

Terms of Reference

Synthesis-review of studies on the socio-economic impact of the COVID-19 pandemic in Africa undertaken by or in collaboration with ILO

1. Background and rationale

The COVID 19 pandemic which began in December 2019 has so far taken over 1 million lives and plunged the world into the most serious human, economic and social crisis in modern times. In an effort to contain the virus, the governments and social partners in Africa established several measures designed to promote hygiene and social distancing which necessitated limiting certain social-economic activities, affecting the livelihoods of many people. In many African countries the COVID-19 pandemic has led to declines in exports; economic slowdown; significant losses for the tourism and travel sector; increase in the price of imported food; falling tax revenues; decline in external funding and rising unemployment.

In March 2020, the UN Secretary General in the report “responding to the socio-economic impacts of COVID-19” called for urgent socio-economic support to countries and societies in the face of COVID-19. In the report, absolute priority has been accorded to the continuing health response, the unfinished task of suppressing transmission and saving lives. The Secretary-General linked this closely to action aimed at mitigating the impact of the pandemic on people’s livelihoods and material well-being, and to the need to build back better in the aftermath of the immediate health emergency. It has to be noted that COVID-19 hit just as the international community was embarking on the Decade of Action to deliver on the 17 Sustainable Development goals of the 2030 Agenda.

The ILO instituted a four pillars policy framework based on International Labour Standards for tracking the socio-economic impact of the COVID-19 crisis. These include stimulating the economy and employment; supporting enterprises, jobs and incomes; protecting workers in the work place; and relying on social dialogue for solution. From the 1st to the 9th of July 2020, the ILO hosted the largest ever online summit of workers, employers and government representatives to address the impact of COVID-19 on the world of work, and how to build a better future of work after the pandemic. The Global summit provided a high-profile platform for the tripartite constituents to address the economic and social impact of the COVID-19 pandemic, and in particular to draw on the Centenary Declaration for the Future of Work to contribute to building back better in the post-pandemic recovery. The Global Summit was preceded by regional events.

The African Regional Virtual meeting was held on 2 July 2020 and discussed the ILO Africa responses to COVID 19 Crisis in order to build back better; as part of the ILO Global Virtual Summit and the World of Work.

The analysis presented in the ILO Monitor of September 2020 has shown the continuing and devastating impacts of the pandemic on jobs and labour income since early 2020, with an estimated 60 million full-time equivalent jobs lost in Africa in the second quarter of 2020. The massive disruptions in the labour market that will persist at least into the fourth quarter. The ILO Monitor identified among others the following to enable building back better:

- 495 million full-time equivalent jobs worldwide were lost since. Of those workers, an estimated 60 million were in Africa, where the crisis is disproportionately affecting women and workers in the informal economy;

- maintaining the right balance and sequence of health and economic and social policy interventions continues to be crucial;
- policy interventions need to be made on a scale which corresponds to the magnitude of labour market disruptions;
- losses in working hours and labour income have been massive during the pandemic and as financial constraints increase, policymakers will face the challenge of sustaining policy responses to counter the danger of growing poverty, inequality, joblessness and exclusion;
- filling the stimulus gap in emerging and developing countries can only be achieved through greater international solidarity. Most developing countries have not been able to mobilize the necessary resources to support policy measures at the level that richer economies have, which has created a large “stimulus gap”.

At national level, a number of African countries have launched rapid Assessment and Socioeconomic Studies in responses to the impact of COVID-19. While the reports of some of these studies are available or have already been published, namely in Burkina Faso, Congo, Democratic Republic of Congo, Cote d’Ivoire, Egypt, Ethiopia, Malawi, Morocco, Nigeria, Senegal, Tunisia, Zambia and Zimbabwe; others are still being finalized.

In light of the above, the ILO Regional office for Africa seeks to commission a Synthesis review of rapid Assessment and Socioeconomic Studies in responses to COVID19 conducted by or in collaboration with the ILO in Africa, focusing on the findings, conclusions, recommendations and scenarios presented to draw the overall lessons learnt and highlight key patterns emerging from those studies.

2. Objectives

2.1. General:

Consolidate the key findings from the different studies on the socio-economic impact of the COVID-19 pandemic undertaken by or in collaboration with ILO in Africa, including Rapid Assessment Studies of the impact of the pandemic on the labour markets.

2.2. Specifics:

- 1.1. Identify key issues and trends that can be distilled from the studies.
- 1.2. Identify the key findings in terms of impact of COVID 19 on the overall economy and labour market that are present in most countries, and in terms of immediate and medium terms responses.
- 1.3. Identify the key knowledge gaps and suggest solutions to fill in the gaps.
- 1.4. Identify lessons and good practices that can be scaled up, at methodological and content levels for further use of the reports and to undertake similar studies in future.
- 1.5. Make recommendations towards ILO Africa more promising actions in support to its constituents in Africa (Government, Employers and Workers) and in line with the Implementation of the Abidjan Declaration (2019) and with relevant UN frameworks.

2. Approaches and methodology

Successful Review Teams are expected to conduct their review using approaches that will maximize both the rigor and relevance of their work to policy challenges. They will be expected to choose their approach to suit the review question.

The consultants (it is envisaged a bilingual team of two consultants) will review key ILO policy responses to COVID 19, including ILO Monitors and [country policy responses](#). They will then review available reports on rapid assessment and socio-economic impact of Covid-19 in Africa during the period March 2020 and March 2021 namely the focus, design and context of studies, findings and recommendations.

The methodology to be used should ensure that the findings are accurate, methodologically sound, comprehensive, and unbiased.

The study can follow overall the Campbell Collaboration Systematic Reviews: Policies and Guidelines (http://www.campbellcollaboration.org/lib/download/3308/C2_Policies_Guidelines_Version_1_0.pdf) as a general guidance, or the Cochrane Methodology Review (<https://mdanderson.libguides.com/c.php?g=384755&p=7400484>).

Under overall guidance from the Team Leader (TL), the Review Team will consider the following steps:

- a) Organize virtual meetings with the ILO responsible officers for the study to understand ILO needs and agree on an overall approach that will be reflected in the Inception report.
- b) Review all relevant documentation provided by the ILO responsible officers.
- c) Develop the Inception report
- d) Convene virtual meetings with selected specialists on the identified areas covered by the various assessment and socio-economic studies who bring experience of the problems, contexts and options underpinning in the reports.
- e) Develop the draft report for review by ILO including visual presentation of key learning (see Deliverable section below)
- f) Integrate comments received
- g) Develop the final version of the report

It is expected that the Review Team will maintain on-going interaction with the ILO responsible officers (Management Team of the review) throughout the review process in order to assure that the deliverables are developed under the ILO expectations.

The recommendations should be directed to ILO, governments, employers' and worker's organizations. These should be actionable and indicate the level of resources required, the timing (short, medium and long term) and the level of priority to consider (low, medium and high).

3. Deliverables

Under overall guidance from the Team Leader (TL), the Review teams will deliver:

- i. **An inception report**, which should be submitted for review within 10 days of commencing the contract. The inception report will include- (1) Background, (2) Aims and rationale for review, (3) Definitional and conceptual issues, (4) Objectives of the synthesis review; (5) Conceptual framework; (6) Methods for identifying and briefly describing studies to assess the reports available so far; (7) Outline of the report, (8) list of persons to interview and (9) a schedule of the consultancy.

The report should be written in English and is subjected to approval before moving to the next phase.

- ii. **A draft report** in English, including an executive summary (no more than 4 pages, both in French and English).

The report should present the findings and conclusions organized by a specific typology (e.g. specific sectors; specific group of people affected; group of countries; type of issues; etc.) and following ILO COVID 19 framework or any relevant approach as suggested and endorsed during the inception phase.

The draft and final reports should include:

- a) Summary
- b) Background;
- c) Objectives;
- d) Methodology and limitations;
- e) Synthesis of main findings (following ILO COVID 19 framework);
- f) Critical analysis of the findings
- g) Analysis of the studies' methodology;
- h) Conclusions and recommendations for policy-makers, and Employers' and Workers' organizations and ILO.
- i) Lessons learned and good practices

Annexes

- (a) Relevant synthesis tables.
- (b) Visual representation of key evidence to attract readers' attention help their understanding;
- (c) ToR
- (d) Documents reviewed
- (e) d. List of persons interviewed

- iii. **A final report** following the draft report outline addressing comments received on the draft report.

Quality assurance

The consultants' team will be required to ensure the quality of data (validity, reliability, consistency and accuracy) throughout the analytical and reporting phases. The report shall be written in an evidence-based manner such that all findings, conclusions, recommendations, etc. are supported by evidence and analysis.

4. Timeline and calendar

The review will be undertaken between April and July 2021. The tentative schedule for this study is as follows:

Activity/Deliverable	Number of working days for each member of review team (35 days x 2)	Tentative dates
- Briefing with the ILO Representative officers (Management Review Team) - Review of ILO policy documents on COVID 19 and studies conducted in xx countries - Development of the Inception report	10	26 April -7 May 2021
Review and approval of the Inception report by the ILO resp. officers (Management Review Team)	(5 working days for ILO, 0 for the Consultant)	10-14 May 2021
Development of the synthesis analysis report	20	17 May-11 June 2021
Circulation of the draft report	(2 weeks for ILO, 0 working day for the consultant)	14 June - 25 June 2021
Integration of comments to arrive to a final report	5	2 July
Approval of the final report by the ILO resp. officer	(2 working days for the ILO, 0 for the consultant)	Between 2 and 10 July 2021
TOTAL	35	

5. Management of the Review

The consultants will report to the Management Team of the review comprising the Deputy Regional Director of the ILO Regional Office for Africa (ROAF), M. Peter VAN ROOIJ, the Chief Regional Programming Unit, M. Joseph MOMO and the Senior Economist of the ROAF, M. Ken SHAWA, on all aspects of the review deliverables and day-to-day work schedules. The Management Team of the Review will provide guidance and required support and clarifications throughout the process to the consultants. They are the main interlocutor between the synthesis team, represented by the team leader, and ILO counterparts to ensure a smooth implementation process.

A weekly meeting will be established between the Management Team of the Review and the consultants to monitor the progress and address any issues related to the study. The Management Team of the Review will also conduct the 1st level quality assurance of the synthesis products and soliciting ILO stakeholders' feedback on draft products.

6. Synthesis Team composition and profile of the consultants

The synthesis will be conducted by at least a Team leader and a Team member.

The team leader requires experience in the following areas:

- University Degree at Masters Level and relevant work experience in social sciences, economics and education.
- A minimum of 10 years of professional work experience in the areas of policy analysis and design, socio-economic studies, research in the area of macro-micro economics, and strategic development
- Extensive knowledge of and experience in applying qualitative and quantitative evaluation/research methods
- Previous work with ILO and UN is an advantage.
- Key understanding of youth employment, gender issues, and labour market issues; including relevant contextual knowledge in Africa at field and policy level will be an asset.
- Excellent analytical and communication skills are essential.
- Prior experience on synthesis reviews and similar studies and/or on the synthesis of large volumes of quantitative and qualitative information is preferable.
- Bilingual in English and French with excellent report writing skills
- Use of visual communication tools is an asset
- Excellent capacity to work under limited supervision and in a proactive way

The Team Member requires experience in the following areas

- A minimum of 10 years of professional work experience in the areas of policy analysis and design, socio-economic studies, research in the area of health economic policy, etc.
- Extensive knowledge of data analysis
- Previous work with ILO and UN is an advantage.
- Key understanding of socio-economic, including relevant contextual knowledge in Africa at field and policy level will be an asset.
- Excellent communication skills.
- Prior experience on synthesis reviews and similar studies and/or on the synthesis of large volumes of quantitative and qualitative information is preferable.
- Bilingual in English and French with excellent report writing skills
- Use of visual communication tools is an asset
- Excellent capacity to work under limited supervision and in a proactive way

7. Selection of the study team

The selection will be based on a Call for expression of interest. A team of at least two consultants is preferred to develop the assignment, so that the documents are screened and analysed independently by each consultant to limit bias. Gender balance will be preferred. However, individual applications will also be considered.

The applicants should present a short proposal that explains the rationale to select the team; the CV highlighting key assignments related to this one, the proposed daily rate in USD, two references and three relevant documents produced by the applicant(s).

Applications of individual or consultancy companies or similar are welcome.

The selection of consultants will be based on the quality of the technical proposal, experience of team members and financial proposal as the three main factors.

8. To Apply

Expression of interest should be forwarded to the ILO Regional Office for Africa (roafrpu@ilo.org, cc: moulod@ilo.org), no later than 31 March 2021 (5:00pm, Abidjan time). The application should comprise :

- a) A short technical proposal;
- b) CV highlighting experience with evidence reviews, synthesis studies and meta-analysis;
- c) Two references of clients of the consultants and their contact details;
- d) Three supporting publications, one of which should refer to a comparable synthesis study;
- e) A financial proposal and breakdown of costs.