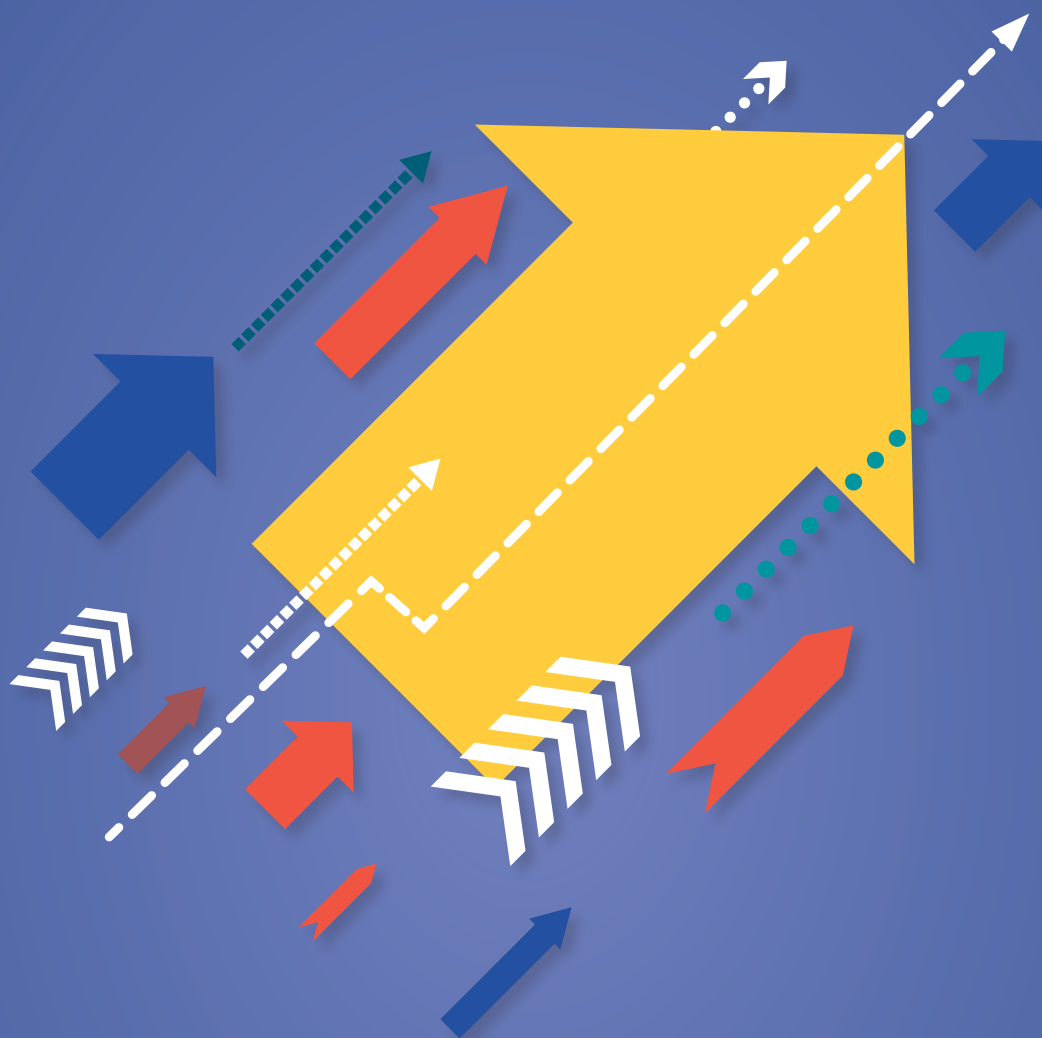




International
Labour
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Enterprise
Formalization



FORMALIZE YOUR BUSINESS

IN THE GAMBIA

TRAINER'S GUIDE



AGENZIA ITALIANA
PER LA COOPERAZIONE
ALLO SVILUPPO



TABLE OF CONTENTS

INTRODUCTION	4
About the "formalize your business" training course	4
Objectives of the Guide	5
GENERAL CONSIDERATIONS ON ADULT EDUCATION	6
SESSION PLANS	9
Indicative Program	9
SESSION 0: INTRODUCTION TO THE TRAINING	10
SESSION I: GENERAL CONSIDERATION ON FORMALIZATION	12
Unit 1: What does business formalization mean?	12
Unit 2: Why is it important to formalize your business?	13
Unit 3: The challenges involved in formalizing a business	14
SESSION II: FORMALITIES TO BE COMPLETED	16
Unit 1: Business registration	16
Unit 2: Setting up a bookkeeping system	17
Unit 3: Tax registration	19
Unit 4: The formalities of social security coverage	21
Unit 5: Formalities related to labour regulations and decent work	22
Unit 6: Taking into account specific requirements	24
APPENDICES: Miscellaneous Forms	26
Appendix 1: Participant's Self-evaluation Form	27
Appendix 2: Final Training Evaluation Form	28

► INTRODUCTION

ABOUT THE “FORMALIZE YOUR BUSINESS” TRAINING COURSE

Formalize Your Business is a training module designed to help informal economic units transition to the formal economy. This training module complements the International Labour Office's SIYB (Start and Improve Your Business) training program. Its aim is to raise awareness among male and female entrepreneurs on the importance of formalizing their businesses, on how to achieve that, and on how to address the challenges associated with formalizing micro- and small enterprises¹. The training also raises awareness on why and how to comply with existing legislations as a formalized business. It is supported by two types of tools: a Trainer's Guide and a **Learner's Handbook**. The Learner's Handbook is divided into four main parts.

Part I provides a range of information on the topic of formalization in The Gambia to facilitate the learner's understanding. It is divided into two sections.

Section I is entitled “**General Information on Business Formalization**”. This section helps define what business formalization is (including the various dimensions of the formalization process and the practical administrative steps to be taken to start a formal business or formalize an existing venture), presents the rationale for formalizing a micro- or small business, and outlines some of the key challenges that male and female entrepreneurs will have to address as they go through the formalization process.

Section II of the Handbook, entitled “**Formalities to be Completed**”, covers all the steps that entrepreneurs, male or female, will need to take as part of the formalization process, from official registration/certification to addressing specific requirements related to the nature of the activity pursued². This section is organized into four key headings:

- i. “**What I Need to Understand**”, which is a generic presentation of the formalities to be completed.
- ii. “**How Things Work in The Gambia**”, which provides entrepreneurs with key information on how, where and under what conditions they should complete the procedures described in part i).
- iii. “**Useful Addresses**”, which lists a few addresses that entrepreneurs may contact to obtain additional information or complete specific formalities.
- iv. “**Some tips**”, offering some tips from entrepreneurs who have lived through these experiences.

Part II of the Handbook is a workbook designed to facilitate learning by giving learners an opportunity to gradually apply the knowledge they have acquired. It includes individual and group activities/exercises, and a self-assessment table that allows learners to not only assess their own knowledge of the subject and their ability to formalize their businesses, but also identify the level they have reached in the process of complying with the law. This part also includes a table that allows entrepreneurs to develop an action plan for their individual process of transitioning from informality to formality.

Part III of the Handbook is a **glossary** aimed at facilitating understanding. For the convenience of the learner, we have provided practical definitions for selected uncommon concepts that appear in the Handbook. The goal is not to retain these definitions but to consult them when needed to ensure learners fully grasp the meaning of the text in which they appear.

Part IV, entitled “**Documents**” is an appendix containing additional useful forms and documents to enhance learners' understanding of some of the issues discussed.

While this module is designed to allow entrepreneurs to use it on their own, it is recommended that learners be given initial training on the subject for greater effectiveness. Training may be delivered by business development service providers, small and medium enterprise agencies and their training departments, female entrepreneurs' associations, or employers' and

¹ The training is intended for micro- and small-business owners and promoters who meet the following three essential criteria: i) be an owner or manager of a micro- or small-business or be an aspiring entrepreneur with a proven track record of starting a business (e.g., be enrolled in a SIYB training program); ii) be able to read and write in the official language (in this case, English), and be available to attend the training session and participate in post-training activities.

² From an engineering point of view, it is always more practical to form homogeneous groups: for example, a group made up only of operating entrepreneurs or a group made up only of potential entrepreneurs who are not yet established. When working with a mixed group, the trainer should make sure that questions are worded in a way that addresses the situation of both categories at the same time, to ensure good understanding.

business organizations. It may also be delivered by individual consultants and consulting firms with experience in facilitating entrepreneurship training, including SIYB-certified trainers.

The intention of providing entrepreneurs with information on formalization does not have the objective of turning them into subject experts. Ultimately, entrepreneurs will benefit from being referred to resource persons or entities in order to facilitate their compliance with rules and requirements.

OBJECTIVES OF THE GUIDE

This Handbook is intended for use by trainers who are certified to deliver the “Formalize Your Business” training. Its main objective is to help trainers conduct their training activities on the topic in a methodical way. The proposed session plans, which are organized by subtopic, clearly outline the objectives of the session and provide a detailed description of how each activity will be conducted.

The training is not designed to “impart knowledge” to the participants, let alone turn them into formalization specialists. **Instead, it aims to provide them with as much useful information as possible and, more importantly, motivate them** to embrace the idea of formalization and, finally, build their capacity to confidently take the initiative to accomplish or have accomplished the tasks necessary to formalize their business. Entrepreneurs or aspiring entrepreneurs are expected to develop the ability to self-assess and plan their formalization process.

It is important that each workshop is designed to “**match**” the profile of the participants and meet their expectations in the best possible way. In short, the training is designed to be delivered in 3 half-days, each lasting 5 hours, for a total duration of 15 hours. However, depending on their level of formalization, some groups of participants may need less time to be prepared to properly initiate their formalization process.



Should your training session include **women entrepreneurs**, do not hesitate to ask about the specific challenges they may face in accessing the training as entrepreneurs, and also during the formalization process. This will help you support them more efficiently in their formalization process. To organize the training, you are also advised to ensure that the timetable and venue meet their specific needs, especially in terms of mobility and time constraints related to their household and caregiving responsibilities. A centrally located, well-lit facility that is accessible to all – including people with disabilities – with adequate sanitary facilities, a childcare option and, if needed, access to a breastfeeding room would be an important consideration.

As is the case in any training course where tangible results are expected, it is recommended that trainers **offer post-training assistance to participants**, while paying careful attention to the most disadvantaged groups, such as women entrepreneurs, and to the constraints facing them specifically. In this particular case, it is recommended that trainers offer participants at least 6 hours of personalized support over a period of 3 months, considering the risk of demotivation associated with potential constraints.



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Additional tools and information material on
business formalisation are available on our
website.



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