



Evaluation Summary



International
Labour
Office

Evaluation Unit

Creating opportunities for youth employment in South Sudan - Mid Term Joint Evaluation

Quick Facts

Countries: *South Sudan*
Mid-Term Evaluation: *09/2011*
Mode of Evaluation: *Independent*
ILO Administrative responsibility: *ILO-Cairo*
Technical Area: *ED/EMP/MSU*
Evaluation Management: *MDG Achievement Fund*
Evaluation Team: *Carlos Carravilla*
Project Code: *SUD/08/50/UND*
Donor: MDG-AF (US\$ 9,000,000)
IOM: 799,718
UNDP: 1,753,326
UNICEF: 985,598
FAO: 879,690
UNFPA: 259,368
UNESCO: 405,263
ILO: 1,400,336
UNIDO: 1,404,659
UNAIDS: 194,526
UNOPS: 917,514
Unallocated 2

Keywords: *Youth employment, migrant youth, returnees, demobilised soldiers, social stability*

Background & Context

The object of evaluation is the Joint Programme (JP) Creating Opportunities for Youth Employment in South Sudan (YEP) belonging to the MDG-F Youth Employment

and Migration Thematic Window. Initially the JP covered both Sudan and South Sudan, but as of July 2011 the Programme was separated into two country Programmes: UN Joint Programme for Creating Opportunities for Youth Employment in Sudan, and UN/RSS Joint Programme for Creating Opportunities for Youth Employment in South Sudan (YEM). The YEP aims to provide skills development and livelihood opportunities to 2,500 young men and women aged between 15 to 30 years with particular attention to migrant youth, including returnees and demobilised soldiers. Twenty-one years of civil war have left an entire generation without access to education. The Programme seeks to demonstrate in six localities in four States across South Sudan youth employment approaches in three broad labour markets: urban markets, rural markets and agropastoralist livelihoods. The motivations for the implementation of this mid-term evaluation are to generate knowledge, identifying best practices and lessons learned and improve implementation of the Programme during its remaining implementation time.

Main Findings & Conclusions

According to the Resident Coordinator's Support Office (RCSO) in Juba, the real value of the Programme has been to introduce youth problems into the dialogue agenda between the United Nations System in the Country and the Government of the Republic of South Sudan

(RSS). The Programme has served as a catalyst for the promotion of the attention to youth to the extent that priorities addressing youth problems are in the Interim South Sudan Development Plan. This result goes beyond any expectations that the RCSO could have about the impact of YEP. Additionally, RCSO thinks that Joint Programming has the value of forcing the agencies to deliver as one.

The Government's commitment to the Programme is of the maximum level. This attitude has been patent during the evaluation activities, and especially strongly showed by the two leading ministries, the Ministry of Labour and Public Service and Human Resource Development (MoL) and the Ministry of Culture, Youth and Sports (MoCYS), which have remarked their will of participating at every level, from decision making to monitoring. It was precisely this commitment that led the RSS to propose a reshaping of the Programme, originally conceived in Sudan (Khartoum), with a weak participation from South Sudan and, therefore, not relevant to the reality of South Sudan.

A stronger commitment to the Programme has to be demanded to some of the agencies involved. UNDP, UNICEF UNIDO and UNESCO have really low budget execution levels and developed little activity so far.

The leading agency, ILO, has been doing a great effort to bring all agencies together to deliver a real joint implementation but the previously attitude of some participating agencies has not been the most propitious. One of the consequences of this situation is that the real contribution of YEP to the United Nations reform can be assessed as poor. It has to be considered that agencies are having their first experience of joint working and are dealing, for the first time, with its complexities and trying to face them, which has to be understood as a positive process.

The participatory process developed by the Inception Mission (April and May 2010) allowed, through the subsequent reshaping of the YEP, adapting the initial Programme to RSS priorities, national context and beneficiaries' needs with the exception of

gender specific needs. The opinion of the RCSO in Juba about the YEP before the Inception Mission and the reshaping was that since there were (1) too many partners, (2) a reduced budget and a (3) design not relevant to the Southern Sudan context, the intervention wouldn't have any positive impacts. The RCSO also expressed that the Inception Mission and subsequent reshaping completely succeeded in improving the design and transforming the YEP into a relevant intervention. The Programme, although some activities were designed to address women's needs following the consultations during the Inception Mission, cannot be qualified as gender sensitive. An initial gender sensitive participatory assessment should have been carried out as a prerequisite to then design and implement introducing the gender perspective.

The JP specially contributes to the attainment of Millennium Development Goal (MDG) 1, target 1.B. Achieve full and productive employment and decent work for all, including women and young people. There is also a contribution towards MDG 5: Improve maternal health, and MDG 6: Combat HIV/AIDS, malaria and other diseases.

Recommendations & Lessons Learned

RECOMMENDATION ON RELEVANCE

Continuity interventions should be based on gender sensitive participatory assessments conducted by a specialist in order to address social groups that are systematically excluded from development initiatives. Also, it would be recommendable to hire a gender expert to give technical support to all the partners during the whole Programme duration to (1) facilitate the gender inclusion in the implementation and to (2) deliver trainings to the partners to contribute to build their capacities.

In order to maintain, in an extremely variable environment as the South Sudanese, the (1) relevance to direct beneficiaries' interests, and also (2) promote ownership and (3) sustainability of the results achieved it's

recommended to enhance the participation of youth and women associations and unions in decision-making at state level and to implement activities dedicated to strengthen these associations.

In order to keep the Programme's relevance to a variable context as the South Sudanese, it would be recommended to hire a national evaluator to conduct a continuous evaluation process to give the Programme feedbacks that could help to reshape activities. It would be desirable that the indicators were focused on the improvement of the living conditions of people affected by the programme, avoiding as much as possible using activities, products or processes as indicators. Indicators should also be gender and ethnic sensitive. This means that they have to allow measuring: (1) The quality of participation (from decision making to just participation in activities) of the different collectives involved; and (2) how different collectives are benefitting from the programme.

RECOMMENDATION ON EFFICIENCY

It's recommended to give the YEP Chief Technical Adviser authority over all the agencies involved in the YEP and regarding YEP implementation. By doing so, coordination, efficiency and coherence will surely improve. Some flexibility in the application of administrative procedures (as procurement and tendering) needs to be enhanced in order to react to the challenges of daily work and improve efficiency.

Joint Programming is a good model, but the tools currently used for managing design and implementation should probably be reviewed in the mid term: (1) Identification, formulation, implementation and monitoring should be conducted in a joint way to enhance coherence. (2) The standardization of forms, formats and procedures would help efficiency. (3) Programme documents detailing who does what and who is responsible for what would increase accountability and coordination. (4) Programme Managers with authority to coordinate the different agencies would enhance coherence and efficiency.

All management instruments to be used by the JPs partners should be standardized and

attached to the Programme Document so that all agencies had to use the same forms, formats and procedures. This would eliminate delays and blockages arising from administrative incompatibilities among agencies.

UN and affiliated organizations are encouraged to enhance coordination (through the utilization of the tools and structures available) in the implementation of activities to improve joint implementation, and by doing so prioritize efficiency and results delivery during the last part of the Programme. YEP and MDG-F Secretariat. Improving the exchange of information in both directions would develop the capability to solve problems, mutual trust and accountability in the relationship between both instances.

The YEP Chief Technical Adviser in ILO needs a bigger support team and the already recommended authority according to his coordination responsibilities.

It's recommended that UNDP, UNICEF, UNESCO and UNIDO prepare as soon as possible realistic and detailed implementation plans to fulfil their commitments with the required quality and spend their budgets before the termination date of the Programme.

These plans should get the approval of the Programme Management Committee. In case any of these plans were rejected by the Programme Management Committee it would be advisable to redirect the affected funds to any of the agencies that have demonstrated higher implementation capacities (UNOPS, ILO, IOM, FAO or UNFPA) so far to carry out the same or different activities, depending on the Programme Management Committee priorities and always maintaining the contribution to the YEP's outcomes and outputs.

During the last part of the Programme UN agencies should make an effort towards the standardisation and institutionalisation of training materials, curricula and methodologies in the closest collaboration with the corresponding ministries. ILO has already been working in this direction, so there

is some experience accumulated that could be useful for the whole Programme.

Joint programming needs to move towards structural configurations more balanced and rational, particularly in contexts where the running costs per agency can compromise efficiency. Future actions should involve less agencies and each one should participate with a clearly defined role based on the contribution of an added value.

RECOMMENDATION ON EFFICACY

A requirement for four months no-cost project extension was presented to the National Steering Committee (NSC) during its first meeting on 18 October 2011. The reason for this requirement is that the YEP will not be able to complete all its activities by 31 December 2011 given the pace at which some UN partners are delivering their components. The NSC endorsed the extension and the RCSO has already forwarded the request to the MDG-F Secretariat. Once the request has met all the requirements at the national level, the evaluation recommends its approval by the MDG-F Secretariat. It's recommended to expand the Y-PEER experience to all the locations where the Programme has presence.

RECOMMENDATIONS ON SUSTAINABILITY

Promoting productive activities to generate income in the youth centres could help to enhance their sustainability. It's recommended to promote experiences exchange among the different youth centres supported by the Programme and also with others that are working in the country, especially to share sustainability activities. Also, these exchanges could contribute to improve intercultural relationships, something that could help building peace culture in the country.

To counteract to some extent the effect of the lack of human resources in RSS for teaching in the vocational and youth centres, it's recommended a massive Training of Trainers in the main areas of interest. It is recommended, since there is an agreement between the United Nations System in South Sudan and the RSS to scale the YEP to a national level: (1) To allocate some funds from

the YEP to contract an external consultant specializing in identification and formulation and a gender expert to facilitate the formulation process and prepare the Programme document of the future intervention. (2) To allocate some funds from the YEP to carry out a systematization of the YEP experience under a gender perspective that would give accurate inputs to the formulation process of the programme at a national level.

RECOMMENDATIONS ON COUNTRY LEVEL

In order to enhance mutual accountability it's recommended that the participating UN agencies share with their governmental partners both at national and state levels the (1) detailed budget allocation for the whole Programme, and (3) a detail of the activities to be carried out until the end of the Programme with their corresponding budget. UNIDO, UNDP, UNICEF, UNESCO, UNESCO/UNAIDS and UNFPA should share as soon as possible the different financial reports produced during the life of the Programme to all the Programme partners to improve mutual accountability.

RECOMMENDATIONS ON GENDER ANALYSIS

Continuity interventions should be based on a gender sensitive participatory assessment in order to address social groups that are systematically excluded from development initiatives. This assessment should allow to design gender sensitive outcomes, outputs, activities and monitoring indicators.

To improve the gender perspective in the implementation at community level it's recommended to expand to all the locations covered by the Programme the Y-PEER component implemented by UNFPA.

It's recommended, to achieve strategic and sustainable results in gender equity, to assess the possibility of enhancing the involvement the Ministry of Gender in the last part of the Programme.