



Evaluation Summary



International
Labour
Office

Evaluation Unit

Technical Assistance for Capacity Building Support to the Ghana Social Opportunities Project (GSOP) Final Evaluation

Quick Facts

Countries: GHANA

Mid-Term Evaluation: May 2013

Mode of Evaluation: Independent

ILO Administrative responsibility: Abuja

Technical Area: ROAF, Addis Ababa

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Project End: August 2013

Project Code: P.250.09.127.040

Donor: Government of Ghana funded by IDA
(USD 1,479,819.00)

Keywords: Capacity building

Background & Context

Project purpose, logic and structure

The Ghana Social Opportunities Project (GSOP) funded by the International Development Agency (IDA), is located in the social protection sector with the aim to improve targeting in social protection spending; increase access to cash transfers nationwide; expand employment and cash-earning opportunities for the rural poor during the agricultural off-season; and improve economic and social infrastructure.

The International Labour Organisation (ILO) was asked to provide assistance to the project through the formulation of a labour intensive works policy and through capacity building of project stakeholders involved in the LIPW Component. A partnership agreement was signed between GoG and ILO in 1st April 2011. ILO's TA activities commenced

in September 2011, 12 months after commencement of the GSOP.

The main aim of the Capacity Building (CB) component of GSOP is to create capacity at the national and local levels and implement the project in forty-nine (49) selected districts, thereby strengthening the Government's decentralization programme to enable the strategy to be scaled-up nationwide. This was to be achieved through the following objectives: Strengthening Koforidua Training Centre's (KTC) capacity to cater for the demand for training within the Project (GSOP); and Formulating a National Policy for Labour-Intensive Public Works (LIPW).

The TOR for the evaluation mission specifies the Purpose as follows:

- i Give an independent assessment of progress to date (May 2013) of the project; assessing performance as per the foreseen targets and indicators of achievement;
- ii Provide strategic and operational recommendations as well as highlight lessons learned and approaches to sustain the achievements of project results.

As per the TOR the independent evaluation covers all outcomes of the Technical Assistance (TA) for the ILO's CB Support to the GSOP. The evaluation assesses all key outputs that have been achieved since the start of the project and the capacity building efforts made at all levels.

The primary clients of the evaluation are the Government of Ghana as beneficiary of this assistance, project stakeholders and constituent, including the ILO, IDA and most importantly the concerned communities. In this respect the evaluation at-

tempts to provide a critical viewpoint to eventually develop recommendations that support i) increasing the degree of meaningful employment creation in the long run, and ii) constructing and maintaining long-lasting quality rural infrastructure.

Methodology of evaluation

The evaluation has been carried out in principle through a participatory approach through desk review of project documentation, interviews and discussions with stakeholders, site visits, evaluation workshop with KTC staff, consultation workshop with implementation partners and sharing the evaluation workshop with all stakeholders for comments and contributions.

Main Findings & Conclusions

A. Findings: Relevance & Strategic Fit

- Capacity building through training of all persons involved in project work is the major initiator for mainstreaming the innovative technology that creates significant and meaningful employment opportunities (→ GSOP created nearly 760,000 worker-days, 3 LI Guides for Practitioners developed, 755 persons trained).
- The formulation and enactment of the LIPW Policy is the fundamental condition for sustainable LI work methods. As such it is considered a major achievement by the GoG.
- The training component of the CB project is the main contributor for enabling effective GSOP operations on the ground.

Conclusions: Relevance & strategic fit

The successful formulation of the LIPW Policy Framework by GoG was triggered by the ILO TA component and is a fundamental achievement to mainstreaming LIPW on a national scale. The support for developing a sustainable LI training capacity at KTC is an essential contribution to the operationalization of the LIPW Policy Framework.

B. Findings: Validity of Design

Due to the evolving nature of GSOP and its objective to improve targeting in social protection spending, increase access to cash transfers, and expand employment and cash-earning opportunities for the rural poor during the agricultural off-season, this project became a reactionary training approach with a 'crush' implementation program.

Conclusions: Validity of design

Although the delivered training has been a 'reactive crush-programme' and had to be delivered

before sufficient training capacity was achieved, it has still managed to create a wide-ranging starting platform of positive awareness and motivation for the adoption of LI work methods at local and national levels.

C: Findings: Project Effectiveness

Achievements:

- **Fundamental and substantial results have been achieved in the relatively short period of time since the ILO TA started operations for the CB component.**
 - There is a predominant appreciation of the training received by all cadres and participants. The quantity of training delivered is significantly above the original targets.
 - The capacity at District level to manage LI projects has been appreciably enhanced and a sustainable level of awareness of LI approach has been created.
 - The communities' involvement in the project and level of awareness and appreciation of the LI work approach and its benefits have been considerably increased.
 - The transfer of skills to communities contributes to an increased capacity of local/village-based maintenance.
 - The capacity of local small-scale Contractors to carry out LI work contracts has been improved.
 - The project provides the opportunity for a wide audience on LI technology training and as such is a more integrated approach for public infrastructure in general.
 - The LI Guides have been developed in close collaboration with the relevant line agencies (DFR and GIDA) as well as with two KNUST Faculties. The result is a very well documented and comprehensive set of Guidelines.
 - The training programme (under component 4) with its focus on skill development provides a real opportunity for poor community members to take up economic activities.
- ##### **Overall GSOP Challenges:**
- The bidding and contract documents currently in use are not yet appropriate for LI contract works.
 - The capacity to design road and dam projects, prepare bidding and contract documents as well as supervising contract works is still weak and Contracts are poorly managed at district level.
 - Approval of works by Regional Coordinators (GSOP), line agency engineers and district en-

gineers also appears to be without sufficient understanding of the required quality standards and LI work methods.

- Hand tools for LI works are partly lacking or are inappropriate and measuring and quality control equipment are rarely seen on site.
- **One of the most challenging technical issues is the lack of proper compaction.**

Training Related Challenges:

- The selection criteria for trainees were not necessarily based on minimal educational requirements, work experience and defined job-descriptions. The selection was carried out by GSOP and KTC was not directly involved.
- The crush-training programme (due to the demand driven project approach and late start of the ILO TA component) led to overcrowded classes with high numbers of participants.
- A structured follow-up by the guest trainers (resource persons) has not been adequate due to various reasons. KTC does not have its own cadre of permanent trainers / instructors.
- KTC does not have its own model/training site where practical exercises can be carried out and demonstrations organised.

Conclusions: Project effectiveness

- The training programme significantly supports the GSOP in terms of enabling cash transfer through meaningful employment creation and construction of rural infrastructure.
- The new Guidelines for Practitioners for roads, dams and climate change are comprehensive and will be very useful for a replication of the project/approach. As such they are also important instruments for the operationalization of the LIPW Policy Framework.

D: Findings: Resource Efficiency

- The project has been following the original activity list as stipulated in the Agreement. Establishing annual work plans and actually implementing them has not been possible, as the GSOP implementation process requires continuous adaptations to respond to changing demands.
- With respect to the ILO TA component the project expenditures are within the budgetary limits and the funds have been used very efficiently and well targeted.

Conclusions: Resource efficiency

The resources have been well allocated and managed in respect of achieving the expected results and considering the given demand driven approach.

E: Findings: Effectiveness of management arrangements

Effectiveness of Management Arrangements

- Under the current circumstances the project's reporting and monitoring system and reporting routine are considered elaborative and sufficient.
- The ILO management back-up support is important and indispensable. The limited financial authority of the CTA is considered insufficient for efficient operations.
- **The collaboration among all partners involved in the training development and delivery has been exemplary.**
- One of the obvious strong elements of the GSOP is the effective inclusion and participation of communities.

Impact Orientation and Sustainability

- The Draft LIPW Policy Framework was completed last year and will soon be forwarded for Cabinet approval.
- For KTC to become a fully capacitated and effective national training institution with a potential international outreach the strategy in terms of what is desired is obviously in place. The Principal of KTC and the ILO CTA are now preparing plans for continued and concentrated support based on a clear understanding what the development path should be.

Conclusions: Effectiveness of management arrangements

- The collaboration with the various project partners has been exceptionally good and fruitful.
- Active community participation, community awareness about LIPW opportunities and skill transfer through training is evident.

Recommendations

Recommendations for immediate TA follow up (before Dec 3013) :

1. It will be important to now provide high quality training to further enhance the competency level of all involved actors. This should immediately start with refresher training for supervisors and contractor staff currently operating.
2. For the remaining period of the ILO's TA input (till end Dec 13) the following priority activities are recommended:
 - Carry out the planned courses for climate change projects
 - Carry out 6 refresher (problem-oriented) courses in selected regions for Client and Contractor Supervisors plus coaches (each two weeks)
 - Finalise the L.I. practitioner guides
 - Assist the Principal in developing a project proposal to further strengthen KTC
 - Prepare final project report
3. It is strongly recommended to also train Contractors/MDs in LI technical matters, work management, contract management and business management. DFR and other line agency staff who are involved in LIPW must also receive thorough orientation training.
4. KTC to further strengthen and institutionalise collaboration with KNUST. It is also suggested for KTC to consider a more 'mobile training approach' and to develop the respective capacity for it.
5. Retain the two local ILO training engineers at KTC.

Recommendations for KTC support project (past Dec 2013):

6. It is strongly recommended to continue supporting the development of KTC to becoming a centre of excellence for LIPW training. Model training sites for roads and dams at KTC are also a must.

Recommendations for follow-up by GSOP

7. Develop a concept for road and dam maintenance including the necessary management systems applicable for use by LI methods at local level.
8. To further develop the DAs to be able to manage LIPW it is recommended to assemble a 'District toolkit' containing all standard documentation and simple testing and control equipment coupled with appropriate training.
9. It is strongly recommended to urgently review the contract documents for road and dam works to align them with LI construction

methods and management requirements of small-scale contractors, DAs' contract management capacity and legally sound contract requirements.

10. It is strongly recommended to develop and introduce a tailor-made LI-friendly Quality Assurance system.
11. Provide through the project adequate compaction equipment, e.g. plant hire pool at Regional level.
12. Establish at each district/region a pool of qualified and certified Site Supervisors from which contractors can hire.

Important lessons learned

1. GSOP as a social protection project using a multi-sector LIPW approach shows adequate substance to generate a national labour-intensive police framework that receives political and public ownership.
2. Effective collaboration with all partners in a large-scale project like GSOP pays out not only for managing the project but also for training.

The well-managed and effective collaboration in the GSOP demonstrates good practice in achieving common goals in a large-scale and multi-sector programme.

3. Active community participation is a cornerstone of GSOP and shows good results.
4. Although GSOP is conceived as a cash transfer project contributing to overcome extreme poverty within the project period, good quality infrastructure in the long term is an even more important factor to enhance the livelihood of the concerned communities.
5. The evaluation has clearly demonstrated that only planned and well-prepared training by sufficient and professional trainers can achieve the desired training effects.
6. For LIPW operations well-developed LI work standards and methods, appropriate contract documentation, good supervision and appropriate quality control measures are indispensable success factors.
7. The commitment demonstrated by the originating Ministry of Employment and Labour Relations and the participating stakeholders in developing the LIPW Policy has achieved an excellent result and as such is the fundamental condition for sustainable LI work methods for public infrastructure in Ghana.
8. The successful formulation of the LIPW Policy Framework by GoG was triggered by the ILO Capacity Building component and demonstrates good practice.