

4th Steering Committee Meeting
“Job Creation, Core Labor Standards, and Poverty Reduction”
BMZ, GTZ, ILO, and World Bank
November 30, 2005

Participants:

Achim Johannsen, BMZ; Frank Tibitz, GTZ; Irina Kausch (advisor BMZ/GTZ); Zafar Shaheed, Claude Akpokavie, ILO; Susanne Dorasil, WB (German ED Office); Louise Fox, Amy Luinstra, Caterina Ruggeri, Friederike Rother, WB.

Introduction

After words of welcome from Amy Luinstra, the participants agreed upon the proposed agenda of the meeting, focusing on the country-level activities and the dissemination phase of the program.

I. Research Papers

It was announced that final versions of all research papers are in and available on the project website. As discussed at the previous SC meeting, all will be subjected to the following procedure: professional editing to a reasonable length (40 pages each or so); publication as a Social Protection Discussion Paper; and adaptation into a series of accessible 4-page summary pieces useful to policymakers, Bank staff, and others. The research papers have been well-received and have catalyzed a 2-year Africa regional research program that has mobilized separate funding, including significant commitments from World Bank base budget. Achim Johannsen stressed that the results of the country work should focus on the question “What can we tell policymakers?”. Everybody agreed on this. The papers are precisely written for policymakers and stakeholders.

II. Country-level work

Steering Committee members agreed that country level work is proceeding very well in Ethiopia and Burkina Faso, the latter of which just concluded an initial workshop at which preliminary findings were discussed. After considerable discussion with the country team and in-country consultation, colleagues from Ghana have also come forward a proposal to support labor market work in the country. The latest Ghana country work proposal has been circulated among SC-members and has been posted on the Trustfund’s website. Achim Johannsen asked for a stronger involvement of German bilateral partners in Burkina Faso, especially with regards to a lately established database on labor markets by the German partners in Burkina Faso and the “Base de Données Socio-économique”. He was disappointed that bilateral partners in Burkina had not been informed on a labor market workshop held in October 2005. Mr. Johannsen furthermore requested strong involvement of stakeholders (including bilaterals) for the country work in Ghana. Mr. Zafar Shaheed stressed the same point and also underlined the importance of including issues relevant to core labor standards in the country work. Ms. Luinstra agreed to look into this and circulate information on the country work in Ghana as soon as possible. [In the meantime the Burkina Faso team, as well as the Ghana country team have contacted the German bilateral partners on the country work.]

a. Burkina Faso

The Burkina Faso work focuses on the following three areas: (i) support to the Burkina Faso Employment Strategy; (ii) development of the national SP strategy, and (iii) strengthening the statistical and monitoring and evaluation capacities within the government. With respect to the first area, the following four background papers have been commissioned: (a) rural employment; (b) urban employment and labor migration; (c) child labor and employment opportunities for vulnerable groups, and (d) the impact of existing employment programs. First drafts have been discussed at a national labor market workshop on October 12, 2005 and will contribute to preparation of the Burkina Faso Employment Strategy. The workshop was attended by a range of key stakeholders, including policymakers, technical staff of government agencies, researchers from local academic organizations, and civil society groups. Final drafts are expected in early 2006. The second area of focus for the project, support to the Burkina Faso National Social Protection Strategy, has taken on particular importance as it is now one of the triggers of Burkina Faso PRSC-6 (WB credits to support the national Poverty Reduction Strategy). In consultation with national stakeholders and WB staff, the draft prepared by a multisectoral government team identified priority social protection and labor market measures to include in the next PRSC. The paper will be finalized for PRSC negotiations in Spring 2006. The final component aimed at building statistical and monitoring and evaluation capacity within the Ministry of Employment and Youth has succeeded in establishing a database to organize labor market-relevant data from the statistical office and other sources. This

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component is also supporting a technical manual for collecting and using such data; a series of training workshops (including in local offices outside of Ouagadougou); and the development of a manual and training on labor market program monitoring evaluation. This latter component served as a model for the work proposed in Ghana.

b. Ethiopia

The TF is providing considerable support to analytical labor market work, including workshops to widely discuss and disseminate findings. Recent progress has been achieved in three areas: (i) analytical work is well underway with completed first drafts in most topics; (ii) design of a joint WB-ILO workshop; and (iii) improvement of information sharing on the labor market. The latter has been particularly helpful for the revision of Ethiopia's PRSP. Policy papers will cover topics such as civil service and public sector employment; private sector growth and job creation; labor dynamics; youth labor markets; labor market information; migration; and labor market indicators. A policy report synthesizing key findings will be discussed and disseminated at a joint workshop with ILO in early December. Ethiopia is currently revising its PRSP which has presented an opportunity to get the Ministry of Labor engaged in the process and propose relevant labor market indicators in the monitoring matrix. The flow of labor market data and analysis into policy-making has been substantially improved. Continuous policy dialogue with the Government, social partners, GTZ, and ILO has featured in all phases of the project.

c. Ghana

The objective of the country proposal for Ghana is to enhance the capacity of the Ministry for Manpower Planning, Youth and Employment for monitoring the implementation of employment generation policies under the GPRS. This is justified by the fact that a National Employment Policy can be more effective if it is based on analyzed labor market information. Finally, the proposal also seeks to fund workshops that support the dissemination of employment policies/programs and the promotion of social dialogue. The point was made that the work in Ghana should as much as possible be seen as a follow-up to the Employment Summit. This work should also be coordinated with the ILO capacity building component in Ghana.

A full revised proposal is now available on the Trustfund's website.

III. Capacity Building

a. Labor Economics Intensive Training Program.

The project will include a two week labor economics course to be offered in Kenya; supervised ongoing research, dissemination conference; and a short term fellowship for selected researchers. Full proposals from three short listed organizations to administer this training program in collaboration with the African Economics Research Consortium (AERC) were submitted. An evaluation committee has evaluated the proposals on the basis of their responsiveness to the Terms of Reference, applying the evaluation criteria specified in the Request for Proposal. The German economics research center IZA reached the highest scores and has been selected to implement the Labor Economics Intensive Training. IZA has been in close contact with AERC to arrange for the training component. More information will be available on the website shortly.

b. Final workshop and dissemination

SC-members agreed that the objective of the workshop is to reach African stakeholders, including policy-makers, African social partners, other African institutions and researchers, as well as important donor agencies, and senior World Bank staff. Possible venues for the workshop were discussed, including locations Africa (e.g. Capetown or Nairobi), Europe, or Washington, D.C. While a location in Africa is prima facie more "logical" as pointed out by the ILO colleagues, a location in Europe might offer easier - and possibly cheaper - transportation for participants from various parts of Africa. The BMZ and WB colleagues noted their preference to hold the workshop at GTZ headquarters in Eschborn/Frankfurt. A final decision on the location was not taken. Since country work, as well as the Labor Economics Intensive Training Program will not be finalized before the summer of 2006, the workshop has been tentatively scheduled for September/October 2006.

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Louise Fox and Amy Luinstra concluded that the World Bank will continue to disseminate findings from the Trustfund Program among World Bank colleagues, for example at the PREM week and other occasions. SC-members will be informed of such events and invited to attend as interested and available.

Amy Luinstra thanked all SC-members for their participation.