



International
Labour
Office

FUND FOR EVALUATION IN EMPLOYMENT

Building evidence on labour market impacts
in the Middle East and North Africa

Sixth Call

Application form available [here](#)

Application deadline: Monday, September 7th, 2015, 11:59pm CEST

Partners:

Oilatech™

IDRC  CRDI



Schweizerische Eidgenossenschaft
Confédération suisse
Confederazione Svizzera
Confederaziun svizra

Swiss Confederation

Federal Department of Economic Affairs FDEA
State Secretariat for Economic Affairs SECO



 LIFAD

Investing in rural people

The Fund for Evaluation in Employment is an initiative of the International Labour Organization (ILO) aimed at improving the effectiveness of employment and enterprise interventions in the Middle East and North Africa. Through its request for proposals in 2015, the Fund offers technical assistance and seed funding of up to \$650,000 to project implementers and researchers for impact evaluations and results-based monitoring and evaluation (M&E) systems for employment and enterprise programmes in the Middle East and North Africa.

ABOUT THE FUND

The Fund for Evaluation in Employment is a joint initiative of the International Labour Organization (ILO) through its “Taqeem”¹ and “Market systems development for decent work- ‘the lab’²” projects. It is supported by the following donor institutions:

- International Development Research Centre (IDRC)
- International Fund for Agricultural Development (IFAD)
- International Initiative for Impact Evaluation (3ie)
- Silatech
- Swiss State Secretariat for Economic Affairs (SECO)

Launched in 2010, the Fund aims to increase the evidence base on what works and why to improve labour market outcomes while strengthening the knowledge and skills of researchers and practitioners to rigorously assess the impact of their interventions. Based on this evidence, it aims to promote evidence-based learning and programme improvement, especially related to women and young people.

Since 2010, five requests for proposals have been issued, resulting in the initiation of fifteen impact evaluations and strengthening of twelve monitoring and evaluation (M&E) systems.

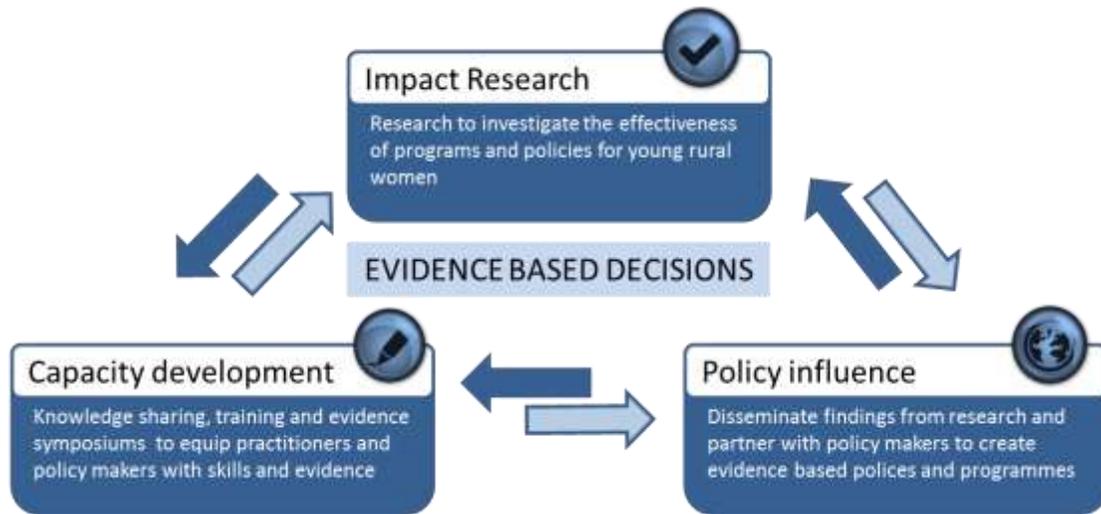
In this year’s call for proposals, the Fund offers different types of support: technical assistance for the implementation of result-based monitoring practices and seed-funding for conducting impact evaluations. In order to enhance the range of applied approaches and methods for impact evaluation and improve the use of their results, it also promotes match-making activities that help to bridge the gap between research and practice.

THE STRATEGY

The Fund applies a results based measurement strategy that promotes the production of evaluation evidence that can be used to create better and more results based policies. Throughout this approach, there is an iterative cycle of capacity development, impact research and policy influence.

¹ See more here: <http://www.ilo.org/taqem>

² See more here: <http://www.ilo.org/thelab>



- i. **Capacity development:** the Fund provides training, knowledge sharing and coaching to produce a critical mass of evaluation expertise amongst practitioners and researchers. During the period 2010-2015, the Fund carried out 17 evaluation and evidence workshops with nearly 1,000 participants.
- ii. **Impact research:** high quality applied research with a focus on understanding “what works” in programming and policy. The Fund provides seed funding and technical assistance to both experimental and non-experimental approaches to measure the effects of labour market interventions.
- iii. **Policy influence:** findings and recommendations from impact research are translated and transmitted to policy makers and practitioners with influence to use the evidence in programming and policy decisions.

In delivering its services, the Fund relies on a network of M&E and impact evaluation experts, firms, donors, and academic institutions represented by the Taqem Evaluation Council.

WHAT DOES THE FUND OFFER AND TO WHOM?

The Fund targets two types of organizations:

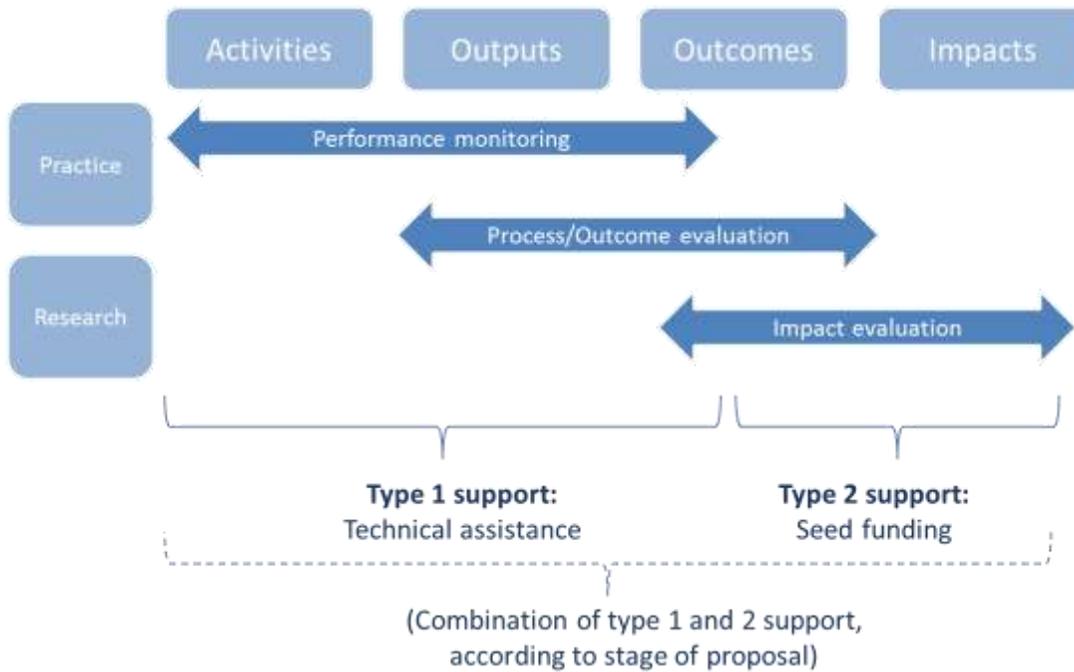
- **Implementing organizations:** public, non-governmental or private organizations with operations in one of the MENA countries and implementing interventions focused on improving labour market outcomes.
- **Research institutions:** based worldwide, but must be studying effects of employment and enterprise development interventions implemented in the MENA region.

Partnerships between international and local research organizations, as well as between researchers and implementers are particularly encouraged and the Fund offers match-making support in the context of its community of practice.

Both technical assistance and seed funding is offered. The technical assistance is mainly directed at the development and implementation of results-based monitoring and evaluation systems, as well as in some cases for the design of impact evaluations. Seed funding is available for the implementation of

impact evaluations. According to the stage of the proposal, both support types can be provided, building on each other in a complementary manner (see chart below).

Chart: Overview of supported activities within the Fund



Detail on type of support offered

Financial Assistance	
Goal: generate more and better evidence on the impact of employment and enterprise interventions	
Project implementers	Researchers
A small cash grant of up to \$5000 to cover the costs of technical assistance to strengthen an organization’s M&E system, conduct data collection and/or to finalize a solid plan to conduct an impact evaluation. In the case of an impact evaluation design, this may include evaluability assessments, development of evaluation design (concept note), or the development of a full research proposal.	The Fund will provide seed funding to selected impact evaluations assessed as being ready for implementation. Up to a total of US\$650,000 ³ is available to fund 3-5 studies. This means in most cases projects will have to bring in co-funding to supplement the costs.

³ Selected evaluations will be considered for funding through 3ie’s Policy Window depending on funding availability. See more details in the “eligibility”-section.

Technical Assistance	
Goal: improve result-based monitoring and evaluation practices	
Project implementers	Project implementers
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Participation in an ‘Evaluation Clinic’, a training course on M&E and impact evaluation for employment and enterprise practitioners (expenses paid for one participant). • Assignment of an M&E expert to focus on the organization’s M&E system and/or planned evaluation design. <p>The technical assistance covers up to US\$ 20,000 of in-kind support per organization.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Participation in an ‘Evaluation Clinic’, a training course on M&E and impact evaluation for employment and enterprise practitioners (expenses paid for one participant). • Assignment of an M&E expert to focus on the organization’s M&E system and/or planned evaluation design. <p>The technical assistance covers up to US\$ 20,000 of in-kind support per organization.</p>

THE 2015 CALL FOR PROPOSALS

Thematic concentration

The evidence base demonstrating how to achieve positive labour market outcomes is growing, but the work has only just begun. Global reviews show that the evidence on the effectiveness of employment and entrepreneurship promotion programmes is still scarce and findings from completed impact evaluations are widely heterogeneous. In a global comparison, MENA is the region with the largest gap of evidence regarding the effectiveness of labour market interventions. This applies particularly for youth: the Youth Employment Inventory, a global repository of evidence on program outcomes of youth employment interventions, reveals only six impact evaluations for that region.⁴

Part of the solution to increasing the evidence base is to provide targeted support to labour market practitioners to explore the cause-and-effect relationship between interventions and outcomes of interest. Impact evaluations have become an important method to analyse if development projects are achieving their intended objectives and which causal mechanisms led to the respective findings. Successful and meaningful evaluations involve the participation of implementing organizations from the beginning to the end and must therefore go hand in hand with program implementation and design.

In order to ensure that programme implementation follows the established targets, and to identify potential barriers early on the way, an effective results-based progress-tracking through solid monitoring and evaluation (M&E) systems is of crucial importance. This does not only serve the purpose of generating credibility and accountability towards partners and donors, but also helps organizations to practice internal learning and thereby to continuously improve their programmes.

⁴ <http://www.youth-employment-inventory.org> (as of 06/2015)

In 2015, the Fund focuses on the regions of the Middle East and North Africa. It aims to generate evidence on the following labour market interventions, with a specific focus on gender equality and/or youth employment outcomes:⁵

1. **Training and skills development:** programmes that offer skills training in order to facilitate the transition into the labour market, improve the employability and/or enhance the productivity of their participants.
2. **Enterprise development:** particularly value chain development or market systems approaches to more and better job creation, e.g. facilitating access to goods and services, or improving the performance and growth of small and medium enterprises (SMEs).
3. **Employment services:** job counseling, job-search assistance and/or mentoring services, often complemented by job placements and technical or financial assistance.
4. **Subsidized public or private sector employment:** interventions aiming to reduce the labour cost for employers (e.g. through wage subsidies), as well as labour-intensive programmes or public works which provide short-term employment in infrastructure or social development and community projects.

METHODOLOGIES

The Fund encourages robust approaches to impact evaluation that demonstrate causality and attribution. In particular, evaluation designs that test different versions of an intervention (cross-cutting designs) are highly encouraged. In order to tackle the challenge of evaluating the impacts of complex interventions, and to understand the underlying reasons and causal mechanisms behind those findings, qualitative evaluation approaches are strongly recommended to be incorporated into the evaluation design (mixed methods). The methods should be carefully selected and combined according to the research questions and the learning needs of the initiative in question, in order to maximize the credibility and information value of the evaluation results.

With regard to monitoring and evaluation systems, the Fund promotes results-based approaches developed based on a clear theory of change. Assumptions related to the corresponding causal links, as well as risks and potential unintended outcomes should be taken in consideration. For further guidance on methodologies for impact evaluations and the set-up of results-based M&E systems see Annex II.

Given the focus of the 2015 call on gender-related labour market outcomes, applicants are highly encouraged to apply the Women's Empowerment in Agriculture Index (WEAI) in their impact evaluations, adapted to the according methodological design and research outcomes of interest.⁶

⁵ See examples of result chains and a selection of current evidence on the different intervention types in the annex.

⁶ The WEAI is a composite tool to measure the empowerment, agency, and inclusion of women in the agriculture sector. It measures the roles and extent of women's engagement in the agriculture sector in five domains: (1) decisions about agricultural production, (2) access to and decision-making power over productive resources, (3) control over use of income, (4) leadership in the community, and (5) time use. It also measures women's empowerment relative to men within their households. See more detailed information here: <http://www.ifpri.org/publication/womens-empowerment-agriculture-index>

ELIGIBILITY

The following will be eligible to apply and participate in the selection process:

1. Applicant

Applicants can be based in any country in the world but the project proposed for evaluation must be in one of the countries of the League of Arab States.

2. Eligible Countries

The countries of the League of Arab States: Algeria, Bahrain, Comoros, Djibouti, Egypt, Iraq, Jordan, Kuwait, Lebanon, Libya, Mauritania, Morocco, Oman, Palestine, Qatar, Saudi Arabia, Somalia, Sudan, Syria, Tunisia, United Arab Emirates and Yemen.

3. Working Language

The working language will be English and the application form and information will only be available in English; nevertheless, applicants may also submit their proposals in French.

4. Institutions

The following types of institutions are eligible to apply for funding:

- Governments
- Academic institutions
- Non-governmental organizations
- Bilateral or multilateral agencies

5. Exclusion

The Fund will not support the following types of organizations or interventions:

- Private companies
- Programmes promoting religious or ideological doctrine
- Land, site acquisition or facilities construction projects
- Individuals, either through scholarships or other forms of financial support
- Political campaigns

6. Additional requirements for funding through 3ie's Policy Window (non-fulfillment has no exclusionary effect on applications)

Depending on funding availability, some evaluations will be considered for funding through 3ie's Policy Window. To be eligible for this window, either the applicant or the corresponding implementing agency must be a member of 3ie at the time of grant signing. Furthermore, applicant teams must show substantive involvement of developing country experts in the evaluation. See more information about 3ie's eligibility requirements here: <http://www.3ieimpact.org/funding/policy-window/>

SELECTION CRITERIA

Priority will be given to applications that demonstrate the following characteristics

1. Innovativeness of project

Submissions that propose projects for evaluation with new and creative solutions to the enterprise and employment challenge will be given high marks. Innovative project ideas could include market-based approaches to development, linking young entrepreneurs to value chains, unique delivery models, environmental or technology based solutions and youth inclusive and gender-responsive ideas. Extra weight will be given to applications that demonstrate ability to reach disadvantaged populations, especially women and rural populations.

2. Policy relevance and scalability of the intervention

In accordance with the three components of the Fund, the relevance of the intervention in its respective political context is of high importance. Submissions will be assessed according to their convincing demonstration of this relevance and should clearly articulate how the evaluation knowledge will be used to influence policy.

3. Capacity and Investment in M&E / IE

Submissions that demonstrate at minimum some level of institutional investment, basic skills and experience in M&E and familiarity with key concepts (such as results chain/log frameworks, indicators, qualitative and quantitative data collection methods) will be recognized. Selected applicants must show proof of assured co-funding for the evaluation at the time that the grant agreement is signed. Experience using different types of IE designs would be desirable (see Annex II for a discussion of the Fund's evaluation principles).

4. Potential for knowledge generation and replication

The Fund seeks to identify organizations and projects with a strong commitment and the potential to generate new evidence in the field of youth employment, entrepreneurship and value chain development. Extra weight will be given to applications that provide evidence of effective implementation and also potential for replication of the project idea, by the implementing organization itself or other organizations in the field.

5. Quality of collaborating project team

The professional and academic backgrounds and experiences of the team who will implement the evaluation plan will be taken into consideration, as well as their demonstrated motivation, dedication and interest in the topic of M&E / IE.

6. Use of the Women's Empowerment in Agriculture Index (WEAI)

This applies also for proposals not related to the agricultural sector. The index can (and in most cases needs to) be shortened and adapted to the corresponding research design and outcomes of interest.

SELECTION PROCESS

Applicants will go through the following selection process:

1. Interested applicants will submit application forms with details about the project they intend to monitor and/or evaluate; the implementing organization, its M&E system and capacity and the envisioned team (see details on the application form in Annex I).
2. Eligible and qualified applicants will be shortlisted by a selection committee (they may also be invited for an interview).
3. Shortlisted organizations will be invited to the Evaluation Clinic and will present their evaluation plans in a working group (participation not mandatory and will depend on experience of evaluation team)
4. Shortlisted applicants may be asked to submit a detailed M&E plan or IE plan (where possible, accompanied by a cost-effectiveness analysis).
5. M&E/IE plans will be reviewed and rated by a selection committee formed by external evaluation experts to receive seed funding to conduct the IE (for those projects deemed ready for an IE).

Timeline for selection process

Stages of the process	Timeline
1. Launch of request for applications	1 July 2015
2. Deadline to receive applications	7 September 2015
3. Screening and shortlisting of applications by ILO	30 September 2015
4. Selection of shortlisted proposals by selection committee and feedback to applicants	15 October 2015
5. Consultations during Evaluation Clinic (optional)	20 October 2015
6. Based on feedback and consultations: Submission of detailed M&E/impact evaluation plans	01 November 2015
7. Final selection of supported proposals by selection committee	15 November 2015

The selected initiatives will be presented in the next ILO Evidence Symposium, to be held in 2016. The symposium will bring together policy makers and practitioners with researchers to present and discuss the evidence base for “what works” in increasing the employment and productivity of youth in the Middle East and North Africa regions.

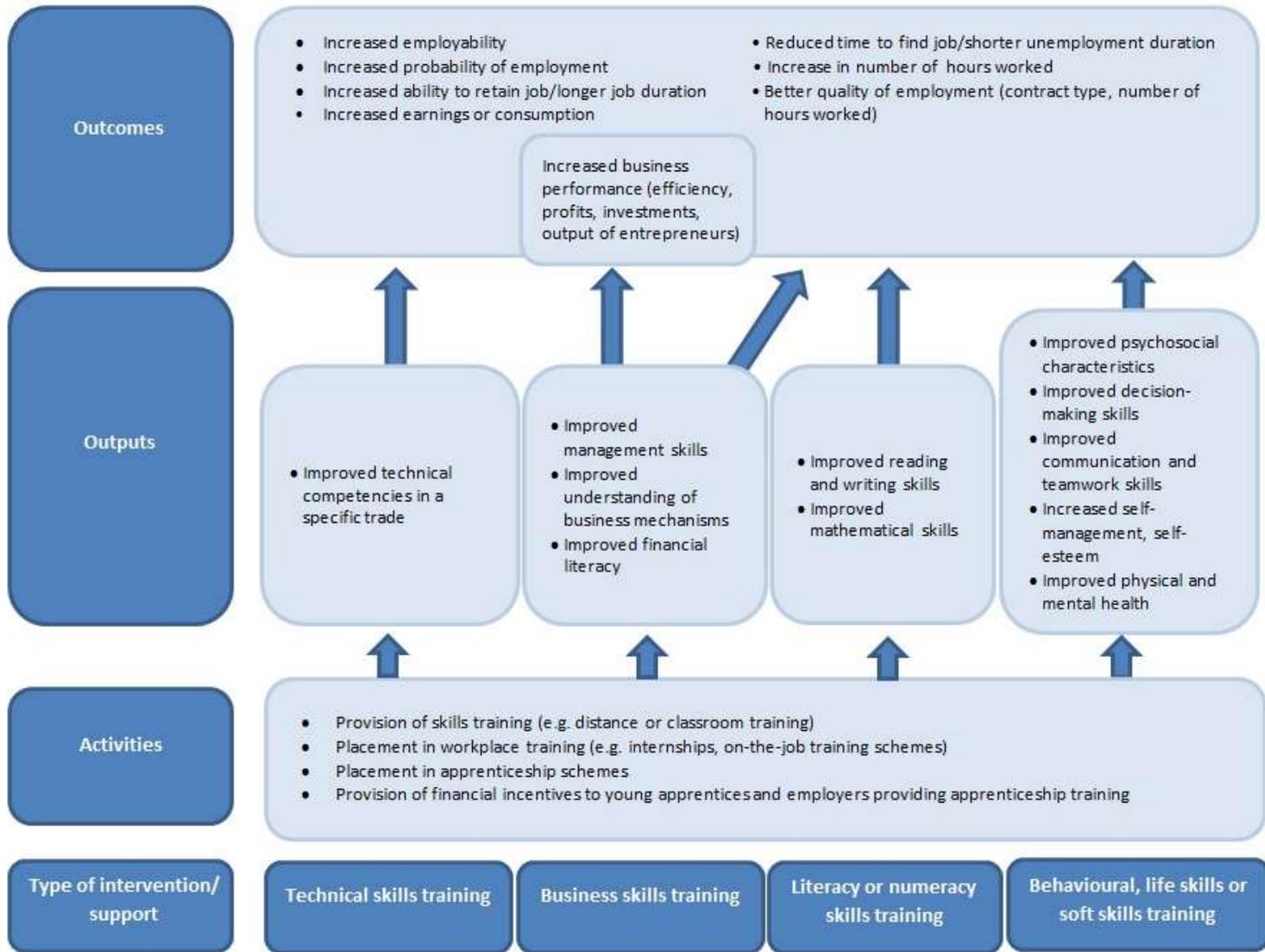
All applications must be submitted using the online application form:
<https://fs17.formsite.com/youth/rfp2015/index.html>

For questions related to the Fund and the application, please write to:

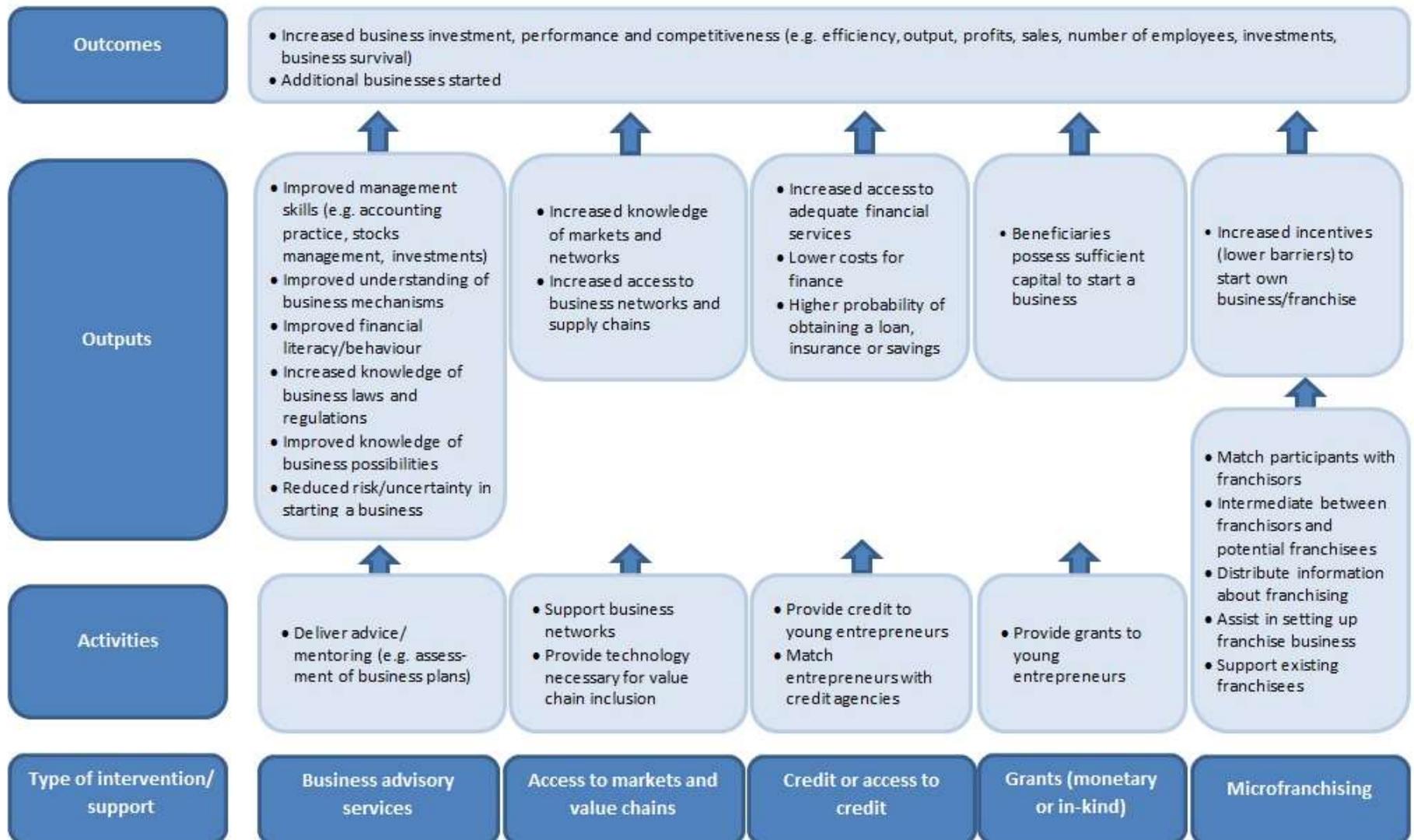
Youth Employment Programme
International Labour Organization
taqcem@ilo.org (Subject: “2015 Fund for Evaluation”)
4, route des Morillons
CH-1211 Genève 22
Switzerland

Annex I: Exemplary result chains for different types of active labour market programmes (ALMP)

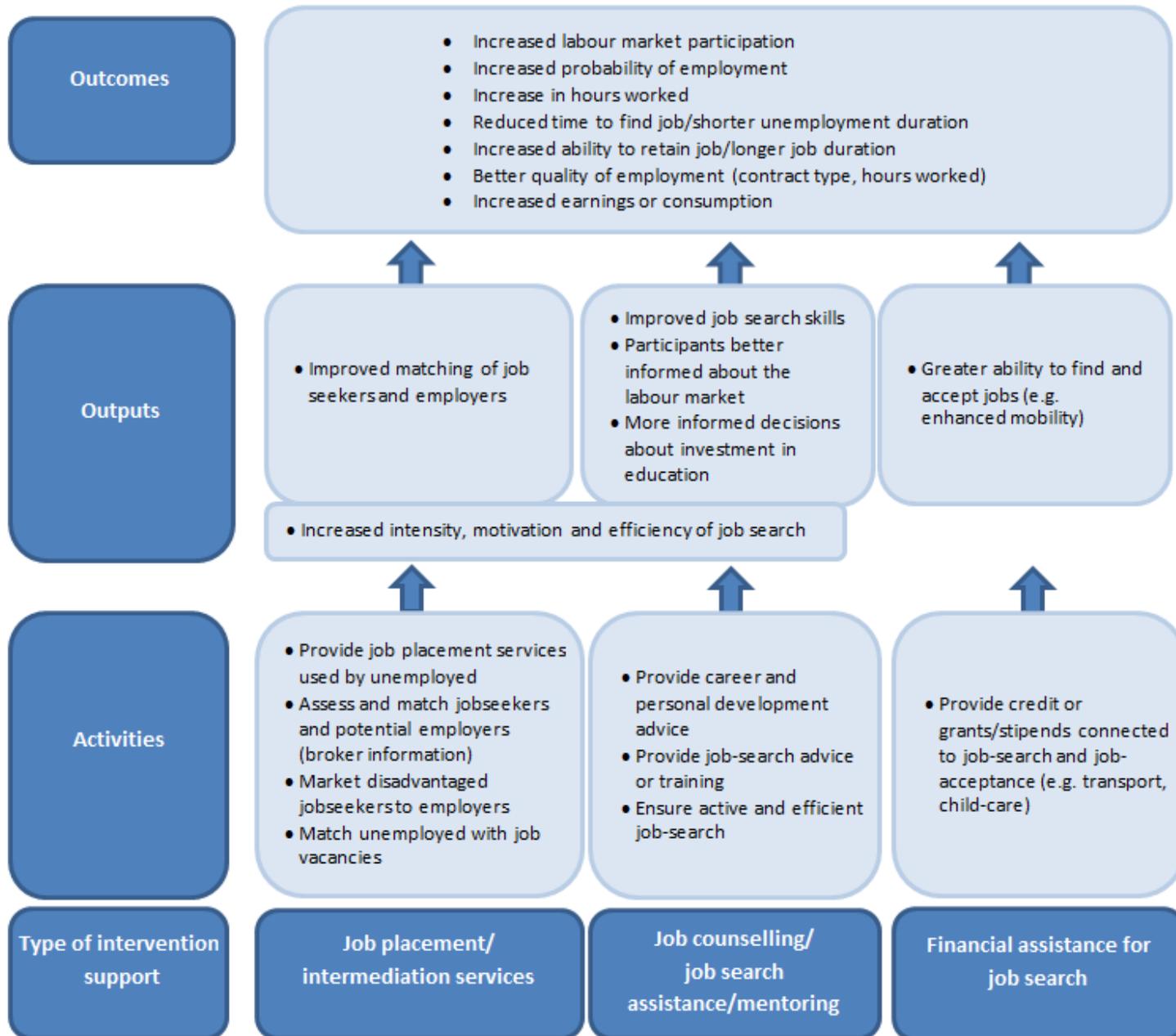
Training and skills development interventions



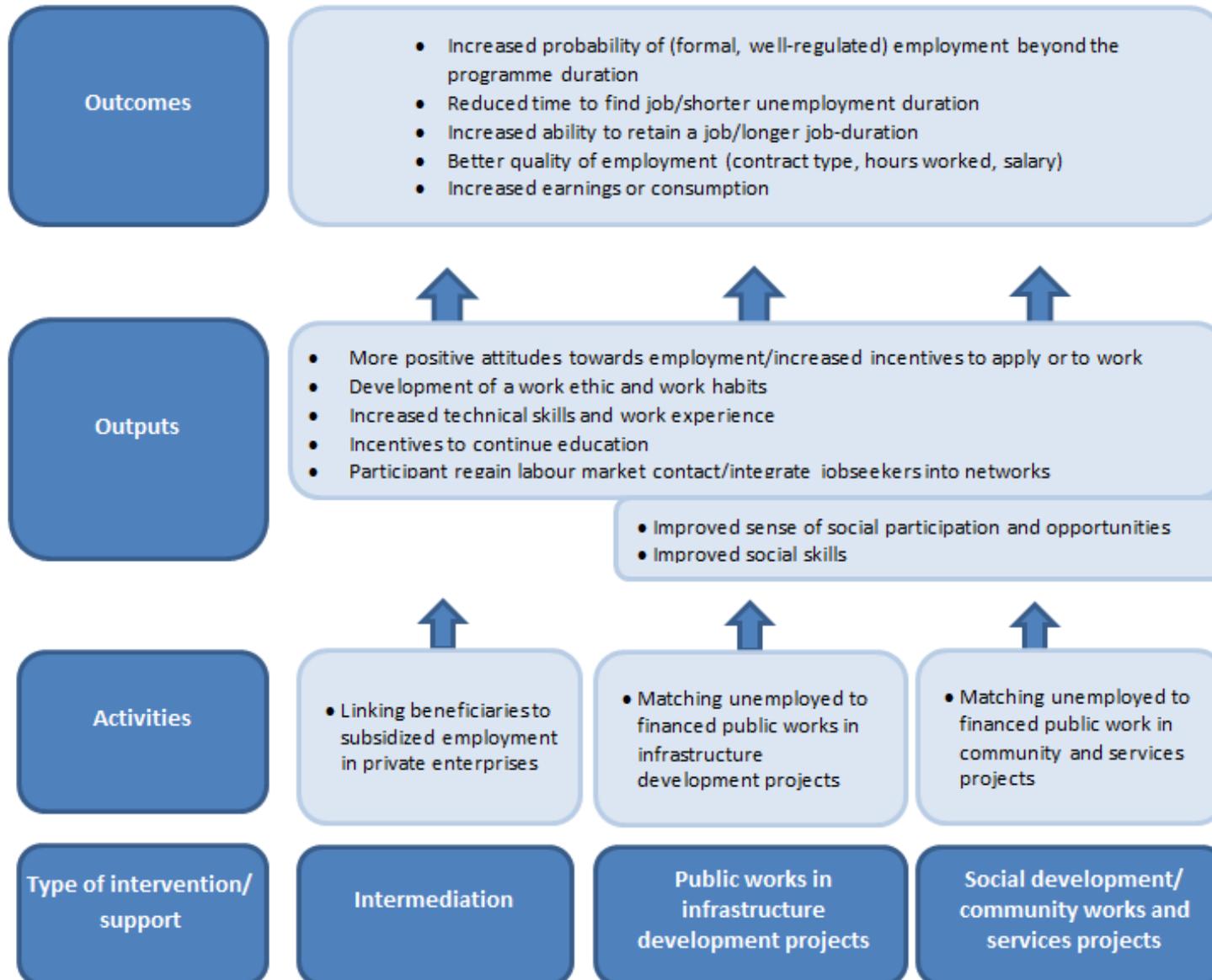
Enterprise development and entrepreneurship interventions



Employment services



Subsidized employment



Annex II: Selected references on methodological guidance and existing evidence

Methodological guidance

- Gertler P. et al. (2010). 'Impact Evaluation in Practice', World Bank.
- Hempel, K. & Fiala, N. (2012). Measuring the success of youth livelihood interventions: A practical guide to monitoring and evaluation. Link: http://www.ilo.org/employment/Whatwedo/Publications/WCMS_376599/lang--en/index.htm
- Khandker, S., Koolwal, G. & Samad, H. (2009). Handbook on Impact Evaluation: Quantitative Methods and Practices, World Bank. Link: <https://openknowledge.worldbank.org/bitstream/handle/10986/2693/520990PUB0EPI1101Official0Use0Only1.pdf?sequence=1>
- White, H., & Phillips, D. (2012). Addressing attribution of cause and effect in small n impact evaluations: towards an integrated framework. International Initiative for Impact Evaluation Working Paper No. 15. Link: http://www.3ieimpact.org/media/filer/2012/06/29/working_paper_15.pdf

Cross-cutting evidence

- Betcherman, G., Dar, A., & Olivas, K. (2004). Impacts of active labour market programs: New evidence from evaluations with particular attention to developing and transition countries. Social Protection, World Bank. Link: <http://info.worldbank.org/etools/docs/library/251019/day6DiscussionPaperSeries0402April6Se1.pdf>
- Card, D., Kluve, J., & Weber, A. (2010). Active Labour Market Policy Evaluations: A Meta-Analysis*. The Economic Journal, 120(548), F452-F477. Link: <http://www.econstor.eu/bitstream/10419/26615/1/593924770.PDF>
- Cunningham, W., Sanchez-Puerta, M. L., & Wuerml, A. (2010). Active Labor Market Programs for Youth: A Framework to Guide Youth Employment Interventions. Link: <https://openknowledge.worldbank.com/handle/10986/11690>
- USAID (2013), State of the field report: Examining the evidence in youth workforce development. Link: http://www.usaid.gov/sites/default/files/documents/1865/USAID%20state%20of%20the%20field%20youth%20workforce%20development%20final%202_11.pdf

Skills training programmes

- Attanasio, O., Kugler, A., & Meghir, C. (2011). Subsidizing vocational training for disadvantaged youth in Colombia: Evidence from a randomized trial. American Economic Journal: Applied Economics, 188-220. Link: <http://www.jstor.org/stable/41288643>
- Card, D., Ibarrran, P., Regalia, F., Rosas-Shady, D., & Soares, Y. (2011). The labor market impacts of youth training in the Dominican Republic. Journal of Labor Economics, 29(2), 267-300. Links: <http://www.jstor.org/stable/10.1086/658090>, <http://cid.bcrp.gob.pe/biblio/Papers/NBER/2007/febrero/w12883.pdf>
- Cooper, R., Dawes, A., Gertler, P., & Martínez, C. (2011). Expertise on evidence of good practices of life skills and employability: Programs for high risk youth in Latin America. Jacobs Foundation
- Groh, M., Krishnan, N., McKenzie, D., & Vishwanath, T. (2012). Soft skills or hard cash? The impact of training and wage subsidy programs on female youth employment in Jordan. The Impact of Training and Wage Subsidy Programs on Female Youth Employment in Jordan (July 1,

2012). World Bank Policy Research Working Paper, (6141).

Link: http://papers.ssrn.com/sol3/papers.cfm?abstract_id=2116139

- Haan, H. C., & Serriere, N. (2002). Training for work in the informal sector: fresh evidence from West and Central Africa. International Training Centre of the ILO. Link: <http://siteresources.worldbank.org/INT/ILM/214578-1103217503703/20295542/TrainingforWorkWCA.pdf>
- Ibarrarán, P., & Rosas Shady, D. (2009). Evaluating the impact of job training programmes in Latin America: evidence from IDB funded operations. Journal of Development Effectiveness, 1(2), 195-216. Link: www.tandfonline.com/doi/abs/10.1080/19439340902918094
- Premand, P., Brodmann, S., Almeida, R., Grun, R., & Barouni, M. (2012). Entrepreneurship training and self-employment among university graduates: evidence from a randomized trial in Tunisia. World Bank Policy Research Working Paper, (6285). Link: <http://elibrary.worldbank.org/doi/pdf/10.1596/1813-9450-6285>

Enterprise development interventions:

- Cho, Y. & Honorati, M. (2013). Entrepreneurship Programs in Developing Countries: A Meta Regression Analysis. World Bank, Washington, DC. Link: <http://elibrary.worldbank.org/doi/pdf/10.1596/1813-9450-6402>
- Effectiveness of Entrepreneurship Development Interventions for Women Entrepreneurs: An ILO-WED Issue Brief. Link: http://www.ilo.org/wcmsp5/groups/public/--ed_emp/--emp_ent/--ifp_seed/documents/publication/wcms_329356.pdf
- Grimm, M., & Paffhausen, A. L. (2013). Interventions for employment creation in micro, small and medium-sized enterprises in low-and middle-income countries – a systematic review. Link: http://www.wiwi.uni-passau.de/fileadmin/dokumente/lehrstuehle/grimm/PDF/Review_Report_May_FINAL.pdf
- Ingram, V., & Oosterkamp, E. (2014). Literature review on the labour market impacts of value chain development interventions. Wageningen, LEI Wageningen UR (University & Research centre), LEI Report. Link: http://www.ilo.org/wcmsp5/groups/public/--ed_emp/--emp_ent/--ifp_seed/documents/briefingnote/wcms_323492.pdf
- McKenzie, D., & Woodruff, C. (2013). What are we learning from business training and entrepreneurship evaluations around the developing world? The World Bank Research Observer, lkt007. Link: <http://elibrary.worldbank.org/doi/pdf/10.1596/1813-9450-6202>

Employment services:

- Altmann, S., Falk, A., Jäger, S., & Zimmermann, F. (2015). *Learning about Job Search: A Field Experiment with Job Seekers in Germany* (No. 254671). Link: <http://ftp.iza.org/dp9040.pdf>
- Blundell, R., Meghir, C., Dias, M. C., & Reenen, J. V. (2004). Evaluating the employment impact of a mandatory job search program. Journal of the European Economic Association, 569-606. Link: http://www.personal.ceu.hu/staff/Gabor_Kezdi/Program-Evaluation/Blundell-CostaDias-Meghir-VanReenen-2004.pdf

- Osman, A. (2014). Occupational choice under credit and information constraints. Link: https://b3eda0643a390084a0b3c5a405bfeb77566311b2.googledrive.com/host/0B_P10kKQcC7raUNCOWNkQ05YOUU/Occupational_ChoiceUnder_Credit_and_Information_Constraints.pdf

Subsidized public or private sector employment:

- Levinsohn, J., Rankin, N., Roberts, G., & Schöer, V. (2014). A youth wage subsidy experiment for South Africa. Link: http://www.3ieimpact.org/media/filer_public/2015/04/15/ie15-youth_wage_subsidy.pdf
- Girma, S., Görg, H., Strobl, E., & Walsh, F. (2008). Creating jobs through public subsidies: An empirical analysis. *Labour economics*, 15(6), 1179-1199. Link: <http://repec.iza.org/dp3168.pdf>
- Huttunen, K., Pirttilä, J., & Uusitalo, R. (2013). The employment effects of low-wage subsidies. *Journal of Public Economics*, 97, 49-60. Link: <http://www.econstor.eu/bitstream/10419/38891/1/626804167.pdf>

ANNEX III: THE FUND'S EVALUATION PRINCIPLES

Definitions:

Impact evaluation (IE) assesses the changes that can be attributed to a particular intervention, such as a project, programme or policy. In contrast to outcome monitoring, which tracks and examines whether targets have been achieved, an IE is structured to answer the question: how would participants' well-being have changed if the intervention had not been undertaken? This involves a counterfactual analysis, that is, "a comparison between what actually happened and what would have happened in the absence of the intervention."

Cost benefit analysis involves weighing the total expected costs against the total expected benefits of one or more actions in order to gauge the efficiency of the intervention.

Evaluation Design:

- A range of methodological options exist to build a counterfactual. These options include both experimental and quasi experimental designs. Further information is provided at <http://go.worldbank.org/7M4NUSKE10>.
- The most interesting IEs provide both qualitative and quantitative evidence (i.e. use a mixed method approach to data collection). Qualitative data collection techniques include focus groups and key informant interviews.
- The basis of a quality IE revolves around four key inputs: (1) a logical results chain that connects inputs to outcomes and specifies indicators for measurement, (2) a clearly defined evaluation question which serves as the research hypothesis, (3) an appropriate strategy for identifying the counterfactual and (4) appropriate techniques for collecting robust data. The four key inputs will serve as the basis for the learning agenda and the development of the evaluation plans during the Evaluation Clinics.

Costs:

Experience suggests that the costs of conducting IEs can be high. The initial design and data collection make up for the lion share of an evaluation budget, where data collection costs can easily reach 80% of the total evaluation budget. The Fund for Evaluation in Youth Employment seeks to provide technical and financial support so that also organizations with smaller budgets can produce evidence of what works. Good quality IEs can also be designed and kick-started with smaller budgets since additional fundraising is more likely to be successful when a good design is in place.

Communicating results:

- As important to the production of new evidence, how evaluations will communicate the results of their evaluation should be clearly addressed. This should include dissemination via events, workshop, and websites. It is also envisioned that each completed evaluation will produce "a brief", which is a simple, easy to read report on the major outcomes, challenges, and lessons learned from the evaluation.

- Engaging policy makers is an important part of dissemination. Project teams should make attempts to involve policy and government stakeholders in conducting evaluations thereby ensuring an “authorizing environment” has been created.



CONTACT

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