

2017 | Skills Portfolio Review



Background

Across World Bank Group client countries, skills development has become a priority. Skills are at the core of improving individuals' employment, incomes, and standards of living. Having a skilled workforce is necessary for countries to boost their global competitiveness and foster creativity and innovation.

The Skills Global Solutions Group (GSG) brings together a community of hundreds of skills experts from across the World Bank Global Practices. However, defining the World Bank's skills portfolio has been a challenge: skills is a cross-sectoral topic, one that is not limited to a single

practice or region. And the definition of "skills" is broad, as it includes the types of cognitive skills traditionally taught in the classroom, technical skills learned on the job or through training programs, and the socioemotional or life skills necessary for success.

The Skills GSG set about conducting a portfolio review of skills work across the Bank to answer questions such as:

- ▶ In what types of skills projects is the World Bank investing, and where?
- ▶ Which Global Practices have active and pipeline projects that contain skills-related components?
- ▶ How much do these projects cost?
- ▶ What beneficiaries do such programs target, and how do they measure their results?

This portfolio review seeks to answer these questions by analyzing 105 active and pipeline IBRD/IDA lending projects that include skills components.

A network diagram consisting of numerous light blue nodes connected by thin white lines, forming a complex web. The nodes are distributed across the left and center of the image, with a higher density of connections on the right side. The background is a solid, vibrant blue.

Methodology

Methodology

To conduct the portfolio review, we used the search function of the World Bank Operations Portal to identify relevant projects.

We applied the following filters to limit the project to a manageable scope:

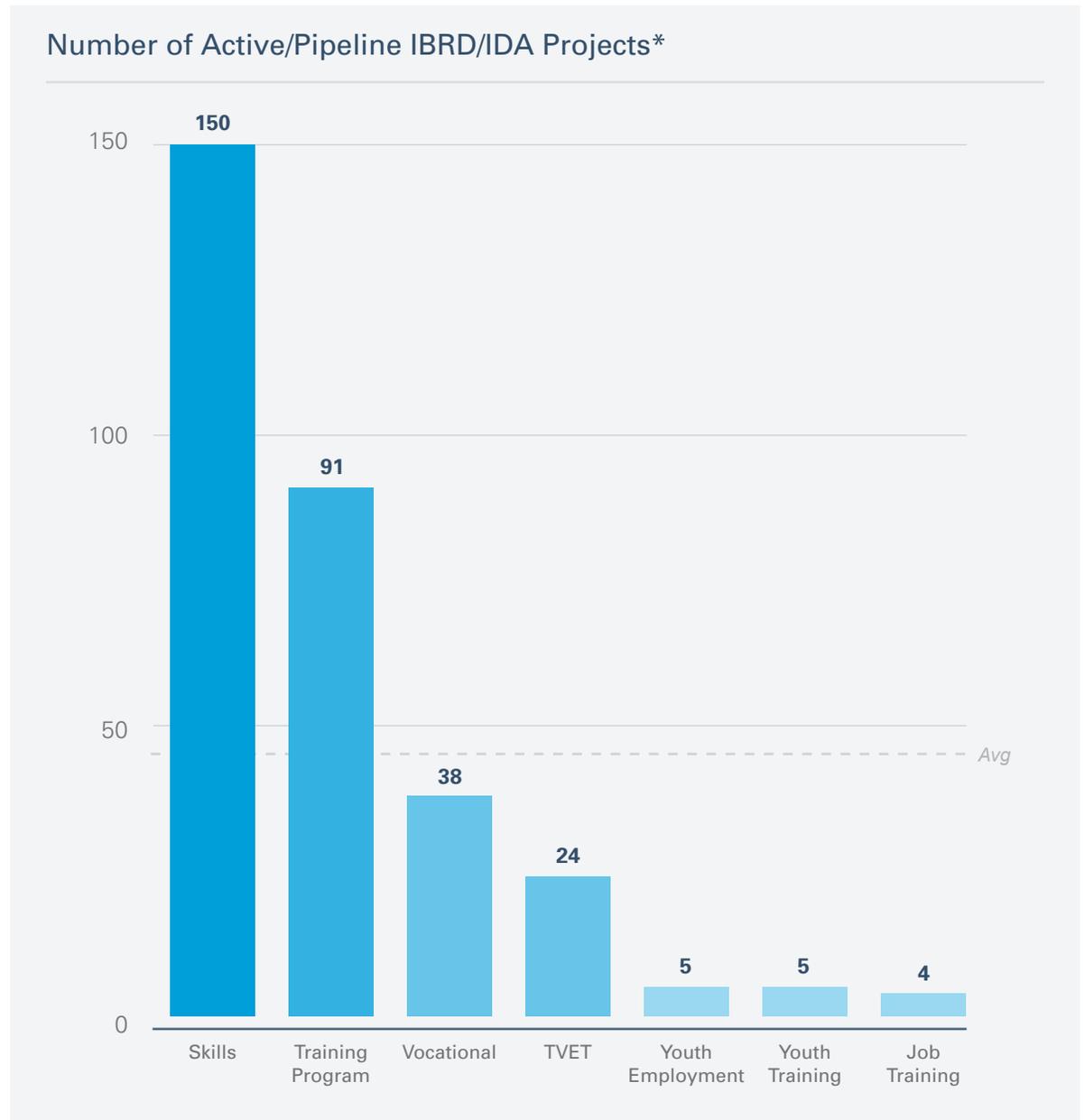
Product Line: for this initial review, we included only IBRD/IDA lending projects

Status: we filtered results to include only active and pipeline projects

The Operations Portal allows users to limit searches to keywords found in specific areas: Project Development Objective (PDO), Results, and/or Project Documents. We selected all of these areas in order to cast a wide net.

To The Right

With product line and status filters applied, the search terms identified the following number of projects:



Methodology

Of course, many of the identified projects contained multiple keywords. Once duplicate projects were removed, we were left with **208 skills projects.**

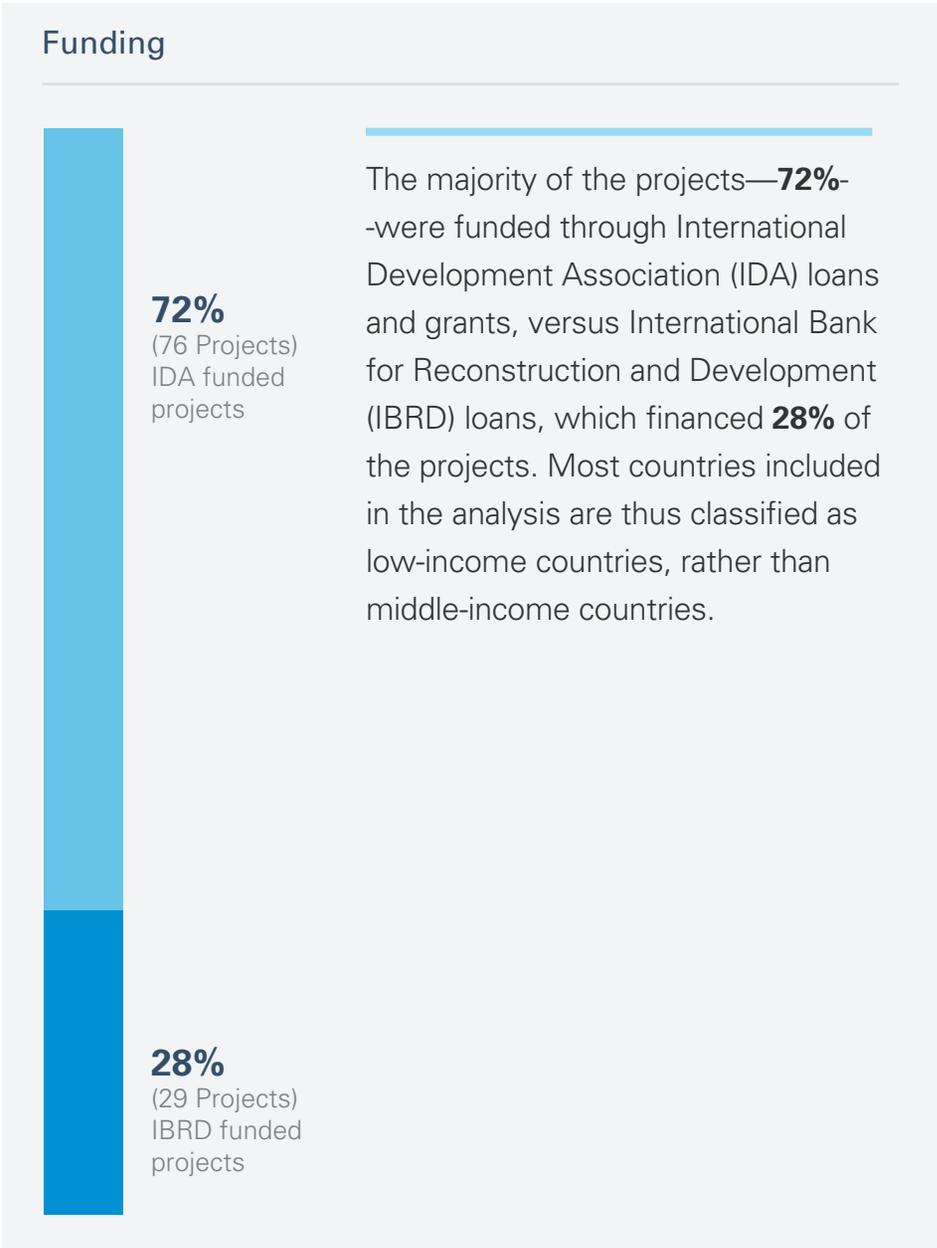
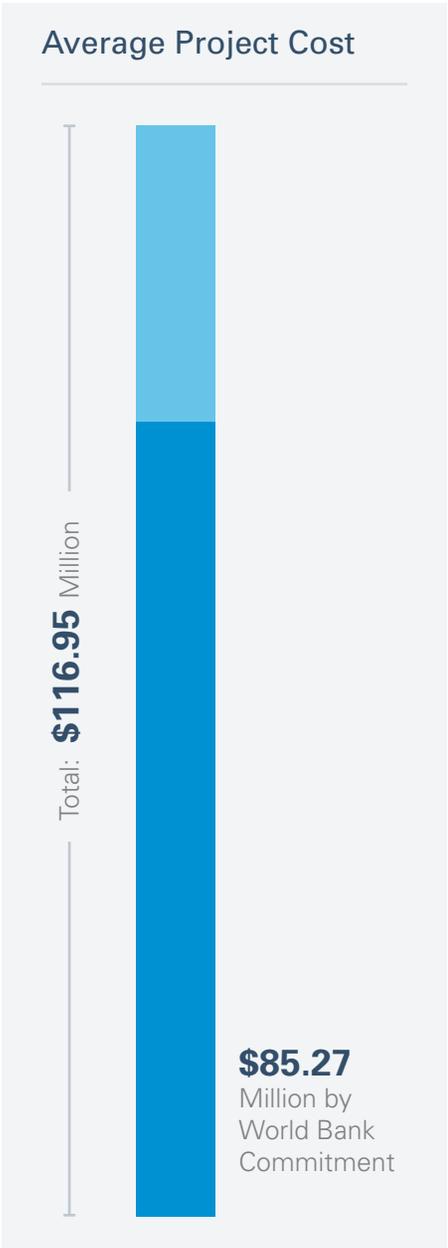
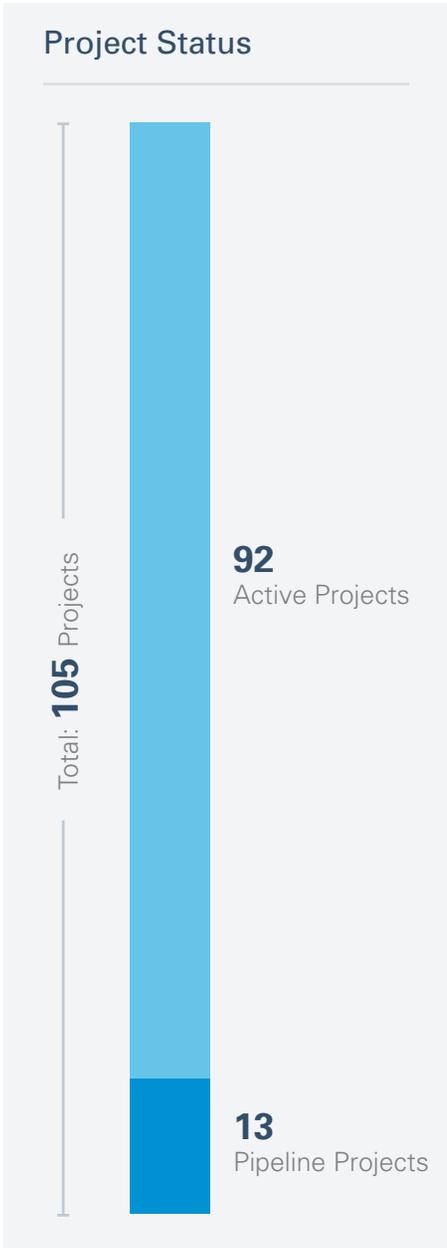
Next, we reviewed all project PDOs and components to determine each project's relevance to skills development. We **removed 103 projects** due to lack of relevance, or because they did not contain at least one component that explicitly focused on skills. For details on how these decisions were made, please see the appendix.

Of the remaining **105 skills projects**, we conducted a basic analysis of project information, using Project Appraisal Documents (wPADs) and Project Information Documents (PIDs) as our sources.

Findings



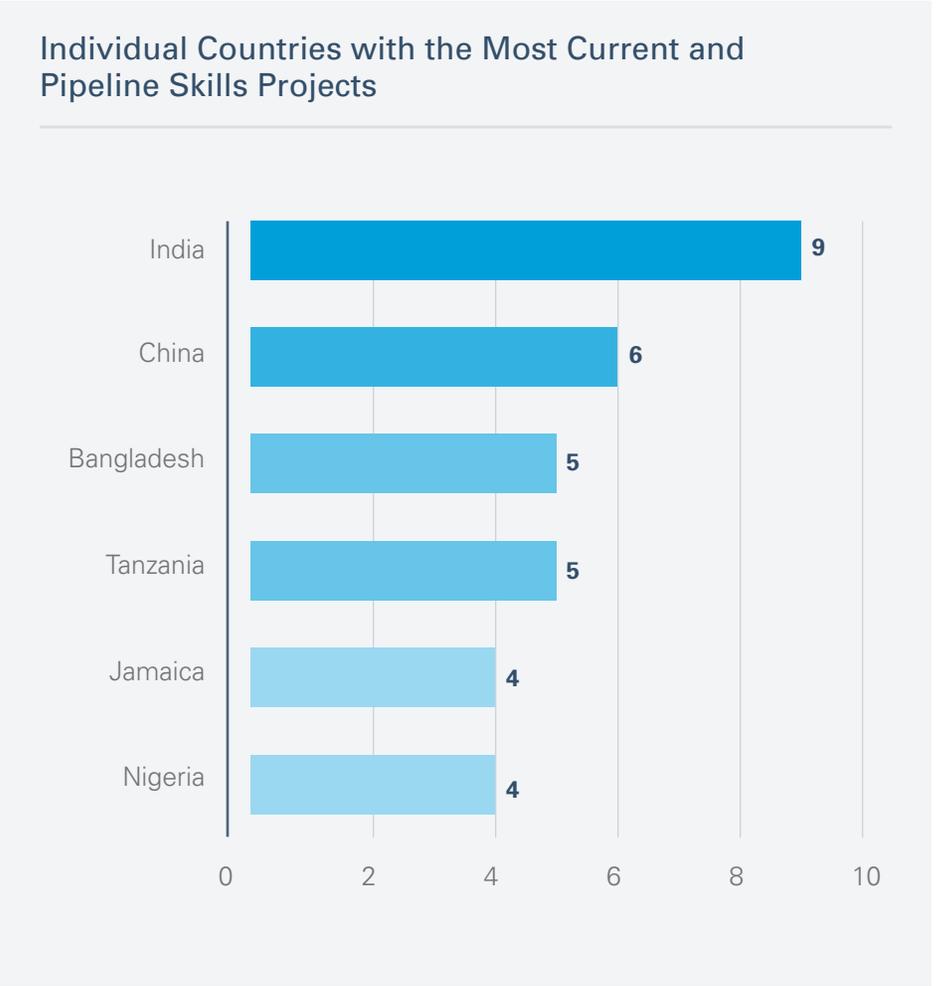
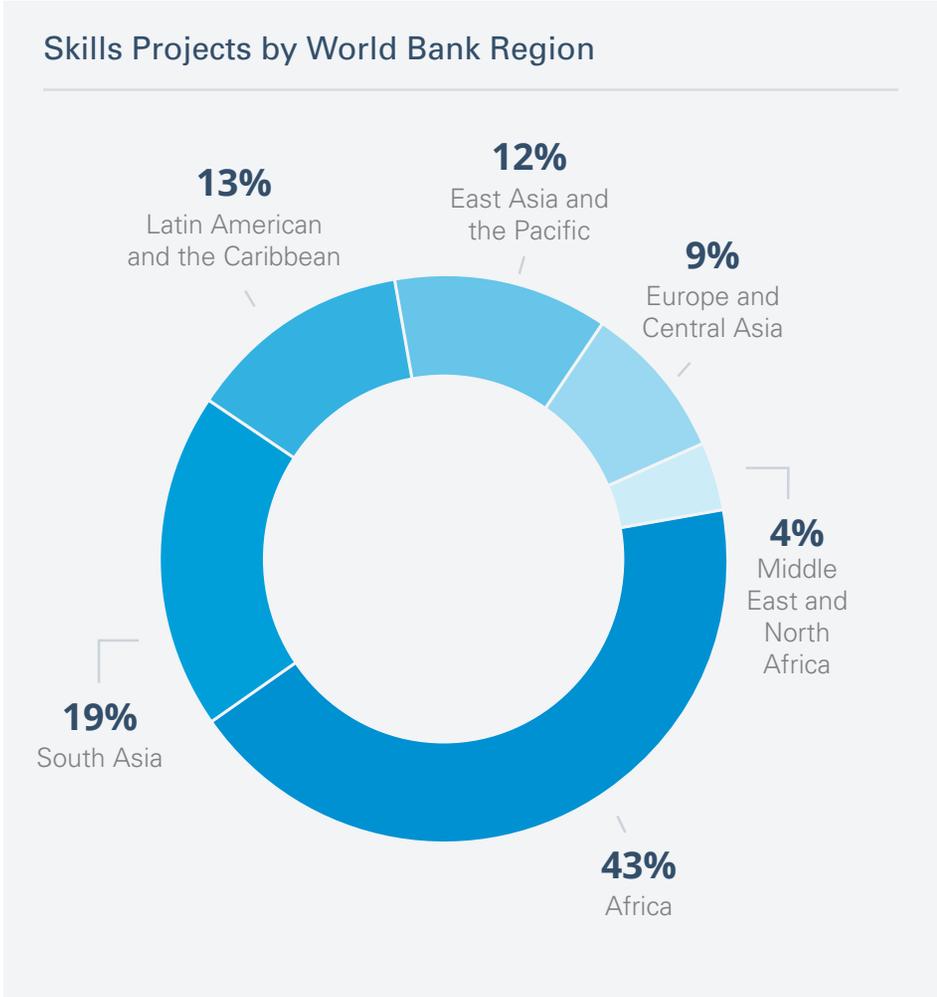
Findings | How is the World Bank Investing in Skills?



Findings | Where is the World Bank Investing?

Well over one-third of the skills projects are in the Africa region.

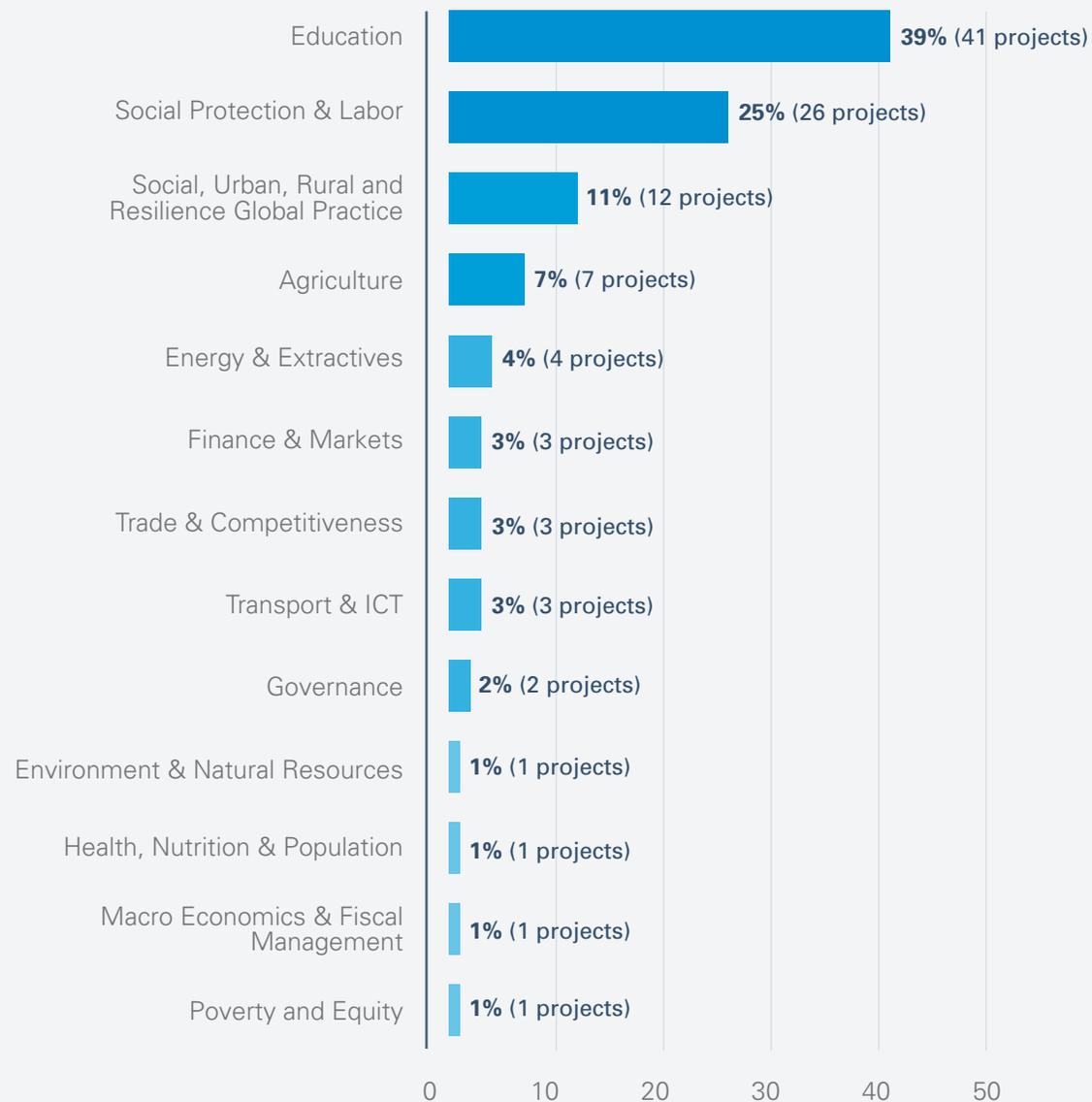
South Asia had the second-highest number projects, followed by Latin American and the Caribbean.



Findings | Where is the World Bank Investing?

As we might expect, the largest numbers of projects were led by the **Education Global Practice** (41 projects) and the **Social Protection and Jobs Global Practice** (26 projects). However, projects across a broad range of Global Practices included components that focused on skills development, ranging from Agriculture to Energy and Extractives to Social, Urban, Rural, and Resilience.

Skills Projects By Lead Global Practice



Findings | In what types of skills training projects is the World Bank investing?

“Skills development” is a broad concept, one that includes interventions that take place throughout the lifecycle (from early childhood, through the school years, and while in the workforce), in different contexts, and for different purposes.

Skills development projects at the World Bank can range from:

- ▶ Job training for out-of-work adults
- ▶ Socioemotional skills development programs for at-risk youth
- ▶ How much do these projects cost?
- ▶ Vocational training programs that provide learners with the skills they need for jobs of the future

In our analysis, we categorized the identified projects into five types of training:

Labor Market Training

46 projects

Training to assist under-or unemployed individuals find and maintain employment, typically short-term.

Technical Training

27 projects

Training programs at a formal technical or vocational institution, typically-long term.

Sector-Targeted Training

19 projects

Training undertaken in the workplace to improve the skills of workers in a specific sector.

Tertiary Education

7 projects

Non-academic skills training programs as a part of a formal academic post-secondary program.

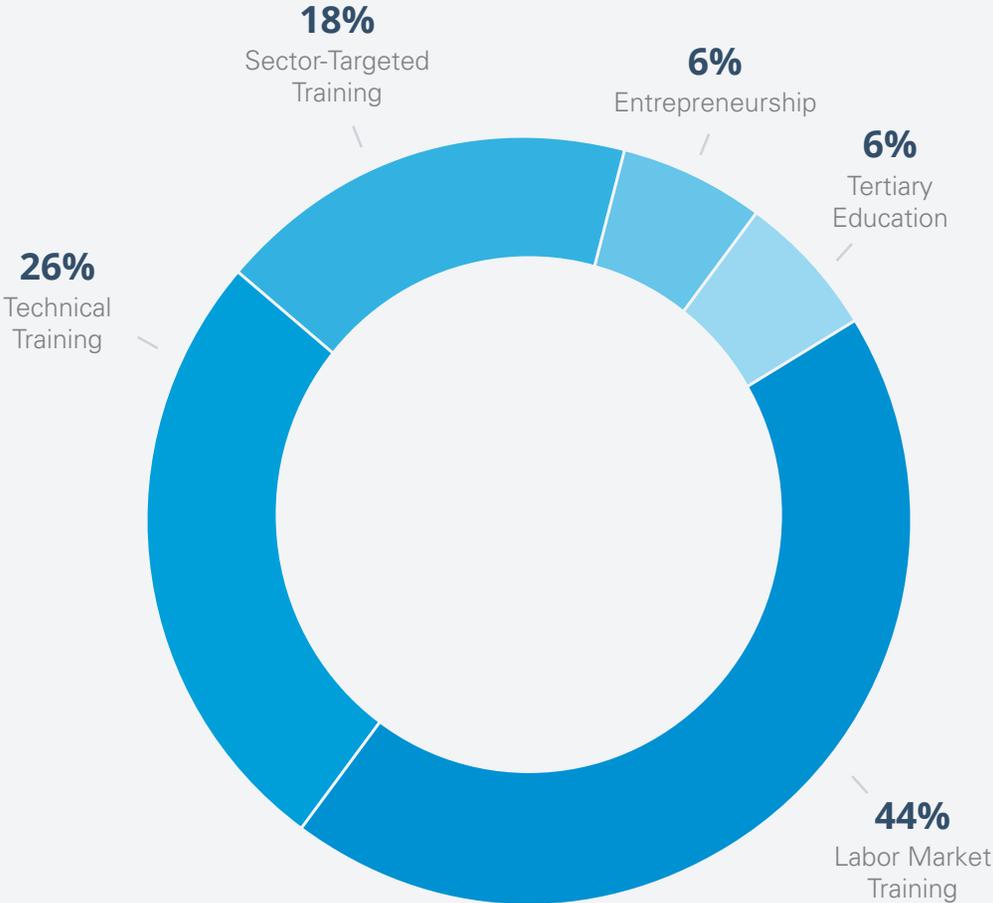
Entrepreneurship

6 projects

Training for business creation and development for the purposes of personal socioeconomic development.

Findings | In what types of skills training projects is the World Bank investing?

Type of Skills Training



Each project was assigned one category; in cases of projects that included components that fit into multiple categories, we selected the one that appeared to be the greatest focus of the project. Labor market training programs, which are typically short-term trainings designed to trainees gain and succeed in employment, are the most commonly funded, consisting of 44 percent of the projects. Technical training—typically, longer-term traditional technical and vocational training (TVET)—and sector-targeted training are also common.

Findings | Who are skills projects targeting?

We also created 4 very broad categories to describe the target groups or beneficiaries for relevant project components:

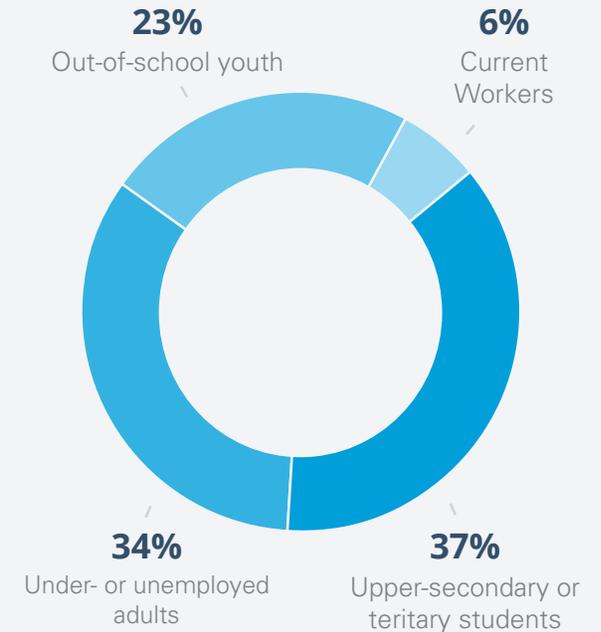
Current workers Those receiving upskilling training on-the-job.

Out-of-school Youth Youth (most frequently defined as ages 15 to 35, although this varies by project) not currently enrolled formal education

Under- of unemployed adults Working age adults seeking new or better employment.

Upper-secondary or tertiary students Youth enrolled in academic or vocational programs at formal institutions.

Target Groups



Because the project beneficiaries outlined in project documents were very specific, we selected just 4 target groups designed to be as general as possible. For projects with multiple types of beneficiaries, we selected the one that fit the main focus

of the project. Projects targeting those enrolled in formal education or vocational programs and targeting under- or unemployed adults made up over two-thirds of the portfolio.

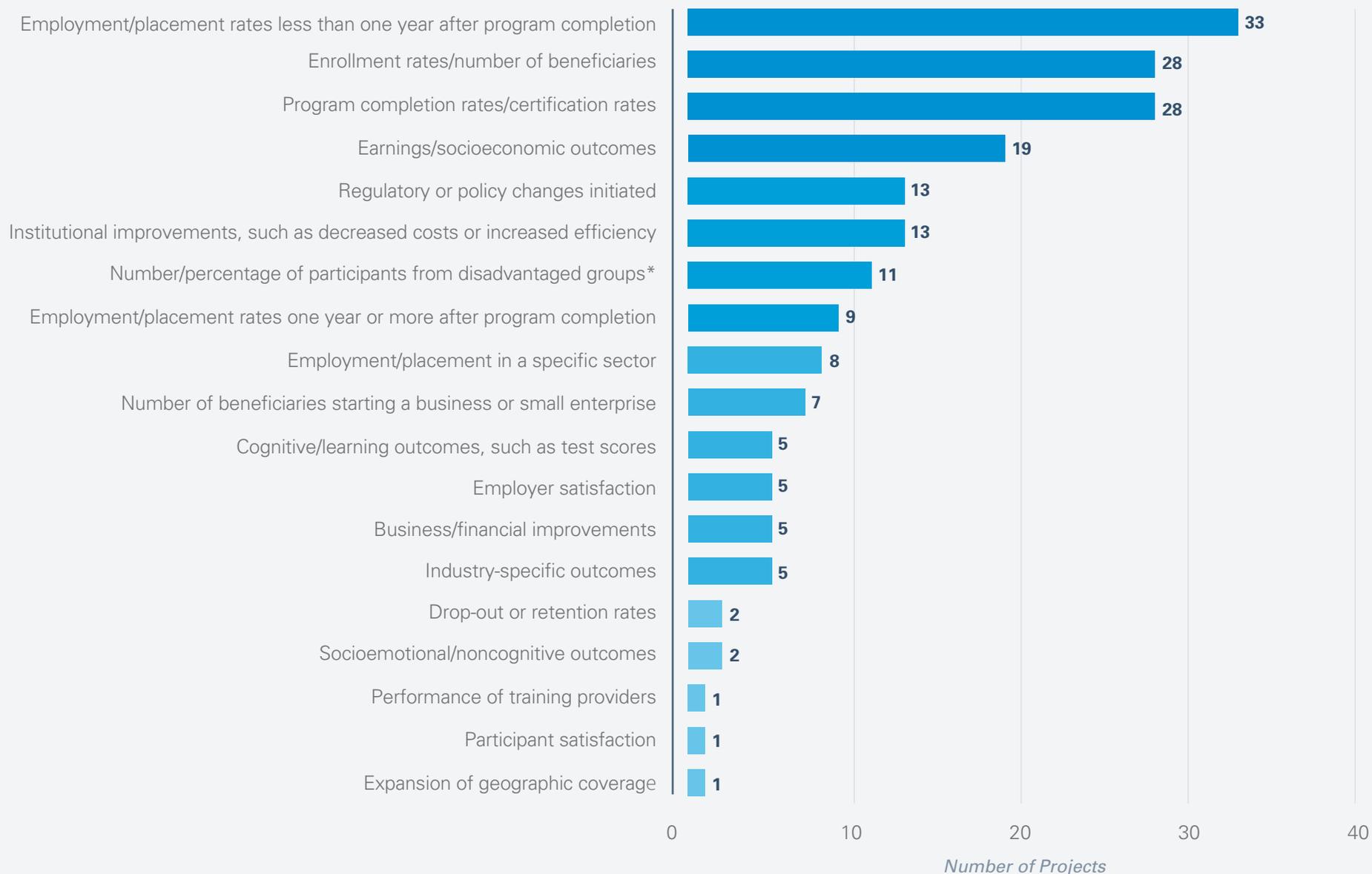
To conclude our analysis, we asked: How is the World Bank measuring the outcomes of all of these skills programs?

We categorized the many, very-specific project indicators for relevant project components into a list of general indicator types. Most projects had multiple indicators. Virtually all projects measured demographic breakdowns such as the number or percentage of female participants, so we did not include these as categories, except when such outcomes were used as key overall indicators.

Our findings indicate that most skills projects determine outcomes by measuring employment or placement rates less than one year after program completion, overall program enrollment rates or total number of beneficiaries, program completion rates (including rates of certification among participants), earnings and other socioeconomic outcomes, and whether or not certain regulatory or policy changes were initiated. Few programs measured employment rates after one year, specific cognitive or noncognitive learning outcomes, or participant satisfaction with the program.

Findings | How does the World Bank measure the outcomes of skills projects?

Skills Project Indicators



Appendix



In conducting this portfolio analysis, we reviewed all 208 projects that our Operations Portal keyword search returned in order to determine which projects should correctly be classified as “skills projects.”

Below are some additional methodology notes about how we made these determinations.

We only included projects that contained at least one component with a major focus on skills development (such as job skills, life skills, financial skills, and socioemotional skills). This included projects that focused on improving skills in a specific sector or industry—such as mining or information technology—as long as there was a significant emphasis on improving the skills of individual workers.

Such projects accounted for most of the skills projects from practice areas outside of Human Development that we included in the final analysis. We also included education projects with a major teacher career training component.

Appendix

The following types of projects and components were excluded from our definition of “skills projects:”

Projects that Including Training for the Staff or Contractors who would be carrying out World Bank work.

Health Education Projects that focused on increasing general knowledge or behavior change, rather than training in specific skills.

Education Projects focused exclusively on basic or cognitive skills.

Tertiary Education projected focused exclusively on institutional development.

Managerial Training for country leadership, policymakers, etc.

Industry specific projects in which worker training was only implied or briefly mentioned.

Knowledge sharing, consulting, and project management support.

Women and girls’ empowerment programs that did not focus specifically on skills development.

Additional Notes:

- ▶ “Additional financing” projects were included, and counted and analyzed separately from their original projects.
- ▶ For some pipeline projects, for which final documents had not yet been published in ImageBank, we referred to working documents that may be subject to further changes or revisions. All information is current as of May 2017.
- ▶ The term “youth” may be defined differently across different projects, and we did not seek to distinguish between these definitions.