

**PLANNING WORKSHOP AND LAUNCHING OF ACTIVITIES
OF THE ILO TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE FOR EMPLOYMENT
CREATION AND STRENGTHENING OF YOUTH
EMPLOYABILITY IN THE FRAMEWORK OF KUMBA-MAMFE
ROAD DEVELOPMENT PROJECT**

**Closing address by Mr. Tomas DA VERA CRUZ, Director a.i of the
ILO DWCT for Central Africa & Country Office for
Angola, Cameroon and Sao Tome & Principe
(03 October 2014)**

**Honorable David Aman Koulbout, Divisional Officer of Meme
Sirs Sub-Divisional Officers,
The Government Delegate for Kumba City Council
The Mayors of Kumba 3, Konye, Nguti and Upper Banyanga
The Representative of the Ministry of Public Works of Cameroon
Honorable Senator
The representative of the Cameroun Inter-professional
Confederation
The Representative of the Workers Confederations
The Regional Director of the Pan African Institute for the
Development, West Africa
Distinguished guests,
Ladies and Gentlemen**

It is for me an honor and a real pleasure to address this salient audience on the occasion of the official launch of the employment component of the major Kumba-Mamfe road development project. On behalf of the Assistant Director General and ILO Regional Director for Africa and of all the DWCT team in Yaoundé, I would like to reiterate to you the honor we feel for being a privileged partner of the Ministry of Public Works, the Ministry of Economy, Planning and Territorial Development, The Ministry of Habitat and Urban Development and many other national institutions in the implementation of employment intensive investment approaches for job creation and poverty reduction.

As you are all aware, by drawing lessons from the implementation of its first poverty reduction strategy, the Government of Cameroon is for the first time fully engaged in the formulation and implementation of a long-term development Vision. This Vision, which projects an image of the country up to 2035, aspires to make of Cameroon *a democratic emerging state, united in its geographical, linguistic and cultural diversity*. More specifically, the Vision constitutes a reference framework for: (i) reducing poverty to a socially acceptable level; (ii) moving to an effective middle-income country status; (iii) becoming a newly emerging country; (iv) strengthening the national unity and consolidating the democratic process.

These specific objectives are translated into the orientations of the Growth and Employment Strategy Paper (GESP) for the 2010-2020 period, that covers the first ten years of the long-term Vision. The main issue concerning the implementation of GESP will be to focus on growth acceleration, the creation of formal jobs and poverty reduction. It is, therefore, expected to: (i) increase growth to an annual average of 5.5% over the 2010-2020 period; (ii) reduce underemployment from 75.8% to below 50% in 2020, with the creation of tens of thousands of formal jobs every year in the next ten years; and (iii) reduce the monetary poverty rate from 39.9% in 2007 to 28.7% in 2020. To achieve these objectives, the Government intends to implement in a coherent and integrated manner: (i) a growth strategy, (ii) an employment strategy, and (iii) a strategy to improve governance and central government's strategic management.

Distinguished guests, Ladies and Gentlemen,

The ILO Decent Work Agenda (DWA) and the Decent Work Country Programme (DWCP) for Cameroon are consistent and in line with the three pillars referred above. The ILO DWCP strategy will foster inclusive growth by focusing on decent job creation as the best way out of poverty.

Taking advantage of infrastructure development component, the ILO's intervention will focus on the development of the small scale contractors, capacity building of local governments and institutions and the use of local resources, human and material, to deliver secondary and tertiary infrastructures that are by their nature employment intensive.

The Kumba-Mamfe road development project, jointly funded by the Government of Cameroon, the African Development Bank and the Central Africa States Development Bank, offers an excellent opportunity for the Government and the Africa Development Bank to apply their new approach and commitment to make employment, particularly the youth employment a central concern of their development agenda. To assist in achieving so, the Government through the Ministry of Public Works has signed an agreement with the ILO aiming at:

- Developing the capacity of local government to integrate labour-based approach and techniques into the public works decentralized investment programmes;
- Strengthening the capacity of local administrations in planning and managing secondary and tertiary infrastructure construction and maintenance;
- Train the youth of project intervention zones on labour-based techniques in the perspective of post-rehabilitation programmes;
- Introduce and demonstrate the feasibility of technological alternatives that favour the access of small contractors to works and in encouraging sub-contract in the procurement documents;
- Reinforce the delivery capacity of the small contractors of the region for them to take advantage of public procurement of medium and small size works;
- Put in place youth based rural roads committees able of taking responsibility of the maintenance programmes;

- Adopt and implement a participatory approach in planning, monitoring and implementation of the employment component of the project.

Honorable Divisional Office, Ladies and Gentlemen,

Since the 1st of April 2014, the ILO put in place its project team to in charge of:

- Identify critical tasks that should be taken for the successful establishment of the Project.
- Ensure overall substantive conception, planning, implementation, monitoring, and evaluation of the project activities
- Take the necessary steps to ensure the operationality of the project, administrating daily operations to ensure effective project implementation;
- Prepare work plans, progress reports, budget and budget revisions in a timely manner;
- Collaborate with the technical monitoring committee and liaise with all relevant stakeholders to ensure achievement of the project objectives;
- In collaboration with ILO EIIP specialist and Programming Unit, draft the terms of reference for national and international consultants, identify and select the consultants, and monitor and review their assignments;
- Keep the representatives of the Steering Committee informed on a regular basis of the progress of the Project;
- Organize appropriate training activities in collaboration with the identified partners
- Ensure that the project resources are used efficiently

Monsieur le Préfet, honorable invités, chers participants, Mesdames et Messieurs,

Au terme de ces 2 premières journées de travail dédiées à la planification stratégique du projet, je voudrais, au nom de l'équipe du Bureau International du Travail et de mes collègues, remercier

sincèrement tous les participants ici réunis pour la pertinence de leur réflexion et la qualité de leur contribution et pour avoir investi dans cet important exercice autant d'énergie, temps et passion.

Je voudrais en particulier exprimer toute ma reconnaissance à ces honorables maires ou leurs représentants qui ont été appelés au long de deux exigeantes sessions à fournir des subsides et à réaffirmer leurs engagements politiques aussi symboliques que cela soit visant à fournir un ancrage solide et un appui soutenu aux activités du projet.

Je voudrais aussi exprimer toute notre reconnaissance au Préfet de Meme, au Délégué de la Communauté Urbaine de Kumba pour nous avoir soutenu dans cet initiative et mais surtout pour le chaleureux accueil qui nous a été réservé dès notre arrivée dans cette belle ville de Kumba.

Illustres invités, Chers participants, Mesdames et Messieurs,

Certains d'entre vous avaient peut-être des attentes plus nombreuses et plus exigeantes de ce séminaire. A défaut de répondre à toutes les attentes, le séminaire a eu l'avantage de ne s'être pas refermé sur lui-même et s'est ouvert aux contributions et critiques de tous les participants. Cela nous a permis de recueillir des enseignements très pertinents qui vont aider notre équipe de projet à finaliser et améliorer son plan de travail et renforcer davantage la communication et les échange d'information sur le projet.

Ladies and Gentlemen, Dear Participants

I could not finish my address without having a special word of appreciation to all those senior officials, who travelled during long hours from Yaoundé and Buea to join us and share with us their rich experience and valuable views on the of follow up of the African Development Bank projects portfolio. Particular reference is also made to all my ILO colleagues and Government personnel affected to the

project for the work performed and their valuable contribution to the organization of this workshop.

Last but not the least, we would like also to thank all those who directly or indirectly contributed to the well-being of the participants, I refer to the drivers, security guards, cratering personnel, cleaning and all types of logistic personnel.

Ladies and Gentlemen, Dear Participants

We have taken notes of all comments and inputs reflected also in the evaluation form that were distributed. We will pay a major attention to them. You will receive a copy of the summary of your responses and comments and we are glad to observe that in all items of the evaluation form we have recorded over 95% of satisfactory or very satisfactory expressions.

We are also confident that all the participants benefit from the lessons learned from this workshop and will make the best use of the knowledge shared.

Our last words go to all those who are to travel. We wish them a good journey and a very careful drive and safe route.

Thank very much for your attention