

STRENGTHENING THE IMPACT OF SECTOR AND TRADE POLICIES IN GHANA

STRENGTHEN STRATEGIC KNOWLEDGE SHARING SEMINAR

SEPTEMBER, 2019

TANG PALACE HOTEL, ACCRA

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Appendix: List of Participants of the High Level Meeting

Abbreviations

APR – Annual Performance Review

DRIC – Directorate of Research Innovation and Consultancy

EMPIA – Employment Impact Assessment

ETE – Effects of Trade on Employment

EU – European Union

FDI – Foreign Direct Investment

GEA – Ghana Employers Association

GOG – Government of Ghana

GSS – Ghana Statistical Service

GTUC – Ghana Trade Unions Congress

ILO – International Labour Organization

KNUST – Kwame Nkrumah University of Science and Technology

LiPW – Labour-intensive Public Work

MDPI – Management Development and Productivity Institute

MELR – Ministry of Employment and Labour Relations

MOF – Ministry of Finance

MWH – Ministry of Works and Housing

NDPC – National Development Planning Commission

SDGs – Sustainable Development Goals

STED – Skills for Trade and Economic Diversification

TRAVERA – Trade and Value Chain in Employment Rich Activities

UN – United Nations

UCC – University of Cape Coast

UG – University of Ghana

Summary

The International Labour Organization (ILO) in partnership with the Ministry of Employment and Labour Relations (MELR) organized a strategic knowledge sharing seminar under the theme “Strengthening the Employment Impact of Sectoral and Trade Policies” project which is funded by the European Union (EU) to share achievements of the project and findings of country studies as well as other related projects being implemented by the ILO and her social partners in Ghana. The project aims at strengthening the employment dimensions in policies and programs related to international trade with better analysis, more coherent policy making and enhanced programs that are designed to encourage employment creation and upgrading. The seminar hosted participants from key Ministries, Departments and Agencies, Social Partners, Development Partners, Private Sector and Academia.

Highlighting some major achievements of the project, Mrs. Akua Ofori-Asimadu, Officer In-Charge of the ILO office in Ghana mentioned that the project has promoted collaboration and knowledge sharing among beneficiary countries and created mass knowledge on employment issues among sector stakeholders. According to her, the credible findings from the project will support government in leveraging industries that are competitive in international trade towards providing more decent jobs in Ghana and raising the number of workers who are productively employed.

In his remarks, the Chairman for the seminar, Director of Monitoring and Evaluation at the National Development Planning Commission (NDPC), Dr. Isaac Mensa-Bonsu, posited that such a seminar for sharing the project outcomes was very timely, especially when Ghana is currently implementing a medium term plan that has employment highly placed on the national development agenda. The NDPC need tools and knowledge to ensure that the objectives for the National Development Agenda which NDPC mandatorily develops periodically (every four years) are achieved. Supporting the call for a system that will monitor performance in the public sector of Ghana, he recounted how good assessment models and tracking systems equipped with feedback mechanisms which informed necessary adjustments aided the rapid development of Korea. He finally noted that in the era of evidence based decision making, the findings of the project is crucial and will be useful to all decision makers at all levels as it reveals useful information on job creation; revealing the number of jobs, which sector is creating more jobs and which sector has the propensity to create more jobs.

Mr. David Dorkenoo, a Deputy Director at the ILO office in Abuja said the knowledge seminar which has been organized in line with ILO’s core mandate of forecasting employment issues coincides with the centenary celebration of the ILO and noted that Ghana and ILO have a sixty two (62) yearlong working relationship. While accepting that there is difficulty in accessing data on employment in Africa, he was optimistic that sharing data collected from this project and other ILO projects will gradually address the challenge. He noted that the project has generated a lot of knowledge sharing, promoted development collaborations among beneficiary countries and created credible knowledge base; however, what remains outstanding is the commitment to integrate project gains to inform government policies and safeguard sustainability of the project deliverables.

Presenting the Keynote Address, Hon. Bright Wireko-Brobby, a Deputy Minister at MELR acknowledged the successful working relations between Ghana and the ILO which led to Ghana's first National Employment Policy. He assured participants that the MELR will forward the project outcomes to cabinet for consideration. Assuring stakeholders on the use of the outcomes of the Project, Hon. Wireko-Brobby said predictions on the Planting for Food and Jobs project being implemented by the government of Ghana was informed by outcomes from this project.

In a solidarity message read on his behalf by Mr. Joseph Kingsley Amoah, the Chief Executive Officer of the Ghana Employers Association (GEA), Mr. Alex Frimpong, lauded the contribution of the ILO to Ghana's development. While admitting the capacity challenge and the fact that most businesses in Ghana complain about unfair trade globally, he expressed hope that the project outcomes would build the capacity of business operators in Ghana and make them globally competitive. Raising concerns on the unavailability of accurate data, he called for an urgent need to step up work on the labour Market information systems in Ghana.

A Deputy General Secretary of the Ghana Trade Union Congress (GTUC), Mr. Joshua Ansah, expressed worry that many initiatives and inputs by successive governments have failed to generate the expected jobs over the years. He lamented that Government of Ghana makes very good policies but effective implementation remains the challenge, hence the need to follow through with the outcomes of this project which is aimed at improving employment conditions in Ghana.

1.0 Registration

The ILO Ghana office officially registered participants and managed protocols for the seminar.

2.0 Session – Official Opening

2.1 Introduction

After saying a brief prayer to start the meeting, the moderator on the day Mrs. Charlotte Hanson introduced the dignitaries present at the Strategic Knowledge Sharing Seminar. They included the Guest of Honour, Honorable Bright Wireku – Brobby, a Deputy Minister at MELR, Dr. Isaac Mensah – Bonsu, Director of Monitoring and Evaluation at the NDPC, who chaired the meeting, Mr. David Dorkenoo, a Deputy Director at the ILO office in Abuja, Mrs. Akua Ofori - Asumadu, Officer In-Charge ILO Ghana, Mr. Joshua Ansah, Deputy General Secretary of GTUC and Mr. Joseph Kingsley Amoah from the GEA. Stating the purpose of the meeting, she said the Strategic Knowledge Seminar aims at providing a platform for sharing the achievements of the project, give social partners opportunity to brainstorm and share strategic lessons and make recommendations for sustenance of the projects outcomes beyond September 2019. She added that the event also officially draws the curtains on activities under the “STRENGTHEN” project.

2.2 Opening Remarks

2.2.1 Chairman

Dr. Isaac Mensa-Bonsu, Director of Monitoring and Evaluation, NDPC

In his remarks, the Chairman for the seminar posited that such a seminar for sharing the project outcomes was very timely, especially when Ghana is currently implementing a medium term agenda with the theme; “An Agenda for Jobs, Creating Prosperity and Equal Opportunity for all”. The NDPC need tools and knowledge to ensure that the objectives for the National Development Agenda which NDPC mandatorily develops periodically (every four years) are achieved. Supporting the call for a system that will monitor performance in the public sector of Ghana, he recounted how good assessment models and tracking systems equipped with feedback mechanisms which informed necessary adjustments aided the rapid development of Korea. We need to ensure that there is a very effective system in place to assess our public sector performance and provide for us information that will guide government injection of financial resource into sectors expected to generate employment and improve the economic fortunes of our country. In this era of evidence based decision making, the findings of the project is crucial and will be useful to all decision makers at all levels as it reveals useful information on job creation; revealing the number of jobs, which sector is creating more jobs and which sector has the propensity to create more jobs. However we must not only focus on creating Jobs but also consider the quality of the job and sustainability prospects. As social partners with a common interest we have the opportunity to share

our knowledge and experiences, and guided by that, we will propose next steps that will make good use of the outcomes of this very important project “STRENGTHEN”.

2.2.2 Special Guest

Mr. David Dorkenoo, a Deputy Director at the ILO office in Abuja

In his very brief remark, Mr. Dorkenoo said the knowledge seminar which has been organized in line with ILOs core mandate of forecasting employment issues coincides with the centenary celebration of the ILO. He quickly added that Ghana and ILO have a sixty two (62) yearlong working relationship as social partners. According to him, the commitment of the stakeholders on the project leaves him with very positive hopes that the outcomes of the “STRENGTHEN” project will make positive impact on the development agenda of the people of Ghana. While accepting that there is difficulty in accessing data on employment in Africa, he was optimistic that sharing data collected from this project and other ILO projects will gradually address the challenge. Highlighting some of the achievements of the project, he said the project has generated a lot of knowledge sharing, promoted development collaborations among beneficiary countries and created credible knowledge base. Despite the good delivery however, what remains outstanding is the successful incorporation of the project gains into government policy framework to safeguard sustainability and continuous use of the project deliverables. In his concluding remark, he called on participants to be actively involved in this seminar that will identify and adopt the next steps for the way forward and continue monitoring the smooth integration of the project outcomes into government policy framework.

2.3 Solidarity Messages

2.3.1 Mr. Joseph Kingsley Amoah, GEA

In a solidarity message read on his behalf by Mr. Joseph Kingsley Amoah, the President of the Ghana Employers Association (GEA), Mr. Alex Frimpong, lauded the contribution of the ILO to Ghana’s development. The deliverables of the project will be very useful to both formal and informal employers in Ghana. While admitting the capacity challenge and the fact that most businesses in Ghana complain about unfair trade globally, he expressed hope that the project outcomes would build the capacity of business operators in Ghana and make them globally competitive. Raising concerns on the unavailability of accurate data, he called for an urgent need to step up work on the labour Market information systems in Ghana. According to him, when there is accurate data on employment across the sectors, it will be easy to identify which sectors are creating more employment opportunities and decide what can be done to sustain and improve the operations in these employment hubs. Finally, he posited that the GEA looks forward to future working collaborations that will influence and improve the employment creation policy of the country. He quickly added that employment that will be created must however meet international standards of quality and sustainable jobs.

2.3.2 Mr. Joshua Ansah, Deputy General Secretary, GTUC

A Deputy General Secretary of the Ghana Trade Union Congress (GTUC), Mr. Joshua Ansah, who represented the General Secretary of the TUC, Dr. Yaw Baah, extended felicitations from their Union and thanked all stakeholders for their contribution to the project that has generation efforts under the project. The deputy Chief of the Labour Union in Ghana expressed concerns that since 2002 many initiatives and inputs by successive governments have failed to generate the expected jobs over the years. He lamented that Government of Ghana makes very good policies but effective implementation remains the challenge, hence the need to follow through with the outcomes of this project which is aimed at improving employment conditions in Ghana. Despite the accelerated development initiatives over the years, there is very little to show as jobs created from these development activities. This seminar has presented an opportunity for us to identify some of the causes of our unemployment deficits even in the face of huge Public Investments over the years. He finally touched on the need to also assess the conditions under which workers are working and the wages / salaries paid them.

2.4 Special Address

Presenting the Keynote Address, Hon. Bright Wireko-Brobby, a Deputy Minister at MELR acknowledged the successful working relations between Ghana and the ILO which led to the development of Ghana's first National Employment Policy. This collaboration between Ghana and the ILO also qualified Ghana to be part of the global project on Strengthening the Impact of Sector and Trade Policies on Employment. The outcomes and impacts of the project implementation over the last three years are the reasons why we have gathered today to share lessons and experiences and also agree on specific steps for the way forward as we work to sustain the gains of this project. The role of the ILO in the planning, inauguration and implementation of the employment policy is beyond measure and deserves commendation. The financial and technical support from the ILO is worth mentioning and appreciated. The MELR he said is the largest beneficiary of this very important project because it has complemented the efforts in pursuing our official mandate. We have institutionalized in all MMDAs a framework that will collate and share the accurate data for policy guide. Assuring stakeholders on the use of the outcomes of the Project, Hon. Wireko-Brobby informed participants that prediction on jobs created under the Planting for Food and Jobs project being implemented by the government of Ghana was informed by outcomes from this project. Presentations at the project launch and inception workshop provided enough insight to the sector which shaped our policies and aided the design of programs that supported the creation of decent jobs in Ghana. Notably also, was the development of a roadmap on transitioning the informal economy to formality, the draft labour migration policy and the Third (III) Phase of the Ghana Decent Work country program. Finally, he said the seminar provides another great opportunity for the sector to learn from the various consultants and stakeholders/experts on the findings of the studies that have been conducted under the project. The minister assured participants and the managers of the project that the MELR will officially share the outcomes of the project with cabinet for consideration at the top government level.

3.0 Session II – Presentations and Discussions

3.1

Topic: Project Activities and Achievements

Presenter: Akua Ofori – Asumadu, Officer In-Charge, ILO Office, Ghana

(i) Key Issues:

1. Project focused on producing country knowledge, developing methodologies, training of technical staff, embarking on sector studies and training of policy makers, considering international labour standards
2. Established a Policy Working Group with membership drawn from Academia, CSOs, Key line Ministries and development Partners
3. Information generation and sharing has been undertaken successfully. Dissemination of knowledge in the form of methodological improvements. Concrete steps have also been taken to mainstream these methodologies
4. Enhanced the capacities of technical staffs and analysts in the government sector and organizations of social partners, statistical offices and research institutions.
5. Organized technical workshops and study tours that studied theoretical aspects of employment impact and generation. Technical training experts from academic institutions in Ghana and their counterparts from Geneva facilitated training sessions on the project
6. Provided technical skills support for skills development and export oriented value chains. Undertook studies on TRAVERA and STEP to guide the selection of sectors that have high employment creation potentials.
7. Institutional arrangements have been activated to mainstream EmplA into the day to day activities of ministries targeted for job creation. MELR to facilitate the establishment of EmplA desks in ministries. Ministry of Finance has already established a desk
8. Organized an Interactive dialogue session with the government economic team and showcased scientific ways of measuring jobs to the team.
9. Ministries will submit accurate data on employment in their annual progress reports to the NDPC, unlike in the past when ministries had challenges providing employment data.

(ii) Recommendations:

1. That the Policy Working Group should be maintained to assist with future work
2. Project deliverables mainstreamed into the core fabric of the public sector must be sustained
3. Other ministries should accelerate processes in line with the established EmplA desks.
4. Private sector to insert a request for information on job creation on their annual re registration form to facilitate data collection on employment creation

3.2 Country Studies on EMPIA

3.2.1

Topic: Social Housing

Presenter: Mr. Maikel Lieuw-Kie-Song, ILO Geneva

(i) Key Issues:

1. Construction has a low employment creation potential and it is a male dominated sector, giving very little opportunity to women
2. Increased public investments in this sector have not automatically created employment opportunities. There is need to deliberately target and embark on labour intensive projects.
3. The issue of scanty, scattered and inconsistent data on employment in the infrastructure sector
4. High rate of unskilled labour, most workers were casual workers. Both skilled and unskilled labour has endured conditions short of ILO criteria of measuring decent work.
5. Lobby for local content on partnership projects to create employment and create job opportunities for locals.

(ii) Recommendations:

- a. Review the design of instruments for collecting data in order to capture all relevant characteristics of employment in the infrastructure sector and dedicate more resources to the commissioning of a comprehensive national employment census.

- b. The TUC and the National Labour commission must embark on a nationwide campaign and ensure the effective enforcement of labour laws and protect workers from indecent employment
- c. The NVTI should be adequately resourced to continue to train more highly skilled workers capable of being absorbed by the infrastructure sector
- d. MELR and MMDAs should implement the Labour-Intensive Public Works (LiPW) to ensure gender equity and ensure fair remuneration in the sector
- e. Government should use contract leverage to address concerns of poor working conditions and introduce incentives to attract private sector investments that will create employment

3.2.2

Topic: Agro Processing (Cocoa Processing)

Presenter: Dr. Bernardin Senadza, University Ghana (UG)

(i) Key Issues:

1. Producers predominantly export about 90% of their products as there still remain unmet demand on the global market for semi-finished cocoa products
2. The major constraint facing the cocoa processing companies remain the unavailability of cocoa beans
3. Usually an increased output will not automatically result in a relative increase in direct employment
4. Due to high use of skilled labour there is a high tendency of quality/decent employment

(ii) Recommendations:

1. Government should utilize automated cocoa processing facilities to create more employment and reduce capital investment
2. Government should implement LiPW to ensure the employment of women and youth as well as embark on frequent social dialogue to sensitize employers
3. Introduce policies that will attract investments into the processing industry to create thousands of additional jobs, mostly in the cocoa production value chain

4. Government should conduct employment impact assessment of policies, like the tax incentives before granting them, so that these incentives are properly targeted to secure jobs in return

3.3 Sectoral Studies

3.3.1

Topic: Study on TRAVERA (Roots and Tubers – Cassava, Potato and Yam)

Presenter: Dr. Robert Aidoo, University of Cape Coast (UCC)

(i) Key Issues:

1. Roots and tubers are very critical to the employment sector/economy of Ghana as it employs many people. There is even more room for improvement on the job creation capacity in the sector, especially when local and international demand remains high.
2. There is an upward trend in the production of roots and tubers, as it records an annual 5% rise in production. Productivity improvement accounts for the rise not necessarily expansion.
3. Our export quantity for roots and tubers are very much lower due post harvest losses and this creates a wide productivity gap
4. Export quantities are much lower for our tubers, a case that can be directly attributed to the challenge of high post harvest wastages. Cassava records the highest post harvest losses
5. Employment is usually casual for all three tubers, but due to the high processing activity for Cassava it records high skilled labour among them.
6. Workers engaged in the roots and tuber production hub work under very poor conditions, especially the women who process gari under the cassava value chain.
7. Some of the challenges that sector players face include high labour requirement during harvesting, high cost of labour, and high cost of processing inputs, limited access to credit facility and high perish ability among others.

(ii) Recommendations:

1. Producers must add value to raw tubers to reduce post harvest losses and create employment

2. Producers should upgrade skills production techniques/processes and improve professionalism to present potential of business expansion and increase chances of employment creation
3. Producers in the sector should fine tune products to meet international demand and increase/improve export activities
4. Government should facilitate the Identification and promotion of more efficient processing technologies and provide efficient processing machines for roots and tubers production sector
5. MLER should sensitize workers in the sector on labour issues and ensure that employers provide personal protection equipment for workers on the value chain eg. Women engaged in gari production on the cassava value addition chain

3.3.2

Topic: Study on STED (Yam Roots)

Presenter: Dr. T. Adomako, Management Development and Productivity Institute (MDPI)

(i) Key Issues:

1. There is very little literature on the capability gaps and how best we can address the gaps
2. That tuber production is on the rise and raw products are mainly expected. Processors are also emerging and coming up slightly and gradually
3. Workers are informal and manual dependent. Factories for processing yam are almost non-existing.
4. We need Enterprises that are well nurtured and managed by professionals to enhance our productivity levels
5. Domestic and private firms operate in the sector for the past twenty (20) years but only a few of them are legally registered
6. Capacity gaps are in the transport, labour value, export capacity, records and labour turnover too is low. There is also tuber export losses which affects our export capacity
7. A National Export Strategy report revealed that non-traditional exports have strong potential of enhancing incomes for economic diversification

(ii) Recommendations:

1. Government should create an enabling environment for business growth by granting tax exemptions and providing other business support services to producers in the sector
2. Producers should improve product development by enhancing product volume and value to feed both local and international demand.
3. Government should provide logistical inputs and enhance the post harvest skills, storage and packaging, warehouse management skills through periodic training programs
4. Government should strengthen institutions in the sector by providing financial literacy support and business management skills
5. Producers should improve business functions and introduce new technologies to reduce export loss rate

3.4

Topic: Country Studies on ETE

Presenter: Dr. William Brafu Insaiddo, UCC

(i) Key Issues:

1. Less than 50% of workers in Ghana have decent work/employment
2. Export promotion has a comparatively higher employment generation potential
3. No empirical studies have been undertaken to directly ascertain the employment effects of the export promotion measures in Ghana
4. Trade liberalization in the form of tariff reduction adversely affect wages, especially the unskilled workers
5. Decline share of workers in decent jobs despite the possible increase in employments
6. Foreign Direct Investments impact in terms of increasing wages has also not been significant
7. Large number of workers in the informal sector of the economy, and they have little knowledge on labour laws and social protection

(ii) Recommendations:

1. TUC should educate workers, especially those in the informal sector on social protection laws and enforce laws to protect workers from indecent employment situations
2. MELR should undertake further research to assess and obtain information on the employment benefits and widespread economic costs of export promotion
3. Government should impose special taxes on imported products that compete with locally manufactured products, to offer some protection for local manufacturers
4. Government should provide incentives for local manufacturers to enable them increase their production capacity and enhance their capacity to export, expand and create more employment
5. NVTI should develop local skilled manpower to enable the country maximize the gains from foreign direct investments
6. MELR should further probe the long term benefits of trade liberalization in relation to employment and wages
7. Government's FDI policy should focus on encouraging foreign direct investment into sectors with high capacity to generate employment
8. MELR should develop and implement significant complementary development programs to develop skilled labour, enhance Ghana's capacity to benefit from Trade Liberalization and the Economic Partnership Agreement (EPA)

4.0 Closing Session

4.1 Adoption of Roadmap on the way forward

At the close of the Knowledge sharing seminar, the deputy Minister of MELR thanked all the stakeholders who participated and the ILO and EU for their support. The MELR, he said has gathered a lot of useful information from the knowledge sharing seminar and previous activities under the project. The MELR will organize a sector meeting to unpack and carefully study the reports and works from the project. The government of Ghana will look forward to fuse the deliveries from this project. In his final remark he expressed hope that all the good works and the adopted steps from the forum will impact the job creation agenda of Ghana.

4.2 Closing Remarks

In a very brief closing remark the Chairman expressed his sincere gratitude to the ILO and the European Union for supporting the “Strengthen” project in Ghana. He also commended the Project management team led by Mrs. Akua Ofori – Asumadu and all social partners for playing very significant roles that led to the successful implementation of the project. The information gathered from this seminar is very useful as it has increased our knowledge and enhanced our understanding of employment issues but there is more to it than just acquiring the knowledge, hence the need to adopt the deliverables to impact policies that will positively impact employment creation in Ghana. In addition, this project has provided the opportunity to enhance our skills and build our capacity to make us globally competitive. The NDPC will engage our social partners in this forum in our future development planning endeavors. He further posited that the outcomes from the Knowledge sharing session and the reports from the Strengthen project in general will be critically considered during the strategizing sessions of the NDPC next year.

APPENDIX**STRENGTHENING THE IMPACT OF SECTOR AND TRADE POLICIES ON EMPLOYMENT IN GHANA**

STRATEGIC KNOWLEDGE SHARING SEMINAR

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