabilisation, especially in urban areas, where the majority of Africans will live in the future. Demand-driven education, including post-primary education, needs to be expanded and more productive employment and decent work for the rising youth population must be created. Decent work, in particular, provides hope of a better future and can help fragile states build peace and stability”.²

The programme “Skills for Youth Employment and Rural Development in Western and Southern Africa” sought to increase opportunities for young women and men to find gainful and productive employment through strengthening formal and informal systems of technical and vocational skills provision, covering three countries: Benin, Burkina Faso and Zimbabwe.

The programme had the following overall objective³: To strengthen skills development systems that improve employability, promote access to employment opportunities and increase incomes for inclusive and sustainable growth.

The overall objective was pursued through four immediate objectives:

1. Increased capacity of rural community groups to identify local economic opportunities, develop appropriate training programmes to access jobs and provide post-training support to community and private small-scale enterprises.
2. Public and private training institutions are enabled to better deliver demand-oriented services to rural, informal economies.
3. Strengthened systems of informal apprenticeship through upgrading the skills of master crafts persons and apprentices while facilitating access to new technologies.
4. Enhanced capacity of stakeholders and institutions at the national level to apply tools, methodologies and strategies developed under the programme for broader out-reach.

The objectives were expected to be achieved through two main activity areas:

- The use of the ILO’s Training for Rural Economic Empowerment (TREE) methodology in a number of rural communities to support local economic development. The main sectors were apiculture, aquaculture, dairy, horticulture, cattle rearing, piggeries, poultry, and solar marketing/green jobs.

¹ The current assessment is based on a desk review alone and, as agreed with the Evaluation Department, no project site visits were made.

² Report of the Africa Commission, May 2009.

³ There are small wording differences between the project documents of West Africa and Zimbabwe but the objectives are largely the same.

- The upgrading of training delivery through systems of informal apprenticeship – the so-called Quality Informal Apprenticeship. This included skills development in arts and crafts, catering, carpentry and joinery, clothing, hairdressing, home décor, motor vehicle mechanics, upholstery, plumbing and welding.

Phase I of the initiative (2010-11) commenced operations in Benin, Burkina Faso and Zimbabwe with a budget of DKK 30 million. Phase II (2012-14) had a budget of DKK 55

million. It was initially foreseen that the programme would expand to Zambia in the second phase, but this was dropped based on the recommendation of the Review conducted in October 2011, which found that “more young men and women will benefit from the Programme if the Danish funds are not diverted to other countries”⁴. The programme in Burkina Faso was phased out towards the end of 2012 following the recommendations of the Danida appraisal for phase II due to the slow progress and high administrative and salary expenses of the West African component⁵.

In Phase 1, the project was implemented as a single project across the three countries. It was however felt that it was more practical to implement the initiative separately in West and Southern Africa and therefore during Phase II the initiative was implemented as two separate components (Zimbabwe and Benin) with separate project documents, evaluations etc. This division was endorsed by the 2011 review.

Based on the recommendations of the Mid-Term Review, there was a no-cost extension for the Zimbabwe component until December 2015 when the project was finalised.

Effectiveness of achievements⁶

The 2011 Danida review found “that the progress in the three countries has been satisfactory. The progress in Zimbabwe is impressive. In Benin and Burkina, progress was initially hampered by delays, but has now accelerated”. The Review team found that number of young people enrolled in training was above target, and assessed it as realistic that the training targets for the five-year Programme can be achieved although it was obviously not possible to assess whether the training would lead to employment.⁷

Training for Rural Economic Empowerment (TREE)

The TREE methodology is an ILO programme applied for local development and is considered a key pillar of the project’s methodology. TREE is composed of five main modules:

Module 1: Institutional organisation and planning

Module 2: Identification of economic opportunities and training needs assessment

Module 3: Training design, organisation and delivery

Module 4: Post-training support for micro-enterprise development and wage employment

Module 5: Monitoring, evaluation and documentation.

⁴ Danida Review Aide Memoire, October 2011.

⁵ Danida Appraisal, Skills Development 2012-2014, Phase II, December 2011.

⁶ Due to the limited scope of the current evaluation exercise findings are based on desk review alone.

⁷ Danida Review Aide Memoire, October 2011.

Targets for employment were subsequently developed and have reportedly exceeded targets by the end of the project. The table presented below shows the reported achievements⁸ at project outcomes/immediate objective level.

⁸ As agreed in the inception phase, the limited scope of the current evaluation only allowed for a sampling approach on certain initiatives, including Skills for Youth. So the findings captured are based on desk research alone, as there was no opportunity to meet project partners and beneficiaries.

Consolidated table with achievements as reported by the two components

year	Achieved Zim	Target Zim	% of target reached Zim	Achieved Benin & BF	Target Benin & BF	% of target reached Benin & BF	Achieved total	Target total	% of target reached
Number of jobs for youth	5,457	3,780	144	6,398	5,433	118	11,855	9,213	129
Total of beneficiaries in informal apprenticeships, QIA	2,667	2,000	133	4,885	3,240	151	7,552	5,240	144
Number of participating Master Crafts-Persons in the QIA-program	1,345	1,000	135	2,693	1,777	152	4,038	2,777	145
Number of trained partners	116	75	155	3,480	n/a	n/a	3,596	n/a	n/a
Number of crafts persons who have increased their income by 10% (only Zimbabwe)	2,378	700	340	n/a	n/a	n/a	2,378	700	340

Source: For Benin: *Final Technical Progress Report, December 2014*⁹
For Zimbabwe: *Final evaluation report, October 2015*¹⁰.

The Evaluation finds no evidence that a monitoring system existed to measure outcome indicators (baseline or target). The only indicators that the Evaluation has been presented for are at the output levels and these are activity-based (measuring number of workshops held, people trained, etc.).¹¹

There were two independent final evaluations: one for Benin (with some data from Burkina Faso as well) and one for Zimbabwe. The final evaluation of the Benin component concluded: “the existing monitoring and evaluation tools are not accompanied by established benchmarks to allow for evaluating performance”¹². The final evaluation for Zimbabwe also met difficulties, as explained in the report: “...at least certain qualitative indicators could have been expected, providing more information on the program’s impact and/or its sustainability. Although the formulated indicators of the program’s logical framework matrix can be called SMART (Specific, Measurable, Attainable, Realistic and Time-bound), they are nevertheless merely process indicators that do not allow any conclusions considering the quality of executed activities, or even the changes resulting hereof.”¹³

⁹ Rapport d’avancement pour la coopération technique, (Final Technical Progress Report), Benin, December 2014. Also includes the reported results from Burkina Faso.

¹⁰ Skills for Youth Employment and Rural Development in Western and Southern Africa (Zimbabwe Component), Independent Final Evaluation, October 2015.

¹¹ It should be mentioned that the outcomes were never specified in the project document.

¹² Evaluation finale indépendante du Projet CEJEDRAO; Renforcement des compétences pour l’emploi des jeunes et le développement rural en Afrique de l’Ouest (Bénin) RAF/10/52/M/DAN, July 2014.

¹³ Skills for Youth Employment and Rural Development in Western and Southern Africa (Zimbabwe Component) Independent Final Evaluation, October 2015.

An impact assessment of the TREE programme in Zimbabwe, which was carried out in 2015¹⁴, suggests positive impact – but this data should be interpreted in the light of no baseline data.

The Evaluation’s assessment echoes the two final evaluations: without established baselines, targets and results reporting at outcome/impact level it is hard to assess whether this initiative had impact or whether it was effective.

Relevance of the initiative to the recommendations of the Africa Commission

The linkage between the Africa Commission’s recommendations and the foci of the two components (rural development and informal apprenticeship) seem less than direct.

During the various meetings of the Africa Commission, there was continuously reference to the importance of vocational training and skills development and this is captured in minutes of the meetings¹⁵. (See the footnote some of the major views expressed in this area¹⁶).

The Commission’s recommendations focus on the need to make formal education more relevant to private sector employers’ needs: it is hard to see a direct relevance link between that goal and the final initiative that was developed with its focus on rural development and informal apprenticeship without a formal, institutional anchoring. Clearly, there was a desire to have a private-sector-drive approach to vocational training and the engagement of private sector stakeholders is commendable but the Evaluation does not assess that this implied a parallel system rather than strengthening the existing, formal TVET system

Initiative	Related Africa Commission policy recommendations
Promoting Post-Primary Education and Research	R20: Focus on and invest in post primary education, better considering the requirements of the private sector, so Africa can become globally competitive.
	R21: Enhance investment in secondary education, specifically within technical and vocational training and skills development for young women and men. The Africa Commission recommends the expansion of the

¹⁴ Impact Evaluation of the Training for Rural Economic Empowerment (TREE) Project In Zimbabwe (final draft), ILO, December 2015,

¹⁵ Minutes of the meeting, Second Meeting of the Africa Commission, Addis Ababa, 20 November 2008.

¹⁶ Louisa Dias Diogo (then Prime Minister of Mozambique) “stressed the importance of getting more young people into the labour market as well as to implement the policies that already exist. In addition, she emphasized that young people also need access to technical and vocational training”; Dr. Mohamed Ibn Chambas (then President of ECOWAS “mentioned the importance of educating the youth and not only primary and secondary schooling, but also technical and vocational education”; Dr. Asha-Rose Migiro (then Deputy Secretary-General of the United Nations) “pointed out the importance of the various aspects of education and she was pleased that it came up very strongly in Mrs. Tørnæs’ presentation and that it is present in several of the initiatives. There has to be a bridge between secondary education and skills development, so they have the opportunity to start their own businesses”. President Kikwete of Tanzania “underlined the importance of education. Education would enable youth to find employment themselves or if this is not possible then start up their own business. This is where vocational education could be very helpful and empower the youth”. Ms. Betty Maina (then Executive Director of the Kenya Association of Manufacturers) said “There has been too little focus on post-primary education so far. However, it should not only be on TVET, but also secondary and higher education”. Also Prime Minister Anders Fogh Rasmussen underlined the need to focus on post primary education, including vocational and technical education (IVEIT). The then Danish Prime Minister posed the questions of how to involve businesses in identifying and financing activities, how university education and research can be strengthened to an internationally competitive degree and how a demand-driven education can be ensured”. Dr. Gregg Mills suggested “an enhancement of the apprentice system, as training should be attained via employment. Professional certification is also required in order to raise the salary of the workers”. A member of the Africa Commission, Ms. Ellen Margrethe Loj emphasized¹⁶ stress the importance of the initiatives targeting youth employment directly. She found that “vocational training should be hammered over and over again in developing countries as the youth does not get the relevant skills to get a job” and stressed that vocational training and skills development are continuously overlooked. Moreover, she pointed to the peace and stability factor and commented that “it is extremely dangerous if Africa’s youth does not have hope and prospects and therefore lacking skills is a security challenge”. (Interview, 2nd February 2016).

Initiative	Related Africa Commission policy recommendations
	Education for All – Fast Track Initiative to include post primary education, including technical and vocational skills development as part of a comprehensive approach to education for all

The initiative took no action with respect to the expansion of the Education for All – Fast Track Initiative to include post primary education. This goal was reemphasized in the approval documents of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs¹⁷, but the implemented initiative was not designed to achieve this goal.

Sustainability and scaling up

Sustainability was considered an important aspect when the Board of Danida approved the initiative’s funding: one member of the Board (Anders Ladekarl) stressed that it was vital that the training activities were integrated into the existing education system and that there should not be establishment of parallel systems. The Chairman (Klaus Bustrup) concluded that although the programme was targeting the informal sector, the Board still wished to see adjustment to the overall education policy with emphasis on better recognition of vocational education.¹⁸ There is no evidence that these concerns were reflected in the final initiative as implemented.

In Zimbabwe, the final evaluation stated that there was a commitment of USD 500,000 by the Government of Zimbabwe, which was hoped could ensure the continuation and further consolidation of the programme. In the 2016 budget statement of Zimbabwe, the Government commits to supporting an initiative by the ILO, expressed as follows: “Furthermore, the International Labour Organisation is supporting youth sponsored centres. The support targets youth training in business project management, business projects identification and marketing. Government will complement this effort through allocating USD 75,000 per administrative district”¹⁹. This should reportedly be a continuation of the TREE programme. As there are 59 districts in Zimbabwe, this commitment amounts to USD 4,425,000 but the implementation has not, to the Evaluations knowledge, started yet.

Whilst a National Skills Development Policy has been formulated for Zimbabwe we have seen little evidence that the approaches and methodologies introduced by the initiative have been included in that policy or whether the expected funding has materialised.

Conclusions

The absence of an indicator framework means that the evaluation is unable to determine whether the initiative was effective. Clearly, many people were trained but the ILO independent evaluations were not able to validate the reported employment effect of the projects endeavours. There is some evidence that one country is seeking to apply the methodology of the project in its national framework whereby there could be a chance for replication in the future. Otherwise, the absence of evidence of effectiveness could have hindered attempts to achieve replication and/or scale up.

It is questionable as to whether the design of the initiative met the expectations of either the members of the Africa Commission or the Danida Board and its relevance vis-à-vis the recommendations of the Africa Commission is therefore assessed as low.

¹⁷ Opfølging på Afrikakommisionens anbefalinger – det bilaterale og det internationale spor, 17th August 2009.

¹⁸ Minutes from Danida’s Board meeting, 9th December 2009.

¹⁹ The 2016 National Budget Statement, “Building a Conducive Environment that Attracts Foreign Direct Investment” Presented to the Parliament of Zimbabwe on 26th November 2015.