



GREEN EMPLOYMENT AND ENTERPRISE OPPORTUNITIES (GrEEn) PROJECT COUNTERFACTUAL IMPACT EVALUATION



Funded by
the European Union

EVALUATION CONTEXT

The GrEEn project is a joint action from the EUTF, the Embassy of the Kingdom of the Netherlands in Ghana, UNCDF and SNV.

The project is aligned with the EUTF overall objective of addressing root causes of irregular migration and displaced persons in Africa, more specifically its strategic objective no. 1 of creating greater economic and employment opportunities. The joint action focuses on creating climate resilient communities, addressing skills gaps and increasing access to finance for returnees, youth and women. Additionally, it supports job creation and self-employment opportunities by incubating and financing Micro, Small and Medium Enterprises (MSMEs), thereby creating decent and sustainable jobs. The evaluation focuses on three interventions:

- 1) the Cash for Work (CfW) project, which offers light trainings, access to finance and financial literacy trainings rolled out for women, youth and returnees between 2021 and 2023;
- 2) the Opportunities for Youth Employment program, offering in-depth trainings, job placements, mentorships or entrepreneurial training and support for women, youth and returnees;
- 3) incubation and/or acceleration services MSMEs.

Beneficiaries of intervention 1 will be able to apply and transition to intervention 2.

UNDERSTANDING THE IMPACT

Intervention 1 and its extension into intervention 2 is evaluated using a CIE. In addition, an RDD or PSM design may be applied to evaluate the transition from intervention 1 to 2. The first and second rounds of CfW beneficiary selection were conducted in 2021 and 2022 respectively, via public lotteries, creating a baseline sample for the RCT of 3,488 individuals for this intervention, with 1,042 being treated beneficiaries and 2,446 being in the control group. C4ED will conduct the endline survey during the third quarter of

QUICK FACTS

IMPLEMENTING PARTNER
United Nations Capital Development Fund (UNCDF) & Netherlands Development Organisation (SNV)

LOCATION
Ashanti & Western regions, Ghana

METHODS
Stratified Randomized Control Trial (RCT), quasi-experimental methods (Propensity Score Matching, PSM /Regression Discontinuity Design, RDD), panel data on beneficiaries and qualitative interviews with beneficiaries and stakeholders.

TARGET GROUPS
Returnees, women, youth, Micro Small Medium Enterprises (MSMEs)

FINANCING AMOUNT
20 000 000 EUR

2023, approximately 24 and 12 months after the first and second round CfW beneficiaries worked on CfW sites and concurrently received training, respectively. C4ED will evaluate interventions 2 and 3 with two mixed-methods studies covering beneficiaries only. C4ED collected baseline data in 2022 on 352 individual beneficiaries of intervention 2. For intervention 3, C4ED collected baseline data in 2021 on a first cohort of 59 MSMEs receiving incubation and acceleration services. In 2022, C4ED surveyed a second cohort of 30 MSMEs, and

collected midline data on the first cohort. For both interventions, C4ED will collect endline data in the third quarter of 2023. In addition to quantitative data, C4ED will use qualitative interviews (12 Focus Group Discussions, 39 In-Depth, and 25 Key Informant Interviews) with 106-130 project beneficiaries, 6 implementers of the intervention and

19 other stakeholders involved in the program as well as desk research (of mainly project documents). C4ED also collected qualitative data in the first quarter of 2023 to gain further insight into the underpinning mechanisms which drove the results observed in the CIE.

BUILDING ON SOLID FOUNDATIONS

Counterfactual impact evaluations (CIEs) are used to identify the attributable effect of a project on beneficiaries. The “counterfactual” is what life would have looked like in the absence of the intervention. Unlike in simple before-and-after comparisons, CIEs provide a way to separate program impacts from other effects. Since we cannot directly observe a counterfactual, we construct a control group using experimental and quasi-experimental econometric methods to estimate program impacts.

A randomized control trial (RCT) is an experimental method in which people from an eligible population are randomly selected to receive the program or serve as a control group. Randomization eliminates systematic differences between program recipients and the control group, allowing researchers to estimate the causal impact of the program.

Propensity score matching (PSM) is a statistical process that consists of making a group of project participants and a

group of non-participants as comparable as possible based on observed characteristics. This quasi-experimental approach then allows to compare outcomes between the two (matched) groups to estimate the causal impact of the project.

Regression Discontinuity Design (RDD) is a quasi-experimental method that is used when selection of beneficiaries into a program is based on a score or index such as a poverty score or test score with a clear threshold value determining participation. Non-participants on the ineligible side of this threshold for program participation form the comparison group, while program participants on the eligible side of the threshold form the treatment group. The causal impact of the program is determined by comparing outcomes for the treatment and comparison within a close neighbourhood of the threshold for program participation on either side of the threshold.

HOW WILL A CIE INFORM POLICY?

In support of evidenced-based policy making, the outcomes of the CIE will provide context and insight into the how and why the program (did not) generate an impact. The evaluation will inform the effectiveness of the interventions in contributing to the achievement of EUTF Strategic Objective 1.

Findings regarding effects by key subgroups will also inform targeting approaches of policies and programs in future. From a broader perspective, the CIE will contribute to the literature and fill knowledge gaps regarding the effectiveness of CfW activities.

TIPS FOR FUTURE PROJECT IMPLEMENTATION AND EVALUATION

- Always communicate any changes to planned implementation activities to evaluators early.

- Monitor and keep good records of participant attendance of program training sessions to track treatment uptake.



Center for Evaluation
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