



1. Project Data

Project ID P132667	Project Name BJ-Youth Employment (FY14)	
Country Benin	Practice Area(Lead) Social Protection & Jobs	
L/C/TF Number(s) IDA-53920	Closing Date (Original) 30-Jun-2018	Total Project Cost (USD) 32,111,789.97
Bank Approval Date 11-Mar-2014	Closing Date (Actual) 30-Jun-2019	
	IBRD/IDA (USD)	Grants (USD)
Original Commitment	35,000,000.00	0.00
Revised Commitment	35,000,000.00	0.00
Actual	32,111,789.97	0.00

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2. Project Objectives and Components

a. Objectives

The objective of the Project was “to improve access to employment skills and employment opportunities for underemployed youth in Benin.” (Financing agreement No. 5392-BJ, 2014; PAD No. 795, 2014).

b. Were the project objectives/key associated outcome targets revised during implementation?



Yes

Did the Board approve the revised objectives/key associated outcome targets?

Yes

Date of Board Approval

24-Apr-2018

c. Will a split evaluation be undertaken?

No

d. Components

Component 1: Developing Skills through Apprenticeships (Approval: US\$ 6.3 million; Actual: US\$ 7.50 million) – This component supported improved access for underemployed youth to apprenticeships of improved quality in skilled trades and helped the Government and private sector trade associations to expand and improve nationally recognized certification for skills learned in such apprenticeships. It supported three priorities of the National Employment Policy: (i) promotion and sustainability of SME's and small industries; (ii) building capacity among employment actors; (iii) promotion of national solidarity in employment services (i.e. increasing access of poor and vulnerable households to such services); and (iv) building the public and private institutional capacity for employment promotion.

Component 2: Developing Small Business Skills (Approval: US\$ 15 million; Actual: US\$ 13 million) – This component supported the ANPE to scale up and improve the quality of its existing programs to assist predominantly underemployed youth to develop skills related to establishing and managing a small business. This included (i) developing training modules for life skills training, business training, and business plan preparation for beneficiaries of different levels of literacy; (ii) supporting the formation of business groups and facilitation to help beneficiaries to pair with existing private sector firms; and (iii) supporting short vocational training in high potential sectors. In so doing, it would support key priorities of the National Employment Policy: (i) the promotion and sustainability of SME's and small industries, and (ii) the promotion of national solidarity in employment services.

Component 3: Start-up Support (Approval: US\$ 8.7 million; Actual: US\$ 10.30 million) – The skills developed under components 1 and 2 may not be sufficient by themselves for youth to access improved labor market outcomes without complementary support to address other constraints that they typically faced. In line with the World Bank Independent Evaluation Group's 2012 thematic evaluation of youth employment programs whose main operational recommendation was to adopt a comprehensive approach, the project aimed to address not only skills constraints through components 1 and 2, but also lack of capital, information, networking, and mentoring.

Component 4: Institutional Capacity Building and Project Management (Approval: US\$ 5 million; Actual: US\$ 4.2 million) – This component supported four of the nine priorities of the National Employment Policy: (i) improving the employment information system; (ii) building capacity among employment actors; (iii) improving the coordination among employment promotion programs; and (iv) building the public and private institutional capacity for employment promotion.

e. Comments on Project Cost, Financing, Borrower Contribution, and Dates



Project cost and financing. At appraisal, the project was estimated at US\$ 36.9 million, financed by IDA-53920 grant of US\$ 35 million and a borrower contribution of US\$ 1.9 million. The proceeds were not fully disbursed. US\$ 32,111,790 were disbursed from the World Bank Financing and US\$ 500,647 from the borrower contribution. The total disbursement amounted to US\$ 32,612,437.

Dates. The project became effective on November 5, 2014. A level-2 restructuring in April 2018 extended the loan closing date from June 30, 2018 to June 30, 2019. The restructuring changed component costs and reallocated between disbursement categories. Additionally, it changed the results framework by dropping two intermediate results indicators and reducing the ambition of two other intermediate results indicators. The project closed on June 30, 2019.

3. Relevance of Objectives

Rationale

The project was consistent with the Country partnership strategy (FY 2013-2018) at approval: the project was relevant to Objective 5 of the Country partnership strategy (CPF), 'Labor skills development for youth in Benin.' The project continued to be consistent with the country strategy at closing: Country Partnership Framework (FY19-23) identified 'BJ-Youth Employment' project as relevant to objective 5, 'Improving relevance of education and professional training for strengthened job creation in Benin.' Moreover, Women's economic empowerment was a foundational theme in CPF at closing following the Systematic country diagnostic finding that women's weak economic empowerment is a significant constraint to achieving twin goals in Benin. The project focused on women beneficiaries by aiming that at least half of beneficiaries were women, specific needs of young women were taken into consideration, and gender disaggregated results indicators were collected (PAD, page 12). Additionally, sub-component 1.3 provided support for girls in nontraditional trades (PAD, page 38). The project was also consistent with the 2012 national Employment Policy that by 2025, all Beninese women and men of working age have a job that provides an income sufficient to meet their vital needs and ensure their full well-being (PAD, page 9).

While unemployment rates in Benin are generally low relative to comparators, the levels of underemployment are high. Benin also has a large informal economy with 72% employed workers employed less than 35 hours and/or in a lower paid job than the minimum guaranteed wage (ICR, page 5). The project was suitable for the country context because it expanded and scaled up an existing government program and supported youths to start their own businesses in a context that is highly informal and unable to support workers. Additionally, the World bank has previous sector experience of a labor force development project in the country (P070204).

Rating

High

4. Achievement of Objectives (Efficacy)



OBJECTIVE 1

Objective

Improve access to employment skills for underemployed youth in Benin

Rationale

The theory of change (TOC) for the project was convincing. The main assumption underpinning the TOC was that skills and financial constraints prevent youths from full employment. The project focused on increasing these skills through two channels: Improving Employability through apprenticeship program and developing small business skills. In Benin, apprenticeship is one of the main sources of employment skills, especially for youth with low levels of education. The project builds upon this existing country structure of apprenticeship training by improving the quality of apprenticeship, which included equipping training centers and improving master artisans' capacity to teach. The project also supported scaling up the apprenticeship certifications by enhancing government capacity to conduct examinations e.g. new communes offering examinations. Moreover, the project included increasing women's participation in male-dominated programs through information campaigns, network facilities and direct monetary incentives. The second channel aimed to support graduates of the apprenticeship program, in addition to other underemployed youth, to provide life skills training and business training.

Employment skills may not translate into employment opportunities due to financial and capital constraints. The project aimed to minimize this constraint by providing start-up grants to the apprenticeship and business-training graduates in fields with significant capital intensity under objective 2. The main assumption underpinning the second objective was that access to grants will translate into employment opportunities for underemployed youth in Benin. Temporally, the youths would first participate in enhanced apprenticeship trainings, receive certifications (CQP/CQM), then enroll in life skills and small business trainings, prepare business proposals under the small business trainings and apply for grants. Finally, the beneficiaries would productively invest those grants and receive follow up support to start or expand a business.

Selected output and Intermediate outcomes:

- Ten occupation streams offering new post-apprenticeship exams leading to the CQP or CQM were created, meeting the revised target of 10.
- 1,069 master artisans, 54.3 percent of which were female, received skills upgrade training, exceeding the target of 500.
- Six training centers received new equipment, falling short of the target of 10.
- 77 communes offered exams leading to the Certificat de Qualification aux Métiers (CQM), which exceeded the target of 60.
- 15,729 of youth with low levels of literacy received support for creating business plans, surpassing the target of 5000.
- 474 women supported were trained in trades with traditionally low numbers of women, exceeding the revised target of 200

Outcomes

The project surpassed the result framework targets for both PDO level indicators for the objective 'Improving Access to Employment Skills':



Youth supported by the project receiving the apprenticeship certification (CQP) under the project increased from a baseline of 0 in 2014 to 2,991 in 2019, exceeding the target of 2,500 by 19.6 percent. The ICRR stated that the targeting method (decentralized enrollment, tailored communication, and random selection) ensured that the program benefited targeted beneficiaries: who had never attended school (28 percent), not completed school (33 percent), and female (+50 percent).

Youth completing small business and life skills training under the project increased from a baseline of 0 in 2014 to 15,864 in 2019, exceeding the target of 15,000 by 5 percent. These consisted of two separate trainings: ACV (life skills training) and TRIE & CREE (generate your business idea training/ start your business). While ACV had a retention rate of 92.2%, TRIE and CREE had absolute retention.

Preliminary results of an impact evaluation (IE) support some trends from the results framework. The impact evaluation studied the impacts of trainings under component 2 (small business and life skills training) mentioned above. The IE reports results for two randomly sampled groups from the population: the treatment group who received trainings and the control group, which did not receive any training (see M&E section for details on impact evaluation). The IE found that Short-term impacts on employment skills were strong and positive. The trainings had positive effects on the sampled beneficiaries as compared to the control group, both on their socio-emotional skills and on their business practices. The training had a large, positive impact on non-cognitive skills: self-efficacy (especially for women), locus of control, and depression (especially for men). The IE also found that the trainings had a large impact on business practices. For example, more than half the participants who received training kept separate accounts for households and business, compared to about a third in the control group. The ICR noted that the practice of keeping written records and a written budget also increased among training beneficiaries (ICR, Page 16).

Rating
High

OBJECTIVE 2

Objective

Improve access to employment opportunities for underemployed youth in Benin

Rationale

The theory of change (TOC) for the second objective was convincing. The PAD stated that even with employability skills, a main constraint for youth in starting their own business is the lack of financial resources. A survey of apprenticeship graduates showed that even after receiving training and formal certification, many of them were unable to start their own or joint businesses due to lack of resources. The project aimed to minimize this constraint by providing start-up grants and follow-up support to the apprenticeship and graduates in fields with significant capital intensity. The main assumption underpinning the TOC was that access to grants will translate into employment opportunities for underemployed youth in Benin (see the rationale section under objective 1 above for an explanation of the TOC for the whole project).

Outputs



The ICR notes the following outputs under Component 3. Start Up support:

- Contract with Mobile operator MTN signed for mobile payments of start-up grant to qualified trainees.
- Effective mechanism developed by PCU M&E Specialist for data collection on payments and verification using ACE feedback via Google Forms and vetting with MTN.
- Rich database built of 15,000 + youth with approved business plan in as many as 90 different types of enterprises awarded start-up grants.

These outputs aided the process of disbursement of start-up grants and gathering of data of beneficiaries.

Outcomes

The outcome indicator for this object was the number of youths starting or expanding microenterprises with support from the project, which increased from a baseline of 0 in 2014 to 15,509 in 2019, exceeding the target of 10,000 by 56 percent. However, this indicator was insufficient for tracking the results for access to employment opportunities because it reports the number whose business plans were approved and received a start-up grant, but no other outcomes were reported to assess the viability of these businesses. A post-grant training (GERME) was conducted to provide follow-up support for businesses, which had a 92.7 percent retention, but no variables evaluate these follow-up trainings.

The preliminary impact evaluation results provide some subsidiary results that were not assessed by the results framework. The IE reports results for three randomly sampled groups from the population: treatment group 1 (T1), which received grants and training, treatment group 2 (T2), which only received a cash-grant, and a control group, which received neither. Across both groups (T1 and T2), the cash grant was mostly used for purchasing productive asset. However, T1 was more likely to use the grant for productive grants (80 percent) than T2 (68 percent). Half of both groups (T1 and T2) also spent the grant on purchasing inventory for the enterprise. The IE also stated that the program did not have any significant effects on profits and earnings. The evaluation notes there isn't enough elapsed time to assess if these lower profits were due to higher expenditure for expansion or lack of demands for products and services from these businesses.

Yet, the ICR noted that employment opportunities were improved through the combination of training and startup support. Beneficiaries invested in their economic activities, grew the amount of capital and inventory of their firm, and women hired more labor (ICR, page 18). The ICR reported this based on positive results of the trainings (see objective 1 for details), which might turn into increased income and profits, but the evidence to support this conclusion is not available. While noted positive impacts of trainings on business practices and usage of start-up grants indicate an increased access to employment opportunities, the sustainability of these employment opportunities will depend on long-term trends of income and profits of the businesses (see Risk to development section for discussion on sustainability).

Rating
Substantial



OVERALL EFFICACY

Rationale

Based on the information in the ICR, the objective to improve access to employment skills was fully achieved, and the objective to improve access to employment opportunities was almost fully achieved.

Overall Efficacy Rating

Substantial

5. Efficiency

At appraisal, the project did not undertake a cost-benefit analysis or cost-effectiveness analysis due to limited data and difficulties with quantifying employability. The PAD anticipated that the proposed project was expected to improve youth labor market outcomes and produce important social benefits but did not give any data of a comparable project in Benin or any other country. The only calculation cited in the PAD is that, without assistance, youth will most likely find work in an economic activity with very low productivity because according to the national statistics about 60 percent of youth aged 15-24 and 47 percent of youth aged 25-34 earn less than the poverty line while working full time. The median wage was estimated at around 20,000 FCFA per month for youth with no education and 25,000 FCFA per month for youth with primary education, compared to 45,000 FCFA per month for youth with higher levels of education. The analysis stated that by strengthening the human capital of selected youth and supporting their transition into the labor market, the project was expected to have a positive impact on their productivity and future revenues (PAD, page 24). The end-line survey of impact evaluation is expected to report revenue and profitability trends of the businesses started under the project.

The ICR provided cost comparisons for training interventions under component 2 for similar programs around the world. The ICR also estimated the cost of the intervention per person at US\$ 745 and concluded that these number are comparable with comparators and that the cost of similar interventions in developing countries that range between US\$ 1,000-US \$2,000.

The ICR also noted three factors that negatively affected the project's implementation efficiency: (i) underperforming coordination during the first two years due to the Government's decision to bypass Bank procedures and appoint a coordinator paid through Government funds; (ii) The use of country systems for financial management; and (iii) frequent changes in line ministry and high turn-around of key personnel aggravating issues linked to country systems since new counterparts had to be educated on the project every few months (ICR, page 19). The ICR also stated that low coordination in initial years resulted from government-nominated coordinator's poor understanding of project scope and planned activities. Similarly, financial management system delays caused problems with disbursement, which influenced the sequencing of project activities and decision of dropping activities during restructuring. Finally, the project coordination unit had to modify relationships and re-coordinate with civil servants each time the line ministry changed (ICR, pp 24-25).

Efficiency Rating

Modest



a. If available, enter the Economic Rate of Return (ERR) and/or Financial Rate of Return (FRR) at appraisal and the re-estimated value at evaluation:

	Rate Available?	Point value (%)	*Coverage/Scope (%)
Appraisal		0	0 <input type="checkbox"/> Not Applicable
ICR Estimate		0	0 <input type="checkbox"/> Not Applicable

* Refers to percent of total project cost for which ERR/FRR was calculated.

6. Outcome

Relevance of objectives is rated High, as the objectives were aligned at project closing with the Bank’s Country Partnership Framework for Benin (FY 18– FY 23) and the country’s national employment policy. Efficacy is rated Substantial, as the project almost fully achieved its development objectives. Efficiency is rated Modest because of insufficient economic analysis and shortcomings in the efficiency of implementation. Based on these ratings, and consistent with the achievements and shortcomings noted, Outcome is rated Moderately Satisfactory.

a. **Outcome Rating**
Moderately Satisfactory

7. Risk to Development Outcome

The ICR characterized Risk to Development Outcome as Modest because (a) Government of Benin is committed to the youth and social inclusion agenda as reflected in the many national programs in existence (b) project generated content, process, and institutional improvements will last after project closing (c) skills developed will be sustained among the beneficiaries. The ICR stated that while sustainability is a challenge in absence of external support, the success of the project has sparked interest in government for continued engagement. However, it is important to note that in the past the reduction of donor funding, including the closing of Bank’s Labor Force Development project drastically reduced the money supply to FODEFCA, the main financier of apprenticeship program. (PAD Annex II, page 34).

The ICR also recognized a risk to the sustainability of the commune-level employment services. Moreover, the sustainability of employment opportunities rests on the viability of microenterprises created under the project. At the closing of the project, there was not enough evidence to assess the sustainability of the businesses started or expanded under the project. The long-term outcome (skills and employment opportunities) will only be sustained if these businesses are profitable and if youths stay employed through them.



8. Assessment of Bank Performance

a. Quality-at-Entry

Aforementioned in the relevance section, the project continued to be relevant to Country Partnership Framework (FY19-23) and 2012 National Employment Policy. The PAD stated that project's design was based on the lessons learned from previous youth employment projects, including a report by the Independent Evaluation Group (IEG) of the World Bank, which suggested that a comprehensive approach involving complementary interventions to remove key constraints to youth employment can maximize the impact of youth employment programs (PAD Annex II, page 24). Additionally, the project had a specific focus on social development aspects. The project aimed to put an emphasis on targeting youth who were most affected by underemployment -- youth who are female, rural, currently self-employed, and/or with low levels of education. The ICR also noted that the gender Innovation lab provided insights from academic literature to support female beneficiaries.

Quality at entry review (QER) raised issues about implementation arrangements and low capacity of the coordinating agency. The PAD acknowledged that weak capacity of stakeholders was a potential risk and proposed capacity building activities (Component 4). The ICR at closing stated that the delays observed in reaching effectiveness and in starting the implementation of the main activities suggested that the project was not fully ready to be implemented after Board approval (ICR, page 31). Yet, the project put effective monitoring and evaluation measures in place as discussed in the M&E section. The results framework indicated the agency responsible for monitoring each indicator. Additionally, the project assessed several operational risks associated with the program (Annex 4, PAD): stakeholder risks, governance, design, social and environment, monitoring, and sustainability with mitigation measures.

Quality-at-Entry Rating

Satisfactory

b. Quality of supervision

The ICR stated that the World Bank team conducted periodic supervision missions, proactively addressing implementation issues as they emerged. The findings of the implementation support missions focused on performance of implementing agencies in managing the project and the progress toward achieving the PDO and were reported regularly in the Aide-Memoires and ISRs (ICR, page 31). The team provided regular implementation status through reports and tracked the progress of the project. The Bank team took proactive steps to manage risks. It identified key challenges facing FODEFCA (the implementing agency for Component 1) and pushed for an institutional audit to improve its functioning and took the risk of the beneficiary selection process very seriously and addressed it by promoting a transparent and equitable process (ICR, page 31-32).



Quality of Supervision Rating

Satisfactory

Overall Bank Performance Rating

Satisfactory

9. M&E Design, Implementation, & Utilization

a. M&E Design

Clear PDOs and components aided a concise design supported by a results framework. For the first objective, “improving access to employment skills,” the project provided support for (i) upgraded CQM and CQM examinations for different trades (ii) life and business skills training. Both activities are underpinned by good intermediate and outcome indicators e.g. number of youths receiving CQP certification (see efficacy section for details). For the second objective, “improving access to employment opportunities,” the project provided start-up grants and follow up support (GERME trainings), which is underpinned by one outcome indicator – number of youths starting or expanding microenterprises with support from the project. There were no indicators to measure the quality of follow-up trainings (GERME) or businesses started under the program.

The main gap in the M&E design was that some indicators were not sufficient to adequately capture the contribution of project activities to project outcomes. In the efficiency section, PAD noted that in the absence of project youth will most likely find work in an economic activity with very low productivity. However, in M&E design, baselines for many indicators did not account for this assessment – that is, all baselines were zero. The first component, developing skills through apprenticeship expands the existing government program by scaling up apprenticeship certification, supporting the quality of apprenticeships (equipping training centers, master artisan training), and support for girls in apprenticeships. Indicators that only report project beneficiaries with zero baseline do not capture the before-and-after effects of the quality of the support provided by the WBG.

Some of these gaps were addressed by a rigorous impact evaluation to study the relative impacts of providing basic business training (component 2), providing start-up capital (component 2 and 3), or providing both on employment outcomes for youth after 12 and 24 months of the program. The experimental design allowed for causal inferences about the results the project activities. It focused on 15 southern communes from the 77 communes to minimize cost. Three highest communes with highest contribution to poverty were selected from 5 departments. Three rounds of data collection were (see M&E implementation for details on the impact evaluation).

b. M&E Implementation

The PAD envisaged that the PCU would develop a computerized system to track all outcome and intermediate indicators as well as other information required for effective management. The ICR stated that the implementation was more cumbersome than expected due to interrupted power supply and inadequate time for management information system (MIS) trainings due to initial payment delays for component 2 (ICR, page 27). The issue of not being able to collect information on life and business skills trainings without either delaying the trainings or starting trainings without monitoring was addressed by



using Google forms. For the first component, the team collected exam data and maintained an Access database to ensure verification of the data collected by the government database. Under Component 3, grant payments were made using mobile money by contracting with the mobile operator, MTN. A Google Form (1st wave) and Survey CTO (2nd wave), a mobile data collection app, was used to retrieve data related to SIM activation for use in start-up grants payments.

Moreover, the project conducted an impact evaluation, which was financed by the World Bank's Gender Innovation lab. A baseline survey was conducted in July/August 2017. A set of 3,444 eligible applicants were randomly selected from 15 communes stratified by gender and their participation in project activities. The applicants were randomly assigned to four treatments: 1. Participants assigned to the first treatment group (T1) received the full package of interventions, including the training and cash grant; 2. Participants assigned to the second treatment group (T2) received the business and socioemotional skills training but not the cash grant; 3. Participants assigned to the third treatment group (T3) received an unconditional cash grant of up to US \$400 but not the training; 4. Participants assigned to the pure control received neither the training nor the cash grant.

c. M&E Utilization

Program data was periodically presented in progress reports and generated with increasing frequency notably after the MTR to keep up with the pace of implementation. The PCU M&E Specialist analyzed data to generate a weekly feedback report for various actors and stakeholders (ANPE Directorate, PCU, ACE, and Trainers) which helped streamline organization of activities for the following week. The real-time data also informed planning and budgeting of activities, for example, on short-term technical training, preparation and verification in payment of start-up grants to beneficiaries, and in quality assurance such as through the identification of ineffective catering service firms contracted for the trainings (ICR, page 27-28). The ICR also stated that the pivotal role played by the ACE (Employment Agent) in strengthening monitoring and evaluation in the project has created a replicable model for future endeavors in youth employment- such as the proposed Youth Inclusion project.

M&E Quality Rating

High

10. Other Issues

a. Safeguards

Environmental and Social Safeguards: The project was classified as a category C project and was expected to have minimal or no adverse environmental impacts. The project financed apprenticeships for selected youths working with a master crafts person acquiring skills and work experience. This skill acquisition might involve occupational health impacts to both the apprentices and the masters- however, nothing adverse or untoward was reported during implementation. Also, there was no plan for new civil works or rehabilitation of training centers (ICR, page 29).



b. Fiduciary Compliance

Financial Management: The project heavily relied on country's FM system. During implementation, the cumbersome financial procedures associated with this system contributed to cumulative delays which had to be tackled with a creative workaround. The delays due to unpredictability with payments ended up impacting the sequencing of activities. In the first year of implementation, the FM issue impacted timeliness of payments in the project, with the program making slow progress. Delays however also meant more time needed for implementation, which the restructuring subsequently addressed (ICR, page 25). By mid-2016 a creative and practicable workaround to the SIGFIP system to help prioritize PEJ was devised to improve funds flow and implementation quality. The successful implementation of an action plan for accelerating payments through SIGFIP greatly improved overall disbursement for the remainder of the project (ICR, page 30). The ratings for Financial management changed from moderately unsatisfactory to moderately satisfactory in November 2017 and remained at that level for the remainder of the project (Operations Portal).

Procurement: Overall, the procurement rating was steady at moderately satisfactory from the MTR to project closing. The project complied with the Bank's procurement policies and procedures (OP/BP 11.00). Large procurement contracts centered around the procurement of training firms, hiring of the ACE across all communes, selecting service providers who would develop entrepreneurship and life skills curricula and administer training (under Component 2), and acquisition of new equipment around the proposed upgrading in a few public and private technical and vocational training centers (under Subcomponent 1.2) to ensure that apprentices were able to follow the dual training in adequate conditions, and to improve overall quality of apprenticeships (ICR, page 30).

c. Unintended impacts (Positive or Negative)

Several unintended positive impacts were reported by the ICR (p. 23):

- The PEJ implementation experience triggered the mainstreaming of short-term technical training (FTCD) into all vocational training centers (CFP) and technical schools, with FTCD also being seriously considered for inclusion in the government's National Vocational Training strategy.
- The success and visibility of PEJ informed further thinking within government on exploring ways to ensure that more unemployed and under-employed youth are reinserted into everyday practical trades to assure better income certainty for graduates of the program under a proposed new initiative termed PURDE (Projet d'Urgence de Reconversion des Demandeurs de l'Emploi).
- The extensive database of applicants spun off the development of a mobile App by ANPE to match up trades people with customers seeking their services. ANPE saw potential in putting this data to good use and an App in beta testing, expected to be functional by the end of 2019, was highlighted during the ICR mission.

d. Other



11. Ratings

Ratings	ICR	IEG	Reason for Disagreements/Comment
Outcome	Satisfactory	Moderately Satisfactory	Both ICR and this ICR Review have the same ratings for the harmonized criteria (high relevance of objectives, substantial efficacy and modest efficiency). The aggregation of these ratings is consistent with a moderately satisfactory outcome. If the ICR had followed OPCS Guidelines, it would have reached the same conclusion.
Bank Performance	Satisfactory	Satisfactory	
Quality of M&E	High	High	
Quality of ICR	---	Substantial	

12. Lessons

The ICR (pp. 34) offered several lessons and recommendations, including the following lessons restated by IEG:

- A strong communication strategy, decentralized delivery, customized content aligned to target groups, and incentives for maximum participation such as provision of childcare and subsidies for lunch and travel are important factors for determining the success of employment training programs such as this youth employment project in Benin.
- Early joint preparation by Bank and Client to develop operating modalities for the project facilitates coordination and fund flows.
- Project background work e.g. beneficiaries' surveys help ensure that project would address context-specific constraints.

13. Assessment Recommended?

No

14. Comments on Quality of ICR



The ICR was written well and provided a good account of the project. The theory of change was logical and clear, although it could have established better linkages between the project components and accounted for external factors. The evidence was results-oriented and captured good data points from the results framework and impact evaluation. The document candidly discussed implementation inefficiencies and provided good examples of workarounds and effective solutions. The lessons learned section was utilized effectively to reflect on project preparation, implementation, and results. Two shortcomings were that the ICR did not follow OPCS guidelines to derive outcome rating, and that, although it presented costs for comparable training and entrepreneurship programs, the economic analysis was insufficient.

a. Quality of ICR Rating
Substantial