



# Evaluation Summary



International  
Labour  
Office

Evaluation Unit

## *RBSA support towards achieving the 2010-11 Biennium CPOs on employment in Africa (Outcome 1-3) RBSA Evaluation*

### Quick Facts

**Countries:** Ethiopia, Namibia, Zambia, Uganda, Mauritius, Somalia, South Africa Southern Africa Sub-Region, Regional Africa

**Final Evaluation:** Dec 2012

**Type of Evaluation:** Thematic Evaluation

**Mode of Evaluation:** Independent

**Technical Area:** Employment Promotion

**Evaluation Manager:** Makda Getachew (ILO ROAF)

**Evaluation Team:** Stanley Karuga

**Donor:** ILO-RBSA Funds -Total for Employment CPOs in Africa-US\$ 5,947,921; Total for the ten (10) CPOs Evaluated-US\$ 1,747,672

### Background & Context

Unemployment, especially for women and young people in general remains one of the biggest challenges in Africa. This problem, which was exacerbated by the global financial crisis which started around 2007, continues to be a major concern of national governments development agencies *particularly the ILO which is the lead agency* in decent work and employment promotion globally. Employment promotion is among the four important, interdependent and mutually reinforcing strategic pillars of the decent work agenda of the ILO. The African region remains a high priority for the Office and realizing labour market opportunities to create more and better jobs for women and men was among its

priorities during the period biennium 2010-11. The focus of the ILO in the region is on rural employment, the informal economy, youth employment and child labour, gender equality, social protection, social dialogue and rights at work. During the 2010-11, ILO's employment promotion strategy was guided by the Global Employment Agenda (GEA) which includes three outcomes: (i) Coordinated and coherent policies that generate inclusive job rich growth; (ii) Skills development policies capable of increasing the employability of workers, competitiveness of enterprises and the inclusiveness of growth; and (iii) Policies and programmes that promote sustainable enterprises and entrepreneurship.

It is against this background that the ILO provided RBSA funds amounting to US\$ 5,947,921 towards supporting Employment CPOs in the African region, and US\$ 1,747,672 for the ten (10) CPOs being evaluated in this report<sup>1</sup>. The RBSA was introduced by the ILO to address serious shortages in regular budget resources by providing a mechanism for donors to make lightly earmarked voluntary contributions instead of project or programme funding. It allows donors to channel voluntary contributions to increase the capacity of the Office to deliver on the priorities set out in the

<sup>1</sup>During the biennium 2010-11, the ILO allocated flexible funding to employment promotion in the African region distributed across nineteen (19) CPOs. CPOs which have not been or will not be evaluated through project evaluations were selected for this independent thematic evaluation of RBSA support.

ILO P&B and in particular, the implementation of DWCPs through the realization of CPOs. It is the flexibility of RBSA and the opportunity to complement and leverage other resources that makes it an essential component of the ILO's resource mix.

### **Evaluation Methodology and Key Challenges**

The evaluation was carried out in a participatory manner to ensure that the findings represent the views of the various key stakeholders, while methodology comprised: (i) literature review of key relevant documents; (ii) field interviews of key stakeholders involved, in one way or the other, in the CPOs being evaluated; (iii) field level observations. A total of 38 stakeholders were interviewed either physically or through telephone.

The main challenges faced by the Mission included time limitation for field visits; poor connectivity and therefore in-audibility of telephone or skype-based interviews; and the inability to access final implementation reports for some CPOs including ZAF 102, SHA 103, NAM 126, SOM 101 and RAF 107.

### **MAIN FINDINGS AND CONCLUSIONS**

Overall, the CPOs performed fairly well despite limitations of finance and human resources. Majority of the CPOs attained their planned outputs and anticipated outcomes, albeit after the end of the biennium 2010-11 for some of them. According to virtually all the informants interviewed, RBSA funding-albeit being relatively small, is making a positive difference to the overall agenda of promoting decent work and employment through integrating the agenda into national policies and strategies, as well as building the national capacity to articulate relevant issues and strategies. More specifically, the RBSA funding is making a positive difference by way of impact in relation to increased knowledge and capacity building with respect to strategies for promoting employment among recipient

governments and social partners, providing confidence to other development agencies that are not specialised in the area of decent work and employment promotion to join the fight against unemployment-by virtue of ILO's presence, and by facilitating leveraging of resources from sources external to the ILO.

### **Relevance and Strategic Fit**

Based on literature review and responses an overwhelming majority of informants met during field interviews, the Mission resolutely concludes that the CPOs are highly relevant and strategically in line with the respective national policies and strategies, ILO Strategic Policy Frameworks and the UN agenda for socio-economic development agenda for Africa. This includes the National Employment Policy and Strategy (2009) and the DWCP (2009-2012 in the case of Ethiopia; the Small & Medium Enterprises Policy & Programmes and DWCP (2010-2014 in the case of Namibia; the Reconstruction and Development Programme (2008) in the case of Somalia; the National Employment and Labour Market Policy (2005) in the case of Zambia; The Employment Relations Act (2008) in the case of Mauritius; the National Employment Policy (April 2011) in the case of Uganda; the Accelerated Shared Growth Initiative for South Africa (2006) in the case of South Africa; United Nations and ILO agenda for Africa, and the ILO and Strategic Framework (2010-15).

### **Validity of Project Design**

The Mission found the design of RBSA-funded CPOs for the biennium 2010-11 to have been largely appropriate and adequate based on adequacy of CPO identification, planning, selection and approval processes; extent of stakeholder consultations; plausibility of causal linkage between activities/outputs and anticipated outcomes. That notwithstanding, there were some concerns regarding the long and bureaucratic procedures involved from

identification to approval/release of funds resulting in delays the commencement of implementation activities; and the general lack of prior knowledge of the amount of resources available from RBSA resulting in uninformed budgeting on the part of outcome coordinators. The Mission found the processes to be largely inadequate in terms of the technical selection criteria; realism of planned objectives and outcomes taking into account resource availability and time line for implementation; and gender mainstreaming and equality strategies.

### Project Effectiveness and Achievements

Despite limitations with respect to RBSA funding and the very lean field staff—who are also responsible for other technical cooperation projects and programmes, the performance of the CPOs was considered to have been quite good. In this regard, the Mission observed the following achievements:

- (a) **ETHIOPIA 126:** Draft National Employment Policy and Strategy and Decent Work Country profile; and the National Employment Policy developed in support of PASDEP;
- (b) **NAMIBIA 126:** Draft Employment Policy Environment Assessment Report and integration of some of the findings in the Fourth National Development Plan (NDP 4)-2012/2017, and the Decent Work Country Program (2010-2014);
- (c) **SOMALIA 101:** Rehabilitation of 2,259 hectares of agricultural land and creation of about 37,000 worker days;
- (d) **ZAMBIA 129:** Development of Action Plan for piloting inclusive vocational training, and training on disability equality;
- (e) **ZIMBABWE 126:** Development of the National Employment and Labour Market Policy and DW profile for Zambia;
- (f) **MAURITIUS 101:** Production of four (4) studies on green job economy which has greatly informed Government and Social Partners' strategy towards Job creation in a an environmentally sustainable manner

under the auspices of Maurice Ile Durable Strategy; and (g) Development of the final Draft of MSME Policy, document on the Platform for Policy Action, review of the National Curriculum Centre, and establishment of networks for certified trainers;

(h) **SOUTH AFRICA 102:** Support to the Global Jobs Pact" agenda, identification of macro-policy options for employment promotion, Decent Work Indicators in Africa (study); DWCP for South Africa, and implementation of National Framework Agreement to mitigate the impact of the global economic crisis. In facilitating the achievements of all these outputs and outcomes, all the CPOs played an immense role in capacity building of ILO tripartite constituents and other stakeholders. The majority of respondents felt that this has been valuable support towards the fight against unemployment;

(i) **South Africa Sub Region 103:** Initiation of the Public Procurement and Social Economy project; and formation of a network of actors who are interested in social entrepreneurship in Kwa Zulu Natal;

(j) **Regional Africa 107:** Conducting a sub-regional conference attended by more than 150 participants comprising 7 countries, Adoption of communiqué on the plan of action towards promotion of decent work and employment, participation in the regional hub dubbed "SHARE" in Nairobi; participation in the development of the "Employment for Peace Initiative" for the Horn Africa region, and IGAD-led "Regional Employment Policy" initiative; support in the development of programme document on "Re-integration of ex-combatants in Southern Sudan-to cater for about 150,000 ex-freedom fighters; support to the development of the document on "Youth Employment "focusing on refugees from Chad in Darfur-which is expected to leverage some US\$ 2 million from a consortium of donors; support in the preparation in the "National Forum for Employment" in Burundi and the preparation of the Draft Employment Policy;

(k) **UGANDA 128:** Support to mainstreaming of gender into the final draft of the MSME Policy, assisting the Women Entrepreneur Associations of Uganda in the drafting of a position paper on policy related action areas in relation MSME and gender; development of gender-sensitive and youth-oriented enterprise training tools and guides; identification of potential BDS providers and conducting training of trainers (TOT); and mentoring trained trainers; participation in the development of the National Curriculum Development Centre in reviewing and revising the national entrepreneurship education curriculum at “A” levels;

### Effectiveness of Management Arrangements

While the CPO implementing staff was fairly well conversant with the general criteria for RBSA funding, they raised a number of issues with respect to RBSA funds operations and management. Firstly, there were concerns with:

(a) The likelihood of subjectivity on the part of evaluators and lack of transparency regarding the CPO ranking procedures-which often does not provide feed back on why a given CPO was selected or not; (b) Rigidity of Office procedures and the short term orientation of RBSA funding; and (c) The long and bureaucratic procedures involved and the occasional late request for proposals resulting in the funds being released well into a given biennium.

While the implementation of CPOs is regularly monitored under the overall Global Monitoring mechanism- i.e. the OBWs review which occur 4 times per biennium (jointly by Country Offices, Regional Offices and Outcome Coordinators), the Mission was concerned with: (a) the brief nature of information provided in the CPO status assessment reports; (b) Lack of conventional and well defined CPO log-frames and weak compliance of indicators of achievement

with the SMART<sup>2</sup> principles in the context of monitoring and evaluation frameworks for some of the CPOs such as UGA 128 and RAF 107 whose milestones and outputs were not time-bound; and (c) The seemingly poor documentation and information management-as evidenced by the fact that the Mission could not access final Implementation Reports for some CPOs (SOM 101, NAM 126, SHA 103, ZAF 102 and RAF 107) despite making a lot of effort to request for them.

### Efficiency of Resource Use

The Mission was not able to examine efficiency of resource use in detail but the general view is that the RBSA funds have not only been used fairly strategically (employment promotion and capacity building) but also efficiently.

### Impact Orientation & Sustainability

While it may be too early to talk about sustainability and impact, the Mission is of the view that CPO activities and outputs have good prospects for impact and sustainability.

### Recommendations

Recommendations involved:

- **RBSA Design and Processes**
- **Technical Evaluation Criteria of Proposals**
- **Performance and Effectiveness, and**
- **RBSA Management and Finance**

Details on these recommendations and more on lessons learned can be found in the main report.

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<sup>2</sup>An acronym standing for *Specific, Measurable, Attributable Realistic and Time-bound*-that is used as a measure appropriateness of indicators of achievements for a project or a programme.