

# III. Strengthening the institutional and personal project as an objective and methodology of intervention

## FORMUJER Argentina

### Introduction

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## Introduction

“Our proposal is to consider programmes not as regulations, but rather as a *“frame for conversation”* between the central levels (where ..... the idea of their design arises) and the regional and local levels (where they are implemented) ... (it is) at this point that the connexion comes into play between the programmes and reality, their relevance and capacity to respond to the diversity of poverty situations... It is by focusing on these ideas that we have to rethink the meaning of decentralisation of social policies.”

Dagmar Rasczynsky , ECLAC 2002

The purpose of this chapter is to supplement the presentation of and reflection on the intervention model that the FORMUJER Programme as a whole gradually developed, by identifying particularities and stresses of the modality implemented in Argentina to fulfil the objectives of the programme in general and of each of its components and then reflect on the “lessons learned” up to the present moment in the development of the Programme.<sup>1</sup>

An effort will be made to justify these particularities, making the relations between the approach and the local strategy adopted and the conditionings of the social and institutional context explicit. The frame of reference of the lessons learned is also that same social and institutional context that possesses features of its own and others it shares with the regional scenario. The validity of the lessons learned will always be conditioned by the dynamics and the meaning that gender, and in general social, relations assume, in particular in the field of labour, and by the interventions of the institutional players in relation with them.

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<sup>1</sup> At the time this systematisation was produced the Argentine Programme had not completed the execution of the pilot training projects of its target population nor the period of keeping alongside and strengthening the co-executing institutions. The climax of these activities will make possible, in the final stage of the Programme, the consolidation of the process of recovery and reflection on the interventions made.

## 1. The intervention scenario

During the time that the Programme has been developing, many “assumptions”, references and parameters of context have changed significantly. The changes in the Argentine social structure and mainly its expression in the spread of unemployment (15% in 1999/2000 and 25% in 2002), the deepening and accelerated pace of growth of poverty and exclusion;<sup>2</sup> the crisis at the political-institutional level and its consequences for the configuration of the system of representation and social organisation, question the field of intervention of this initiative. What is the role of training for work, which are the orientation and the best strategies to use this tool to enhance employability and citizenship of poor women? How many of these lessons and practices can be spread and contribute to improving the social and occupational condition of men and women in general?

It becomes necessary to begin by specifying some features of the national context as a frame of reference for this systematisation. In the first place: what is the present situation of the target population of the Programme?, what has happened –in general terms– to the women of poor households in Argentina?, what signals can be noticed regarding the configuration of gender relations in the social sector, and in that of the people who have “fallen” below the poverty line due to loss of jobs and diminishment of family income? What positions are women occupying in this public stage and what are the repercussions on the domestic distribution of responsibilities? How are they seen to be by their peers and the players of the more formalised world of work?

At present, taking an estimated population of 37 million Argentines, 18.5 million of them are poor. Non-declared work, underemployment and unemployment exceed an index of approximately 53%, while 46% of the economically active population is constantly seeking work. Up to June 2002, 27,964 people per day became poor, of which 10,968 were children and adolescents. Likewise, 20,493 persons (7,736 children and adolescents among them) entered a situation of indigence.

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<sup>2</sup> In scarcely a year, poverty grew by 15% reaching 53% of the population, while at the time the Programme started, although the poor and the new poor were already a topic of conversation, levels were a little above 20% of the population in a situation of poverty.

Because of the crisis, a record number and proportion of women are in charge of households. According to the INDEC<sup>3</sup> Survey, as of October 2002, in 28.8% of households of the entire country a woman is the main person in charge, either because she maintains the family, earns more than the man or lives in a household where there is no masculine presence: a total of 2.7 million women are in this situation. In 1991, female leadership accounted for 22.4% of households. After the Tequila crisis in 1995, that index jumped to 26% and with the recession that began in 1998 it accelerated to the present 28.8%. This percentage is distributed among the different cities of the country, with values that approximate 35% in the largest cities, and that decline to 20% in the smallest.

Likewise, an ever increasing number of women enter the labour market because they began to live alone, to round off the family income or because the traditional head of household has lost his job.

Thus, in the Capital and the Buenos Aires urban area, 34% of women work or seek work, when in the eighties this percentage was approximately 25% and at the beginning of the nineties it was 28%. Every increase in the rate of female activity was associated to a crisis, such as the hyperinflation of 1989, the Tequila crisis of 1995 or the recession that began in 1998.

At the same time, employment instability has increased, with a reduction in the amount of paid hours, a high deterioration in the contractual relationship and in the access and characteristics of the social security net. This affects women to a greater extent, especially heads of household who are obliged to find some job because they are in charge of their home. Income of female heads of household is on the average 28% lower than that of male heads.

Within the framework of this critical situation women are becoming the new protagonists in the social participation area. The movements of the unemployed, also called the “picketers”<sup>4</sup> movements, erupt massively on the national scene. They are new types of organisations in which female presence and women protagonists are significantly more important in terms of numbers and in positions of responsibility, contrary to the traditional civil society organisations (the trade union organisations of workers, the political parties). The women are the

<sup>3</sup> Instituto Nacional de Estadística y Censos.

<sup>4</sup> Pickets and road blocks have been the typical means of struggle adopted by these movements.

driving force and their incorporation stands out: eight of every ten picketers' centres are headed up by women who are pioneers in the organisation of soup-kitchens and community clothing centres, although also in participation in mobilisations and picketing. In road blocks, four out of every ten women are part of the safety cordons, are strongly involved in actions of every kind and take decisions. Women are in charge of the popular centres, that are the physical hubs of these organisations, and in a majority they also participate as delegates and/or local points of reference. The response to the serious situation of poverty and unemployment is the establishment of a new community structure. In this public space, linked to the construction of projects and alternatives to the social and institutional crisis, the work of the women stands out and is very visible, being as they are valued and recognised by their peers.<sup>5</sup>

Although some features have changed, the stereotypes nevertheless persist and an order of gender that segments and relegates in the labour market, continues to affect work opportunities offered to women and also permeates opportunities and choices tied to training.

As in other decades, the level and modality of participation of women –and in particular poor women in the public space and specifically in the occupational audience– is conditioned by an inter-crossing of external factors, synthesised in the previous paragraphs, but also by personal projects and decisions. *This Programme precisely intends to intervene on that capacity to formulate projects. It intends to improve the quality of technical and vocational training to which the women accede with the purpose of empowering their participation in the projects.*

To complete this frame of reference, the situation of the policies aimed at the target population of the Programme is addressed. *The players and the policies, as well as the target population, are the subject of this intervention.*

When the design of the Argentina Programme was approved (1998), although the unemployment levels were high and a sector of new poor consolidated to join the ranks of the structural poor, both males and females, the State provided itself with some leeway to define policies and interventions of a strategic nature (among them and within the field of labour, those linked to the regulation

<sup>5</sup> "[...] When they lose their jobs, men become depressed and lock themselves up in their home. It is the women who go out and establish a relationship with the movement and who end up pushing the whole family..." Juan Cruz, member of one of the unemployed movements. Interview in a local paper.

of the labour force, to the attention paid to unemployment through programmes of inclusion of unemployed persons in local productive projects or projects of community service; and to the definition of guidance for a human resources training policy). With time these ideas were diluted in responses that gave priority treatment to the social and occupational emergency without visualising articulation with longer term transformation projects.

*It is in this institutional framework that FORMUJER intervenes through the use of a tool –training for work– in order to contribute to strategies that improve the conditions and the socio-occupational situation of a population that is increasingly impoverished in a context in which the models of labour organisation, of relationships with public benchmarks, that no longer provided them opportunities, have cracked, are in crisis and in which it is necessary to outline or propose alternative routes.*

## 2. Rationale of the intervention model adopted

With the aim to contribute to increase productivity and employment opportunities for low income women through vocational training as a tool for intervention, the FORMUJER Programme is defined as a strengthening initiative to the institutions working in this field. At the same time, it is defined as a pilot intervention experience that, therefore, must put in place recommendations and policy instruments.

The Programme adopts institutional strengthening as the strategy to review and enrich, from a gender and social equity perspective, the methodologies and practices in place in the region and in the local area, in matters of training for work. **It adopts this strategy among other possible or available ones in the repertoire of public policies, as for instance the establishment of a legal framework, the assignment of resources according to general parameters with distance monitoring of the behaviour of players; direct actions towards the target population with general prescriptions regarding, for example, quotas, geographical distribution, socio-demographic and occupation profile, inter alia.**

In its execution, FORMUJER faces a dual **challenge: to strengthen institutional capacities** on the basis of accumulated knowledge and, at the same time, **build and validate criteria and recommendations** transcending the logic of a focused experience.

In this framework, the strategy could have been:

- ◆ to *apply models, methodologies and instruments* to improve the quality of training for work developed at the central level with its subsequent validation in focused actions;
- ◆ to *revise and build up approaches, criteria and methodologies* on the basis of a framework of objectives, components and strategic axes defined.

The latter has been the type of strengthening adopted by the Programme and emphasised in Argentina. It involves activities of inter-institutional or multiple player co-operation and construction, rather than single direction assistance.

The FORMUJER intervention model is based on joint construction and the complementation of points of departure and diverse experiences, rather than on strengthening understood as the transfer of knowledge and universal responses to a problem. This characteristic acquires absolute signification in the case of Argentina, since the Programme is inserted in an area (the State at the central level) that co-executes its actions with multiple and heterogeneous institutions.<sup>6</sup> This led to the recognition of points of departure and diverse institutional strategies that render unfeasible the application of unique and standardised instruments. **Behind this type of intervention there is also a definition of how to solve, with a policy, the tension between its vocation of universal scope and the attention paid to differentiated problems and perspectives of solution.**

<sup>6</sup> Condition which the context imposes on a public vocational training policy that is supposed to be systemic and universal, on the basis of an existing supply that is dispersed and of an impression of decentralisation of the educational services established by the national State.

“The trend to universalise analyses and standardise responses a priori is frequent. The result tends to be the denial and invisibility of the multiple forms that the gender identity acquires [...], poverty and [consequently the result tends to be, also] the failure of these responses” to the extent that they do not affect living and working conditions of specific women and men (S. Fernandez, 2002).

On the basis of this approach, what aspects in particular justify the choice of intervention adopted?

## 2.1 The institutional framework of vocational training as source of its rationale

The institutional framework of vocational training in Argentina, that shows a supply distributed and dispersed among players of different level and extraction and a State with competencies to orient and regulate the role of the players, contributes to justifying the manner of work adopted by FORMUJER.

What the Argentina Programme proposed to do was to “pilot” a management model that presumed the existence of a State that:

- defines vocational training policies setting orientations and governing criteria;
- identifies and chooses the players for their competencies and their history to work on the basis of the objectives to be fulfilled;
- co-operates and dialogues with them to adjust and execute those orientations in their contexts;
- promotes the integration of their actions into broader projects of local development and has links and synergy with the educational system and the labour relations system;
- integrates the players in a systemic management to optimise and exchange resources and knowledge.

This approach is the opposite of that which operates with standardised parameters and instruments designed for undifferentiated or prototypical institutional players. In this management model the decentralised players, in order

to adjust their supply and make use of available resources, force their projects by making their lacks and particularities invisible, with which they normally end up by making the social intervention and the investment made less relevant and efficient.

There are lessons learned in that sense, starting from the experience with very massive vocational training programmes implemented, both in Argentina and in other countries of the Southern Cone, in the previous decade. The major failings did not lie in the objectives or in the generic orientations set, but rather precisely in the intervention model, basically in the type of relationship with the players (the training institutions) and with the contexts (reference points for demand, population and local areas).

Some characteristics of this model were justified by their massive coverage. *From the vantage point of FORMUJER, it is understood that the relative priority assigned to formal parameters in the evaluation of training offers (cost, number of vacancies, schedule in hours, physical infrastructure, inter alia) when facing more substantive characteristics linked to relevance of the institutions and of training, favoured the practice of a supply-centred logic on the part of the players that executed these policies jointly with the State.* In fact, this type of intervention responds more to an approach involving management of training than to an irreversible attribute of massive initiatives.<sup>7</sup>

Returning to the FORMUJER Programme, *the dispersion of supply of vocational training in Argentina makes it necessary to consider the institutional heterogeneity that characterises it. It is from there that the Programme must construct its strategies and lessons, involving its different contexts, and only then will the responses be inclusive of and involve the whole and, therefore, be valid as lessons.*

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<sup>7</sup> As part of the systematisation process and in a more advanced stage of the Programme, we shall reflect on how tools and processes developed by the FORMUJER Programme can be adapted in vocational training programmes or employment programmes of a massive nature.

The themes addressed by FORMUJER –incorporating the gender approach, improving the quality of training– serve as grounds for the adoption of an intervention model based on **accompaniment** by institutions and **joint construction on the medium term** horizon.

FORMUJER has defined the following challenges:

- ➔ to contribute –with training– to removing discrimination and stereotypes based on gender and class that restrict and condition the working life of women;
- ➔ to update and revise the training for work approach in order to make it relevant regarding the changes occurring in the organisation and in the labour market, and to promote more equitable gender relations in that scenario.

*Working in these areas to produce sustainable changes requires a process, at least in the medium term, of deconstruction and reconstruction of behaviours, practices and approaches, that can only occur when a close relationship exists and work is done jointly with the players. The issue is one of changing the vantage point so that both the process and the results are valued and these shall be evaluated in terms of point of departure rather than in terms of a parameter of arrival.*

The appropriation of these approaches makes inductive-deductive paths more relevant and effective than “the other way around”: introjection of solutions worked out from outside. The technical assistance from the Programme co-ordination to the central level is then oriented towards revising critically the experiences and knowledge of the players for whom the strengthening was “designed”, to complement them and strengthen them with the tools and knowledge available, rather than promoting or accompanying the application of instruments. This necessarily requires time and closeness, but the result is impact and sustainability. *What the Programme basically needs to generate in the institutions and in the individual is the need to appropriate these new “vantage points” and understand the effect that this change has in enhancing the quality of what is done.* As is posited by the updated approaches to education and training in general, it is important to accompany the development of competencies, and in

particular to generate the need to learn and to strengthen them throughout (institutional or personal) life.

The objective that focuses on the enhancement of employability and citizenship of women justifies the adoption of a type of intervention that begins by conceptualising these concepts and the strategies to work with them.

FORMUJER intends to improve the quality of training to enhance the employability of the target population.

For that purpose:

- ➔ it promotes the incorporation of the gender perspective in the practices and contents of training, in order to identify and remove stereotypes and role models that restrict the projects of women and men;
- ➔ construct and revise training from the viewpoint of vocational competencies applied to training, to define it on the basis of the requirements of the context and thus make it relevant and valuable.

In order for that training to be a strategic tool at the disposal of individuals, it must aim adequately towards the conditioners of the employability of those individuals and –therefore– dwell on the characteristics that the gender marks assume in the social space in which those people live and perform or will have to perform as workers. *Training must consider the demands and possibilities of the setting and the responses and projects that the players are involved with, so that the work on employability may fit that context.*

This implies that the institutions revise and construct their supply on the basis of a productive linkage with the context reference points:

- Population
- Demand
- Local space

The strategy of project construction in the case of Argentina involves working with institutions and individuals.

*In the case of a Programme or policy to be implemented from the central level, the work of strengthening heterogeneous institutions inserted in contexts equally heterogeneous, implies the challenge of paying attention to the particularities of each of them, to generate sustainable institutional strategies that lead to fulfilment of its objective: the enhancement of employability.*

*These strategies constitute the institutional project, that does not begin or end with FORMUJER, but that the Programme takes into account to strengthen it with some specific components that are its axes:*

- Revision of the training supply incorporating a gender approach
- Consolidation of relational mechanisms regarding players of the productive sector and the sector of the context
- Strengthening relational strategies regarding the population which is the target of the Programme
- Articulation with other players and vocational training experiences in the field
- Transfer and dissemination of the experience.

*The approach is the same when working on strengthening with individuals: the training institutions must introduce a type of relationship that articulates the supply of training with a process of accompaniment for the construction of personal projects targeting the enhancement of employability, seeking to transform an unfavourable point of departure by virtue of external and subjective conditions into a desirable and possible occupational project.*

The methodological procedure to work on employability is what, within the FORMUJER framework, is called **Occupational Project**.

### 3. Design of the intervention strategy

On the basis of the rationales and the criteria described an intervention is posed characterised by different ingredients and processes that, as a whole, contribute to source the strategic direction of the model:

The ingredients are the components of lines or action defined by FORMUJER at the regional level, and the procedure –the how– illustrates the strategic direction travelled by Argentina.

What are the stresses of the intervention model of FORMUJER Argentina that have supplemented the initiative and learning from the Regional Programme as a whole?

There is a first substantive axis and three strategic axes of the initiative developed by the Ministry of Labour that are part of the same approach:

- *Accompany institutional projects already in place* in the field of training for work, to strengthen their quality through gender equity and social equity criteria.
- *A management structure based on co-ordinated intervention by several players.*
- *An intervention strategy by the national State centred on co-operation and institutional strengthening of the institutional projects and capacities of the players,* within a framework of objectives and components clearly determined and monitored by the State.
- Lastly, and arising from the previous point, *a strategy of relations with the target population* of the actions –low income women, women from poor or impoverished sectors– centred, also, on *strengthening or building up personal or collective projects,* tied to work.

Given the type and structure of FORMUJER Publications, the description of the intervention model in this document stops at the first axes. The last, referring to the Occupational Project strategy as a construction of the persons that undergo training, is addressed in depth in the specific document designed for that line of action, although keeping in mind that it is integrated and responds to the same logic.

The following activities and processes were defined to implement this intervention strategy.

The order in which they appear does not imply a sequential execution. Although there are some activities that are specific to the launching or start-up of the Programme and others that have to do with a more advanced or closing stage, in the main these are continuous processes.

- *Establishment of a national co-ordination for the Programme in the framework of the structure of the Ministry of Labour*
- *Identification and selection of beneficiary and co-executing institutions*
- *Joint planning with co-executing institutions*
- *Strengthening and joint work at the local level regarding the different components of the Programme*
- *Articulation at the central level*
- *Monitoring and evaluation*
- *Revision and recovery of the experience*
- *Articulation, transfer and dissemination at the central, local and regional level.*

#### **4. Implementation of the intervention model from the central level and in local contexts**

Both in its design and in its implementation, the Programme Argentina had to contemplate *activities in two directions*:

- ➞ *towards the central level, in the area of the Ministry of Labour and, in particular, the Employment Secretariat, considering the impact and mainstreaming objective of the public policy of this initiative. Thus it sought to articulate systematically its planning and execution with the technical-political levels of decision-making and development of other Programmes and Areas of the Ministry that act in the field of vocational training. Also*

with other programmes aiming at a target population of a similar profile as that of the Programme;

- *towards the focalising and execution areas of the pilot projects:* with the beneficiary and co-executing vocational training institutions and the local players linked to the working plan constructed together.

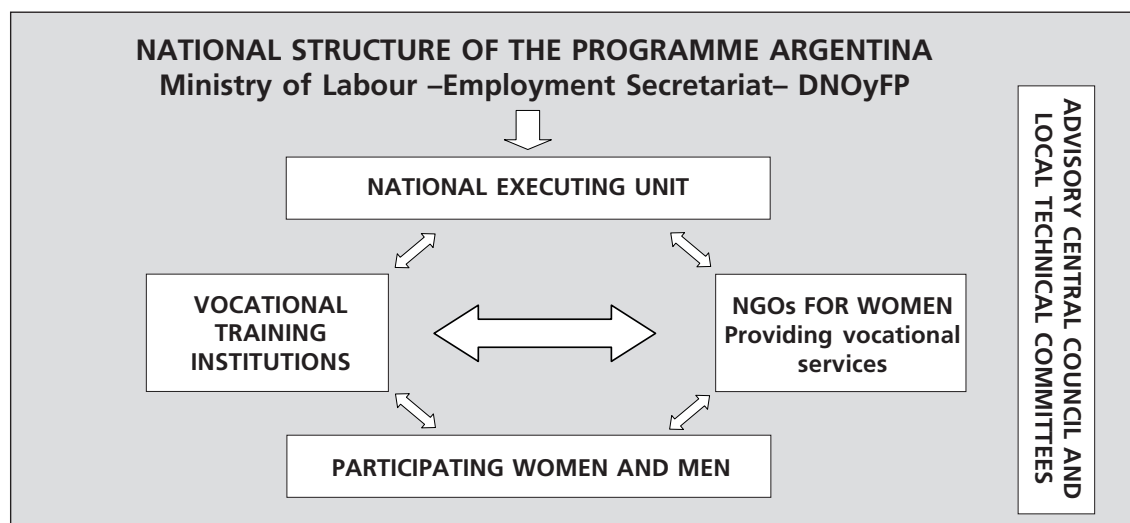
**The purpose of this dual direction is that, while working in synergy, the policy will be constructed by the feedback of these spaces. The national co-ordination of the Programme, by its condition as central technical unit of the Programme, becomes in this model a “hinge” that articulates and adds value to the transfer of initiatives and developments that occur in one or the other space.**

The type of activity carried out by the national co-ordination towards the central level and towards the local level has been different:

Towards the central level —➤ proposals, negotiation and articulation

Towards the local level —➤ joint strengthening and construction

The description of the implementation of the Programme shall be structured below on the basis of the processes indicated at the end of point 3.



FORMUJER/Argentina is located within the Ministry of Labour. The latter, as has already been stated, has competence to define vocational training policy and implement programmes and projects in this area. As has also been explained, it belongs to a scenario in which the supply of technical education and vocational training is disseminated in a heterogeneous universe of players: there is no institution –as there is in other countries of the region– even of a mixed nature that concentrates it. This status of belonging to the State led FORMUJER to a *design of co-execution with third parties* –in this case institutions that provide vocational or technical training, of different origin and nature– and of *articulation and feedback* with Ministry policy.

The central challenge of FORMUJER –to incorporate the gender perspective into VTI practices and developments– led to including another player in the territorial management structure: local organisations with a history of working with women (NGOs – non-governmental organisations). Their role was to strengthen the training institutions in their relations with the target population and in the work of deconstructing and reconstructing non-sexist training and practice.

To consider training as a tool integrated in initiatives or systems of productive development or local development, led FORMUJER Argentina to extend the axis of its relationship with the productive sector. Whereas the Regional Programme established the latter originally as a component of institutional strengthening, it became a broader concept of relations and summons with other players of the governmental or non-governmental context, i.e., with all those who are in a condition to think, as a group, of initiatives of target population inclusion to improve living conditions, their occupational situation and to contribute to the collective effort. *A significant role was promoted especially for training in the dynamism of productive initiatives and strategic plans at the local level. Finally, this axis of the model is also a response to the challenge of focalising and contextualising that the Regional Programme poses.*

#### 4.1 Processes implemented

→ *Design of the national co-ordination of the Programme and operation in articulation with the Ministry structure*

The National Executing Unit (NEU) is located in the area of the Ministry responsible for vocational training policies and programmes, at present called National Bureau of Vocational Training and Guidance (*Dirección Nacional de Orientación y Formación Profesional*) and is made up of the national co-ordinator and specialists in charge of the different components that supplemented and strengthened the technical operation of the co-ordination in the following subjects: technical assistance, conceptual and methodological pedagogy (Curriculum Development component); occupational project and gender (Occupational Guidance and Compensatory Strategies components), relations with the context (Linkage with the productive and social setting component), planning, monitoring and evaluation and financial resource administration. Moreover, the NEU was specifically supported by international and local consultancies in the specific and cross-cutting axes of the Programme.

NEU profile and design, the establishment of substantive and technical-administrative articulations in the framework of the structure of the Ministry and the general operation of the Programme were processes which were consulted and endorsed by the political level (State Secretariat) or the technical-political level (Training Bureau).

The strategy implemented to produce an impact on Ministry structure, its programmes, projects and the practices of its technical cadres has been nourished by different types of activities:

- ◆ The application for endorsement of the execution of work plans and of specific tasks or developments to the technical-political level and the joint presentation, to the political level, as part of the proposals and initiatives of the sector.
- ◆ The visibility of the products developed by FORMUJER and the analysis of its contribution to other programmes and projects.
- ◆ The systematic summons of the technical cadres to encounters (workshops, events) on planning, evaluation and training organised by the Programme.

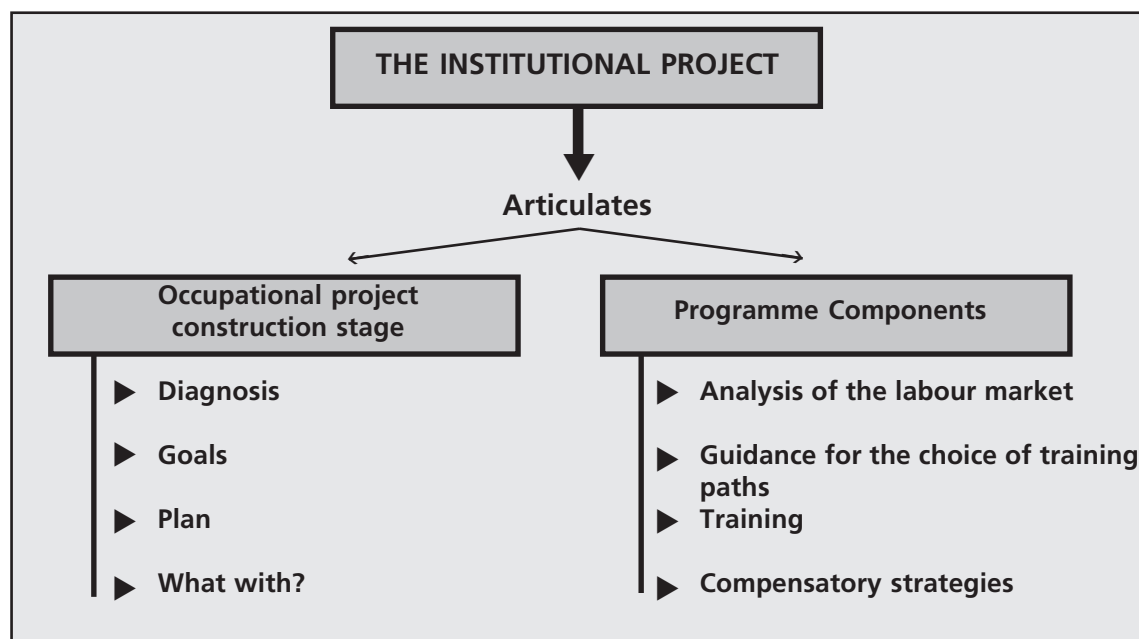
- ◆ The joint execution of Programme processes and products: selection of institutions; joint technical assistance in the field to players; production of criteria and terms of reference for contracting consultancy services (labour market analysis, development of communication strategies; development of supports for the evaluation of institutions and target population); drafting rules and regulations, etc. *It is through this systematic articulation at once of insertion in work processes of other areas of the sector, that the approach and products of FORMUJER accomplish mainstreaming and impact successes.*
- ◆ The attention paid to the requirements of other programmes to accompany or strengthen the lines of action directly developed by the Ministry or to provide technical assistance to the decentralised players that take part in them: *i.e., the synergy between programmes facilitated by the technical-political level.*

A consensus was reached by participants at the technical-political level regarding Programme overall planning and the adaptation of the regional design to the national scenario. Subsequently, negotiations with external players, execution of actions –especially those carried out in the focalising areas– and the production of recommendations have been consulted, agreed to and endorsed with the purpose of laying the foundations of a policy that incorporates the governing criterion of gender equity.

Further on, when the results attained are presented, *products of that articulation that operates as a strategy of institutionalisation and technical transfer* shall be specified in detail.

➔ *Identification and selection of beneficiaries and co-executing institutions*

When the rationale was described it was mentioned that FORMUJER, in its work both with VTIs and with individuals, resorted to the contributions of strategic planning with a gender perspective, with the conviction that work by project favours the sustainability, importance and relevance of the intervention. *The process of construction of personal projects and the revision of the institutional projects are correlated where participation in the Programme is concerned.* As has already been stated in this document, the type of work with the VTIs will be addressed, i.e, the institutional projects.



Simultaneously with the strategies of transfer and impact, which were introduced in the previous point in relation with the central structure of the Ministry and its policies, FORMUJER addressed the work with the players targeted for strengthening: the vocational training institutions.

As has already been said, **FORMUJER Argentina decided to pilot a kind of execution of State policy based on co-operation and dialogue with the players, on the basis of the definition of objectives and governing criteria.** It is in this execution with third parties that the national adaptation of the general model of the Regional Programme lies.

What were the elements of this strategy? They are applied according to dimensions that are specifically Argentine and others that adopt, supplement or go further into depth regarding regional thrusts:

- ◆ *Construction of selection and evaluation criteria for beneficiary and co-executing institutions.*<sup>8</sup> This is the first phase of implementation of the intervention model. The eligibility criteria for the institutions were defined on the basis of Programme objectives, at the beginning of the

<sup>8</sup> For more information, see: FORMUJER Argentina, "Proceso de selección y evaluación de instituciones de formación beneficiarias," national edition of Publicaciones FORMUJER 2000, available in the webpage *Gender, Training and Work*.

Programme. “Partners” of technical quality and with a record regarding the issues addressed by the Programme were sought to co-execute the actions. Moreover, focalising areas were defined also according to criteria established in agreement with the Ministry and the technical and financial assistance agencies of the Programme.<sup>9</sup> This system of selection criteria (by area and by institution) seeks to illustrate the heterogeneousness of the population targeted in the actions, the socio-economic productive profile in which the low income women will have to perform and also the institutional diversity in the vocational training field.

- ◆ *Working out an instrument to gather information on the profile of the institutions.* The instrument was accompanied by a conceptual document that described the objectives of the Programme and was distributed among a series of institutions in the predetermined areas. The institutions that participated in the selection process were pre-selected from the records of the Ministry of Labour and recommended by key informants of the working world, the world of vocational training and of the world that worked with low income women. The analysis of the information contained in this instrument –that operated, moreover, as an application for membership in FORMUJER– made possible a first technical report and a second pre-selection of institutions the information of which was validated in the field for the final report.

As a result of these procedures a toolkit is now available to strengthen institutional quality and which includes the following collecting instruments and evaluating criteria that are transferable and applicable to other similar interventions:

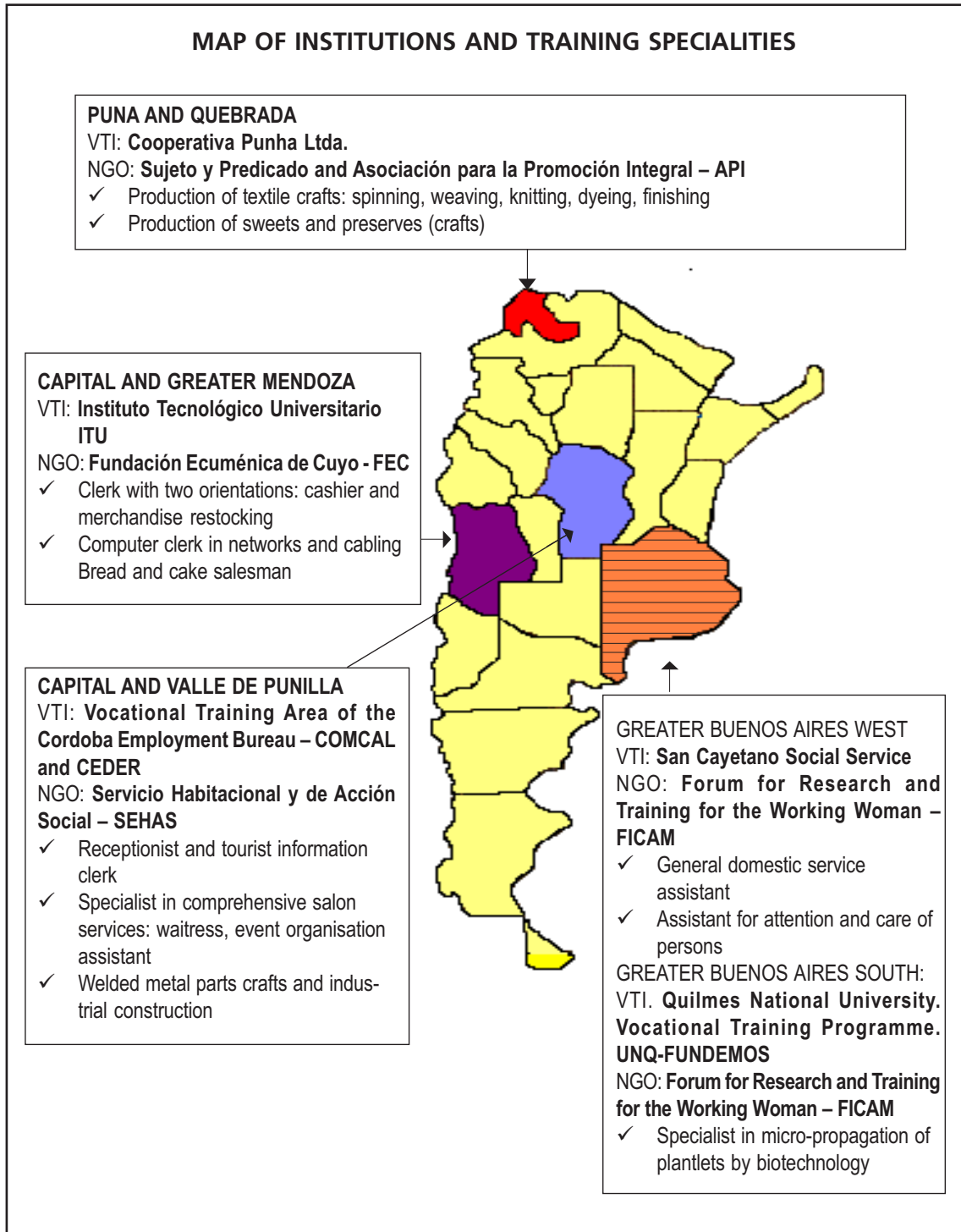
- “Criteria and instruments for procedures to select institutions; institutional quality diagnosis”<sup>10</sup>
  - Criteria and Evaluation Grille covering vocational training institutions
  - Instruments for selecting NGOs

<sup>9</sup> See “Criterios de Selección de Instituciones,” document submitted to the IDB as part of the conditions prior to putting the Programme in practice.

<sup>10</sup> The documents mentioned are part of a national edition of *Publicaciones FORMUJER* and are available on the *Gender, Training and Work* web page, FORMUJER Programme, Argentina.

- Instruments for gathering institutional information
- Instructor evaluation questionnaire
- Questionnaire for the Technical Teams for Institutional Evaluation
- “Methodology for planning programmes and projects with Institutions”
  - Methodological proposal, objectives and institutional framework for Programme implementation with the VTIs
  - Reporting Office of the Planning Workshop with VTIs
- ◆ *Selection process as a strengthening strategy: this was undertaken jointly with other Ministry programmes and areas under the co-ordination of FORMUJER NEU in order to transfer the objectives, criteria and instruments to the technical structure of the Ministry. In terms of recovery of lessons learned, this may be retrieved as a strategy of mainstreaming and enlarging teams sensitised and trained to incorporate equity and quality criteria in the evaluation of vocational training institutions or institutions acting in the employment area.*

The final result of these processes can be seen below.



➔ Joint planning with the co-executing institutions

Once the co-executing institutions had been selected, the intervention regarding them was organised on the basis of the design and execution of the work plans. These were formulated taking into account the objectives of the Programme,

the lines of action, the goals and the execution deadlines. For the plan construction process the following phases were proposed and followed:<sup>11</sup>

- *Analysis of the institutional conditions of implementation, evaluation of strengths and weaknesses in relation to the different lines of action.* In a workshop with the technical teams of the VTIs a process was developed of analysis of the situation of the institutions regarding the objectives to be achieved by the Programme and the definition of strengths and weaknesses to recognise the point of departure. Also worked on was the vision of its own institutional projects as a framework to incorporate FORMUJER. In the situation analysis its position regarding the different components of the Programme was considered: technical-teaching capacities to revise and develop the training supply incorporating the gender and competencies approach; history and potentiality of relations with the context to make the training relevant and make insertion practices and projects viable; history of work with the target population to adjust institutional practices to the profile of the population; articulation with other vocational training institutions to facilitate impact and transfer.
- *Design of the plan* with results, deadlines, activities, own and Programme resources used. For this design achieved by consensus and with the support of the co-ordination, the institutions had available an overall plan worked out by the Programme (the FORMUJER project). In this phase, the expression of the results and, in particular, of the activities, described the characteristics and specific “shades of meaning” that FORMUJER assumed in each of the zones. *It is here that the framework that the intervention model of the Programme offers is established in contextualised and sustainable projects that are based on institutional history to strengthen it and on future needs.*
- *Signing of agreements and the like for technical and financial assistance.* Through the technical assistance provided by the NEU, the institutions assigned resources and worked out local budgets: the criteria for assign-

<sup>11</sup> For further information, see FORMUJER Argentina, “Propuesta metodológica, objetivos y encuadre institucional para la implementación del Programa de las IFP”, national edition available on the *Gender, Training and Work web page*.

ment and the budget ceilings were set at the central level. This stage brought the planning process to a close and made possible the signature of agreements and commitments between the VTIs and the Employment Secretariat. *This instance made the Programme as well as its methodology visible once again to the structure of the Ministry.* Work was done jointly with other sectors on the preparation of a legal framework (Operational Regulations for the Programme and Model of Agreement with Third Parties) and on the provision of financial resources.

On the basis of these work plans progress and fulfilment of goals was administrated, executed, registered, monitored and evaluated.

➔ *Strengthening and joint work at the local level on the different components of the Programme*

While always considering the strengths and weaknesses of each VTI, the technical assistance actions have been co-ordinated by the co-ordination office at the national level and actions of exchange between the institutions have been co-ordinated on the basis of their complementarities, and thus the methodology used at the regional level of the Programme is reproduced.

The great components of the strengthening process have been:

- ◆ Definition of conceptualisations and instruments to support strengthening, by including and adapting, when needed, the advances (documents and instruments) developed by the Regional Programme.
- ◆ Central instances of transfer and exchange workshops on the strategic axes of the Programme: gender, guidance for the occupational project, etc., with management and technical teams from the institutions.
- ◆ Technical assistance in the field and at a long distance regarding substantive products and strategies of the Programme and in aspects linked to budgetary resources administration.
- ◆ Monitoring and revision of the plan and the activities. Revision of resource assignment.
- ◆ Encounters of evaluation (objectives regarding the institution, the context and the target population) and revision of planning.
- ◆ Participation of institutions in regional Programme experience evaluation and systematisation events.

➔ *Articulation and work with others at the central level*

As in the selection of co-executing institutions, *sharing with other programmes and areas*, processes such as technical assistance in focalising areas, instrument design, proposal analysis, evaluation of results, etc., *was one of the keys of the mainstreaming and strengthening strategy that, as in the previous phase, reproduces the methodological outlines of the Regional Programme: joint construction and feedback.*

➔ *Monitoring and Evaluation*

As a permanent NEU activity the plans and activities have been followed up and revised, as is also the case regarding the process carried out by the institutions, by the beneficiary population and the players of the local area. That monitoring was undertaken by means of VTI progress reports and NEU team visits to the focalising areas.

Likewise, and on the basis of the development of a regional model for Programme evaluation,<sup>12</sup> instruments for information surveying were adapted and applied for the evaluation of results and impact among the target population, technical teams and the training teams of institutions. The evaluation is at present going on, although there are already results available that are partial but nonetheless illustrate the focalising on the population and the institutionalisation of the Programme.<sup>13</sup>

➔ *Revision and recovery of the experience (exchange and document construction instances)*

Systematisation of the experience is a line of action considered emphatically for the closing stage of the Programme, both in the co-executing institutions and at the national co-ordination level.

With guidelines defined by consensus at the regional co-ordination level of FORMUJER,<sup>14</sup> the process of systematisation began. The results of the evaluation shall be the inputs of same.

<sup>12</sup> The model will be addressed in a specific document of the Series *Materiales conceptuales y didácticos* of the FORMUJER Regional Publications.

<sup>13</sup> For further information, see Relatoría Taller Regional "Intercambio y Consolidación de Metodologías de Evaluación de Programas de Formación con Enfoque de Género", Purmamarca, Jujuy, Argentina, March 2003, available in the *Gender, Training and Work* website.

<sup>14</sup> See the introduction.

So far Programme Argentina has formalised a first version of systematisation at the central level and the institutions are developing theirs, with the exchanges and assistance of the NEU.

As a result of this process of recovery of experience and what was produced, the national edition of materials developed when the Programme was in place in its different components is being built up, as has already been mentioned in several places in this document. Institutions and their technical teams are participating in this process revising and again validating the training offers developed, registering and reflecting on the mechanisms implemented to establish a relationship with the population and the local setting and, lastly, reflecting on the intervention model applied, the levels of institutionalisation achieved and sustainability prospects. The NEU co-ordinates transfer activities to other players and sustainability activities in the Ministry and local institutions.

➔ *Articulation, transfer and dissemination at the central, local and regional level*

The implementation of articulation and exchange actions at the local and central level, as well as in the framework of the Regional Programme, have been described elsewhere in this document on the experience of Argentina as well as in the regional synthesis chapter.

Dissemination has been an ongoing task but it acquires its maximum stress at this stage since only in this stage are there consolidated strengths and products available.

Transfer occurs in different directions but anyway what is sought is to impact on quality spaces that reach the population targeted by the Programme through training for work actions or technical education. Likewise, it is through these activities that FORMUJER can contribute to the strategic intention of the Ministry vocational training area. **By disseminating products and methodologies developed and validated within the FORMUJER framework, a contribution is being made to the construction of an institutional training system or network in which the strengthening of the players is visualised as a central responsibility of the State.**

Behind this objective, the VTIs have planned transfer activities to local players in the area of education or training for work; and the NEU, together with the political-technical level of the Ministry, will define other jurisdictions with

which it shall establish technical assistance and materials transfer processes and approaches.

Likewise, Programme Argentina has developed activities at the local level involving the transfer of methodology and experiences to the FORMUJER partner countries and to PROIMUJER in Uruguay, regarding which Argentina is more directly responsible for transfer since it belongs to its sub-region and because of institutional similarities.

## 5. Principal overall results attained and lessons learned

Although the impacts and results achieved in the target population, in male and female instructors, in the institutions and in the local setting are, to a large extent, the product of a way of intervening in reality and are an effective means to verify the validity of the intervention model, *what this document intends to do is cut out the effects of the processes implemented according to this mode of “making gender and vocational training policies at the State level”*.

The guide for putting this description in order shall again here be the processes listed in point 3, illustrated with references to specific goals and results achieved. The references to transfer processes, recovery and systematisation of the experience shall be tenuous, since the implementation of the Programme in Argentina has so far not yet fully included them.

- ➔ *Institutionalisation design at the central and local level*
- ◆ The legitimacy of the National Executing Unit as a technical reference point in the area where the Programme is inserted, and its permanence in the institutional space is one of the outstanding achievements of Programme implementation. Contributing to this fact we have on the one hand the technical profile of its members and on the other hand the method of joint work and integration of working teams with other reference points in the area or sector. The NEU as a whole or through its individual members is called upon to make contributions by way of training, gender and local development policy proposals; to define mechanisms to call upon and work with the low income population or the population affected by other dis-

criminations and for specific transfer actions involving the products of the Programme.

*This emphasis on the design of co-ordinations integrated by technical criteria (history and commitment with the axes of the Programme, local and institutional insertion) was passed on to the focalising zones: when selecting co-executing institutions special attention was paid to the adaptation of the profile of the managing and technical-teaching teams. The teams in charge of executing the Programme have remained in place and have strengthened their role as technical reference points within the VTIs (other programmes/projects) or in their local setting.*

- ◆ Other aspects to be highlighted that are linked –in this case at the central level– to the consolidation of institutionality refer to the endorsements, recognition and appropriation levels, both of the overall mode of intervention of decentralised public management with third parties, and of isolated or specific Programme components and products.

Some of the most significant indicators of this institutionalisation are listed below:

**Endorsement, valuation and demand for transfer of model and products**

- Endorsement for the arrangement of a postponement of the Programme so that it will accompany the main actions in the vocational training field defined by the Ministry, such as strengthening institutional quality in other jurisdictions; providing vocational training by FORMUJER in interventions involving attention paid to the occupational emergency.
- Budgeting and recognition of FORMUJER VTIs as providers of training in the Programme Male and Female Heads of Households (definition of vacancies to be covered by the Programme and execution of courses) (Resolution 583/2002 of the Ministry of Labour, Employment and Social Security).
- Application for technical and conceptual support for the production of ministerial rules and regulations for the inclusion of equality of opportunities between women and men as a governing criterion of the training and employment programmes promoted by the Tripartite Commission for the Equality of Opportunities and Treatment (Resolution 656 of 24 September, 2002 MTEySS).

- Participation of other programmes in FORMUJER processes and activities: selection of institutions; definition of offers on the basis of the analysis of labour market studies; technical assistance of other programmes to the VTIs in the process of revision and design of supply.
- Transfer of methodologies used in local labour market analyses to define a Labour Market Observatory in the area of the Employment Secretariat (taking into account two strengths of the Programme: technical-qualitative and sights on supply-population). Besides the methodology, FORMUJER contributes studies carried out for seven sectors in the five focalising areas.
- Technical assistance demand regarding the process and the instruments to select institutions.
- Authorisation and endorsement to transfer scholarship resources to beneficiaries for the “Compensatory Strategies” mode defined together with the VTIs and the population, to guarantee access of the population to training courses.
- Apply the rules and instruments developed by FORMUJER to other interventions (model of agreement with institutions, membership application, beneficiary registration file and others).
- Co-ordination and empowerment among ministerial programmes financed by the IDB to develop articulated vocational training activities that help to gradually build up the National Vocational Training System, expressed in the agreement among Safety and Health at Work Programme, FORMUJER and Certification of Labour Competencies.

**Appropriation of approaches and concepts: employability; quality of training; occupational project methodology; gender and other differences**

- Inclusion of training for employability and the guidance strategy and occupational project as methodologies recommended for other programmes and policies (Res. 656/2002 of the MTEySS, DIA Programme, National Vocational Training System Protocols).
- Training materials/offers revised/constructed by FORMUJER as well as developments and implementation of the occupational project stimulate interest on the part of the players in charge of technical and vocational training (educational jurisdictions, centralised governmental institutions working in the production area, local development; decentralised suppliers, grassroots social organisations, working with poor women).

➔ *Identifying and selecting beneficiaries and co-executing institutions*

- ◆ The performance of co-executing training institutions –verifiable both by fulfilment of working plans and by the level of appropriation of the strengthening provided by the NEU– indicates the relevance of the criteria utilised in the process of selecting them and of the selection process itself. According to the point of view of the external evaluation and of the players with experience in managing vocational training programmes, the emphasis on the selection of “partners” of high quality and the existence of adequate diagnoses of the point of departure of the institutions, have been fundamental pillars for the achievement of the objectives of the Programme. *The selection of the players as a component of the intervention strategy is one of the lessons that FORMUJER can transfer to the policies.*
- ◆ In this process it was also possible to specify that some criteria set by the Programme and then later identified as salient features of the institutions have provided greater assurance than others of these achievements and their impact:
  - the attitude/history favourable to work with gender/class, to the acceptance and work with “difference”, flexibility;
  - the legitimacy of the institution in the local environment, the history/capacity for articulation/dissemination;
  - the legitimacy, capacity and commitment of teams.

Nevertheless, in general terms and after accompanying the route followed by the institutions during the implementation of the Programme, *it can be seen that the set of attributes or the system of criteria functions as such, and acquires more power when the institution possesses a strategic vision of institutional modus operandi.* When that happens, the VTI is capable of identifying its specificity, having a development objective, projecting, setting itself targets, articulating with others, optimising existing resources of its own and other resources, revising the experience, etc. It is this vision that motivates it to have available the tools mentioned.

➔ *Joint planning: contextualisation of objectives*

- ◆ The initial construction of working plans adjusted, on the one hand, to each institutional project and local setting and, on the other hand, to the

objectives and overall planning of the Programme, is another effect of execution under this kind of intervention. *The specific plans and the extent and quality of the progress related to those plans, are indicators of the feasibility of working from this flexible mode founded on the first sections of the document.*

- ◆ The strategy applied consisted in the delivery by NEU of a planning proposal that included, for each line of action, expected results, necessary activities, deadlines regarding execution, definition of players responsible and estimated costs, discriminating the resources contributed by FORMUJER and those that had to be paid in by the Institutions. This proposal served as a guide and skeleton for each VTI to integrate it in accordance with its needs and specificities.

As has already been stated, when the issue is one of trying to manage initiatives oriented towards changing the approach and the institutional practices, the accompaniment in the processes becomes more relevant than waiting for results. *The co-ordinated drafting of working plans in which commitments and parties responsible are defined and times and resources are assigned, appears to be an option on the one hand unavoidable but also promissory versus implementation in accordance with given external planning.* The working plans are defended as distinctive institutional proposals under the overall Programme umbrella. The aims of each and the others are shared and acquire an awareness of their feedback and of responsible co-operation: the network is set up.

The reports on the progress of planning are an input from the experience recovery process, as well as sourcing the revision of the plan itself. *The existence of the working plans with their respective budgetary schedules establishes a commitment at the central and local level to systematic dialogue and consultation and to the solution of unexpected occurrences and problems in a timely manner.* There are no empty spaces and in the process there is an intertwining of administrative accompaniment, that sends signals to the need for technical strengthening and vice versa. *The efficient use of resources and the sufficient flow of funds – within the internal margins of governance – are indicators of the success of this element of the intervention strategy.*

→ *Strengthening and joint work at the local level*

Different types of products are to be identified as a result of this process:

- ◆ Training spaces and channels have been established –and systematically prevail– as well as technical assistance and exchange between the central technical co-ordination and the institutions, which become substantive elements of the strengthening strategy. Similarly, exchanges between institutions have been generated. Indicators of these achievements include workshops and encounters on training and evaluation of the process, organised at the central level; technical assistance and long distance exchange or on the field exchange to the VTIs; technical assistance among institutions on the basis of recognition of strengths of some and others in the resolution of different Programme components.

It is in these instances of co-ordination that differences have been identified and objectives and actions have been contextualised, so as to adapt the overall proposal and make it sustainable; and it is through this process that the validity of the intervention model and its capacity for adaptation have been verified.

**Training, technical assistance and exchange spaces and channels**

- As of March 2003, 121 instructors and five technical teams have attended training activities in Programme methodologies organised by the National Executing Unit and the Vocational Training Institutions.
- The team and instructor population become multiplying and transfer agents for other institutions and jurisdictions and will grow with the development of the actions planned for the last stage of FORMUJER execution.

- ◆ Co-ordinating institutional teams have been consolidated at the local level that are endorsed by the institution and are legitimate both internally and externally. The indicators involved, as we have already said, are their permanency, the nature as technical reference points they have assumed and the capacity to transfer the approach and products and methodologies of the Programme towards other local players and –in co-ordination with the NEU– towards other programmes and institutions in the region. The con-

solidation of these quality institutional spaces is expressed through the level of appropriation achieved in relation with the handling of the FORMUJER methodology.

- ◆ As a correlate to the above, another important result is expressed in the impact of the proposal at the local level: this is another achievement of the process that is fed by the existence of institutional spaces that are relatively consolidated, mentioned in the previous paragraph. As an illustration, indicators of the levels of appropriation of the FORMUJER model in the institutional strengthening process are shown below.

Focusing and methodological elements appropriated by local teams
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <i>Gender and class, difference, recognition of heterogeneity: conceptual appropriation that began and needs strengthening according to the point of view of the local players themselves.</i></li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <i>Occupational Project as an integrating methodology of vocational technical training. This methodology has been transferred to other supplies of the institutions. The following stand out:</i> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✓ trainer training in the area of the Cordoba Employment Bureau;</li> <li>✓ training of the Puna Network leaders (this organisation clusters more than thirty institutions of Jujuy Quebrada and Puna);</li> <li>✓ use in actions of labour intermediation of the San Cayetano Institute;</li> <li>✓ application of the methodology to other ITU careers in Mendoza.</li> </ul> <p>Moreover, technical assistance has been provided jointly by the NEU, the VTIs and the regional co-ordination unit, to INA of Costa Rica and the PROIMUJER Programme in Uruguay so that this methodology may be incorporated into technical and vocational training, and it has been applied to other collectives attended by other local level programmes and initiatives.</p> </li> <li>• Capacity of training conceptualisation and relationship with and opening up to the local setting of the institutions through the training proposal:           <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✓ Internships and training practices in the private sector employer area have been obtained (363 internships in the private sector between Cordoba CEDER /Villa Giardino and Mendoza) or in areas recreated within the institutions (UNQUI laboratory, San Cayetano facilities, adapting of Cordoba Capital/ (COMCAL facilities).</li> </ul> </li> </ul>

- *Co-operation and dialogue with the productive and social setting to articulate the accompaniment of self-managed occupational projects of the graduates of training and for management training.*

#### Appropriation and valuation of intervention mode

- *FORMUJER identity: the FORMUJER model as a strategy of institutional policy is transferred to other programmes at the local level.* An impressive example is the transfer of the proposal from the Cordoba Employment Bureau to another public policy at the provincial level.
- *Capacity for project management, verified through working plans and flow of funds agreed to and by quarterly progress reports.*
- *Capacity and readiness for teamwork expressed in joint knowledge construction versus application of models, in adaptation of methodologies and readiness to share them.*
- *Capacity to register, evaluate and systematise the experience in a participative manner, made evident by building distinctive evaluation instruments and in the capacity to contribute to the NEU instrument building process.*
- *Valuation of interinstitutional exchange by promoting the generation of networks.*

#### Recognition and valuation of the proposal in the local setting

- *Supply of training revised /constructed by FORMUJER stimulates the interest of other players responsible for technical and vocational training in the focalising area.* This includes materials to work with the Occupational Project with a highly socially vulnerable population.

#### Quantitative results

- As a systemic expression and ultimate product of all the lines of action undertaken, FORMUJER Argentina has developed the following up to March of 2003:  
Ten socio-vocational profiles and 16 training courses designed and validated in training actions that reached:
  - ✓ 725 individuals of its target population
  - ✓ 2,416 beneficiaries of the Vocational Training Component in the MTEySS Male and Female Heads of Households Programme
  - ✓ 1,228 indirect beneficiaries reached in training courses of other training suppliers of the co-executing VTIs that incorporate the Occupational Project device

➔ *Evaluation and systematisation of the experience. Transfer and dissemination at the central and local level*

Although these lines of action have accompanied the progress of the Programme, it is in this present stage that its mode of execution for the case of Programme Argentina has been defined and systematised. Therefore, the description of the strategies and instruments used and the analysis of the lessons learned from its implementation shall be addressed in the final publication by Argentina to close its own execution and describe the continuity of achievement and advances in the remaining countries and in Cinterfor/ILO.

Regarding progress in implementation, the following is germane:

- ◆ At the central and local level, impact evaluating instruments have begun to be applied, as well as results proposed by the regional evaluation model. These tools, that observe the processes of beneficiaries, trainers and technical teams, have been supplemented by FORMUJER Argentina, on the basis of joint work of revision and validation with the institutions, which contributed significantly to the appropriation of this central component of the Programme and is a strong axis for institutional strengthening. The results of this process were submitted to the Regional Workshop on “Exchange and consolidation of methodologies of evaluation of training programmes with a gender approach,”<sup>15</sup> in which conclusions were arrived at on the central recommendations regarding evaluation models for programmes with similar characteristics as FORMUJER.
- ◆ The standards provided by regional co-ordination for the recovery of the experience, were revised and adapted to the national Programme context and transferred to the institutions, which in their working plans included activities to systematise local experiences. The results of the evaluation of beneficiaries and technical teams shall be the input for this systematisation process.
- ◆ The transfer and dissemination at the central level and at the local level is being planned for systematic systematisation in the final stage of the Programme. Nevertheless, transfer actions have been developed as a re-

<sup>15</sup> See footnote No. 13.

sponse to demand by players in the focalising areas and by the National Executing Unit. The products of the Programme are being processed didactically in order to have available simple publications on training trainers and technical teams that accompany and make possible the transfer process.

- ◆ The co-existing institutions and the NEU, accompanying this stage, and on the basis of a communication strategy planned as a whole,<sup>16</sup> devoted themselves to developing or completing the development of communication pieces that support the sustainability of the model in the different spaces and according to the diversity of strengths and identities that the Programme has adopted.

## 6. Reflections on the sustainability of the model proposed

In a context where the role of the State as guide and regulator of actions of multiple players is in crisis –which was translated into a discontinuity of some substantive policies– the FORMUJER achievements in terms of taking advantage of the experience to implement the intervention model have been more impressive at the local level.

Nonetheless, when this first advance in systematisation occurred, promising indicators were recorded of an effective contribution and articulation of proposals at the central level, although this did not imply the overall appropriation of the strategy proposed. **The most notorious indicator of these effects is the fact that the supply developed by the Programme has reached, in the focalising areas, population covered by the massive initiative of the Ministry of Labour to attend to the occupational emergency and, moreover, some of its approaches and methodologies are traversing rules and regulations and programmes of the area or sector.**

This appropriation will possibly be feasible given the degree of progress in a Programme which already has transferable products and experience. **But the**

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<sup>16</sup> This is developed and gone into in further depth in the regional publication "Estrategia de comunicaciones: una herramienta para la gestión de políticas de formación y equidad," Cinterfor/ILO, Montevideo, 2003, v. II.

**power of the contribution lies in the technical-political capacity to conceive a strategic vision of the vocational training policy in order to, on the basis of that policy, articulate the existing contributions.**

Another strategic aspect to be considered in this line of making sustainable an intervention that presumes to traverse the structure and the policies of the Ministry, is time, or better said, the co-ordination of times and processes with technical, administrative and technical-political decision-making areas. In many cases, even when relying on the endorsement and definition of support and articulation in relation to Programme activities, the pacing of times and stresses for joint progress –more than the timing of objectives– can become an important and largely ungovernable obstacle.

Nonetheless, even with the reservations mentioned, **there is no doubt that this strategy of intervention that hinges in a dual direction –towards the central level and towards the local level– in the construction and exploitation of products and lessons, turns out to be the most adequate. It is a valid and effective institutional practice to manage a policy from the central level with decentralised interlocutors, strengthening its institutional quality, causing a change in perspective and, therefore, the impact sought in individuals.**

Some aspects of the proposal, although they show a high level of understanding and efficiency in the orchestration of the framework of the Programme, recognise major difficulties when guaranteeing its sustainability, mainly, linked to the requirements posed in terms of resource availability and of obtaining commitments with other players. These are aspects in which the margin of governance is reduced so that the institutions can continue it. Between them the following stand out: the orchestration of compensatory support strategies to guarantee access and permanence in training low income women and the consolidation of a system of information on supply and demand needs that allows training supply to be kept up to date.

A last aspect, the solution of which also escapes the scope of action of these institutions, is the accompaniment (technical and financial assistance in the medium term) to consolidate occupational projects that imply individual or collective self-managing solutions.