



# Evaluation Summary



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## ILO Technical Assistance Support to Limpopo Department of Public Works in the Implementation of the Expanded Public Works Programme Midterm Evaluation

### Quick Facts

**Countries:** Limpopo Province-South Africa

**Mid-Term Evaluation:** 25<sup>th</sup> August 2014

**Mode of Evaluation:** Independent

**ILO Administrative Office:** ILO Co. (Pretoria)

**ILO Technical Backstopping Office:** ILO DWT,  
Pretoria/EIIP

**Evaluation Manager:** Nomaswazi Dlamini

**Evaluation Consultant:** Stanley M. Karuga

**Project End:** 31<sup>st</sup> December 2014

**Project Code:** SAF/04/54/SAF

**Donor & Project Budget:** South Africa  
US\$ 8,753,697 (2005-2014)

**Keywords:** Employment Creation; Poverty  
Alleviation; Labour Intensive Construction;  
Unemployed and Marginalized Groups

### Background & Context

The Expanded Public Works Programme (EPWP) was initiated by the Government of South Africa (GSA) in 2004 following the Growth and Development Summit (GDS) of June 2003 and against the backdrop of high poverty and unemployment rate of up to 40%. The programme is a nation-wide initiative which “makes systematic use of public expenditure to boost productive employment and to develop

marketable skills among the historically disadvantaged communities (women, youth and people living with disabilities) towards contributing to the national goal of alleviating poverty at all levels - national, provincial, local authorities as well as state-owned enterprises”. The programme focuses on four sectors, namely; Infrastructure, Environment and Culture, Social and Non-state. The ILO provides technical assistance support to the programme through the Limpopo Department of Public Works Department (LDPW) under the “ILO Support to Limpopo Department of Public Works in Implementation of EPWP”.

EPWP has so far undergone two full implementation phases. Phase 1 during the period 1<sup>st</sup> April 2004 – 31<sup>st</sup> March 2009 with the target of creating one (1) million work opportunities (WOs) – which it achieved one year ahead of schedule. Phase 2 during the period 1<sup>st</sup> April 2009 – 31<sup>st</sup> March 2014 –with a target of 4.5 million WO's with women expected to account for 55%, youth for 40% and people living with disabilities (PLWD) for 2%. The project is fully funded by GSA with an overall budget of US\$ 8,753,697 for the period covering 2005 to 2014 (Phase 1& 2).

**Present Situation of the Project:** Phase 3 of EPWP, which aims at creating a further 6 million work opportunities (WOs), commenced on 1<sup>st</sup> April 2014 and is scheduled to end on 31<sup>st</sup> 2019. Its

design is currently being finalized. The focus of this evaluation is on phase 2 of the “ILO Technical Assistance Support to LDPW on the implementation of EPWP” phase 2 covering the period 1<sup>st</sup> April 2009 – 31<sup>st</sup> March 2014) – which is hereafter simply referred to as the “project”.

**Project Management Structure:** The project is managed by a small ILO technical team comprising a Chief Technical Advisor (CTA) and two (2) TAs. The team, which is stationed at LDPW in Polokwane (Limpopo Province) is administratively backstopped by ILO Co. (Pretoria) and technically by the Employment Intensive Investment Programme (EIIP) Senior Specialist – also based in Pretoria. The team is also supported by an ILO Finance and Administration Assistant who is stationed in ILO Co. (Pretoria) as well as an Administrative Assistant provided by LDPW.

**Purpose, Scope and Clients of the Evaluation:** The specific objectives of the evaluation are to: assess whether the objectives of the ILO technical assistance support to the implementation of the EPWP Phase 2 were achieved; and the role of ILO TA relation to the requirements of EPWP Phase 3; and make recommendations on how these objectives could be realized in the new agreements to be signed; and the necessary realignment of TA activities to the requirements of EPWP Phase 3.

The evaluation has been undertaken in accordance with the ILO Evaluation Policy adopted by the Governing Body in November 2005, and the Technical Cooperation Agreement between the ILO, the National Department of Public Works (NDPW) and LDPW. The primary clients of the evaluation include the ILO Co. (Pretoria) and the technical unit in Headquarters (EMP/INVEST) and project partners including NDPW, LDPW, GSA as well as other stakeholders.

### **Methodology**

The evaluation was based on a participatory approach involving interviews with a wide range of selected key stakeholders taking into account adequate gender representation. The methodology used four main research instruments - namely: (i)

Desk review of a wide range of relevant documents; (ii) “one-on-one” and/or focused group discussions in ILO Co. (Pretoria) and Limpopo Province; (iii) Independent observations by the Mission; (iv) stakeholders’ de-briefing workshop which was held at the end of field visits.

## **Main Findings & Conclusions**

While the Logical Framework (LF) of the project did not provide no baseline data, some of the target indicators were not objectively verifiable - which made objective assessment of its performance by the Mission rather hazy. That notwithstanding, the Mission observed that the project had attained a number of outputs that will no doubt go a long way towards attaining its immediate objectives, and by extension the objective of EPWP-which the project’s outputs are feeding into.

**Relevance and Strategic Fit:** The Mission found the project objective and outputs to have been relevant not just to the socio-economic development needs and aspirations of direct target beneficiaries – i.e. the LDPW, municipalities, departments, mentors, contractors and consultants; but also the indirect or ultimate target beneficiaries – i.e. the unemployed women, youth and PLWD. Its objective and outputs are also strategically in line with development aspirations of GSA and other development agencies. On the part of GSA, these includes national development aspirations as enunciated in key policy documents e.g. the National Development Plan - Vision for 2030 (2011) and the New Growth Path Framework (2009). The projects activities are also strategically in line with Decent Work Country Priorities (DWCP) for South Africa (2010-2014) and in particular outcome 3 whose focus is *More women and men, especially youth a persons living with disabilities, have access to productive and decent employment through inclusive rich growth*”; ILO Decent Work Agenda for Africa (2007-2015) and its Strategic Framework (2010-2015); United Nations Development Assistance Framework (2007-2010) and the Millennium Development Goals.

**Validity of Project Design:** The Mission also found the validity of project design to have been logical and coherent from the point of view of the foundational information base upon which the project was conceptualized and designed.

**Project Performance and Effectiveness:** Although the LF in the Project Document (PRODoc) for EPWP phase 2 provided indicators of achievement, they were not objectively verifiable - with many outputs being of qualitative nature and with neither baseline data nor achievement target indicators. The few that are objectively verifiable (e.g. outputs 2.3 and 2.4) were somewhat misplaced as they were more of EPWP indicators of achievement, and the ILO team neither had direct responsibility nor control over their delivery. That notwithstanding, most respondents met during field interviews felt that the project had performed reasonably well especially with respect to immediate objective 1, namely; “enhancing the technical capacity of LDPW through the development of appropriate Employment Intensive Approaches (EIA) strategies and tools in the coordination of provincial EPWP”. LDPW staff who had benefitted from training and other forms of capacity building indicated that they were now more confident in planning and implementing their work. The project has however not performed equally well with respect to immediate objective 2, namely; “increase the institutional capacity of Government’s implementing agencies to plan, manage and implement large-scale EI projects and incorporate good labour policies and practices”. This was attributed to two main factors that outside the control of the ILO project team. Firstly, the high turnover of LDPW staff – following their improved employability after training through the ILO project (a negative unintended result). Secondly, absence of a dedicated LDPW team to understudy the ILO team-which is in a way related to the first issue.

**Efficiency of Resource Use:** The project team comprising 3 ILO technical experts and a financial and administration assistant was found to be

technically qualified, committed to project work and with high team work spirit. On account of the fact that the ILO Project Team is supposed to support LDPW in delivering to EPWP objectives (and not to implement the project as such) its current staffing was largely deemed to be adequate. However, the high and increasing demand for ILO technical support in Limpopo Province and more recently in the neighbouring provinces (primarily North West Province) is evidently stretching the team’s capacity – especially given the existing low in-house technical capacity that has been exacerbated by high staff turnover in key implementing bodies. While some key stakeholders felt that the team’s support to the other focal sectors (Environment & Culture, Social and Non-State) was not up to the desirable level – the Mission was cognizant of the fact that the main focus and responsibility of the ILO project (according to the MOU between ILO and LDPW) was on the infrastructure sector even though the team also tried to provide support to the other sectors in relation to the efficient utilization of employment intensive approaches. Re-establishment of Labour Intensive Training Centre (LITC) as a national satellite training centre in Limpopo Province as proposed, will further put added pressure on the ILO team unless additional staff is provided to undertake the training coordination role at the centre, While the project team considered the budget to be adequate, it is likely to become an issue during the second-half of phase 3 as the demand for ILO technical support increases. The Mission found the distribution of both human and financial resources to have been quite strategic and their utilization to be fairly efficient, transparent and prudent.

**Impact Orientation and Sustainability:** Notwithstanding the short-term employment nature of project design (which was meant to be the case) some of its elements that have potential for promoting sustainability include: (i) The continued *commitment and full funding of the project by the Limpopo Government* through the regular budgetary ALLOCATIONS; (ii) *ILO capacity building of LDPW and implementing bodies* to adopt

and apply labour-intensive methods in infrastructure projects, as well as *learnership and skills training* for future employability; (iii) The significant and continued political will of the Limpopo Provincial Government in support of project ideals; (iv) Efforts towards *institutionalization of project management* through LDPW and the PSC where LDPW is the chair; and (v) *Stakeholder involvement* at all levels for ownership. However, while the ILO team has so far provided significant inputs towards sustainability by way of skills development and capacity building (through training, seminars, workshops and study tours, among others) effectiveness in terms of sustainability of project activities has remained rather elusive.

Looking into the future, significant progress towards sustainability of project activities and enhanced “sustainable livelihood” is likely to be seriously undermined by the following three (3) issues – which will need to be addressed during EPWP phase 3:

(i) The *high staff turnover* among implementing bodies including LDPW, Provincial Departments and municipalities – which to a large extent has been triggered by their improved employability after undergoing project training (an unintended result).

(ii) *Lack of appropriate and integrated institutional framework for training in LI methods* (e.g. LITC and its satellite network, and integration of training in higher institutions of learning) to broaden training so as to expedite progress towards attaining the requisite critical mass of trained personnel; and

(iii) *Lack of a clear sustainability and exit strategy* in the project design and implementation processes – which is essential for purposes of guiding project implementers and stakeholders in terms of requisite interventions.

**Main Conclusions:** Despite having no baseline data and targets upon which performance of the project could be objectively assessed, the view of the Mission and indeed that of a majority of key respondents met during field interviews is that it has done quite well - especially in terms of

enhancing the capacity of LDPW through the development of appropriate EIA strategies and tools in the coordination of provincial EPWP”. Institutionalization of capacity of Government’s implementing agencies to plan, manage and implement large-scale EI projects and incorporate good labour policies and practices has performed rather poorly - primarily because of high staff turnover within LDPW and other implementing bodies coupled with the absence of a dedicated team of local technical staff to under-study the ILO technical team (external factors that negatively influenced the performance of the project).

Key factors that are likely to underpin success of the Project in future include:

(i) Re-focusing ILO TA interventions towards activities providing improved livelihood to the target beneficiaries by supporting implementing agencies to put more emphasis on the promotion of “sustainable livelihood” based on EPWP principles - as opposed to short-term employment creation;

(ii) Having in place local technical counterpart staff on a longer basis to understudy the ILO team coupled with appropriate mechanisms for their retention;

(iii) Putting in place an appropriate and integrated institutional framework for training in LI methods including the establishment of a national LITC and its satellite network, coupled with institutionalization of training in LI methods within tertiary training institutions;

(iv) Having adequate funding to cater for increased capacity building needs, including the recruitment of an additional local trainer to take up the training coordination at the proposed LITC; and

(v) Attainment of broader-based “buy-in” of the project ideals and principles including through change of mind set e.g. among contractors, consultants, mentors and corporate business organizations.

## Recommendations & Lessons Learned

Please see the full report for this section.