Enabel

Executive summary

Evaluation finale du Projet “Skills, Attitudes, Governance and Anti-Corruption (SG+)”

Code navision

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enabel.be

Presentation of the evaluation

The Ugandan government and its international partners have adopted a multidimensional approach to tackling the challenges of employment, governance and the fight against corruption. Within this framework, the EU is playing a crucial role through its Multi-Annual Indicative Program (2021-2027)[1], aligned with Uganda's National Development Plan (NDP) III. This program supports initiatives such as the creation of green jobs, the fight against corruption and the improvement of technical and professional skills. With the Team Europe SB4U (Sustainable Business for Uganda) Platform[2] it aims at supporting Uganda's business environment to become more conducive for inclusive and green investments. In this context, Enabel's strategy in Uganda (2023–2027) is structured around strengthening the synergies between skills development, employment creation, and governance.

The Skills and Attitude, Governance and Anti-Corruption (SG+) project, implemented by ENABEL and the Private Sector Foundation Uganda (PSFU), contribute to Enabel's objectives by 1) fostering public-private cooperation to address and resolve bottlenecks to private sector investments (lack of skilled labour, corruption issues, access to finance, etc.) and improving business environment in Uganda ; 2) establishing private sector led initiatives to fight corruption and strengthen the private-public sector dialogue.

Launched in December 2020, the SG+ consisted of two components: the "Skills and Attitude" and "Governance/ Anti-Corruption". It was defined upon the following building blocks: i) addressing National and EU development policies concerning skills development, economic growth, investment, governance and corruption and green growth; ii) building upon previous support and actions undertaken and defined by the EU-PSFU's partnership. Additionally, SG+ aimed to be linked with green sectors as part of the selection criteria and training program for graduates and companies.

This **end term evaluation** (ETE) of the SG+ Project followed two specific objectives of learning and accountability. It is therefore both *summative* and *formative* with a general purpose to identify the project achievements and challenges of implementation and generate learnings for future programming and next phases of similar interventions.

More specifically, the evaluation mission was mandated:

- To identify lessons learned (ie Strategies, approaches, successes, obstacles and failures) and define which are the best practices that can be adopted and scaled up.
- To understand whether it is necessary to reorient future actions to improve skills of young graduates for the job market addressing needs presented by private sector and policy dialogue to create fair and accessible labour market.
- To guide strategic decision-making of both donors, implementing partners and national partners.

The end-term evaluation was conducted between January and May 2025. It included a field visit, multiple interviews with the project team, national counterparts, and beneficiaries, as well as an in-depth review of documentation to triangulate feedback and consolidate the evaluation findings.

[1] https://international-partnerships.ec.europa.eu/document/download/213dd708-12ab-4cc0-b7ec-d754f36cd7eb_en
[2] The SB4U Platform assesses, proposes and executes measures to make the regulatory and enforcement environment more conducive and to initiate new innovative approaches which are likely to improve the investment climate and the business environment.

Findings and conclusions

The final evaluation of the SG+ Project highlighted several key issues relevant to the implementation of similar pilot initiatives, which combined two components that were interconnected but differed significantly in terms of implementation approaches and key stakeholders. The main findings of the evaluation span the entire project value chain—from design to results—while also reflecting on the implementation strategy. The 10th main conclusions and the summary of the DAC score presented below highlight the most relevant findings of the evaluation regarding the SG+ Project.

1. A robust theory of change (ToC) and intervention logic are needed from the design phase, to ensure relevance and coherence in implementation, and facilitate stakeholders understanding of their roles and expected contributions. In depth needs assessment and background analysis, together with a baseline study, are key to building such a ToC. In the case of the SG+, weaknesses in the GAC component of the ToC led to decreased relevance thus impact of the component.

2. The positive outcomes and prospects for impacts of the SG+ WRP on the youth integration to the workforce and governance of companies are worth being reproduced and scaled up in Uganda. Building on the lessons learned or ensuring scaling up/reproduction yet needs a structured approach to sustainability which addresses the risk of losing project gains.

3. SG+ Public Private dialogue and partnership platform well addressed the need for coordination between stakeholders, ensuring that policy or Project efforts were embedded within broader governance reforms, and maximised effectiveness of Project activities.

4. The WRP component addressed private sector needs with non-sector specific activities. Relevance and effectiveness could be enhanced with sector-specific activities then rolled out more broadly.

5. MSMES and large companies displayed very different needs and respond to different incentives to accept and retain staff. While the WRP did not tailor its approach to the size and specific interests of participating companies, addressing these differences could enhance activities relevance and efficiency.

6. The WRP gained important traction with companies and graduates with little publicity. Graduates were informed of the job opportunities through some confidential and closed What'sApp groups. Hence there are still many graduates to be reached out.

7. The matchmaking platform built by SG+ has been very instrumental to both companies and youth to allow youth to land on jobs and companies to identify needed expertise. However, the platform is accessible only by companies. Graduates cannot select themselves job opportunities. At times, offers made to them often do not match their expectations. Graduates are thus not yet active in the job search, limiting their ability to comprehend the job market itself.

8. While the SG+ Project M&E system included varied indicators, quite many of them were not SMART. Ensuring that progress is systematically measured and adjusted thanks to SMART indicators would have allowed the Project to adjust more swiftly and built on learning opportunities.

9. Some youth placement Projects such as the ones organised by the African Leadership Academy, or the African Institute for Mathematical Sciences have developed interesting tracing systems through Alumni group surveys which prove useful in the long run to assess the sustained impact of the Support provided to youth. Such a system does not exist for the WRP.

10. There are still important needs in terms of supporting the governance and anticorruption agenda in Uganda. More funding and resources are required to ensure lasting governance improvements. Early results show the relevance of training companies in governance as well as ensuring continuity in the functioning of the CRF.

Coherence	A	The SG+ Project demonstrated a good level of coherence with other Enabel and international development actors' projects. However, its complementarity could have been strengthened with closer SB4U collaboration.
Relevance	B	The SG+ Project has proven to be highly relevant in addressing challenges in youth employment and in Uganda. From the outset, the project aligned its objectives with the critical need to bridge the gap between education and the labour market. However, while having a highly relevant objective, the governance and anti-corruption component intervention logic lacked some robustness, leading to some misalignment with overall project goals.
Efficiency	B	The program's efficiency was uneven between the Work Readiness Program (WRP) and Governance and Anti-Corruption (GAC) components. The WRP benefited from the financial incentives included in the program and well-suited trainings enabling a good engagement of graduates and companies. However, the GAC faced challenges due to a limited M&E framework with mostly output indicators, making it difficult to track progress.
Effectiveness	B	The project successfully facilitated the creation of dialogue spaces between the public and private sectors in Uganda, fostering discussions and cooperation through regular meetings, forums, and events. It contributed to strengthening young graduates' access to the job market. It contributed to the initiation of adoption of e-government services including digital procurement. However, operational adaptation, particularly under the GAC component, limited its ability to fully execute activities as initially planned.
Sustainability	C	The sustainability of the SG+ Project faces several challenges. While the learning model was well-received by the private sector, its long-term viability depends on sustained efforts and additional resources. Interviews with key stakeholders and the absence of follow-up actions in project documentation confirm that the sustainability measures foreseen in the TFF were not executed as intended. The government's support for apprenticeship frameworks and integration into national plans is promising, but full roll-out will take time. In the Governance and Anti-Corruption (GAC) component, more funding and staff are required to ensure lasting governance improvements. While the project fostered trust and dialogue, continued engagement and resources are needed for long-term impact and scalability.
Impact	B	The SG+ Project supported policy reform through digitalization and anti-corruption efforts enhancing transparency, as well as improved employability by integrating soft skills into education and influencing recruitment practices. However, the Project long-term impact is impossible to assess as it was a pilot project, challenges on its sustainability remain, continued awareness and collaboration are key for long-term impact.

Recommendations

N°	Recommandation	Related conclusion(s)	Targeted actors	Level	Priority	Type
1	Develop a sustainability plan at the design stage if possible and at the most at early stage of implementation: a clear plan that includes post-project sustainability strategies, focusing on integration into national policies and long-term operational continuity.	C2	Enabel, EU, PSFU	2	Short term	Strategic
2	Strengthen the intervention logic: Develop a well- articulated theory of change with clear objectives, activities and expected outcomes.	C1	Enabel, EU, PSFU	1,2	Long term	Operational
3	Leverage existing platforms for public-private dialogue and partnerships: Utilize and reinforce existing multi-stakeholder platforms to enhance dialogue and collaboration between public institutions, the private sector, and civil society on governance and anti-corruption initiatives	C3	Enabel, EU, PSFU	2	Medium term	Strategic
4	Align program design with sector-specific needs: Development of tailored program guidelines that address sector-specific challenges, ensuring the curriculum is relevant for each industry.	C2 ; C4	Training Partners, companies, graduates	1	Medium term	Operational
5	Structure a two-level program for large companies and the less structured job market and synergise with existing approaches in large companies: Develop a differentiated approach that tailors support mechanisms to the specific needs of (1) large, structured companies and (2) the MSMEs.	C2 ; C4 ; C5	PSFU ; Enabel ; Local Authorities ; Companies ; Graduates	1	Medium term	Strategic
6	Disseminate more widely WRP opportunities: through all campuses and different channels (recruitment campaigns, radio campaigns)	C1 ; C2 ; C6	Graduates	2	Medium term	Operational
7	Provide graduates with direct access to job offers: Granting graduates direct access to job offers on the plateform to improve job matching and recruitment speed / ensure that the platform continues to develop and operate over the long term	C7	Companies, Graduates	2	Medium term	Operational
8	Integrating M&E from the Beginning: Ensure that monitoring and evaluation (M&E) mechanisms are included at the program's inception, allowing for continuous assesment and adaptive management.	C1 ; C2 ; C6 ; C8	Enabel, EU, PSFU	1	Long term	Operational
9	Continue tracking graduates in the medium term: Tracking graduates for several years after program completion to evaluate the long-term impact on employability andcareer growth.	C9	Enabel, PSFU, Gaduates	1	Long term	Operational
10	Institutionalize Governance Training within PSFU: integrate governance training and advisory services into its core offerings. This would position PSFU as a continuing governance support hub for private sector actors, beyond the lifespan of the SG+ program	C10	PSFU / Enabel/ Development partners	1	Medium term	Operational

Lessons learned

- **Grounding design to ascertain relevance.** The design phase used a participative approach with private sector organizations and representatives meeting with government and technical and financial partners to work towards addressing the most pressing needs. Additionally, the content and delivery of training program were also informed by baseline studies and ex-ante needs assessment. By incorporating the perspectives of those directly involved in youth employment, the project was able to design initiatives that were not only relevant but also practical and actionable within the local context.

- **A partnership approach to job market readiness**. Creating strong partnerships between universities, businesses, students, and local authorities is crucial for preparing graduates for employment. These collaborations, through targeted projects and advocacy, not only improve training programs but also enhance pre-employment links, ensuring that graduates are equipped with the skills and experience needed to succeed. By addressing both technical and soft skills, this approach significantly improves the job market readiness of graduates and aligns education with employer expectations.

- **A comprehensive approach to equitable conditions at the workplace.** In addressing the importance of workplace conditions, the practice focuses on creating an environment where employees feel safe, supported, and able to thrive. Workplace conditions include both physical factors like safety protocols, ergonomics, and cleanliness, as well as emotional and psychological factors, such as a supportive management style, work-life balance, and mental health support. A key lesson learned from this practice is the importance of taking a holistic approach to workplace conditions. Furthermore, ongoing engagement with employees through regular feedback is vital to adapting the workplace to changing needs and challenges. For workplace conditions to truly have a lasting impact, businesses must be committed to continuous improvement.

- **Self-assessment on corporate governance.** one of the key lessons learned from the project is the importance of implementing self-assessment mechanisms for companies before launching governance training programs. The purpose of this approach is to ensure that the training content aligns with the actual needs of the companies and that they are more engaged throughout the project. By conducting self-assessments, companies can better identify their own strengths and weaknesses, which helps tailor the training to address the most relevant gaps and challenges. The self-assessment process allows businesses to evaluate their existing governance practices, which in turn ensures that the training program is customized to meet their specific needs. The results of this approach were significant. By tailoring the training to focus on best practices instead of corporate governance tools, companies gained more practical knowledge that they could apply immediately. This led to better engagement, higher satisfaction with the training, and more impactful improvements in governance practices.