

NDYEP

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NIGER DELTA YOUTH EMPLOYMENT PATHWAYS

MID-TERM EVALUATION REPORT

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Acronyms

DFAC	→	Doctor Fish Agricultural Consult
FGD	→	Focus Group Discussion
ICT	→	Information Communication Technology
KII	→	Key Informant Interviews
MEL	→	Monitoring, Evaluation and Learning
MTE	→	Mid-Term Evaluation
NDYEP	→	Niger Delta Youth Employment Pathways
PAC	→	Project Advisory Committee
PIND	→	Foundation for Partnership Initiatives in the Niger Delta
PWD	→	People living with disability
PVET	→	Technical and Vocational Education and Training

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Executive Summary

The mid-term evaluation of the Niger Delta Youth Employment Pathways (NDYEP) project was conducted between February and April 2019 as the project's first phase drew to a close. Its primary purpose is to provide evidence of the project's progress so far, to support decision making of PIND Executive Directors; NDYEP project staff; partner project managers, government stakeholders and Ford Foundation in the ongoing process over the next year.

NDYEP aims to contribute to addressing the critical issue of youth unemployment in the Niger Delta, focusing initially on three priority states of Abia, Akwa Ibom, and Rivers. The overall goal of project is to develop models of youth job readiness or workforce development that provide marginalized young men and women in the Niger Delta the opportunity to secure sustainable jobs through quality training that prepares them with market relevant skills.

The evaluation used a qualitative approach, seeking evidence around nine key evaluation questions articulated in collaboration with the project team, and using the OECD/DAC criteria of Relevance, Efficiency, Effectiveness, and Sustainability to frame these. The methodology used tools of document review, key informant interviews and focus groups discussions to collect information relevant to these questions; the latter two were the central tools used during a primary data collection field visit in Abia, Akwa Ibom and Rivers state and at the PIND office in Abuja during March 2019. The data collection process was synergised with data collection for three in-depth case studies of three implementing partners, to be developed following the evaluation.

Data collected was analysed against the evaluation questions and are presented in this report using the OECD/DAC criteria framework. Here, the 19 findings articulated, and 'lessons learned' are brought to bear more explicitly on the four strategic change objectives driving the project.

Strategic objective 1. Develop an understanding of the employment and skills landscape in the Niger Delta region to inform strategic investments in skills development programming.

Good progress has been made at the design stage against this objective through in-depth research exploring the economic sectors in each of the three target states; and employment opportunity within these. Key targets related to research outputs have been met.

However, it is now evident from the activity of implementing partners that there are pertinent distinctions between types of skills and sub-sectors being addressed within each formal sector targeted by NDYEP. Further analysis of these in relation to student profile, the profile of those achieving placements, and understanding of the economic health of these sub-sectors in each state would deepen learning from the project, including the amenability of the sub-sector to women and persons with disabilities (PWDs). Potential bottlenecks related to the details of conditions in these sub-sectors warrant observation and documentation by NDYEP.

Strategic objective 2. Promote a demand-driven approach to skills development in the Niger Delta through partnerships between youth employment ecosystem players, especially employers, policymakers, development partners and training institutions.

There are high levels of interest among those engaged in the project in demand-driven approaches. Employers were consulted during the research to lay the basis for the project in order to tailor training to the needs of promising sectors and employers within them. However, since private sector organizations do not commonly share and/or carry out longer term projections of employee requirements, it has not been possible at this stage to tailor the trainings precisely to the numbers and skills they might require in future.

In Rivers state, key state social actors involved in policy making have participated in project design and have a continuing strong interest in its implementation. Positive relationships have been built with select key actors, and some state resources have been provided to the programme via partners, but leadership from these stakeholders has not yet been sought. In Akwa Ibom and Abia states, state social actors have so far been engaged less effectively. Programme targets related to uptake of youth employment approaches by state governments have not yet been met, as this component is now envisaged for phase two.

Thirteen partner organizations were carefully selected with either strong prior experience as training organizations, or as growing business ventures with a vested interest in developing a skills-ready workforce. All were well embedded in their sectors in terms of technical expertise and relationships with other organizations. Twelve of these have completed the first phase of training

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and have succeeded in linking a proportion of trainees with onward opportunities. These represent a strong asset to the project going forwards.

Further engaging state actors, and scaling up the engagement of private sector actors, will be a critical step towards sustainability during the next phase of the project. Most respondents feel that the project duration is most likely too short to fully embed these next steps, particularly in recognition of the time required to work closely with government systems. In the long term, financing a transition from the pilot stage into a scaled-up state-level intervention threatens to be a central bottleneck unless a clear strategy is developed.

Strategic objective 3: Develop programs that demonstrate model pathways from skills training to employment through the provision of direct vocational training in three sectors of the economy, ICT, agriculture and construction, and other sectors where opportunities are identified.

Twelve functioning partnerships of an initial thirteen have made good progress in evolving model pathways from skills training to employment. Meeting the needs of young men and women for skills-based training which gives them real prospects of earning a livelihood in their local areas is at the heart of the project design and objectives. Despite an overall somewhat pressurized time-frame which has required extension, results in completed trainings and trainee placements have been achieved in a very short time. These are a credit to strong partner organizations and are a promising foundation for ongoing work.

The project is showing strong results in equipping beneficiaries with market-ready technical and employability skills, and in guiding them to further opportunities. Targets related to youth training and job/internship placement have been comfortably exceeded, such that employers are also starting to benefit from the approach.

Key elements of the programme approach which have supported these results include:

- A philosophy of working to the strengths of implementing partners;
- an emphasis on hands-on, practical inclusive training methodologies; and
- establishing the accountability of partners to the onward progression of trainees.

These constitute key elements of an evolving 'model' for addressing youth unemployment in the region.

There have also been challenges and learning in the journey so far. First, early fund disbursement and other delays during the inception period have been 'managed', but caused a somewhat rushed time scale for the actual training and ultimately compromised achieving an optimal integration of soft skills components of the training process in some cases. Evidence from partners suggest that the most benefit will be derived from soft skills training if these are treated as a framework for the technical training, and therefore integrated more deliberately with other training components. This means using softs skills development and business orientation as part of initial trainee orientation, and integrating opportunities for soft skills application to the technical material throughout the training period. Documenting partner learning on optimizing soft skills integration, as well as other adaptations made to standard curricula in order to accommodate the desired trainee profile will also be an important support for scale up.

Second, the project promotes an inclusive approach, targeting a proportion of young women, people with disabilities and rural participants, all within the 16-26 age group. Both informal and formal targets for these trainee profiles have made good progress and have stimulated implementing partners to explore, discuss and elaborate methods for responding to this profile of target group. This has meant taking on the challenge of including women in traditionally male dominated sectors and people with disabilities in contexts where they are historically excluded from employment.

However, some further design adaptations may be necessary for the project to maximize this inclusion. Beneficiaries across this profile do not all have the same needs; some tweaking of selection and the provision of guidance may help nuance parts of the project to better support particular types of beneficiaries. Providing opportunities for partner exchange on methods used to reach target groups could provide good material for later dissemination, as well as for PIND to more clearly promote elements of a gender transformative approach.

Third, it is clear that there are distinctions between types of onward placements for trainees which are relevant to the project's indicators for success. Because they are directly accountable to trainees' onward progress, partners have developed innovations to fulfil these requirements. Innovations have included developing 'interim' opportunities – including internships within the partner organization, incubation for start-ups, and in-house apprenticeships. At one level these innovations acknowledge that the training does not by itself complete the journey to employment/ livelihood security, and that additional 'interim' steps such as these are needed. Acknowledging and elaborating the key gains from interim steps such as these, and the distinctions between them and 'end game' employment situations would better prepare project management to create support processes for the further transitions. This would

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also better equip the monitoring and evaluation system to track relevant processes and results.

For this reason, and because most of these intern/employee – employer relationships are very new, it is too early to assess the sustainability of trainee transitions into placements. Nevertheless, all trainees and employers consulted find the new opportunities coming into play highly beneficial.

In short, while key elements of the 'models' developing are becoming apparent, they are as yet mostly incomplete. Over the next year it will be important to work to maximize the potential of the inclusive approach, as well as to carefully track the remaining parts of the youth employment pathways emerging.

Strategic objective 4. Monitor and evaluate the project and document, and disseminate key learnings

The results framework provides good support for the tracking of targeted results at this pilot stage of the project, although some adaptations could crystallize a focus on the project's objectives for inclusiveness. It is already anticipated that the framework will need modification to support the later scale-up process. As noted, there are some key elements of learning emerging – including concerning economic sub-sectors, and partner adaptations to accommodate the trainee profile – that will be important to document, in order to feed into a dissemination strategy to promote the approach more widely.

Important learning could also be extracted from the project by the inclusion of quantitative or qualitative tools for tracking / following up those trainees who are not absorbed into program-linked placements: currently, no information will be available to the project on the situation of these trainees, although they could include both negative and positive stories.

The results framework also does not currently capture the full ambition of the project in terms of strengthening or stimulating the local economies in the three selected sectors, although this is an important impact-level ambition of the project. Understanding these changes is likely to require qualitative research with organizations located in the economies; and could be supported by quantitative indicators such as state-level GDP related to the specific sectors; sector-specific changes such as the number of functioning fish farms in Akwa Ibom; or the turnover of business sector partners.

Recommendations

Based on these and further findings against the evaluation questions as set out in the report, the evaluation presents the following recommendations for PIND management, NDYEP project staff and partner organizations:

PIND management and NDYEP project staff

Recommendation 1: Focus on and develop a clear strategy for engagement of state actors in committing to and planning for scale up, particularly in Akwa Ibom and Abia states. This should potentially include policy makers associated with ministries engaging with youth development/employment, small and medium businesses, and agriculture; and should also include TVET providers.

The strategy will also need to engage a wider pool of private sector players with understanding of the target sectors, in this process.

Consider identifying 'showcase' projects in each sector which can act as physical demonstration grounds, including accommodating visits from state actors and private sector representatives / potential employers.

NDYEP project staff

Recommendation 2: Clarify selection criteria, if necessary tailored to each partnership, and bearing in mind limitations and / or trainee profiles necessary for success in the sector. Support partners to meet these criteria, including by peer-to-peer partner exchange workshops through which partners can explore strategies for inclusion of women and PWDs used by others, and replicate or adapt these for their own purposes.

In the context of unemployment rates in the Delta that are higher for women than for men, as well as how gender segregation in work sectors forms a core cause of gender inequality in economic terms, consider using this opportunity for a gender transformative approach in the target sectors by raising the proportion of young women targeted to at least 50%, perhaps initially by 'established' partners who already have some strategies in place to approach these targets.

Recommendation 3: In subsequent new rounds of partner selection as the project expands, emphasise and clarify the expected relationship between training and placements to be established by the selected partner, as achieving this accountability has been a key driver of the project's success so far. This includes clarifying the distinctions between placements in internships, employment or incubated start-ups, and defining expectations of the project and from partners in particular concerning trainee progress post-internship/incubation. PIND should consider and clarify strategies which might support these transitions.

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Recommendation 4: Set up a peer mentor system between old and new partners in similar sectors so that the full experience of the first phase of implementation can be profited from. Arrange exposure visits to existing partners as part of this learning exercise process.

Partner organizations and PIND project staff

Recommendation 5: Integrate the soft skills component of the training more consistently into earlier parts of the technical training period; or at the beginning – either through organizing training schedules so that external soft skills experts can be accommodated earlier in training, or for organizations using their own soft skills resources, by ensuring through curriculum review that these are scheduled as part of orientation and introductory stages.

Encourage partners also to integrate soft skills practice into their technical curriculum delivery methodologies – such as by integrating team work exercises; opportunities for trainees to make presentations; opportunities to engage in discussion; and by carrying out activity / project planning exercises which require understanding of technical content as well as soft skills application.

Recommendation 6: Consider tailoring the details of training support for organizations targeting youth with particular disadvantages, including women moving into male-dominated (sub) sectors; PWDs, and trainees located in rural areas distant from training locations.

Monitoring Evaluation and Learning

Recommendation 7: Develop a system for monitoring results which continues to track first round alumni as they progress through business incubation, apprenticeships and internships into post-incubation positions. Disaggregate this monitoring by sub-sector, as well as by age, gender and rural/urban location as is currently the case. This would support the development of further long-term evidence, potentially to support the continued advocacy for this approach. Consider including tools to track a sub-set of trainees who move into situations not tracked by the current results framework via program-linked placement positions.

Recommendation 8: To contribute to learning across the project, and to support inclusive scale up, develop case studies on partner experience in various aspects of the inclusive approach, including drawing young women trainees in non-traditional sectors; and on including PWDs (of different types). Thematic case studies elaborating the distinct features of the different placement pathways and transitions beyond these would also contribute to learning: i.e. training wage employment; training internship / apprenticeship; training independent business start-up.

Recommendation 9: Consider developing a moderately detailed theory of change on the anticipated involvement and roles of stakeholders in the scale up process. This would be helpful both for use as a programming tools supporting ongoing strategic implementation decisions (activity prioritisation) as well as a tool to support learning through the final evaluation process.

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Introduction



Solar Installation and Maintenance

The Niger Delta Youth Employment Pathways (NDYEP) is a two-year collaboration between Foundation for Partnership Initiatives in the Niger Delta (PIND) and Ford Foundation. The project aims to contribute to addressing the critical issue of youth unemployment in the Niger Delta, specifically youth job readiness, workforce development, and job creation in three priority states of Abia, Akwa Ibom, and Rivers. The vision of the project is to develop models of youth job readiness and workforce development that offer young people opportunity to secure sustainable jobs or develop enterprises by developing and providing quality training that equips them with market-tailored skills.

This document reports on a Mid-Term Evaluation (MTE) conducted between February and April 2019 as the first phase, effectively Year 1, of the project drew to a close. As a primarily formative evaluation, the process was conducted at this stage to gather evidence and analysis on progress in building models for creating market-relevant training and following through on trainees into job/apprenticeship / intern placements to demonstrate and further develop job-readiness of trainees. This information will support ongoing decision-making as the project moves into its second year and prepares for subsequent scale up to impact on the broad picture of youth unemployment in the Delta.

Overall, the MTE set out to assess the contribution made by the project to capacity development and the achievement of models that promote effective, efficient and innovative youth employment – that, therefore, ensure a closer link between demand for jobs and the supply of targeted technical and soft skills in the labor market.

The evaluation team therefore sought information about implementation of the project from its official start in September 2017 to March 2019 to build evidence on what has been learned. As a utilization-focused evaluation, the primary purpose of the assignment is to be useful to its intended users – in this case, PIND Executive Directors; NDYEP project staff; partner project managers, government stakeholders and Ford Foundation.

To do this, the evaluation drew of the OECD/DAC criteria of relevance, efficiency, effectiveness and sustainability to gather evidence on how far the project's design and objectives are appropriate to address the issues of youth employability in the target area ('Is it the right program'?}; how supportive elements of organizational efficiency have supported effectiveness (Is it being carried out in the right way?); how far it is effectively achieving results (Is it working?); and how far these results can be expected to be sustained once the project draws to a close.

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Project Overview



Solar Installation and Maintenance

The NDYEP project, designed as a two-year project, formally commenced in September 2017, although it was effectively January 2018 when the project got fully underway. The project is in effect segmented into two implementation phases: Phase 1 corresponding broadly to Year 1; and Phase 2 corresponding broadly to Year 2. However, an extension to Phase 1 was approved until April 2019, thus Year 2 or the second phase actually commenced at this point. enduring

The overall budget for this phase was US$ 865,895.73, consisting of $700,000 as Ford Foundation's contribution and $165,895.73 as PIND's contribution.

The overall goal of project is to develop models of youth job readiness or workforce development that provide marginalized young men and women in the Niger Delta the opportunity to secure sustainable jobs through quality training that prepares them with market relevant skills. To achieve this, the project articulated four strategic change objectives expressing the implementation logic of the project, to:

1. Develop an understanding of the employment and skills landscape in the Niger Delta region to inform strategic investments in skills development programming;
2. Promote a demand-driven approach to skills development in the Niger Delta through partnerships between youth employment ecosystem players, especially employers, policymakers, development partners and training institutions;
3. Develop programs that demonstrate model pathways from skills training to employment through the provision of direct vocational training in three sectors of the economy, ICT, agriculture and construction, and other sectors where opportunities are identified; and
4. Monitor and evaluate the project and document, and disseminate key learnings.

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Context of unemployment in the Niger Delta

The project targeted 3 states of the Niger Delta region, with a view to scaling this to 3 further states during phase II of the project, and potentially subsequently across all 9 Delta states. The three target states for Phase I were Abia, Akwa Ibom and Rivers; these were selected due to particularly acute levels of unemployment in these areas.

Nigeria in general suffers the phenomenon of jobless growth, with an expanding population and 'youth unemployability', issues which have particular resonance in the Niger Delta.[1] Despite decades of reasonably steady economic growth (until recession in 2016), unemployment remains very high:, unemployment stood at 23.1% in the third quarter of 2018, with peaks in Akwa Ibom, which reported the highest unemployment rate at 37.7%, and Rivers State and Abia at 36.4% and 31.6% respectively.[2] Underemployment combined with unemployment rates suggest a national rate of 43.2%. Women are disproportionately affected by this phenomenon, as more than 50% of unemployed youth are female. Notably, unemployment rates are generally high regardless of education: people with postsecondary education have a higher unemployment rate (24%) than people with primary education (18%) or below primary (15%) in 2017.[3] More than half of Nigerians are under the age of 30.

The Labor Force Survey in 2018 conducted by the National Bureau of Statistics found a labor force of 90.47 million nationwide and the highest unemployment rate is in the Niger Delta region. Available evidence reveals that unemployment, particularly youth employment, is a critical issue related to both economic development and de-escalation of conflict in the Niger Delta. Studies suggest that traditional modes of youth workforce development have not been successful. As such, innovative methodologies that engage youth outside of traditional training models might be more successful.



Female Trainee learning wall finishing

1: Niger Delta Youth Employment Pathways (NDYEP) Project – The Model, PIND 2018.

2: 'Labor Force Statistics – Volume 2: Unemployment and Underemployment by State Q3 2018', National Bureau of Statistics (NBS), April 2019. Note that these recent figures are for overall unemployment. In 2017, youth unemployment at ages 15-24 was higher at 33% nationwide and 41.82% in Rivers State and 36.58% in Akwa Ibom. (USAID. Workforce Development and Youth Employment in Nigeria: Desk Review. March 2016, quoted in Identifying Pathways to Employment for Youth in the Niger Delta An Analysis of Abia, Akwa Ibom and Rivers States, DAI 2018.

3: Identifying Pathways to Employment for Youth in the Niger Delta An Analysis of Abia, Akwa Ibom and Rivers States, DAI 2018; Niger Delta Youth Employment Pathways (NDYEP) Program – Proposal, PIND 2017.

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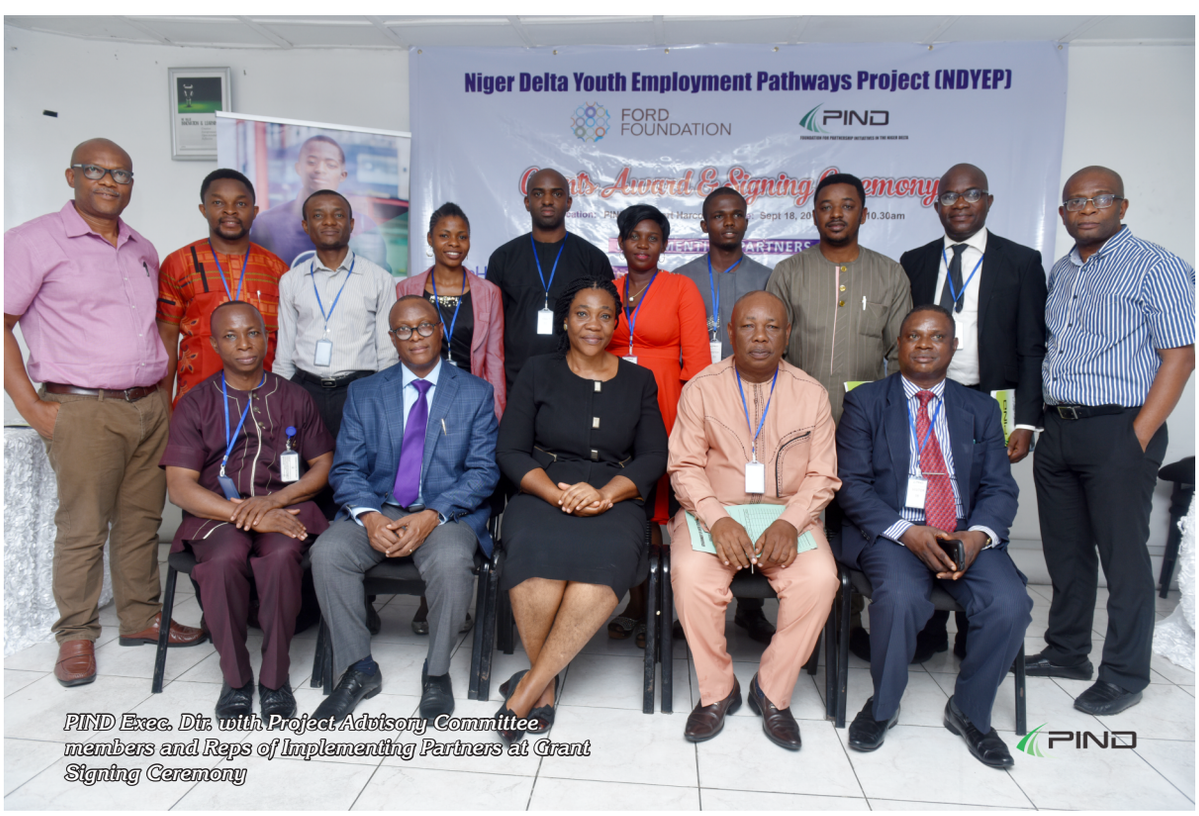
Context of PIND's broader work

PIND was established in 2010, with initial funding from Chevron Corporation, to engage in building partnerships for peace and equitable economic development in the Niger Delta region. PIND's strategic programmatic areas are: economic development, peacebuilding, capacity building and analysis and advocacy. The Foundation supports projects in collaboration with a diverse range of donor partners including bilateral and multi-lateral aid agencies, federal and state government agencies in Nigeria, private companies and foundations. In 2011, PIND commissioned a study to provide information on economic opportunities in the Niger Delta. PIND used the information obtained from the study to design, fund and build broad stakeholder support for programs and activities that shape its strategic direction. In the last eight years, PIND has established several of partnerships and collaboration to achieve a peaceful and enabling environment for inclusive and equitable economic growth of the Niger Delta region.

PIND's experience has shown that connecting jobseekers and market actors with the requisite market information about the demand side of the labor market and facilitating more productive interactions between youth and private sector looking for workers can result in productive opportunities for young people. PIND has experienced this across its portfolio agriculture value chains projects, specifically: Aquaculture, Palm Oil and Cassava value chains, where a crowding-in of new entrants into value chains and stepping up of market actors into more value-added roles within the value chains, yields significant gains in productivity and further dynamism.

An overall Theory of Change guides PIND's focus areas of work, and the NDYEP project engages with this in specific dimensions. In particular, NDYEP has engaged with this Theory of Change through the following components:

- Research and Analysis: NDYEP based its sector and partner selection, and training elements on research and analysis of economic opportunities and the local labor market.
- Proving Models Work: NDYEP sets out to build, and evidence, an innovative model for enhancing youth employment.



PIND Exec. Dir. with Project Advisory Committee members and Reps of Implementing Partners at Grant Signing Ceremony

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- Capacity Building: this model includes capacity building of, and partnering with, existing local actors
- Empowering Existing Actors: the model also includes involving local actors to generate ownership; and disseminating program learning to them.

The NDYEP program itself works on the broad logic that:

- If sector targeting and skills development content can be sufficiently tailored to local economic context

Then a combination of

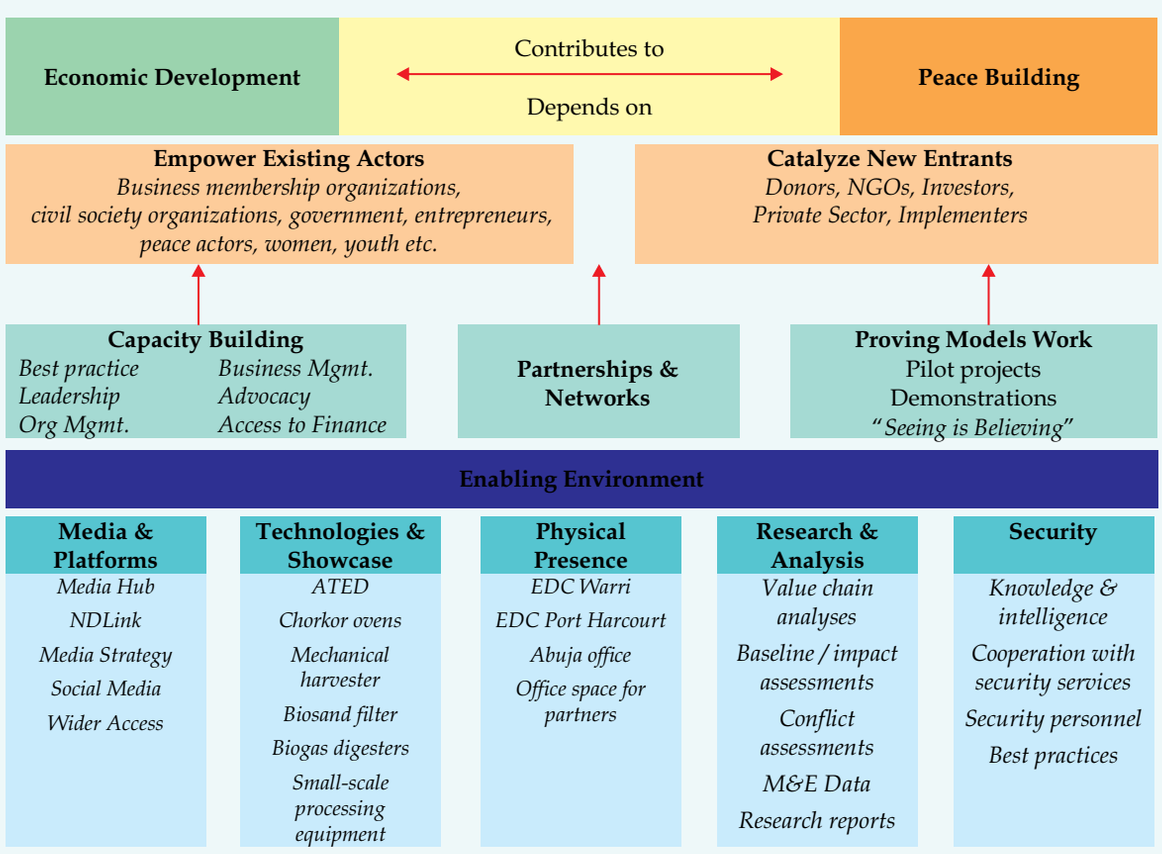
1) Capacity support to existing training organizations and
2) Tailored training for young people which includes technical and soft skills and
3) Support into employment or entrepreneurship

- Will move a cohort of young people from unemployment into employment
- This process will also stimulate the local economy through upskilling enterprise

If the approach used engages local stakeholders, empowers actors, and generates evidence

- Then it will provide the basis for scale up to benefit further youth cohorts.

Figure 1: PIND's Theory of Change



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Status of implementation

Following formal commencement of the project in September 2017, PIND undertook an in-depth study to act as a basis for detailed research design and strategy. This research identified viable sectors of the economy to target, types of skills gaps identified by employers, and a mapping of existing approaches and potential partners. It also began a process of collaboration and consultation with a wider pool of stakeholders including those located in public sector youth development systems; and in private sector networks. An Advisory Committee for the project was established, and included stakeholders from these sectors. Sectors identified for initial work were those of ICT, aquaculture and the construction industry; additional sectors specifically for Abia state of renewable energy (solar) and leather and garments were also explored, with a view to developing interventions in Phase 2.

This inception period also saw the identification of grantees via a call for proposals for training programs in the identified sectors, and a detailed collaborative process for final selection of appropriate partners. 13 organizations were selected during August 2018, with a spread across the three sectors and three states, though with somewhat more focus on the ICT sector and on Rivers state:

Table 1: Selected partners for NDYEP

Organization	Sector	State
Doctor Fish Agricultural Consult (DFAC)	Aquaculture	Akwa Ibom
Ibiteinye International Farms Limited	Aquaculture	Rivers
Clinton Innovation Center	ICT/ Solar	Abia
Innovation Growth Hub	ICT	Abia
Start Hub Technology	ICT	Akwa Ibom
Cinfores	ICT	Rivers
Entrepreneurial Development Initiative (ENDIP)	ICT	Rivers
Keeping It Real Foundation	ICT	Rivers
Netopps	ICT	Rivers
Kiara de-luke Academy	Construction	Abia
Azure-Gold Limited	Construction	Akwa Ibom
Entrepreneurship and Innovations (E&I) / Rivers State University / Est Master Construction Company	Construction	Rivers
Kaiser Foundation for Social Development	Construction	Rivers

Three partnerships – one in each of the three states - were also established to support the envisaged soft skills components of the training programs to be implemented:

- Youth Alive Foundation
- Wider Perspectives Limited
- Living Earth Nigeria Foundation

Partners undertook processes to identify and select participants, and training began in ICT and Aquaculture sectors in September 2018, and in the Building Construction sector in November 2018 in programs lasting between 3 and 5 months, depending on the organization and sector.

At the time of this evaluation process, most partners – with the exception of two partners in the Construction sector – had completed the training program for one or two batches of trainees, and most had begun supporting alumni trainees into placements as interns, apprentices, employees, or supporting them in business start-ups.

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Evaluation Methodology

The evaluation was conducted between February and May 2019 by an evaluation team consisting of two independent consultants: a lead evaluator, Kirsty Milward and support consultant, Olayide Adesanya. These were supported by two PIND staff as research assistants during and immediately following field work.

Field work took place in four locations: Abia; Akwa Ibom; and Rivers states; and the Federal Capital Territory. The MTE adopted mixed qualitative methods and explored a set of key evaluations questions developed in collaboration with the PIND program team. These aimed to unpack how far key elements of the project design and implementation process have supported the achievement of results, and to what extent the model used is likely to be sustained. The evaluation questions were adapted from a broader set of multiple possible questions set out in the terms of reference (See Annex 7); a further sub-set of these questions was considered at analysis stage to extend areas of insight where the collected data allowed this.

Table 2: Key evaluation questions

Design level	Relevance	1. To what extent are the objectives of NDYEP project consistent with the needs and interest of: o The goals and policies of PIND Foundation? o The people (unemployed men and women; potential employers)? o Regional and state plans?
	Ownership in design	2. How far have State social actors' taken effective leadership in the project interventions (participated in design)?
Process level	Efficiency	3. To what extent have the resources/inputs (funds, time etc.) have been turned into results?
		4. What have been the organizational bottlenecks / challenges?
	Ownership in the process	5. How far have State social actors' taken leadership in the project implementation / resource provision?
Results level	Effectiveness	6. To what extent have the objectives of the NDYEP project been met or are expected to be met?
		7. Is the project effective in responding to the needs of the beneficiaries?
		8. Does the M&E framework effectively support the implementation and tracking of the targeted results?
		9. What are the features of the approach that have been most effective in supporting results?
	Sustainability	10. What is the probability that the benefits of the NDYEP intervention will continue in the long term?
		11. What are the key challenges and remaining bottlenecks to achieving results?

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Training session on ICT

Although the broader purpose of the program, as shown in Section 2 above, includes stimulating the local economy in selected economic sectors and sub-sectors, the MTE did not attempt to assess progress in this area, as it was considered too early in implementation to collect evidence on impact level results.

Synergizing with Case Studies development

The MTE process, following the suggestion of PIND Foundation, was synergized with the design and data collection for three deep-dive case studies elaborating the details of 'models' of implementation – one in each economic sector – developed by partners. Case study data will be separately analyzed following this MTE process, and developed into three Practice Papers to be made available to a wider pool of stakeholders. Their purpose is to present, in clear and accessible format, information on promising practices and lessons learned through NDYEP at this point.

Data collection for the case studies was therefore being integrated into the MTE data collection process, in particular through the field visits. To some extent, the depth of insight made available through the case study data collection was also drawn upon on the MTE analysis process.

The field visit was carried out from 11th to 21st March by the evaluation consultants and two research assistants. The team was accompanied by NDYEP project staff for support purposes. Project staff participated in meetings focused on case study data collection; but to maintain independence for the MTE, they were not present in meetings focused on data collection for the MTE.

Techniques for Data Collection

The evaluation team adopted the following techniques to collect qualitative data to address the evaluation questions:

i. ***Document Review*** – a rapid document review was conducted on project literature made available to the evaluation team prior to the field visits. Following the field visit, further review was conducted on 12 partner progress reports submitted to PIND in early April 2019.

ii. ***Focus Group Discussions*** - Focus Group Discussions (FGDs) were held using participatory techniques, with staff of implementing partners, and youth training providers to collect information on status of implementation, achievement of project results, challenges and sustainability of the project. A total of 5 FGDs were conducted with partner staff for the MTE, and a further 7 FGDs with trainees and employers for the case studies. These included FGDs with two 'control' groups of applicant trainees who had not been selected for the training: on group of construction sector applicants and one group of ICT sector applicants.

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iii. ***Key Informant Interviews*** – 14 Key Informant Interviews (KIIs) were held with PIND's executive management, NDYEP project staff, staff of project implementing partners and members of the Advisory group. A further 16 KIIs were conducted with employers, potential employers and trainees in the framework of the case studies. The KIIs used a semi-structured interview format with questions based on the 11 evaluation questions, and tailored to each interview type.

Respondent selection and sampling

All implementing partners were invited to take part in two FGDs. The evaluation team also sought PIND staff advice on identifying potential respondents external to the project such as state government actors; as a result, 4 interviews were held with members of the Advisory Committee who are also located in relevant public sector institutions.

Since time and resources did not allow for all implementing partner staff to be interviewed individually, stratified sampling was used to select a sub-set of partners for individual interviews for the MTE. Criteria for selecting respondents included:

- Data across all three states;
- Data across all three sectors;
- Data covering challenges, capacity gaps, and an overview of partner specialisations.

On the basis of the information available about status of implementation among partners, while also using the criteria for coverage of all states and all sectors, the following were selected for individual interviews:

- Ibiteinye International Farms Limited – Rivers – Aquaculture
- Start Hub Technology – Akwa Ibom – ICT
- Kiara de-luke Academy – Abia – Construction
- Nettops – Rivers – ICT
- Keeping It Real Foundation – Rivers – ICT (as PWD specialist)

Selection of partners for the three case studies followed a different procedure. However, since data collection for these also included interviews with partner staff, these were also available to MTE analysis and included:

- Doctor Fish Agricultural Consult – Akwa Ibom – Aquaculture
- Clinton Innovation Center– Abia – ICT/ solar
- Entrepreneurship and Innovations / Rivers State University /Est Master Consortium– Rivers – Construction

In summary, 8 of the 13 implementing partners were individually consulted; a further 4 implementing partners and 3 soft skills providers were included in two of the MTE FGDs.

Table 3: Type and number of KIIs and FGDs conducted for MTE

Data collection tool	# of meetings	# of respondents
KIIs with PIND senior staff	3	3
KIIs with NDYEP staff	2	2
Plenary FGD and sector based FGD with all partners	4	15
KIIs with non-case study implementing partners	5	5
KIIs and FDGs with staff from case study partners	3	19
KIIs with government stakeholders	4	4
Total	21	48

Limitations to the study

Application of the evaluation methodology was subject to the following limitations:

- Anticipated field work time was somewhat reduced due to security issues resulting from state-level elections. This meant that although 11 of 13 grantees took part in Focus Group Discussions, only 8 overall were individually interviewed [through combined process of data collection for the MTE and the case studies]. One grantee also could not participate in the FGD due to security concerns related to travel.

  While individual interviews with all implementing partners would have

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strengthened the findings presented here, the evaluation team considers that they nevertheless acquired a relatively representative overview of the issues and progress of grantees.

- While the timing of the evaluation process was optimized for generating learning for moving into the second year of the project, in some dimensions it was not ideal. In particular, some of the construction sector organizations had not completed the first round of training at the time of fieldwork, so it was not possible to gain evidence of employer experience of program-trained interns or of trainees' experience of onward internships or employment. Results reflecting here on these issues therefore represent only the aquaculture and ICT sectors.

- Time pressures for completing the MTE process to support Year 2 also impacted to some degree on the analysis process. Of note, material collected to support the development of case studies has not been fully analyzed at this point. Thus, findings here only lightly reflect this material, which was focused mainly on gaining deeper insight into employer and employee/trainee experiences. However, sufficient light analysis has been conducted on this material to be confident that it does not contradict any of the findings presented here.



Control group during MTR

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Findings

Relevance

Finding 1

After some initial adjustments, the project fits very consistently not only with PIND Foundations' goals and policies, but also with the experience it has accumulated in some key areas over the past eight years. [4]

The project is highly consistent with PIND's overall objectives for peace building and economic development with job creation as a core component of this. It also builds on PIND's experience in aquaculture and its pro-poor, inclusive approach to project design and implementation. The implementation strategy of working through partners with the aim of strengthening them and thus making sustainable contributions to their ongoing work is also consistent with PIND's strategy of acting as a catalyst for other organizations, rather than implementing themselves.

Parts of the project approach draw strongly on PIND's prior work in aquaculture, and more broadly on agricultural value chains. Nevertheless, it also takes this experience into new areas of ICT and construction, and more explicitly targets a specific group of young people between the ages of 16 and 26 as well as taking PIND '*a step further in linking with the specific needs of companies*'.[5]

These 'new' elements for PIND involved some organizational adjustment, as to optimize support for NDYEP it was necessary to shift the youth focused work from its previous community-development context into the broader economic development theme of work. As discussed under Finding 7, making these structural adjustments to the project management has taken some time over the first year.

Finding 2

The project has been carefully designed to address specific economic issues prevalent in each state and to contribute to addressing the youth unemployment issues that state agencies are also directly or indirectly tasked with solving.

Research during inception for the project included a study identifying promising sectors for economic development, and a mapping of state TVET institutions. As such, the project is designed to tailor to the skills gaps of each state; and partnering with organizations thoroughly embedded in the economies of each state offers a strong strategy for further tailoring skills training to sub-sectors requiring particular skills.

State social actor respondents consulted in Akwa Ibom and Rivers recognize the potential of the project to calibrate with the needs of state agencies to support youth employment. In particular in Rivers, there is broader recognition that the project stands to offer an important model for state initiatives to draw on, for example in the 'rewriting the narrative' project in the state which aims to radically change how TVET is carried out by the public sector in Rivers. The project was also recognized as assisting to fulfil one of the functions of the Rivers State Chamber of Commerce, which is to equip young graduates for jobs and internships.

Finding 3

Employers were consulted during the research to lay the basis for the project in order to tailor training to their needs. However, since private sector organizations do not commonly share and/or carry out longer term projections of employee requirements, it has not been possible to tailor the trainings precisely to the numbers and skills they might require.

A number of elements in the project approach have aimed to address the needs of employers for a skilled and job-ready workforce. These include research to identify skill gap areas – which, for example, identified the sub-sectors of plumbing, tiling, and joinery undertaking by implementing partners in the construction sectors. They also included an emphasis on soft skills as part of the training curriculum; a hands-on approach to training which gives young people ample opportunity to apply and practice classroom-acquired theoretical skills; and a strict approach by implementing partners to issues such as trainees' full attendance and timeliness. Respondents consulted are confident that the project is building both technical and soft skills that employers are seeking. According to Aquaculture employer

> *"They have the skill to run a farm comfortably. Two of them have been sent to manage a fish farm in Imo state because of their competence and improved technical skills. They now understand the language of fish. My trainees are more advantaged because they learn how to make money and do business from the beginning".*

In addition, the strategy of selecting a number of implementing partners who are developing businesses and aim to expand their own workforce, combined with a flexible approach by PIND discussed in Finding 14,

4: KIIs 1; 2; 4

5: KII 4

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means that the technical skills included in curricula do meet the direct needs of some employers.

On the other hand, senior respondents in PIND recognise that there remains some information gap in addressing employer needs in the long term, because most private sector organizations in the Niger Delta context are not in the practice of making long term projections to predict workforce requirements in the future; and for those that do, there is as yet no mechanism for sharing these with education agencies and organizations developing youth work readiness.

Finding 4

Meeting the needs of young men and women for skills-based training which gives them real prospects of earning a livelihood in their local areas is at the heart of the project design and objectives. However, some further design adaptations may be necessary for the project to maximize its inclusive approach.

The project is fundamentally innovative in aiming to a) design youth training which is connected to identified skills gaps in economic sectors selected for the potential for growth and which therefore offer real promise as livelihoods options; and b) hard-wiring accountability for trainee employment prospects into project design by including placement targets in the contracts and objectives of partners implementing the training. To this extent, the project has a very good match between its objectives and young people's needs.

In addition, the inclusion of soft skills and a business orientation as core elements of training is enhancing the prospects of trainee's being able to apply new skills in actual business contexts. Evidence collected for case studies suggests that these components are widely and strongly appreciated by the young trainees, and have succeeded in building their self-esteem, equipped them with leadership skills and made them self-motivated.[6] This has also led to their identifying and taking up business opportunities even before training has completed: For example, the trainees who were trained through Start Hub on hardware have started making money by repairing phones and laptops. One of the implementing partners attested to this

> *"one of our trainees also started flying drones and making money from it. He wants to actually go into drone technology because there is a market there with lots of people owning drones now".*

Despite widespread acknowledgement of an 'entitlement' mind-set among young people in the region which is seen as a potential obstacle to the approach, there is evidence from partners that many young people are in fact responsive to an approach which includes accountability to developing real opportunities for them. In the words of another implementing partner,

> *"… the youths themselves are now inviting other youths who are waiting to see when another training will start. Many of them have found out that they do not need a government job that pays only N38,000 a month and that the only thing they need is a little push and they will start their own work".*

According to an ICT intern

> *"during the internship, I have been exposed to more practical experiences. I can now produce mould of anything at the moment. It is quite simple but due to the fact that I didn't know it but the internship has opened my eyes to it".*

On the other hand, all young people are not in the same situations and therefore do not have precisely the same needs. The project's inclusive approach at the design stage is expressed in an overall target for 40% of trainees to constitute a combination of women and PWDs. Little has been explicitly documented about what this might mean for partner approaches – and given the complexity of a) gender segmented labor markets and b) the range of special needs presented by different types of disability, this constitutes something of a gap in project approach.

Nevertheless, as detailed further in Findings 12 and 15, partners have responded with a variety of adaptations to the marketing of training, the networks they are building, and with individualised support strategies to meet these targets. More clarity on objectives for inclusivity targets, and some strategic support to partner learning on these issues would better support promising progress made.

Finding 5

In Rivers state, key state social actors have participated in project design and have a continuing strong interest in its implementation. In Akwa Ibom and Abia states, state social actors have so far been engaged less effectively.[7]

Respondents confirmed that key actors in the Rivers State Government have been involved with the NDYEP right from the design stage. The Ministry of Youth, the Ministry of Science and Technology; the Ministry for Small and Medium Enterprises and the Port Harcourt Chamber of Commerce in Rivers state have all been informed, and at some level been engaged in the project.

6: Case study FGDs: Clintonel; E&I Consortium

7: Based on KIIs 1; 2; 3; 4; 17; 18; 19; 20

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The creation of a 9-member Project Advisory Committee has been a key method for eliciting and sustaining this engagement. This includes representatives from the Abia, Akwa Ibom and Rivers state machinery, and a member from the Port Harcourt Chamber of Commerce which has helped to create linkages with private sector. It also includes membership at the Federal level by a senior member of the National Board for Technical Education, providing a useful perspective on issues of scale up. The participation of government on the project at the beginning has provided useful connections in knowledge and support at the level of identification of potential trainees.

The Ministry of Youth Development and others in Rivers state have also provided some support in implementation through implementing partners, discussed further in Finding 10.

More work needs to be done to secure the support of the other state social actors, particularly in Abia and Akwa Ibom states. The Advisory Group member from Akwa Ibom state has so far not been an active member. In Abia, the Advisory Group member has engaged with the project, and represents a resource for further collaboration. PIND project staff have begun working to get increased engagement / support from state actors in these states.

Efficiency

Finding 6

Despite an overall somewhat pressurized time-frame which has required extension, results in completed trainings and trainee placements have been achieved in a very short time. These are a credit to strong partner organizations and are a promising foundation for ongoing work.

As detailed in Finding 11, results in trainee placements and ongoing opportunities have been achieved much more quickly – effectively in a span of seven months from September 2018 to March 2019 - and at a larger scale, than anticipated at the start of the project. These are good indications of a strong groundwork having been laid for the project, and show promise for producing strong coverage over the coming year.

The keys to these results have been 1) thorough, localized, research to guide project direction and selection decision-making and 2) the establishment of good relationships with a strong group of implementing partners, only one of which – for reasons external to the project – has not been able to complete the first phase activities. Establishing these key foundation stones has required project investment in establishing management and decision-making structures, and in carrying out research and processing the findings of this into decision-making. The returns to this investment have only partially been revealed at this mid-point, but, in being greater than anticipated, show real promise in generating good value. An exponential value will be derived for the project if it can be adequately supported into region-wide scale up, and can generate the tenacity likely required to integrate the approach into state youth development initiatives.

Finding 7:

The management structure which can support NDYEP at an optimum level is now in place and positive relationships have been built to sustain the work into the scale up process. [8]

In the context of an evolving overall funding structure for PIND, the relationship between Ford Foundation and PIND represents a new type of funding relationship, and, as such, required some embedding into previously established management systems. While the 'fit' of NDYEP into PIND's overall mission and programming structure has been clear from the outset – as an economic development program with peacebuilding elements (See Finding 1) – management arrangements that would optimize organizational systems support for the program have evolved over the course of the first year. While the program was seen as something of an 'orphan' within PIND initially, [9] management arrangements finalized in January 2018 have now set the stage for the program to be fully integrated into PIND's overall organizational drivers, and to benefit fully from its organizational strengths and sectoral experience.

Specifically, the appointment of an overall program manager for the Economic Development theme of work, and with oversight of the day-to-day management of NYDEP, offers the opportunity – and has already begun to – strengthen the linkages between NYDEP sector-based implementation work and PIND's previous and current economic development work, particularly in sectors in which PIND has strong experience, such as agriculture in general and for NYDEP, specifically in aquaculture; and in the soft skills and business development work. [10] This development also locates the central management for NYDEP in Warri, rather than in Abuja, therefore more locally to the project implementation sites and with consequent potential for management responsiveness to operational and contextual issues during the preparation for scale up of the project. While certain specific management issues still remain under review – whether, for example, the responsibilities of individuals within the project

8: Based on Annual Report 2017; Interview 1; Interview 2; Interview 5
9: Interview 1
10: See interview DFAC; E and I; Soft skills FGDs

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management team would be better divided by geographic operational area; and whether the different contract status of project team members represents a threat to PIND's reputation as a labor rights supportive employer – some benefits of locally 'in touch' and integrated management are already evident. For instance:

- Partners have been enabled to contact each other for linkages related to but independent of the project, such as DFAC contracting Start Hub for support with developing and Aquaculture services web platform. [11]
- Aquaculture partners have been able to draw on PIND's prior work on aquaculture value chains and technical expertise. [12]
- Most partners have accessed soft skills and business development support for trainees via PIND's prior soft skills training partners, whose curriculum has been developed on the basis of PIND's (and other organizations') prior work. [13]

Finding 8:

While fund disbursement delays have been 'managed', they have been a challenge to effective implementation, causing start delays for PIND and its partners, and ultimately compromised achieving an optimal integration of soft skills components of the training process in some cases. [14]

The greatest challenge to strong and confident implementation has been the overall tight timeline, compounded by delayed fund disbursements which have caused delays and subsequently, in some cases, a 'rushed' process.

While the project formally began in September 2017, the fund instalment for Year 1 from Ford Foundation was eventually received end December 2017. Start-up of initial project activities - consisting primarily of a research process to establish the basis for approaches to implementation in target sectors and key economic factors relevant to program design – was achieved by November/December 2017 in the absence of a specific fund with only minor delay. The research took seven months to completion instead of the scheduled six months, leaving, on the face of it, only two months (July and August 2018) for the training of the target 1000 trainees.

Although the senior management and donors have consistently demonstrated timeline flexibility in response to delays – first extending the project on a no-cost basis until December 2018, and then again until April 2019 – uncertainty around the schedule seems to have resulted in some symptoms of 'rushed' participant selection exercises, and a less than optimal integration of different training components in some cases. For example, one external actor and three partners mentioned insufficient attention and time given to mobilization and orientation of trainees – a factor noted by many as extremely important in the Niger Delta. Partners consistently emphasized the need to address and re-orientate a youth population well embedded in an 'oil-based entitled' mind-set which has for at least two decades been supported by a hand-out development culture and an approach to youth employment which has strongly depended on a 'starter-pack' incentive design. Alongside in some cases insufficient time for mobilization and selection of trainees, the 'rushed' training timeline resulted in insufficient integration and strategic time-placement of the soft skills component into technical training curricula. At least three partners specifically mentioned that the soft skills should have been carried out earlier in the training process to maximize the business orientation of trainees from the outset, and to place the technical skills clearly in the context of how these could be deployed in a business and employer-employee context. [15]

Finding 9:

Some difficulties are evident in aligning business sector and development sector financial management, implementation and monitoring / accountability practices.

A defining feature of NYDEP is that it has partnered, in the main, entrepreneurial, business-oriented organizations and deployed profit-oriented strategies with the objective of contributing to stimulating economic growth in selected sectors, and (indirectly perhaps) to demonstrate 'business thinking' to trainees.

At the same time, the project uses a development sector framework and methodologies to establish accountability both in terms of financial management and for monitoring, reporting and learning. There have been some frictions arising from this confluence. While evidence suggests that these frictions have on the whole been worked through and adequately managed, they have nevertheless constituted challenges, therefore contributing to the multiple factors creating a 'strained' timeline for implementation.

They include:

- A need for business partners to establish financial management procedures according to development sector best practices, such as establishing separate bank accounts for NYDEP funds and assiduous accountability in

11: FGD 20
12: FGD 20
13: FGD 9
14: Based on Interviews 1; 4; 5; 13; 15; 37; FGD 8; FGD 9
15: Start Hub; Ibiteinye; E&I Consortium

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terms of receipting small items and submitting hard copy receipts for monitoring. While establishing these practices clearly offers learning opportunity to partners amounting to organizational strengthening, the challenge of (and time required to) follow these practices in the cash-based informal economies in which they operate should not be underestimated. (e.g. Kiara) [16]

- A need for reporting to be oriented to development sector processes, such as reporting on learning processes and showcasing success stories through a 'development' lens. (e.g. Innovation Start Hub) [17]

Finding 10:

Positive relationships have been built with select key state actors, and some state resources have been provided to the program via partners, but leadership from these stakeholders has not yet been sought. [18]

A nine-member Program Advisory Committee (PAC) was established during the inception period consisting of 6 state government actors in Abia, Akwa Ibom and Rivers states, and at national level, and chaired by senior PIND staff. This group includes at least four actively engaged members who are well informed about the project and express a keen interest in its development and its potential for scale up in liaison with public sector systems.[19] The Advisory Committee met several times during the inception phase of the project, but have not met since the start of training implementation.

In specific cases, state resources have also been made available to the project via implementing partner requests and prior relationships. For example, NETTOPS initially partnered with the Ministry of Youth Development in Rivers state to host the training in their premises – which included drawing on the Ministry's electricity and internet services. The Ministry is also providing certification for the training provided. Another partner, the E&I Consortium, includes the public sector River State University as one of three Consortium members. At least three further partners, based in Abia and Rivers states, drew on state level databases to identify potential trainees.[20] Others have built relationships with relevant ministries in the course of the project (Azure Gold; Start Hub).

Involving state actors – via the Advisory Committee - in design, but not currently in implementation appears to be an implicit strategy to allow 'new' kinds of private-sector oriented youth development models to evolve and become established, while also keeping key state-level individuals informed. One Advisory Committee member noted

> *"One thing we promised PIND was that …they were going to be protected from state encroaching on the program… We were supposed to be at the side-line, watching them".*[21]

The project is, after all, focused on private sector employment, rather than public sector opportunities. It therefore seems appropriate that these actors have been engaged only peripherally – or for specific aspects of trainee identification and monitoring as requested and possible through individual partner organizations - as the partners explore their strategies for connecting their trainees with jobs and other opportunities in the evolving local economies.

There is widespread awareness amongst senior and project management that the task of engaging state actors more systematically will be a key step in the coming year to lay the groundwork for scale and a sustained process – this engagement will indeed be key as the project progresses (See Recommendation 1).

Efficiency

Finding 11

Key targets related to research outputs have been met; those related to youth training and job/internship placement have been comfortably exceeded. Other targets related to uptake of research and youth employment approaches by state governments have not yet been met, as this component is now envisaged for phase two.

Overall, the NDYEP project aims to contribute to addressing youth unemployment in the Niger Delta. The vision of the project is to develop models of youth job readiness and workforce development that offer young people opportunity to secure sustainable jobs or develop enterprises through quality training that equips them with market-tailored skills.

As Table 4 shows, targets for reaching trainees (Indicator 4.1) have been exceeded at 164%, despite the fact that one of the thirteen implementing partners was not able to carry their training program to completion.[22] In addition, insofar as training completion rates indicate successfully improved employment-relevant skills, this target (Indicator 3.1) has been well exceeded at 367%.

16: FGD 12
17: KII 14
18: KII 1; 3; 5; 14; 18; 19; 20
19: KIIs 17; 18; 19; 20
20: Ibiteinye International Farms Limited; Kiara de Luke Academy; Keeping It Real Foundation
21: KII 18
22: Kaiser Foundation or Social Development, working in the construction sector in Rivers state, was unable to continue due to logistical challenges.

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Similarly, while milestone targets were set at 0 for indicators related to post-training placements in internships, apprenticeships; and to waged employment or business start-ups, partner organizations have in fact ensured a total of 691 placements of some type, accounting for 47% of trainees who completed training. This vision is translated into the results framework as follows:

Table 4. Results framework targets and mid-term achievements

Outcome statements and indicators	Target	Results	RAG ratings [23]
Impact: Contribute to the reduction in labor market unemployment rate among youths in the Niger Delta			
Indicator I: Youth unemployment rate	No change	n/a	●
Outcome 1: Research outputs that enable greater understanding of the dynamics of what kind of jobs and skills the industry needs, where those opportunities are located, and the necessary skills pathways published			
Indicator 1.1: Cumulative number of research outputs that are adopted by State governments and federal agencies working in the Niger Delta, educational institutions and the private sector for policy, curriculum and hiring practices	1	1	●
Indicator 1.2: Number of youth employment and skills development initiatives which have based key aspects of their curriculum/approach on insights from NDYEP research report	5	4 – including 3 sector-specific skills development programs and the soft skills training initiative	●
Outcome 2: Piloted models that provide us with pathways for long-term sustained job, self-employment, or entrepreneurship			
Indicator 2.1: Cumulative number of state governments that adopt the model for youth job readiness, workforce development and entrepreneurship that is developed, tested, validated, refined from the project	4	0 – Not yet attempted, but some key relationships in place	●
Indicator 2.2: Published analysis illustrating demonstrable evidence of what works and what does not for young employment creation and entrepreneurship development	4	In process	●
Outcome 3: More effective skills-based training, which enables a closer link between demand for jobs and income generating opportunities and the supply of targeted soft and hard skills development			
Indicator 3.1: Number of 18 to 24-year olds in the three States targeted by NDYEP, demonstrating improved skills (at level two or higher of the NSQF) needed for employment and/or entrepreneurial start-ups that can generate income	400	1,468 completed training, yet to be assessed	●
Indicator 3.2: Number of job-to-job internship, apprenticeship placements	0	233	●
Indicator 3.3: Number of 16 to 26-year olds in the targeted States by NDYEP, who secured *waged* employment or who start an enterprise after completion of (skills development) training	0	458	●
Outcome 4: Equip at least 3,000 youth with the relevant sector specific and soft skills in ICT, construction and agriculture in the target states			
Indicator 4.1: Number of young women and men (aged 16 – 26 years) accessing NDYEP facilitated learning opportunities, across the three target states	1,000	1,637 (including 169 who started but dropped out)	●

23: Specific RAG Criteria defined for the NDYEP project: Green = "Achieved" (i.e. meeting current milestone/target), Amber = "Partially Achieved" (i.e. not quite meeting current milestone/target)", Red = "Not Achieved" (i.e. far off meeting current milestone/target), and Grey = "Too early to measure".

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Sector-wise, as shown in Table 5, about two-thirds of the trainees have been drawn into the ICT sector – reflecting partly that seven of the twelve functioning partnerships work in this sector. The construction sector at present has the most successful record of trainees finding placements of some type, at 67.7%. In the ICT sector, one further implementing partner is on the point of reporting 47 further placements, which would bring the proportion of trainees placed in the ICT sector to almost 50%. [24]

Overall, results in terms of trainee numbers and their employability – in terms of their absorption into work opportunities – shows excellent progress, and completion rate for trainees – or conversion rate from admission to completion - stands at a creditable 89.6%. While the process of building 'models' of developing youth employability in growth-potential sectors is as yet incomplete, the approach displays clear promise for dissemination and scale up.

Table 5. Sector-wise achievements in training and placements

	# of completed trainees	# of trainees in internships / waged employment / start-ups	% trainees in placement
Aquaculture	271	90	33.2
ICT	906	404	44.6
Construction	291	197	67.7

(See Annex 5 for full results data by partner and sector)

On the other hand, targets relating to wider dissemination and uptake of the approach have not been fully met. Uptake of the initial research has made good progress, with 4 (of an anticipated 5) initiatives having based key aspects of their curriculum/approach on insights from the research (Indicator 1.2). Milestone targets for the engagement of the state in take-up / replication of the project through public sector youth engagement initiatives have not been met (Indicator 2.1). This reflects the observation discussed in Finding 10 (EQ 5) that state actors have not yet been fully drawn into the project; and indicates a reorientation of strategy in this regard since project design.

Finding 12:

Informal and formal targets for trainee profiles have made good progress and have stimulated implementing partners to explore, discuss and elaborate methods for responding to this profile of target group. This has meant taking on the challenge of including women in traditionally male dominated sectors and people with disabilities in contexts where they are historically excluded from employment.

In line with data showing disproportionately high levels of youth unemployment in the target states, NDYEP set out to target young men and women, setting the target age range at 16 to 26 years. It also set out to target those who were genuinely unemployed, i.e. no longer in education and not earning income, or low income.

In line with PIND's overall inclusive approach, it also set targets for the inclusion of young women and PWDs combined at 40% of the trainee intake. Informally, it also sought to target young people disadvantaged by the income levels of those they are dependent upon (by virtue of being unemployed), and – for example – by location.

These targets have been partially met, at the same time as presenting implementing partners with a whole range of challenges, discussed below. Table 6 shows that all sectors have struggled with the higher end of the target age range, in fact admitting trainees up to age 29 on the courses. While the aquaculture sector has almost reached the 40% target for inclusion of women, the proportion of women in construction sector courses remains quite low at 21.6%, reflecting strong gender segregation in this sector which is traditionally very male dominated. Despite this context, similar proportions of women have progressed from training programs into placements, signalling a very positive process – although lower proportions of women in aquaculture placements than were trained may signal a need to investigate through what processes women are being 'pushed out' of placements in this sector.

The overall proportion of rural trainees compared to urban – at 21.1% - indicates some attention to this very relevant axis of disadvantage in employment, and an attempt to address it through some partnerships.

24: Cinfores in Rivers state was on the point of starting 27 trainees as interns and 20 in full time employment in April 2019, just after the data collection period for this assignment.

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However, the rural/urban breakdown for two partners has not been made available.[25] It is also of note that this average is carried mainly by the construction sector, which has 64.6% rural trainees, with particularly high proportions in Abia and Rivers states, where 85% and 72% of construction trainees respectively are from rural areas. In Abia state, one partner, the Kiara de-Luke Academy, which has a rural location itself has 85% rural trainees. Excluding this partner, the proportion of rural trainees across all states is only 12.9%.

Some noteworthy attempt has been made to include PWDs in parts of the project: these represent 4.2% of completing trainees, or 65 individuals – an achievement worthy of credit, although more clarity on what the target is would give this achievement better context. However, more than half (7) of the implementing partners have not managed to accommodate any PWDs, and in the construction sector, only 1 PWD has been trained. State-wise, Akwa Ibom state has the broadest accommodation of PWDs across partners, with 20 in aquaculture, 4 in ICT and one in Construction. While Rivers state has overall most PWDs, at 39, this is carried by one partner in the ICT sector – Keeping It Real Foundation (Rivers state), which specialises in working in an inclusive approach with PWDs. Across all states, Keeping It Real Foundation accounts for 39 of the 44 PWDs trained. This suggests that most implementing partners need to work to ensure inclusivity in the selection of trainees in the next phase of the project.

Table 6. Sector-wise achievements of trainee target profiles – March 2019

	Age range of trainees	Proportion of women successfully trained	% of PWD trained	% of rural trainees*	Proportion of women in placements
Aquaculture	16-28	38.0%	7.4%	7.4%	30.0%
ICT	16-29	35.5%	4.9%	6.2%	40.1%
Construction	16-29	21.6%	0.3%	64.6%	20.3%
Overall	**16-29**	**31.7**	**4.2**	**21.1**	**30.1**

* *Data not available for two partners*

Implementing partners identify a number of obstacles to reaching the target profile trainees, as well as a number of ways in which they have tackled these, including:

- **Women**: All three sectors are generally male dominated except for specific sectors within some, such as fish drying and marketing in the aquaculture sector. As a result, applications from women candidates have been difficult to attract. Case study data reveals that a number of partners have made special efforts to do so, for instance with separate, tailored, women-only advertising and some lowering of technical requirements (Clinton); with special support offered to women in Construction; and by fielding applicants with limited technology access – where women are concentrated – into sub-sectors in which more ubiquitous technology can be used (Start Hub).[26]
- **PWDs**: are challenging to reach because:
  - Many do not have phones so are harder to reach with advertising through text or social media.
  - Several training sites have access challenges for the physically disabled (e.g. stairs).
  - PWD support such as sign language interpreters were not budgeted for
  - Required levels of education (e.g. being able to read and write) exclude many PWDs.
  - The target age range combined with the desirability of some level of education is a dual challenge, because when PWDs get access to education is it often at a later age: some implementing partners adjusted to this by raising the age limit for PWDs.
  - Transportation and food costs of training are a particularly significant challenge to PWDs; many are dependent on daily begging for subsistence.

Five implementing partners have managed to accommodate some PWDs, including KIR for whom PWD-friendly approaches were not new. Organizations tackling some of these issues for the first time have 1)

25: Cinfores and ENDIP

26: Start Hub advertised that having a laptop was an advantage, but most women applicants did not have these. Those without laptops (including PWDs and men) were encouraged to go into the Digital Marketing stream, where a smart phone was sufficient. As a result, this stream had about 80% women trainees. Start Hub also supported 3 women with laptops.

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partnered with (church) organizations in contact with PWDs to identify them and learn ways to support them (E.g. DFAC; Ibeteinye; Start Hub); 2) identified sub-sectors in which some kinds of disability can be relatively easily accommodated (e.g. Digital Marketing – Start Hub).

Age group targeting, which specifies young people between age 16 and 26, has also presented a number of challenges. Partners across the board note that candidates falling above the age limit often otherwise fit dimensions of the target profile well. In particular, partners note that older candidates may often display better motivation to succeed, and have more imperative to earn a stable living due to growing family responsibilities. Some proportion of older trainees have been taken on in all three sectors (See Table 6), although qualitative case-study evidence suggests that the issue is felt particularly acutely in aquaculture and ICT.[27] Indeed, in the DFAC project, a number of older trainees were taken on independently of the PIND project to meet demand / awareness generated by the PIND-supported training.

In ICT, evidence suggests that the issue of age limit is compounded / mixed with the issue of the advantages stronger education profiles seem to offer in this sector. Partners have made innovative and noteworthy adjustments to trainings to cater to a lower prior knowledge base in their trainee cohorts; and have also lowered conventional prior knowledge requirements for selection.[28] Nevertheless, they have sometimes struggled with this, and some suggest the issue could be resolved by retaining the age profile but redesigning training to run concurrent with university level study, and including undergraduates in the intake.[29] In construction, too, partners have deliberately adjusted their training methodology, including more video and visual elements, to cater to the lower education base of their trainees. [30]

Data on the average age of trainees compared with the average age of those securing placements does not appear to suggest any particular advantage to older trainees, however, as the average age of trainees placed is slightly lower than the average age of trainees themselves (see Table 7).

Table 7. Average age and age range of trainees and trainees finding placements

		Age range	Average age
Trainees overall	Aquaculture	16 – 29	23.5
	ICT	16 – 29	22.0
	Construction	16 – 29	24.5
Placed trainees	Employment	16 – 29	22.3
	Internship	17 – 29	23.2
	Start-up	16 – 29	22.3

Targeting rural disadvantage: Rural trainees have also been hard to reach, except by one partner which is located in a rural area. The reason commonly cited is that training venues are located most often in urban areas, and in the absence of stipends for transport, this by default excludes most trainees who would have to pay daily transport costs. Some partners have considered identifying alternative training centers in rural areas but have not yet found ways to meet the additional costs that would be associated with this (rent; staff transport etc). It is also likely that monitoring figures are less reliable for this disaggregation than for others, as there are complexities which have not been clearly defined. For example, some trainees classified as urban may in fact be originally rural but are temporarily staying with relatives in the urban area, either in the longer term or specifically to attend the training. Bigger urban centres such as Port Harcourt have peri-urban areas around them which fall strictly in neither category. It seems likely that more clarity on the part of PIND is required to specify what is expected in terms of rural/urban intake; and also, precisely who might be included in each category.

Informally, partner organizations were also targeting the 'right kind' of trainee in their selection processes: trainees who were not expecting handouts; who really wanted to 'do' something; who showed the right kind of initiative and leadership to be able to thrive in the private sector. Many included attempts to identify leadership potential in their selection processes.

Most partners feel they were quite successful in identifying these 'right' kind of candidates – and the willingness of at least seven organizations to take on their trainees as employees or interns is testament to this. The

27: Case studies, DFAC and Clintonel
28: FGD 1; 2; Clintonel case study
29: Nettops
30: E&I Consortium case study

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trainee dropout rate is also low at 10.4% - although this at the same time indicates there may be scope for further refining of selection processes. A number of these drop outs are accounted for by a challenge during selection affecting at least 6 partners, mainly in the ICT sector: at the time of the first-round selections, Universities in the region were on strike. Therefore, organizations received a number of applications from individuals who were technically unemployed and not in school at the time, but who returned to university when the strike ended. One partner noted that in the absence of a method for verifying whether applicants are enrolled in university, and given the likelihood of future strikes, this issue remains an ongoing threat. This situation, combined with insights on education levels discussed briefly under Finding 13, suggest some refining of the desired trainee profile, at least for particular (sub) sectors, may be helpful.

Finding 13:

The project is showing strong results in equipping beneficiaries with market-ready technical and employability skills, and in guiding them to further opportunities. Employers are also starting to benefit from the approach. However, beneficiaries do not all have the same needs; some tweaking of selection and the provision of guidance may help nuance parts of the project to better support particular types of beneficiaries.

As results data shows, the project has been remarkably effective in responding to the overall need of beneficiaries to move into positions of employability. Trainees completing training are equipped with new technical skills in areas in which there are growing local markets; and nearly 50% of them have found placements in internships (233 placements), waged employment (251 placements) or start-up businesses (207 placements). State-wise, Akwa Ibom state has the greatest percentage of start-ups (60%), followed by Abia state with 27% and Rivers state, 13%, while Abia state has a greater emphasis on employment (53% of those employed) and internships (37.8% of interns). In contrast, 36% of those employed are in Rivers and only 11% in Akwa Ibom. Of interns, 35.6% are in Akwa Ibom and 26.6% in Rivers state. Three training graduates noted during the FGDs:

> *"Sooo much has changed because the skills I have acquired are in my brain and no one can take it out. I knew nothing about aquaculture before I came but now, I can answer questions in it… I have also learnt how to be independent without depending much on my Aunty. I am able to take care of my little needs which I couldn't do before".*

– An Aquaculture intern

> *"After my internship, if the company decides to employ me, I will stay back and work. …If I have this skill in aquaculture, it will help me in life, and I will be able to start my own hatchery and farm. My hope is that if I get employed, I will focus on how to save and source for funds to start up [my own business]".*

– Another Aquaculture intern

> *"I am confident I would be able to run it [the start-up enterprise] successfully. I have learnt and now know the tips of how successful business people have made it. Once you fit your business into business model canvas and work hard towards it, you will be successful".*

– An ICT incubated start-up member

Regarding meeting the needs of employers as beneficiaries of the project, while signs are promising, it is early at this stage to judge whether their needs are being fully met. This is in part because while some employers have recruited program graduates in all sectors, and interviews suggest they are happy with the skills and orientation of the trainees, numbers are currently quite small, and employer-employee relationships have not been in place very long. In addition, future needs of employers are currently difficult to assess, as the project has found little evidence of the kind of business projections which might identify these needs.[31] However, an employer of ICT intern noted that

> *"this NDYEP training is the best so far…. The youth empowerment trainings I know do not push their trainees in internship. However, some of them are given some monies to start off on their own without anyone to mentor them".*

It is worth noting also that the category of 'placements' covers three types of onwards opportunities for trainees which each have different implications for stability and long-term prospects. Of the 691 trainees in some kind of placement, 34 % are interns; 36% are in employment and 30% are in 'start ups' (see Annex 5). Clearly, interns do not have the same security or prospects as employees; trainees engaged in start-ups include those starting small businesses on their own as well as those being 'incubated' by partners, with sometimes quite significant levels of support. It is too soon to discern, at this stage, the prospects of forging successful livelihoods for each of these groups in the long term, and therefore to draw strong conclusions on the success of their skills acquisition pathways. It will be important for the project to continue to disaggregate these categories and track the trainees after they complete internships and start-up incubation periods to gain full insight into the success of the trainings.

Research for the case studies also reveals the range of skills sets being developed by partners, linking to various

31: KII 3; 5

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sub-sectors of the broader sector economy. A sample list of these is presented in Table 8. It is probably that each of these sub-sectors presents somewhat different challenges / facilitation for both employability (which depends on the opportunities in the sub-sector) and for inclusion of women (which depends of prior male dominance in the sub-sector) and PWDs (which depends on which physical abilities are essential in the sub-sector).

Table 8. Examples of sub-sectors addressed by partners, requiring specific skills sets

Aquaculture (and associated value chain)	Fish breeding and hatching Fish raising – fingerlings and juveniles Fish processing: drying and smoking Fish marketing
ICT	Computer aided design (CAD) Computer aided manufacturing (CAM) Solar technology installation and maintenance Digital marketing/entrepreneurship Software development Coding Web development Database administration Graphic design Video editing Computer hardware engineering Games development Animation Mobile phone repair and assembly
Construction	Tiling Plumbing Joinery/Furniture Floor installation Iron bending/rebaring Wall and ceiling finishing Construction materials trading

Nevertheless, the target of 50% of trainees gaining one type of placements is both ambitious and – by current experience - clearly achievable. However, it begs the question of what happens to the other 50% of trainees in terms of later opportunities for application of skills acquired. Trainees are captured by the monitoring framework who are a) employed within a short period following the training b) involved in internships or employment with the implementing partner, or brokered by the implementing partner; and c) part of incubation initiatives by implementing partners to support new businesses. Other trainees cannot, with current tracking frameworks, be part of any assessment of how far the project has responded to needs.

Second, some trainees have clearly struggled to fit within the framework / training package offered. One key informant noted

> *"We are not meeting all of their needs. The people who come for the training lack some basic things in life which affects their self-esteem, for instance basic tools that are required for the training".*

While implementing partners are well aware of the risks of playing into a 'handout' mind-set; and of their own interests in nurturing young people who are willing to strive, plan, and take initiative in order to succeed, they are also nearly unanimous in stating that for different types of trainees, more support is needed, including – variously in different circumstances - material support

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for training-relevant tools; food and transportation stipends for the duration of the training; and start-up support following the training. Some strategic thinking on the tension between maintaining a no-frills approach and the desire to maintain a gender and disabilities inclusive approach, and to reach rural young people, may be required.

Issues brought forward by grantees include:

- Many PWDs need additional support to be able to attend training, because for many, their daily subsistence is precarious. This might include transport and food provision. Some may also need basic support to be able to start up small businesses of a manageable nature on completion of training.
- Additional small incentives – such as start-up support, or provision of basic tools - for women applying for training in non-traditional work sectors could jump-start the process of creating 'success stories' and role models, which would, in turn, encourage other women to move into these sectors. This might include women entering the construction industry; the solar technology sector which had very low female trainee rates;[32] and/or women trying to enter male-dominated sub-sectors of ICT, such as programming; a particular challenge in this sector is that young women are less likely than young men to own laptops.
- Targeting rural trainees may require transport or urban accommodation allowances to make attendance possible or support to partners re-locating (some rounds of) training to rural areas / designing a 'mobile' training modality which can be moved closer to a rural catchment.
- For particular (sub) sectors in which higher levels of education are likely to be a significant asset in business success / employment prospects – such as parts of the ICT sector – adjustments could be made to EITHER the provision that trainees should be out of education (i.e. training schedules could be adapted to run alongside education); OR the age range should be modified to include older candidates who have graduated but have remained unemployed.[33]

Some partner organizations have addressed these issues by offering help to particular trainees during training, such as with transportation assistance and hostel accommodation (Kiara-de Luke, which is an out-of-town organization; E&I for rural participants); a few laptops to those with particular need (Start Hub).

Finding 14:

The results framework provides good support for the tracking of targeted results at this pilot stage of the project, although some adaptations could crystallize a focus on the project's objectives for inclusiveness. It is already anticipated that the framework will need modification to support the later scale-up process.

The results framework includes a good mix of quantitative and qualitative indicators tracking outputs in terms of numbers trained and placed as well as tentative qualitative indicators designed to measure outcomes in terms of training quality and youth employability, which will need to be finalized in the coming months. The M&E plan also includes a provision for developing documentation and analysis of parts of this experimental journey through case studies to support learning and dissemination of results. The budget for MEL is anticipated at 35%, which is appropriate for a pilot project from which learning will need to be systematically extracted in order to drive scale-up. Spending on MEL currently stands at 22% of the budget, reflecting that learning is now on the point of being available for documentation.

As discussed in Finding 10, milestones set in the results framework have not all correctly anticipated the 'order of play' of the project – and do, therefore, indicate an adaptive approach through which scale-up will be better supported. Specifically, the framework reflects an expectation that State involvement and 'replication' would begin earlier in the process, and that the process of job-linking/ internships would take place at a later stage (first targets for this are placed at the end of phase 2 or Year 2). In the event, implementation has adapted to emerging understanding that:

- It was important to establish the accountability of implementing partners to the onward employment / internship process early in the process, as a core part of the 'models' being developed, and to avoid 'losing' trainees as training closed.
- It became apparent that replication by state systems of the models would require a fully formed and informed situation. In other words, 'models' needed to be complete and analysed before presenting evidence concerning these approaches to state actors in an advocacy form. Therefore, this component has been more or less 'on hold' until the training-employment linkages have been made and evidence gathered.

32: Clintonel case study
33: Clintonel case study; Start Hub

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Elements of the framework that might benefit from elaboration, either by inclusion in the framework or through collaborative learning initiatives, include that:

- Including gender and PWD inclusion targets in the framework would clarify and crystallize the project's objectives in this dimension, and help define the level of priority accorded to these.
- Learning could be extracted from the project by the inclusion of quantitative or qualitative tools for tracking / following up those trainees who are not absorbed into program-linked placements: currently, no information will be available to the project on the situation of these trainees. In addition, as mentioned above, to extract robust evidence on the pathway from training into secure employability / livelihood, it will be necessary to monitor the pathways taken by trainees after they complete internships, or the start-up incubation periods offered by some implementing partners.
- Tracking of trainee profile and progress by sub-sector would yield learning about the quality of training, economic health of the sub-sector, and amenability of the sub-sector to women and PWDs.
- The framework does not currently capture the full ambition of the project in terms of strengthening or stimulating the local economies in the three selected sectors. Various possible indicators could be considered to address this gap, such as including, where data is available, state-level GDP related to the specific sectors; sector-specific changes such as the number of functioning fish farms in Akwa Ibom; or the turnover of business sector partners. However, retrospective baselines would need to be established to support these.

Finding 15:

A philosophy of working to the strengths of implementing partners; an emphasis on hands-on, practical inclusive training methodologies; and establishing the accountability of partners to the onward progression of trainees are key features of the effectiveness of the NDYEP approach. These constitute key elements of an evolving 'model' for addressing youth unemployment in the region.

Focus Group Discussion using an Outcome Tree participatory methodology with all but two implementing partners, and in-depth interviews with 6 of the 12 functioning partners explored the foundations and pathways that have produced results among grantees. These suggest the following common features which are driving success:

I. Working to strengths of carefully selected, committed partners

Selection of partners was carried out carefully, and included a range of types of organizations, thus able to evolve and demonstrate different kinds of pathways to successful youth employability. All selected organizations were previously well embedded in their respective sectors in terms of technical expertise and relationships with other organizations. All also had strong prior experience either in training, or as business ventures, or both. Types of organization included relatively well-established private sector organizations with strong experience in training; NGOs with specialist outreach; and businesses with core interests in establishing a pool of trainees to support their own needs and those of linked enterprise. A number of organizations also specified a broad vision of contributing to the development of Nigeria's youth, to which they felt PIND and the NYDEP project was well aligned.

Aside from specifying trainee profiles and establishing some conditions for quality training, PIND project management has been flexible concerning training content, approach, and the relationships built by grantees to support training. Rather, PIND has aimed to offer tailored support to organizations as their approaches have evolved. This has allowed the organizations to work to their strengths and evolve training-to-employment models tailored to the particular local economy in which their organization is embedded, and, in the cases of the construction and ICT sectors, to their own sub-fields of expertise (e.g. Computer Aided Design and Modelling as sub-sectors of ICT; Joinery and tiling as sub-sectors of construction). In general, this has involved using recognised curricula for the specific (sub) sector, adapting methodologies for the prior education level of trainees, and in some cases for integrating opportunities for soft-skills development, and holding assessment tests and practical activities to demonstrate skills transfer on completion of the training. For example, the aquaculture training was based on the NAEC Curriculum and used certified trainers and PIND's Master Aquaculture Service Providers. For ICT training, most curricula used are global online competence-based programs. For Construction, Kiara Academy is certified by NBTE and using the National Skills Acquisition Framework Certified Assessors for the project.

II. Hands-on / on-the-job pedagogical approaches

As working businesses, a number of organizations, with

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examples in each of the three sectors (Kiara de Luke (construction); Ibeteinye Farms (aquaculture); Clintonel; Start Hub; Innovation Growth Hub; Cinfores (ICT)), have easily been able to offer trainees hands-on experience as part of the training, in pedagogical approaches which combine theoretical and practical experience. In addition, this training context exposes trainees to functioning business processes, as an added dimension of their training. Others (e.g. DFAC; E&I Consortium) have been encouraged and able to include hands-on parts or concurrent processes through the relationships they have built with other organizations that can offer this experience. These approaches have supported both technical and employability skills, encouraging trainees to apply their skills both within and beyond the training context. For example, trainees interviewed for case studies had taken up voluntary projects such as designing and fixing the plumbing for a water feature on the University campus (E&I); and taking side jobs during training in order to be able to pay for the internet data packages required for training (Start Hub).

Some organizations have also built employability/soft skills development into their technical training methodologies: Clintonel, for example, introduced a product design challenge as part of their training, in which teams of trainees were asked to come up with solutions that will solve local problems.

III. Accountability of grantees to onward progress of trainees – resulting in individualized and flexible support during training and post training.

A key feature of the NYDEP approach which distinguishes it from other youth training initiatives, has been establishing accountability for the outcomes of training – in terms of employability of trainees – at the level of the training organization, with support from the broader project. This has been achieved through clarifying the importance of the outcomes of training from the outset, but also by writing targets for placements into grantee contracts, as well as by selecting partners who are motivated by the logic of the project.

Alongside the flexibility characteristic of PIND's support to partners, grantees have been able to develop a range of strategies for either linking them with employment / business opportunities, or for offering them onward support, often in quite individualized ways.

For example, some organizations have offered partial 'start up' opportunities: in aquaculture, both Ibitenye and DFAC offer trainees fingerlings during training as part of the 'practical, hands-on approach'. Following training, DFAC has organized some into clusters and brokered support for them in the form of group ponds for group-based fish rearing. Ibeteinye has facilitated free fish drying facilities for alumni trainees, and some are offered a reduced price from the farm for fish that they then market. In ICT and Construction, some organizations recognize that the training is insufficient for some types of opportunities and have organized a one-year fellowship program (Start Hub) and longer apprenticeships in their factory (Kiara de Luke). Others, as direct inputs into accommodating post-training trainee progress, have arranged to provide incubation to individuals (Nettops) and to group based start-ups (Clintonel).

Sustainability

Finding 16

Several partners are in a position to carry key aspects of the training approach forwards beyond the project boundaries; however, few will be able to continue targeting the most disadvantaged young people, who cannot pay for training, without project support.

A number of implementing partners feel there are good prospects for key components of the project being sustained in the long term. These include training curricula that have been tailored to a youth cohort; are less demanding than previous curricula in terms of prior technical knowledge requirements; and are tailored to key promising economic sectors. Most also have integrated hands-on training components, key to meeting employer needs, and all have now been tested through the first batch of trainees. As noted by an aquaculture implementing partner,

> *"the NDYEP project helped us to build and develop a standard curriculum for our trainings. The NDYEP had a deeper content which was different from ours. Also, the soft skills section was an interesting addition. It motivated and helped people build their leadership, personal development and esteem. Also, it helped us manage youth from diverse background by changing their mindset and re-orientating them".*

Indeed, some partners have already taken on new cohorts, or extended groups in the first cohort independently of PIND funding – for instance, DFAC trained a batch of participants who exceeded the targeted age range. Continuing to train independently of PIND is partly stimulated by the fact that partners engaged in growing business have identified a need for more manpower within their own work, and viewed the NDYEP fund as seed funding to grow their businesses as a route to ultimately reducing unemployment in the Niger Delta.

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At least two partners, however, identify that while elements of training are likely to continue, it will not be possible to continue offering the training to the same youth profile, and in the target age group, as this profile is unlikely to be able to contribute payment for training.

Finding 17

It is too early to assess the sustainability of trainee transitions into placements, although there are positive signs that both trainees and employers are happy with the new opportunities provided by the project.

The project does not yet have information on the sustainability of the transitions a number of young people have made from training into placements: in almost all cases, these transitions have taken place recently and while many examples are available of satisfied ex-trainees and employers, these have not yet stood the test of time. Case study data, for example, documents motivated and satisfied young people in start-ups supported by Clintonel and employees trained through DFAC's aquaculture training alongside employers in aquaculture an ICT who are very positive about results so far. But in all cases, these transitions have taken place relatively recently.

Case study data also provides snapshots of a number of young people finding ways to earn income alongside training or immediately after training – for instance through fixing mobile phones; through taking on small tasks for the partner (Start Hub), and through taking on small, local, plumbing jobs (E&I). Again, these are very recent develops and the case for their sustainability cannot yet be made. It will be important for NDYEP to include a process for following up on the effects and duration of these initiatives at a later date.

Finding 18

The critical step in sustainability will be engaging state actors, and scaling up the engagement of private sector actors, during the next phase of the project. Most respondents feel that the project duration is most likely too short to fully embed these next steps, particularly in recognition of the time required to work closely with government systems.

ndents enthusiastically agree that project targets related to training and placements are likely to be met or mostly met, and perhaps even exceeded. However, several also express that establishing sustainability of the project by embedding it in state and private sector systems will take more time than is currently available to the project. There is recognition that while working directly through state sector TVET institutions in the first place might have ensured built-in sustainability for the approach, the relatively quick results achieved to date – and on which donor relations and frameworks at least partially depend – could not have been achieved through this route.

In addition, correctly coordinating demand for and supply of a skilled workforce for long term results – essentially involving the quite substantive task of building and strengthening relationships between key private sector actors and state youth training institutions across all the states - is unlikely to be fully achieved in the next year.

Partners are aware that they are, in part, attempting a change in a socially normal attitude among young people, who are at the outset attracted to government rather than private sector jobs; are not attracted to agriculture as a viable sector; and often have an 'entitled mind-set'. This is expressed at a minimum in an expectation of incentives for attending training, met and produced historically in a training incentives culture which has distorted the role and effectiveness of training as an effective route to supporting economic development in the Niger Delta. While the current partners do appear to have been largely successful in identifying promising individuals for training and orientating them towards graft, leadership and enterprise, promoting these 'new' values in a widespread and enduring manner is likely to require a long-term effort.

Finding 19

In the long term, financing a transition from the pilot stage into a scaled-up state-level intervention threatens to be a central bottleneck unless a clear strategy is developed. Other potential bottlenecks related to the details of conditions in economic sectors, which may warrant observation and documentation by NDYEP.

While the preceding findings suggest some areas for attention in resolving immediate, relatively minor issues for the program, the issue of financing a scaled-up version of the intervention is a critical issue to develop a strategy for in the coming year. Respondents mentioned various options to explore, including equity financing; State contributions; private sector engagement: but there has as yet not been opportunity to bring this thinking together into a coherent and well-coordinated plan.

Some evidence from this evaluation also suggests that more detailed analysis of the economic sectors and sub-sectors in which partners are working may be necessary to identify sector-based bottlenecks as they evolve, in order to support partners in developing responses. As players embedded in these sectors, partners are often aware of issues but are unable to document and/or not facilitated to communicate these. For example, DFAC

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case study respondents in the aquaculture sector in Akwa Ibom mentioned the high cost of fish feed in the state as a potential barrier to expansion of the sector. Similarly, the issue of standardizing and certified training for niche / new sub-sectors across the region will need to be addressed to ensure a smooth scale up process in which trainee/employee mobility across states is fully accommodated. For instance, respondents in the case study of Clintonel note that Computer Aided Modelling does not have a standardized package of associated skills, which may prove an obstacle for the onward success of trainees of the project, unless NDYEP can support addressing this lack.



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Lessons Learned



Practical Installation of Solar Panel

Key lessons learned during implementation of NDYEP at this mid-term point are embedded in the Findings, above. They include that:

Inclusion

- An inclusive approach presents complexity to implementing partners, which has required exploring and adapting approaches to advertising and selection, and the adaptation of curricula and teaching methodologies. Partners have accumulated learning on these issues which could be used to support the ongoing project, especially in the work with new partners. If this learning is sufficiently collated and documented, it could also support dissemination of the NDYEP approach, and therefore scale-up.
- At the same time, partners have identified challenges to reaching the targeted profile which warrant response from the ongoing design of the project, including that targeted additional support may be needed to reach rural trainees, and to equip those with low technology access (especially women and PWDs) to benefit from training in specific sub-sectors (e.g. software development).
- This suggests a need for more clarity on PINDs expectation of the target profile, perhaps nuanced to specific sub-sectors, and select strategies to support inclusion in challenging dimensions.

Soft skills

- It is likely that most benefit will be derived from soft skills training if these are treated as a framework for the technical training, and

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therefore integrated more deliberately with other training components. This means using soft skills development and business orientation as part of initial trainee orientation, and integrating opportunities for soft skills application to the technical material throughout the training period. Documenting partner learning on optimizing soft skills integration, as well as other adaptations made to standard curricula in order to accommodate the desired trainee profile will also be an important support for scale up.

Onward placements

- There are distinctions between types of onward placements for trainees which are relevant to the project's indicators for success. These include that internships and incubated start-up positions are 'interim' positions, potentially leading to later employment and/or viable business enterprises. Acknowledging these distinctions would better prepare project management to prepare support processes for the further transitions; as well as better equip the monitoring and evaluation system to track relevant processes and results.

Sub-sectors

- It is also evident that there are pertinent distinctions between types of skills and sub-sectors being addressed within each formal sector targeted by NDYEP. Further analysis of these in relation to student profile, the profile of those achieving placements, and understanding of the economic health of these sub-sectors in each state would deepen learning from the program.

Key supportive factors

- It has been important to clearly establish the accountability of implementing partners to the onward employment / internship process early in the process, as a core part of the 'models' being developed. On the other hand, a flexible approach to the precise pathways taken by partners to selection, training, and building onward linkages to placements has been key in allowing them to work to their strengths and evolve their approaches to adapt to NDYEP's objectives. Innovations have included developing 'interim' opportunities – including internships within the partner organizations, incubation for start-ups, and in-house apprenticeships which acknowledge that the training does not by itself complete the journey to employment/ livelihood security, and that additional steps are needed. In addition, developing hands-on methodologies, for both soft and technical skills application, is a promising area in which partners have made progress. It will be important to support and document these evolving processes so that the full shape of pathways to employment is fully understood.

Maximizing learning

- Important learning could be extracted from the project by the inclusion of quantitative or qualitative tools for tracking / following up those trainees who are not absorbed into program-linked placements: currently, no information will be available to the project on the situation of these trainees, although they could include both negative and positive stories.
- Tracking of trainee profile and progress by sub-sector would yield learning about the quality of training, economic health of the sub-sector, and amenability of the sub-sector to women and PWDs.

The results framework does not currently capture the full ambition of the project in terms of strengthening or stimulating the local economies in the three selected sectors, although this is an important impact-level ambition of the project. Understanding these changes is likely to require qualitative research with organizations located in the economies; and could be supported by quantitative indicators such as state-level GDP related to the specific sectors; sector-specific changes such as the number of functioning fish farms in Akwa Ibom; or the turnover of business sector partners.

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Conclusions

Relevance

The project demonstrates a careful and promising design, aiming to meet real and felt needs of employers, young people and state agencies [Findings 2, 3, 4], as well as – after some initial adjustments – calibrating with PIND's wider objectives and benefiting from its prior experience [Findings 1, 7]. It has built good relationships with strong partners, who have also laid good foundations in their relationships to carry their economic sectors forward, and have found ways to individualize support to their trainees within these ecosystems [Findings 11, 15].

The project now needs to fill the gaps in these foundations by strengthening and extending relationships with state actors. While promising steps have been taken in this in Rivers state, attention needs to be paid to advocacy on behalf of the project particularly in Abia and Akwa Ibom states [Finding 5]. In addition, while positive steps have been taken to identify the needs of and involve core private sector actors through implementing partnerships, key aspects of private sector demand and evolution need further identification [Findings 3, 18]. Both state and private sector relationships will be essential to scale up – and in particular, bringing these into communication specifically on the role, opportunities, and strategies available – as demonstrated by the project - for youth employment. In Rivers state, a process is needed to bring state actors from a position of enthusiastic support to one of partial leadership [Finding 10]. A collaboratively process is needed to develop a clear strategy and plan for scale up.

Efficiency

Relatively minor issues related to the positioning of the project within PIND, [Finding 7] and to the alignment of some essentially private sector organizations with development sector accountability frameworks [Finding 9] have now mostly been ironed out. This means that, moving forward, the project can expect to be fully supported by the organizational systems carrying it. While time frame pressures related to less than optimal funds disbursement systems and to a slightly longer than anticipated research / inception process did result in a lack of proper integration of the soft skills components of the training, this has not yet produced evidence of a significantly compromised ongoing broader process of supporting trainees into placements [Findings 6, 8]. With the experience of one full round of training to draw on, it will be relatively easy for partners and PIND to rectify this in the ongoing process.

Effectiveness

The project has produced very strong results in terms of trainees completing training and in supporting ongoing livelihood opportunities of different forms, and through different organizational pathways, for them. These results have been generated in an (in effect) unexpectedly short time frame [Findings 11, 13]. The project also shows very good progress in establishing an inclusive approach, and has pushed partners to consider and adapt to issues surrounding inclusivity. However, some confusion remains. This could be resolved by more strategic thinking on a desirable approach in each sector; clarity about targets; and some strategic support to partners to develop adaptations for accommodating both women in non-traditional work sectors, and different types of PWD [Findings 12, 13]. Formalizing inclusion objectives in the M&E framework at this point could help to provide the required clarity [Finding 14].

Careful selection of partners in a competitive process, and a non-prescriptive approach by PIND to the shape and details of implementation, have paid dividends in capturing the imaginations and commitment of partners [Finding 15]. For several business-oriented partners, the project has strengthened their positions in the sector's ecosystem and enabled them to carry youth employment objectives and results in parallel to (and in support of) their expanding businesses.

The project now needs to cash in on this potential built in the first year. If it can strategically play its hand of demonstration sites, experience gained, and positive relationships built, it is in a good position to expect the start of an exponential multiplier process in the coming year.

Sustainability

While it is too early to assess the durability of the transitions trainees have made into employment and other placements, positive signs of a mutually beneficial process for employers and trainees are promising: ongoing efforts will be needed to verify the positive and negative dimensions of these relationships [Finding 17]. Meanwhile, there are indications that confidence in the value of the newly developed approaches to training will have enduring effects on partner's training methodologies, whatever else happens in the future, although most likely without an explicit effort to target a disadvantaged youth cohort, for resourcing reasons [Finding 16].

However, the project is now at a pivotal moment for sustainability. This can only realistically be assured

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through the deep engagement of state and private sector actors. The question of financial resourcing of a longer-term process establishing institutionalised communication between these actors must now be raised and thrashed out [Findings 18, 19]. It is to develop a clear and bold strategy for this that the project must now turn.



Trainees at plumbing work

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Recommendations

PIND management and NDYEP project staff

Recommendation 1: Focus on and develop a clear strategy for engagement of state actors in committing to and planning for scale up, particularly in Akwa Ibom and Abia states. This should potentially include policy makers associated with ministries engaging with youth development/employment, small and medium businesses, and agriculture; and should also include TVET providers.

The strategy will also need to engage a wider pool of private sector players with understanding of the target sectors, in this process.

Consider identifying 'showcase' projects in each sector which can act as physical demonstration grounds, including accommodating visits from state actors and private sector representatives / potential employers.

NDYEP project staff

Recommendation 2: Clarify selection criteria, if necessary tailored to each partnership, and bearing in mind limitations and / or trainee profiles necessary for success in the sector. Support partners to meet these criteria, including by peer-to-peer partner exchange workshops through which partners can explore strategies for inclusion of PWDs and women used by others, and replicate or adapt these for their own purposes.

In the context of unemployment rates in the Delta that are higher for women than for men, as well as how gender segregation in work sectors forms a core cause of gender inequality in economic terms, consider using this opportunity for a gender transformative approach in the target sectors by raising the proportion of young women targeted to at least 50%, perhaps initially by 'established' partners who already have some strategies in place to approach these targets.

Recommendation 3: In subsequent new rounds of partner selection as the project expands, emphasize and clarify the expected relationship between training and placements to be established by the selected partner, as achieving this accountability has been a key driver of the project's success so far. This includes clarifying the distinctions between placements in internships, employment or incubated start-ups, and defining expectations of the project and from partners in particular concerning trainee progress post-internship/incubation. PIND should consider and clarify strategies which might support these transitions.

Recommendation 4: Set up a peer mentor system between old and new partners in similar sectors so that the full experience of the first phase of implementation can be profited from. Arrange exposure visits to existing partners as part of this learning exercise process.

Partner organizations and PIND project staff

Recommendation 5: Integrate the soft skills component of the training more consistently into earlier parts of the technical training period; or at the beginning – either through organizing training schedules so that external soft skills experts can be accommodated earlier in training, or for organizations using their own soft skills resources, by ensuring through curriculum review that these are scheduled as part of orientation and introductory stages.

Encourage partners also to integrate soft skills practice into their technical curriculum delivery methodologies – such as by integrating team work exercises; opportunities for trainees to make presentations; opportunities to engage in discussion; and by carrying out activity / project planning exercises which require understanding of technical content as well as soft skills application.

Recommendation 6: Consider tailoring the details of training support for organizations targeting youth with particular disadvantages, including women moving into male-dominated (sub) sectors; PWDs, and trainees located in rural areas distant from training locations.

Monitoring, Evaluation and Learning

Recommendation 7: Develop a system for monitoring results which continues to track first round alumni as they progress through business incubation, apprenticeships and internships into post-incubation positions. Disaggregate this monitoring by sub-sector, as well as by age, gender and rural/urban location as is currently the case. This would support the development of further long-term evidence, potentially to support the continued advocacy for this approach. Consider including tools to track a sub-set of trainees who move into situations not tracked by the current results framework via program-linked placement positions.

Recommendation 8: To contribute to learning across the project, and to support inclusive scale up, develop case studies on partner experience in various aspects of the inclusive approach, including drawing young women

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trainees in non-traditional sectors; and on including PWDs (of different types). Thematic case studies elaborating the distinct features of the different placement pathways and transitions beyond these would also contribute to learning: i.e. training wage employment; training internship / apprenticeship; training independent business start-up.

Recommendation 9: Consider developing a moderately detailed theory of change on the anticipated involvement and roles of stakeholders in the scale up process. This would be helpful both for use as a programming tools supporting ongoing strategic implementation decisions (activity prioritization) as well as a tool to support learning through the final evaluation process.



Floor finishing practical training



Kirsty Milward with some Construction trainees

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Annex 1
List of respondents

Respondents	Organization	Position	Gender
PIND Staff			
Dr. Dara Akala	PIND Foundation	Executive Director	Male
Tunji Idowu	PIND Foundation	Deputy Executive Director	Male
Emeka Nwankwo	PIND Foundation	Manager, Planning & Evaluation	Male
Emeka Ile	PIND Foundation	Project Manager, Niger Delta Youth Employment Pathways Project	Male
Patrick Ekpe	PIND Foundation	Project Advisor, Niger Delta Youth Employment Pathways Project	Male
Implementing partners			
Eno George	Ibitienye Integrated Farm	Admin Manager	Female
Bereni Fiberesima	Netopps	Founder/Executive Director	Male
Hanson Johnson	Start Innovation Hub Technology	Founder/CEO	Male
Chigozirim Uche	Kiara De-Luke Academy	Project Coordinator	Female
Bitebo Gogo	Keeping It Real Foundation	CEO	Female
Rebecca Asemota	Keeping It Real Foundation	Program Officer	Female
Fabian Emmanuel	Azure Gold	Managing Coordinator	Male
Hope Emmanson	Dr. Fish Agric. Consult	Program Officer	Male
Israel Yusuf	Dr. Fish Agric. Consult	Managing Director	Male
Emmanuel I. Okon	Dr. Fish Agric. Consult	Not specified	Male
Bereni D. Fiberesima	Netopps	Founder/Executive Director	Male
Chris Amuta	E & I Centre	Director, Sales & Business Development	Male
Hanson Johnson	Start Hub	Founder/CEO	Male
Kingsley Atang	Youth Alive Foundation	Programs Lead and Public Relations/Outreach Coordinator	Male
Chinagozi Daniel	Innovation Growth Hub	Founder/CEO	Male
Eno George	Ibiteinye Integrated Farms Limited	Admin Manager	Female
Chigozirim Uche	Kiara De-Luke Academy	Project Coordinator	Female
Tochukwu Chukwueke	Clintonel Innovation Centre (CIC)	Founder	Male
Blessing Johnson Nwankwe	Cinfores Limited	General Manager, Business Development Division	Male
Tarinyu Beniwari	Wider Perspectives Limited	Team Lead, human Capital Unit	Male
Anthony Chovwen	Living Earth Nigeria Foundation	Managing Director	Male

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Advisory Group			
Dr Nkwachukwu Agomoh	Abia State Ministry of Small and Medium Enterprises Development	Permanent Secretary	Male
Erasmus Chukwunda	Port-Harcourt Chamber of Commerce, Industry Mines & Agriculture	Director General	Male
Ruhuoma Kejeh	Rivers State Ministry of Youth Development	Director, Youth Mobilization	Female
Suleiman M Yusuf	National Board for Technical Education	Director	Male

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Annex 2
List of documents reviewed

1. PIND 2017 Annual Report
2. DAI Youth Employment Assessment Report
3. Niger Delta Youth Employment Pathways (NDYEP) Project Proposal
4. Niger Delta Youth Employment Pathways (NDYEP) Model Description
5. Niger Delta Youth Employment Pathways (NDYEP) Program Design Slides
6. 2018 in Brief - NDYEP
7. NDYEP 2018 Report
8. Progress Reports from Implementing Partners, March 2019

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Annex 3
Field visit schedule

Text in GREEN = mainly MTE focused
Text in PURPLE = mainly case study focused

Monday 11 April	Abuja	Individual KIIs with PIND staff – Tunji Idowu
Tuesday 12 April	Abuja and by Skype	– Emeka Ile – Patrick Ekpe – Emeka Nwankwo KII with Keeping It Real Foundation
Wednesday 13 April		*Travel to Uyo, Akwa Ibom*
Thursday 14 April	Uyo, Akwa Ibom	FGD with NDYEP implementing partners FGD with partners that have completed first set of training FGD with ICT sector-based implementing partners FGD with aquaculture and construction sectors-based implementing partners FGD with soft skills training providers
Friday 15 April	Uyo, Akwa Ibom	KIIs with representatives of non-case study implementing partners: – Keeping It Real Foundation – Netopps – Start Innovation Hub Technology – Kiara De-Luke Academy
	Oron, Akwa Ibom	FGD with staff of DFAC and its partner FGD with trainees Site visit to training venue and cluster ponds
Saturday 16 April	Onna, Akwa Ibom	Case study KII with Employer (Ibom Integrated Farms) KII with trainee on internship KII with trainee on internship
	Uyo, Akwa Ibom	KII with Potential employer KII with potential employer Site visit to potential employer's farm FGD with PWD Trainees Site visit to Daughters of Charity fish rearing business with PWDs
Sunday 17 April		*Travel to Abia*

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Monday 18 April	Aba, Abia	KII with Advisory Group member
		FGD with Trainees
		KII with Intern (Prosper)
		KII with Start-up (Favour)
		KII with Start-up (Victor James)
		KII with Start-up
		KII with Start-up
		FGD with Control Group
		FGD – Clintonel staff
Tuesday 19 April	Aba, Abia & Port Harcourt, Rivers	KII with an Employer (Solar)
		KII with an Employer
		FGD with E&I staff
		FGD with Plumbing Trainees
		FGD with Tiling Trainees
		FGD with Control Group
Wednesday 20 April	Port Harcourt, Rivers & Abuja	KII with Trainees at RSU
		KII with Plumbing Trainee
		KII with Tiling Trainee
		KII with Trainee
		FGD with Potential employers
		KII with Potential employers
		KII with Rivers State University
		Dara Akala (Abuja)
		KII with Advisory Group member (Abuja)
Thursday 21 April	Port Harcourt, Rivers	KII with Advisory Group member
Sunday 24 April	Port Harcourt, Rivers	KII with Advisory Group member

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Annex 4
FGD and KII checklists

FGD 1: MTR – Partner organizations in collective

In advance: Please request partners to:

1) Prepare a two-minute presentation on 'Your model for promoting youth employability though NDYEP' – may include: What your organization did before? How did you select participants? What are the important features of the training you conducted? Who else have you engaged with in designing or implementing the training? How have you made contact with / approached employers?

2) Bring the following data, where possible, to share with the Evaluation Team:

- Any project monitoring / training reports.
- Overview of training curriculum, including soft skills components + e.gs of soft skills curriculum
- Any 'success stories' of trainees who have done well / unusual stories
- Any data on participant selection / attendance / dropout
- Any documentation on networking with employers
- Any follow up information on post-training journey of alumni trainees
- Any details on type and terms of internship taken up by trainees
- Any training evaluation data by participants

Equipment needs: Flip chart paper; Markers; Post-it in different colours.

Time required: 2 hours

1. Introduction to the evaluation; objectives of the FGD
2. Two-minute presentation on 'Your model for promoting youth employability though NDYEP' – may include: What your organization did before? How did you select participants? What are the important features of the training you conducted? Who else have you engaged with in designing or implementing the training? How have you made contact with / approached employers?
3. Divide into groups on the basis of stage of implementation (Still training; Finished training but not yet placed interns; Finished training and have placed interns / supported trainees into business)
4. Create an Outcome Tree depicting: use different colour for each organization in the group.
    - What experience did your organization have before that helped you to implement the project (**roots**)
    - What have been the key relationships for the NDYEP (**trunk**)?
    - Who has your organization reached out to/connected with to implement your NDYEP project? (**Branches**)
    - What changes can you see as a result of the project for 1) trainees 2) employers 3) your organization 4) anyone else (e.g. other providers / state actors) (**Leaves**)
    - What overall changes can you see in terms of actual employment / business success for trainees (**Fruits)**
    - What parts of the project were difficult or did not work (**fallen branches)**
    - Which parts of the project can your organization sustain (**Seeds / new shoots)**
5. Brief comparison in Plenary of the 3 groups' outcomes.
6. Collection of data by Evaluation Team

FGD 2 (3 separate FGDs in same format): Project partners in sector-based small groups

FGD in discussion format; each participant to answer each question as far as possible

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Key Questions:

The focus is on sector-specific issues / responses

Relevance

1. To what extent are the objectives of NDYEP program consistent with the needs and interest of:

   - o The **young people** that your organization is in touch with? (How far do young people want to work in this sector?)
   - o **Employers** in your sector?

2. How far has NDYEP responded to the needs in your sector? What are the strengths/ weaknesses of the project / PIND in responding to your sector?

Efficiency

3. What have been the particular challenges your organization has faced that are related to the sector?

4. How far have State government actors been involved in the project?

Effectiveness

5. How far has your project been effective in facilitating trainees into work/business in your sector? What are the features of the project that have enabled / hindered this?

6. What monitoring do you take part in with NDYEP? Is this monitoring asking you for the right information to effectively track results? Have you had any results that are not captured by this system?

7. What features of the project have been most helpful for you to get results? What have been the gaps?

(E.g. capacity support; networking; support in training design…)

Sustainability

8. For your organization, what are the key challenges and remaining bottlenecks to sustaining the approach in this sector?

1. MTR: Program staff – PIND

Bold questions are particularly for senior level respondents.

Relevance

1. To what extent are the objectives of NDYEP program consistent with the needs and interest of:
   - — The goals and policies of PIND Foundation?
   - — The people (unemployed men and women; potential employers)?
   - — Regional and state plans?
2. How far have State social actors' taken effective leadership in the program interventions (participated in design)?
3. Does the NDYEP program take into account the particularities and specific interests of women in the areas of interventions?
4. **To what extent have the NDYEP program results so far contributed to the PIND Foundation and Ford Foundation results in the area of economic development**?
5. **Was the strategy adopted and inputs identified, realistic, appropriate and adequate for achievement of the results**?
6. **Has the partnership strategy been appropriate and effective**?
7. **Are the monitoring indicators relevant and do they meet the quality needed to measure the outputs and outcomes of the program?**
8. **Case study question: What theories or principles was NDYEP applying when it started? How far do you think these principles have been confirmed or refuted so far?**

Efficiency

9. To what extent have the resources/inputs (funds, time etc.) have been turned into results?
10. What have been the organizational bottlenecks / challenges?
11. How far have State social actors' taken leadership in the program implementation / resource provision?
12. **How is the program management structure operating? How well does the NDYEP program's management model – that is, its tools, financial resources, human resources, technical resources, organizational structure, information flows and management decision-making – contribute to generating the expected outputs and outcomes?**
13. **How conducive are current PIND Foundation procedures to NDYEP programming? How can existing**

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bottlenecks be overcome and procedures further strengthened?

14. **How did the program financial management processes and procedure affect program implementation?**
15. **What gaps or obstacles have there been in applying the theory?**

Effectiveness

16. To what extent have the objectives of the NDYEP program been met or are expected to be met?
17. **Does the M&E framework effectively support the implementation and tracking of the targeted results**?
18. **Are the program management strategies for NDYEP effective in delivering desired/planned results**
19. **To what extent and in what ways is the NDYEP program contributing to the PIND Foundation's economic development goal**?
20. Is the stipulated timeline of outputs being met? What factors are contributing to progress or delay in the achievement of the outputs and outcomes?
21. **Do the outputs produced meet the required high quality**?

Sustainability

22. What is the probability that the benefits of the NDYEP intervention will continue in the long term?
23. What are the key challenges and remaining bottlenecks to achieving results?
24. **Is the duration of the project sufficient to ensure a cycle that will ensure the sustainability of the interventions?**
25. **To what extent are the visions and actions of partners consistent with or different from those of the NDYEP project?**
26. **In what ways can governance of the NDYEP project be improved so as to increase the chances of achieving sustainability in the future?***2. MTR: Project staff – partners (also for case studies) 2 x interviews in general group in Port Harcourt*

If you feel you have already answered these questions during the Focus Group, you do not need to answer them again. We are looking for more detail, where you can provide it.

Essential questions in bold.

Relevance

1. To what extent are the objectives of NDYEP project consistent with the needs and interest of:
   - The young people that your organization is in touch with?
   - The employers that your organization has contact with?

Efficiency

2. How far have you been able to turn resources/inputs (funds, time etc.) into results so far?

3. What have been the challenges for your organization of working with PIND on this project?

(4. How far have state social actors' taken leadership in the program implementation / resource provision?)

Effectiveness

5. How far have your own objectives in working with the NDYEP project been met so far?

6. **How far has your project been effective in responding to the needs of the beneficiaries?**

7. What monitoring do you take part in with NDYEP? Is this monitoring asking you for the right information to effectively track results? Have you had any results that are not captured by this system?

8. **What features of the project have been most helpful for you to get results? What are the important features of 'your' model**?

(e.g. capacity support; networking; support in training design…)

Sustainability

9. **For your organization, how far will you be able to sustain the NDYEP approach in the long term? (How far are you able to take on the new approach yourselves?)**

10. For your organization, what are the key challenges and remaining bottlenecks to sustaining the approach?

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3. MTR: State government actors

Relevance

1. To what extent are the objectives of NDYEP project consistent with the needs and interest of Regional and state plans?

2. How far have (you) state social actors' participated in the design of the program? In what ways? How would you rate this process?

Efficiency

3. How far have (you) state social actors' been able or willing to take leadership in the program implementation / resource provision? What has facilitated this? What have been the obstacles?

Effectiveness

4. What do you see as the features of the approach that are most effective in supporting results?

Sustainability

5. What is the probability that the benefits of the NDYEP intervention will continue in the long term?

6. What are the key challenges and remaining bottlenecks to achieving results?

4. MTR: Other stakeholders / Providers

Relevance

1. To what extent are the objectives of NDYEP project consistent with the needs and interest of Regional and state plans?

- The people (unemployed men and women; potential employers)?
- Regional and state plans?

2. How far have stakeholders like yourself been able to participate in design of the program?

Efficiency

3. How far have stakeholders like yourself been able to take leadership in the program implementation / resource provision? What are the facilitating factors or obstacles to this?

Effectiveness

4. In your view, what are the features of the approach that have been most effective in supporting results?

Sustainability

5. What is the probability that the benefits of the NDYEP intervention will continue in the long term?

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Annex 5
Evaluation team biographies

Kirsty MILWARD – Lead Evaluator

Kirsty has nearly 20 years' experience combining organizational leadership and project management in adivasi (indigenous) education in rural India, with independent consultancy assignments conducting and managing research and evaluation. These have focused on gender, women's economic empowerment, citizenship and rights, social norms and the enabling environment for young women, eliminating violence against women, education and sanitation behaviour change through Community-Led Total Sanitation (CLTS). She has good technical skills in the design and implementation of mixed method and qualitative evaluation, research and learning / documentation processes for complex programs, and in analysis of qualitative material. Kirsty has particularly strong writing skills and has contributed to a number of publications. She also has good skills in facilitating analysis and learning at organizational and community levels, using a range of participatory methods. Publications include "Organising Women Workers in the Informal Economy" with co-editors Naila Kabeer and Ratna Sudarshan; "Promising Pathways: Innovation and Best Practice in CLTS at Scale in Madagascar" and "Gender Mainstreaming Critiques: Signposts or Dead Ends?" with Franz Wong and Maitrayee Mukhopadhyay.

Recent research and evaluation assignments have included co-leading a global corporate evaluation of UN Women's Governance and National Planning; co-conducting an Evaluability Assessment of the ILO/UN Women Regional Safe and Fair program under the EU Spotlight Initiative; designing and leading a study to consolidate knowledge for DFID's complex Voices For Change program in Nigeria; leading a 3 year evaluation of the Australian Government's multi-country Pacific Women Shaping Pacific Development program; leading a review of implementation of DFID's policy, the Strategic Vision for Girls and Women; thematic desk research to inform the design of DFID's Muva program working on women's economic empowerment in Mozambique; and leading mixed methods research on best practices in CLTS in Madagascar.

Kirsty lived for 23 years in rural West Bengal, India, where she founded and co-manages Suchana, an education resource centre working with the *adivasi* community. She has a long-term interest in participatory and bottom-up development processes, and in how community-level collective action can contribute to these. Recent publications include "*Organising Women Workers in the Informal Economy*" with co-editors Naila Kabeer and Ratna Sudarshan; "*Promising Pathways: Innovation and Best Practice in CLTS at Scale in Madagascar*"and "*Gender Mainstreaming Critiques: Signposts or Dead Ends*?" with Franz Wong and Maitrayee Mukhopadhyay. She completed an MA at IDS, Sussex in 1994.

Olayide ADESANYA – Support Consultant

Olayide Adesanya is a Deputy Director in New Nigeria Foundation and the Head of Programs Department. She has over twenty-five years' work experience in different sectors cutting across non-profit, training and manpower development, media, education, etc. Her expertise cuts across several areas including stakeholder engagement and management, facilitation of company-community relationships, participatory stakeholder reviews and evaluation, design, implementation and evaluation of social investment initiatives, sustainable community development, CSR consulting, administration, journalism, negotiation and conflict management, manpower training and development, and public relations.

Olayide's background in Mass Communication gives her a sophisticated grasp of human interactions but her real passion comes from using that background to undertake development initiatives including design, implementation and evaluation of social investment initiatives for private sector organizations, stakeholder engagement and management, evaluation of community development projects, building and sustaining professional relationships with the Foundation's clients, partners, service providers, etc. She is emotionally intelligent and has contributed to the successful execution of projects in the private and public sectors, both as team leader and member. Layide was a consultant on the participatory stakeholder review of the Foundation for Partnership Initiatives in the Niger Delta, she has been involved in the participatory evaluation of Chevron Nigeria Limited's Global Memorandum of Understanding (GMoUs), served as a monitoring and evaluation specialist on the World Bank funded Abia State palm oil value chain development project, worked with other NNF consultants to conduct a value chain study of six sectors (cassava, livestock, vegetable oil,

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rice, machine fabrication, and wood products & furniture) in Abia, Kaduna and Lagos States. In her roles at NNF, she has represented and made presentations on behalf of the Foundation at several conferences and workshops.

Prior to joining the NNF team, Olayide had a distinguished career at the Financial Institutions Training Centre where she served in various roles including training and marketing and she also worked in the print and electronic media. She had a stint, for about nineteen months, in the education sector as the pioneer head of the Corona Teachers' College (now Corona College of Education), with responsibility for the development and management of the College to achieve and maintain the highest degree of educational standards and discipline.

'Layide studied Mass Communication, has a postgraduate degree in Business Administration and a Certificate in Facilitating Multi-Stakeholder Processes, from the Wageningen UR Centre for Development Innovation, Wageningen, The Netherlands. She is a member of the Nigerian Institute for Training and Development (NITAD).

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