

CHALLENGE 3 OF 3

Challenge 3: Ask the people the programme is for

Job-creation programmes count good jobs every six months, and the workers are never asked.

Challenge Owner: Adem Babo

The problem

Every six months the employer fills a monitoring sheet: headcount per job position, gender, age band, average monthly salary in ETB, training participation, and which of seven improvement criteria applied. Those numbers become the programme result. Nobody calls the trainee in the call centre, the daily worker on the site, or the one who left after two weeks. A good job is defined precisely: 15 years or older, formal or informal work, 20 hours a week over 26 weeks or 520 hours a year, the minimum wage where one is legally established, no child labour, no forced labour, no discrimination, freedom of association. For daily and seasonal workers it counts only above six months of continuous employment, confirmed "either by employer or worker", a door already in the rules that nobody uses, because of obvious challenges in keeping in touch with thousands of beneficiaries.

Who you are building for

Selam, 22, Addis Ababa. Trained in sales for free, placed in a call centre six months ago, paid monthly. Smartphone, a data bundle that runs out. Nobody has asked her whether a contract exists or pension is deducted.

Abel, 19, construction site outside Adama. Daily worker, seasonal, paid in cash. Feature phone, Amharic only, reads poorly. He started "after the rains" and cannot say if that is five months or seven, the number that decides whether he counts.

Hiwot, 34, monitoring officer. She files the six-month sheet for 23 companies, with employer figures she half believes, no field-visit budget, and a donor who wants evidence that survives evaluation.

What to build

An agent that interviews beneficiaries in their own language on a cheap phone and turns those conversations into the programme's monitoring numbers.

The output, in one sentence: per person, a structured record carrying a verdict on each clause, a confidence score, the consent given, and a line that aggregates into the six-month sheet.

Minimum demo, done in two days. A chatbot or voice agent runs a full interview with two of the personas, in English plus one Amharic path, on a phone-sized screen. It establishes each clause by conversation rather than by form, writes per-clause status (met, not met, unclear) with a confidence value, then aggregates 20 or more records into the sheet layout beside the employer's figure. Working means we run one on our phone at your table and see the aggregate appear.

Stretch ideas.

- Hard cases handled visibly: a refusal, a contradiction of the employer, a respondent under 15 (stop, flag, never count).
- Voice in and out for a feature phone, a transliterated Amharic path, the sheet defects fixed.
- SDG mapping (8.5, 8.6, 8.8, 5.5, 1.2), and the evidence behind an ImpactProtocol certificate: a signed aggregate with no identities.