

## CHYAO TF in Sierra Leone

1. PROMOTING SUSTAINABLE YOUTH EMPLOYMENT IN SIERRA LEONE
2. VOCATIONAL TRAINING FOR YOUTH WITH DISABILITIES IN WESTERN AREA AND KONO DISTRICTS OF SIERRA LEONE TOWARD PRODUCTIVE AND ACTIVE SOCIAL LIVES
3. SUPPORTING YOUTH PARTICIPATION AND EMPOWERMENT- GOBIFO
4. SKILLS TRAINING AND CAREER DEVELOPMENT



This evaluation report reflects only the views of its author and does not involve in any way the Italian Ministry of Foreign Affairs.

The evaluation awarded to ABATON srl of Rome, was carried out in May and June 2013 by a team coordinated by Matteo Scaramella and composed of Giorgio Macor and Valentina Bianchini.

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# Executive Summary

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*The evaluation concerns four projects in Sierra Leone, funded by the Italian Government through the “Children & Youth in Africa” (CHYAO) trust fund managed by the World Bank.*

*The evaluation exercise has been carried out following OCSE/DAC parameters of relevance, efficiency, effectiveness, impact, sustainability, coherence and value added; horizontal issues have also been taken into consideration, such as good governance, gender and environmental issues, when applicable.*

*In this frame, seven clear evaluation questions have been identified. They provide comprehensive assessment of projects strategies, of their achievements and allow to draw recommendations for further actions.*

- 1. Overall objective of the projects was the promotion of youth employment in compliance with country needs.** Youth - i.e. population between 15 and 34 – are 34% of the total population and 60% of them are unemployed or underemployed. Youth were deeply involved in the conflict and are still suffering from its consequences: wounds and disabilities, lack of adequate education and skills, disrupted economic environment, extremely poor demand for labour. After war relief interventions have created a strong relief-minded approach to livelihood, not conducive to sustainable improvement of their living conditions. By targeting vulnerable youth and contributing to the strengthening of national institutions dealing with youth issues, the projects took into account the needs of the poorest in the short and in the long term.
- 2. The activities implemented by the projects, focusing on training and capacity building, were consistent with GoSL development objectives, particularly the ones concerning poverty reduction, as expressed in the PRS II (“Agenda for Change”).** Training has concerned skills, numeracy, literacy, agribusiness and BDS. This choice derived from a careful training needs analysis and proved to be very successful and conducive to effective empowerment of youth; the geographical selection of the interventions, proved as well very appropriate and fully compliant to GoSL policies, that are aimed to ensure food security and increase income generation by improving living conditions in rural areas, mitigating internal migrations towards towns and promoting agri-business. The development of a M&E system for the YES Secretariat implemented by one of the projects, very relevant to the need for institution strengthening, has been extremely well appreciated by GoSL and all concerned parties.
- 3. One of the main positive results of the projects is the contribution that they have provided, as a whole though each of them in a different manner, to the evolution from an assistance-based to a business-based attitude of the beneficiaries.** Actually in the aftermath of the war a relief approach was logic and coherent with the need for fast recovery. As a consequence of such an approach, whose limitations were very clear to the donors, final beneficiaries and, sometimes, local NGOs have developed an assistance-based mind-set that needs to be overcome to pursue a self-reliant development path. Nowadays Country’s conditions have significantly changed, and so has GoSL strategy in the youth and employment sectors. To support this change of perspective, NaYCOM, now responsible of youth issues, is managing the sector, where projects and programs have moved from a relief-

based approach into a business-oriented one. This new institution is able to attract funds and channel their flow efficiently and effectively and it is supported by UNDP and the World Bank, deeply committed in this sector.

- 4. Projects have been efficiently implemented within the budget; time-extensions have been requested by all projects.** All project outputs were delivered with no over-spending, with one only exception, due to unavailability of staff, but in that case UNDP has timely refunded relevant funds. Disbursement by WB has been regular, with no delays. However, in the design phase projects had been rather optimistic on the time-frame, underestimating difficulties and time needed to overcome them. Extensions were agreed to all projects but one; they allowed more infrastructures to be rehabilitated, hosting additional training, providing refresher courses, increasing number of beneficiaries, catch up some delays in the implementation.
- 5. All projects achieved the expected results at the time of project completion.** According to their nature of pilot project, they succeeded in tailoring their activities on the beneficiaries they wanted to reach, achieving the expected outcomes, showing a satisfactory overall effectiveness and allowing favourable expectations about future impacts. However, the small-scale approach did not allow, for the great majority, to achieve results going further the subsistence threshold, thus affecting sustainability.
- 6. All the projects had an internal monitoring system and final assessments have been produced for each of them.** Transparency and accountability were ensured, and field components of each project were sufficiently monitored. Supervision of monitoring and reporting was ensured by the World Bank through their Task Team Leaders (TTL) and hired consultants. Final evaluations have been carried on for all the projects. They share a positive assessment of the overall impact achieved by the projects at their completion. However, projects follow-up has constantly decreased after projects completion and in some cases completely stopped.
- 7. In the short term the results achieved had a substantial positive impact on the lives of targeted communities; sustainability is however a matter of deep concern.** At the end of the projects, most beneficiaries declared to have “more hope for the future”, better income and skills, increased self-esteem and better living conditions; this is still lasting, two years after projects end, and will most probably last for a while to go. But the majority of the communities benefiting by the projects showed, at a different extent, an approach to their own development giving a far too great role to aid, which often leads communities to wait for another donor to come, rather than to count on their own resources and efforts to overcome constraints and difficulties. Sustainability of the infrastructures built by the projects is also at risk, as far as their maintenance and proper use are concerned. A further problematic issue concerning sustainability is the governance at beneficiaries level; decentralised GoSL institutions need to be strengthened, since they play a key role in implementing national poverty reduction strategies, and in the support an follow-up of development activities. Projects have to rely on them and, if needed, contribute to their reinforcement, rather than bypass them and create parallel structures, as it was the case for GoBifo.
- 8. The projects allowed a better understanding of the drivers and weaknesses of the strategies employed to foster youth employment in Sierra Leone. They significantly**

**contributed to the reshaping of policies and strategies on youth employment by GoSL and International Donors.** Actually, after CHYAO, PBF and BF experiences, International Donors and Government changed their approach to youth employment policies toward a more business-oriented one. The five new BDS centres built by UNDP under the Youth Empowerment and Employment Programme (YEEP) are following this new path, which is strongly promoted by NaYCom, the central governmental institution on youth issues. Such an important impact is due to both the actual achievements of each single project and to the capacity of making explicit the factors of success and failure and to transfer to all the stakeholders, including GoSL, the lessons learned from experience. M&E exercises done by the projects themselves or by the WB have greatly contributed to this process, particularly the impact evaluation ones. This allowed demonstrating the weaknesses of the relief based approach, largely prevailing at the moment of the launch of the projects.

**9. Political coordination still needs improvement.** The recently established Ministry of Decentralization and Rural Development needs to better coordinate its action with the NayCOM. Even if a strategy on youth employment has been identified, dissemination of that strategy to all concerned institutions is not fully accomplished. However, political sustainability looks acquired, provided that all decision makers and implementing agencies will keep adopting as mainstream strategy the business-oriented approach.

**10. CHYAO Trust Fund objectives implementing methodology and practise is still very relevant to country needs and is worth to be continued.** The findings of the evaluation provide suggestions and recommendations for new interventions:

→ ***NaYCom has to be considered as a key stakeholder on youth issues in Sierra Leone.*** NaYCom has shown good potential to efficiently manage funds for programmes and projects, ensuring coordination of different interventions in the sector and improving political coordination, by fostering dialogue among Government, International Donors, NGO's and civil society. NaYCom is actually already playing this role, receiving funds and managing a great number of project and programmes on the issue. Its involvement would ensure a better alignment with national policies on youth and therefore full ownership of the recipient Country, a better follow-up after the end of single projects, extend the number of beneficiaries and create the conditions for a better sustainability.

→ ***Encourage youth employment by promoting partnership with private sector.*** In a country where 87% of the population works in the informal sector and is often self-employed, the key is to create and/or strengthen entrepreneurship, promoting partnership with the established private sector, helping in developing a civic culture, conducive to economic democracy.

→ ***Focus on entrepreneurial mind-set, as an engine for economic development.*** The evidence shows that the main challenge for economic growth and sustainable youth employment is to give youth both a positive perspective on the long term and some attitude and capacity to plan their future, increasing the awareness of the importance of planning their own business activities and of saving for their own household or community. CHYAO projects performed well in this sense, combining in their vocational trainings, numeracy, literacy and business skills. Access to banking and to micro-credit schemes, though not significantly successful during project life-time, has proved to be an important area for action of future interventions.

→ ***Encourage employment in rural areas focusing on agri-business, take advantage of country's resources in this sector, mitigate urbanization.*** The majority of the population

still live in poor rural areas, but a lot of them are migrating to towns looking for jobs. Urban economy is however still very poor and living conditions of immigrants are under many aspects even worse than the ones they tried to escape from. Efforts are to be deployed to create more income generating activities end to increasing local production. The promotion of agribusiness activities and trainings, together with the provision of mechanical tools, would be a key-tools in order to achieve this, promoting state and private investment and linking to other economic, cultural and social development policies and programmes.

- ***Strengthen local governance structures and involve them deeply in youth employment projects***, in line with GoSL decentralization strategies. Youth employment projects have a greater impact if they involve local development committees, helping them to become more youth-oriented and gender-sensitive and compliant with national decentralization strategies. Communities internal cohesion will be improved by promoting the establishment of small workers groups and improving their commitment to achieve results for the group benefits.

# Objectives and methodologies of the evaluation

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The evaluation has been conducted according to the Terms of Reference (see Annex I) of the contract signed on 12 March 2013 between the Italian Ministry of Foreign Affairs – DGCS and Abaton, a Company based in Rome; it started on May 6, following a communication sent by DGCS on the 24 April 2013.

The object of the evaluation is a sample of projects implemented in Sierra Leone and already completed, funded by the Italian Ministry of Foreign Affairs – DGCS through a Trust Fund to the World Bank. The projects are:

1. **“Supporting Youth Participation and Empowerment” - TF 094804 (Recipient Executed) and TF 095652 (Bank-executed). Implementing Agency: GOBIFo**
2. **“Skills Training and Career Development” - TF091056 (Recipient Executed). Implementing Agency: AVSI**
3. **“Vocational Training for Youth with Disabilities in Western area and Kono Districts of Sierra Leone toward Productive and Active Social Lives “- TF 091058 (Bank-executed) and TF 091059 (Recipient Executed). Implementing Agency: COOPI**
4. **“Promoting Sustainable Youth Employment in Sierra Leone” - TF 091047 (Bank-executed) and TF 091048 (Recipient-executed) “Promoting Sustainable Youth Employment through Capacity Building”, Implementing Agency: UNDP, e TF091045 (BE) and TF091046 (RE) “Promoting Sustainable Youth Employment through Youth Entrepreneurship”. Implementing Agency: NACSA.**

A fifth project has been added by Abaton during the evaluation, at no additional cost for the Client; it is “Empowering Vulnerable Youth for Self-Reliance in Kono District and Western Area” (TF095498) which followed the project “Vocational Training for Youth with Disabilities in Western area and Kono Districts of Sierra Leone toward Productive and Active Social Lives “ and was also implemented by COOPI. Such an extension proved necessary to give evidence of the impacts and of the sustainability of the outcomes of the COOPI project included in the contract.

The evaluation has followed three phases:

- desk analysis of the projects and definition of evaluation questions;
- field mission;
- synthesis of the findings, reporting and discussion with the Client and the major stakeholders.

Desk analysis consisted in the collection and analysis of available documentation, and interviews with MAE and WB representatives and with some of the staff of implementing NGOs; this allowed to identify strength and weaknesses of the projects to be verified during the field mission, formulate evaluation questions, methodology and tools.

Methodology is based on OECD-DAC principles, i.e. on the five criteria of relevance, efficiency, effectiveness, impact and sustainability; this is extended to the assessment of projects



coherence with and compliance to the principles of ownership, alignment and harmonization, as they have been outlined in the high level forum of Rome, Paris, Accra and Busan and the consequent working groups meetings. Horizontal questions have been as well taken into consideration, such as environmental and gender issues and good governance.

Evaluation questions have eventually been defined, aimed to the assessment of the degree of achievement of the objectives at all levels, of their quality and utility for the beneficiaries, of the degree of compliance of implementation procedures and practice to principles of good and transparent management, also through the application of benchmarking tools.

Strengths, weaknesses and causes of success and failure have been deeply analyzed; best practices and lessons learned have been outlined which will help to improve future interventions.

Seven evaluation questions have been identified in order to better focus the evaluation exercise and make the best possible use of limited resources; for each of them judgment criteria and performance and success indicators have been defined. They are the following:

<b>EQ 1) Was the project proposal consistent with and supportive of Government's Poverty Reduction Strategy and relevant sector programs?</b>	
<b>Judgment criteria</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• proper identification of beneficiaries;</li> <li>• clear identification of the main constraints to be addressed;</li> <li>• regular coordination and harmonization among main stakeholders and with relevant governmental bodies</li> </ul>
<b>Indicators:</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• project beneficiaries and Poverty Reduction Strategy's targets are aligned</li> <li>• activities answering to identified constraints are consistent with government strategies in the sector</li> <li>• number of coordination meetings</li> </ul>

<b>EQ 2) What was the quality of project design? And were outputs and outcomes achievable, given the limited resources and time available?</b>	
<b>Judgment criteria</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• presence and quality of the Logical Framework (LF)</li> <li>• existence of a chronogram</li> <li>• identification of a risk management strategy</li> <li>• conception of an exit strategy</li> <li>• results were realistic and feasible according to the proposed budget and duration</li> <li>• local partners and beneficiaries have been involved in defining the project strategy</li> </ul>
<b>Indicators</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• OVIs clearly defined and realistic</li> <li>• realistic chronogram</li> <li>• risks and assumptions are properly taken into account</li> <li>• transfer of capacities to local partners is paid attention</li> <li>• proper cost analysis</li> </ul>

- local stakeholders/beneficiaries approach noticeable in the project proposal

**EQ 3) Have the planned outputs been achieved within the expected inputs/resources and within the expected timeframe?**

**Judgment criteria**

- overall project cost correspond to project results and benefits
- activities have been implemented as scheduled
- activities have been implemented at planned or below planned cost
- corrective measures have been taken if required

**Indicators**

- OVIS have been met
- quality of results was good
- timeframe has been respected
- no significant financial constraint has been recorded
- required corrective actions have been timely and properly implemented

**EQ 4) Was an efficient monitoring/evaluation and reporting system established?**

**Judgment criteria**

- set up of an internal M&E system
- clear definition of tasks/responsibilities among project staff
- administrative requirements are clearly set up
- data and figures are regularly checked and updated

**Indicators**

- regularity of progress/intermediate reports
- administrative management is transparent and fitting the rules
- data and figures match the expected OVIs
- no conflict of competences is noticeable

**EQ 5) Were the planned outcomes achieved and had all planned beneficiaries access to project results/services?**

**Judgment criteria**

- extent to which planned results have been achieved
- extent to which target groups utilize the newly acquired knowledge and competences
- flexibility to adapt to changing external conditions in order to ensure benefits for the target groups

**Indicators**

- increased job opportunities
- increase of income and improved living conditions compared to the baseline
- appropriateness of measures taken by the management to cope with unplanned effects

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**EQ 6) Did the provided benefits last after project completion?**

<b>Judgment criteria</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• assessment of correctness of the exit strategy</li> <li>• local partners kept coordinating the main stakeholders</li> <li>• relationships between beneficiaries and local partners remain steady</li> <li>• data and figures of project results have been updated</li> <li>• analysis of financial/economic viability of new business related to the project</li> </ul>
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<b>Indicators</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• stable or positive trend of project results since project completion</li> <li>• relationship network established by the project is still alive</li> <li>• the rate of new businesses not financially viable is acceptably low</li> </ul>
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**EQ 7) Did the CHAYO Trust Fund support development/consolidation of policies by government institutions?**

<b>Judgment criteria</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• analysis of macro-economic policies in the sectors related to youth employment</li> <li>• assessment of new sectoral initiatives and of their relevant donors</li> </ul>
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<b>Indicators</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• best practices from CHAYO funded projects have been integrated into national policies</li> <li>• experiences from CHAYO funded projects have been replicated by governments or by other donors</li> </ul>
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The evaluation question have been selected to give a precise answer to the Client knowledge needs and to produce a useful report. They are conceived in such a way that they cover all the OEDC-DAC criteria and the horizontal issues.

During field mission the evaluators have interviewed implementing agencies staff, met stakeholders, counterparts and a sample of beneficiaries, assess results, indicators, strength and weaknesses of the projects, answer the evaluation questions, addressing issues that had not clearly appeared during the phase of the analysis of the documentation.

This draft final report is now presented to the Client, who will circulate it among concerned stakeholders; the draft will then be discussed in a joint meeting with the evaluation team, the Donor, the WB and the Implementing Agencies.

A final report will be prepared, taking into consideration the comments, suggestion and integrations proposed by the concerned parties.

# Country Context

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**Consolidating  
a pluralistic  
democratic  
system**

Following the end of the civil war, which lasted from March 1991 to January 2002, peace and democratic institutions have been consolidated.

Since then, Sierra Leone has already had three full-fledged and credible elections for President, Parliament, and local councils. The first Presidential and Parliamentary elections were held in May 2002 and saw the victory of the Sierra Leone Peoples Party (SLPP) candidate, while in the elections held in 2007 and in the last ones held in 2012, Ernest Bai Koroma of the All Peoples Congress Party (APC) was sworn in as President of Sierra Leone, defeating the candidate of the SLPP. Civilian rule has always been either under APC or SLPP, with the APC ruling for a 25-year period from 1967 to 1992 and the SLPP ruling from 1961-1967 and from 1996-2007. There was broad consensus among international observers that these elections were free, fair and credible, providing good reason for optimism that a sustainable pluralistic democratic system is gradually being established. However, the situation remains fragile, as demonstrated by clashes in urban centres between SLPP and APC supporters.

Local and Chiefdom elections were also successfully held for the first time in 32 years, in May 2004. Being an important milestone in terms of political reconciliation, the Local Government elections represent an important step toward the implementation of the decentralization programme, which aims at improving the delivery of essential services at grass-root level, giving local authorities responsibilities for most local-level delivery of services (health, education, water, feeder roads, etc.). Increasingly, the district councils directly influence development planning and the delivery of services, and they are continuing to broaden the engagement of their communities in planning and monitoring.

**Sierra Leone  
increased its  
HDI of 41% in  
32 years**

Since the end of the conflict, the Country has made significant strides in rehabilitating the extensive socio-economic destruction caused by the conflict. In fact, according to the UNDP's Human Development Report of 2013, Sierra Leone's Human Development Index (HDI) value for 2012 is 0.359 positioning the country at 177 out of 187 countries and territories, with an increase of 41% (from 0.255 to 0.359) between 1980 and 2012.

However, Millennium development Goals (MDG's) are far to be achieved, with 53% of the population, according to 2008 data, living below the poverty line and individuals living above the line suffering from deprivations in education, health and other living conditions.

Most recently, global economic volatility (sharp increases in food prices in 2008 followed by steep declines in commodity demand and prices in 2009) has exacerbated poverty, particularly among the most vulnerable groups such as young urban and rural populations.

**Focus on HD, agriculture, energy and transport to foster development**

To foster development, the Government set up a Poverty Reduction Strategy (PRSP II) for the period 2008-2012, called “Agenda for Change”, where identified four key priorities/sectors:

1. Human development: ensuring sustainable human development through expanding access to the basic social services and improving coverage of the social protection needs of the poor and vulnerable.
2. Agriculture: raising quantity and value-added productivity in agriculture and fisheries, emphasizing the productive capacities of the poor and vulnerable.
3. Energy: providing a reliable power supply to the country, and transiting toward a low carbon energy economy through use of the country’s significant hydropower potential.
4. Transports: developing a national transport network for goods and people, thereby facilitating increased investment and economic activity.

PRSP II moved away from the recovery agenda of the first PRSP to a development strategy focused on broad-based economic growth.

In this framework, the issue of youth unemployment is considered as one of the main risk to peace and stability, and a threat to development. Within a population of 6.1 million (UNFPA data) the youth (age group between 15 and 34 years old) represents 34% of the total population. With low literacy rate, 60% of youth are unemployed or underemployed, among the highest in the West African sub-region, making the youth dependency ratio of the country very challenging.

In addition to this, the limited capacity of the private sector and a generally difficult economic environment, exacerbated by the global economic crisis and its repercussions on the country’s economy and labour market worsened the situation: according to UNDP data 60 % of people in Sierra Leone lives below the national poverty line.

The problem has also gender implications, with many girls dropping out from school or being forced to early marriages in order to be economically sustained. This results in less access than men to land, credit, training and employment.

Moreover, women in Sierra Leone are more susceptible to poverty because of their prevalence in the informal sector, which unfortunately involves a large part of the productive activities of the country.

To tackle gender disparities, the Sierra Leonean government has adopted two national policies: the Gender Mainstreaming Policy and the National Policy on the Advancement of Women, these are in addition to the National Gender Strategic Plan (2009-2012) and the Sierra Leone National Action Plan (SILNAP), based on United Nation Security Council Resolution (UNSCR) 1325 on Women, Peace and Security and UNSCR 1820 on sexual violence launched in 2010. However, despite these efforts, MDG 3 on Gender Equality and Women’s Empowerment will not be met by 2015.

Creating jobs, primarily through private sector growth and skills improvement (especially vocational training) supplemented by works programs, was identified as the key to promote and sustain youth employment. Another issue addressed by the PRSP II was that of halting migration of young people from rural areas to urban centres by fostering agriculture, a sector in which the Country is economically advantaged.

**34% of total population is in the age group of 15-34 years old**

**Still 60% of people lives below the national poverty line**

***Shifting aid modalities according to Paris and Accra principles***

Together with the promotion of agribusiness in rural areas and all over the country, the Government efforts were directed to improve infrastructures (energy, water, ports, and roads) and access to quality finance (notably rural finance), which are holding back development across all sectors.

To finance this programme, Government of Sierra Leone relied on the help of International Development Partners through development assistance. For much of the period since the civil war, the use of aid funds and the modalities for funds delivering have been governed by the demands of early post-conflict recovery, which has meant that a significant part of the funding was used for security and peace-building activities. Since then, there has been a growing demand from government, accepted by the country's development partners, to adjust the profile of spending and the modalities of aid delivery to reflect the agreements of Paris and Accra on Aid effectiveness, in order to ensure ownership, alignment, harmonization, mutual accountability and managing for results. A new aid policy was also prepared to guide partners' support for the Agenda for Change.

On the other hand, Government is trying to foster its institutional capacities and is asking to centralize development aid into the national institutions which proved to be ready for the task. The NaYCom, National Youth Commission, is one of those, already managing youth concerned programmes and projects and gradually becoming the national benchmark on youth issues.

The new PRSP, about to be released under the title of "Agenda for Prosperity" (2013-2017) will succeed the Agenda for Change and will provide a development strategy for the coming years, which will probably include the already mentioned trends in the youth sector:

- Centralization of the management of youth programmes and projects into the NaYCom;
- Promotion of youth employment through skills training;
- Promotion of agribusiness sector as an employment opportunity in rural areas;
- Fostering local governance and collective actions at community level;
- Empowerment of women and most marginalized groups, taking into account cross-cutting issues in development projects.

# *Projects Evaluation*

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## **Project 1. Promoting Sustainable Youth Employment**

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### **Component 1**

<b>Title:</b>	<b>Promoting Sustainable Youth Employment through Capacity Building</b>
<b>Grant Number:</b>	<b>TF091048</b>
<b>Implementing Agency:</b>	<b>UNDP</b>
<b>Start Date:</b>	<b>October 2007</b>
<b>End Date:</b>	<b>September 2010</b>
<b>Total Budget:</b>	<b>155.400 \$</b>

### **Component 2**

<b>Title:</b>	<b>Promoting Sustainable Youth Employment through Youth Entrepreneurship</b>
<b>Grant Number:</b>	<b>TF091046</b>
<b>Implementing Agency:</b>	<b>NaCSA</b>
<b>Start Date:</b>	<b>October 2007</b>
<b>End Date:</b>	<b>October 2010</b>
<b>Total Budget:</b>	<b>177.600 \$</b>

### ***Project background and objectives***

A decade after the end of the civil war, Sierra Leone is now a stable and peaceful country, governed through democratic institutions. Encouraged by the progress made in the post-conflict years the government set up the national strategy called “Agenda for Change”, which was financed mainly through external aid. The support of International Development Partners to achieve the goals set up in the Agenda needed to be efficiently managed and rationalized, particularly in the youth employment sector, which was targeted by numerous projects from different organizations.

The need to improve programming, coordination and efficiency of the Institutions managing the great amount of foreign aid received, is reflected in the overall objective of the following project, financed through CHYAO Trust Fund,

which was to strengthen the capacity of Sierra Leone to implement successful sustainable Youth employment programs and provide technical assistance to young entrepreneurs. The project was divided in two components, implemented by two different agencies.

The first one, called “Promoting Sustainable Youth Employment through Capacity Building” was implemented by UNDP, and directly addressed the need of strengthening institutional capacity of the Youth Employment Secretariat (YES) from the Ministry of Youth and Sport (created to implement and coordinate the Youth Employment



Scheme, launched by the government in 2006 to support the creation of youth employment), by providing a Monitoring and Evaluation system. Specific objectives were to: (a) develop a multi-donor short and long term strategy, including policy and programs for youth employment promotion, (b) strengthen the capacity of the Ministry of Youth and Sports to develop and implement technical sound youth employment creation programs, (c) strengthen the capacity of key Ministries in

addressing youth employment issues.

The second component, called “Promoting Sustainable Youth Employment through Youth Entrepreneurship”, was implemented by National Commission for Social Action (NaCSA), which mandate was expanded so that to include social protection of disadvantaged individuals and households; repatriation of war victims; the implementation of community-driven development projects for rural communities; and support for capacity building in district and chiefdom councils. NaCSA is a governmental institution, under the President office, receiving funds straight from Ministry of Finance and responsible for implementing developing projects, among which infrastructures building and other works of public relevance. The specific objective of this component was to build capacity of youth entrepreneurs in micro-credit financing and basic business development plans.

The two components, targeting two different types of beneficiaries and addressing different sectors of activity, will be considered separately by this evaluation.

## PROJECT EVALUATION

*The evaluation of the project gives a positive feedback of both components achievements. The activities funded in order to strengthen the capacities of national institutions in the youth employment sector, have had a great and long-lasting impact. The YES, now part of the National Youth Commission, has improved its programming abilities in its domain by mainstreaming the youth employment programming around Business Development Skills. The training provided by NaCSA significantly improved living conditions and competences of the beneficiaries reached, allowing them to make future planning and projections.*

**The following table summarizes the project’s performance according to the evaluation questions; while in the next pages the evaluation is described with full details according to OECD/DAC parameters.**

**NB: A = UNDP component**

**B = NaCSA component**

**EQ 1 Was the project proposal consistent with and supportive of Government’s Poverty Reduction Strategy and relevant sector programs?**

Criteria	Indicators	Comments
<b>Proper identification of beneficiaries</b>	Beneficiaries and PRS target groups are aligned	<b>A + B:</b> Target groups consistent with UN Joint Vision. GoSL Agenda for Change and Youth Employment Strategy.
<b>Clear identification of the main constraints to be addressed</b>	Activities answering to identified constraints are consistent with government strategies in the sector	<b>A:</b> Lack of M&E capacity identified by GoSL, donors and private sector as main constraint for effective and efficient programming and use of resources <b>B:</b> Business Development Skills in agribusiness identified by GoSL and donors as a key to sustainable income generation in rural areas

<b>Regular coordination and harmonization among main stakeholders and with relevant governmental bodies</b>	Scheduled coordination meetings	<p><b>A:</b> Workshops held before and during project implementation helped defining the action plan; then the activity was carried on autonomously.</p> <p><b>B:</b> Some coordination took place in the initial stage of project implementation, then it suffered from the withdrawal of responsible staff.</p>
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**EQ2 What was the quality of project design? And were outputs and outcomes achievable, given the limited resources and time available?**

Criteria	Indicators	Comments
<b>Presence and quality of the LF</b>	OVI's clearly defined and realistic	<b>A + B:</b> LF according to WB format, OVI's lack of quantitative targets.
<b>Existence of a chronogram</b>	Realistic chronogram	<p><b>A:</b> Initially realistic, but an extension has been required for management problems</p> <p><b>B:</b> Underestimation of the problems caused by political uncertainty, by the low initial degree of literacy, and of the need for refreshment courses</p>
<b>Identification of a risk management strategy</b>	Risks and assumptions are properly taken into account	<b>A + B:</b> There was a good analysis of risks and assumptions, which eventually hold true
<b>Conception of an exit strategy</b>	Transfer of capacities to local partners is paid attention	<p><b>A:</b> Capacity building was the main objective.</p> <p><b>B:</b> Business knowledge transfer to beneficiaries designed and implemented in all phases of the project.</p>
<b>Results were realistic and feasible according to the proposed budget and duration</b>	Proper cost analysis	<b>A + B:</b> Outputs were coherent with the given inputs.
<b>Local partners and beneficiaries have been involved in defining the project strategy</b>	Local stakeholders/beneficiaries approach noticeable in the project proposal	<b>A + B:</b> GoSL and other stakeholders actively involved. Final beneficiaries selected after project's start.

**EQ 3 Have the planned outputs been achieved within the expected inputs/resources and within the expected timeframe?**

Criteria	Indicators	Comments
<b>Overall project cost correspond to project results and benefits</b>	OVI's have been met	<p><b>A:</b> Business advisor not recruited. Other OVI's cost efficiently met.</p> <p><b>B:</b> OVI's met at planned cost</p>
<b>Activities have been implemented as scheduled</b>	Quality of results was good	<p><b>A:</b> M&amp;E system well-conceived, appropriate to the context and highly appreciated by the stakeholders.</p> <p><b>B:</b> Beneficiaries acquired good competences in BDS</p>
<b>Activities have been implemented at planned</b>	Timeframe has been respected	<b>A:</b> Extension requested due to difficulties in hiring business advisor

<b>or below planned cost</b>	No significant financial constraint has been recorded	<b>B:</b> No cost extension requested to cover learning needs
<b>Corrective measures have been taken if required</b>	Required corrective actions have been timely and properly implemented	<b>A:</b> Corrective measures to recruit business advisor not successful, component stopped and related budget refunded. <b>B:</b> Extension allowed disbursement of all expected grants.

#### EQ4 Was an efficient monitoring/evaluation and reporting system established?

Criteria	Indicators	Comments
<b>Set up of an internal M&amp;E system</b>	Regularity of progress/intermediate reports	<b>A:</b> Purpose of building a M&E system was achieved <b>B:</b> An internal Monitoring system existed and was effective; it was discontinued when the monitor left the project. Activity of the groups of entrepreneurs has not been monitored after project completion.
<b>Clear definition of tasks/responsibilities among project staff</b>	Administrative management is transparent and fitting the rules	<b>A + B:</b> Administrative management was efficient and tasks properly distributed.
<b>Administrative requirements were clearly set up</b>	No conflict of competences is noticeable	<b>A + B:</b> Administrative duties were defined and fulfilled.
<b>Data and figures were regularly checked and updated</b>	Data and figures match OVIs	<b>A + B:</b> They match OVIs, except for business advocacy in component A.

#### EQ5 Were the planned outcomes achieved and had all planned beneficiaries access to project results/services?

Criteria	Indicators	Comments
<b>Extent to which planned results have been achieved</b>	Increased job opportunities	<b>A:</b> M&E system is a powerful tool to enable Youth Employment projects to deliver benefits. <b>B:</b> Average income of beneficiaries increased and life conditions improved, without increasing the number of employees, in compliance with OVIs.
<b>Extent to which target groups utilize the newly acquired knowledge and competences</b>	Increase of income and improved living conditions compared to the baseline	<b>A:</b> YES staff able to M&E youth employment projects <b>B:</b> Beneficiaries, thanks to the acquired skills, are now beyond the subsistence threshold and are planning to expand.
<b>Flexibility to adapt to changing external conditions in order to ensure benefits for the target groups</b>	Appropriateness of measures taken by the management to cope with unplanned effects	<b>A:</b> Corrective measures couldn't overcome Business Advisor constraint <b>B:</b> Good flexibility to adapt to political delays.

#### EQ 6 Did the provided benefits last after project completion?

Criteria	Indicators	Comments
<b>Correctness of the exit strategy</b>	Stable or positive trend of project results since project completion	<b>A + B:</b> Achieved results kept providing benefits also after project's completion.
<b>Relationships between beneficiaries and local partners remain steady</b>	Relationship network established by the project is still alive and local partners keep coordinating main stakeholders	<b>A + B:</b> No local partners were foreseen. Coordination between GoSL and UN agencies is regular and steady.
<b>Analysis of financial/political viability of new business related to the project</b>	The rate of new businesses not financially viable is acceptably low	<b>A:</b> M&E system integrated into NaYCOM. <b>B:</b> The sample of beneficiaries groups that has been possible to reach were all productive and increasing their business.

#### EQ 7 Did the CHAYO Trust Fund support development/consolidation of policies by government institutions?

Criteria	Indicators	Comments
<b>Analysis of macro-economic policies in the sectors related to youth employment</b>	Best practices from CHAYO funded projects have been integrated into national policies	<b>A + B:</b> The project contributed to shift GoSL policies on youth employment towards business-oriented approach as opposed to relief approach.
<b>Assessment of new sectorial initiatives and of their relevant donors</b>	CHAYO funded projects have been replicated by governments or by other donors	<b>A + B:</b> BDS confirmed as a key to GoSL and International donors have given it a greater importance in their policies and have planned and implemented new programs in the sector

## RELEVANCE

### Component 1 - UNDP

In 2006 Sierra Leone was entitled to receive funds (35 million US\$) from the UN Peace Building Fund (PBF), and youth employment sector was identified as one of the priorities of the Fund, with approximately 10 million US\$ to be allocated to the sector. In the meantime, other donors' funds (Irish Aid and Norwegian Government among others) gathered their aid into a Youth Basket Fund. Government, donors and private sector representatives identified as major need the coordination of all existing youth employment initiatives, as well as the coordination between concerned public institutions (Ministries of Youth and Sport, of Tourism and Culture, of Labour, Industrial Relations and Social Security, of Agriculture and Food Security, of Works, Housing and Technical Maintenance, of Education and Presidential Affairs).

Lack of monitoring and evaluation capacity was considered as the main constraint for the

Government to shape an effective and efficient programming of interventions and use of resources in this sector.

The decision of strengthening the YES through an appropriate capacity building initiative not only was coherent with such an analysis, but also with the aim of ensuring aid effectiveness through major country's ownership of programs and projects, as requested by the country in order to pass from a relief strategy to a growth oriented one. The project was in line with both the needs of the beneficiaries and the strategy of the GoSL, which gave to YES the responsibility of the coordination and supervision of the Youth Employment programming. Moreover, objectives and methods of this component were consistent with Sierra Leone Agenda for Change, UN Joint Vision and Sierra Leone Youth Employment Strategy

## Component 2 – NaCSA

At project's start the focus of youth employment programs was mainly on short-term solutions, as a result of emergency relief programs in the immediate aftermath of the war. Business skills and experience were very low or barely existing and sustainability of newly created jobs proved uncertain. There was a great need of recovering from the lack of formal education during the war.

According to UNDP human development indicators, the average schooling of adults was 3,3 years, but the majority of youth during the war period couldn't attend schools. The lack of basic competencies such as literacy and numeracy was a further burden to get an employment.

In addition to this, difficulties in accessing credit were a further bottleneck for youth, farmers and the private sector, irrespectively to the size of enterprises.

Business Development Skills (BDS) were identified by International Partners as one of the key to foster youth employment, giving them the capacity to enter a business and rationalize it for future planning.

This is why, component 2 was conceived to provide business training to groups of young entrepreneurs providing small grants in order to consolidate their businesses, also in view of facilitating future access to credit, in parallel to the capacity building approach to institutional stakeholders foreseen by the previous component. Addressing two of the main challenges identified in the Agenda for Change, youth unemployment and lack of credit access, this component too is very relevant to the purpose of youth empowerment and to the strategy pursued by the country, which is supported by International donors.

## QUALITY OF PROJECT DESIGN

The Project Proposal documents provide evidence of a structured and logic project design for both components. The common overall objective, which was to increase sustainable employment opportunities for youth entrepreneurs and raise the involved institutions abilities to implement programs for sustainable youth employment, was pursued by setting clear activities outputs embedded in a logical strategy, provided in the Project Design Summary according to WB format.

### Component 1-UNDP

This component aimed at ensuring that youth employment projects through Peace Building Fund and other programs lead to sustainable employment of young entrepreneurs. To this purpose, project activities were grouped into 4 main components:

1. Implementation of an Action Plan to promote youth employment, including the organization of a workshop with donors and key Ministries;
2. Provision of technical expertise to encourage the development of sustainable business and youth entrepreneurship opportunities in urban and rural areas;
3. Support for Monitoring and Evaluation (M&E) and assisting YES to develop M&E mechanism to measure youth

employment programs impact, especially through the PBF;

4. Implementation of an independently conducted assessment of project impact.

The design is appropriate to achieve the expected outcomes, and includes a good analysis of assumptions, but the timeframe was rather ambitious considering the desired outcomes, the type of actions involved (establishment of a M&E system and BDS training), and the great number of implementing agencies expected to participate to PBF Fund and Basket Fund. A detailed chronogram is missing, despite vague descriptions of single actions expected timing. Output indicators are detailed but they are poorly quantified.

An exit strategy was not considered, following the assumption that the M&E Advisor would have effectively taught to YES how to monitor and evaluate youth employment programs and

## **Component 2- NaCSA**

Project activities aiming at improving business development skills to young entrepreneurs were divided into three components:

1. Developing business skills of young rural entrepreneurs groups by providing them with training in financial literacy, introduction to financial services especially micro-finance; providing technical expertise in business development; and providing on-going support and guidance to selected young rural entrepreneurs groups.
2. Providing small grants to accelerate the development of existing groups of youth entrepreneurs.
3. Implementation of an independently conducted assessment of project impact.

## **EFFICIENCY**

### **Component 1-UNDP**

Three groups of activity out of four were efficiently implemented. The M&E advisor to YES was recruited in June 2008 to develop mechanism to measure the impact of Youth Employment programs, funded through PBF and Basket Fund. A review of the M&E system of YES was then initiated, through a mid-term overview led by the advisor of 11 Fuel for Wood projects supported through the YES and already on-going. A new M&E system for the YES was subsequently designed, based on an operational matrix that joins key outcomes, outputs, indicators and potential stakeholders. The M&E strategic framework was presented for approval to YES Steering Committee, and finally approved in spring 2009.

In 2008 the YES Steering Committee approved a total of five Microfinance Institutions, encompassing 10 districts across the country for financial assistance under the PBF.

The projects of PBF and BF to be evaluated were 17 and started in January 2009, each with common reporting templates. Quantitative data of outputs were balanced by gathering qualitative evidence of outcomes, through implementation of Most Significant Change (MSC) methodology. All

projects, providing them with a M&E manual they could use at project completion.

In light of the above, project design may be considered as moderately satisfactory.

Even this project design shows some weaknesses in the timeframe of the activities; in fact the high number of illiterate among the target group needed a longer period of training. The output indicators are detailed but, in this case too, they do not set quantitative targets.

The exit strategy do not exist and this is a major weakness of the project design as at project completion, it is not clear who is in charge of the follow up of activities.

Therefore the quality of project design may be rated as moderately satisfactory.

implementing partners, plus YES staff and interns, were trained in this method of gathering, analysing and communicating projects' effects on beneficiaries lives and a database was designed for tracking YES projects' training and policy inputs.

Regular meetings of implementing partners were held throughout 2009, enhancing coordination and jointly testing the implementation of MSC methodology.

Moreover a website was developed, allowing YES to improve its profile and facilitate better coordination across the sector. To assess the impact of the 17 Youth Employment projects implemented under the PBF and BF a questionnaire was drawn, filling it at the end of the one-year projects, and eventually resulted in the publishing of a comprehensive report.

The only activity which was not efficient was the Business Advisor training. UNDP didn't succeed in recruiting a Business Advisor, despite a 1-year extension of the project's timeframe. Following interviews one candidate was identified in October 2008, but ultimately he rejected the offer and no other suitable candidates were found. A second

advertisement was held in May 2009, but this too resulted unsuccessful.

Business Development Skills were prioritized in the Call for Proposal, were included among main projects' objectives, but UNDP couldn't provide direct support through the foreseen advisor and implementing agencies had to seek support on their own. Therefore, part of the funds received has been refunded to the World Bank.

## **Component 2 – NaCSA**

The cost of the component implemented by NaCSA accounts for 177.600 US\$, employed mainly in the production of training in Business and Financial literacy. 40.000 US\$ were to be given to selected groups of beneficiaries (1.000 \$ per group) at the completion of their business plans as a support for the launch of their activities. The project, implemented by a governmental institution, suffered from the beginning of delays due to the political elections of 2007, starting activities only in April 2008, 8 months later than expected.

Then, the cooperation with key stakeholders, such as District Council representatives, local Ministries officials, NGOs and community associations took the form of seven-person committees in charge of the beneficiary selection, which ensured their involvement and participation in the project directives.

The identified groups were 40 and the geographical areas involved were: Kambia district (5 groups selected), Port Loko district (5 groups selected), Kailahun district (10 groups selected), Moyamba district (10 groups selected) and Western Freetown rural area (10 groups selected).

The identified trainers came from 4 local agencies (one per region) and worked in close cooperation with NaCSA staff. The training in Business and Financial literacy was divided in two phases, the first one finally started in November 2008, a year later than expected due to the mentioned delays, and consequently the second one took place in January 2009.

All 40 groups received the training, but disparities in learning achievements were observed and therefore refreshment trainings were deemed

However, the overall rating for efficiency can be satisfactory, as all other activities were on time and we can say that the work of the M&E Advisor was very cost-efficient, employing one resource whose impact was felt both in the YES capacities to monitor and evaluate projects and in the reshaping of youth employment programming according to her findings.

necessary. This is one of the main reasons, along with adverse climate conditions, advocated for the request of a project extension in September 2009, which was finally agreed to end in October 31, 2010.

The bad weather conditions consequences resulted in delays in giving grants particularly in Kahilaun district, as the technical assistance and business development plans training were affected. Thus at the end of 2009 in that district only 2 groups out of 10 were given access to the micro-grants.

The 1000 \$ grants were given to 20 groups (those who had completed their business plans) at the end of 2009 by signing a MoU with NaCSA.

Timely and continuous monitoring of the communities by NaCSA staff were conducted, through follow-up, field visits and training reports all along the project phases, ensuring the achievement of the trainings and backstopping of activities.

At the end of 2009, those who received the grants were making gradual progress as most of them were about to approach breakeven point in their business and 5 out of them were able to access micro-finance, while the remaining 20 groups finalized their business plans and received the grants during the extension year. Modalities and follow-up matched those of the first batch.

Administrative tasks were properly managed by NaCSA financial officer, who supervised the opening of bank accounts by all groups of entrepreneurs, which was a pre-condition for grants' delivery.

Therefore, despite initial delays, efficiency can be rated as satisfactory.

## **EFFECTIVENESS**

## Component 1 – UNDP

Effectiveness can be assessed only for M&E, while the provision of business advice couldn't be implemented.

The M&E system has been involved in the identification, monitoring and supervision of 17 projects funded through the PBF and the BF, and in the assessment of their impact.

The results achieved through these projects, funded by donors other than the CHYAO TF, were supported by the M&E system set up, which significantly contributed to identifying and regularly following them up. Therefore, their achievements may also be considered as a sign of effectiveness for component 1.

The total number of beneficiaries of the 17 projects was of 10.299. Beneficiaries' income increased, on average, by over 197%, and this generally improved food security and allowed addressing school fees. Contribution to these effects wasn't equally distributed among projects, ranging from 69% to over 300%.

Over 70% of respondents reported that the project made a significant difference in their lives, and only 1% reported having received no benefits at all.

The questionnaire made by the M&E Advisor, recruited by UNDP in order to implement the first component, identified a range of secondary effects (i.e. financing literacy) that improved long-term development prospects. The finding revealed

## Component 2 – NaCSA

The project successfully managed to reach all the 600 targeted beneficiaries by providing training to all of them on business and financial literacy.

At the end of the project all 40 expected business plans were developed and all 40 grants were distributed, as it was confirmed by a former NaCSA officer involved in the project.

Business development plans were developed, although there were practical knowledge and skills gaps in terms of clear understanding of business plan development, which resulted in their poor quality, lacking market forecast and adequate cost/benefit analysis. The sample of business plans assessed by the evaluation team were comprehensive but rather basic, by merely drawing a list of expenses and expected earnings. However, we have to consider that since NaCSA usually manages huge projects and that this one had a limited weight, it may have been underestimated.

that rural projects had a more consistent impact than those working in urban environment and addressing high-risk youth. The average investment per beneficiary was 394\$, ranging from 35\$ to 1000\$. As expected, with a few exceptions, there was a direct correlation between the amount invested in each youth and the resulting impact on income.

Beyond the increase in income, the most innovative implementing partners were able to strengthen local decentralization committees and to change the mind-set of communities.

Implementing agencies that developed groups of youth into cooperatives achieved on average better results than those that treated beneficiaries as individuals. Cooperatives that did develop a joint saving scheme, usually reflected in a joint bank account, did further better and reported better individual status. Pooled savings served as an informal type of health and income insurance for cooperative members and this served as a micro-lending scheme. This "micro-micro credit" mechanism has the potential to provide credit to a portion of youth unable to access existing micro-credit programs.

These findings together with the training on Monitoring and Evaluation provided by the M&E Advisor to the YES, contributed largely to an effective programming of youth employment initiatives.

without considering all related costs nor making any projection in the short term.

The choice of 15 people groups, formed by young people mostly employed in agriculture and coming from rural areas, already part of a group registered within their community, with some knowledge in running a business or showing the potential to do so, proved effective in order to achieve and keep projects outcomes. As confirmed by NaCSA Commissioner, after project completion there wasn't any monitoring on the beneficiaries, due to retirement and/or resignation of the staff in charge. By targeting already linked communities, the beneficiaries succeeded in keeping their activities fruitful even without a proper monitoring from the implementing agency.

The extent to which grants beneficiaries managed to access micro-credits in 2009 was 25% and at that time there was no evidence of groups employing other people. This eventually proved to



be a good choice, as by sharing the revenues of business activities only among the farmer group members, the beneficiaries were able to increase savings reinvesting them in their joint activities.

## IMPACT

### Component 1 – UNDP

The Youth Employment Strategy, revised in 2009, did reflect the approach as set out in the National Action Plan developed during the July 2009 workshop.

Out of the 17 projects funded under PBF and BF, the majority (62%) continued to approach communities with a relief mind-set, but having a substantial effect on income levels.

The relief approach, a continuation of the humanitarian relief modality facilitated by the war, treated communities mostly as beneficiaries rather than as development partners. As a consequence, they tend to look almost exclusively for external funding for future improvements. This seriously weakens sustainability of results, given the sense of external reliance.

Though a minority, good examples have been found of beneficiaries able and willing to drive the process and to discuss their future plans in term of their own resources with little reference to external inputs.

### Component 2 – NaCSA

Average income of met beneficiaries increased and life conditions improved. They are now beyond the subsistence threshold and are planning to expand.

This is the main impact the project had on beneficiaries' lives and mentalities. The training on Business Development Skills and the requirement of business plans made them more business oriented and allowed them to make future projections. This is an achievement not common to encounter in rural communities across the country, since they are usually much focused on present conditions, struggling for subsistence.

Moreover, the linkages created by the project are still in place and operational, often under umbrella associations. The eight groups involved in NaCSA component in Gloucester are still working together and improved both their businesses and their organizational structure by associating together in the Mountain Farmers Association (MOFA). They

In light of the above, effectiveness can be rated as moderately satisfactory due to the lack of a follow up system after project completion.

The consequent business-oriented approach was identified as a best practice to be developed and disseminated; it was adopted by UNDP for further actions and has become the priority for future Youth Employment Plans. The component 1 of CHYAO project has actively contributed to that.

The YES duties and responsibilities have been integrated into the newly created National Youth Commission (NaYCOM), which was fully constituted in June 2011 with the former Head of YES as Commissioner.

The M&E manual is still in use by NAYCOM and the developed website has become NaYCOM website (unfortunately a fire partially damaged NaYCOM premises and since 6 months the website couldn't be updated).

Experiences and lessons learnt by YES, also through the UNDP support, have been transferred to the new institution, which has become the main decision maker on youth issues.

keep a joint bank account, in which profits and savings are stored and used for communities'

Picture 1. MOFA cooperative's terracing in Gloucester, Freetown outskirts



needs and investments and created a marketing system direct to stimulate savings, which allowed

them, among other, to expand their business by commercializing chicken manure.

Women are engaged as well as men in farming and are main responsible for selling the goods in the market, however they do not cover roles of major responsibility in the community organization.

## **SUSTAINABILITY**

### **Component 1 – UNDP**

The project outcomes in terms of sustainability concern the political achievements left to the YES Secretariat in terms of management, programming, reporting, monitoring and evaluation capacities. The heritage given in such aspects is still relevant.

The project has introduced a very performing monitoring and evaluation system. The existing M&E system is largely the development of that one; also the manual provided by the M&E Advisor is still used, with an update done two months ago by UNDP, which still supports this branch.

Moreover, lessons learned from the assessment of employment projects, helped in expanding YES M&E functions and gave birth to three main coordination structures:

1. Partner Group, formed by main agencies involved in employment issues (UN, WB, EC, German Development Cooperation, GIZ, IFAD) with the aim of supporting government coordination on studies and new projects intervention in the area;
2. Youth Employment Strategy Group, composed of Senior Officer of Ministries departments and agencies and large NGOs directors, supporting the development of policies, coherence, synergies and strategic planning between

### **Component 2 – NaCSA**

The importance of component 2 is higher than shown by its budget. Most of the other evaluated projects suffered from sustainability constraints because of their relief approach. This component instead adopted a business-oriented approach from the beginning, by selecting committed groups already active in the business and by providing marketing oriented training.

Field visits confirmed the success of a business-oriented approach.

Together with other projects in agribusiness, CHYAO funded project contributed to the gradual shift of mentality of young entrepreneurs involved improving their income and capacity of planning future actions, therefore impact can be rated as very satisfactory.

projects as well as the adoption of lessons learned;

3. Technical working group based on field visit executors sharing their practical experiences on implementation.

The choice of strengthening the YES Secretariat proved successful, as it is now integrated in the NaYCOM, the referring point in youth issues and employment not only for the Government but for all the International Agencies that support it and that are progressively giving to it the direct management of funds.

The identification of BDS as a tool for sustainable employment development, is reflected in a shift of strategy of UNDP actions in youth employment training. Now BDS are the priority and UNDP initiated in 2011 the Youth Employment and Empowerment Program, based on lessons learned from the impact assessment of PBF and BF projects. This has led to the opening of 5 centres in Freetown, Newton, Bonte, Kenema and Makeni, managed by 5 NGOs, where 850 youth were trained so far and received financial support. Therefore CHYAO pilot project helped in providing the basis for the development of NaYCOM M&E Unit and by strengthening YES capacities, it supported the transfer of skills and responsibilities to a single leading body, which is the NaYCOM.

The training received in BDS resulted in drawing a network of clients (private, NGOs, restaurants, hotels), collecting orders and seeding and harvesting accordingly, so as to reduce redundancies. Ordered goods are packaged and delivered, surplus is sold in the local markets.

MOFA buys from each farmer, pays 90% of the cost and keeps the remaining 10% in a special account for the farmers, to be utilized in case of need. Profits are saved in the joint account and

will be utilized according to common plans and decisions.

Actually they decided to build office premises, with supporting equipment, for MOFA.

The competencies acquired in the business training are still used to make projections and to identify business constraints.

The challenges highlighted were: i) need of improving preservation of perishable goods; this goes beyond simple storing, which they do in traditional ways, but requires refrigeration tools that includes temperature control; ii) control of various pests affecting different vegetables; main problem in this regard is that some of the required pesticides are not available in the local market; the problem was discussed with the Ministry of Agriculture and some specific training on the issue

has been received through EU funded and COOPI run Urban Agriculture Project; iii) extensions in cultivated land brought to a breaking point the issue of irrigation during dry season; this is actually done by collecting water from the swamp and bringing it manually uphill; the most suitable solution implies creating clusters of farmers, digging reservoirs and filling them through the use of water pumps, which requires agreements and financial resources that are actually beyond their possibilities.

Replication of such experience is highly recommendable, bearing in mind that the visited areas involved by the project, Gloucester and Leicester, are very close to the capital town and benefit from a very favourable market.

## CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

*The project, through both its components, indirectly contributed to shape the path that youth employment strategies in Sierra Leone ought to follow.*

M&E section of component 1 has been highly appreciated by all the stakeholders met by this evaluation mission. NAYCOM, UNDP and WB officials acknowledged the importance of the M&E system created by the project in providing institutional capacities building, in facilitating identification and follow-up of initiatives and policy making on youth issues, built upon best practices. In fact, by establishing a Monitoring and Evaluation system for internal use of YES Secretariat, the first component helped this institution, responsible for youth issues, in better programming of youth employment projects. Moreover, the analysis carried out by the M&E Advisor recruited by UNDP, giving an overall assessment on PBF and BF projects, made clear which best practices to follow for future interventions in the sector. Despite not having succeeded in recruiting a Business Advisor, the introduction of BDS in PBF and BF in projects design made implementing agencies committed to address the issue and this resulted, in any case, in improving project results. However past difficulties in recruiting the advisor, despite being strongly needed, imply to reconsider recruitment modalities.

Results from component 2 confirm that business development skills are the key to sustainable self-employment outcomes. In fact, beneficiaries of this component proved to have increased their income over the subsistence level and present saving schemes, which they use accordingly to their business plan. This allows them to plan quantities of crops to cultivate on the basis of market demand, buy goods to differentiate their production and have an identified network of clients.

This second component acted as a pilot project whose best practices have been internalized by Government and International donors, which see BDS as a tool to achieve long lasting employment opportunities for young people. In fact, currently Business Development Skills have been promoted by UNDP through the development of 5 training schools on BDS in five different locations, with plans of further extending the network.

NaCSA, however, should keep monitoring the beneficiaries, in order to improve further actions and disseminate the achievements.

## **Project 2. Vocational Training for Youth with Disabilities in Western Area and Kono District in Sierra Leone towards productive and active social lives**

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<b>Grant Number:</b>	<b>TF091059</b>
<b>Implementing Agency:</b>	<b>COOPI</b>
<b>Start Date:</b>	<b>26th November 2007</b>
<b>End Date:</b>	<b>31st December 2009</b>
<b>Total Budget:</b>	<b>475.000 \$</b>
<b>A second project was funded by CHYAO trust fund under the title of “Empowering Vulnerable Youth for Self-Reliance in Kono District and Western Area”. Given the continuity of the two projects, which may actually represent two phases of the implementation of the same project concept, the evaluation has considered the two grants as a whole.</b>	
<b>Data of the second project are:</b>	
<b>Grant Number:</b>	<b>TF095498</b>
<b>Implementing Agency:</b>	<b>COOPI</b>
<b>Start Date:</b>	<b>March 2010</b>
<b>End Date:</b>	<b>June 2012</b>
<b>Total Budget:</b>	<b>382.235 \$</b>

### ***Project background and objectives***

Sierra Leone’s ratings were already at the bottom of Human Development Index before the start of the civil war. The war worsened people’s living conditions especially in the health sector: the amputations practiced by the rebels added other disables to the large portion of population with disabilities caused by lack of vaccination schemes (e.g. polio), leading also many people from rural areas to move to the capital, increasing urbanization at poor health conditions. Even if now the situation has improved, access to health facilities and rehabilitation centres is still a challenge the Country has to face.

Disables are often young and confined to begging. This is why, COOPI, an Italian NGO, included them in its project intervention, which overall objective was to empower marginalized and at risk youth in Western Area and Kono

District, to generate and access sustainable job and income opportunities. The specific objective was to build the capacity of 250 marginalized and at risk youth (out of jobs and out of school, with special focus on young women and youth with disabilities) to set up and manage sustainable enterprises.

At the end of this project in 2009, a second project was drawn and applied for funding to CHYAO Trust Fund by COOPI, extending the benefits to other disables in the same trade sectors and widening the

approach to not disabled youths, with a focus on agribusiness in Kono. The overall objective of this project was the empowerment of marginalized and at risk youth in the Western Area and in Kono district to generate and access sustainable job and

income opportunities. The specific objective was to build the capacity of 250 marginalized and at risk youth (out of job and school, with special focus on young women and young with disabilities) to set up and manage sustainable enterprises in agribusiness, environmental management and other market profitable sectors. For the purpose of a deeper and whole understanding of the first project, the evaluation mission decided to consider also this second project, since they were implemented in the same areas and most features of the subsequent were built on the achievements of the first one.

## PROJECT EVALUATION

*COOPI's projects gave very good results notwithstanding the high turnover of managing staff. Effective training was delivered, including apprenticeship combined with literacy and numeracy; focus has been on agribusiness in the second project, improving the organization of rural communities and income opportunities; in terms of governance, great attention has been paid to the strengthening of linkages among communities and local governmental bodies.*

**The following table summarizes the project's performance according to the evaluation questions; while in the next pages the evaluation is described with full details according to OECD/DAC parameters.**

**A: COOPI project 1 (TF 091059 - disabled)    B: COOPI project 2 (TF 095498 – disabled and farmer groups)**

**EQ 1 Was the project proposal consistent with and supportive of Government's Poverty Reduction Strategy and relevant sector programs?**

Criteria	Indicators	Comments
<b>Proper identification of beneficiaries</b>	Beneficiaries and PRS target groups are aligned	<b>A + B:</b> Target groups (disabled, rural youth) are consistent with GoSL Agenda for Change and Youth Employment Strategy.
<b>Clear identification of the main constraints to be addressed</b>	Activities answering to identified constraints are consistent with government strategies in the sector	<b>A:</b> YWD are among most marginalized and unemployed groups; low literacy/numeracy is paid proper attention. <b>B:</b> Agribusiness identified by GoSL and donors as a key to sustainable income generation in rural areas.
<b>Regular coordination and harmonization among main stakeholders and with relevant governmental bodies</b>	Scheduled coordination meetings	<b>A + B:</b> Networking with other organizations and institutions engaged in youth employment activities was strengthened (Livelihood and Food Security Coordination Forum, INGO Disability Forum, Forum of the Youth Employment Scheme Secretariat, GoSL, Ministry of Youth, UNDP). <b>B:</b> Kono Ministry of Agriculture office involved in training and monitoring of activities, also after project completion.

**EQ2 What was the quality of project design? And were outputs and outcomes achievable, given the limited resources and time available?**

Criteria	Indicators	Comments
<b>Presence and quality of the LF</b>	OVI clearly defined and realistic	<b>A + B:</b> LF according to WB format, OVIs clearly defined including detailed quantitative targets. Project A: number of YWD, (90 =60% of total targeted beneficiaries) who are now unemployed at EOP will be employed or self-employed; number of YWD (90) who are now hawkers and living rough in the streets at EOP will have increased their income above the poverty line; number of targeted YWD (150) who are now in need of rehabilitation or psychological support at EOP will have been assisted by specialized institutions; 150 YWD will be awarded certificates on informal education, basic accounting and management by Training Institutions; 150 YWD who are now unskilled, will have learnt technical skills on selected activities, through a tutoring program with private sector. Project B: 175 marginalized youth (70% of 250 total targeted beneficiaries) who are now unemployed or underemployed will be employed and/or self-employed by the end of the project; 44 youth with disabilities (70% of 63, the minimum number of YWD in the project) who are now unemployed or underemployed will be employed and/or self-employed by the end of the project; 87 young women (70% of 125, the minimum number of young women to be included in the project) who are now unemployed or underemployed will be employed and/or self-employed by the end of the project; 70% of the newly created businesses generate an increase of income for the youth involved; 250 youth successfully complete literacy / numeracy training, business management and marketing training; - 200 youth complete practical training in production transformation and marketing techniques related to agro- business and environmental management - 50 youth complete on the job skills training; At least 10 new group enterprises set up focusing on agriculture at the end of the project - 35 youth (70%) who went through on the job vocational skills training are either employed or self employed.
<b>Existence of a chronogram</b>	Realistic chronogram	<b>A:</b> Realistic timeframe; the extension was requested for increasing number of beneficiaries and adding business tutoring. <b>B:</b> Optimistic timeframe, in relation to some of the expected outcomes (i.e. training to very poor literate groups, Kono rice branding).
<b>Identification of a risk management strategy</b>	Risks and assumptions are properly taken into account	<b>A + B:</b> There was a good analysis of risks and assumptions, which eventually hold true.
<b>Conception of an exit strategy</b>	Transfer of capacities to local partners is paid attention	<b>A:</b> Local partners were crucial in empowerment of DPOs; apprenticeship training led to self-employment. <b>B:</b> Kono MAFFS office responsible for monitoring

<b>Results were realistic and feasible according to the proposed budget and duration</b>	Proper cost analysis	of created farmer groups. <b>A:</b> Outputs were coherent with the given inputs. <b>B:</b> Transport costs were underestimated.
<b>Local partners and beneficiaries have been involved in defining the project strategy</b>	Local stakeholders/beneficiaries approach noticeable in the project proposal	<b>A:</b> Selection of beneficiaries conceived in cooperation with local partners; SLUDI involved since the design phase. <b>B:</b> Provision of additional land to farmer groups in coordination with MAFFS.

**EQ 3 Have the planned outputs been achieved within the expected inputs/resources and within the expected timeframe?**

Criteria	Indicators	Comments
<b>Overall project cost correspond to project results and benefits</b>	OVIS have been met	<b>A:</b> OVIS were cost efficiently met. All the targeted beneficiaries received the trainings and those in need (36 among Freetown's beneficiaries needed crutches and/or prosthesis, with at least 2 out of them having serious mobility issues) benefited from the referral system. <b>B:</b> Most OVIS met, except literacy training in Kono due to financial constraints; More trained beneficiaries than expected (273 youth and 50 YWD, overtaking the commitment of targeting 250 youth), and 75 more youth and adults in Kono who joined the farmers' groups in midstream, bringing the total number of people benefitting from the activities, at least partially, to approximately 350. The overall YWD reached were 56 (50 in WA as expected and 6 in Kono), slightly lower than the 63 targeted. All of them were reported by COOPI as employed or self-employed at the end of the project, overtaking target of 44. Seven new farming cooperatives were established in Kono, approaching the target of establishing 10 new enterprises. The component which suffered the most from COOPI's financial constraints was the literacy and business management training. The 250 youth trained objective was not met, with only 50 young people receiving all the envisaged trainings in WA, at an average low improvement rate (40% for mathematics, business and English, 60% for conflict management, 70% for general knowledge); in Kono 90 trainees received training in leadership and marketing skills, while the remaining training wasn't delivered because of the mentioned problem.
<b>Activities have been implemented as scheduled</b>	Quality of results was good	<b>A:</b> Inputs delivered as expected and appropriate to achieve expected outcomes. <b>B:</b> Quality of most results was satisfactory, except the literacy training in Kono.

<b>Activities have been implemented at planned or below planned cost</b>	Timeframe has been respected No significant financial constraint has been recorded	<b>A:</b> Agreed extension with additional budget allowed increasing beneficiaries and training activities. <b>B:</b> Funding delays affected timely delivery of results.
<b>Corrective measures have been taken if required</b>	Required corrective actions have been timely and properly implemented	<b>A:</b> No significant corrective measures were required. <b>B:</b> Integration of activities with other on-going projects allowed overcoming financial constraints.

#### EQ4 Was an efficient monitoring/evaluation and reporting system established?

Criteria	Indicators	Comments
<b>Set up of an internal M&amp;E system</b>	Regularity of progress/intermediate reports	<b>A:</b> Internal M&E system developed and independent final evaluation performed. <b>B:</b> Internal Monitoring and reporting by the project has been ineffective and slow. WB took over the task. COOPI final reports were eventually drawn but final evaluation has not been done.
<b>Clear definition of tasks/responsibilities among project staff</b>	Administrative management is transparent and fitting the rules	<b>A:</b> Administrative management was efficient and accountable. <b>B:</b> High turnover of COOPI country representative affected efficiency of administrative process and caused delay in funding activities.
<b>Administrative requirements were clearly set up</b>	No conflict of competences is noticeable	<b>A:</b> Administrative duties were defined and fulfilled. <b>B:</b> Administrative duties were not properly satisfied due to management constraints.
<b>Data and figures were regularly checked and updated</b>	Data and figures match OVIs	<b>A:</b> Achievements exceeded the targeted OVIs. <b>B:</b> Some OVIs were not met (literacy training in Kono) while some were exceeded (agri-business training). There is lack of figures and other verifiable assessments of some results (i.e. increased income).

#### EQ5 Were the planned outcomes achieved and had all planned beneficiaries access to project results/services?

Criteria	Indicators	Comments
<b>Extent to which planned results have been achieved</b>	Increased job opportunities	<b>A:</b> Achieved results exceeded the expectations, creating more self-employment occasions and jobs than planned. <b>B:</b> Most outputs have been quantitatively achieved; flaws



		have been noted in some of the training components.
<b>Extent to which target groups utilize the newly acquired knowledge and competences</b>	Increase of income and improved living conditions compared to the baseline	<b>A:</b> Most beneficiaries were self-employed and able to produce an income at the end of the project. <b>B:</b> Farmer groups are operational and increased the cultivated land improving their living conditions.
<b>Flexibility to adapt to changing external conditions in order to ensure benefits for the target groups</b>	Appropriateness of measures taken by the management to cope with unplanned effects	<b>A:</b> Creative solutions employed on various issues complied with a pilot project approach and proved successful. <b>B:</b> Joining forces with other on-going initiatives allowed dealing efficiently and effectively with upcoming difficulties.

#### EQ 6 Did the provided benefits last after project completion?

Criteria	Indicators	Comments
<b>Correctness of the exit strategy</b>	Stable or positive trend of project results since project completion	<b>A:</b> Exit strategy, based on the links with artisans, has proved highly effective and kept providing benefits also after project's completion. <b>B:</b> Exit strategy based on the handing over to MAFFS the after-project tasks. This ensured follow-up and sustainability.
<b>Relationships between beneficiaries and local partners remain steady</b>	Relationship network established by the project is still alive and local partners keep coordinating main stakeholders	<b>A + B:</b> Local partners are still involved in other similar projects. Coordination with GoSL, MAFFS, NGOs is regular.
<b>Analysis of financial/political viability of new business related to the project</b>	The rate of new businesses not financially viable is acceptably low	<b>A + B:</b> The average income of beneficiaries and community governance increased. The rate of failure is low and mainly concern activities requiring relatively costly equipment or premises.

#### EQ 7 Did the CHAYO Trust Fund support development/consolidation of policies by government institutions?

Criteria	Indicators	Comments
<b>Analysis of macro-economic policies in the sectors related to youth employment</b>	Best practices from CHAYO funded projects have been integrated into national policies	<b>A + B:</b> Focus on agribusiness is consistent with GoSL objective of rural employment and of halting urbanization. It positively tested GoSL policy on the matter.
<b>Assessment of new sectorial initiatives and of their relevant donors</b>	CHAYO funded projects have been replicated by governments or by other donors	<b>A + B:</b> COOPI training model is acknowledged as a good practice by GoSL. COOPI is still active in the Youth Employment sector and using lessons learnt from CHAYO projects.

## RELEVANCE

COOPI was active in Sierra Leone since 1971 and has outstanding experience in the country and particularly in war affected areas. They run several projects divided into strategic program areas, among which livelihood, food security and youth employment addressed by the project funded by CHYAO TF.

The project targeted vulnerable youths with disabilities (YWDs) providing them vocational training, conceived as a combination of literacy and numeracy with business management skills and apprenticeship, labelled as the "COOPI's model". This strategy was particularly relevant as it addressed the literacy problem, giving to beneficiaries who did not attend the schools because of the war, or due to poverty constraints, the opportunity to read and write.

The project relevance lies also in its purposes as by targeting youth with physical and particularly motor disabilities it addressed very vulnerable groups, following GoSL poverty reduction guidelines. Since most of the targeted beneficiaries were begging and living on the streets and suffering from social stigmatization, the project has a remarkable value in terms of social development.

Being conceived as a pilot-project, aiming at identifying and disseminating best practices,

either directly or through other coordinated implementing agencies, the intervention was consistent with country's identified priorities, definition of a common strategy and involvement of a plurality of stakeholders. This coordination aspect was further enhanced by the World Bank which promoted the dialogue among governmental and not governmental institutions involved in youth employment sector.

The second COOPI's project was built on the achievements and best practices of the first one. The former experience allowed COOPI to broaden its own strategy to address youth employment, by adding not disable youth living in rural areas. Previous achievements were kept and expanded by adding the focus on rural settings and agricultural production, in consistence with the Country's Agenda for Change and International Donors suggestions. Moreover, greater attention was paid to gender issues, fixing the target of 50% of the beneficiaries being women, in line with Country's needs and development strategies. In this sense, we may consider relevance of the second project wider than that of the first one but in continuity with the first projects achievements.

## QUALITY OF PROJECT DESIGN

The project intended to reach 150 beneficiaries and had two main components: i) educational and vocational skill training, through literacy, numeracy/basic accounting, marketing and business management courses ii) referral for rehabilitation and/or psychological assistance to specialized institutions able to provide orthopaedic prosthesis, physiotherapy and other supports (i.e. Handicap International).

Through an on-the-job tutoring program involving artisans, small enterprises and other workshops keen to cooperate in various sectors of activity (radio/TV repair, hairdressing, tinsmith, basket making, petty trade, tailoring, fabric painting and so on) the training strategy was consistent with projects objectives, as it promoted the beneficiaries' integration into the real productive world, creating links with already existing

businesses and better employment opportunities. A set of working tool-kits and the participation to business management training courses were given as incentive to selected trainers, either individual artisans or small enterprise associations, in order to provide valuable and committed teachers. The trainees were encouraged and facilitated to set up partnership ventures in the skills they were trained for, so that to induce their employment.

The project proposal followed WB format and included a Project Design Summary listing indicators, monitoring/evaluation tools, and critical assumptions. It included also a detailed chronogram which was rather realistic. The needs addressed were clear, the purposes achievable and the critical assumptions hold true at all levels.

An inclusive approach was used in the selection of beneficiaries, conceived in cooperation with other partners and stakeholders. SLUDI (Sierra Leonean Union for Disability Issues, acting as an umbrella of DPOs = Disable People Organizations) had been involved since the design phase and contributed in empowering DPOs role in sensitization against social stigmatization. The selection followed a tailored approach, being based on beneficiaries' living conditions and commitment, while the subsequent selection of the training sectors suited their preferences and/or "dreams".

The project design was revised after a trial period, in coordination with project's staff and partners, adding identified key elements: the strengthening of the private sector involvement in order to increase self-employment opportunities and improve access to trading and the provision of allowances to promote clients' engagement.

Project design was consistent with project's objective of reaching most vulnerable groups, by including a referral system to existing rehabilitation facilities for YWD and paying attention to gender issues in the training offer.

The beneficiaries of the second project were selected in coordination with COOPI'S local partners through an inception workshop. They were 200 in Kono and 50 in Western Area, with 50% of them being women and 25% disable youth, in compliance with projects purposes of addressing most vulnerable youths. As already mentioned, this project was designed upon lessons learned and best practices of previous project: the training model was maintained adding

conflict management participatory training and links with other initiatives targeting women rights and women economic empowerment; the identification of artisans as trainers through an apprenticeship approach, the formalization of working relationships, business partnership between trainees and artisans and/or the set-up of new small enterprises, were kept. The new approach was related to the creation of employment opportunities through agribusiness in rural areas. It consisted in technical training in agribusiness and environmental management, involving food production, transformation and marketing techniques, following consolidated participatory methodologies. It did not refer to disables, widening projects target, and was adopted in Kono district. The creation of youth cooperatives and farmer groups was meant to improve also governance mechanisms of communities involved. An M&E component was scheduled in the project design, including a baseline survey, an ex-post evaluation and a final survey conducted 6 months after project completion.

Also this project proposal had a Project Design Summary according to the WB format, with indicators, monitoring/evaluation tools, critical assumptions and a detailed chronogram.

Some results proved to be too optimistic, considering the limited timeframe (i.e. marketing and branding of Kono rice, literacy training considering the low starting level of participants), but comprehensive quality of design was satisfactory being planned activities detailed, logic and coherent with project objectives.

## **EFFICIENCY**

The first project targeted 80 YWD in Freetown and 70 YWD in Kono, while a second lot of beneficiaries, 40 in Freetown and 20 in Kono, was added after February 2009 through an agreed extension, bringing the total number from 150 to 210. The expected outputs were met as all the targeted beneficiaries received the trainings and those in need (36 among Freetown's beneficiaries needed crutches and/or prosthesis, with at least 2 out of them having serious mobility issues) benefited from the referral system.

The referral component had the potential of creating an entry point for disables into already operational structures, capitalizing on limited resources and avoiding duplication of services. However, this component suffered from delays due to the closure of Mercy Ship facility and the handover to the Ministry of Health of the Handicap International centre.

Training outputs instead were efficiently met, recording significant improvements: 102 out of 150 trainees of the first batch took the numeracy and literacy course (the remaining 48 were

already literate) showed an average improvement of 49% in the beginners group and 60% in the intermediate group, while only 9% failed; out of 60 trainees of the second batch, over 60% of the beginners and 75% of the intermediate group did improve, while only 8% failed. Business management training was carried out by the Hamile School of Commerce, an accredited provider in both Freetown Western Area and Kono, which timely delivered the 5-weeks-courses. 143 out of 150 trainees of the first batch completed the management course: 69 youth in Kono and 74 in WA, among them 11% failed but 63% did improve. Among the 60 trainees of the second batch, the average result was 59% improvement and 13% failure. Skill training covered 21 trade sectors, considering gender issues: the most attended were tailoring (47 people), fabric painting (30 people, mostly female), embroidery (23, mostly female), hairdressing (20, mostly female), mobile repairs (13), catering (10), radio/TV repairs (9), weaving (6) and blacksmithing (8). After completion of basic business plans, all trainees received materials/equipment based on a list drawn by themselves, with an average cost of 120 \$ each.

AFFORD (African Foundation for Development) delivered business coaching to newly set-up businesses: each client identified 2 key priorities followed up by a business coach at least in 2 sessions a month, which often turned to be on a weekly basis to suit clients' needs.

A 2-day intensive training for business owners and trainers on business skills (finance, marketing, business planning, loans and credit) was carried out in June 2009 by an external consultant, and attended by 22 people in Freetown and 10 in Kono. The training was meant to improve their business skills in order to disseminate them. Another business coaching session, subcontracted to AFFORD, was introduced in the extension phase to consolidate the results achieved. This was an innovative approach and some confusion with the former Business Management Training occurred. However results were tangible and a large percentage of clients were still running their business after a year.

Individual and even creative solutions had to be sought on various issues, negotiating with clients on incentives or forcing saving schemes, deciding whether providing equipment or cash to trainers/artisans, and often compromising

solutions were agreed, which fully complies with a pilot project approach: identifying and testing solutions, analysing them with other stakeholders and eventually promoting and disseminating the best practices. Cooperation with local partners was regular throughout the project's phases and networking with other organizations and institutions engaged in youth employment activities was strengthened, mainly through the Livelihood and Food Security Coordination Forum (coordinated by COOPI), the INGO Disability Forum and the Forum of the Youth Employment Scheme Secretariat (GoSL, Ministry of Youth, UNDP).

The project "Empowering Vulnerable Youth for Self-Reliance in Kono District and Western Area" outputs and efficiency suffered from significant management constraints encountered by COOPI, namely:

a) The project manager left because of illness and a second one left for personal reasons, causing a slow-down in the activities. This was mainly felt in Kono, where many activities were new and local partners' expertise was lower; b) in the same period COOPI country representative changed 4 times, worsening the consequences of previous aspect; c) the WB funds allocations mechanism required the participation of the regional desk in Italy and the country representative, thus COOPI didn't receive funds for long periods, encountering problems with local contracts further slowing down the activities; d) the budget did not adequately took into account transport costs, further affecting the activities in Kono, where agricultural trainings and enterprises were scattered all over the district.

Eventually the Monitoring/Evaluation component suffered badly from the lack of leading staff. COOPI was late in reporting, and field visits and reports to WB were done by external experts or by WB supervisors. Eventually a final report and an evaluation of the Kono component were delivered by COOPI in June and March 2012 respectively, but they provided incomplete information and showed scarce presence of leading staff on the field.

However, COOPI has been able to overcome financial constraints by integrating CHYAO activities with those funded by other donors. For instance new agricultural machines or stores were bought only for the communities who did not have any of them, while the others used those already

provided by an EU funded project, and training activities were jointly implemented. This avoided the complete stop of the activities allowing the achievement of results. In fact, due also to hard work of COOPI staff in the periods when they

## EFFECTIVENESS

Beneficiaries of the first project did not have an employment nor skills, often being beggars, depending from extended families, suffering from social stigmatization. The increase of job opportunities as a result of the project was significant. The evaluation carried out at the end of the project showed that 87% of the clients were regularly or occasionally employed in the sector they were trained for, 11% were occasional workers in other sectors and only 2% were unemployed. Majority of those working in their skill area (77%) were managing their own business, 19% were in business partnership and only 4% were employed on full-time basis. The interviews showed that self-employment was the best option. The rate of business still in activity at the end of the project was 92%, while only 8% stopped. These figures represents 90% of the first batch, 9 months from the start of their business, and 96% of the second batch after 2 months. Better results were recorded for males (98%) and in Kono district (97%), while the few ones who stopped their business declared not feeling equipped enough in terms of training or material, and most of them were female in Freetown WA.

Although a rise in costs, 71% of beneficiaries declared an increase in their profit since the start-up of their businesses. In addition to the activities they were trained for, half of the beneficiaries worked also in extra activities, both related to the received skills or not. This may be considered as a collateral of the training in business management. Moreover, most trainees were implementing their plans (i.e. having a showroom, moving to a more central location, buying products on stock, to add up new products and diversify) and were saving money to do that, showing healthy and planned businesses.

Only 36% of interviewed trainees opened a bank account, thus still a minority; however 14% opened it after the end of the project.

If in the baseline survey begging and petty trading were the main sources of income between the

were on the ground, most outputs have been quantitatively achieved, with major failures as the training component (except agribusiness) is concerned.

selected trainees, at the end of project most income came from business activities related to the new skills acquired.

Extending the above figures (87% of the surveyed clients working in the received skill training area) by projection to the rest of the not surveyed clients, the indicator of 60% of YWD employed or self-employed was achieved with a higher rate than expected. Looking at the surveyed income per week, 97% of beneficiaries were above the poverty line, with a much higher rate than the expected 60% fixed by the indicator.



Picture 2. Polio-affected youth trained in shoes-making by COOPI project, Kono District

Despite the difficulties encountered by COOPI in the management of the second project, outcomes were rather achieved by training more beneficiaries than expected (273 youth and 50 YWD, overtaking the commitment of targeting 250 youth), and by adding 75 more youth and adults in Kono who joined the farmers' groups in midstream, bringing the total number of people benefitting from the activities, at least partially, to approximately 350.

The overall YWD reached were 56 (50 in WA as expected and 6 in Kono), slightly lower than the

63 targeted. All of them were reported by COOPI as employed or self-employed at the end of the project, overtaking target of 44. Seven new farming cooperatives were established in Kono, approaching the target of establishing 10 new enterprises.

The second project's activities achieved better results in terms of gender issues, reaching more women than expected, as 128 women, slightly over the goal of 125, benefited from the intervention. All of them were reported as employed or self-employed at the end of the project, exceeding the target of 87.

Unfortunately, the planned M&E system was not able to determine the project impact on beneficiary's income levels and the expected follow up after the project did not determine sustainability of the created livelihoods, as expected in the project design. But the component which suffered the most from COOPI's financial constraints and delays was the literacy and business management training. The 250 youth trained objective was not met, with only 50 young people receiving all the envisaged trainings in WA, at an average low improvement rate (40% for mathematics, business and English, 60% for conflict management, 70% for general knowledge); in Kono 90 trainees received training in leadership and marketing skills, while the remaining training wasn't delivered because of COOPI's staff turnover and because of delays in allocations by the WB, which led to cancellation of trainers contracts.

## IMPACT

Project impact was significant both for the economic and psycho-social aspect.

For many interviewees the most significant change in their life, resulting from the project, was moving away from begging and being able to meet some essential household expenditure, like paying school fees and medical care to their relatives, paying rent or improving or even building their house. For others, the most significant change was related to adult literacy, becoming able to sign and write, or finding life meaningful feeling better accepted in their community.

The project helped them to reduce vulnerability to stigmatization and discrimination, as well as their

The training in agri-business and environmental management was better performed: in Kono 200 youth received training in agricultural production through farmers' field schools, and 22 received training in rice processing and selling (rice milling machines and maintenance). Financial constraints in some cases didn't allow beneficiaries to receive technical agricultural skills courses accordingly with the agricultural cycle as desirable.

COOPI internal assessment found the project able to foster group work, create an environment of cooperation among the beneficiaries/participants, and make YWD able to earn income from the learnt skills. However, there is a lack of figures and other verifiable assessments for these statements.

COOPI reacted to financial and logistics bottlenecks by acquiring/borrowing funds from other accounts, to pay at least some of the activities, and by making available other project assets (i.e. vehicles and motor bikes). Despite the difficulties encountered, going through the above information the feeling is that also the second project achieved important results and that the outcome of the first project was consolidated in WA and in Kono, while the activities in the agricultural field were innovative and able to produce benefits. Various and tight links with governmental stakeholders were established too and helped in the achievement and in ensuring the sustainability of the intervention.

external perception, contributing to modify the attitude towards them by the family and community members.

The referral for rehabilitation facilitated the YWD access to structures, avoiding them long waiting lists and creating an entry point for the beneficiaries. Some situations of limited mobility, which had a general impact on the clients' life and not only on their business, had been restored improving their wellbeing and living conditions.

The evaluation at the end of the project showed that skill training was the most appreciated training by the trainees, followed by business management. On the job skill training was considered most suitable for Youth With

Disabilities (YWD), being the fastest way to activate their business, making it more practical and easy to follow as they could observe and learn by doing. This training led them to self-employment and to become self-reliant, which represents a social and economic achievement in their lives.

Main motivation of trainers/artisans came from their willingness to contribute to the development of their community. Average collaboration between trainers and trainees was good and in some cases led to employment after the apprenticeship period, or to persistent tutoring relationship.

The external evaluation showed that at the end of the project the extent to which the clients' individual income contributed to the household income was averagely 66%, with 34% of respondents contributing more than 85%. Even if the sample was small and couldn't be used for proper projections, the results showed a significant increase of clients' role in their household compared to their previous conditions. There was some empowerment in the clients control over their individual business profits and in decision making on household expenditures, also for female clients, particularly if they were the breadwinners, even if traditionally the head of the household remains the male relative. Among the main household types of expenditures, the first one was food but the second one was investing in the business, even higher than school expenses and health related costs. 72% of respondents declared to have savings, while only 28% did not, showing good signs of sustainability.

COOPI field officer Wainday Samura, engaged in first CHYAO project in Freetown WA, reported that more than half of the beneficiaries are still working and benefiting from the received vocational trainings, while some are not traceable and only a few dropped out. Most of the self-employed trainees moved to Eastern Area (Kissy, Kalaba town) or to centre town, which are the most populated areas and are more profitable for the implemented trades.

The first project activities implemented in Kono district had a successful and long-lasting impact too on targeted beneficiaries. COOPI's former local coordinator Sheik Mansaray reported that 75% disables that completed the vocational trainings of both COOPI projects are employed and some of them are now even employing other people. However some are not traceable anymore

as they moved elsewhere, either back to their villages or to Freetown to carry on their business there.

The field visits by the ex-post evaluation mission support this positive feedback. The beneficiaries being YWD met still carry on their activities profitably. Some like Margareth Gbassi, an amputee by rebels during the war, diversified their stuff adding several other products (soap, sugar, toys, clothes, etc.) to the ones sold before, and becoming able to employ other people too; others like Ibrahim, polio affected disable, left street begging and started to work as shoes maker in the local market.

Concerning the second project funded by CHYAO TF, its main impact was achieved in Kono's rural areas. 200 suitable farmers were selected in Kono, in line with National Smallholder Commercialization Program of Ministry of Agriculture, Forestry and Food Security (MAFFS). All of the 7 farmer groups identified in rural villages, gathering minimum 20 people below 35-years-old, are still operational. Highly needed mechanical tools (rice-hollers, machines to assess the rice dryness) and rice-stores were provided to them. This enabled the very poor communities addressed to reduce the time spent in manually labour-intensive works and increasing productivity.

Members of farmer groups have their own land and cultivations. The project provided them additional land to grow new crops, acquired through agreements (MoU) with chiefs and traditional rulers owning unutilized land, in coordination with the Ministry of Agriculture. Among the newly acquired land, some former diamond mining pits were rehabilitated for farming (land reclamation), and this contributed to the diversion of youth employment from diamonds mining to other productive sectors.

The field-visit to the farmer group belonging to the village "Yadu Gbense", owning a rice-holler machine, a store and using a reclaimed-land, shows that the equipment and competences brought by the project are still in use and improved community's life. The land which was once a mining pit has been filled and will be soon brushed in order to host the rice swamp, while the store collects the community crops in order to sell them when the price is higher in the market. The rice-holler needs some spare parts but is still in

working conditions and allows them to save time and workforce.

The same applies for another community visited in the village of “Sumbaidu”: the 27 members still use the rice-holler machine, store the rice in order to sell it at the highest price, affording to buy other products, e.g. palm oil with the money earned by the group, diversifying their offer.

The fact that communities involved have now additional land to manage collectively, allowing them to cultivate further crops, had a significant impact on their social and productive life, adding more income and tightening communities linkages.

Finally, extensive trainings took place in agronomic practices through Farmer Field Schools, including training of trainers. The extension workers kept a close link with the communities and some of them are now part of

the local branch of the Ministry of Agriculture, ensuring the follow up of activities after project completion and regular coordination with all concerned institutions.



Picture 3. Ex-mining pit becoming a rice swamp, given to a farmer group in Kono district

## SUSTAINABILITY

Receiving small allowances beneficiaries were able to produce some savings, as well as the purchase of materials and minor equipment. Even more important, they were given tailored training and then coaching in business management. These two aspects produced significant improvements in their daily life, in both the earnings and social status, making most of the newly created businesses still alive and able to tackle with market requirements.

Knowledge and access of the banking system improved, as even if a minority did open bank accounts, savings for reinvestment in the business were the second cost after food purchase. The visited farmer groups hold a bank account, regularly fed with savings and followed by the secretary of the group, selected among the most literate. A significant number of beneficiaries added a second activity to that they were trained for.

An estimated 75% of trained disable still work in the field they were trained for. Self-employment was the most likely job opportunity for the interviewed beneficiaries, and in fact it has been their most common option/choice.

Financial sustainability is acquired unless major constraints will occur (i.e. major increase of raw material cost, downgrade of economic development of the country). The provided

equipment suited local needs and capacities; maintenance training was provided and minor repairs were already finalized. However, concerns about feasibility of major repairs, availability of spare parts, and capacity to afford major costs were raised during the mission.

Thanks to the first project tight links with Disable People Organizations (DPO) and their umbrella SLUDI were built. They were involved in the project management and their managing capabilities increased. DPOs and their umbrella organizations are still embedded within their communities and will remain independently active, being able to build on the project acquired experience. The agricultural component of COOPI second project developed in Kono, built tight links with the District Office of MAFFS. That office was given equipment at the end of the project (bicycles, motorcycles, mobile phones, computers and other office tools) as incentives to ensure they still monitor the farmer groups after the phasing out. This has facilitated the follow up of the project after its completion increasing the sustainability of the intervention.

The CHYAO funded projects proved fruitful also in shaping the ultimate COOPI project on youth employment issues, co-financed by EC and UNDP and called “Enhancing Food Security and development opportunities for disadvantaged



groups in Freetown by supporting technological, organizational and institutional innovation in Urban Agriculture”, which was built on the basis of

the lessons learned by the first and second CHYAO project.

## CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

*Projects results have been quantitatively achieved and their quality may be considered satisfactory as well, since met beneficiaries stated their living conditions as far better than their previous ones. Majority of newly created small business, both in Freetown and in Kono, are still providing an income and look integrated into the existing market.*

The increase in income however, is not the main success achieved if compared to the enormous change in marginalized people life introduced by acquiring new competences and new self-confidence. The shift from street-begging to self-employment is one of the main achievements of the projects. The conversion of land-use in the second project also shows a greater meaning than a merely economic one: giving to young people an alternative to unstable jobs like mining, improving their food security and that of their families by a collective action.

The COOPI model, which means the presence and complementarity of business training, life skills, literacy and numeracy together, proved successful as best practice, being integrated in National Youth Commission (NaYCOM) strategies and replicated by other organizations, such as Restless Development and Concern. Most importantly, COOPI proved to follow a strategy towards youth employment, tailored on country’s specificities, addressing agri-business and creation of farmer groups. This strategy was pursued also after the CHYAO projects through other initiatives (such as the recently finalized urban agricultural project).

Although the pilot project approach proved successful, it risks remaining a single effort unless embedded within a larger coordination scheme, involving main decision makers, governmental and international institutions, regular M&E strategy. This is important not only in order to correctly implement on-going projects but also to identify and shape new initiatives. The risk otherwise is that contacts with governmental bodies, responsible for youth policy-making, will become sporadic. The average income of beneficiaries sharply increased, however this often did not allow overtaking the subsistence threshold. In the long term, this could affect sustainability and a strengthened training in business development skills should be considered as a priority for future planning, as there is the need to increase an entrepreneurial mentality in order to achieve better results and secure living conditions.

According to the outcome of the field visits, a good practice in order to ensure sustainability was the monitoring of the established farmer groups by the local Ministry of Agriculture staff in Kono district. COOPI project actively promoted that by providing equipment and mobility stuffs. The focus group made with the Director of the Kono District Ministry of Agriculture, the chief of the extension section, an extension worker directly involved in the CHYAO project and the training officer, outlined that COOPI approach helped implementing the governmental agricultural policy by promoting the farming groups and by providing them unutilized land for farming, including the former mining pits land reclamation. Therefore, the MAFFS local staff expressed a good sense of ownership about the project’s achievements, leading them to pursue continuity.

Also, the provision of allowances was a specificity of COOPI approach and it was recognized as a key to projects success. The idea of combining allowances and start up toolkits during the initial phase of their business was a good initiative and increased ownership.

Some shortcomings occurred, mainly related to the general training in Kono district for the second project, due to the mentioned staff turnover and financial constraints. However, COOPI succeeded in overcoming most difficulties by wisely combining resources and tools with other on-going projects. In conclusion, we may say that COOPI projects were very relevant and successful to Sierra Leone's goals on youth issues, by increasing their literacy, promoting employment and improving rural communities living conditions focusing on agribusiness. Moreover, marginalized groups and youth at risk have been empowered and their lives positively affected by the projects.

## Project 3. Supporting Youth Participation and Empowerment in Sierra Leone - GoBifo

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Grant Number:	TF094804
Implementing Agency:	Decentralization Secretariat, directorate of Ministry Internal Affairs, Local Gov. and Rural Development (MIA, LG&RD)
Start Date:	6th August 2009
End Date:	30th June 2011
Total Budget:	380.000 \$

### ***Project background and objectives***

Sierra Leone is divided into three provinces: Northern, Southern and Eastern, and Western Area. After May 2004 local elections, a new system of local government was introduced by the new Local Government Act, which re-established local councils already existing in 1972 and created a new one for the capital, Freetown. However the community level is far from this organization

Communities are ruled following traditional principles, which often exclude youth, women, children and disables from the decision-making process. Gobifo project addressed community empowerment pursuing the overall objective of building

social capital, enhancing the capacity of youth in Sierra Leone to design and implement local development initiatives and improving their well-being. The specific objectives were: 1) To strengthen social capital and community capacity for collective decision-making and development activities; 2) To enhance the capacity of villages and local governments to design and implement strategic development plans; 3) To enhance the accountability of decision makers at lower local government level (wards) through mechanisms that foster community consultation and transparent governance.

## PROJECT EVALUATION

*The project had successful impact on rural communities involved, giving to marginalized youth facilities and training that improved their role in their communities. However, the project did not achieve the hoped results in terms of sustainability and decentralization governance.*

**The following table summarizes the project's performance according to the evaluation questions; while in the next pages the evaluation is described with full details according to OECD/DAC parameters.**

**EQ 1 Was the project proposal consistent with and supportive of Government's Poverty Reduction Strategy and relevant sector programs?**

Criteria	Indicators	Comments
<b>Proper identification of beneficiaries</b>	Beneficiaries and PRS target groups are aligned	Target groups of the projects (rural youth, young women and disabled) are identified by GoSL Agenda for Change as youth at risk.
<b>Clear identification of the main constraints to be addressed</b>	Activities answering to identified constraints are consistent with government strategies in the sector	The empowerment of youth and other marginalized groups in rural areas strongly supports on-going GoSL decentralization process, challenging the traditional rulers leading role. Increased youth employment in rural areas identified as a key to development.
<b>Regular coordination and harmonization among main stakeholders and with relevant governmental bodies</b>	Scheduled coordination meetings	Main decisions were taken in a Steering Committee, including main decision makers in decentralization matters.

**EQ2 What was the quality of project design? And were outputs and outcomes achievable, given the limited resources and time available?**

Criteria	Indicators	Comments
<b>Presence and quality of the LF</b>	OVI clearly defined and realistic	LF according to WB format, OVIs are vague and lack of quantitative measures.
<b>Existence of a chronogram</b>	Realistic chronogram	The project phasing, including new villages and ward level, wasn't realistic in terms of available budget and timeframe.
<b>Identification of a risk management strategy</b>	Risks and assumptions are properly taken into account	Legalization of VDC should have been considered as a pre-condition. Otherwise, assumptions are inadequate. Ward level was never involved in former JSDF project, but this was not taken into account in the new proposal.
<b>Conception of an exit strategy</b>	Transfer of capacities to local partners is paid attention	Exit strategy was based on GoSL and other donors support in the long run. Since VDC are still not legally recognized, strategy was not viable. Wards are legally recognized but their involvement wasn't successful.
<b>Results were realistic and feasible according to the proposed budget and duration</b>	Proper cost analysis	Inputs proved adequate to expected outcomes, provided that only the VDC level was involved in the implementation.
<b>Local partners and beneficiaries have been involved in defining the project strategy</b>	Local stakeholders/beneficiaries approach noticeable in the project proposal	Local councils have been involved in selection of target villages.

**EQ 3 Have the planned outputs been achieved within the expected inputs/resources and within the expected timeframe?**

Criteria	Indicators	Comments
<b>Overall project cost correspond to project results and benefits</b>	OVI have been met	60 village plans were drawn and grants disbursed. Skills training was delivered as planned.
<b>Activities have been</b>	Quality of results was	60 villages receiving grants implemented 250

<b>implemented as scheduled</b>	good	activities, divided into 7 sectors.
<b>Activities have been implemented at planned or below planned cost</b>	Timeframe has been respected No significant financial constraint has been recorded	At project completion, 45 village plans out of 60 were finalized and 15 suffered from short delays. Since VDC already received the grants, activities were completed without additional funds. Budget constraints encountered in some infrastructures building were overcome through voluntary labour by youth.
<b>Corrective measures have been taken if required</b>	Required corrective actions have been timely and properly implemented	Ward involvement wasn't acquired but no corrective measures were considered. The same applies for the legalization of VDC.

#### EQ4 Was an efficient monitoring/evaluation and reporting system established?

Criteria	Indicators	Comments
<b>Set up of an internal M&amp;E system</b>	Regularity of progress/intermediate reports	Internal monitoring was ensured by project's staff and reporting was regular. An external evaluation was performed at project completion.
<b>Clear definition of tasks/responsibilities among project staff</b>	Administrative management is transparent and fitting the rules	Administrative management was efficient and accountable. Grants disbursements were transparent and properly supervised by financial officer.
<b>Administrative requirements were clearly set up</b>	No conflict of competences is noticeable	Administrative duties were defined and fulfilled.
<b>Data and figures were regularly checked and updated</b>	Data and figures match OVIs	Despite availability of figures on project's outputs, OVIs achievement can't be measured because of the lack of quantitative targets.

#### EQ5 Were the planned outcomes achieved and had all planned beneficiaries access to project results/services?

Criteria	Indicators	Comments
<b>Extent to which planned results have been achieved</b>	Increased job opportunities	Over 200 youth received skills training and 250 were involved in seed multiplication schemes, which led to job creation. Lack of data does not allow estimating the rate of achieved employments.
<b>Extent to which target groups utilize the newly acquired knowledge and competences</b>	Increase of income and improved living conditions compared to the baseline	Beneficiaries are still employed in the sector they were trained in, improving their income. Benefits were provided also through infrastructures building, provision of commodities and equipment.
<b>Flexibility to adapt to changing external conditions in order to ensure benefits for the target groups</b>	Appropriateness of measures taken by the management to cope with unplanned effects	Youth participation to planning and voluntary works allowed overcoming constraints and achieving the expected results.

#### EQ 6 Did the provided benefits last after project completion?

Criteria	Indicators	Comments
<b>Correctness of the exit strategy</b>	Stable or positive trend of project results since project completion	Exit strategy, without VDC legalization and follow up by district officers, affected project's sustainability and governance. Without project support, VDC are likely to fade out, as already happened to those participating to JSDF phase but not involved in CHYAO project
<b>Relationships between beneficiaries and local partners remain steady</b>	Relationship network established by the project is still alive and local partners keep coordinating main stakeholders	Project management is not part of the regular GoSL staff and is now involved in a project funded by a different donor. District staff is not involved in project initiatives anymore
<b>Analysis of financial/political viability of new business related to the project</b>	The rate of new businesses not financially viable is acceptably low	Most income generating activities remain at subsistence level. Some indirectly promoted urbanization by providing skills more suitable for urban settings

#### EQ 7 Did the CHAYO Trust Fund support development/consolidation of policies by government institutions?

Criteria	Indicators	Comments
<b>Analysis of macro-economic policies in the sectors related to youth employment</b>	Best practices from CHAYO funded projects have been integrated into national policies	No integration into national policies was noticed. Existing youth councils at district and chiefdom level, linked to NaYCOM, were not involved in the project
<b>Assessment of new sectorial initiatives and of their relevant donors</b>	CHAYO funded projects have been replicated by governments or by other donors	A NGO was created with the aim of keeping support to VDC, but so far seeking for funds was unsuccessful.

## RELEVANCE

The first phase of GoBifo (go forward in Krio language) started in Jan 2006 and lasted until mid-2009, supported by the Japanese Social Development Fund and administered by the WB. It advocated the need for supporting inclusive management structures at village level, operating in 184 villages of the Northern Bombali and Southern Bonthe districts.

Since the first phase showed good results, the World Bank agreed an extension of the activities to be funded through CHYAO TF, in order to consolidate the achievements.

A significant difference with the previous phase was the focus on children and youth, rather than to general social development, in line with CHYAO targets.

The project funded by CHYAO TF had 2 components (each with the same weight in terms of budget, 190.000 \$, half of the total budget): empowerment of youth and marginalized groups

in designing and implementing development plans (10 years vision planning, 3 years strategic planning, 1 year action plan) within their communities and promotion of community-driven initiatives oriented to young people through the provision of grants.

Grants were provided upon completion of the planning phase, and supported the action plans. Two types of interventions were foreseen: i) support to livelihoods, like initiatives in agriculture, income generating and petty trading and small infrastructures; ii) social issues and capacity building, including training and skills building.

Both components were consistent with country's context and needs, as the majority of Sierra Leone's population is constituted by young people and the strengthening of democratic institutions across the country is supported by ensuring good governance at the lowest level. The project paid particular attention also to cross cutting issues,

aiming at increasing participation by vulnerable groups (youth and women) and linkages between communities and grass-root organizational levels (village, ward).

These aims are promoted by the GoSL in its “Agenda for Change” and also by its branches,

like the Decentralization Secretariat which was in charge of project execution.

Moreover, the involvement of rural villages, supporting youth role in the communities, for the implementation of small-scale activities targeted to local perception of needs, is consistent with the principle of ownership.

## QUALITY OF DESIGN

The project proposal had a project design summary, according to the WB format, where expected outputs and critical assumptions were specified, but indicators were vague and lacked of quantitative measurements, which made difficult the assessment and monitoring of the achieved outcomes.

In the project design, the CHYAO project aimed at consolidating the work in the two already concerned districts as well as involving new districts. It was planned to target 80 villages in Port Loko and Moyamba districts in 2009-2010 and the same number of villages in Kambia and Pujehun districts in 2010-2011. Such spread of activities was overambitious and excessive compared to the available budget (190.000 \$ allowed roughly 40 grants only and reductions in grants amount would have reduced the impact). In fact the project’s budget was much lower than the one provided by the former Japanese fund. This unrealistic target will not be put into practice, as the project actually reached only 60 villages, limited to the already involved Bombali and Bonthe districts.

Project design included cross cutting issues like gender (women empowerment in the village planning and in the village councils, women participation to financial management) and governance (councils' establishment, tight links between the villages and the wards, participation of ward administrators to the village initiatives, focus on transparency), which were among the most innovative features of the project.

Local stakeholders were actively involved since the initial stage of the project, with local councils participating in setting the criteria for selecting the

communities/villages to reach, while final selection among them was randomly done.

Establishment of Village Development Councils (VDC) and Ward Development Councils (WDC) was conceived as the main pillar of project's structure, which aimed to link development and governance. However villages were not identified and recognized as an administrative unit by the government, which referred only to wards.

Legalization of village councils should have been a pre-condition for the project: in fact, without this, the project built on a parallel system that wasn't, and is still not recognized by the official decentralization scheme. In the short run this may have facilitated the implementation of the activities, bypassing the weakness of existing institutions, but in the long run the new governance structures and the related benefits risk fading out after project completion.

Moreover, these governance constraints had already been encountered during the first phase of Gobifo project without being taken into account in CHYAO project design.

The ward level was kept in the design because it was (and still is) the lowest recognized administrative unit, but in the project history they remained a formal body not really involved in any field activity. Youth councils do exist at district and chiefdom levels (respectively District Youth Councils and Chiefdom Youth Committees) but they weren't taken into consideration in the project proposal.

The lack of a legalization of Village Development Councils, which acted in the project as the main community-level organization, was the main weakness in project design affecting project impact and sustainability of the achievements.

## EFFICIENCY

The organizational system of the project consisted of a Technical Steering Committee, providing technical advice to the management, including key stakeholders (NaCSA, Decentralization Secretariat, Ministry of Development, Ministry of Internal Affairs, Sierra Leone Association of NGOs), of a program manager in Freetown, reporting to WB task team leader as well as to the Decentralization Secretariat, and at provincial level of an office with a provincial coordinator, finance officer, training officers and ward facilitators.

This kind of structure allowed coordination with governmental bodies involved in the decentralization process as well as a widespread presence in the targeted rural areas.

The 60 communities involved (30 per District) were trained in village problems diagnosis and development planning were engaged in identification of development priorities and how to address them. Youth took the lead in decision-making, changing the former context where elders' council was the unique traditional decision-maker in the community. Youth have been timely trained in project proposal writing, participatory rural appraisal tools, roles and responsibilities of VDC, conflict management and resolution, adult literacy, team building, community monitoring and evaluation.

Village mappings were drawn, development indicators were identified, one-year village development plans (VDP) were finalized on time. All 60 VDP were compiled.

No ward development plans were developed instead. In the JSDF experience ward participation had already been low, WDC members seldom attended sensitization and training sessions, unless their own villages were involved (in case other villages were involved they asked for incentives like transport allowances and/or participation fees, or they did not come because of distance).

The 60 VDC instead were already in place since the JSDF era, and youths were highly represented. Missing members (i.e. because somebody moved elsewhere) were replaced by youth. Each VDC included marginalized groups in its structure: the chairman's secretary was often a literate young female or male, 48 out of 60 treasurers were women. VDC autonomy was pursued by ward facilitators, who purposely didn't

attend all meetings in order to build capacity of executive members.

Project's progress reports kept referring to the 60 GoBifo communities in Bombali and Bonthe districts. Documents do not mention the planned extension to other villages and districts, nor the reasons why the extension didn't take place.

Grants amounted to about 3600 \$ each, which is lower than what outlined in the project proposal. They were paid in 2 tranches, 1/3 at the start of the identified initiatives and the remaining 2/3 after successful evaluations of the on-going activities and the assessment of transparency of financial management. They were paid to Community Development Accounts of each village in local commercial banks in the district headquarter towns. After receiving the first tranche in their bank account (following signature by GoBifo senior field staff and local council chief administrator) the implementation of local projects could start. Internal monitoring of the use of first tranches was done by GoBifo staff during field visits, in order to determine purchases and ensure safe keeping of project materials.

The project implemented 250 activities covering the 60 target communities, divided into 7 sectors: agriculture, education, health, income generation, infrastructure, recreation, skills training. Thus, each grant provided per village was divided into several minor initiatives.

The final report stated that 20 villages in Bombali district and 25 villages in Bonthe district completed their projects, while in the 15 remaining ones implementation was still on-going.

A WB supervision report, dated end of July 2011 and referring to the period from the project's start until end of March 2011, stated the overall progress as satisfactory.

Outputs were mainly achieved in the targeted communities. Several further villages showed interest in participating and were denied support because of limited funds.

Material resources (local materials, financial contributions) were mobilized, especially for the implementation of infrastructural projects and of public goods. Often youth contributed with unskilled and skilled labour on a voluntary basis to the building of community infrastructures. Community participation often allowed overcoming the limited funds.



## EFFECTIVENESS

Youth and women were empowered as decision makers and developer of village plans in their communities. Women were elected and given positions of responsibility, being particularly involved in the procurement of materials and their control, often holding also the treasurer position. According to WB supervisors, youth and women gradually took over the traditional opinion leaders in the articulation of community development interests.

Overall, the project contributed in improving the livelihood of children and youth.

Primary schools were built with concrete walls, facilitating/increasing school attendance and safety; children were provided scholastic materials, overcoming the limited income of their parents, who often were not able to pay school fees or to pay for materials and transport costs. Swamp rice farming and seed multiplication (rice and groundnuts) contributed to secure food in the communities.

Construction of Traditional Birth Attendants houses/clinics reduced unattended deliveries, while building of latrines contributed to environmental sanitation.

Youth promoted the compilation of local laws/regulations against the improper use of drying floors, with fines for the defaulters, which were deposited into the community accounts. The community stores built provided storage facilities for agricultural products; other clients were allowed to store their products too, against the payment of fees, calculated according to the duration of use.

Youth contributed to improvement of administration and governance in their communities, by resolving peer group conflicts, and they often were responsible to disseminate information within the community. Some communities were provided sporting gears, and soccer friendly matches were organized to promote unity and solidarity among communities; for such matches pitches were fenced around to ensure payment of entrance fees, and similar fees

were charged for other events organized in the multi-purpose centres (i.e. dances).



Picture 4. Grain-store build by Gobifo project in a village near Makeni

After skills training, products were produced and marketed to generate initial income.

Besides the building of infrastructural goods (schools, multi-purpose centres, latrines, traditional birth attendants' homes, drying floors, grain stores), according to project's figures 404 pupils benefited from school uniforms, 343 from school furniture, 572 from school materials (books, pencils, pens, erasers, bags), 135 from the provision of school shoes and bags, 191 from skills training (soap making, tie-dye, carpentry, tailoring, cloth weaving, food processing, mechanical repairs), 20 from the provision of soccer tools, 18 from the provision of fishing gear, 128 from credit of rice seeds (male youths) and 117 from credit of groundnut seeds (female youths).

Youth played pivotal roles in strengthening development structures at village level and were given the role of village facilitators. Women and groups of vulnerable and marginalized people were supported and actively participated in project's activities. This was facilitated through community sensitization sessions, and in some cases women took executive positions. Good governance, through transparency and accountability, under VDC guidance, was strengthened.

## IMPACT

A GoBifo project independent evaluation report dated June 2011 and conducted by Brown University, Abdul Latif Jameel Poverty Action Lab and Berkeley University of California assessed the impacts of community driven development. The final report states that the project achieved its goals in establishing village level structures and tools and in planning development initiatives, in providing communities with financing and guidance to implement small scale projects, and eventually in creating linkages between these processes and the local decision making institutions. The benefits were distributed broadly and equitably and this was found a valuable approach to deliver small-scale public goods. These achievements look impressive in a country with extreme poverty, endemic struggles and recent recovery from a civil war. In the meantime there was no evidence that the project led to fundamental changes in the way community members interact, nor in their capacity to act collectively outside the immediate sphere of the project. In other terms, marginalized groups empowerment was confirmed for the project related activities but wasn't considered relevant in the general approach to life by the same communities. Women in GoBifo involved areas did not show more opportunities to speak up in general community meetings than in control areas.



Picture 5. Young woman trained in gara dying by Gobifo project, Makeni outskirts

In other terms, the evaluation report confirms the hardware improvements, related to tangible goods made available to the communities, but doesn't confirm the software improvements, related to general human being relationships (which probably require longer time to be acquired).

On the other hand, the built infrastructures and the implemented income generating activities represent a limited benefit, compared to the magnitude of the youth problem, and particularly in rural areas. An approach at larger scale would be required to make a significant impact.

As already mentioned, the established system of governance was out of the national decentralization policy mainstream. The linkages between village and ward level, supported by the project, have proved weak and were not pursued by local administrative authorities. As a matter of fact, after project completion District Officers did not keep track of VDC, and without project's support and grants we may easily presume that they will gradually lose their operational status.

124 villages had been left out in the passage from the JSDF phase to the CHYAO phase. The project management acknowledged that they were not monitored anymore, that opened bank accounts are almost unutilized (no new savings nor cash withdrawals for paying new goods or services), suggesting that relevant VDC are in a rather lethargic state. Similar results are expected in the medium and long-term for the 60 villages covered by CHYAO project.

Thus, impact of this governance system at village level, which seemed solid at project completion, is expected to decrease. For the same reasons, replication of activities out of the project frame is not viable.

## SUSTAINABILITY

The income generating activities assessed by the evaluation mission in the visited villages do not overcome the subsistence level. Evidence proves that intervention logic was relief based, without carrying adequate market analysis, in order to identify better economic potentials.

A soap making training in Mabolleh village resulted in beneficiaries moving to nearest town because of very poor market opportunities at the village. A nearby individual fabric dying micro-enterprise showed a slightly better perspective, thanks to easier carrying of goods to town for selling. The beneficiaries trained in carpentry are still working, providing enough income to sustain three small community groups, but not enough to consider opening a bank account. In Kabombeh village soap making was still performed by a group of youth, as a complementary activity to farming.

Sustainability of such initiatives looks precarious and exposed to unforeseen external conditions.

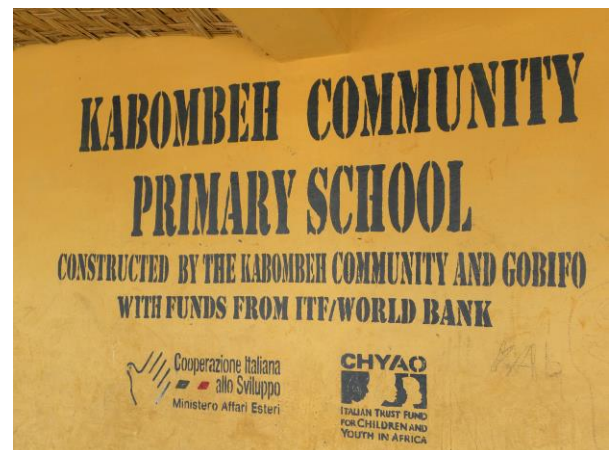
The visited infrastructural public goods gave a better picture. Kabombeh primary school hosts 200 pupils, even if the rehabilitation of a nearby second building is still urgently required. Massama village benefits from grain store, drying floor and 4 community toilets. Sawullia and Mabolleh villages' youth bear responsibility for multi-purpose centres built by the project, and use them as a market hall as well as entertainment facilities.

In two of the visited villages community teachers were trained.

In all villages pupils were given school materials and uniforms, but means for continuing supplying such items are not considered.

Despite the project being managed by a governmental body (Decentralization Secretariat of the Ministry of Internal Affairs), policy support is

not granted. Village Development Councils are still in place and their legalization was encouraged by the project, but so far no decisions were taken on the matter by the competent authorities. No follow up, monitoring/evaluation, supervision of the GoBifo initiatives in the two concerned districts took place after the project completion. No responsibility in that direction was taken over by the District Officer governmental staff.



Picture 6. Kabombeh Primary School built by CHYAO funds

The former management has created a local NGO, Network Action for Rural Development (NetARD), which is linked with a Bonthe District NGO (Partners and Relief in Development) with the aim of gathering funds to keep monitoring and supporting the VDC at least in that district. They have not been successful so far. The NGO may keep GoBIFO experience and methodology alive, but contacts and coordination have to be sought as soon as possible with National Youth Commission, which represents Governmental strategy on youth related issues.

## CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

General picture significantly changed from optimistic expectations drawn in the final report. At the end of project, management applied for an extension until September 2011 with an additional 125.000 \$ budget, aiming at consolidating the achievements in 22 out of 60 communities, strengthening monitoring and supervision, addressing delays in procurement due to

the increase in price of imported goods and delays in fulfilment of infrastructural projects. That extension wasn't agreed by the donor.

Former GoBifo management wasn't part of regular Ministry of Interior staff, but their recruitment was instead specifically linked to the project's implementation. At the end of project, they were not integrated into the Ministry's staff but were contracted the management of a new project funded by JSDF (artisanal mining in Kono district). They might keep the GoBifo approach within their new duties, but targets are different and most probably the GoBifo experience will be vanished. Since they are not involved any more in GoBifo activities, they do not keep updating information on the acquired achievements, particularly as the income generating activities are concerned.

Creation of a NGO aiming at keeping the GoBIFO experience has the potential to avoid losing projects outcomes, but field initiatives did not start yet because of lack of funds.

Also, as the project's staff at district level was not integrated into governmental positions, the links between Bombali and Bonthe districts/villages and the centre are expected to slowly decrease further threatening sustainability.

These risks results from weaknesses in the project design which do not contemplate legalization of VDC nor continuous follow up of project outcomes.

The current national youth employment strategy, carried out by National Youth Commission with international agencies support, focuses on the promotion of agribusiness in rural areas and the constitution of farmer groups. The project purposely addressed rural areas, but agribusiness activities did not receive adequate attention compared to the weight given to activities more typical of urban settings. This may work in villages close to towns and with good road connections, otherwise urbanization will be unavoidable. Only seed multiplication was foreseen as agricultural input, with seed credit schemes (rice seeds for males, groundnut seeds for females), while the providing of rice-hollers in order to complement the building of grain stores would have been advisable, in order to enhance productivity.

The promotion of youth farmer groups is advisable in the project's rural context, and might appear a good alternative to youth oriented village development councils, in case legalization will not be shortly recognized.

The newly established NetARD NGO should try to link the still existing VDC with the legalized District Youth Councils and Chiefdom Youth Committees, replacing in that way what couldn't be done with Ward Councils, whose partnership with VDC had been planned by the project design and was never accomplished. Moreover, the above Youth Councils/Committees are part of the administrative structure led by the NaYCOM. In this way the NGO might be able to strengthen its coordination with NayCOM, and then be involved as implementing agency for future initiatives.

To sum up, the project had a good relevance, was efficient and effective right after its completion but serious weaknesses in project design affected the long-term impact and sustainability.

## Project 4. Skill Training and Career Development Project for Disadvantaged and Disabled Youth

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<b>Grant Number:</b>	<b>TF091056</b>
<b>Implementing Agency:</b>	<b>AVSI</b>
<b>Start Date:</b>	<b>February 2008</b>
<b>End Date:</b>	<b>May 2010</b>
<b>Total Budget:</b>	<b>445.000 \$</b>

### *Project background and objectives*

A general Census conducted in 2004 estimated that there are nearly 130,000 persons with disabilities in Sierra Leone, with prevalence rate of 2.4 % of the total population. As recorded by the Census, the majority of disabled were only indirectly affected by the conflict, while the number of people disabled by a direct act of violence was relatively small (9.5 % of total disabled). However, other estimates, sector studies, and the experience in other countries suggest that the number of PWDs in Sierra Leone can be as much as four times higher than the official figures.

The inextricable link between poverty and disability is unmistakable in Sierra Leone. The war prevented also many people to go to school, reducing their opportunity to

find a job. This is especially true for women, whose drop out from school is higher than for men.

The project executed by AVSI targets disabled and vulnerable people like women and youth, with the aim of demonstrating the effective engagement of disadvantaged youth to achieve self-sufficiency through a durable job or starting up their own sustainable activity.

## PROJECTS EVALUATION

*The project gave to the identified vulnerable groups the possibility to be self-sufficient, reaching the socio-economic planned results. Following a relief-based approach however, the benefits of such intervention have been felt the most at small scale level without exceeding the subsistence threshold.*

**The following table summarizes the project's performance according to the evaluation questions; while in the next pages the evaluation is described with full details according to OECD/DAC parameters.**

**EQ 1 Was the project proposal consistent with and supportive of Government's Poverty Reduction Strategy and relevant sector programs?**

Criteria	Indicators	Comments
<b>Proper identification of</b>	Beneficiaries and PRS	Target groups (disabled, unemployed youth) are

<b>beneficiaries</b>	target groups are aligned	consistent with GoSL Agenda for Change and Youth Employment Strategy.
<b>Clear identification of the main constraints to be addressed</b>	Activities answering to identified constraints are consistent with government strategies in the sector	YWD are among most marginalized and unemployed groups; low literacy/numeracy is paid attention.
<b>Regular coordination and harmonization among main stakeholders and with relevant governmental bodies</b>	Scheduled coordination meetings	Networking with other organizations and institutions engaged in youth employment activities was rather poor. The willingness of tightening links with other NGOs was pursued in the frame of a second CHYAO project, which was eventually abandoned.

**EQ2 What was the quality of project design? And were outputs and outcomes achievable, given the limited resources and time available?**

Criteria	Indicators	Comments
<b>Presence and quality of the LF</b>	OVI clearly defined and realistic	LF according to WB format, OVIs clearly defined including detailed quantitative targets: 60 % of beneficiaries achieved self-sufficiency; 60 small businesses created as a result of start up support, consultation and training; agency created and functioning; 200 youth receive consultation services and access data base; 120 youth completing basic business, life skill and job seeking training courses; 120 beneficiaries find a durable job or start up a profitable activity; 40 sustained linkages with business (data base); 25 youth complete vocational training courses; 40 youth complete apprenticeships; 30 youth businesses receive start-up assistance; 77 beneficiaries find a durable job or start up their own self sustainable activity. Location of Rokel vocational centre, being far from town and mostly populated areas, did not meet local requirements.
<b>Existence of a chronogram</b>	Realistic chronogram	Timeframe was realistic, although an extension was requested to allow additional trainings, construction works and equipment delivery.
<b>Identification of a risk management strategy</b>	Risks and assumptions are properly taken into account	There was a good analysis of risks and assumptions, which eventually hold true.
<b>Conception of an exit strategy</b>	Transfer of capacities to local	Exit strategy was based on local

	partners is paid attention	partners' ability of keeping the flow of benefits. Local partners were also crucial in empowerment of DPOs.
<b>Results were realistic and feasible according to the proposed budget and duration</b>	Proper cost analysis	Outputs were coherent with the given inputs.
<b>Local partners and beneficiaries have been involved in defining the project strategy</b>	Local stakeholders/beneficiaries approach noticeable in the project proposal	FHM involved since the design phase. Selection of beneficiaries conceived in cooperation with local partners.

**EQ 3 Have the planned outputs been achieved within the expected inputs/resources and within the expected timeframe?**

Criteria	Indicators	Comments
<b>Overall project cost correspond to project results and benefits</b>	OVIS have been met	OVI's were cost efficiently met. 42% of expected target declared increased personal income after the training, achieving self-sufficiency; 28 disabled youth were gathered in 3 working groups and 2 were self-employed, exceeding the expected target; 14 small business had been created as a result of the training and a total of 93 trainees were engaged in income generating activities, over the expected 40% goal. Moreover, 58% of the trainees declared being employed in activities related to the received training.
<b>Activities have been implemented as scheduled</b>	Quality of results was good	Inputs delivered as expected and appropriate to achieve expected outcomes. Quality of trainings was satisfactory.
<b>Activities have been implemented at planned or below planned cost</b>	Timeframe has been respected No significant financial constraint has been recorded	Agreed extension and additional budget allowed increasing beneficiaries and number of training activities.
<b>Corrective measures have been taken if required</b>	Required corrective actions have been timely and properly implemented	Underestimation of gender issues was addressed by considering job trainings suitable for women through the extension.

**EQ4 Was an efficient monitoring/evaluation and reporting system established?**

Criteria	Indicators	Comments
<b>Set up of an internal M&amp;E system</b>	Regularity of progress/intermediate reports	Internal M&E system developed and independent final evaluation performed.
<b>Clear definition of</b>	Administrative management is	Administrative management was

<b>tasks/responsibilities among project staff</b>	transparent and fitting the rules	efficient and accountable.
<b>Administrative requirements were clearly set up</b>	No conflict of competences is noticeable	Administrative duties were defined and fulfilled.
<b>Data and figures were regularly checked and updated</b>	Data and figures match OVIs	Achievements exceeded the targeted OVIs.

**EQ5 Were the planned outcomes achieved and had all planned beneficiaries access to project results/services?**

Criteria	Indicators	Comments
<b>Extent to which planned results have been achieved</b>	Increased job opportunities	Achieved results exceeded the expectations, creating more self-employment occasions and jobs than planned.
<b>Extent to which target groups utilize the newly acquired knowledge and competences</b>	Increase of income and improved living conditions compared to the baseline	Most beneficiaries were self-employed and able to produce an income at the end of the project.
<b>Flexibility to adapt to changing external conditions in order to ensure benefits for the target groups</b>	Appropriateness of measures taken by the management to cope with unplanned effects	No significant adaptation measures were required during project's timeframe.

**EQ 6 Did the provided benefits last after project completion?**

Criteria	Indicators	Comments
<b>Correctness of the exit strategy</b>	Stable or positive trend of project results since project completion	Majority of benefits on income generation and improved living conditions lasted after project completion. Vocational training stopped after the project; Rokel vocational training centre is not operational anymore.
<b>Relationships between beneficiaries and local partners remain steady</b>	Relationship network established by the project is still alive and local partners keep coordinating main stakeholders	HAM is a DPO still gathering disabled artisans and active in the youth employment issues. Relationships with FHM and AVSI are maintained.
<b>Analysis of financial/political viability of new business related to the project</b>	The rate of new businesses not financially viable is acceptably low	Created income generating activities did not exceed the subsistence level and followed a relief approach, exposing beneficiaries to changes in external conditions.

**EQ 7 Did the CHAYO Trust Fund support development/consolidation of policies by government institutions?**

Criteria	Indicators	Comments
<b>Analysis of macro-economic policies in the sectors related to youth employment</b>	Best practices from CHAYO funded projects have been integrated into national policies	The project followed a relief approach, while current policies on youth employment focus on business oriented approach. Moreover, NaYCOM strategy prioritizes better use of existing



<b>Assessment of new sectorial initiatives and of their relevant donors</b>	CHAYO funded projects have been replicated by governments or by other donors	premises rather than constructing new ones. AVSI and FHM are not involved anymore in the youth employment sector, and their relationships with NaYCOM are sporadic.
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## RELEVANCE

AVSI was already operational in SL through a distance support initiative to children and through an Italian funded project supporting a primary and secondary school in the outskirts of Freetown. Both initiatives were in partnership with the local NGO Family Home Movement (FHM).

The CHYAO project was conceived as a further support to a Vocational Skill Training centre in Rokel, managed by FHM, to fishing cooperatives in Lakka and to Handicap Action Movement (HAM) training for disabled. Cooperatives and HAM had links with FHM, which was the implementing body under the supervision of AVSI. The project addressed a short-term logic, contributing to the strengthening of local partner's

on-going initiatives, rather than developing a broader and long-term vision on youth employment. However, targeting the extremely high rate of unemployment among youth, women and disabled and the low formal and vocational educational levels, the project answered to some of the priorities identified by the GoSL in the Agenda for Change on youth employment.

The project, conceived as a pilot one, was consistent with beneficiaries' needs of empowerment, both at economic and social level, showing also a potential coordination with several initiatives by the Donors Community in the same sector.

## QUALITY OF PROJECT DESIGN

The project proposal had a good Project Design Summary, made according to the WB format, with detailed indicators, monitoring/evaluation tools, critical assumptions and a detailed timeframe.

The project had three components: i) Improving technical skills of disadvantaged youth attending the Rokel Training Centre, to serve 150 war affected youths in such trades as bricklaying, carpentry, metal working, with 20% out of them expected to be disabled; ii) Strengthening productive and management capacities of 3 youth fishing cooperatives in Lakka, through provision of equipment (boats, engines, fishing nets etc.) and training support, with an initial target of 45 fishermen; iii) Skills improvement of 60 youth with disabilities to facilitate their engagement in productive activities (blacksmithing, locally made metal artifacts). Besides training, component 1 and 3 included some construction works (2 new classrooms, a 300 sqm open hall to be used as space for the production of the metal tools) and equipment/furniture supply.

Project design was revised as AVSI identified some weaknesses: little attention paid to gender issues and underestimation of the additional space required to host the training sessions. Thus, AVSI applied for an amendment which was agreed by the donor through a 6-month extension and a 145000 \$ extra budget, so that to allow additional trainings (tailoring and dress making for component 1, electronics repair and literacy for component 3) and additional construction works (1 classroom/laboratory and 2 more classrooms respectively) and equipment (i.e. sewing machines).

Planned activities, outputs and outcomes were appropriate to achieve project's objective. The employment opportunities to be created through the skills training, were mainly self-employment and microbusiness and/or cooperatives between disable youths (HAM was already running such a business) fitting country's context.

The project aimed to strengthen already on-going initiatives rather than to implement brand new services, and local partners (FHM, HAM) were

involved in the design process. Before the project start, a MoU was signed between AVSI and FHM. AVSI was mainly responsible for the supervision of the planning and implementation phases and for the administrative procedures, while field responsibilities were left to the local partners. FHM and particularly HAM had a strong connection with the beneficiaries. HAM is a group of disabled people organized to enhance their lives and giving their peers alternatives to living in the streets and begging. Governmental bodies (Governmental Technical Institute, Ministry of Education, Youth and Sport, for component 1 and 3, Artisanal Fisheries Community Development Project, Ministry of

## EFFICIENCY

Quantitative outputs achieved exceeded the targets.

Component 1: i) 170 youth were trained in 4 technical areas (welding, brick production, carpentry and tailoring, the latter added by the addendum), over the 150 targeted; ii) construction works were fulfilled as expected; iii) expected tools have been provided timely; iv) training manuals have been produced and distributed.

Component 2: i) total number of young fishermen trained and assisted raised to 115, over the 45 targeted (currently each boat provided employment to 25 people instead than to 15, allowing a significant increase of the expected final beneficiaries); ii) boats, engines and fishing tools were timely provided.

Component 3: i) 90 disabled youths have been trained in 4 technical areas (blacksmithing, metal artifacts, electronic repairs and tailoring), over the 60 targeted; ii) construction works were fulfilled as expected; iii) tools for the training courses as well as start-up kits have been timely delivered.

Monitoring against identified indicators has been regular for all components.

Besides internal monitoring, a mid-term survey was carried out and all data were fed into a database of individual students and progresses for each component. An external evaluation was contracted at the end of the project.

Considering the project's timeframe and the budget extensions agreed through the addendum, increasing the budget from 300000 \$ to 445000 \$, the costs matched the expectations and were

Fisheries and Marine Resources, for component 2) were to participate to the project since the design phase to draw the training curricula in order to ensure compliance of training courses were to governmental requirements.

A weakness in the project design was noticed during the ex-post evaluation field visits: the location of FHM managed Rokel vocational schools was inappropriate because of distance from town (almost 1h drive from city centre, far from main roads) and low population density. This significantly affected the use of the vocational school in the long-run.

timely paid, with regular audits proving correctness of administrative procedures.

The project has shown a high degree of adaptability to circumstances by integrating the original proposal through additional activities and inputs, namely: i) the planned 1 year technical training courses have been reduced to 6 months, increasing the time available for practical apprenticeship; ii) additional tailoring courses targeting women were added, addressing gender issues; iii) start-up kits to the trainees have been provided through the addendum, in order to facilitate the setting of autonomous micro-enterprises.

Communication between AVSI, FHM and WB task manager was satisfactory, with regular consultation between all stakeholders.

In compliance with the MoU signed between AVSI and FHM, the core staff was composed by local people employed by FHM: project manager, field officer in charge of construction and training, accountant and driver. AVSI country representative assisted the project manager in general administration and coordination. All legal matters and documents were carried out in the name of FHM and signed by the Executive Secretary of FHM. Management capacities of local staff improved through the implementation period and eventually they were able to manage procurement procedures, informal planning, monitoring and budget control.

During the last quarter of the project implementation FHM was not able to ensure

continuity due to unexpected mobility of key staff and inability to timely replace the project manager. The constraint was addressed by temporary assumption of the project manager role by the AVSI country representative.

Planned outputs have been delivered paying attention to matching skills trainings with the support in identifying self-employment opportunities. Lack of self-esteem, illiteracy and marginalization were properly addressed too.

The FHM training centre and the HAM facility increased the training capacities both in number of trainees and in technical areas concerned. The strengthening of the network of self-employed disabled and the coordination and cooperation among their small enterprises had a potential multiplication effect towards the community.

A second project was applied for funding to CHYAO TF/WB, with the aim of creating an

agency providing a range of services to meet professional and educational needs of poor and vulnerable youth (skill and life training, facilitating small business start-up, counselling etc.) in Eastern Freetown. This second project had a wider approach and planned a better coordination with other actors, including drawing of an electronic DB on artisan networks, job opportunities, youths seeking apprenticeships together with the Italian NGO COOPI, involved as well with CHYAO TF. Also this second project was agreed and funded. Unfortunately problems arose with the withdrawal of AVSI expatriate staff, and so AVSI gave up the project and paid back the already received first tranche. Since then, AVSI scaled down his presence in the country, which now is limited again to distance support to children and to assisting FHM managed school in the Freetown outskirts.

## EFFECTIVENESS

The final evaluation carried out at the end of the project showed that outcome indicators were met, as follow.

Component 1: OVIs were met, since 42% of expected target declared increased personal income after the training, achieving self-sufficiency.

Component 3: 28 disabled youth were gathered in 3 working groups and 2 were self-employed, exceeding the expected target.

Between components 1 and 3: a total of 14 small business had been created as a result of the training and a total of 93 trainees were engaged in income generating activities, over the expected 40% goal. Moreover, 58% of the trainees declared being employed in activities related to the received training.

Component 2: beneficiaries were already working in the sector on their own or in small groups before the project; as a result of the project they constituted 3 cooperatives, recognized by Ministry of Marine Resources and Ministry of Trade and Industry. The project led to a generalized significant increase of their income, and 24 fishermen doubled their income. Among the 115 beneficiaries of this component, there were 45 women (15 per cooperative), which indirectly

benefited from project activities, becoming employed in fish selling.

Thus, not only the expected outputs were matched, but also the outcome indicators have shown the achievement of the project purpose.

Risks and assumptions hold true, and unplanned negative effects did not occur except an increase of the price of raw materials and some problems of insecurity. But the beneficiaries, organized in groups or cooperatives, actively reacted through a thoughtful management of financial resources and by improving the surveillance.



Picture 7. YWD working in HAM training centre, Freetown outskirts

## IMPACT

Before the project most trainees of component 1 and 3 were unemployed, had little access even to the informal labour market and were relying on their extended families support. Almost all disabled were beggars without any assistance or support from anywhere. Beside the outcome indicators expounded in the previous section, the perceptions of the beneficiaries confirm the achievement of expected results. Beneficiaries said the project improved their livelihood, contributed in increasing their self-esteem reducing social exclusion caused by the social stigmatization related to disability, begging and living on the streets.

Among other effects, the project gave a great impulse towards association and cooperation between vulnerable segments of the population, by contributing in setting micro-enterprises, cooperatives or grass-root organizations. The received trainings and the growth of social capital enhanced people self-reliance to take active part in the social and productive life.

At the end of the project the beneficiaries of component 2 increased their profit, were able to

provide monetary help and food to their extended families and to support members of their communities to set up new activities

In general terms the project contributed to increase food security and to reduce poverty within marginal segments of the population.

The above impact indicators, however, concerned a limited number of beneficiaries, compared to the size of youth unemployment in the country.

This was a pilot project and scaling up the achievements implies either replicating elsewhere the interventions in similar contexts or keeping targeting the same beneficiaries and facilitating employment opportunities by the already established enterprises/cooperatives. Both options imply standardizing the training methodologies and fostering complementarities with the public sector. Higher impact depends from the overall initiatives on the issue, which should be coordinated at governmental level. Unfortunately, project's coordination with governmental institutions and UN agencies was rather weak.

## SUSTAINABILITY

AVSI has mainly acted as supervisor of FHM, who was responsible of the daily management of the project. This exchange of experiences enhanced FHM capacity of managing development projects. Also HAM which was part of formal and informal grass-root organizations networks being formally recognized by the Ministry of Social Welfare and by the City Council, benefited from its involvement in the project. Fishing cooperatives were recognized by the Ministry of Marine Resources and by the Ministry of Trade and Industry, and were embedded in the local community.

The phase out was implicit: local partners, FHM and HAM, should have kept running the training centres and assisting the beneficiaries in their business plans and were expected to be able to replicate the training courses, while the fishing cooperatives were expected to become self-sufficient.

Cooperatives adopting procedures of financial management, which required keeping one third of earnings for daily costs and one third for unforeseen expenditures and necessities of the community deposited into a bank account, proved to be efficient. A similar system has been adopted by micro-enterprises and by disabled groups, covering costs of raw materials and maintenance of the equipment, either opening bank accounts or not.

Equipment and tools provided by the project were appropriate and sustainable. Fishing cooperatives proved to be able to repair/replace the broken tools and equipment (fishing nets, engine spare parts), while the benefits generated by the project were extended to the community reaching more beneficiaries, as a consequence of the increase in income.



**Picture 8. Drying-store of Lakka's fishermen's cooperative, Tombo**

All members of cooperatives, groups and micro-enterprises were involved in the decision making process. Some significant cooperation with the relevant ministries had been developed (i.e. by providing the curricula, by producing the training materials, by implementing some technical training, by recognizing the cooperatives).

Local partners cooperation was kept even if mainly out from the youth employment issue. FHM, after CHYAO project completion, managed a 6-month project funded by British Cooperation through local NGO ENCIS on youth capacity building, where also HAM was involved. This project has been recently completed and applied for a second phase. A Child Protection (children rights, including education) project with UNICEF was managed, which lasted 1 year and a half, and a second phase will soon start. Finally, a community-led sanitation project in Tonkolele district, funded by UNICEF, has recently ended and a second 2-year phase, addressing 60 new villages has been approved.

Thus, sustainability at the end of project seemed easily achievable, however, findings from ex-post evaluation mission show a less optimistic picture.

#### Component 3, disable skills training.

The focus group made interviewing several members of HAM confirmed that the 2 new buildings built by the project are still operational, respectively for welding/blacksmithing and tailoring, and the provided tools are in use. HAM is rather a cooperative than a NGO, has approximately 70 members, including some trainees which have become members as well, while most of them started an independent business often elsewhere. They produce and sell goods. Relationships are kept and in case of need

(i.e. large order of goods to be made) former trainees may come to help.

Some multiplication effect of the training was experienced, because some trainees became trainers through their own workshops. However, no specific training courses are held by HAM in the training facilities built by the project, which are rather a multipurpose workshop.

According to the met beneficiaries the average number of trainees employed or self-employed has increased since the project completion, but they had no data or statistical figures on that. Out of the 4 training sections implemented by the project, 3 are still in place and have been prioritized by HAM: tailoring, blacksmithing and welding. The fourth one, electronic repairs, has been left because of the need to update the training tools and related costs. Now this section isn't operational anymore.

As a conclusion: some sustainability lies in the employment rate which remained stable or even increased, but the vocational training as such has ended together with the project.

#### Component 1, vocational training.

At the start of the project there was only a carpentry workshop, which was used also for training purposes. The project built and equipped new facilities to host bricks making, welding/metal works and tailoring. After the end of the project, the school location was found not proper for training purposes, because of distance and low density of unemployed youth in the area. Thus in 2012, the vocational training stopped for lack of clients. At present: i) carpentry is still on-going, with some reduction of trainees (10, one year ago they were 25); trainers are 6, some of the former trainees are still part time employed; ii) one welding trainer has moved his workshop to Lakka, keeping most of the provided tools, and he is working and receiving apprenticeships there; other trainers and trainees moved to town, where business is easier; some equipment is still in Rokel; iii) bricks making has been abandoned, some trainees opened their workshops closer to main roads and to trade opportunities, most of equipment is still unutilized in Rokel; iv) tailoring training has stopped, most of the tools have been moved to a local tailoring cooperative while the remaining ones were stolen.

The classes for vocational training, which aren't used anymore, are temporarily hosting a primary and secondary local school, with approximately

200 pupils (waiting for the construction of a new school just nearby).



Picture 9. Vocational training centre built by AVSI project, now hosting a primary school, Freetown outskirts

As a conclusion: some improvement of trainees' living conditions is probably acquired also after 2 years since the project's end, but the vocational training school has proved a failure, due to miscalculations in the project design; when funding from donors stopped the school's sustainability was compromised.

This represents a serious constraint of the project, not only for sustainability issues but also affecting the quality of design. Moreover, the school might be given in use to other potential beneficiaries, i.e. through coordination with other stakeholders and/or under National Youth Commission supervision, but relationships with NYC have been loose so far and the issue was not even discussed.

Component 2, fishermen cooperatives in Lakka.

The 3 cooperatives moved to Tombo, on the bottom of the Freetown peninsula, due to better fishing conditions and to the strength of local fishing trade (a governmental huge fishing complex, with marketing, cold chain, boat repair facilities has been recently built in the village). The cooperatives are still operational, and were interviewed by making a focus group with main cooperative members (around 40 people, men and women attending).

They stated to be able to manage daily fishing, addressing temporary constraints (i.e. boat/engine repair, loss of nets) and still hold bank accounts. On the other hand, their living and sanitary conditions are poor, housing and fish drying facilities (for some of them joint in the same building) are miserable, and major improvements (i.e. lack of mechanical spare parts, need of replacing the engines after a given period of years, building of concrete blocks to avoid floods during rainy season) still require support from donors.

As a conclusion: this component achieved what was expected, at a small-scale level the project proved sustainable, but the comprehensive situation is still fragile and exposed to sudden worsening due to price rise and/or economic decline in the country.

For this component, as for the others, the relationships with governmental bodies, crucial to ensure sustainability and scaling up of the activities, were discontinued after the end of the project losing their potential effect.

## CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

*During project life management, administration and efficiency were satisfactory, while main deficiencies lie in the sustainability issue.*

For the future, it is highly recommendable, right from the project design phase to link the activities aiming at improving living conditions and income of targeted beneficiaries with business development skills (BDS) training, in order to orient towards business their mind-set, rather than adopting a relief oriented approach. Moreover, this represents a pre-condition to access micro-credit schemes, which are suitable for the kind of the established entrepreneurship. The fishermen cooperative will soon have to replace the engine of their boats, which is expected to last 5/6 years average. At present conditions, when the engine stops working they will stop fishing and they will start looking for alternative donors to buy a new one. This is a typical case where a micro-credit scheme would allow them to keep working and generating an income.

Similar consideration may be done for self-employed artisans or for HAM's need of updating the tools for the electric repairs workshop. On the other hand, in the country context, where entrepreneurial mind-set in most cases has to be acquired, BDS and commitment are essential to make micro-credit and advantage rather than a financial burden.

Considering instead the vocational training purposes as a whole, they proved little or not sustainable short after the end of the project. As a matter of fact, Rokel vocational school is not operational anymore, except the carpentry sector, which was already active before the project. New trainings have been abandoned and classes have been lent to a local primary and secondary school. This represents a potential almost ready to use, but the inappropriate location is still a constraint difficult to overcome.

From the beginning it was clear that impact of such a project was mainly based on being part of a major effort, with tight coordination of implementing agencies, dissemination of lessons learned and strengths/weaknesses, supervision by governmental bodies able to transfer the experiences into policies and drawing of priorities. All that is not appreciable and has to be addressed as soon as possible. AVSI and FHM don't show coordination or even regular contacts with other stakeholders engaged on youth employment issues. This might have been worsened by the sudden withdrawal of AVSI from the second CHYAO project already agreed and funded.

Contacts with NaYCOM seem always to be in a preparatory phase, relying on just promises or invitations to single events without any formal consultation nor meeting.

In light of the above, the added value of participating to a joint and integrated effort, like that envisaged by CHYAO TF, seems missing.

# Overall evaluation of CHYAO funded projects in Sierra Leone

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*The evaluated projects were the majority of the total projects carried out in Sierra Leone under CHYAO TF and had a common purpose, which was the promotion of youth employment.*

*In order to give a useful support for future similar interventions, the evaluation exercise has been conducted paying particular attention to cross cutting issues, lessons learned and identification of best practices.*

*The overall evaluation outlined below details an independent assessment of the 4 projects performance, following the evaluation questions outlined in the Inception report, which in turn reflect OCSE/DAC evaluations criteria.*

**Ev. Question 1) Was the project proposal consistent with and supportive of Government's Poverty Reduction Strategy and relevant sector programs?**

**The purposes of all the projects were to address the main problems affecting youth, in particular employment and micro-entrepreneurship, as well as physical disability. This is perfectly on line with the National Youth Policy of Sierra Leone, issued in the aftermath of the civil war that for 11 years ravaged the country. It defines youth "persons in the age bracket of 15-35", i.e. about 34% of the country population. Youth were deeply involved and they still bear the consequences of the conflict: wounds and disabilities, lack of adequate education and skills, strong relief mind-set, disrupted economic environment, extremely poor demand for labour.**

**All the projects evaluated target youth as direct beneficiaries, with the only exception of the UNDP component, where they are indirect beneficiaries, taking advantage from strengthening the capacity of the initiatives implemented under the Peace Building Fund and the Basket Fund.**

**At the moment of their implementation, the four projects, as the other ones funded by CHYAO, were perfectly aligned with Sierra Leone national policies, summarized in the Agenda for Change, and coherent with the Country's Poverty Reduction Strategy, thus ensuring full ownership by the GoSL. Project actors made a great effort to comply with priorities and procedures of GoSL, which has proved quite capable of channelling the flows of aid in this sector. The community of donors are committed to improving Sierra Leone human and institutional capabilities in the matter.**

**The cooperation between the Italian Government, through the DGCS of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, and the World Bank is a good example of harmonization of development aid, implementing a coordinated sectorial program and sharing analytical work, in the selection of projects to be funded.**

**All the projects showed particular attention in addressing cross cutting issues, taking into consideration gender issues and most vulnerable groups' problems, according to the priorities of the PRS.**

**The ones involving vocational and skills trainings were tailored to be suitable for both women and men. Two out of the four evaluated projects, implemented by COOPI and AVSI,**



addressed persons with disabilities; unfortunately, they are a significant portion of the population (official average is 4% but unofficial figures are higher), due to war wounds and amputations as well as to poor health conditions (high rate of polio cases followed the interruption of vaccination schemes). There is the need for special help in order to find them an alternative to begging, and this is what the projects did, providing them with appropriate vocational trainings, enabling them to carry on a decent work.

The geographical selection of the interventions was done according to GoSL policies of improving living conditions in rural areas and mitigate internal migrations towards towns, of promoting agri-business, in order to improve both food security and income generation. This is particularly true for the second-funded COOPI project in Kono District, which aimed at enhancing rural communities living conditions by training and supporting them in agribusiness.

Rightly, the projects adopted a pilot approach, implementing small-scale interventions, involving a limited number of beneficiaries, as it was logic and coherent at that time of urgent needs for fast recovery. Today they show the limits of the relief-approach, in most cases affecting impact, sustainability and replication of interventions and, in the long run, risking creating a dependency culture.

Nowadays Country's conditions have significantly changed, and so has GoSL strategy, particularly in the sector of labour and employment policies. NaYCOM is now responsible of the whole sector, and it is able of attracting funds from the donors and of channelling their flow efficiently and effectively. UNDP and the World Bank are already deeply committed in this sector, where projects and programs have moved from a relief-based approach into a business-oriented one.

**Ev.Question 2) What was the quality of project design? And were outputs and outcomes achievable, given the limited resources and time available?**

In order to comply with the stringent requirements of the WB in the project preparation phase, all projects are based on a Project Design Summary, where adequate room is given to the description of project objective, output and outcome, relevant indicators, M&E procedures, context analysis and critical assumptions.

The analysis of the context was generally accurate and detailed; it allowed identifying a set of critical assumptions, which eventually hold true.

In the projects documents there is little evidence of clear exit strategy, but ex post it is possible to appreciate the care that some projects have devoted in ensuring a continuity of their actions and impact.

All the projects tried to set proper performance and success indicators, but only some (COOPI, AVSI) have defined them in both qualitative and quantitative terms, while others (GoBifo and NaCSA) have only a qualitative indication, reducing the usefulness of the LF as a project management tool.

Chronograms were drawn, but all projects have been rather optimistic in this respect, underestimating difficulties and time needed to overcome them. As a matter of fact, all projects had to apply for an extension, which was granted, except that for GoBifo.

In two cases the design showed significant flaws.

AVSI has built a vocational centre too far from densely populated areas of the town, where unemployed youth are more likely to live and to look for a job. This choice was not aligned with NaYCOM policy, which recommends to promote a better use of existing structures rather than to build new ones. While during project implementation the problems caused by distance have been somehow overcome thanks to project support (allowances, per

diem, provision of start-up kits and other benefits) and the centre could achieve the expected results, at its conclusion the number of trainees progressively decreased, trained people moved elsewhere to establish their businesses in the field of training, taking with them part of the equipment, and in the end all remaining tools were stolen. A more careful analysis of the context during the design phase would have avoided such a waste of resources.

Much more serious deficiencies have been found in the design of the GoBifo project, which eventually caused problems in its implementation and sharply hampered its impact and sustainability. GoBifo has created its own structures in the districts, with the aim of transforming them into governmental institutions; the whole design rests on this assumptions, which is not based on any plan of the GoSL, have not been discussed with them and of course did not work. The level VDC is not foreseen in the administrative decentralization scheme; they are a parallel structure, not building capacity in the national nor local administration, potentially working only until the benefits provided by the project last. Their sustainability after project completion is highly uncertain; actually about 120 VDC established in the first phase, funded by JSDF, have been left to their own destiny, and at the moment of the evaluation their bank accounts were idle.

Difficulties in cooperating with Ward Development Councils, which are recognized administrative structures, were already experienced in the first phase. In the project proposal instead there is no mention of those constraints and linkages with WDC are still presented as a major goal to be achieved. Acknowledgment of difficulties would have facilitated addressing them in the phase 2 under CHYAO TF.

**Ev. Question 3) Have the planned outputs been achieved within the expected inputs/resources and within the expected timeframe?**

All the projects have delivered their outputs not exceeding the budget approved, with the only exception of one of the results of the UNDP component that was not delivered, the Business Development Skills, but the allocated cost has been timely refunded.

COOPI asked for a budget increase of its first project of about 90,000 US\$, which was granted along with a 6 month time extension, in order to increase the number of trainees and adjust their approach to business training and their allowance policy.

Also AVSI asked for a 6 month time extension with a supplementary budget of 145,000 US\$ to provide for additional training (i.e. tailoring) and to build additional facilities to host them.

Both COOPI and AVSI then respected the extended budget and timeframe.

UNDP and NACSA asked for one year no cost time extension that was granted and respected.

GoBifo was not granted the 9 month time extension nor the 125,000 US\$ they have asked for. Their project was however completed six months after the expected deadline.

Constant monitoring by the WB is one of the reasons for compliance with approved budget. Funding by WB has been regular, with no delays. Only in the case of COOPI second project, payment had to be partly delayed, because of internal problems of the NGO, that were solved only at a late stage of project implementation; however COOPI could manage to deliver all the outputs, using own resources, showing a high degree of flexibility and ability to cope with unexpected problems.

Audits regularly performed during implementation period always proved the correctness of administrative procedures.

One of the main common causes of delay in project implementation rests in the difficulty in

recruiting human resources. COOPI experienced unavailability of staff in the second-funded project, changing two times project manager and four times country representative. Family Home Movement – AVSI local partner – in the last semester had problems recruiting a new program manager, and eventually AVSI country representative covered the position. UNDP was not successful in recruiting the Business Advisor in charge of BDS training. The delivery of outputs has generally met the expectations: the facilities built by COOPI, AVSI and GoBifo projects (grain stores, schools, workshops) and the related equipment (skills training tools, rice-hollers, etc.) were timely provided, they still are in good status and used by the communities, which still have access to them.

Only AVSI vocational training school has become a primary school after project completion.

In some cases the agricultural skills trainings experienced some delays, which slightly affected the beneficiaries' timely employment of the newly acquired competences.

Some unexpected difficulties were overcome through the mentioned extensions, which allowed adding new facilities to the built infrastructures and hosting additional trainings, providing refresher courses, increasing number of beneficiaries, recovering from delays.

#### **Ev.Question 4) Was an efficient monitoring/evaluation and reporting system established?**

All the projects had an internal monitoring system, both because it is an indispensable management tool and to comply with a stringent requirement by the donor. The World Bank has also run its own monitoring exercise, drafting periodical reports checking the performance of each project.

Reporting procedure was also regulated by WB requirements that have been generally followed timely and exactly, with the main exception of the COOPI project, High top staff turnover coupled with other management problems has caused considerable delay in monitoring and reporting, which in turn caused delayed payments. Reporting was eventually completed by WB, while the NGO coped with financial shortage.

Field components of each project were sufficiently monitored as well, thus ensuring transparency and accountability. That is the case of AVSI and COOPI projects, where training reports ensured close follow up of skills trainings and on the job apprenticeships. Extension workers from Ministry of Agriculture, embedded in the agribusiness component of the second COOPI project, participate in field activities and remained involved in monitoring the achievements also after project completion.

NaCSA component performed regular follow up of business and marketing training for all 40 involved groups in five districts.

Supervision and field monitoring was ensured also by the World Bank Task Team Leaders (TTL) and consultants.

Final assessments have been produced for each project: an impact assessment report of UNDP component, a final evaluation of the NaCSA component final (unfortunately NaCSA unavailable to evaluators), COOPI and AVSI external evaluation reports after project completions, GoBifo final evaluation report conducted by Brown University, Abdul Latif Jameel Poverty Action Lab and Berkeley University of California.

These documents supported a positive vision on the overall impact achieved by all projects at their completion.

The results achieved had a “substantial effect” on the lives of PBF/BF projects young beneficiaries, according to Helga Gibbons report, which states also that 99% of the sample interviewed declared having “more hope for the future”. Those data, if compared to the small amount of money and time through which projects were run, acquire even more

importance.

Better results concerning significant changes in life have been recorded in rural areas, where of course the baseline conditions were worse than in the urban settings.

Monitoring of achievements decreased after projects' completion and in some cases completely stopped. Some information on self-employment following vocational training was gathered through cooperative members (i.e. HAM) and former trainers and local coordinators (AVSI, COOPI, former coordinator of Kono component), farmer groups were still monitored by Ministry of Agriculture extension workers. On the other hand, NaCSA component staff left the office and new staff wasn't aware of past activities and GoBifo management was working for a new project, in a different geographical area and with different targeted beneficiaries and no updated information on village development councils, on their bank accounts and on income generating activities was available anymore.

**Ev.Question 5) Were the planned outcomes achieved and had all planned beneficiaries access to project result/services?**

All projects achieved the expected results at the time of project completion.

The component of 1 of "Promoting sustainable youth employment" project, run by UNDP, indirectly produced the expected benefits, through the identification, monitoring and supervision of PBF and BF initiatives, performed by the M&E newly established system.

Increase of income by over ten thousand beneficiaries was consistent, over 70% of them acknowledged significant improvement in their lives, and best implementing agencies were able also to strengthen governance and to establish cooperatives. Results were achieved both in rural and urban areas, with average better performance in the former.

The NaCSA component finalized business training to 40 groups of youth, who were supported in drawing a business plan, opening bank account and received a 1,000 \$ grant. Some of them were able to apply successfully for further micro-credit.

The beneficiaries of COOPI projects sharply improved their living conditions. Almost all of them at the end of multifaceted training could find a job or become self-employed. Over 70% increased their average earnings, 36% of them opened a bank account.

In Kono seven farmer groups were established, trained and provided with equipment; agreements were signed with land-lords allowing farming in unutilized land.

GoBifo succeeded in implementing Village Development Councils, while Ward Development Councils turned out to be quite ineffective. Infrastructures included in village plans have been built, provision of equipment and other materials (such as tools for primary school pupils) was finalized and planned skills trainings were successfully conducted.

AVSI project too achieved the expected outputs, often exceeding expected indicators. The majority of disabled persons who received training could get a job or be self-employed; after one year from project completion most of them were still in such a position.

Fishermen cooperatives were established, total number of members was higher than initially expected, bank accounts were opened and beneficiaries were able to achieve self-reliance.

In general, the picture at the time of projects' completion showed a satisfactory overall effectiveness. This allowed favourable expectations about future impacts.

## Ev.Question 6) Did the provided benefits last after project completion?

The evaluation took place about two years after the completion of the projects, depending on the actual date of closure of each single project. Field visits and interviews with local communities involved in the project provided a positive feedback about the duration over the time of the benefits received. Maintenance and proper use of the physical infrastructures built by the projects however give room to some concern.

In the case of COOPI; a second project has consolidated and expanded the achievements of the first one, better focusing the intervention.

The facilities and equipment given to rural communities in Kono district by this second project replaced traditional methods with new time saving technologies; the provision of new land to the communities, as well as financial literacy courses, improved their marketing and trading capacity. All these benefits are still there and are now part of communities skills and behaviour.

Youth involved in the GoBifo project received training and improvement of professional skills, in addition to using the facilities built; as a consequence of the centrality accorded to them in the implementation of the project, but they play now a stronger role in the communities they belong to.

In general terms projects results have social implications that cannot be simplified in a mere increase in income: they have improved people life qualitatively, giving them hope, new chances and greater self-esteem; this is still lasting, two years after projects ended, and will most probably last for a long while to go.

Field visits have also identified weaknesses that may jeopardize the continuation of benefits for the targeted communities in the medium-long term after projects completion.

In fact almost all the communities interviewed showed, at a different extent, an approach to their own development giving a far too great role to aid. This often leads communities to wait for another donor to come, rather than to count on their own resources and efforts to overcome constraints and difficulties.

Examples of such a mentality can be found in almost all the projects; just to remind some cases, the fishermen cooperative in Lakka is not saving money to replace the engine in a short future, waiting for next NGO to help them; a farmer group who received by COPI a rice-holler did not even collect information about the cost of the spare part needed.

CHYAO projects have in some cases represented a positive attempt to change current NGOs practice, still largely inspired by a relief-based conception, as it was for the humanitarian relief modality in the immediate aftermath of the war.

A second problematic issue is the governance at beneficiaries level; in particular the governance system put in place by Gobifo project is very vulnerable. In fact, Gobifo outcome in terms of empowerment of marginalized groups in their communities was not significant and it is expected to be even weaker now that the project is over.

The majority of self-employed artisans, either disabled or not, were able to achieve a regular monthly income at the end of the projects. However, insecurity is largely widespread and capacity of reacting to unexpected difficulties is still poor.

Following a relief approach, the largest number of beneficiaries of the initiatives is seen as the best option, while in a business-oriented approach focus is given to securing incomes. Thus a smaller cooperative able to save money, feed bank accounts and repay loans is much more effective than a larger cooperative still at subsistence level and at risk of failure.

Concerning the infrastructures, while the NaCSA component looks promising in terms of future sustainability and COOPI experience is somehow in a hybrid position, with strengths

and weaknesses, the maintenance of GoBifo ones looks far beyond the possibilities of the concerned Village Development Councils. Rokel vocational centre, enlarged and equipped by AVSI project, is not anymore operational, and part of its premises have been lent to a local primary and secondary school.

**Ev.Question 7) Did the CHYAO Trust Fund support development/consolidation of policies by government institutions?**

The CHYAO project had a significant impact at institutional level, positively influencing the evolution of sectorial policies.

With its pilot approach, involving a relatively small number of beneficiaries and small grant amounts, it contributed significantly to the reshaping of Government policies and strategies on youth employment and to more precisely orienting International Donors aid and support to this sector.

Such an important impact is due to both the actual achievements of each single project and to the capacity of making explicit the factors of success and failure and to transfer to all the stakeholders, including GoSL, the lessons learned from experience. M&E exercises done by the projects themselves or by the WB have greatly contributed to this process, particularly the impact evaluation ones. This allowed demonstrating the weaknesses of the relief based approach, largely prevailing at the moment of the launch of the projects.

One of the projects, implemented by UNDP, was actually meant to set up a Monitoring and Evaluation system of PBF and BF projects; though limited in resources and with a short timeframe, it greatly contributed to the comprehension of what are the drivers of youth empowerment in the employment sector.

NaCSA component proved the added value of business-oriented training and of drawing business plans as a pre-requisite to providing grants. COOPI project has clearly demonstrated the limits of the “relief mind-set” and the consequent risk of a dependency attitude.

After CHYAO, PBF and BF experiences, International Donors and Government changed their approach to youth employment policies toward a more business-oriented one. The five new BDS centres built by UNDP under the Youth Empowerment and Employment Programme (YEPP) are following this new path, which is strongly promoted by NAYCOM, the central governmental institution on youth issues. Plans to extend BDS centres to other districts have been drawn.

Political coordination still needs improvement. The recently established Ministry of Decentralization and Rural Development (formerly part of Ministry of Internal Affairs) needs to better coordinate its action with the NayCOM. Even if a strategy on youth employment has been identified, dissemination of that strategy to all concerned institutions is not fully accomplished.

However, political sustainability looks acquired, provided that all decision makers and implementing agencies will keep adopting as mainstream strategy the business-oriented approach.

# Conclusions, lessons learned and recommendations for further actions

*CHYAO in Sierra Leone came at the early stages of country's recovery after the war. Not surprisingly, the type of interventions and the number of beneficiaries targeted by the program recall a relief-based approach. This has eventually proved to be ineffective on the medium and long period, and CYHAO funded projects have in different ways contributed to shift towards a much more sustainable business-oriented approach.*

All projects showed positive impact in improving income and livelihood of the communities involved; however there is clear evidence that medium- and long-term sustainability is proportional to the effort to overcome and to the importance of managerial training provided. When this has not been done sufficiently, self-sufficiency reached at project completion is at risk and very much exposed to economic variations, such as Country's slow growth, prices fluctuations, environmental problems.

Concerning this crucial aspect, the ex-post evaluation has pointed out that on the overall the projects, taking full advantage of their pilot approach, have:

- demonstrated without any ambiguity the limits of the relief-based approach;
- through the reflection on their performance and the final evaluation of their impacts and outcomes, disseminated lessons learned and good practices, thus raising awareness of the need to move to a more sustainable approach;
- indicated possible paths to new approaches, by implementing pilot actions;
- deeply involved GoSL and International Donors in the debate on Youth Employment strategies;
- set up in GoSL institutions an M&E system allowing following the route towards the objectives and adopting corrective measures when necessary.

Thanks to the lessons learned and disseminated by CHYAO projects, GoSL, UNDP and other Donors and Development Agencies have all acquired full awareness of the need to move from a relief-based to a business-oriented approach; national policies for youth employment are actually answering such a need.

A corresponding recommendation for the establishment of new projects or programmes in the area of youth employment is to plan for longer interventions aiming to create job and livelihood opportunities, in order to widen the impact on beneficiaries lives in the long run. To achieve this in a country where only 13% of the population works in the formal sector, while the other 87% works in the informal sector and is often self-employed, the key is to create and/or strengthen entrepreneurship, promote partnership with the established private sector, help in developing a civic culture, conducive to economic democracy.

COOPI model is one of the best practices highlighted by the evaluation. It combines three aspects: business skills, business planning and literacy and numeracy and it is based on the mobilization of youth and on the links between beneficiaries and local governmental bodies, which ensured monitoring of activities and good governance. The provision of marketing skills has proved to play a key role in improving beneficiaries position, from a subsistence level to a secure one. The inclusion of literacy and numeracy to business training has promoted a comprehensive

empowerment of the beneficiaries, which is a key to sustainability. This model is perfectly aligned with the new government strategy on youth employment.

An important lesson learned from COOPI and some other projects is that the support to job creation is much more effective and provides stronger and more sustainable impact when target groups are organized in small groups of workers, diversifying their offer and ensuring their commitment to achieve results for the group benefits, which also helps increasing groups' savings. A fundamental issue lies in the need for capacity strengthening of national institutions dealing with youth employment, in order to ensure GoSL full ownership of sector policies and strategies and alignment to national guidelines of interventions promoted by NGOs and Development Agencies. Actually, a new funding mechanism of development projects is envisaged, managed by national Institutions. In charge of youth employment will most probably be NaYCOM; it has recently signed a MoU with UNDP to manage a 1.2 Million US\$ dollars fund and is already able to issue calls for proposals, recruit staff and implement its own projects through NGOs.

Good practices concern:

- inclusion of Business development skills in training programmes;
- focus on agri-business, in rural areas;
- improving the access to bank services;
- promote the establishment of small workers groups;
- establishing close and positive links with local institutions;
- align goals and strategy to national and local sector policies.

This Institution, strengthened by International Development Agencies support, would also ensure the coordination of governmental institutions, donors and NGOs, enhancing communication and synergy and avoiding duplication of initiatives and dispersion of funds.

At local level governance has been a key issue; the type and quality of relations between farmer groups and cooperatives with Governmental Institutions (i.e. Ministry of Agriculture) have a tremendous impact on the success and follow up of the projects. Under this respect, COOPI project provides a twofold success story: excellent relations with the local office of the MoA ensured both the alignment of project goals and strategy to national and local sector policies and the follow up of project outcomes. On the other end, GoBifo created a parallel structure - Village Development Councils - as the main pillar for youth and women empowerment, bypassing the existing local institutions - District Youth Councils and Chiefdom Youth Committees – and not linking to Ward Development Councils, representing the lowest tier of GoSL decentralized system. After project completion, VDC gradually dissolved, their function of promoting the role of youth within communities faded and no follow-up was ensured.

Supervision by WB on CHYAO funded projects was appreciated by all met implementing agencies. The World Bank timely and carefully supervised project implementation and directly helped them when needed, such as in the case of COOPI reporting difficulty.

An additional value to the projects for Children and Youth in Africa has been provided by the Trust Fund agreement between the Italian Ministry of Foreign Affairs and World Bank. Besides addressing some difficulties in the field (i.e. lack of expatriate staff and poor supervision during the second COOPI project) and some financial constraints (disbursement of funds mechanism was found somehow complex), the added value of a common vision addressing the economic and development related aspects of unemployment, rather than just the individual poverty, was noticed. The macro-economic World Bank approach, able to coordinate various projects, also of limited dimension such as pilot projects, has been capable to realize the different initiatives considering them part of a single development goal.

This approach has been particularly crucial in a situation characterized by multi donors' projects, often to be carried out in a perspective of short and long term strategy; moreover, being the Trust



Fund supporting programs in different countries of the area, the projects were qualified to be a component of a regional development strategy.

The World Bank local office responded, on the one hand, to the need for consistency of the projects with the specificities of the Country, on the other hand providing the appropriate coordination with local institutions, ensuring a continuity of dialogue between authorities and operators on the field.

Purposely, the WB local office, working as a two ways mechanism, made it possible to translate the political proposals into operational projects and - working in the opposite direction – bringing to the attention of decision makers the needs emerging from the territory, implementing a sort of permanent monitoring.

The well established and qualified mechanism for disbursement of funds of the World Bank has allowed to accompany the different stages of the study, the proposal and of the implementation of the projects with the necessary pace, accordingly with the planned financial needs.

Bank visibility has been very high to all stakeholders. The role of the Italian Cooperation is clearly visible to main stakeholders, but much less to final beneficiaries, apart from the presence of logos on major built infrastructures.

## **Annex I: Evaluation' terms of reference (ToR)**

ALLEGATO N. 1



**MINISTERO DEGLI AFFARI ESTERI**

*DIREZIONE GENERALE PER LA COOPERAZIONE ALLO SVILUPPO*

*Ufficio IX*

*Sezione Valutazione*

**TERMINI DI RIFERIMENTO  
PER LA VALUTAZIONE INDIPENDENTE  
DEL TRUST FUND ALLA BANCA MONDIALE  
“CHILDREN & YOUTH IN AFRICA”**

**MINISTERO DEGLI AFFARI ESTERI**

*DIREZIONE GENERALE PER LA COOPERAZIONE ALLO SVILUPPO*

<b>TITOLO DEL PROGRAMMA</b>	“Children & Youth in Africa”
<b>PROGETTI</b>	Youth Employment in Sierra Leone -TF091045, TF091046, TF091047, TF091048 Vocational Training for Youths with disabilities in Western area and Kono District – TF091058, TF091059 Youth participation and empowerment – TF094804, TF095652 Skills training and career development – TF091056, TF091057
<b>LUOGO DEL PROGETTO</b>	Africa
<b>LINGUA DEL PROGETTO</b>	Inglese
<b>AGENZIA ESECUTRICE</b>	BANCA MONDIALE
<b>DURATA</b>	36 mesi
<b>BUDGET</b>	EURO 9.053.903
<b>DONATORE</b>	Governo Italiano

## 1. Obiettivi del progetto

Il *Trust Fund* alla Banca Mondiale “*Children & Youth in Africa -CHYAO*” trae origine dalla Conferenza di Freetown “*Children from war to classroom – from crisis to recovery*” del 19-20 novembre 2004. Lo scopo di questo fondo regionale programmatico è quello di supportare politiche di sviluppo a difesa e promozione dei diritti dei bambini e dei giovani. Principalmente esso mira ad assicurare che i bambini non partecipino ai conflitti armati, a ridurre la vulnerabilità degli stessi bambini e degli adolescenti, con particolare attenzione al genere femminile, e, contemporaneamente, promuovere uno sviluppo sostenibile attraverso interventi nei campi della nutrizione, della salute, dell’educazione e della formazione professionale. La valutazione di tipo *ex post* sarà effettuata su di un campione di progetti (evidenziati in neretto) già conclusi in Sierra Leone, facenti parte dell’elenco finanziato attraverso il *Trust Fund* italiano alla Banca Mondiale.

Grant Number	Grant Name	Country	Grant Amount
<b>ACTIVE PROJECTS</b>			
TF056878	CHYAO AFRICA HUB	Africa	745.962
TF013029	ETHIOPIA - SOCIAL INCLUSION OF DISADVANTAGED CHILDREN AND YOUTH	Ethiopia	2.000.000
TF096420	SENEGAL - STRUGGLING AGAINST VULNERABILITY	Senegal	79.844
TF096421	SENEGAL - STRUGGLING AGAINST VULNERABILITY	Senegal	1.517.032
TF098264	NIGER - INCREASE NUTRITIONAL STATUS	Niger	20.000
TF098265	NIGER - INCREASE NUTRITIONAL STATUS	Niger	380.000
TF098381	LIBERIA - SUPPORT TO DEVELOPMENT OF SMALL FOREST ENTERPRISES	Liberia	20.000
TF099452	LIBERIA - SUPPORT TO DEVELOPMENT OF SMALL FOREST ENTERPRISES	Liberia	380.000
<b>COMPLETED PROJECTS</b>			
TF057379	CHILD NUTRITION PROPOSAL	Africa	150.000
TF091155	SIERRA LEONE - SUPPORT TO EDUCATION OF WAR-AFFECTED CHILDREN	Sierra Leone	469.920
TF095290	LIBERIA - PILOT-TESTING PROGRAM FOR CONFLICT-AFFECTED YOUTH	Liberia	400.000
TF095291	LIBERIA - URBAN YOUTH EX-COMBATANTS	Liberia	400.000
TF095497	SIERRA LEONE - EMPOWERING VULNERABLE YOUTH FOR SELF-RELIANCE	Sierra Leone	17.762
TF095498	SIERRA LEONE - EMPOWERING VULNERABLE YOUTH FOR SELF-RELIANCE	Sierra Leone	382.235
<b>LEGALLY</b>			

<b>CLOSED PROJECTS</b>			
TF057676	ERITREA - STRENGTHENING OVC ACTIVITIES OF ECD CENTERS	Eritrea	1.000
TF057677	MAINSTREAMING YOUTH IN WB PORTFOLIO IN PC COUNTRIES	Africa	90.113
<b>TF091045</b>	<b>YOUTH EMPLOYMENT IN SIERRA LEONE</b>	<b>Sierra Leone</b>	<b>7.606,31</b>
<b>TF091046</b>	<b>YOUTH EMPLOYMENT IN SIERRA LEONE</b>	<b>Sierra Leone</b>	<b>167.282,55</b>
<b>TF091047</b>	<b>YOUTH EMPLOYMENT IN SIERRA LEONE</b>	<b>Sierra Leone</b>	<b>8.726,00</b>
TF091048	SIERRA LEONE - YOUTH EMPLOYMENT	Sierra Leone	98.050,00
TF091056	SIERRA LEONE - SKILLS TRAINING AND CAREER DEVELOPMENT	Sierra Leone	445.000,00
TF091057	SIERRA LEONE - SKILLS TRAINING AND CAREER DEVELOPMENT	Sierra Leone	14.333,66
<b>TF091058</b>	<b>SIERRA LEONE - VOCATIONAL TRAINING FOR YOUTHS WITH DISABILITIES IN WESTERN AREA AND KONO DIST</b>	<b>Sierra Leone</b>	<b>11.970,07</b>
<b>TF091059</b>	<b>SIERRA LEONE - VOCATIONAL TRAINING FOR YOUTH WITH DISABILITIES</b>	<b>Sierra Leone</b>	<b>475.000,00</b>
TF091284	LIBERIA - SRH RIGHTS PROJECT	Liberia	382.931,97
<b>TF094804</b>	<b>SIERRA LEONE – SUPPORTING YOUTH PARTICIPATION AND EMPOWERMENT</b>	<b>Sierra Leone</b>	<b>380.000,00</b>
TF095499	SIERRA LEONE - YOUTH JOB PLACEMENT AND EDUCATION SUPPORT	Sierra Leone	0,00
TF095500	SIERRA LEONE - YOUTH JOB PLACEMENT AND EDUCATION SUPPORT	Sierra Leone	25,00
<b>TF095652</b>	<b>SIERRA LEONE – SUPPORTING YOUTH PARTICIPATION AND EMPOWERMENT</b>	<b>Sierra Leone</b>	<b>9.109,41</b>
<b>Total</b>			<b>9.053.902,97</b>

- Progetto “**Youth Employment in Sierra Leone** -TF091045, TF091046, TF091047, TF091048”

Luogo del Progetto: Sierra Leone

Budget del Progetto: 350,000.00 US\$

Lingua del Progetto: Inglese

Durata: 12 mesi

Agenzia esecutrice: Ministero dei Giovani e dello Sport - NaCSA (National Commission for Social Action)

L'obiettivo generale del Progetto è quello di promuovere l'occupazione giovanile di breve e lungo periodo in Sierra Leone attraverso due componenti:

- Lo sviluppo di strategie di implementazione dei risultati del Youth and Employment ESW e assistenza, anche di natura tecnica, al Ministero della Gioventù e dello Sport per la realizzazione di programmi finalizzati all'occupazione giovanile;
- Lo sviluppo dell'imprenditorialità giovanile attraverso corsi di formazione ad hoc.

- Progetto “**Vocational Training for Youths with disabilities in Western area and Kono District** – TF091058, TF091059”

Luogo del Progetto: Sierra Leone

Budget del Progetto: 399,996.75 US\$

Lingua del Progetto: Inglese

Durata: 18 mesi

Agenzia esecutrice: COOPI – Cooperazione Internazionale

Il progetto si propone di dare seguito ad un progetto precedente implementato dal COOPI a supporto di 210 giovani disabili. Il Progetto proposto si basa sulla stessa metodologia, affinata anche dalle lezioni apprese, dei precedenti *Grants*.

Esso è mirato a rendere indipendenti, soprattutto in campo lavorativo, 250 giovani della Western Area e del Kono District, con particolare attenzione ai giovani disabili di entrambi i sessi.

Il progetto si divide in due componenti principali:

- Realizzazione di corsi di formazione professionale finalizzati ad aumentare la capacità occupazionale dei giovani al fine di creare un'attività in grado di produrre reddito;
- Attività di monitoraggio e valutazione del progetto al fine di comparare i risultati con i progetti già conclusi nell'ambito del CHYAO Africa.

• Progetto “**Supporting youth participation and empowerment – TF094804, TF095652**”

Luogo del Progetto: Sierra Leone

Budget del Progetto: 400,000.00 US\$

Lingua del Progetto: Inglese

Durata: 17 mesi

Agenzia esecutrice: GoBifo

Il progetto GoBifo è stato lanciato nel Gennaio 2006 con i seguenti obiettivi:

- rafforzare il capitale sociale e la capacità delle comunità di prendere decisioni comuni;
- rilanciare la capacità dei villaggi e dei governi locali di programmare ed implementare piani strategici finalizzati allo sviluppo;
- rilanciare la responsabilità dei decision makers a livello di governo locale (Wards) attraverso meccanismi che favoriscano la consultazione collettiva e la trasparenza governativa.

Il Progetto ha operato nei due distretti in 120 villaggi, attraverso due principali investimenti:

- Prestiti per gruppi di comunità e per i *Wards Council* atti a implementare attività di sviluppo attraverso processi inclusivi e partecipativi;
- Supporto e *capacity building* utili a:
  1. assistere le comunità nell'analizzare e individuare collettivamente le priorità;
  2. proporre attività consone al raggiungimento degli obiettivi stabiliti dalle priorità stesse;
  3. implementare, gestire, mantenere e valutare tali attività di concerto con i *council* locali.

- Progetto “**Skills training and career development** – TF091056, TF091057”

Luogo del Progetto: Sierra Leone

Budget del Progetto: 399,091.00 US\$

Lingua: Inglese

Durata: 12 mesi

Agenzia esecutrice: Fondazione AVSI

L'obiettivo generale del Progetto è di aiutare i giovani poveri dell'area est di Freetown a trovare un'occupazione o ad intraprendere un'attività che dia loro profitto.

Il Progetto è finalizzato a rafforzare il network tra iniziative simili così da poter migliorare e accrescere l'efficacia degli interventi a supporto dell'occupazione giovanile.

## **2. Utilità della valutazione**

L'utilità della valutazione dei progetti finanziati tramite il Trust Fund in Africa mira ad accertare la misura in cui i progetti selezionati siano stati rilevanti, effettivi, efficaci e sostenibili nel raggiungimento degli impatti previsti.

La valutazione dovrà pervenire ad un giudizio generale sul grado in cui le strategie e i progetti attivati abbiano contribuito al raggiungimento degli obiettivi e dell'impatto previsto con l'ausilio di domande che dovranno essere concordate (vedi Allegato A).

Le conclusioni della valutazione saranno basate su risultati oggettivi, credibili, affidabili e validi e dovranno fornire raccomandazioni utili e operative.

La valutazione dovrà fornire lezioni e raccomandazioni finalizzate ad organizzare al meglio le eventuali future partecipazioni italiane a questo tipo di finanziamenti per la Cooperazione allo Sviluppo.

## **3. Scopo della valutazione**

La valutazione dovrà:

- esprimere un giudizio sulla rilevanza degli obiettivi e sul loro grado di raggiungimento;
- esprimere un giudizio su efficienza, efficacia, impatto (ove possibile) e sostenibilità dei progetti;
- esaminare i Progetti nella loro completezza, per identificare le buone pratiche e le lezioni apprese, in modo da usarle come base conoscitiva per sviluppare i futuri pacchetti d'assistenza;
- analizzare le strategie e le modalità d'implementazione, come fornire raccomandazioni da integrare per la scelta degli interventi da finanziare attraverso eventuali futuri Trust Fund;
- tenere in considerazione i fattori di sostenibilità e l'impatto che l'implementazione dei progetti finanziati avrà sulle condizioni del Paese;
- stimare i risultati e l'effettività dei progetti.

#### 4. Quadro analitico suggerito

Il *team* di valutazione può includere altri aspetti congrui allo scopo della valutazione.

I criteri di valutazione si fondano sui seguenti aspetti:

- **Rilevanza:** Il *team di valutazione* dovrà verificare il grado in cui i Progetti tengono conto del contesto e dei problemi del Paese. La valutazione riesaminerà la misura con la quale gli obiettivi dei Progetti sono coerenti con i requisiti e le esigenze dei beneficiari. La valutazione stimerà se l'approccio sia strategico e in che misura siano state usate le risorse per l'attuazione dei Progetti. Nel valutare la rilevanza delle iniziative bisognerà tenere conto: a) in che misura gli obiettivi delle iniziative siano validi, b) in che misura gli obiettivi delle iniziative siano coerenti, c) percezione dell'utilità delle iniziative da parte del destinatario.
- **Validità del design dei progetti:** La valutazione riesaminerà la misura con la quale il *design* dei progetti è stato logico e coerente.
- **Efficienza:** Analisi dell'ottimizzazione nell'utilizzo delle risorse per conseguire i risultati dei Progetti. Nel valutare l'efficienza sarà utile considerare: 1) se i risultati siano stati raggiunti con i costi previsti, 2) se i risultati siano stati raggiunti nel tempo previsto, 3) se l'alternativa utilizzata fosse la più efficiente (minori costi o minori tempi) rispetto alle altre. La valutazione indicherà come le risorse e gli *inputs* siano stati convertiti in risultati.
- **Efficacia:** La valutazione misurerà il grado e l'entità di raggiungimento degli obiettivi dei programmi. Nel valutare l'efficacia dei progetti sarà utile: a) considerare se gli obiettivi, generale e specifico dei progetti, siano stati chiaramente identificati e quantificati, b) verificare la coerenza delle caratteristiche progettuali con il relativo obiettivo generale e obiettivo specifico, c) verificare in che misura gli obiettivi generali siano stati raggiunti, d) analizzare i principali fattori che hanno influenzato il raggiungimento degli obiettivi.
- **Impatto:** La valutazione misurerà gli effetti diretti ed indiretti provocati dai progetti nel contesto di riferimento. Nel valutare l'impatto si dovrà tenere conto dei reali cambiamenti che l'iniziativa ha prodotto nella collettività. La valutazione stimerà l'orientamento strategico dei progetti in relazione al contributo apportato.
- **Sostenibilità:** Si valuterà la capacità dei progetti di produrre e riprodurre benefici nel tempo. Nel valutare la sostenibilità dei progetti sarà utile: 1) considerare in che misura i benefici di questi continuano anche dopo che è cessato l'aiuto della DGCS, 2) verificare i principali fattori che hanno influenzato il raggiungimento o il non raggiungimento della sostenibilità dei progetti.

#### 5. Outputs

Gli *outputs* dell'esercizio saranno:

- Un rapporto finale in inglese ed italiano (dieci copie rilegate per ogni versione) in formato cartaceo e su supporto informatico (Word e Pdf).
- Quattro pagine di sommario del Rapporto di Valutazione dei Progetti in inglese e in italiano.

#### 6. Metodologia

L'attività di valutazione dovrà appurare che gli obiettivi siano effettivamente raggiunti ed identificare le cause degli eventuali scostamenti. La valutazione sarà effettuata attraverso l'analisi di varie fonti informative e indagini di dati derivanti dalle attività di monitoraggio dei vari settori.



Inoltre saranno utilizzate interviste con le controparti governative, con i *partners* dei progetti, con i beneficiari diretti ovvero con la popolazione delle suddette zone, con i gestori e con lo *staff* dei progetti.

A questo scopo, il *team di valutazione* intraprenderà una missione in Sierra Leone.

#### **Data Collection:**

Il *team di valutazione* userà un metodo di approccio multiplo che includerà la revisione della documentazione, l'analisi dei dati derivanti dalle attività di monitoraggio, le interviste individuali, i focus groups e la visita delle zone interessate dai progetti.

Il metodo finale selezionato dal *team di valutazione* dovrà tenere conto degli obiettivi della valutazione e delle domande di valutazione che il *team* formulerà attenendosi all'Allegato A.

A questo scopo, la proposta tecnica dovrà:

- a. Identificare la metodologia;
- b. Stabilire il livello di partecipazione degli stakeholders alla valutazione.

#### **Validation:**

Il team di valutazione userà diversi metodi (inclusa la triangolazione) al fine di assicurare che i dati rilevati siano validi.

#### **Coinvolgimento degli stakeholders:**

Sarà usato un approccio inclusivo coinvolgendo un ampio numero di stakeholders.

Dovranno essere coinvolti rappresentanti della Banca Mondiale, istituzioni sociali, governative, di organizzazioni della società civile e, più importanti, i beneficiari dei progetti

### **7. Disposizioni gestionali, piano di lavoro**

<b>1. Desk Analysis</b>	Revisione della documentazione relativa ai progetti
<b>2. Field visit</b>	Il team di valutazione visita i luoghi dei progetti, intervista le parti interessate, i beneficiari e raccoglie informazioni supplementari.
<b>3. Rapporto di valutazione</b>	Bozza del rapporto di valutazione
<b>4. Commenti delle parti interessate e feedback</b>	La bozza della relazione circola tra le parti interessate per commenti e feedback. Queste vengono consolidate ed inviate al <i>team</i> di valutazione.
<b>5. Workshop</b>	Workshop sulla presentazione della bozza del rapporto di valutazione con relativo coinvolgimento delle parti interessate
<b>6. Relazione finale</b>	Il team di valutazione mette a punto la relazione finale incorporando i commenti.

### Profilo del Team di Valutazione

La valutazione dovrà essere svolta da un *team* di valutatori con avanzata conoscenza della cooperazione allo sviluppo e della gestione di progetti di cooperazione. E' richiesta inoltre una buona esperienza nella conduzione di valutazioni dell'aiuto pubblico allo sviluppo.

- Laurea magistrale;
- Esperienza in interviste, ricerche documentate, redazione e scrittura di relazioni;
- Eccellenti capacità analitiche e di sintesi;
- Eccellenti capacità comunicative e di scrittura;
- Eccellente padronanza della lingua Inglese.

### FORMATO SUGGERITO DEL RAPPORTO DI VALUTAZIONE

<b>Copertina</b>	Il file relativo alla prima pagina sarà fornito dall'Ufficio IX della DGCS.
<b>1. Sintesi</b>	Quadro generale che mette in rilievo i punti di forza e di debolezza del progetto. Max 4 pagine, focalizzandosi sulle lezioni apprese e raccomandazioni.
<b>2. Contesto del progetto</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>- Situazione paese</li><li>- Breve descrizione delle necessità che il progetto ha inteso soddisfare</li><li>- Analisi del quadro logico</li><li>- Stato di realizzazione delle attività e stima dei tempi di completamento del progetto</li></ul>
<b>3. Obiettivo</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>- Tipo di valutazione.</li><li>- Descrizione dello scopo e dell'utilità della valutazione.</li></ul>
<b>4. Quadro teorico e metodologico</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>- Gli obiettivi della valutazione</li><li>- I criteri della valutazione</li><li>- L'approccio e i principi metodologici adottati</li><li>- Fonti informative:interviste, focus groups, site visit</li><li>- Le difficoltà metodologiche incontrate</li></ul>
<b>5. Verifica della realizzazione</b>	Verifica dei principali stadi di realizzazione del progetto.
<b>6. Presentazione dei risultati</b>	
<b>7. Conclusioni</b>	Concludere la valutazione facendola derivare dai risultati e dalle comunicazioni principali.
<b>8. Raccomandazioni</b>	Le raccomandazioni dovrebbero essere volte al miglioramento dei progetti futuri e delle strategie della DGCS.
<b>9. Lezioni apprese</b>	Osservazioni, intuizioni e riflessioni generate dalla valutazione, non esclusivamente relative all'ambito del progetto, ma originate dai findings e dalle raccomandazioni.
<b>10. Annexes</b>	Devono includere i TORs, la lista delle persone contattate e ogni altra informazione/documentazione rilevante.

## Annex II: list of persons met

Organisation, Ministry and department	Name	Title
AVSI	Libero Buzzi	Desk Officer
AVSI	Fishermen cooperative in Tombo	Beneficiaries of AVSI project
COOPI	Augustin	Disable beneficiary of COOPI project in WA
COOPI	Buma Massaguoi	Monitor of Urban agricultural project
COOPI	Giacomo Franceschini	Previous Desk Officer for Sierra Leone
COOPI	Ibrahim	Shoes-maker beneficiary of COOPI Disables vocational training project in Kono
COOPI	Margareth Gbassi	Petty-trader beneficiary of COOPI Disables vocational training project in Kono
COOPI	Novella Maifredi	Desk Officer for Sierra Leone
COOPI	Sabine Jekak	Country Manager In Sierra Leone
COOPI	Silvia Favaron	Independent evaluator of COOPI's project
COOPI	Sheik Mansaray	Former local coordinator in Kono district
COOPI	Sumbaidu farmer-group	Beneficiaries of II COOPI project in Kono district
COOPI	Waindai Samura	Field officer for first CHYAO project in WA
COOPI	Yadu Gbense farmer-group	Beneficiaries of II COOPI project in Kono district
COOPI	Betty from Yadu Gbense farmer-group	Social worker secretary and administrator of Yadu Gbense farmer group
Family Home Movement	Ernest Sesay	Director
Family Home Movement	James Abu Gbanoh	Administrator
Family Home Movement	Joseph Syffa	Logistician
GoBifo	Cassius Mansaray	Ward facilitator
GoBifo	Joseph Moihama Johnson	Project Accountant
GoBifo	Kabombenh village community	Project's Beneficiaries
GoBifo	Mabolleh village community	Project's Beneficiaries
GoBifo	Massama village community	Project's Beneficiaries
GoBifo	Mohamed Mankas Sesay	Training Officer
GoBifo	Salmata Kargbo	Procurement/administrator officer
GoBifo	Sawulia village community	Project's Beneficiaries
GoBifo	Sullay Sesay	Programme Manager
Handicap Action Movement	Abu White Koroma	Chairman and Blacksmith
Handicap Action Movement	Eric Sesay	Programme Officer and Tailor
Handicap Action Movement	Ibrahim Sesay	Blacksmith

Handicap Action Movement	Mustapha Kamasa Weldes	Welder
Handicap Action Movement	Sheku Bernard	Blacksmith
Handicap Action Movement	Yayah Yonkai Kanru	Welder
Ministry of Agriculture	Ayah B. E. Torto	Kono District Ministry of Agriculture training officer
Ministry of Agriculture	Brima Samuel Bangura	Kono District Ministry of Agriculture extension officer
Ministry of Agriculture	Musa Kande	Kono District Ministry of Agriculture officer Kono District
Ministry of Agriculture	Sahr Ihpachir	Kono District Ministry of Agriculture extension worker
NaCSA	Francess Kondoh	Former responsible of NaCSA project
NaCSA	James Harding	Executive secretary
NAYCOM	Anthony Koroma	Commissioner
SLYEO	Charles Lahai	Executive director
SLYEO	Mustapha Kabba	Administrator
SLYEO	Sahr Fayia	Finance officer
UNDP	Marbey Sartie	Programme Analyst, Youth Employment and Empowerment Programme
UNDP	Mohamed Abchir	Country representative
UNDP	Sarah Benevant	Youth employment officer
World Bank	Chiara Tufarelli	Administrator and Liaison Officer, Italian Trust Fund for Children and Youth in Africa
World Bank	Maurizia Tovo	TTL of the Italian Trust Fund for Children and Youth in Africa
World Bank	Peter Ganda	Senior officer in Freetown
World Bank	Sarah Michael	Bank Senior Social Development Specialist, ex-TTL of TF 091047 and TF 091048 executed by UNDP and of TF091045 and TF091046 executed by NaCSA

## Annex III: list of documents

Topic	Documents
<b>Country background</b>	<p>Joint CAS IBRD-IDB FY10-FY13 (for Sierra Leone)</p> <p>Draft Policy Note on Disabilities</p> <p>World Bank Project Performance Assessment Report of the Sierra Leone National Social Action Plan (March 27, 2013).</p>
<b>CHYAO TF</b>	<p>Summary Financial Information for CHYAO Trustee (April 20123)</p> <p>Summary Financial Information for the 9 Grants to Be Evaluated</p> <p>CHYAO Portfolio in Sierra Leone</p> <p>CHYAO Donor Progress Report June 2009 PART I</p> <p>CHYAO Donor Progress Report June 2009 PART II</p> <p>CHYAO Donor Progress Report June 2009 Part III</p> <p>CHYAO Donor Progress Report June 2009 Part IV</p> <p>List of Concept Notes Received for II CFP</p> <p>Text of II CFP</p> <p>Text of III CFP</p>
<b>Project I. “Promoting Sustainable Youth Employment in Sierra Leone” -TF 091048 executed by UNDP and TF091046 executed by National Commission for Social Action (NaCSA).</b>	<p>Concept Note</p> <p>Proposal TF091046</p> <p>Proposal TF091048</p> <p>Narrative Progress Report (December 2008)</p> <p>Narrative Progress Report (June 2009)</p> <p>Narrative Progress Report (October 2010)</p> <p>TF 091046 Grant Agreement with NACSA</p> <p>TF 091046 Subsidiary Agreement with NACSA</p> <p>TF 091048 Grant Agreement with UNDP</p> <p>TF091048 Amendment to grant agreement w.r.t. extension of closing date and reallocation of grant proceeds</p> <p>TF091048 WB Completion Report</p> <p>TF091046 WB Completion Report</p> <p>TF091046 – UNDP Progress Report</p> <p>TF091046 UNDP Completion Report with Annexes</p> <p>TF 091046 – 2009 Progress Report by NACSA</p>

	<p>TF091046 - 2008 (1) Project Report by NACSA</p> <p>TF091046 – 2008 (2) Project Report by NACSA</p> <p>TF 091046 – BTOR June 2009</p> <p>TF091048 – BTOR May 2009</p> <p>UNDP Impact Assessment report, January 2011</p>
<p><b>Project II. “Vocational Training for Youth with Disabilities in Western area and Kono Districts of Sierra Leone toward Productive and Active Social Lives “- TF 091059 executed by COOPI.</b></p>	<p>Concept Note</p> <p>Proposal</p> <p>Addendum to Proposal April 2008</p> <p>TF091058 Grant Dashboard from MyTF</p> <p>TF091059 Grant Dashboard from MyTF</p> <p>COOPI Progress Report June 2008</p> <p>COOPI Project Report July 2009</p> <p>COOPI Baseline Survey Report</p> <p>COOPI Outlines of Initial Findings (draft)</p>
<p><b>Project III. “Supporting Youth Participation and Empowerment- GoBIFO” - TF 094804 executed by Decentralized secretariat</b></p>	<p>Proposal</p> <p>Grant Funding request</p> <p>e-Trust fund Summary</p> <p>Grant Agreement</p> <p>Semi-annual Report (August 2010)</p> <p>Press on GoBiFo</p> <p>Completion Report</p> <p>Strengthening Social Capital. The GoBifo Approach in Rural Sierra Leone</p>
<p><b>Project IV. “Skills Training and Career Development” - TF091056 executed by AVSI</b></p>	<p>Concept Note</p> <p>Full Proposal</p> <p>GRM summary data sheet</p> <p>Loan Overview</p> <p>Letter of Agreement with AVSI</p> <p>Amendment to letter of agreement with AVSI</p> <p>Approved Additional Funding and Revised Proposal (April 2009)</p> <p>First Semester Progress Report and third Semester Project Report</p> <p>Final Evaluation Report</p> <p>Draft Policy Note on Disabilities</p>

## **Annex IV: list of acronyms**

AFFORD	African Foundation for Development
AVSI	Associazione Volontari per il Servizio Internazionale
BDS	Business Development Skills
BF	Basket Fund
BMT	Business Management Training
CHYAO	Italian Trust Fund for Children and Youth in Africa
COOPI	Cooperazione Internazionale
DPO	Disable People Organizations
EC	European Commission
FHM	Family Home Movement
GIZ	German International Cooperation
GoSL	Government of Sierra Leone
HAM	Handicap Action Movement
IFAD	International Fund for Agricultural Development
ILO	International Labour Organization
JSDF	Japanese Social Development Fund
KOWONET	Kono Women Groups Network
MAFFS	Ministry of Agriculture Forestry and Food Security
M&E	Monitoring and Evaluation
MOFA	Mountain Farmers Association
MoU	Memorandum of Understanding
MSC	Most Significant Change
NaCSA	National Commission for Social Action
NaYCOM	National Youth Commission
NetARD	Network Action for Rural Development
NGO	Not Governmental Organization
OVI	Objectively Verifiable Indicators
PBF	Peace Building Fund
SLYEO	Sierra Leone Youth Empowerment Organization
SLUDI	Sierra Leone Union for Disability Issues
TOR	Terms of Reference
UNDP	United Nations Development Program
VDC	Village Development Council
VDP	Village Development Plan
WA	Western Area
WB	World Bank
WDC	Ward Development Council
YWD	Youth with Disabilities
YEEP	Youth Employment and Empowerment Program
YES	Youth Employment Secretariat