INTRODUCTION

Each region is the subject of a geographic (DWCP) evaluation once every five years. This year Africa was due and the ILO Evaluation Office examined the ILO’s programme of work in four selected Southern African Development Community (SADC) member States of Lesotho, South Africa, the United Republic of Tanzania and Madagascar, from 2014 through 2018. These countries are all covered by the sub-regional dimension of the SADC DWP; however, each of them also has their own Decent Work Country Programme (DWCP).

WHAT IS A DECENT WORK COUNTRY PROGRAMME?

A DWCP is the main vehicle for delivery of ILO support to countries. It has two objectives: promote decent work as a key component of national development strategies, and; to organise ILO knowledge, instruments, advocacy and cooperation for tripartite constituents to advance the Decent Work Agenda.

ABOUT THE EVALUATION

The evaluation seeks to determine how well SADC and its member-countries of Lesotho, South Africa, Tanzania and Madagascar achieved the outcomes planned in their respective DWP and DWCPs; how they were achieved and under what conditions. The evaluation also attempts to contribute to organizational learning by identifying lessons learned, emerging good practices and recommendations.

EVALUATION METHODOLOGY

The evaluation used a mixed-methods approach to ensure the validity and reliability of the findings. Data was derived from various methods:

- Comprehensive document review
- Synthesis review of 23 related project evaluations
- An online survey administered to ILO staff
- 167 interviews with stakeholders
- Countries visited: Lesotho, Madagascar, Tanzania and South Africa

KEY COUNTRY-SPECIFIC FINDINGS

Lesotho: The ILO provided technical expertise, capacity building and advisory support to the tripartite task teams on the discussion and development of the Lesotho Labour Policy and the National Social Protection Law. In response to the evolving context of labour migration in the SADC region, Lesotho’s constituents developed the National Labour Migration Policy and an Action Plan 2018-2020.

Madagascar: The ILO implemented development cooperation projects that tested intervention models for job placement information systems/services and employability/entrepreneurship training for youth and women. Through these projects, the ILO collaborated with regional employment offices, universities, research organizations, and employers to facilitate employment access.

Tanzania: Through the revision of the National Employment Policy and the development of a Youth Employment Policy, ILO constituents contributed to the DWCP outcome of strengthening an enabling policy environment to enhance productive employment. The DWCP supported wide-ranging initiatives on skills development, such as apprenticeship schemes for youth and recognition of prior learning.

South Africa: The Ministry of Labour initiated a review of labour legislation to address two specific decent work deficits in the workplace: social protection and youth employment. The ILO provided support towards reinforcing freedom of association and collective bargaining; building institutional capacity to implement sound wage policies; and to promote principles and rights related to non-discrimination in employment and occupation.

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**KEY FINDINGS**

1. **International Labour Standards and Social Dialogue** were the cross-cutting policy drivers that achieved the most results. With regard to gender equality and non-discrimination, overall, much remains to be done. Integration of environmental sustainability, as a cross-cutting policy driver, was limited in the DWCPs.

2. ILO helped the constituents to better understand the Decent Work Agenda. In addition, it developed their capacities to analyse and mainstream their needs into the DWCP. This will lead to improvement of relevant institutional capacities to generate further progress towards Decent Work country objectives.

3. The SADC DWP priorities continue to be important from the national perspectives. However, regional decisions need to be trickled down to the national level, with tripartite follow-up of the outcomes of regional decisions at country level.

4. The likelihood of the DWCP achievements being continued/implemented/scaled-up largely depends on full national ownership, the constituents’ institutional capacities, effective governance and continued ILO support.

**KEY RECOMMENDATIONS TO THE GOVERNING BODY**

1. Reinforce the capacities of the social partners. Capacity development plans should identify the capacity development needs of each constituent group and suggest delivery approaches that could best address those needs.

2. Improve efforts to coordinate and promote the involvement of stakeholders in all aspects of decent work country programming (for example steering, implementation, resource mobilization, and monitoring and evaluation).

3. Make additional efforts to promote gender equality and non-discrimination.

4. Update the SADC DWP to respond more effectively to present conditions and challenges, both at the regional level and at the level of the SADC member States.

5. Consider a more custom-made approach to countries’ DWCP design.

**VOICES FROM CONSTITUENTS**

- “We lacked the means to follow-up on many of the actions that were planned. For example, we created a regional committee but there were no resources to follow-up.”

- “One of the biggest contributions has been the local awareness of child labour [in the vanilla value chain]. People didn’t talk about it before and now they do. The issue is no longer taboo.”

- “The communication with the ILO is good. We are consulted often. But we would like more follow-up.”

- “We received technical support from ILO specialists to help with our analysis. They provided training on how to do an evaluation of employment. They helped us put in place indicators and to interpret data.”

- “One of the biggest contributions has been the local awareness of child labour [in the vanilla value chain]. People didn’t talk about it before and now they do. The issue is no longer taboo.”

**VOICES FROM ILO STAFF**

- “It is not easy for the agencies to work together in the field. From the point of view of the partners, they do not see the agencies working together.”

- “The ILO had the biggest impact on the question of youth employment. The government did not previously give much importance to youth employment. This has changed.”

- “I think we managed to bring in employment in a more coherent way within the Ministry.”

- “When we conducted the policy development we worked very closely with the stakeholders. We don’t just bring a consultant who writes the document. We try to teach them as we go. I think our approach is sustainable.”