



*Employment Intensive Investment Programme (EIIP)
Good Practices and Successful Initiatives in
South-South and Triangular Cooperation - Concept Note, May
2011*

Title : Regional Seminars and Community of Practice for Labour-based Practitioners

Acknowledging the potential of labour-based technology thirteen regional seminars have been held in different countries in Africa, where labour-based practitioners have met to review developments in the application of labour-based technology and associated issues. Each seminar offers an opportunity for participants to consolidate lessons learnt over the past years into a corpus of “best practice” and to identify areas for future work

Background and Objective. The regional seminars for labour-based practitioners are held every two years, bringing together practitioners, planners, policy makers, researchers, funding and development partners and all others involved in infrastructure development from the African region and beyond to discuss developments, share experience and ideas on the application of employment-intensive approaches in the delivery of essential infrastructure. The objective of the seminars are thus to facilitate sharing, learning and expanding of knowledge through presentation, discussion and debate on the state of the art of policy, practice, research and development and to exchange views on specific themes related to employment-intensive investments and local resource-based approaches. The proceedings and papers offer a unique rich source of knowledge on the issues, challenges, best practices and research findings on the application of labour-based technologies and local level planning.

Sustainability & replicability. The first two seminars held in Mbeya, Tanzania in 1990 and Mochale, Lesotho in 1992 were both financed, organized and chaired by the ILO, with initially some 21 participants from 6 countries, but mainly ILO staff from projects in East Africa and the 2nd with 36 participants from 14 countries. However, since then the seminars have not only continued to grow in terms of numbers of participants (mainly from “south” countries), but also in terms of the number of countries and regions covered. The scale has grown significantly over the years with some 450 participants from 27 countries participating in 2007 at the 12th Seminar in Durban, South Africa and 465 participants at the 13th seminar, in Kampala, Uganda.

In terms of *national ownership* of these seminars, since 1993, the 3rd Seminar was hosted by the Zimbabwe Institute of Civil Engineers, the 4th in 1995 by the Research Centre for Employment Creation in Construction, part of the University of Witwatersrand, in South Africa and the 5th by the Department of Feeder Roads in Ghana. Ghana was the last country to host the seminar before a fee paying system was introduced. Since then, it has been mainly hosted by the governments themselves – in many cases between the equivalent of the Ministry of Public Works, Transport and Communications; Ministry of Local Government; Ministry of Planning and Economic Development; Ministry of Roads and Highways; or the Ministry of Employment and Social Welfare. At the end of each Regional Seminar, countries bid to host the next one and participants vote in for the next hosting country. This year the 14th Regional Seminar will be hosted by the Government of Ghana represented by the Ministry of Roads and Highways, Ministry of Employment and Social Welfare and the Ministry of Local Government and Rural Development during 5 – 9 September 2011 in Accra, Ghana.

What started as a small seminar organized by the ILO to review current practice at the time by gathering experts and practitioners together in the field in a specific region of East and Southern Africa, has now become an international conference attracting 465 participants from all over the world. In 1999, at the 7th Seminar, we noted that a representative from Cambodia was present. In the year that followed at the 8th Seminar in Cairo, the Asian representation grew to include Cambodia, Indonesia, Laos, Philippines, and Thailand. In 2007 at the 12th Seminar we saw the first participant from Latin America present.

These seminars have been conducive to an active exchange of ideas and information through “south-south” learning, based on the participants' experience in the region and also to draw on their previous experiences from other areas.

Achievements/results achieved. What the Employment Intensive Investment Programme (EIIP) of the ILO initiated, organized and financed as a small seminar in 1990, has now become mostly a self-financed, nationally-owned and organized, international platform for south-south learning on labour-based practices, now contributing to over two decades of documented experience and knowledge.

In addition, at the 2003 10th Seminar in Arusha, Tanzania, the seminar participants formulated the “Arusha Statement” on the final day of the seminar and resolved to adopt the Statement and pursue follow up actions in their respective countries to address these shortfalls. The progress and actions taken were reviewed during the regional seminar held in Kenya in 2005. Since then, the Mombasa (2005), Durban (2007) and Kampala (2009) statements were introduced. The appropriate follow up and their impact is assessed at each subsequent seminar.

In Durban, South Africa (2007), a parallel Ministerial Meeting was held during the Seminar in which 12 Ministers of Labour and Public Works from Angola, Botswana, Kenya, Lesotho, Malawi, Mozambique, Namibia, South Africa, Swaziland, Tanzania, Zambia and Zimbabwe critically reviewed and discussed the potential of infrastructure and service delivery in creating decent productive employment opportunities, and its impact on poverty reduction, social cohesion and political stability. Following their meeting the Ministers issued a Ministerial statement in which they reaffirmed their commitment and support towards optimizing employment creation in the delivery of essential infrastructure and service delivery. These ministerial meetings are now part and parcel of the Regional Seminars for Labour-based Practitioners.

Lessons learned (enabling factors / obstacles or challenges). The Regional Seminars have been forums to discuss and share new research findings and methods of operation on key issues relevant for the planning and implementation of works using employment-intensive approaches. Participants also identify challenging issues that require further work and results to be reported during the next seminar.

As the size and expectations of the seminars grow, one challenge that exists is ensuring that the topics remain appropriate and of relevance and that an adequate amount of interactivity is maintained. – Although the ILO through the EIIP, has been able to contribute to the development and continuation of this important platform for south-south exchanges of experiences and knowledge, these seminars are now mainly organized and managed locally by the hosting country.

In the final Durban Statement (2007), they called upon the ILO to continue to provide technical advisory support on the harmonization of approaches on optimizing the employment potential of public investment in infrastructure and to strengthen knowledge management and sharing for increased and efficient application of employment-intensive approaches.

Cost-benefit analysis or explanation of the comparative advantage of using SSC for this project.

The regional seminars are now mainly self-financed, nationally-owned and organized, offering an international platform for south-south learning on labour-based practices, completely owned by the “south”. The ILO, through EIIP, continues to provide technical advice and assistance as requested.

Annex.

Most Proceedings, Papers and Statements can be found at:

<http://www.ilo.org/public/english/employment/recon/eiip/publ/regsem.htm>

	Year	Host country	Host	Participants	# of countries	Topics	Official Statements
1st	1990	Mbeya, Tanzania	ILO / EIP Regional Advisor	21	6	reviewed the current practice in general	
2nd	1992	Mohales Hoek, Lesotho	ILO / ASIST-Africa	36	14	reviewed ways of improving the application of labour-based methods in road construction and maintenance	
3rd	1993	Harare, Zimbabwe	Zimbabwe Institute of Civil Engineers Research Centre for Employment Creation in Construction, Department of Civil and Environmental Engineering, University of Witwatersrand	80	18	reviewed the application and efficiency of labour-based methods in road construction and maintenance	
4th	1995	Johannesburg, South Africa	Department of Feeder Roads in Accra			Urban infrastructure development, education and training.	
5th	1996	Accra, Ghana	Jointly organized by the Ministry of Works Transport and Communications (MoWTC), the Ministry of Local Government (MoLG) and the Ministry of Planning and Economic Development (MPED) of the Uganda Government,			Labour-based contracting	
6th	1997	Jinja, Uganda		115	15	Contracting in employment-intensive works	

7th	1999	Lusaka, Zambia	Ministry of Works and Supply (MoWS)	115	12	Contracting in employment-intensive works	
8th	2000	Cairo, Egypt	The Egyptian Social Fund	190	28	The New Millennium - Challenges for employment-intensive investments	
9th	2002	Maputo, Mozambique	National Road Administration (Administração Nacional de Estradas — ANE)	189	22	Towards appropriate engineering practices and enabling environment	
10th	2003	Arusha, Tanzania	Ministry of Works (MoW)	210	24	Labour-based technology for poverty reduction	
11th	2005	Mombassa, Kenya	Ministry of Roads and Public Works	250	19	Integrated Labour-Based Approach (LBA) for Socio-Economic Development	Mombassa Statement
12th	2007	Durban, South Africa	National Department of Public Works and KwaZulu-Natal Department of Transport, Safety and Liaison in Durban W/ side Ministerial meeting	450	27	Prioritizing Employment in Government Policies and Investments in Infrastructure Programmes	Durban Statement
13th	2009	Kampala, Uganda	W/ Side Ministerial meeting Ministry of Roads and Highways, Employment and Social Welfare , and the Ministry of Local Government and Rural Development	465	27	Approach in the Construction Sector: A Catalyst for Achieving Prosperity for All	Kampala Statement
14th	2011	Accra, Ghana					

