Country Brief
Green Jobs in Asia Project

Project Description

The Green Jobs in Asia project directly contributes to the national programs and initiatives relating to climate change, environment and disaster management and recovery from the economic crisis. Through enhanced capacity of ILO constituents, sound policy guidance, the undertaking of gender-responsive field activities on green employment in specific economic sectors, the project aims to assist five Asian countries in shifting to a low-carbon, environmentally friendly and climate resilient economy that helps accelerate the jobs recovery, reduce social gaps, support development goals and realize decent work.

It is envisaged that upon completion of the project, ILO constituents and national partners will be knowledgeable about the impacts of climate policies on the labour market and the potential for gender responsive green jobs creation/maintenance. They will have acquired the capacity and the elements to take part in the national discussions on climate change and to respond to these changes, including in the context of the development and implementation of the Decent Work Country Programmes (DWCPs). They will also contribute to developing specific policies and programs for the promotion of green jobs employment opportunities in critical sectors.

The immediate objectives of the project are:

i. Promote the capacity of ILO constituents to engage in dialogue on green jobs through increased access to reliable sources of data and information on green jobs and training, including on the employment impacts of environment-related policies and good practices on green jobs;

ii. Green jobs mainstreamed in national labour and social policy of participating countries;

iii. Green Jobs demonstration programs which respond to the different needs of women and men, implemented in key sectors selected based on the basis of research and consultations.

ILO constituents are a key project target group with a view to creating the long-term capacity and the conditions of social dialogue to mainstream green jobs into social and employment policy, integrate Green Jobs policies into the DWCP, contribute actively to climate and environment related policies at the national level, and facilitate a just transition for enterprises and workers towards a low-carbon, environmentally friendly economy. In Bangladesh, project objectives were focused on three main areas; namely, developing constituents’ capacity on green jobs, support for mainstreaming green jobs into national plans, policies and programmes, and the implementation of a pilot project aimed at demonstrating the potential for green jobs at the sectoral level.
Bangladesh

Capacity Building

A tripartite National Conference on Green Jobs in Bangladesh was held on 18 September 2011 wherein ILO constituents and other relevant stakeholders expressed their commitment towards supporting the expansion of green jobs. In addition, a tripartite 2-day foundation training on green jobs was attended by 40 participants from government, workers’ and employers’ groups, as well as academe, private sector actors and civil society to discuss the concept of green jobs and visualize potential strategies for green jobs development in the country. Discussion on the way forward focused on the need to advance government efforts by identifying specific sectors and industries with potential for green jobs creation, mainstreaming green jobs into the national employment strategy and the role of tripartite constituents in ensuring a just transition for the workforce in Bangladesh. The foundation training was followed by the delivery of capacity building workshops on climate change and green jobs, respectively led by the Bangladesh Employers Federation (BEF) and the National Co-ordination Committee on Workers Education (NCCWE). The workshops were designed to strengthen the capacity of social partners to understand the linkages between environmental protection policies, workplace conditions and fundamental labour standards for improving green jobs advocacy and outreach.

In total, four capacity building workshops on Climate Change and Green Jobs were delivered by NCCWE, in Dhaka, Chittagong, Rajshahi and Khulna between April-May 2012. The four training courses engaged a total of 128 workers representatives, with a female participation rate of 50 percent. Workshops identified concrete recommendations for further action regarding green jobs promotion. A position paper on green jobs was also prepared by NCCWE and translated into English for wider knowledge sharing purposes.

The training for BEF was held in Dhaka on 3 May and attended by 33 participants of managerial and supervisory rank and in Chittagong on 24 May for 64 participants. BEF developed two case studies on good practices associated with enterprise level initiatives for green jobs in Bangladesh which were presented during the workshops in addition to distributing advocacy materials on green jobs.
Bangladesh

Policy

In Bangladesh, the expansion of green jobs is in line with the country’s Sixth Five-Year Development Plan (2011-2015), which affirms the government’s commitment to pursue an environmentally sustainable development process. The Bangladesh Climate Change Strategy and Action Plan (BCCSAP) of 2009, prepared by the government of Bangladesh, outlines plans for building capacity and resilience to climate change, in line with the concept and the strategy of green jobs. Green jobs in renewable energy have been included in UNDAF Action Plan Pillar 5. ILO’s Green Jobs initiatives will contribute to Outcome 2 regarding vulnerable populations benefiting from natural resource management, environmental governance, and low carbon emission green development (UNDAF pillar 5). A tripartite Project Advisory Committee (PAC) was formed under the leadership of Ministry of Environment and Forests (MoEF), the national government focal agency on climate change, as well as the Ministry of Labour and Employment (MoLE). The second PAC meeting held on 19 September 2011 was organised for technical consultations on the green jobs mapping study carried out in 2010 towards setting criteria for green jobs sectoral profiles.

Demonstration project

The demonstration project in Bangladesh focuses on the development of curricula and delivery of competency based training courses on the installation and maintenance of solar home systems. The target beneficiaries are unemployed women and men in 10 rural districts. The project thus aligns well with Bangladesh’s Renewable Energy Policy of 2008 which sets a target for renewable energy resources to meet 10% of the national demand for electricity by 2020, as well as the Climate Change Strategy and Action Plan of 2009 which supports low-carbon development through the promotion of renewable energy.

In this connection, the project contributed towards facilitating a Public–Private Partnership between Grameen Shakti and the Bureau of Manpower, Employment and Training (BMET), in collaboration with the Infrastructure Development Company Limited (IDCOL) to build the skills and competencies of solar technicians and entrepreneurs with a view towards ensuring the labor requirements of existing renewable energy service providers were adequately met... The private
Bangladesh

partner, Grameen Shakti, is the largest service provider of rural-based renewable energy promoting solar home systems to low-income rural households. Grameen Shakti provided technical input to the development of manuals and curriculum which, together with BMET, was used in training 100 Master trainers. BMET, Bangladesh’s public sector training provider, worked to mainstream this curriculum through the delivery of roll-out trainings led by Master Trainers in 10 of BMET's Technical Training Centres across the country (Faridpur, Bogra, Khulna, Rangamati, Barisal, Laksmipur, Rangpur, Dinajpur, and Sylhet). In addition to offering training and professional guidance on entrepreneurship, BMET also provided information to trainees on tools for developing viable business plans. IDCOL is the representative public agency that promotes, *inter alia*, renewable energy through its countrywide partners of 40 service providers; IDCOL was involved in linking service providers with skilled solar technicians and entrepreneurs.

As of June 2012, 40 batches of roll-out training had been delivered, reaching a total of 1,509 beneficiaries. An assessment of access to available finance was also conducted with a view to providing recommendations for new and potential entrepreneurs looking to enter the renewable energy market.

Although local demand varies, recruitment is ongoing and thus far 100 qualified graduates have been hired by renewable energy service providers, with the project continuing to support BMET in its efforts to guide employment matching and placement.

**Challenges and opportunities**

Green jobs issues are an emerging thematic area in Bangladesh and are not yet clearly understood by all constituents. Similarly, because the renewable energy sector is in its nascent stage in Bangladesh, while the project was effective in increasing the employability of trainees, it ultimately experienced challenges in terms of locating employment for intended beneficiaries, especially among rural women. For example, despite concerted efforts the project witnessed a low turnout of female trainees. This can be attributed to social and cultural biases against female workers in the labour market, as well as a lack of willingness of service providers to recruit women due to the manually-intensive nature of the job.
Bangladesh

To better address these issues, BMET is working to ensure rosters of trainees compiled by Technical Training Centers are shared with service providers to encourage more systematic job placement of graduates. At the institutional level, efforts to mainstream the solar home system training curriculum, competency standards and occupational profiles into the country’s National Technical and Vocational Qualification Framework (NTVQF) are underway. Once integrated into NTVQF, trainees will have an opportunity to have their skills and competencies assessed and obtain a national certificate under the Framework.

Lessons learned

The promotion of green jobs differs according to country context and this should be taken into account for the future implementation of similar projects in Bangladesh. Accordingly, further capacity building for ILO constituents and social partners will be pre-requisite for developing appropriate policy frameworks for green jobs.

Responses to climate change and environmental degradation have been customarily dealt with at the national level by the Ministry of Environment and Forests, including the Department of Environment, and Disaster Management Bureau, as well as local government institutions, and a number of specialized environmental NGOs; in large measure ILO’s traditional partners in Bangladesh remain unfamiliar with these issues. In this regard, although the project has been instrumental in pioneering the concept of green jobs, linkages between green jobs and decent work require further clarification for constituents, especially given that the economy remains largely dominated by the informal sector. Future interventions to strengthen capacity are needed, particularly in identifying and explaining constituent’s role in the promotion of green jobs, Greater advocacy, information and knowledge sharing work on green jobs required for this purpose. As an initial step, the national position policy paper on climate change and environmental issues prepared by the NCCWE will feed in to the development of a set of recommendations that can be used to contribute to a National Green Job Action Plan.

Given the high priority the Government of Bangladesh has accorded to renewable energy sources, technical training on the installation and maintenance of solar home systems is vital for addressing the country’s skills needs in a job sector that is expanding rapidly. Accordingly, a
Bangladesh

value chain development approach is being explored to identify the employment potential of addressing environmental issues associated with waste disposal and recycling of solar home system batteries. However, it is important to involve as many service providers as possible to enlarge the scope of options for the recruitment of graduates. In this regard, better communication and linkages at the district level between Technical Training Centers and service providers’ regional offices will be required to enhance the efficiency of job placement services.