FIRST ITEM ON THE AGENDA

Thematic evaluation: ILO projects on training for employment

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I. Introduction

1. The theme of this paper, training for employment, was selected by the Officers of the Committee on Technical Cooperation. In the light of the Committee’s previous deliberations, as well as discussions at various meetings of the Officers of the Committee, an attempt has been made to make this year's paper more analytical, focusing not only on the level of success in the implementation of programmes and projects, but also on their impact, sustainability replicability and the lessons learned.

2. The first part of the paper deals with projects with a significant training component which have been implemented by the International Labour Office relating to major ILO programmes. The second part of the paper covers selected technical cooperation projects pertaining to training for employment conducted by the International Training Centre of the ILO, Turin.

3. This paper is based on 19 projects. One of these projects has had major inputs from the Turin Centre as well as from the backstopping unit at headquarters; as such, the project is referred to in both sections of the paper. ¹

II. International Labour Office

A. Evaluation framework

4. This part of the report is based on 15 projects implemented between 1992 and 1999 which included a major training component and were related to major ILO programmes in the fields of skills development, self-employment, micro- and small enterprise development, gender promotion and vocational rehabilitation. The projects include 13 national and two subregional projects covering Africa (six projects), Asia (four projects), Eastern Europe (three projects) and Latin America (two projects). The budgets ranged from less than $500,000 to close to $6 million. The duration of the projects varied from 18 months to nine years.

5. The review is based on project evaluation reports, supplemented with materials from project documents, tripartite review reports and mid-term evaluation reports. The 15 evaluations include: nine internal evaluations (conducted by ILO officials) and six external evaluations (conducted by outside consultants).

6. The sample of projects with training as their major component includes projects of different size and duration from different regions, aimed at various direct recipients and intended beneficiaries, and illustrates the different training approaches and methodologies

¹ The Polish project was a joint technical cooperation project undertaken by ILO headquarters and the Turin Centre, for which the technical unit at headquarters was responsible for the overall project implementation strategy, workplan and project activities. Through an integrated approach, the Turin Centre provided inputs for the development of national capacity, especially training of trainers in modular curricula development, training of instructors in Modules of Employable Skills (MES) based training delivery, and training of employment officers. A full-time Chief Technical Adviser (CTA), supported by technical assistance provided by ILO headquarters, ensured that institutional development, sustainability and replication of project outputs was achieved.
of the ILO. The selected projects were required to have been completed and evaluation to have been carried out at the end of the project or, preferably, some years later. Most of the projects were evaluated upon their completion. Only two projects (Cambodia and Poland) were evaluated approximately two years after completion (ex post evaluation). The availability of comprehensive evaluation reports using the standard ILO evaluation framework also determined the selection of the sample.

B. Overview

Major objectives to be attained

7. The development objectives of the 15 selected projects were:
   - skills development and employability (Ukraine, Poland, Honduras I and Madagascar);
   - poverty alleviation and employment creation in small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs) and the informal sector for low-income groups (Belarus, United Republic of Tanzania I, Cambodia, Pakistan and Nepal);
   - improvement of the quality of employment and life of disadvantaged groups (eastern and southern Africa, United Republic of Tanzania II, Bangladesh, Namibia, southern Africa and Honduras II).

8. For these purposes, the main immediate objective was the strengthening and development of the capacity of the following categories of direct recipients:
   - national training institutions (Honduras I, Madagascar, Poland, and Ukraine);
   - micro- and small enterprise development organizations and business associations (Cambodia, Honduras II, southern and eastern Africa and United Republic of Tanzania I); and
   - various government agencies, NGOs and community-based organizations contributing to the integration of disadvantaged groups (the poor unemployed, people with disabilities, youth and women) into socio-economic development (Bangladesh, Belarus, Namibia, Nepal, Pakistan, southern Africa and United Republic of Tanzania II).

9. The main indicators of achievement of the immediate objective were: the number of staff members of the direct project recipients trained and capable of delivering training services; the number of intended beneficiaries trained by project trainers; and the sustainability of the strengthened organizations.

Types of training methodology and materials

10. The following ILO major training methodologies (see Appendix I) were used in the projects: Modules of Employable Skills (MES); Community-Based Rehabilitation (CBR); Community-Based Training (CBT); Start and Improve Your Business (SIYB); Modular Package on Gender, Poverty and Employment; and Grass-roots Management Training (GMT). These training materials have been developed and field-tested by the ILO over the past ten to 15 years.
**Intended beneficiaries and direct recipients**

11. The intended beneficiaries include a wide range of disadvantaged groups. Poor rural women were the main beneficiaries of the projects in Bangladesh, Pakistan, Nepal and United Republic of Tanzania II. Poor women, displaced persons and returnees, people with disabilities and demobilized soldiers were the main beneficiaries of the project in Cambodia, while the projects in Namibia and southern Africa were designed for people with disabilities (women and young children). Persons who had been made unemployed (as a result of structural adjustment programmes) were predominantly represented in the projects in Belarus, Poland and Ukraine. Micro- and small entrepreneurs in the formal and informal sectors are the intended beneficiaries of projects in eastern and southern Africa and Honduras II.

12. The direct recipients cover a broad cross-section of institutions and agencies, ranging from government ministries and agencies to employers and workers’ organizations, non-governmental organizations (NGOs), public and private small enterprise development organizations, business associations, organizations of people with disabilities and community-based and private sector organizations. All the projects selected have established working relations with a number of these institutions and agencies.

**Institutional development versus direct support projects**

13. Generally speaking, very few technical cooperation projects today are of the direct support type (i.e. projects which provide direct assistance to the intended beneficiaries through the provision of specific services). Most countries prefer projects with an institutional development focus, namely projects that reach the beneficiaries indirectly by supporting a wide range of public and private organizations and institutions (referred to as “direct recipients”). These latter projects have a long-term impact and reach a much larger number of intended beneficiaries overall than direct support projects.

14. All the 15 projects selected for the thematic evaluation focus on the development of institutional capacity. Training of trainers was the aim in most of the projects evaluated. In Poland, for example, 230 teachers and instructors from eligible institutions were trained. This made a crucial contribution to the sustainability of training delivery. In some cases, institutional development was accompanied by direct support to the intended beneficiaries as part of the training of the staff of the institutions and agencies (the direct recipients). This direct support component was thus an important secondary objective in some of the projects (for example, the projects in Bangladesh, Cambodia, Namibia, Pakistan and United Republic of Tanzania II).

**C. Evaluation: Main findings**

15. The main findings of this thematic evaluation are presented under: (1) project performance in terms of major achievements; and (2) project impact in terms of sustainability, replicability and long-term impact. The factors behind successful projects have also been examined and have been presented in the section on lessons learned.

**Performance and achievements**

16. This evaluation focuses on the achievements related to the immediate objective of capacity building through training, such as the capacity to formulate national policies on people with disabilities, or small enterprise development; the facilitation of access by small
enterprises to business development and financial services; the development of technologies suitable for rural women. Two aspects are considered: first, the capacity acquired by the direct recipients of the project in the area of training, including the number of staff members trained and the training topics; and second, the number of intended beneficiaries reached and trained by the project staff and their partners with a view to improving their employability, helping them engage in income-generating activities, or establishing a micro- or small enterprise.

(a) Capacity acquired by the direct recipients of the project

17. Capacity refers to the technical, administrative and managerial skills acquired by the staff of the institutions/agencies which allow them, after the completion of the project, to continue to deliver effective training services to the intended beneficiaries and adapt these services constantly to the nature of demand and the characteristics of their clients. The actual use of such capacity requires the availability of physical (premises, equipment, etc.) and financial resources, without which the project’s direct recipients will not be able to achieve their objectives.

18. The development of capacity, as defined above, was substantially achieved in the following six projects: Ukraine, where 23 institutions acquired the capacity to develop and use a modular training approach; Poland, where 50 staff members of labour offices and 230 trainers from 110 public and private training institutions were trained in employment-oriented adult vocational training design and delivery; Belarus, where the staff of employment services and of local training institutions were instructed in dealing with the training needs of unemployed people in depressed areas; United Republic of Tanzania I, where 26 staff members in a leading vocational training institution were instructed in the delivery of training in business skills to the owners of informal sector enterprises; Cambodia, where the staff of eight Local Economic Development Agencies (LEDAs) were instructed in the delivery of training in business skills and a variety of other services needed by small and micro-enterprises, and the Start and Improve Your Business (SIYB) project in eastern and southern Africa, where 34 private trainers, 180 staff members of 30 small enterprise development organizations and 15 master trainers were instructed in the application of the SIYB methodology and materials.

19. In some other projects, the development of such capacity was only partly achieved for a number of reasons, as illustrated by the following examples: the responsible ministry in Madagascar did not place the required physical and financial resources at the disposal of the project; delays in the Honduras I project led to only 60 per cent of the planned outputs being achieved, with an extension of the project therefore being recommended; and some of the counterpart staff trained under the Pakistan and Bangladesh projects were transferred to other government agencies towards the end of these projects, thus considerably reducing the capacity of the project’s direct recipients.

(b) Intended beneficiaries reached and trained by the projects

20. The number of intended beneficiaries reached and trained by selected projects (namely in Bangladesh, Cambodia, Namibia, Pakistan and United Republic of Tanzania I) alone is not necessarily an indicator of the complete success of a project because, as mentioned above, direct support to intended beneficiaries is only a component of the staff training provided for institutions and agencies (direct recipients). However, it may provide clues as to what can be expected in the long term. In fairly successful projects, thousands of intended beneficiaries were reached: 3,600 in Bangladesh, 10,000 in Cambodia, 4,500 for the SIYB project in eastern and southern Africa, and 7,300 in Poland.
**Impact**

21. The factors used for impact assessment are the extent to which the achievements of the immediate objectives are being sustained and replicated and are having a long-term impact on the development objectives.

(a) **Sustainability**

22. An indicator of sustainability is the capacity of direct recipients to deliver training services after the completion of the project. This capacity depends on four elements: institutional, managerial, technical and financial, the latter being by far the most difficult to achieve.

23. The sustainability of the delivery of training services cannot be assessed objectively at the end of a project. An *ex post* evaluation (usually two or more years after the completion of the project) is required for this purpose. Terminal evaluations, carried out at or near the end of the project may, however, provide some tentative indications on this issue, particularly where they make assessments of potential capacity of direct recipients.

24. Of the 15 selected projects, those in Ukraine, Poland, Cambodia, the SIYB project and United Republic of Tanzania I were able to achieve substantial or fair degree of potential sustainability. It would seem, from the available information, that the national NGO established with support from the Cambodia project achieved sustainability by the year 2000. It is functioning autonomously and without operational subsidies. The direct recipients in these projects were government agencies whose new programmes have been deemed sufficiently successful to merit continued public investment.

25. Four other projects were only partly successful in achieving a similar level of sustainability (Bangladesh and Honduras I, Madagascar and United Republic of Tanzania II). The remaining projects were essentially able to achieve the immediate objective of the direct support provided to the intended beneficiaries.

26. A review of the evaluation reports shows that three main factors determine the extent to which sustainability is achieved. First, the projects achieving sufficient sustainability incorporated in the project design the elements that help to secure project sustainability. The Cambodian project is exemplary from this point of view.

27. Second, the choice and commitment of the project’s direct recipients can play an important role. Projects with strong commitment from project partners seem to have not only performed better, but also to have achieved a fair degree of sustainability (for instance, Poland and Ukraine), whereas the sustainability of project achievements is doubtful where such strong commitment is lacking (for instance Madagascar).

28. Third, the cost recovery of exclusively training projects is notoriously low, even though it can be improved somewhat if a demand-driven training approach is used. With a view to ensuring financial sustainability, it may therefore be important for institutional development projects to incorporate other income-generating activities, such as the operation of a credit scheme or various other commercial services. For example, the Local Economic Development Agencies (LEDAs) in the Cambodian project were able to achieve financial sustainability by expanding their credit programme. Other projects, such as the SIYB project in eastern and southern Africa, were able to attract clients willing to cover a good part of the cost of training because they help them gain access to various sources of loans. Most of the selected projects did not adopt a similar approach. This explains why, although they may have reached some degree of technical and managerial sustainability, they will continue to depend on government or donor funding without – which, in the long term, they may not be able to continue their training activities.
(b) Replicability

29. The six projects (Ukraine, Belarus, Poland, Cambodia, the SIYB project and United Republic of Tanzania I) that have achieved most of their immediate objectives can be replicated, possibly with some minor adaptations to improve performance, as suggested in their evaluation reports. Indeed, most of these projects have already been replicated in a number of countries (in particular, the projects in Cambodia and Poland and the SIYB project in eastern and southern Africa). The approach and methodology developed through the implementation of the project in Poland have not only been replicated by in-country training providers, but have also been applied in the design and formulation of projects in other countries (including Belarus, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Ukraine and Zambia).

30. The successful SIYB project in eastern and southern Africa is itself partially the result of replication. The SIYB training materials were first developed and used in East Africa, while the first Start Your Business materials were piloted in Fiji. The project in eastern and southern Africa has continued to develop further training materials, producing generic international versions for use and adaptation all over the world.

(c) Long-term impact

31. Long-term impact relates to the achievement of development objectives and can only be assessed a few years after the completion of projects, using ex post evaluation. Although ex post evaluations are not usually carried out (due to the lack of funds allocated in projects), independent terminal evaluations sometimes include a tentative assessment of potential long-term impact. Such tentative impact studies were carried out for half of the projects selected for this exercise. However, in some cases, these impact studies are of poor quality and are not very reliable. In particular, little is known about the quality and sustainability of the newly created jobs and businesses. It is also unclear how the impact assessments were carried out, since it appears that baseline studies were not undertaken when the projects commenced.

32. The development of adult training in Poland fully achieved its long-term development objective of skills development and employability. Major public and private training providers (110 training institutions), as well as the Ministry of Labour and Social Policy and the Ministry of Education, are continuing to apply and adopt the results of the project more than three years after project completion. The modular training approach promoted through the project has been included in the National Strategy for Employment and Human Resources Development for 2000-06. While impact studies have not been carried out for the projects in Belarus and Ukraine, achievements during the life of the projects and the commitment of the governments concerned suggest that the expected long-term impact of these projects could be achieved.

33. For the remaining projects, insufficient information is available to draw any conclusions in this respect. However, the relatively limited achievements of a number of projects (in Pakistan, Nepal, Namibia and southern Africa) suggest that their long-term impact may be fairly limited.

D. Success factors and lessons learned

34. An attempt has been made to isolate some of the factors normally associated with successful projects. The projects selected for this thematic evaluation have been analysed from this viewpoint and the following is a résumé of the lessons learned.
Project formulation and design

35. Generally speaking, the success of a project depends to a large extent on the quality of the project formulation and design. To ensure quality, it is necessary to have: clear links between objectives, outputs and activities; clear indicators of achievement; realistic development and immediate objectives; realistic duration and project resources in accordance with the planned outputs; and inclusion of elements to secure the sustainability of project achievements. Even though these aspects are required by the ILO Procedures on Project Formulation and Design, it was found that a number of projects covered by the present thematic evaluation did not meet all of the above requirements, which may partly explain why some of them did not fully achieve their intended objectives.

36. Sustainability is often difficult to achieve in poorly designed projects. It is therefore important to incorporate into the project design those factors, as seen in the successful projects in Cambodia and Poland (see boxes 1 and 2), that help secure the sustainability of training projects for employment, namely: undertaking preliminary studies before deciding whether to launch a new project; high-quality project formulation; the early consideration of long-term impact; the use of an integrated approach; and the adoption of a demand-driven training approach. Consideration of such issues after the project has started will only yield limited results.

Box 1: Poland

In Poland, the ILO assisted the Ministry of Labour and Social Policy (MOLSP) to implement the “Development of adult training” project, financed under a World Bank loan between 1993 and 1998, with a total budget of $3.5 million. The project was designed with the objectives of improving productivity, promoting inward investment and enhancing labour force mobility by retraining unemployed people and improving the skills of low/semi-skilled workers to increase their ability to cope with structural unemployment. By the end of the project, a national network of training providers had been established which were capable of delivering flexible employment-oriented modular training programmes based on the ILO’s Modules of Employable Skills (MES) approach, which were closely linked to direct redeployment and/or job placement and with the labour market requirements. As a follow-up activity to this project, a national information and communication network of modular training providers will be established, with the aim of strengthening institutional capability to implement competency-based modular training and of developing new training methods and materials.

The following factors have contributed to the project’s success:

- pre-assessment and project appraisal were carried out by the World Bank;
- an ILO project formulation team worked very closely with the Turin Centre for the formulation of a fully fledged project document;
- a project start-up mission by the ILO, which included the long-term CTA, created a timely and professional project implementation unit;
- the MOSLP, as a credible partner, as well as other national participating institutions, both public and private, played a key role in the production and implementation of project outputs;
- through the formation of national curricula development teams, created upon completion of the train-the-trainer courses, national institutional capacity was established and long-term sustainability was ensured;
- the integration of the national and regional employment offices, as one of the project’s immediate development objectives, supported the demand-driven employment-oriented approach of the project and linked training with the labour market;
- cost-effective training courses, based on flexible modular curricula design, were contracted by employment offices for more than 7,000 unemployed during the period 1998-99;
- the ILO’s involvement and the direct contribution of all key national stakeholders, as acknowledged by the Polish Government and the World Bank.
Box 2: Cambodia

The Small and Informal Sector Promotion project in Cambodia was implemented between May 1992 and December 1995 with a total budget of $4.4 million, following a period of more than 20 years of civil war. It aimed to contribute to Cambodia’s long-term socio-economic development and to raise the living standards of disadvantaged, war-affected population groups through the promotion of small enterprise development. By the end of the project an autonomous national NGO, the Association of Cambodian Local Economic Development Agencies (ACLEDA) had been created which was well on its way to financial sustainability and had already assisted some 10,000 clients, of whom 90 per cent were women. A follow-up project strengthened and expanded ACLEDA’s financial services. ACLEDA is at present a major force for poverty reduction and employment creation in the country.

The following factors have contributed to the project’s success:

- project formulation included thorough assessments of the institutional environment and services available to micro- and small enterprises, and of the needs and expectations of one of its main client groups (demobilized soldiers). A period of preparatory assistance allowed the ILO to gain more in-depth knowledge of the environment before the project document was finalized;

- project design and backstopping by the ILO allowed sufficient flexibility for the project team to react to opportunities as well as to threats as they arose. The establishment of ACLEDA, for instance, had not been foreseen in the project document;

- in the absence of credible partners among NGOs and in the Government, the project supported the establishment of a partner with characteristics that would allow for the business-like delivery of demand-driven services. Cambodian project staff, who established ACLEDA and were responsible for service delivery, were carefully selected, trained and motivated and developed a maximal sense of ownership;

- the business training and credit services evolved on the basis of the response by clients. Over the project's life, business training became increasingly concrete, participative and of short duration. Different target groups were offered different training courses. Training was part of an integrated programme. Trainees could gain access to credit to realize their business plans. ACLEDA’s services formed part of the Employment Generation Programme and were linked with those of other projects;

- geographical areas were targeted where economic opportunities were arising due to the construction of irrigation schemes and roads under a labour-based public works project. Clients could also have access to services from a vocational training project;

- with the establishment of ACLEDA in early 1993, the issue of the institutionalization and sustainability of services was addressed early. Developing ACLEDA as an autonomous organization became one of the project’s main tasks. In view of the organization’s importance today, this has been a worthwhile investment.

(a) Preliminary assessment of socio-economic and other conditions at project sites

37. This type of assessment is carried out prior to developing the project design and shows whether the minimum conditions exist for a reasonably successful project. However, this type of assessment is not generally carried out in a systematic manner, since funding is not usually available for the purpose. Preliminary assessments are at best made after the start of the project in the context of its first or pilot phase. Such assessments are useful only if the findings are really taken into account in the formulation of the project, which may require flexibility on the part of the donor agency. It is very rare that a decision is taken to discontinue a project in the event of a negative assessment.

38. For skills development to lead to future employment, training must be based on an assessment of the labour market and business situation. Such a “demand-driven” training approach has to be guided by labour market needs and should adjust the various areas of training to the real and immediate requirements of employers and/or opportunities for self-employment. The development and delivery of a “demand-driven” training system therefore requires the gathering and analysis of adequate information on the labour market and business situation. Training needs assessments should also be undertaken with a view to gauging the demand for the various types of training and to adapting existing training.
materials to the characteristics of the potential trainees. This type of training is likely to be more successful because it responds to a clearly felt need and is adapted to the requirements of the trainees.

39. Such assessments/studies were carried out by the six projects that performed well as part of a first or pilot project phase. The United Republic of Tanzania I project benefited a great deal from an earlier inter-departmental project on the informal sector in the United Republic of Tanzania and was able to build on the experience gained by this project. Similarly, the Cambodia project successfully started the operational phase of the project after a preparatory assistance phase. Taking into account the lessons learned in previous projects or phases is also important. Projects in Pakistan, southern Africa and Nepal that were carried out over two phases, for example, did not learn from the mistakes of the first phase and only achieved limited overall performance by the end of the second phase of the project.

(b) Adoption of an integrated approach

40. With few exceptions, skills development training should be part of an integrated project covering a number of components, since training by itself is usually of limited usefulness. For example, to ensure that training is linked with labour market needs, an integrated approach was applied through the involvement of employment services in three projects (Poland, Ukraine and Belarus). Business management training should be linked to other services required for the establishment of a successful business, such as components designed to: facilitate access to various business development services and/or financial services (as in the case of the Cambodia project); promote an enabling business environment; and improve productivity. Alternatively, the training project could establish close collaboration with other projects which cover the missing components, instead of partly duplicating such projects. The preliminary assessments/studies mentioned earlier should provide useful clues on the various aspects that could be dealt with in an integrated fashion by the project.

41. Only a few evaluations refer to unforeseen constraints which might have been avoided if an integrated approach had been adopted at the beginning of the project. Three projects (Pakistan, Bangladesh and United Republic of Tanzania II) suffered a lack of funds for micro-loans, preventing the projects from reaching a larger number of the intended beneficiaries. The evaluation report of the southern African project for the benefit of people with disabilities recommends that a project extension should include additional components related to education and health, and should involve additional United Nations agencies (WHO, UNESCO, UNICEF). The evaluation report for the women entrepreneurs project in Nepal also recommends that any project extension should include a literacy component, without which the project would have a limited impact.

(c) Demand-driven training

42. The evaluation reports clearly show that demand-driven training has been altogether more successful than training approaches that were not targeted at demand. Projects using Modules of Employable Skills (MES) in Poland, Belarus and Ukraine, which were evaluated as successful, all focused on matching training with emerging areas of demand by employers for new skills, which was regarded as an important factor in the development of employable skills.
Project implementation

(a) Selection and involvement of direct recipients

43. The selection of institutions and agencies as the direct recipients of projects is of particular importance for the success of institutional development projects. In general terms, in the case of institutional development projects, care should be taken, wherever possible, to build on whatever is already in place, rather than imposing structures that are totally new. In some cases, project formulation requires the selection of specific local institutions (government agencies, NGOs, business associations). In other cases, it is possible to choose from a number of potential institutions and agencies. A faulty choice, it would seem, not only reduces the chances of success, but also makes it difficult to change in the course of implementation. A comprehensive investigation of potential direct recipients should reduce these risks.

44. The 15 selected projects worked with a variety of national institutions and agencies, including government agencies, social partners, NGOs, associations of producers and community-based organizations. Analysis of the evaluation reports indicates, however, that there is no consistent correlation between the types of institutions/agencies selected and the performance of the projects. For example, government agencies were involved in projects which performed both well and poorly. The same applies to the social partners and NGOs. Other factors therefore need to be taken into consideration.

45. The three successful projects in Poland, Ukraine and Belarus involved a mix of government agencies and private sector training organizations. The success of these projects can be partly attributed to the commitment of the government agencies to provide full technical and financial support to the projects over the long term. A similar project in Madagascar did not perform so well, in view of the limited commitment of the authorities to the project. The successful project in Cambodia created a new national NGO. Although the project operated under the umbrella of the Government, it had no operational linkages to any government agency and was implemented with a high degree of autonomy. This allowed it to develop demand-driven services and rapidly build a national capacity to deliver services in a country devastated by civil war. The SIYB project in eastern and southern Africa involved a mix of NGOs and government agencies, including small enterprise development institutions and private trainers. The evaluation report indicates that the latter have been altogether more successful than the government institutions in achieving some level of cost recovery. The urban employment promotion project in the United Republic of Tanzania also worked with a broad mix of organizations. This allowed it to achieve most of its objectives, despite the weak performance of some of its partners.

46. In only one regional project (southern Africa) were workers’ and employers’ organizations involved as direct recipients alongside government agencies and NGOs. In Poland, Ukraine and Belarus, workers’ and employers’ organizations were consulted and associated with the training-cum-employment-oriented activities of the projects.

47. Even though all the projects involved a mix of direct recipients as partners, only a few of them played an active role in the success of the project. According to evaluation reports, the direct recipients that generally perform fairly well are those with staff members who are motivated and directly interested in the success of the project.

48. Some of the projects which involved government agencies as direct recipients (Pakistan, Bangladesh, Nepal) suffered from frequent transfers of trained staff to other governmental agencies and a wide array of bureaucratic constraints inherent in this type of organization.
These problems clearly do not concern all governmental agencies, as illustrated by the good performance of the projects in Poland, Ukraine and Belarus.

49. In conclusion, the interest and commitment of the staff of institutions and agencies to the success of the project are important. Strong commitment to the success of the project is often assured when they have something to gain directly from the project. In addition, continuity of staff trained by the project can contribute greatly to project sustainability.

50. The mix of public and non-public institutions contributes to some extent to the successful performance of training for employment projects. Such public and non-public partnerships need to be closely monitored and assessed for further replication.

(b) Choice of training methodologies and materials

51. The use of appropriate training methodologies and materials can contribute greatly to the successful implementation and sustainability of projects. The ILO has developed a number of training methodologies adapted to the characteristics of various categories of beneficiaries. These materials have been developed and field-tested in a large number of countries by ILO headquarters technical units in collaboration with the ILO field structure and/or the Turin Centre.

52. Most of the projects that performed relatively well (eastern and southern Africa, United Republic of Tanzania I, Poland, Ukraine and Belarus) used one or a combination of these field-tested ILO training methodologies and materials. These projects also benefited from the technical support provided by the technical units which developed the materials. Project personnel with experience of the materials were able, in some cases, to make extensive adaptations in order to tailor existing training materials to the country-specific socio-economic situation, priority needs and direct beneficiaries.

53. Additional training materials, covering new generic and advanced skills, were also developed during the implementation of some of the projects. In Poland, for example, training packages on core competencies for lifelong learning, self-employment, computer-assisted design (CAD) and computer-numeric control (CNC) were developed to respond to new technologies and the emerging needs of the world of work.

54. To recapitulate, projects which made use of proven training methodologies and materials developed by the ILO and adapted them to the social, economic and cultural environment of each specific project situation were found to be quite successful. The development of new training methods and materials during project implementation is justified only in cases where these methods and materials cover new approaches and/or competency areas.

(c) Impact assessment or ex post evaluation

55. Ex post evaluation is required to assess long-term impact of institutional development projects, since their full impact does not materialize fully until a few years after the project is completed. Such studies cannot be carried out unless funds are provided from the project budget, from other sources, or from a combination of both.

56. Impact assessment studies require baseline studies to be undertaken before the start of the project with a view to comparing the pre-project to the end-of-project situation. Furthermore, the projects need to establish an efficient monitoring system for the regular collection of the information required for such impact studies. Very few of the projects under review undertook the baseline studies that would ensure the reliability of impact assessment. The monitoring systems were also not very effective.
III. International Training Centre of the ILO

57. This section of the paper assesses the training of trainer programmes related to projects carried out by the Turin Centre during the period 1990-2000.

58. The projects were selected on the basis of geographical coverage, size, target groups and the technical aspects of their modalities of delivery. Five projects were considered for this review. The final sample included one national project each in Africa, Asia, Europe, Latin America and Arab States. The sample includes four completed and one ongoing project. The size of the projects range from a large technical assistance project ($3.3 million) to small phased projects ($140,000). This assessment is based on four course reports, six interim reports, three final reports and two impact reports.

59. All the projects used the training of trainer approach for capacity building, which is one of the major activities of the Turin Centre. Three projects covered vocational training (Namibia, Poland, Yemen) and two projects consisted of small and medium-sized enterprise development (Chile, Viet Nam). The three vocational training projects were designed to strengthen the recipient’s institutional capacity in the fields of curriculum development and training delivery. In addition to national and private training institutions, the curriculum development process involved employer and professional associations. The two small enterprise development projects were designed to improve the institutions’ capacity to provide consultancy and support services to enterprises. The objective of the project in Viet Nam was the development of women’s entrepreneurship. The target groups included representatives from central, provincial and private enterprise development institutions, employers’ and workers’ associations, provincial chambers of commerce and credit institutions.

A. Overview

Development objectives of the projects

60. The vocational training projects in Namibia and Yemen were designed to improve the access of school leavers, retrained adults and the unemployed to the labour market. The Polish project sought to improve the qualifications of low/semi-skilled workers, enhance labour force mobility and increase the ability of workers to react to structural unemployment. The project in Chile was designed to establish a technical advisory and consultancy system for small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs) through institution building. The project in Viet Nam was intended to promote women’s entrepreneurship.

2 List of projects reviewed:
(a) Skills development in rural communities – adapted for Namibia (ECC contract 89/9531/12);
(b) Fellowship programme for the project: (POL/93/01/IBRD) Development of adult training (TOR) – Poland;
(c) Technical assistance to the vocational training project (CR 2793/YEM) – Yemen;
(d) Training of management consultants and technical assistance to micro- and small enterprises – Chile;
(e) Promotion of women’s entrepreneurship – Viet Nam.
Immediate objectives

61. All three vocational training projects focused on developing the pedagogical competencies of selected core trainers who already had sufficient technical (trade-related) skills. The objective was also for core trainers to be able to train other trainers and to develop or adapt their training of trainer tools to local languages. The pedagogical competencies included training needs assessment, curriculum development, training delivery methods and skill testing. The project in Poland sought to develop the capacity of curriculum development (CD) teams in 21 occupational fields to design and deliver modular vocational training programmes based on the ILO’s Modules of Employable Skills (MES) approach.

62. The project in Chile was designed to develop the training and advisory skills of SERCOTEC\(^3\) trainers and consultants to assist enterprises. The Vietnamese sought to mainstream gender concerns into existing SME promotion programmes.

B. Evaluation of outcomes

63. The objectives of the training of trainer components in the projects in Poland, Yemen, Chile and Viet Nam were fully achieved. In Namibia, the impact assessment suggests that about two-thirds of the objectives were achieved.

Major achievements

64. Two separate types of outputs were produced by the projects. The first consists of the trainers trained and the second the outputs produced by the trainers upon their return to their workplace. Some quantitative examples may be useful to illustrate the multiplier effect of the training of trainers. In Poland, Turin Centre experts trained 230 teachers and trainers (both women and men) who were grouped, after completion of the training programme, into 21 curriculum development (CD) teams covering 21 occupational areas. The CD teams produced modular employment-oriented training programmes, including relevant training support materials (4,300 instructional units) for more than 110 jobs in all sectors of the economy. The Yemen project trained 12 core trainers, who in turn trained 82 members of technical committees and completed all of the planned new curricula. The project in Chile trained 16 small enterprise development executives of SERCOTEC who in turn trained 370 SME consultants.

65. For the Viet Nam project, the Turin Centre trained six senior representatives of the chamber of commerce, the Vietnam Women’s Union and private enterprise development centres. On their return to Viet Nam, the senior representatives’ institutions organized 19 seminars for a total of 742 women entrepreneurs and gender focal points of SME development institutions.

Impact, sustainability and replicability of projects

66. The Polish project achieved a remarkable impact that went beyond the adult training system. The MES approach developed under the Ministry of Labour and Social Policy was also adopted by the Ministry of Education in the Vocational Education and Training Reform in Poland (1999-2000). The project established 13 lead institutions, which

\(^3\) SERCOTEC: Servicio de Cooperación Técnica (a private corporation which supports SME development).
developed the capacity to modernize the MES approach and to expand the development and implementation of adult training programmes on a sustainable basis without external support. The experience gained in this project should be made available by the ILO to future projects of a similar nature.

67. The vocational training project in Yemen is still under implementation. A quantitative and qualitative assessment was carried out in April 2000, two years after the training of curriculum development teams had taken place. Curriculum development continued on a sustainable basis after the international experts left. According to the mid-term review, the curriculum sub-component of the project achieved impressive qualitative results. Another survey assessed the achievements and difficulties related to the preparation, approval, printing, distribution and implementation of new programmes. The results of the survey provide the basis for improving sustainability and replicability.

68. The final evaluation of the project in Chile in December 1999 included a survey which examined the quality and relevance of the advisory services provided by the consultants trained by SERCOTEC development executives. The interest and satisfaction of entrepreneurs who received and paid for the advisory services confirmed the impact of the project. Negotiations are under way with the sponsor to replicate the project in the other regions in Chile not covered in the previous project.

69. The final evaluation of the project in Viet Nam confirmed the existence of institutional capacity in local chambers of commerce, private development institutions and the Vietnam Women’s Union for the organization of gender-related training and guidance to business and enterprises on a sustainable basis.

70. Ex post evaluations were undertaken for two projects between two and three years after their completion. The Ministry of Labour and Social Policy assessed the Polish experience in designing and implementing vocational training based on MES. The findings presented in a report confirm the validity and sustainability of the work started under the adult training project. Since 1998, vocational training based on modular curricula produced by the adult training project has been offered on the free training market. Twenty new training providers have confirmed that traditional curricula are gradually being replaced by modular courses. Two years after the project, MES programmes increased in number from 100 to 156 and are training approximately 3,500 persons a year. Employment placement rates related to MES courses vary between 60 and 100 per cent, according to the occupation.

71. The ex post evaluation of the project in Namibia was conducted by interviewing participants who were trained in Turin and their employers. At the time of training, most participants did not have any employment. A subsequent survey traced almost all the participants and found that two-thirds had secured employment, including self-employment. Half of them confirmed that the training was directly relevant to their work. Of those who considered that the training had been relevant to their jobs, 80 per cent felt that it had provided them with much of what they needed to perform their tasks. Some 83 per cent of the employers who sent their staff to attend the course in Turin said that they had witnessed an improvement.

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C. Lessons learned

At the stage of project design

- Vocational training projects, in which curriculum development teams were first trained and then monitored at their workplace during development work, were successful. Selection of national trainers for such teams should therefore be based not only on their technical expertise, but also on their availability and commitment to work in teams, possibly on a full-time basis at a predetermined location over a long period.

- A sectoral needs assessment and an institutional capacity audit of SME development/support institutions should be carried out prior to training business advisers and consultants.

- Planning a sequence of small separate but related projects is a valid alternative to formulating a comprehensive project proposal spanning several years and requiring a sponsor to commit considerable financial resources. Such an approach enables a recipient to negotiate and plan a flexible programme in phases with the donor and the provider of technical assistance. Each phase represents a mini-project which includes an evaluation and a proposal for the next one.

- When training of trainers is chosen as a means of action in an SME development programme, the project design needs to include a support system to monitor and backstop the field work of newly trained consultants, who should not be left on their own. An on-line help desk for business consultants, combined with a database of national case studies would be a practical means of providing such a system.

- In order to generate quality and competition in consultancy services to enterprises, projects should also include the establishment of a certification system for consultants, combined with the promotion of professional associations of SME consultants.

- Promotion of women’s entrepreneurship is likely to lead to more substantial results if gender issues are mainstreamed into programmes which promote small enterprise development. Training of trainers programmes designed for this purpose should include representatives of various actors, such as SME development institutions, chambers of commerce, women’s associations and unions, employers’ associations and credit institutions.

Project management and implementation

(a) Training

- Training of trainers is a cost-effective means of strengthening institutional capacity and leads to sustainable development.

- Group training is recommended when the project is required to establish operational units staffed with work teams. Among other benefits, group training develops teamwork rules and procedures, teamwork attitudes and homogeneous quality standards.

- In vocational training projects, the upgrading of the technical skills of trainers should be organized through exposure to industrial experiences by means of individual
fellowship placements. The creation of small groups with similar needs allows a reduction in individual fellowship costs.

- Customized distance-learning programmes are a cost-effective means of upgrading individual knowledge and skills related to, but not limited to, training design/delivery/evaluation, management and or business advisory services.

- Training in the Turin Centre may be a convenient option if the training is combined with an international study tour in Europe. Training in the Turin Centre enables the course manager to monitor quality assurance, since most of the training delivery factors are directly under his/her control.

(b) Monitoring and follow-up

- Training of trainers alone is not sufficient. It is of the utmost importance to monitor and assist trainers in their work, on their return, for the time that is necessary so that they can perform their duties on a sustainable basis without external assistance.

- Monitoring the progress of a project at a distance and with short missions is a cost-effective alternative to assigning international experts and/or consultants to the project. This approach has been used to implement a sequence of separate, but related small projects with great success.

- The use of national consultants to bridge the gap between short-term assignments of international experts in order to ensure continuity and support to ongoing development work has proved to be effective. This approach contains costs and allows for flexibility in providing international consultants as and when required, without interrupting the project’s development work between assignments.

(c) Coordinating curriculum development with procurement

- One of the most difficult tasks is to coordinate the development of new curricula with the procurement and installation of new equipment at vocational training centres. Equipment lists and specifications should be based on new curricula that have been developed on the basis of a needs analysis.

**Sustainability and replicability**

- The training of trainers approach to institutional capacity building is more likely, through the multiplier effect, to produce a broader sustainable skill basis in a shorter time than the direct training approach. But to facilitate the sustainability of the results, a training of trainers programme requires the recipient organization to create the conditions and to provide the means to enable the trained staff to carry out the tasks for which they have been trained. The translation of training of trainer materials into the local language provides a knowledge base and allows replicability of training as and when required.

IV. Concluding observations

A. International Labour Office

72. The sustainability and long-term impact of a project depend on the quality of the project design. In view of the weaknesses observed in the design of some projects in the sample,
the ILO should increase its efforts to train ILO field and headquarters staff in project design and evaluation, as well as in the quality control of project design. Mechanisms to feed the lessons learned back into project design should also be strengthened.

73. Technical units at ILO headquarters, in the field, and in the Turin Centre should join together in reviewing and updating the existing training methodologies and materials to ensure their wider dissemination among the ILO constituents and staff involved in technical cooperation.

74. To improve the design and implementation of future institutional development projects, particularly those experimenting with a new training approach and/or an integrated approach, it is important to go beyond terminal evaluations and invest in long-term impact assessments. For this purpose, the ILO should undertake research on impact assessment methodology.

75. Project budgets do not normally include an allocation for *ex post* evaluation including impact assessment studies. The ILO should come to a better understanding with donor agencies on the need for longer term impact studies and up-front investments (for example, for preliminary assessment studies) in order to ensure that the conditions are sound for particular types of training interventions.

76. Two main InFocus programmes will be taking the lead in the ILO in the field of training for employment.

*InFocus Programme on Skills, Knowledge and Employability*

77. The InFocus Programme on Skills, Knowledge and Employability (IFP/SKILLS) aims to link skills development with future employment and access to training for employment. An integrated and demand-driven training approach is being developed on the basis of an assessment of labour market needs. The effectiveness of such an approach also depends on the capacity of the services which facilitate navigation and job brokering in labour markets, such as the delivery of training services to jobseekers and to groups facing particular challenges, including women, people with disabilities, as well as young and older workers.

78. Future technical cooperation projects designed and developed by this InFocus programme will promote and implement the skills development approach in combination with the strengthening and development of employment services, with particular emphasis on capacity building in the areas of employment counselling, vocational guidance and labour market information systems. More effective use of information and communication technologies in both formal and informal training delivery is an important development task.

79. In developing new technical cooperation projects, IFP/SKILLS collaborates closely with the Turin Centre with a view to making use of their respective experience and expertise.

*InFocus Programme on Boosting Employment through Small Enterprise Development*

80. The title chosen for the InFocus Programme on Boosting Employment through Small Enterprise Development (IFP/SEED) implies the need to be able to measure employment changes resulting from ILO training (and other) activities. Detailed research is currently being undertaken on employment impact and on testing new impact assessment methods. It
is anticipated that this research will include some *ex post* evaluation work. One goal of this work is to identify and validate low-cost methods of measuring employment impact which can be incorporated into new projects on a routine basis.

81. The ILO has invested in the development of a wide range of high-quality training materials in recent years, and it is therefore particularly important that ILO constituents and staff should be aware of what is available and should have easy access to it. The IFP/SEED Programme has recently placed information, including various training materials, on its website (http://www.ilo.org/seed). The IFP/SKILLS Programme has established an International Network of Vocational Training Providers to facilitate the exchange of available training materials between countries which have already received assistance and ongoing technical cooperation projects. An on-line data bank and a website are currently being established to facilitate interaction among training providers in different countries.

B. International Training Centre of the ILO, Turin

82. One principal lesson emerging from the experience presented in the paper is that the effect and impact of projects are greater to the extent that project interventions are accompanied by additional measures. “Stand alone” training or “stand alone” training of trainers can achieve its own immediate learning objectives. However, the newly trained trainers need an enabling environment and receptive conditions, policies and resources to apply their knowledge and skills. Conversely, new policies and practices resulting from ILO technical cooperation projects would have a much greater chance of permanence and effectiveness (in its widest sense) if their stakeholders and *owners* were part and parcel of the exercise and if the interventions of the Office and the Turin Centre were well articulated and complementary.

83. However, only one of the projects reviewed enjoyed full cooperation and concertation between the Office, on the one hand, and the Turin Centre, on the other. This was the case in Poland. There, the Office managed the project and provided the CTA; the Turin Centre was fully involved in the design of the project, and managed and executed the implementation of the training component. In the case of the other projects, the Office and the Turin Centre followed separate paths.

84. Joint work by the Office and the Turin Centre will be more successful in so far as it exploits the comparative advantages of each partner; the Office has the advantage of being able to provide technical assistance on policies and practices for training for employment and, in so doing, the Office can rely on the Turin Centre’s capacities in the fields of training and learning methodology to make the ILO’s mission and expertise go further and be more effective.

85. In addition, over time, the Office and the Turin Centre have developed separate capacities for the mobilization of funds for their technical assistance and training projects. Both parts of the Organization have privileged relationships with multilateral and bilateral donors and funding agencies. Recently, improved contact between the units responsible for resource mobilization has resulted in clearer guidelines for strengthened collaboration. It is expected that these will increase outreach, improve effectiveness and reduce overlap and inefficiency.

86. Taking the above into consideration, the Turin Centre’s Five-Year Development Plan (2001-05) aims to achieve a closer association with the Organization as a whole. The Turin Centre’s activities and products are becoming increasingly interrelated and integrated, especially with the InFocus programmes. They provide these programmes with a wider reach and broader impact.
87. In the area of training for employment, the Turin Centre’s programmes mirror the orientations of IFP/SKILLS and IFP/SEED. The Turin Centre aims to build capacity among ILO constituents and disseminate ILO research findings, especially in developing countries and in Central and Eastern Europe.

88. As far as IFP/SKILLS is concerned, the Turin Centre’s activities include developing understanding of the methods and practices used for the design and implementation of more effective employment and skills development policies. The current priority areas are: employment policy development, labour market information systems, employment services, training policy analysis, reorienting training systems, employment of disadvantaged groups, and decent work in the informal sector. Joint work, for example, in the Jobs for Africa Programme, ensures that the Turin Centre’s training and capacity-building work contributes to wider organizational goals.

89. As far as IFP/SEED is concerned, the Turin Centre’s activities focus on policies and practices which will help in boosting self-employment and self-employability. The current priority areas are entrepreneurship education, enterprise development policies and strategies, business development services, promotion of women’s entrepreneurship, socially responsible enterprise promotion and privatization, microfinance and SME credit schemes, and decent work in the informal sector. Joint work, for example, in the annual Business Development Seminar, ensures that the target groups of the Turin Centre and the Organization are interconnected and merged, and that learning becomes embedded in policy development and institutional capacity building.

Appendix I

ILO training methodologies and materials

1. **Modules of Employable Skills (MES)**

   The ILO’s Modules of Employable Skills (MES) training methodology was elaborated in the *MES Handbook*, as well as in the *MES Staff Development Package* (Chrociel and Plumbridge, 1992) and is considered to be a modern systems approach to employment-oriented training development and delivery. It is an appropriate tool for competency-based training design based on the principle that the actual demands for skills in the labour market and the real training needs of individuals should be taken into account. It facilitates the acquisition by a trainee of practical and social skills and related knowledge needed to perform to the required standard in a given employment or self-employment situation. The MES approach supports lifelong learning for decent work, which requires increasingly flexible systems of training delivery, which are a major feature of MES. Based on project experience (lessons learned), the methodology has been further refined. The use of modern information technology has been added in the process of modernizing and enriching the MES approach.

2. **Community-Based Rehabilitation (CBR)**

   The Community-Based Rehabilitation (CBR) methodology is a strategy, within the context of general community development, for rehabilitation, the equalization of opportunities and the social inclusion of people with disabilities. CBR is implemented through the combined efforts of people with disabilities themselves, their families and communities, and appropriate health, education, vocational and social services. A multi-sectoral approach is used in CBR, with the ILO’s involvement in the areas of training and employment complementing health and educational inputs by other agencies, and, particularly, WHO and UNESCO. In relation to training, emphasis is placed on including people with disabilities in regular job training programmes as a preparation for mainstream employment.

3. **Community-Based Training (CBT)**

   The Community-Based Training (CBT) methodology is based on a systems approach consisting of the analysis, design, implementation and evaluation of training services in support of gainful employment in the urban informal sector and in rural areas. It is designed to assist government agencies, non-governmental organizations and training institutions to provide training for self-employment and income generation. Emphasis is placed on participatory approaches involving the community at all stages of the training process and the provision of practical skills for pre-identified employment opportunities. It also increases the productivity of those engaged in informal activities by upgrading their skills and improving the organization and management of production.

4. **Start and Improve Your Business (SIYB)**

   The SIYB training programme offers a sustainable and cost-effective method of reaching a substantial number of small-scale entrepreneurs who have not been exposed to business training and of equipping them with the basic management skills needed in a competitive environment. Well over 150,000 businessmen and women in 83 member States have been reached by this ILO programme, which is implemented through intermediary institutions such as employers’ organizations, chambers of commerce, national trade union training centres and women’s NGOs. Some 15 donor countries have financed the ILO’s efforts in introducing and sustaining SIYB worldwide and 40 countries are currently benefiting from ILO-SIYB projects. IFP/SEED introduces the SIYB programme by training the trainers employed by these organizations and advises on how the programme can be implemented in a sustainable manner. The local trainers in turn train aspiring and existing entrepreneurs on how to start up and/or manage their businesses. By applying this multiplier strategy the programme benefits a large number of aspiring and existing entrepreneurs.
5. **Gender, poverty and employment**

The Modular Package on Gender, Poverty and Employment, which is designed for policymakers, planners, programme managers and implementers, workers and employers and other social partners, is an instrument/methodology for awareness-raising, training and the exchange of information in the interlinked policy areas of employment promotion, poverty reduction and gender equality. Using a gender-based framework, the Modular Package is based on the analysis of policy issues, strategies, lessons and good practices from national and subregional experiences in eight thematic areas: broad links between employment, poverty and gender; organization and negotiating capacity; access to assets; access to training; access to credit; expansion of wage employment; social protection; and social funds.

6. **Grass-roots Management Training (GMT)**

The Grass-roots Management Training (GMT) approach consists of a business training methodology specially developed for the needs of micro-entrepreneurs in Africa. It targets existing entrepreneurs with limited literacy skills with a view to helping them improve their enterprises and raise their incomes.
Appendix II

List of projects reviewed/implemented by the International Labour Office

1. NAM/95/M01/NOR Human resources development for community-based rehabilitation of persons with disabilities – Namibia;
2. PAK/94/M01 NET Training and employment for rural women in NWFP – Pakistan;
3. BDG/92/M01/NOR Technologies for rural employment with special reference to women and sustainable development – Bangladesh;
4. UKR/96/007 Introduction of flexible training programmes for the unemployed (summary project evaluation reports and TPR) – Ukraine;
5. RAF/92/M18/FRG Improved livelihood for disabled women: A regional promotion programme for southern African countries – interregional;
6. MAG/93/M01/IDA Appui à la création et au développement du Centre de ressources des personnels des établissements d’enseignement technique et professionnel – CERES – Madagascar;
7. BYE/98/002 Poverty reduction through self-employment promotion in wealth-generating sectors (not yet coded) – Belarus;
8. POL/93/01/IBR Development of adult training (TOR No. 9) – Poland;
9. HON/96/M01/NET Proyecto de Apoyo al Centro Nacional de Educación para el Trabajo – CENET – Honduras;
10. URT/94/M04/NET Action to assist rural women – United Republic of Tanzania;
11. URT/97/019 Integrated urban employment promotion – United Republic of Tanzania I;
   URT/95/M03/NET Action to assist rural women – United Republic of Tanzania II;
12. RAF/97/M11/SID Start and Improve Your Business programme for entrepreneurs in southern and eastern Africa: Phase Two;
13. NEP/88/050 Developing women’s entrepreneurship in tourism – Nepal;
14. HON/95/M01/NET Assistance in the formulation and implementation of a micro- and small enterprise promotion policy – Honduras;
15. CMB/92/010 Small enterprise and informal sector promotion – Cambodia.