



International
Labour
Organization



- ▶ **Building a Future on lessons learned from the Zimbabwe Labour Market**

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► Advancing social justice and promoting decent work for all

Foreword by the Director

How does one summarize 10 years (2010 - 2020) of interventions in various communities stretching across a country with over 14 million people, 10 provinces and over 70 districts; with similar but disparate cultural nuances; that form, in most instances, the basis of success or failure?

These interventions, criss-crossing the country from Nyanga, Chimanimani, Gutu, Chivi, Mberengwa, Lupane, Bulawayo, Gokwe, Gweru, Kadoma, Zvimba, Harare, Murehwa, Mutoko, Guruve, Marondera, Macheke – just to name some of them, bear the footprint of ILO work in Zimbabwe. The ‘form and matter’ of the interventions have been wide and varied – from honey, carrots, beans, sweet potatoes, onions, tomatoes, leafy vegetables, poultry, piggery, cattle farming; to basic solar drying contraptions, solar products retail, waste collection and recycling initiatives, climate smart agriculture solutions, green manufacturing, honey stations, elaborate Mopani worms and tomato paste processing plants and gold milling machinery. The variety of interventions also shows the diversity of enterprises involved, ranging from family-run informal micro businesses to medium-size unionised companies, at different stages of their business life.

This is outside the human story of emotional and personal transformation of youth and women; skills development and acquisition, group cohesion, families and communities lifted out of poverty and being enabled to ensure that children were in school,

livestock was purchased and better houses were built. In our many efforts, we have pushed boundaries for more and better results. Many times we succeeded and other times our interventions stumbled with the reality of a harsh business environment. Despite the challenges, the Office’s long-term approach is now paying back, as we have been investing in institutional capacity building and reinforcement of intermediary structures that can sustain impact on the ground.

Much has been done in the rural economy, in terms of generating employment opportunities, however, the informal economy, which has remained a common feature of the Zimbabwe labour market requires deliberate attention. Several workers, about 94%, are in this sector and this will require the consolidated efforts of Government, workers and employers, which can be strengthened through the use of social dialogue. The TNF, recently enacted into law, therefore provides an excellent platform to address existing decent work deficits, particularly in the informal economy

This report, therefore, is an attempt to summarize the many aspects outlined above and hoping that, since there will be a digital version, the human story of change will be heard first hand as captured from those whose lives were impacted.

In 2019, we joined the rest of the ILO family in celebrating our 100 years of existence. We had several activities with tripartite partners which, among others, saw the President E.D. Mnangagwa preside over the signing of the TNF Bill into law;



youth discussed the Future of Work they envisage; artists jostled in an Innovation Challenge to depict how the creatives were part of the conversations on the transition to greener economies; ending with the UN family coming together to celebrate its joint achievements.

As we respond to a new world of work underlined by COVID-19 – let us keep *Advancing Social Justice and Promoting Decent Work for all!*

Happy reading!

Hopolang Phororo

Director.



► Introduction

The **ILO Country Office for Zimbabwe and Namibia (CO-Harare)** is responsible for delivering on the ILO's strategic objectives of extending and strengthening **employment creation, rights at work, social protection, and social dialogue**.

CO-Harare receives funding from the ILO's core budget streams and Reserve Bank of South Africa, as well as support from its tripartite partners: the Government of Zimbabwe represented by the Ministry of Public Service, Labour and Social Welfare; the Employers' Confederation of Zimbabwe (EMCOZ) and the Zimbabwe Congress of Trade Unions (ZCTU), which have been guided by the Decent Work Country Programme.

► Origins of the CO-Harare

The ILO Harare Office started off as a multidisciplinary team (MDT) in 1994, evolved into a sub-regional office in 1999 and became the **Country Office responsible** first for Zimbabwe in 2009 and then for **Namibia** in 2015.

Over the past 10 years, CO-Harare has received support from the following partners: the Danish Commission for Africa (2010-2015), the Government of Sweden (2006-present), African Development Bank (March 2017-June 2021), the European Union (the United Kingdom and various partnerships within the UN family).



▶ Strong tripartite constituents, inclusive social dialogue and international labour standards

Overview

Since gaining its independence, Zimbabwe has witnessed the crafting of various **national development plans** aimed at **promoting macroeconomic stability, expanding economic opportunities, reducing poverty and creating jobs**. These are the Economic Structural Adjustment Programme (ESAP); the Medium Term Plan (MTP 2010-2015); the Short Term Emergency Recovery Program (STERP); and the Zimbabwe Agenda for Sustainable Socio-economic Transformation (ZimAsset).

These plans and policies were meant to accelerate economic recovery in the short- and medium-term by:

- Achieving macroeconomic stability
- Facilitating multi-sector growth
- Restoring employment
- Reversing declines in social outcomes
- Strengthening social dialogue
- Improving public service delivery
- Boosting the productive capacity of key economic sectors (such as agriculture and mining)

ILO's interventions are taking place in an environment of high levels of unemployment, de-industrialization and extreme poverty. However, **opportunities** exist in the form of:

- Human resource capital and the youth demographic dividend
- Harnessing informal and rural economies
- Growing ICT use
- Partnering with international actors
- Infrastructure rehabilitation and upgrading
- The green economy

Introduction

From the mid-1990s, the progressive decline of the Zimbabwean economy affected domestic – social and political – and international relations. This led to all sectors operating well below capacity, with high operating costs and with little support from equally inefficient and subsidy-dependent public enterprises.

What is social dialogue?

Social dialogue includes **all forms of negotiation, consultation, or simply the exchange of information between or among representatives of governments, employers and workers, on issues of mutual interest pertaining to economic and social policy**. When successful, social dialogue has the potential to resolve important economic and social issues, encourage good governance, advance social, industrial peace and stability, and boost economic progress.

RESULTS AT A GLANCE:

- ▶ Zimbabwe has ratified all Core Conventions and most of the Governance Conventions
- ▶ Over 1000 judicial and law enforcement officers sensitised in ILS
- ▶ Adaptation of the The Kadoma Declaration
- ▶ TNF bill enacted into law

Social dialogue in Zimbabwe

The genesis of social dialogue is part of the country's history and politics before and after independence.

In order to broaden and strengthen appreciation of social dialogue, the country's law enforcement agents and the Public Service Commission were **sensitized on its main principles and those of international labour standards**, as well as mutual gains bargaining, conflict prevention and negotiation, effective negotiation, how conflict develops into a dispute, approaches and processes in managing conflict and resolving disputes, the negotiation process and practical negotiation skills.

These instruments of good governance foster better cooperation in the labour market, creating an enabling environment for the realization of the Decent Work Agenda.

One of the landmark achievements of social dialogue in Zimbabwe has been the tripartite agreement in the form of the *Kadoma Declaration – Towards a Shared National Economic and Social Vision* signed on 4 September 2009. The Declaration aims that:

- The rule of law in all its dimensions would be observed
- Workplaces would be de-politicized
- The economic landscape would become democratized.

What is the Tripartite Negotiating Forum?

The broad mandate of the TNF is to facilitate tripartite consultations and negotiations on socio-economic issues. It will largely guide the tripartite partners as they engage in social dialogue processes.

Its members include:

- Ministers and employers' and workers' presidents
- Technical Committee (employers' and workers' representatives as well as two observers from specific economic and consumer groups and a Secretariat)

The TNF Bill was enacted into law on 5 June 2019:

<http://www.veritaszim.net/node/3537>



▶ Economic, social and environmental transitions for decent work for all

Overview

The Zimbabwean economy has been experiencing years of economic decline, leading to poverty, unemployment, and underemployment, including in the agricultural sector. Agriculture is the backbone of the country's economy, contributing 15-20% to the GDP, especially in the rural areas that are home to 70% of Zimbabwe's population.

This report aims to highlight ILO's view of **rural areas as engines of growth, development and decent work focussing on skills development, entrepreneurship, cooperatives, women's economic empowerment, employment-intensive investment and local economic development, among others.**

Jobs in the informal and rural economies

Operating on a small RBSA budget, the programme **promoted more and better jobs for young people and women in the rural and informal economy.**

The intervention:

- Benefitted 300 women and young people from four districts
- Consisted of five project sites including poultry and vegetable growing
- Taught construction skills (brick-making and laying, carpentry, electricity fitting, plumbing and welding)

To achieve this objective, the sought to deliver the following **outcomes**:

- Provision of wage and self-employment opportunities for trained beneficiaries
- Increased agricultural (horticulture/animal) production in vulnerable communities
- Promotion of youth employment (support to venture into value-addition initiatives and employment-intensive approaches through local government infrastructure investments)

The target groups were based in five sites in the districts of Harare, Makonde, Zvimba and Chimanimani. At Hopley – a peri-urban residential area in Harare South – together with UNFPA, a youth and health centre was constructed and ILO labour-based methods were applied to construct a demonstration road. At the other sites, the beneficiaries were engaged in horticulture, poultry and honey. Women and young people were also taught on how to add value to their produce to increase income and reduce post-harvest losses.

The programme also organized two sub-regional knowledge-sharing activities that saw relevant HQ departments and other ILO offices in the region converge to discuss youth and women employment in the rural and informal economy. The platforms enhanced constituents' capabilities to **develop efficient policies and programmes that contributed to decent employment outcomes**

RESULTS AT A GLANCE:

- ▶ Creation of jobs in both the rural and informal economies
- ▶ Promotion of skills development, entrepreneurship, cooperatives and value addition
- ▶ Application of TREE and QiA methodologies
- ▶ Development of various strategic knowledge products on Informal Economy to inform policy
- ▶ Implementation of EIIP – Employment Intensive Investment

based on 'what works' for youth employment. They also helped in **identifying entry points to create decent work in rural areas to support the implementation of the rural development strategy.**

Training for Rural Economic Empowerment (TREE)

Methodology

The approach emphasizes the role of skills and knowledge for creating new employment opportunities for the disadvantaged youth and women. TREE is based on matching skills to the identified employment and income-generating opportunities at the local level. In addition to skilling, youth and women are linked to microfinance, markets, and technology and business development services.

Quality Informal Apprenticeship (QIA)

Through quality improvements in informal apprentices (QIA) young people:

- Gained skills in construction related trades (brick laying, plumbing, electrical fitting, carpentry and joinery)
- Acquired theoretical skills training and were placed under the guidance of experienced craft persons, who explained the practical aspects of the training (apprenticeship)
- Were inducted into a culture of business and networks, which makes it easier for them to find jobs or get into self-employment upon completion of their apprenticeships

Employment Intensive Investments (EIII)

Employment Intensive Investments in Infrastructure (EIII) using labour-based methods for the development of key infrastructure in communities. This provides young people with an opportunity

to acquire new skills, earn an income and improve infrastructure (road works and construction) in their community using low-cost technology, as well as locally available materials. This approach is strategic, because it **transfers knowledge on infrastructure to the local community** that will be useful for future maintenance.

The ILO supported these rural and urban communities with training on the following topics:

- Appropriate farming methods for the identified horticultural produce
- Developing business plans (Start and Improve Your Business programme)
- Stock taking, marketing, record keeping and financial management
- Group dynamics and cohesion (Savings and Credit Cooperatives programme)
- Safe and healthy agricultural practices (Work Improvements in Neighbourhood Developments programme)
- Women workers' rights

Employment Promotion and Labour Market Governance (EPLMG)

This project contributes to the implementation of the extended Zimbabwe Decent Work Country Programme (2012-2019) with two priority areas on employment promotion by supporting the formulation of a comprehensive national **employment policy and mainstreaming employment targets into policies and programmes.**

The overall objectives of the project are:

- Address the challenge of the growing informal economy, through the development of evidence-based, gender-responsive and non-discriminatory legislation, policies and strategies

- Strengthen social dialogue institutions by building the capacities of relevant bodies
- Support labour law reforms and application of international labour standards in law and practice for better labour market governance

According to the ILO report: *Women and men in the informal economy: a statistical picture* (2018), 2 billion women and men are making their living in the informal economy.

Evidence also shows that most people enter the **informal economy** not by choice, but as a consequence of a lack of opportunities in the formal economy. In Zimbabwe in 2011, 84.2% of the economically active population were in the informal economy, rising dramatically to 94.5% in 2014 due to deteriorating economic conditions that started in 1997.

Participants in the informal economy face a myriad of **decent work deficits** such as lack of recognition, operating unregistered and not being included in national statistics. In addition, the reach of social protection, labour legislation and other regulatory frameworks that could protect them are not extended to their workplace.

The **EPLMG programme** is providing the Bulawayo City Council with financial and technical support to enable the development of strategies and policies that are sensitive to the needs of the informal economy. The ultimate objective is **to sensitize participants in the informal economy to develop an entrepreneurial mindset and build strategic partnerships with the private sector and tertiary institutions in the city.** This will help the sector grow and foster sustainability.

The following are some of the knowledge products that have been generated by the Country Office on the informal economy over the years are:

- *Situational analysis of women in the informal economy in Zimbabwe*
- *Enabling Environment for Sustainable Enterprises*
- *Mainstreaming informal economy in the National Development Strategy in Zimbabwe*
- *Impact of COVID-19 on SMEs*
- *BCSME final capacity needs assessment report*
- *Baseline survey- Bulawayo microenterprises*
- *Bulawayo SME Chamber business plan*
- *Bulawayo City Council capacity needs assessment*
- *SME Trust strategic plan*
- *SIYB training report*

Despite the different interventions, there remains a gap in terms of nationally representative data on the informal economy.



► Sustainable enterprises as generators of employment and promoters of innovation and decent work

Overview

The ILO, with support from development partners, has rolled out projects that have used a variety of **methodologies to contribute to poverty alleviation and economic empowerment for women and youth**, also tapping into **employment creation potential of the green economy and enterprise development**.

1. Youth and Women Economic Empowerment Programme

The ILO's Youth and Women Economic Empowerment Project is a partnership between the African Development Bank, the Government of Zimbabwe and ILO that:

- **Promotes economic empowerment of women and youth in rural areas of Zimbabwe** through the development of technical and business skills
- Facilitates the integration of women and youths into local value chains as a pathway for **employment creation and improvement of incomes and living standards**
- **Supports enterprise development** through the establishment of district-level processing enterprises designed to strengthen the efficiency of four value chains that provide sustenance for rural communities

It covers artisanal gold milling, mopani worms, honey, and horticulture in the four districts of Guruve, Beitbridge, Lupane, and Mutoko.

- Beitbridge: mopani worms
- Lupane: honey
- Guruve: artisanal gold milling
- Mutoko: horticulture

The project intends to create jobs for 3,500 youth and women, in the sub-sectors of food and gold ore processing. In addition, about 200 SMEs are expected to benefit from business development services, technology and facilitation of access to credit and markets.

What are the key results so far?

Matshiloni Mopani Worm Processing Centre

- Permanent employment and income earning opportunities for 12 youth and women
- Active participation of 78 micro entrepreneurs supplying raw produce and providing services to the company
- Stimulation of economic activity along the value chain and improvement of the district's economic profile
- Electricity and water infrastructure investment, benefiting local businesses, schools and households

RESULTS AT A GLANCE:

- Value addition infrastructure constructed for tomato paste and Mopani worms
- Gold milling plant under construction
- 3,000 youth in 20 training institutions acquired technical skills for green jobs
- SCORE rolled out to 75 manufacturing, beverage and horticulture SMEs
- Implemented TREE and QIA methodologies

Mutoko Fruit and Vegetable Processing Plant

- Permanent employment opportunities for 26 youth and women
- Enhanced employability through training in pack house operations, produce handling, record keeping and traceability of produce, Global Agricultural Standards of grading and packing, cooling protocols and quality checks for 44 youth
- Participation of at least 321 farmers in the horticulture value chain

The ILO's Youth and Women Empowerment Project in Zimbabwe is dedicated to **building rural infrastructure that directly benefits communities and indirectly empowers rural women through construction skills training.**

Stories of change: Improving market access in Mutoko

Mutoko, a rural town about 150 kilometers from Harare, is a mountainous region where farmers work on rich soil to grow a diversity of crops, especially tomatoes and mangos. However, poor road networks, high transportation costs, and limited bargaining power have slowed progress for local farmers in the district.

"We have no say over the price of our products," said Prosper Chawarerwa, a 22-year-old farmer. *"Even though we know the price is very low, there is no room to negotiate."*

As markets become more complex and demand for high-value products increases, rural farmers should be able to diversify their incomes. That is why the African Development Bank partnered with the ILO on the Youth and Women Empowerment Project in Zimbabwe.

By establishing anchor enterprises, **the project connects rural farmers to markets and ultimately adds value to agricultural products.**

So far, more than 200 farmers have received business management and financial literacy training. This **training balances the power between small producers and buyers**, so the farmers can negotiate better prices for the foods they grow.

"With this training, I am now able to calculate the cost of producing my crops and I know what price to request in the market," said Mable Shamba, another farmer in the district.

Farmers now have better access to domestic and international markets, grow and sell more produce, and earn a higher income. With the extra money, they may choose to invest in their own businesses and increase the quantity, quality, and diversity of their goods.

Stories of change: Bridging the gender divide in Mutoko

Pennia Kadzinga is one of eight female graduates in construction from the Tabudirira Vocational Training Centre. Today, she is employed by an engineering company and is working on the construction of a tomato paste processing factory.

"I am equipped with the right skills and I am holding my own, side by side with the male builders," she said with pride.

Kadzinga grew up in a household and village where women were expected to seek domestic jobs in the community. The thought of becoming a builder had never crossed her mind.

Today, Kadzinga, a single mother of three, puts food on the table, pays school fees, and provides basic household needs for her family every month.

The ILO's Youth and Women Empowerment Project in Zimbabwe is dedicated to building rural infrastructure that directly benefits communities and indirectly empowers rural women through construction skills training.

Kadzinga participated alongside seven other women.

"I thought I had missed my opportunity at first," said construction worker Dorothy Pote, as she arranged bricks in a wheelbarrow. *"When I heard that construction of the tomato paste factory was commissioned, I did not hesitate to apply."*

This core group of eight are the breadwinners of the families, and their earnings have become even more valuable during recent droughts.

Farmers in the area have traditionally grown crops like butternut, tomatoes, and peas. However, unpredictable weather patterns due to the climate crisis discourage farmers. When these women looked for alternatives, they found the ILO project.

In addition to the eight women, 16 men were also employed at the construction site. They were grateful for the opportunity to work with knowledgeable engineers at a reputable company.

Overall, the tomato paste factory construction project has **created employment and income-earning opportunities for women, young people, and local businesses.**

More stories

[New fruit and vegetable pack house set to arrest post-harvest losses](#)

[Bridging the gender divide](#)

2. Green enterPRIZE Innovation and Development

The ILO's Green enterPRIZE Innovation and Development initiative is a three-year project funded by the Swedish International Development Agency. It began in December 2017.

The overarching objectives of the project are:

- Help 2,000 youth in 20 training institutions acquire technical skills for green jobs
- Support the development of 75 green and growth-oriented SMEs through an enterprise challenge fund
- Assist another 40 existing SMEs improve working conditions and increase productivity

It has four short-term goals:

- **Empower youth with technical and entrepreneurial skills** to jump-start the green economy
- Integrate green technical and business skills into the curriculum at technical vocational education and training institutions
- Help **green and growth-oriented SMEs access financial and non-financial business development services**
- Raise **awareness** in the public and private sectors **about the green economy**
- The main enterprise-related activities of the project—the Simuka-Phakama Green enterPRIZE Innovation Challenge and SCORE Modular Programme—follow the green business capacity development process for SMEs.

What are the key results so far?

Simuka-Phakama Green enterPRIZE Innovation Challenge

- One-year business development programme taught entrepreneurs how to **expand green products and services** (business management training, mentorship, coaching, consulting, networking, access to finance and technology support)
- 27 SMEs in the first round of the competition and

51 SMEs in 2019 received access to financial and business development services ([Read the full list](#) of winners and participants from the three competitions and watch the [Awards Ceremony](#))

- The goal is that business development service providers **offer more green business services, SMEs build relationships with corporations, and green SMEs encourage other firms to enter the green economy**

“When you use cloth diapers, you are saving the environment by reducing waste in our landfills and the number of trees cut down. As a green-oriented parent, you are also saving financially.”

- Elizabeth Nyamuda, Tamba Washables, First Prize in Best Green Business

“Participating in the Green enterPRIZE Innovation Challenge in 2018 gave me the opportunity to move from traditional tools that use coal generated power sources to tools that are powered by solar panels. I currently employ five people and I am looking to grow the size of my team in order to meet a growing demand.”

- Edson Makiyi Power, Perked Investments Limited, Second Prize in Best Green Business

Stories of change: Winning through inclusion

Nuspectt Garden and Poultry Products was founded by Timothy Mudarikwa, who has a visual disability. In addition to Timothy's passion for organic horticulture and poultry products, he is also dedicated to hiring and training people with disabilities.

The SME earned the “best entrepreneur with a disability” prize in the 2018 edition of the Innovation Challenge.

Staff participated in the ILO's Improve Your Business training programme. Now, Timothy plans to venture

[into other livestock farming activities and build new infrastructure.](#)

Stories of change: Protecting crops with drone technology

[Alley Capital Group is a smart agriculture company that offers crop protection through precision drone systems. It also offers climate protection, because the technology requires fewer agro-chemicals to get the job done.](#)

But that's not all. This innovative system eliminates farmers' exposure to the agro-chemicals, which can be harmful to their health.

“The quick deployment aspect of drone technology is our nation's best chance in the fight against outbreaks like the armyworm. Those outbreaks require a rapid response to protect crops and national food security,” said Piwai Chikasha, a co-founder.

Chikasha and his business partner Takudzwa Chipadza won First Prize in the Best Young Entrepreneur category of the Innovation Challenge.

Today, Alley Capital Group is a member of the [Africa Goes Digital Network](#).

[Green enterPRIZE - Innovation and Development in Zimbabwe](#)

More stories

[Green EnterPRIZE](#)

[Is your business ready to leap and go green?](#)

[Innovative entrepreneurs key to kick-start a green Zimbabwe](#)

Sustaining Competitive and Responsible Enterprises (SCORE)

This global ILO programme **improves productivity and working conditions in SMEs by promoting responsible and resource-efficient management practices** that increase profitability while offering jobs that deliver a fair income, security in the workplace and social protection for workers and their families. Through the introduction of cleaner production and eco-innovation solutions, SMEs and large enterprises can **improve the productivity and environmental sustainability of their production processes.**

“Since the SCORE Programme started, we have improved in many areas: everyone now gets free meals, we have a new canteen under construction, we are able to meet our production targets, the workers are motivated, and we received a wage increase this past week. Mainly these improvements were as a result of workplace cooperation and teamwork.”

- Irene Gwavava, Operator at Shriji Luggageware (Pvt) Ltd

Stories of change: Richmond Furniture's journey towards becoming a sustainable and competitive enterprise

Richmond Furniture has revolutionized its operations through the dedicated implementation of the SCORE Workplace Cooperation module. The benefits to customers, employers and workers are beginning to accrue.

Zimbabwean businesses are faced with the task of navigating an arduous macroeconomic environment to remain viable. More than ever, management and employees must collaborate and innovate around internal processes. **SCORE** happens to be a key intervention that a company can **leverage to face challenges and achieve productivity goals.**

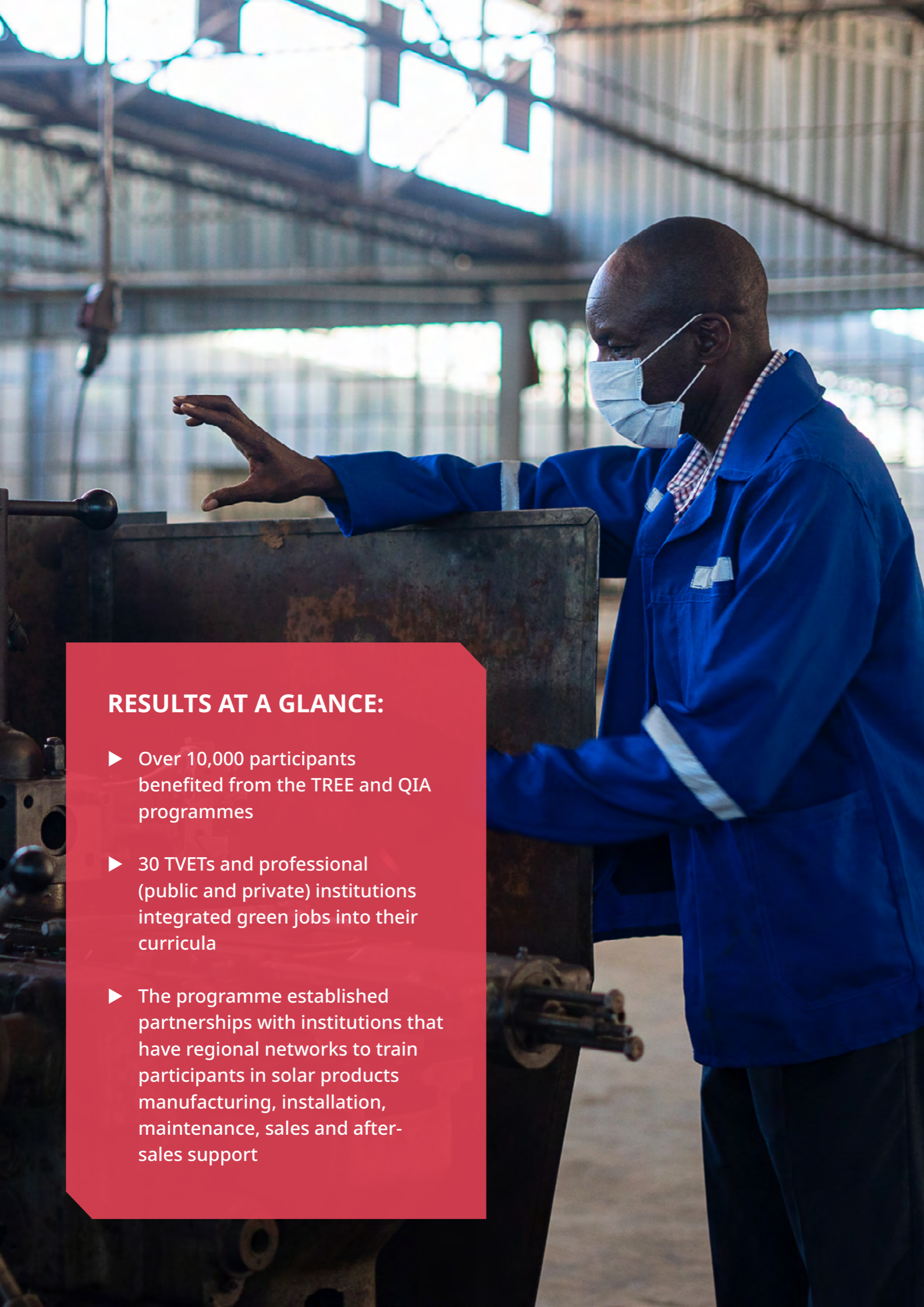
Richmond Furniture is an SME whose vision is *“To be the leading, innovative and credible choice supplier of furniture and interior fittings in Zimbabwe”*. The company specializes in the design, manufacture and selling of a wide range of furniture products.

The enterprise has successfully implemented the SCORE Workplace Cooperation module from November 2019 to March 2020. The following are the key **highlights of their achievements:**

- Improved productivity, i.e. from 38% plan adherence to 67%
- Gender inclusivity, i.e. three female staff (half of all participants) were co-opted into the Enterprise Improvement Teams (EITs)
- Optimised workflows
- Key Performance Indicators-based decision making
- A cleaner, more orderly workplace
- A more inclusive, customer-focused team

The programme achieved its goals through the formation and operationalization of an Enterprise Improvement Team (EIT), the organization of daily line meetings among shop floor workers, the implementation of 5S pilot initiatives, the installation of production visuals and notice-boards, the adoption of Key Performance Indicators (KPIs) and the consolidation of waste reduction and elimination techniques.

[Read more about Richmond Furniture](#) and other companies that joined the SCORE training programme.



► Skills and lifelong learning to facilitate access to and transitions into the labour market

Overview

Zimbabwe has experienced high levels of skills losses across borders and within economic sectors. Unemployment and underemployment levels are high due to a persistent skills mismatch, paper qualifications that don't match developmental needs, and outdated certifications and policies. There is therefore a **need to rebuild and expand necessary skills**.

Skills for Youth Employment and Rural Development Programme

In western and southern Africa, this five-year partnership between the ILO Skills Programme and the Danish Africa Commission aimed to:

- Strengthen skills development systems
- Improve employability
- Promote access to employment opportunities
- Increase incomes for inclusive and sustainable growth

The skills training included two ILO programmes:

Training for Rural Economic Empowerment (TREE)

Apiculture, aquaculture, cattle fattening, dairy, horticulture, dairy production, piggery, poultry, and solar marketing/green jobs.

Quality Informal Apprenticeship (QIA)

Art and crafts, catering, carpentry and joinery, clothing, hair dressing, home décor, motor vehicle mechanics, upholstery, plumbing and welding.

After participants completed vocational and technical training, they earned certificates based on their new skills. By the end of 2014, about 70% of beneficiaries, comprising **5,000 people**, were **employed and earning more money than when they started**.



RESULTS AT A GLANCE:

- Over 10,000 participants benefited from the TREE and QIA programmes
- 30 TVETs and professional (public and private) institutions integrated green jobs into their curricula
- The programme established partnerships with institutions that have regional networks to train participants in solar products manufacturing, installation, maintenance, sales and after-sales support

The programme results from 2010 to 2015

INDICATORS	TARGETS	ACHIEVEMENTS	ACHIEVEMENTS IN %
Number of beneficiaries in the TREE programme	3,400	5,457	161%
Total beneficiaries in informal apprenticeships in the QIA programme	2,000	2,667	133%
Number of participating crafts persons in the QIA programme	1,000	1,345	135%
Total beneficiaries	6,400	9,469	148%
Number of trained partners	75	116	155%
Number of youth employed (including the wage-employed, gainfully self-employed, and/ or those who increased their income)	3,780	10,292	278%
Number of crafts persons who have increased their income by 10%	700	2,378	340%

Jobs for the unemployed and marginalized young people

The Youth Employment Support (YES) Jobs for the Unemployed and Marginalized Young People (JUMP) **created sustainable jobs for young people in poor and marginalized communities.** From 2009 to 2011, YES JUMP was part of the ILO's response to the Zimbabwe Decent Work Country Programme.

The programme **supported youth entrepreneurship development** through skills training, business development services, and technical and financial support. It strengthened both local job creation schemes and small enterprises.

The project reached youth in the pilot districts of Goromonzi, Gokwe, and Norton and helped **create 1,321 jobs**, surpassing the target by 32.1%. Seven hundred young people received training in business planning, management and finances.

Stories of change

"Before I accessed the first loan from a SACCO (Savings and Credit Co-operative), I had lost hope in life. I would spend days loitering at home without the slightest idea of what the future for me would be. When I heard about the loans, I formed a group with my three brothers, borrowed US\$700, and started this carpentry venture.

*Although things were tough at the beginning, **the training we got gave us courage and hope and now things are moving in the right direction.** Although we started with a turnover of less than US\$200 per month, this has increased now to at least US\$7,000 per month over a short period because we borrowed another US\$2,000 and increased our capacity to purchase in bulk. Now we have four workers working for us. This has really changed my life. I am now occupied and do not have time to spend loitering and being used by politicians who would buy us beer during election campaigns to beat up people.*

I have no time for that anymore. I have no time to be used by these politicians again to spread political violence."

- Samuel Chimedza, a beneficiary youth in Gokwe

Greening technical and vocational education and training (TVET) and skills development

A lack of appropriate skills often prevents countries from going green, as SMEs struggle to find the right people to fill emerging occupations, or lack the resources to invest in the re- or up-skilling of existing occupations. At present, TVET institutions do not offer enough courses and programmes that generate skills for green jobs.

The Office, through the Green enterPRIZE Innovation and Development Project, has invested in **strengthening the capacity of TVET and professional training institutions and community-based skills development initiatives to deliver training programmes to provide technical and business skills for green jobs.**

The review of curricula and training programmes is part of the intervention on "Greening TVET and Skills Development" which is one component of the ILO Green enterPRIZE Innovation and Development Programme.

In 2018, an ILO in-depth assessment resulted in the identification of **30 TVET and professional (public and private) training institutions in Zimbabwe that currently offer or have the capacity of integrating technical and business skills for green jobs into their curricula.** The assessment focused on different economic sectors, while prioritizing productive activities that have strong links to the environment and that show employment potential.

According to the outcomes of the assessment, seven economic sectors are expected to hold most of the green employment potential in Zimbabwe, namely; agriculture and livestock; construction; waste management and recycling; renewable energy; tourism and hospitality; forestry and manufacturing.

Furthermore, these sectors were also recognized for their potential to be integrated in curricula in TVETs, colleges and polytechnic institutions. This would help **improve/enhance skills development to meet the expected demand for green jobs** as Zimbabwe transitions to a greener economy.

In 2019, the ILO conducted two additional assessments:

- An **institutional capacity assessment**, to provide a baseline of the current capacity, awareness and experience of both management and key teaching/training staff to expand the TVET training offer in green economy related subjects
- An **in-depth assessment of selected curricula and training programmes**, to pave the way for the development of new courses aligned to the Zimbabwe National Qualification Framework (ZNQF)

By March 2020, the project developed and piloted the process and procedures for the development and verification/validation of five Qualification Standards and Developing a Curriculum Chart based on the requirements of the ZNQF:

- Solar PV Installation and Maintenance Mechanic/Craftsman
- Biogas Systems Installer
- Solar Sales and Marketing Agent
- Solar Agro-Processor
- Climate Smart Market Gardener

Modular courses and training programmes and teaching, learning and assessment materials, as well as a training of trainers programme, are currently being developed for each of the above-mentioned occupations, thereby enhancing the sustainability of the training for the green economy in TVET institutions.

By the end of 2021, it is expected that:

- 2,000 students will be equipped with technical and business skills for green jobs
- 1,000 youth will be employed and economically active

“The main principle underpinning the Ministry’s Education 5.0 is that knowledge that does not result in quality goods and services is knowledge that is not useful at all in advancing Zimbabwe’s strategic vision of becoming a competitive, modernized and industrialised nation by 2030.”

- Wisdom Simon Mtisi, Director-Deputy Director of Curriculum Research and Development Directorate of Quality Assurance and Standards, Ministry of Higher and Tertiary Education, Innovation, Science and Technology Development

Stories of change: Work-based training programme for solar PV installation, sales and marketing

The accreditation of the new curricula is expected to take place in 2020, followed by the Training of Trainers and Training of Students across the TVET institutions involved. The involvement of private sector-led training and apprenticeship initiatives, such as M-Tron Africa and its Society for Electronics (Engineering) Technology in Africa (SETA) Foundation, will accelerate the achievement of these results, while reinforcing the capacity of public TVETs to become direct providers of skills for green jobs.

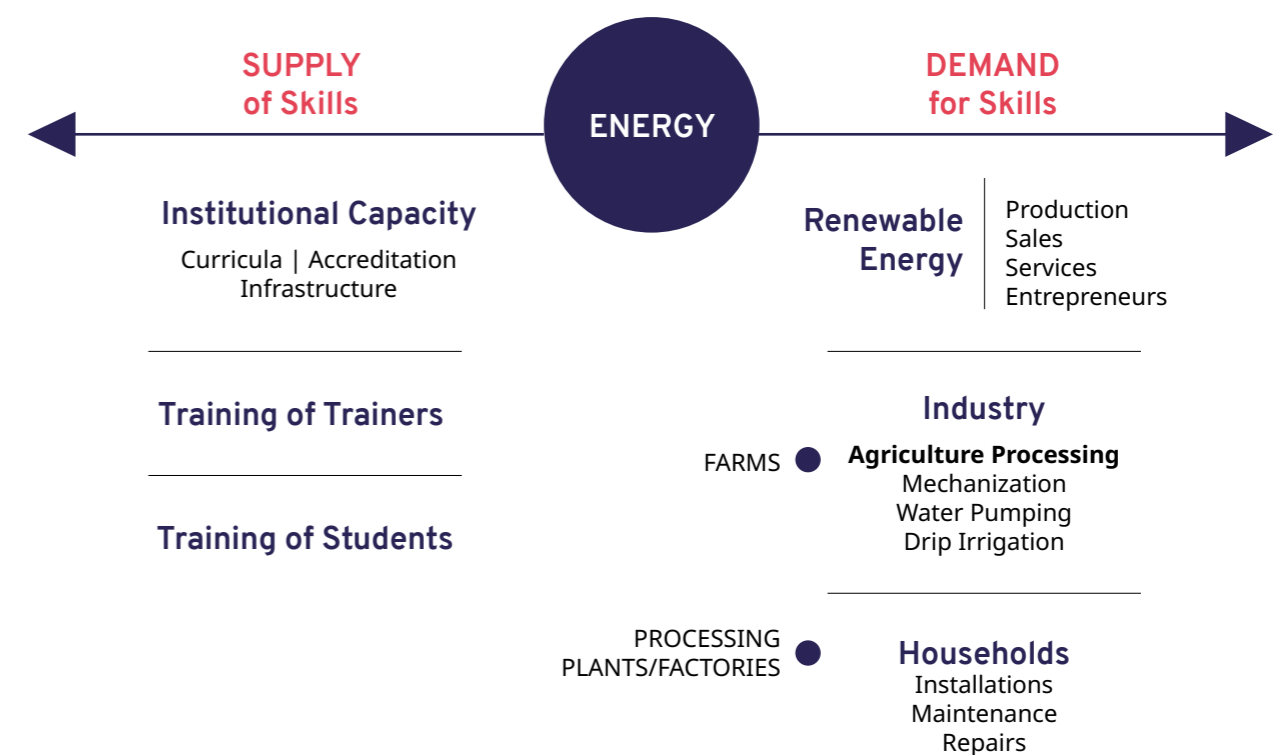
The ILO Green enterPRIZE Innovation and Development Programme, the SETA Foundation and M-Tron Africa have agreed to partner to train the youth in the field of solar products manufacturing, installation, maintenance, sales and after-sales support.

This will be done initially through a systematic approach, comprising:

- The inclusion of the SETA Foundation among the TVET institutions currently involved in the Green enterPRIZE Innovation and Development project
- The participation of qualified trainers and experts from the SETA Foundation and M-Tron TechnoParks in the curricula development process, which should lead to the development of Skills Proficiency Schedule and Modular Curricula. Training will draw on the existing

offers available at the SETA Foundation, as well as other training content available in the country and region that the parties consider relevant to the scope

- The delivery of Training of Trainers to equip teachers from the network of TVET institutions that are part of the project
- The delivery of training programmes for students of selected TVET institutions, combining theory, work-based practice and industrial attachment at the M-Tron TechnoParks for a total period of six months training and six months apprenticeship
- The consolidation of the new training programmes to be regularly offered at selected TVET institutions, accredited by the Ministry of Higher and Tertiary Education, Innovation, Science and Technology Development (in addition to existing industrial accreditations)





► Gender equality and equal opportunities and treatment for all in the world of work

Overview

Gender equality and women's empowerment are an integral part of the ILO's Decent Work Agenda that advocates for the **promotion of opportunities for women and men to obtain decent and productive work in conditions of freedom, equity, security and human dignity.**

UN Joint Programme for Gender Equality

The Joint Programme for Gender Equality (2014-2017), with UNDP and UN Women, sought to:

- Promote Women Economic Empowerment (WEE) and Improved Working Conditions (IWC)
- Achieve increased capacity of women and women's groups to identify and exploit economic opportunities for employment and self-employment for women
- Build capacities for the promotion of women workers' rights (WWR)

At a macro level, the project's main purpose was to **formulate national policy frameworks that adhere to global labor standards and promote gender equality at a national level**, through campaigns and advocacy.

The concerned Conventions are Equal Remuneration Convention, 1951 (No. 100) and the Discrimination (Employment and Occupation), 1958 Convention (No. 111) (already ratified) and the Workers with Family Responsibilities Convention, 1981 (No. 156) and Maternity Protection Convention, 2000 (No. 183) (yet to ratify).

This was done through building capacities of strategic partners such as workers and employers; lawyers' association, the Zimbabwe Gender Commission, National Employment Councils (NECs), District and Provincial Implementing Councils (DICs and PICs) and government Ministries gender focal points. **Three knowledge products came out of the project** under this component:

1. *Situational Analysis of Knowledge, Application and Gaps on Women Workers Rights in Zimbabwe*
2. *Future of Women at Work in Zimbabwe*
3. *Situational analysis of women in the informal economy in Zimbabwe*

Their findings are clear pointers at the necessary follow-up action on equal treatment of workers in the world of work.

Evidence of impact

The **Joint Programme for Gender Equality project** mainstreamed its efforts in the ongoing **national labour law reform process**. A new Section 4A on labour rights, under Sub-section 7, provides that female employees are entitled to 98 days of maternity leave, is included in the draft Labour Bill submitted to the Attorney General's office. Unlike the current Labour Relations Act under Section 18, the draft Bill removed the conditions that had been provided for at law for accessing fully paid maternity leave. The new provisions seek to **establish maternity, as a right that is provided for without any preconditions.**

The ZCTU presented a paper to the Parliamentary Committee on Public Service, Labour and Social Welfare, which highlighted, amongst others, practices of sexual harassment within the workplaces and the targeting of women in mass retrenchment exercises.

The Women’s Economic Empowerment (WEE) component was implemented with six women’s groups comprising 290 members in five selected districts and three provinces.

The target groups of women were supported to access land and grow a variety of horticultural produce, with some venturing into poultry production, through knowledge and skills transfer, extension services as well as encouraging male involvement. In addition to economic empowerment, the women:

- Completed training in self-mastery and leadership, GBV, HIV/AIDS and environmental awareness
- Received exposure to basic business development training in record keeping, financial management and stock taking, following the Start and Improve Your Business (SIYB) programme
- Practiced managing post-harvest losses and value addition

Evidence of impact

Through the WEE component, the project made a small but significant change in **creating economic opportunities for women’s self-employment**, leading to increased income and financial independence. A number of them reported:

- Purchasing livestock, household and personal assets
- Building better houses or improving existing ones
- Sending their children to school consistently

- Increased confidence, skills and self-esteem, enabling them to take more active roles in leadership positions in their communities and have a voice in family matters

Stories of change

*The unleashed potential of a community
A brighter future in the Nyanga district*

a. Spotlight Initiative

Violence against women continues to be a huge issue in societies around the world, as well as in Zimbabwe. In Zimbabwe, about 1 in 3 women aged 15 to 49 have experienced physical violence and about 1 in 4 women have experienced sexual violence since the age of 15. Globally, the recognition of the importance of improving responses and prevention of all forms of violence against women has increased as evidence and data regarding its effects increases.

This global partnership, with €500 million of dedicated funding, is aimed at eliminating all forms of violence against women and girls (EVAWG), as well as harmful practices (HPs). In line with the principles of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, the Initiative follows a human rights-based approach and takes into consideration the **specific needs of women and girls**, who experience multiple and intersecting forms of discrimination and uphold the principle of “leaving no one behind”. This work is embedded in the broader normative framework of the sustainable development goals and builds on decades of work, existing initiatives, and accelerated momentum.

With the support of the European Union, the ILO has been working with UNDP, UNESCO, UNFPA, UNICEF, and UN Women to intensify efforts towards eliminating violence against women and girls, as well as harmful practices.



It follows a **transformative and evidence-based approach**, addressing unequal power relations between men and women and focusing on gender equality and women’s empowerment. The Zimbabwean component focuses on:

1. Legislative and policy frameworks
2. Strengthening institutions
3. Prevention and social norms
4. Delivery of essential services
5. Data availability and capacities
6. Supporting women’s movements

The ILO is specifically contributing to pillars 3, 4, and 6, drawing on the lessons learned from its standard-setting process on ending violence and harassment in the world of work.

Evidence of impact

Twenty-five trainers have completed training of trainers programmes to lead national sensitization programmes on the ILO Convention on the elimination of violence and harassment in the workplace. This is outside other interventions by the tripartite partners and the Zimbabwe Gender Commission along similar lines.

It is envisaged that, at the end of the programme:

- 10,000 workers will have been reached with information on violence and harassment in the workplace
- 12 workplaces will have model workplace policies and programmes
- 4,500 women and girls will be self-employed



► Improving working conditions and protecting workers

Overview

The ILO and its partners are focused on:

- Mitigating the spread of HIV/AIDS – and, more recently, COVID-19
- Improving and reducing occupational health and safety
- Strengthening the respect for rights of workers and to improve social protections
- Eliminating child labour and promoting fair and safe migration
- Bringing change to both the workplace and the immediate environs

COVID-19: Protecting workers in the workplace

In the wake of the COVID-19 pandemic, the ILO intervened in a number of ways. At the policy level, **national stakeholders were advised of a number of measures to ensure a safe return to work for those in the formal and informal economy.** More than 90,000 Zimbabweans were reached with a series of public information programmes on Capital Radio and by a social media campaign to increase awareness of how to tackle the world of work issues relating to COVID-19.

One of the first sectors to re-open in Zimbabwe is the food sector. In partnership with the National Social Security Authority (NSSA), workers and employers, the ILO designed a demonstration of practices for mitigating the effects of the pandemic on the food value chain workers in the informal sector.

In three towns, namely Bulawayo, Chinhoyi and Chivhu, the ILO:

- Supported 120 food traders with knowledge and consumables to reduce the risk of COVID-19 infection and disease impact on informal food markets
- Improved workers and market visitors' access to safe water and sanitation
- Improved the informal food market resilience through securing productivity and business continuity

The three markets supported are used by an average of 3,500 consumers a day.

More than 100 enterprises – predominantly in the informal economy – have been supported to cope with the disruption caused by COVID-19 pandemic. Through training and virtual information sharing on the coronavirus, the ILO focused on providing entrepreneurs with:

- Knowledge on the symptoms
- Strategies to prevent its spread and details of organizations that could support them if infected
- Support in carrying out risk assessments and developing business continuity plans to minimize the disruption to their businesses

RESULTS AT A GLANCE:

- Enterprises supported with COVID-19 responses and business continuity strategies
- Over 20,000 young people, sex workers, peer educators, health workers trained in HIV Testing and Counselling Services
- 12 sector-specific HIV/AIDS codes of practice developed
- Knowledge and empowerment tools developed for transport corridors with high HIV/AIDS including air and railway
- National and regional migration instruments developed
- More attention on effects of child labour



No to child labour, yes to quality education

Over the last decade, the ILO has been advocating for the elimination of child labour, particularly in its worst forms, promoting the application of child labour conventions and the enforcement of related national laws. ILO messaging on the topic has reached more than 2 million Zimbabweans with campaigns and materials on national radio, newspapers and community-based campaigns. The ILO has also supported the ZIMSTAT to update the methods and definitions to ensure more accurate and comparable data on child labour.

Incidences of children engaged in prostitution, domestic work, mining and other illicit activities have been reported. More work needs to be done as 42,000 children aged 5 to 14 years old are child labourers. Nine out of 10 of children in economic child labour are not paid at all. (ZIMSTAT 2019). As adults, former child labourers lack adequate skills therefore are more likely to end up in poorly paid, insecure work or to be unemployed. There is a high probability that their own children will end up in child labour.

Stories of change: Where is the “human-centred approach”?

HIV and AIDS

In the region, education and awareness are central for effective workplace responses. Peer education was used in some projects to create behavioural change in the work of work. Treatment literacy education helped reduce stigma and discrimination associated with HIV/AIDS and influenced increase of voluntary counselling and testing for HIV (VCT) uptake and antiretroviral (ART) services.

The intervention made inroads in enterprises and workers, sensitising various sectors on occupational safety and health to social security. It further developed manuals and guidelines based on the ILO Code and the Code Implementation Manual.

The ILO partnered with UNAIDS, Ministry of Health and Child Welfare and the National Aids Council to reach out to traditional and religious leaders on HIV, sexual and reproductive health (SRHR) and gender transformation programmes. Leaders from these social sectors offer cultural insight, bring locally relevant knowledge and social capital that hold potential for reaching a wide constituency.

Further, awareness and emphasis on safe practices was extended to young miners and sex workers. The project has offered varied services that include: HIV testing and ART (antiretroviral therapy) initiation and support, TB screening, Voluntary Inspection with Acetic Acid and Camera (VIAC), STI screening and treatment, Voluntary Medical Male Circumcision (VMMC), family planning, condom promotion and distribution and health/HIV/occupational health and safety education.

Evidence of impact

To date, the programme has reached over 2,000 young people and sex workers engaged in artisanal mining activities with accessing HIV Testing and Counselling Services through a partnership with the National AIDS Council (NAC) and the Ministry of Health. In addition, the ILO partnered with the Ministry of Health and PSI (Population Services International) to pilot HIV Self-Testing in the private sector. This resulted in 62 health workers and peer educators drawn from 20 private sector companies receiving training, with the message influencing 10,222 workers and over 6,000 workers, mainly male workers, accessing HIV testing and counselling services.

Twelve HIV/AIDS sectoral policies have become the bedrock of HIV/AIDS response mechanisms. These are the mining, transport, energy, SMEs, clothing, textiles, tourism, agriculture, tobacco, motor, engineering and the informal economy sectors, which were developed in line with the ILO Recommendation concerning HIV and AIDS and the World of Work (No. 200); the ILO Code of Practice on HIV and AIDS and the world of work and Statutory Instrument (SI) 105 of 2014.

Sectoral codes of practice

Workplace policy on HIV and AIDS, TB and other opportunistic illness for the clothing industry in Zimbabwe

Stories of change

Where is the “human-centred approach”?

a. Corridor Economic Empowerment Project (CEEP)

This project was implemented in six countries: Malawi, Mozambique, South Africa, Tanzania, Zambia, and Zimbabwe. It focused on five HIV/AIDS-afflicted areas per country.

The development objective was **to control and stop the HIV/AIDS epidemic by reducing vulnerabilities and promoting economic empowerment and gender equality.** Poverty, gender inequality and social exclusion continue to pose major challenges to HIV prevention efforts.

Between 2011 and 2016, the ILO, in partnership with Sida, implemented an innovative economic empowerment programme amongst hard-to-reach populations in transport corridors and vulnerable communities in southern and eastern Africa, with the aim of reducing their vulnerability to the HIV epidemic. The project included three main goals:

- Help policy makers make evidence-based decisions to mainstream the economic empowerment model into HIV/AIDS regional and national agendas
- Empower workers by increasing the availability of economic services along transportation corridors, preventing and mitigating the spread of HIV/AIDS
- Reduce HIV/AIDS vulnerabilities by increasing access to prevention and impact mitigation services

Evaluation report

https://www.ilo.org/aids/Publications/WCMS_456923/lang--en/index.htm#:~:text=response%20to%20...-,Educated%20Empowered%20Inspired%20%2D%20Transforming%20lives%20through%20the%20response%20to%20HIV,challenges%20to%20HIV%20prevention%20efforts.

National Social Security Authority (NSSA)

The ILO, over the years, has lent technical as well as financial support to the National Social Security Authority (NSSA). This has been in the form of harmonising the various pieces of legislation on OSH- the Factory and Works Act, Pneumoconiosis Act and SI 68-1990 - National Social Security Authority

(Accident Prevention & Workers' Compensation Scheme in line with comments of the ILO supervisory bodies (Art. 19 and 22).

With the support of the ILO, a draft [OSH Act](#) was initially put together in 2014; with the principles for the Bill being adopted in 2016, public consultations in collaboration with the Attorney General's Office and regional benchmarking (Tanzania and South Africa) having been accomplished.

Other support to NSSA has been the development of an **extensive programme on training and promoting occupational safety and health in the private sector.**

These activities include:

- Strengthening and institutionalizing the system approach to OSH
- Providing support for the annual OSH Safety and Health Awards
- Extending screening and surveillance of workers in the informal sector
- Establishing guidelines for post-employment pneumoconiosis surveillance

Labour migration

The economic downturn of the country has forced both skilled and unskilled workers to seek 'greener pastures'. There is a general acceptance that labour migrants contribute most to their countries' economies when they are employed in decent working conditions and their human rights are respected from both ends.

With no control of the situation, and no end in sight to the challenges and a continued loss of essential skills, institutions such as the ILO, IOM and other stakeholders **advocate for orderly and mutually beneficial forms of labour migration and the effective protection of Zimbabwean migrants.**

The ILO's role has been to ensure that key principles of the ILO Multilateral Framework on Labour Migration, form a **key part of the development, strengthening and implementation of national labour migration policies and practices.** In accordance with specific ILO conventions on labour migration: Convention Nos. 97 (1949) and 143 (1975), as well as international guidelines, such as the AU and SADC protocols, the Country Office has contributed its expertise to the process at country and regional levels.

These efforts have seen the development of the National Labour Migration Policy, which is derived from the Migration Management and Diaspora Policy and the report of the Third National Youth Dialogue on Migration of 2010. Most importantly, this policy acts as a pioneering initiative in the SADC region.

Its aim is to **promote good governance in labour migration, strengthening of legislation and the promotion of regional cooperation and harmonization of labour migration policies, and regional economic integration.**

Zimbabwe has also experienced human trafficking, with some cases going to litigation. In 2014, by enacting the Trafficking in Persons Act and ratifying the Protocol of 2014 to the Forced Labour Convention, 1930, the country has strengthened its legal and institutional framework to combat forced labour. The Act covers sexual exploitation, debt bondage, illegal labour, forced labour, or other forms of servitude, which in ILO parlance is modern slavery and human trafficking.



Global Action Programme on Migrant Domestic Workers and their Families

Under a European Union-funded Action Programme on Migrant Domestic Workers and their Families (2013–2016), the programme promoted rights-based policies and regulations in ten countries through five major migration channels.

These consisted of Ukraine-Poland, Zimbabwe-South Africa, with Lesotho added in 2014, Indonesia-Malaysia, Nepal-Lebanon, and Paraguay-Argentina. Guided by the ILO strategy to promote Decent Work for Domestic Workers, the programme aimed to:

- Offer key guidance and recommendations for improving migration policies, awareness raising campaigns and capacity building programmes for domestic workers
- Advocate for better working conditions for migrant domestic workers with a view to realizing the 2030 Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs)

As part of the GAP-MDW (Global Action Programme on Migrant Domestic Workers) Zimbabwe/Lesotho-South Africa migration corridor project, partners developed information guides for workers emigrating to South Africa; and locally-based workers in Zimbabwe.

Domestic workers' guides:

https://www.ilo.org/Search5/search.do?sitelang=en&locale=en_EN&consumercode=ILOHQ_STELLEN_PUBLIC&searchWhat=migrant+domestic+workers+zimbabwe&searchLanguage=en



► Partnership





▶ Lessons learned

Introduction

All the evaluations reflected similar insights about the way the office was 'doing business', both on the strengths and what might have been done differently. While the above narrative highlights the achievements, this section considers possible areas of focus to ensure better results in future programmes. Several components were identified as needing adequate planning to ensure projects remain viable and active beyond their life-cycle, such as:

- Communication
- Capacity building interventions
- Realistic project timeframes
- Sustainability planning
- Access to finance
- Partners' expectations
- Unintended consequences, such as GBV increased by economically empowering women

The following summaries repeatedly came out in different evaluations:

Communication

It was important for communication and exit strategies to be included in project design. The two should always be prepared early to guide project management teams through effective and efficient exit processes and communication approaches and strategies. Clear and effective communication was deemed essential to ensure that all stakeholders had accurate and common information about the programme goals, implementation framework and resources allocated to each of the implementation processes. Where changes in program design

become necessary, such changes had to be communicated and justified early to all stakeholders. Effective communication would reduce the likelihood of a crisis of expectations – which was recurrent in most of the interventions.

Capacity development

Short periods of capacity development for communities that often have low literacy levels and low business and financial skills was considered inadequate. Besides incorporating a strong training module in market intelligence gathering and market access support components, it should be complemented with:

- Follow-up refresher sessions
- Mentorship programmes
- Experiential learning for the effective sustainability of entrepreneurship development, with carefully tailored sensitization, capacity building and financial support interventions

Sustainability planning

Some of the projects were drawing to their end without sustainability plans having been adequately addressed. For example, there was a need to integrate the micro-finance components in a structured, professional and sustainable manner to ensure financial support for the programme beneficiaries.

Capacity building in managing small enterprises (planning, marketing, record keeping and managing loans) was provided only at the end of projects, endangering the sustainability of youth or women-focused interventions beyond the programme life-cycle.

Group dynamics

When a project establishes SACCOs as a strategy, these must be well resourced and adequate time must be allocated to build their capacities. Most of the SACCOs established under different interventions were not given a long enough gestation period to survive after the project. Providing grants to SACCOs without adequate capacity building resulted in serious challenges in terms of managing the loan disbursement and recovery. Evidence from other experiences indicated that once capacity had been built, prospects for long-term sustainability became higher because such institutions are membership based and driven, which empowers members to nurse and nurture the SACCO and ensures sustainability.

It was also observed that using a group-based approach for individual beneficiaries without any previous group-experience did not work successfully. Defining group-based organizational structures as a binding requirement for benefitting from project activities resulted in little impact and most fell apart after the project.

Another observation was that individual-group based loans (given to the individual through his or her group) worked better than group-loans (given to a group to invest jointly) in terms of speed of utilization, management and repayment (as the former approach avoids bureaucracies associated with the dynamics of group decision-making processes). Future projects had to take this into consideration before adopting a 'one-size-fits-all' approach that has been employed for most projects.

Gender mainstreaming

Gender mainstreaming in programmes needed to be strengthened to ensure that the intervention would not have unintended results such as:

- Gender Based Violence resulting from the empowerment of women
- Women being asked to pull out of project activities by their husbands or because they have no one to take care of their children
- Women turning up late for training because they carried the burden of childcare and household chores

Awareness on gender-related rights was low, resulting in some women quitting their attachment or their involvement in economic empowerment projects due to patriarchal attitudes and discrimination. It was important to have a gender mainstreaming strategy in all the programmes.

Planning and monitoring

Planning for different interventions in the future had to be holistic in approach, and take into consideration all components of the value chain. Youth and other stakeholders have been discouraged by the long time lag between programme launch and the actual roll out of activities.

Realistic project timeframes and scope were crucial to success. Adequate time frames would have also allowed for an inception period in the project planning phase, making room for the smooth onset of the implementation period. An unrealistic timeline for structural change, such as the development of new policy, that is outside the project's control compromises the intended results of the project.

Success in policy work is an unpredictable venture.

It is hard to achieve success in the time span of a project cycle and it can be challenging to attribute the results to the efforts made.

Having a three-year time frame for an agriculture-related intervention, which was mainly seasonal and subject to climatic fluctuations, renders the project impact unrealistic. Agricultural projects should take, ideally, four to five years to realize impact. Furthermore, working with vulnerable requires time to enable the empowerment project to turn into profitable enterprises.

An example was given of a programme that was coming to an end with no consolidation of some outstanding issues critical before closure. Where technical expertise is lacking amongst government departments, such expertise could be sourced at an early stage from outside, instead of proceeding with internal know-how. New projects could also leverage on expertise from other UN agencies such as FAO for guidance on agriculture related projects.

Several recommendations were made regarding establishing an independent unit in the office to handle periodic impact monitoring, in order to consolidate and rebalance upcoming challenges and deviations from original plans by all projects.

Access to finance and business training

It was noted that economic empowerment only by way of provision of business finance to informal economy MSME business starters without complementary business and financial skills training was not a sustainable approach and was likely to have limited and short-lived impact.

Partnerships

Proactive building of Public-Private Partnerships (with a wide range of local, national, regional and international organizations) was an important strategy for resource mobilization, ownership and sustainability and should remain a core principle of all ILO projects and programmes.

With development partners preferring management of programmes that go for elements of "lean management" to ensure value for their money, and with resource bases shrinking, transactional costs of 50% more of a budget, with layers of management structures such as those in place in the Organization, put off donors.

Many partners prefer small numbers of key staff as per following examples:

- Local project manager plus regular coaching through ILO HQ, RO or CO
- Part-time CTA, in charge of several (if possible neighbouring) projects at the same time
- Intermittent short-term consultancies based on detailed periodical work plans, to be established together with project staff
- Outsourcing of program implementing structures to avoid applying the very costly rules and regulations of the UN head-offices

It is therefore advised that in the future, targeting for new projects by the Office should be guided by lessons learned from old projects on viability and related economic sub-sector analysis, as outlined above.

7. Research and knowledge products

https://www.ilo.org/africa/about-us/offices/harare/facet/lang--en/index.htm?facetcriteria=TYP=Publication&facetdynlist=WCMS_221315



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