



Evaluation Summaries

Youth Employment Promotion Programme (YEP)

Quick Facts

Country: Timor-Leste

Mid-term Evaluation: March 2010

Mode of Evaluation: Independent

Technical Area: Youth Employment and Vocational Training

Evaluation Management: ILO Geneva

Evaluation Team: Michael Wheelahan

Project Start: 1 March 2008

Project End: 31 January 2012

Project Code: TIM/07/03/AUS

Donor: Government of Australia AusAID

Keywords: Capacity building, vocational training, youth employment, community development

Background & Context

The YEP is a 4-year programme with an overall budget of US\$ 18,023,735, with US\$ 10,000,000 to be funded by the Government of Timor Leste (State Secretariat for Vocational Training and Employment) SEFOPE through the Employment and Vocational Training Fund (FEFOP), and US\$ 8,023,735 funded by AusAID.

The YEP programme builds on a successful earlier programme funded by the EC, STAGE (evaluation reports available). STAGE was designed to strengthen the system of employment skills training as well as the capacity of national administration and other relevant institutions. Its three components were (i) Secretariat of State for labour and Solidarity capacity building; (ii) Strengthening the capacity of existing rural and urban training providers; and (iii) Community Empowerment.

Purpose, scope and clients of the evaluation

The evaluation examined the progress, good practices, achievements, and lessons learned throughout project implementation. The clients are the Government of Timor-Leste, in particular

SEFOPE, INDMO, and FEFOP; ILO Programme staff in Timor-Leste, Jakarta, and HQs; Programme staff in Timor-Leste; and the Australian Government.

Methodology of evaluation

The evaluation commenced with a desk review of a full range of documents and reports relating to the project followed by field visits and stakeholder consultations from 1-19 March 2010.

Main Findings & Conclusions

The evaluation found that the YEP Programme had been well-designed and its objectives are valid particularly in the context of the Government's national priorities for 2010 as well as AusAID's Australia – Timor-Leste Country Strategy.

Good progress has been made across all four components of the YEP programme and there are signs of growing capacity within INDMO and SEFOPE. Collaboration arrangements between SEFOPE, INDMO and Ministry of Education (MoE) are working well and the full establishment of the NQF will require a Decree Law which will be prepared by the Ministry of Education for approval by the Parliament.

YEP has strongly supported the development of Youth Career Centres and an expanded counselling program is currently being implemented. Labour intensive work arrangements on road maintenance have been highly effective at the District level with more than 35,000 placements under the scheme.

Recommendations & Lessons Learned

INDMO and Vocational Training

SEFOPE, AusAID and the ILO should promote with donors that fund projects which include capacity building and training to ensure that such work takes place within the scope of the TLNQF to foster sustainability and future skills recognition. The projects should link with accredited local

training providers in providing competencies. This requirement should also be promoted by SEFOPE through the Government's National Priorities Working Group 3 on Human Resource Development.

YEP should intensify the awareness raising campaigns and promotion of the NQF agenda and registration and accreditation requirements to educate training providers, employers and trainees on the new arrangements.

A strong case should be made by SEFOPE and ILO to the National Government as well as to potential donors to ensure adequate budget and resources are allocated to INDMO and SEFOPE so that this work can be completed. AusAID should also consider further funding needs beyond the current project life.

To ensure the sustainability of the vocational training reforms beyond the current project life, ILO should seek donor support to cover:

- Assistance to MoE in the preparation of NQF Legislation. This is a crucial step to consolidate the mandate of INDMO. Despite the fact that the INDMO Decree Law has been approved by the Council of Ministers and by the Parliament in 2008, there is a risk that inappropriate NQF Legislation may supersede INDMO Law and eventually impact negatively in its mandate and in the definition of the entire Vocational Technical Education and Training system.
- Support for training providers to allow them to meet registration and accreditation standards and as part of the implementation of the Qualifications framework.
- Longer term support to accredited training providers to deliver national qualifications, including support for the development of appropriate materials.

FEFOP

The training and employment-related opportunities available under FEFOP should be widely promoted and the Government should maintain annual budget allocations at least at the 2009 budget level. With the Fund's operations now well established, SEFOPE, ILO and AusAID should consider opportunities for diversifying sources of funds, including through additional donors.

The approval and contracting process of the self employment module under this model should be simplified and streamlined to minimize disruption and delays in the delivery of the program to the participants.

CEOP's and Youth Counselling

The individual case management approach to counselling clients is currently being implemented by CEOP staff. This programme is both ambitious and resource intensive and should be reviewed in 6 months time including feedback from clients to assess its effectiveness and the outcomes being achieved.

CEOPs should develop 'group' counselling approaches to convey information and guidance to groups with similar information needs or similar aspirations.

Display of materials and information in CEOP offices should be improved and pamphlets and brochures on training and employment opportunities should be made available for distribution in CEOP offices and more widely, based on a specific communication effort in the next few months.

Labour Intensive Works

Budget allocations for labour intensive works should continue and specifically target rural and remote communities. The training programmes for literacy and numeracy, HIV/AIDS awareness and family planning should be continued and should also target young people in local communities.

There are eight teams of field engineers, supervisors and contractors based in SEFOPE and in the field with funding from YEP and TIM WORKS. ILO should alert potential donors proposing any follow-up labour-based road projects to the availability of this expertise to minimize the loss of positions when the TIMWORKS project concludes, either in June 2010 or end of 2010 if the expected extension is indeed approved.

SIMU – the National Labour Market Information System: Further support and enhancements to the LMI system (SIMU) database software should be considered to improve the usefulness and efficiency of the database and its reporting capability. If this is not possible within existing YEP resources, ILO and SEFOPE should identify other opportunities.

SEFOPE and ILO should seek donor support for the unit to develop greater capacity to analyze data such as the LF survey and other data collected by various units within SEFOPE and report on labour market issues.

Gender Equality

Effective gender mainstreaming requires a dedicated effort and resources. ILO, SEFOPE and AusAID should consider this and arrange for specific gender expertise to be available to implement the SEFOPE gender mainstreaming strategy, including through i) training of staff and capacity building, where elements of ILO tools such as the Participatory Gender Audit could be adopted and ii) further research and analysis of gender in employment, using SIMU as a source of data and determining gender-specific social and economic barriers for gainful employment of men and women.

Important lessons learned

The integrated approach has resulted in the implementation team being fully embedded within the organizational framework of SEFOPE and INDMO. The recruitment of national project staff using a Service Contract with the Ministry enabled national staff to be recruited directly on Government conditions of service, promoting counterpart ownership facilitating capacity building. This approach should be seriously considered by other development partners where other projects require a significant number of national staff to be recruited. ILO may want to discuss this with relevant Government institutions and with its UN partners.

Experience with vocational training reforms in other countries confirms that major vocational training initiatives such as those being undertaken in Timor-Leste take a long time to be implemented fully and require ongoing support. SEFOPE and ILO should prepare a succession plan well in advance.