

INTERVENTION BRIEF | LABOUR SYSTEM

JOB FAIRS TO ENHANCE JOB MATCHING

THE PROBLEM

In Addis Ababa job search costs are high for job seekers and recruitment costs are high for firms. Job seekers often incur financial and time costs to travel to job boards located in the centre of the city to view job postings or to stand on job corners in the hopes of securing employment. According to an assessment conducted by LIWAY, both female and male job seekers who stand on job corners waiting for employers, specifically in construction and the services sector, often don't get employment that matches their skills or provides a reasonable wage. In most cases, the jobs are temporary and unreliable. On the other side, employers must pay per vacancy posted on job boards and have challenges with employee screening due to the limited information that can be extracted from the CVs of young labour market entrants.



Job fairs are commonly used in developed and developing economies to match employers and both lower and higher-skilled workers. However, in Ethiopia, job fairs are predominantly used for educated and highly experienced professionals. Low- and medium-skilled job seekers, therefore, remain highly dependent on job boards and job corners. They also lack interactions with and information on employers, which results in unrealistic expectations (e.g., wages, required skills). On the other side, employers lack sources of appropriate labour to fill lower-skilled positions, particularly smaller companies without the knowledge and means to effectively advertise open positions. Where job fairs have been held for lower-skilled labour, employers have expressed disappointment with the quality of the applicants.

OUR INTERVENTION

LIWAY partnered with Mela Events Management PLC, Aha Psychological Services, and Addis Ababa City Bureau of Labour, Enterprise, and Industry Development (BoLEID) to pilot job fairs for low- and medium-skilled job seekers in Addis Ababa. The aim is to enhance the interface between job seekers and employers and reduce job search and recruitment costs, as well as enable exchange of information and improve job seeker skills, ultimately resulting in LIWAY's target groups securing better and higher paying jobs.



The job fairs incorporate action research, panel discussions, soft skills training, job readiness testing, and enhanced database management to facilitate post-job fair matching and tracking of results. Employers, private employment agencies, and job matching service providers pay for booth rental and for value-added services on a subscription basis and companies may also sponsor the event. Learning workshops are also held to share best practices and validate the findings of the action research.

Mela Events Management is responsible for all event logistics including venue identification, participant selection, promotional activities, panel discussions, and overall event management. Aha Psychological Services developed and facilitates both the soft skills training and the job readiness testing. BoLEID provides technical support in areas such as venue selection, legal support, and gathering employment data. LIWAY engaged and coordinated the partners, as well as provided financial support to test the model, which also includes development of a database management and digital platform to facilitate job seeker registration and post-event matching services.

Based on the learnings from the pilot, BoLEID intends to allocate budget to facilitate decentralised job fairs at sub-city and district levels with support from private event management partners.

KEY ACHIEVEMENTS TO DATE

- One pilot job fair event was held for two days and adhered to COVID-19 protocols (preparation for two additional pilot job fairs is underway).
- 32 large employers, private job matching service providers, and technology developers participated.
- 3,315 women and youth job seekers attended the job fair.
- Job readiness testing was administered for 352 attendees and 183 attended job search skills training sessions.
- 959 women and youth job seekers were employed as the result of the job fair.

EMPLOYMENT
OPPORTUNITIES CREATED
FOR WOMEN & YOUTH
959



The Livelihoods Improvement for Women and Youth (LIWAY) programme aims to increase incomes of poor women and youth in Addis Ababa through improved wage and self-employment opportunities. We work in four interrelated market systems to create sustainable change: labour, micro and small enterprise (MSE), medium and large enterprise (MLE), and skills. LIWAY is funded by the Swedish International Development Cooperation Agency (Sida) and the Embassy of the Kingdom of the Netherlands (EKN). The programme is implemented by a consortium of partners composed of SNV Netherlands Development Organisation, Mercy Corps, TechnoServe, and Save the Children International.

For more information, visit: www.liway.org