



Discussion paper

Survey results: Labour-based training institutes

1. Survey background

The ILO conducted an online survey from November 2020 to March 2021 consisting of 34 questions. The survey serves as a first step to revive and facilitate collaboration among labour-based training institutes in Africa after the reunion that took place in Addis Ababa in 2015. An overview of all the questions is attached to this report as ANNEX I. The purpose of the survey was to identify common challenges and potential areas for future collaboration, as well as to reconfirm the appetite among the labour-based institutes for knowledge and information sharing with a view to organizing a workshop in early July 2021. For this purpose, survey questions were structured with the following areas:

- 1) A general profile of training institutes
- 2) Policy environment
- 3) Institutional set-up
- 4) Training details
- 5) Research and development
- 6) Effective management
- 7) Collaboration initiatives

2. Survey responses

The ILO shared the online survey on 2 December 2020 to 18 labour-based training institutes. The deadline was extended due to the limited response rate from a certain region. By 14 March 2021, the ILO received 19 complete responses from the following institutes (in alphabetical order):

- **Burkina Faso:** Institut International d'Ingénierie de l'Eau et de l'Environnement
- **Cameroon:** Ecole Nationale supérieure des Travaux Publics
- **Ethiopia:** Ethiopia Roads Authority, Ginchi Labour Based Road Construction and Maintenance Technology Training Center Directorate
- **Ghana:** Koforidua Training Centre
- **Kenya:** Kisii Training Centre (KTC)
- **Madagascar:** Centre de formation HIMO (CF HIMO)
- **Malawi:** National Construction Industry Council of Malawi
- **South Africa:** Proposed Labour Intensive Training Centre (LITC)
- **Tanzania:** Appropriate Technology Training Institute (ATTI – MBEYA)
- **Togo:** 1) Centre Regional de Formation pour Entretien Routier (CERFER) ;
2) Ecole Africaine des Metiers d'Architecture et d'Urbanisme
- **Tunisia:** 1) Centre sectoriel de formation en bâtiment de ben arous
2) Centre sectoriel de formation professionnelle agricole en aménagement des périmètres irrigués Barrouta
3) Centre de formation professionnelle Agricole dans le secteur des forets REMEL
4) Centre Technique des Matériaux de Construction, Céramiques et verres
5) Centre de formation professionnelle de Missabougou
- **Uganda:** Mt. Elgon Labour Based Training Centre in Mbale
- **Zambia:** National Council for Construction

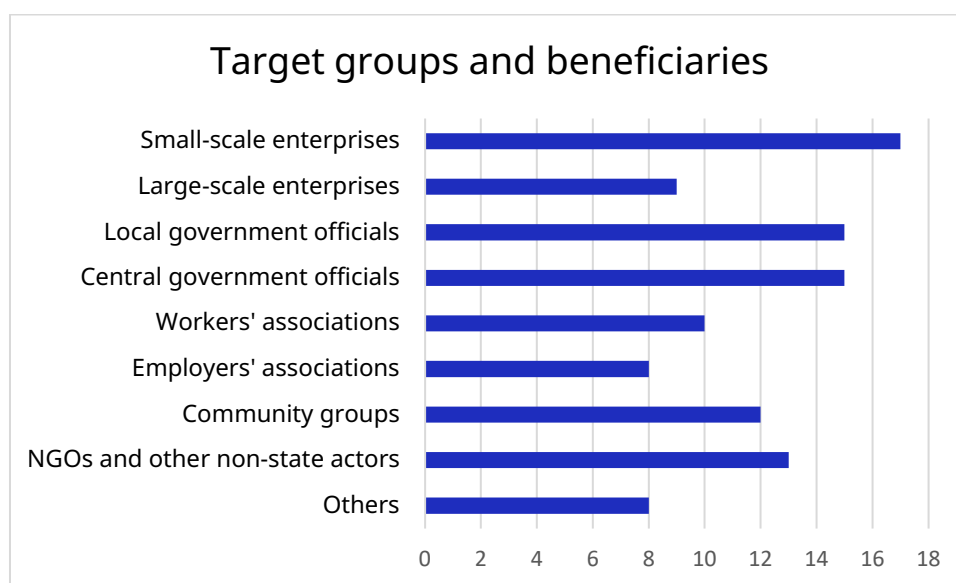
Of 19 institutes, 14 institutes identified themselves as specialized labour-based methods. The survey results summary is attached as ANNEX II.

3. Survey analysis

This section presents key findings from the survey results. The ILO selected four topics that may be of common interest to the labour-based training institutes (hereafter “the institutes”) in the region, with underlying implications that require further discussions. These are: 1) **Training contents and targets**, 2) **Digital technologies and distance learning**, 3) **Development of institutional strategies**, and 4) **Collaboration among and with institutes**. To analyze the results in a succinct manner around these selected areas, the structure of this section does not reflect the order of the survey questionnaire, and not all the questions and answers are treated in this section.

1) Training contents and targets

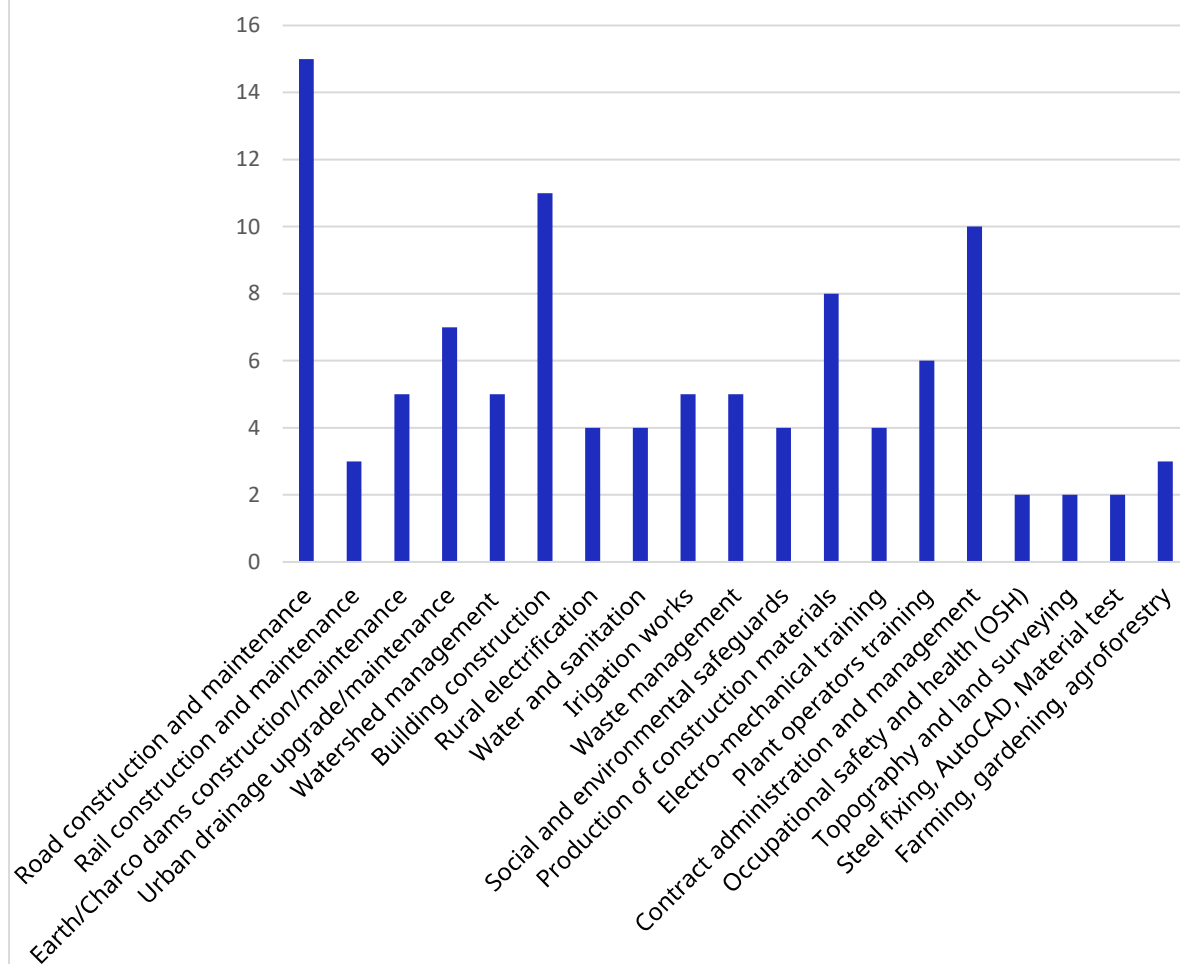
Since the majority of the survey respondents identified themselves as labour-based training institutes, the target audiences and main beneficiaries are small-scale contractors in most cases, with the participation of central/local governments. A relatively smaller percentage for the participation of large-scale contractors is understandable due to the nature of labour-based construction. Other target groups of the institutes included public and private sector trainers (training of trainers), farmers, direct engagement of unemployed youths, consultants, and other authorities as their target groups (see the chart below).



Tripartite consultations and social dialogue are the founding principles of the ILO. From this point of view, the engagement of trade unions and employers’ associations (e.g. engineers’ associations), according to the survey result, is rather limited. Although the traditional tripartite system does not necessarily line up with all development situations, an independent evaluation of ILO’s EIIP¹ concluded that the involvement of tripartite partners may contribute to national development frameworks, as well as tackling some of the issues of gender and social inclusion. For this reason, the ILO’s EIIP seeks to nurture their involvement with the institutes. These dimensions are particularly important for the courses on crosscutting social and environmental issues, whose capacity exists in most of the institutes with at least one specialized trainer.

¹ ILO (2006). “[Independent Evaluation of ILO’s Strategy for Employment Creation through Employment-intensive Investment Approaches](#)”. Evaluation Unit. Geneva.

Types of training courses offered by the institutes



According to the survey, most of the institutes with only a few exceptions (those that did not identify themselves as labour-based training institutions) are conducting training on road construction and maintenance, as well as contract administration and management. The ILO has also traditionally worked on these areas for almost half a century².

In response to the adoption of SDGs, the Paris Agreement, and other key international policy frameworks including the ILO's "Guidelines for a just transition towards environmentally sustainable economies and societies for all"³, the ILO has been stepping up its interventions in the area of green works⁴ in recent years. The EIIP defines green works as *"the employment intensive development, restoration and maintenance of public infrastructure, community assets,*

² ILO (2021), "[Guide: ILO Guide for Skills Development in Employment-Intensive Investment Programmes](#)". Geneva.

³ ILO (2015), "[Guidelines for a just transition towards environmentally sustainable economies and societies for all](#)". Geneva.

⁴ ILO (2020), "[Green works: Creating decent jobs through investments – promoting forest restoration, irrigation, soil and water conservation, and flood protection](#)". Geneva.

natural areas and landscapes to contribute to environmental goals such as adaptation to climate change and natural disasters, environmental rehabilitation, ecosystem restoration and nature conservation". Green works include forestation, irrigation, soil and water conservation, flood protection. Green works are therefore by definition labour-based with their labour-intensity up to as high as 60%.

According to the survey results, however, relevant green works training offered by the institutes, such as watershed management and irrigation works, remain a rare opportunity. Demand for a just transition started in an early trade union movement that has now become a mainstream policy tool applied by international institutions and treaties. There is a strong resonance between the global policy environment for a just transition and the creation of green works.

Discussion point: Does your institute integrate or plan to integrate more green dimensions in your training, beyond the traditional environmental safeguards? Is there an appetite from the target groups, such as government and social partners (i.e. employers and workers' associations), to implement green works?

2) Digital technologies and distance learning

The majority of the institutes (15 out of 19) indicated that there is a planned activity for rehabilitation and/or development of their respective training facilities. Although the survey did not specify the details of such activities, the facility rehabilitation and development is understood to refer to physical infrastructure maintenance of their offices and/or classrooms, which 16 out of 18 institutions indicated are either in a "very good" or "good" condition, to ensure the continuity of training services.

However, according to the subsequent survey results, these facility rehabilitation/development plans do not seem to lead to the inclusion of digital tools as part of training infrastructures, such as computers, software, tablets, and smartphones. Only slightly over half of the survey respondents (11 out of 19) indicated that they have integrated such digital tools in the provision of training. For the integration of digital technologies in labour-based training, the ILO gathered its experiences from all over the world on the effective use of digital tools in employment-intensive works⁵. These experiences demonstrated that digital technologies are enhancing the impact and efficiency of labour-based project planning, implementation, and monitoring while ensuring sustainability of projects, an area which can be discussed further.

Similarly, only slightly over half of the survey respondents (12 out of 19) indicated that they have physically mobile training capacity. In the absence of complementarity with the mobile training capacity, online or other distance learning modalities are one of the available digital options. With an exception of five institutes, however, most of the institutes (13 out of 19) indicated that they have not yet conducted online/distance training after the outbreak of the COVID-19 crisis. The survey participants raised the following as the main reasons behind the lack of distance training modalities.

- Lack of IT infrastructure, including an online training platform
- Lack of stable internet connections

⁵ ILO (2020). "[Using digital technologies in employment-intensive works](#)". Geneva.

- Practical training may not be effective online
- Online training has not been discussed as an alternative method
- Negotiations for accreditation not complete

Besides the lack of IT infrastructure and stable internet connections that go beyond the control of the institutes, the survey results somewhat show the general reluctance to incorporate distance training modalities due to the impracticability of providing similar quality of training that is perceived as more effective on-site with hands.

The ILO's Skills and Employability Branch conducted a separate survey on digital technologies in 2020 in collaboration with UNESCO and World Bank⁶. The objective of the survey was to understand the challenges and emerging innovations in a variety of TVET institutes after the outbreak of the COVID-19 pandemic. The survey found that the uptake of distance learning approaches in TVET institutes has generally accelerated after the crisis, and in 46 countries out of 92, around 66 percent of the institutes reported that training was provided completely remotely. 12 percent reported that training was provided partially remotely and partially face-to-face, while 15 percent of TVET providers indicated that no online or offline distance learning was offered at the time of the survey. There was a significant difference across regions, and in the African region, around 30% of the survey respondents answered that they are regularly or occasionally using online/distance learning modalities for the provision of training services. This result is identical to the present survey result for labour-based training institutes, which showed only 32% of the institutes are integrating online/distance learning modalities.

Understandably, most of the TVET providers in the aforementioned survey cited a similar emphasis on the provision of training in practical skills, which is traditionally offered through practical on-site exercises and workshops or apprenticeship training, and other forms of on-site training. Although virtual training with online platforms, simulators, and virtual or augmented reality software proved possible in some contexts, the nature of labour-based skills acquisition as well as the resources and IT infrastructure availability continue to be a challenge for the integration of distance learning modalities.

Discussion item: Can we augment labour-based training with digital tools? Should and can the institutes explore distance training modalities, given the IT infrastructure constraints? What types of training can be conducted from distance, and what experiences can be shared?

3) Development of institutional strategies

Nearly half of the institutes named research and development as an area where a technical gap exists, followed by institutional set-up and policy environment. Others included the collaboration in the area of climate change adaptation and sustainable construction materials, as mentioned in the previous section, as well as general capacity building of the labour-based approaches. Unsurprisingly, these identified technical gaps correspond almost identically to the desired areas for collaboration with the ILO. Few institutes, on the other hand, indicated effective management neither as a gap nor as an area that would require support from the ILO. Within these identified technical gaps, support for the development of institutional strategies is

⁶ ILO (2021). "[Skills development in the time of COVID-19: Taking stock of the initial responses in technical and vocational education and training](#)". Geneva.

an area where many of the institutes showed their interest, followed by joint research initiatives, knowledge and information sharing among the institutes, technical advisory, project-level collaboration, and useful information database management.

The development of institutional strategies, however, remains an objective at a high level that requires elaborated analyses of business models, market needs, and target audiences in different contexts. Several related survey results may shed light on key issues that details the proposed area of potential collaboration for the development of institutional strategies. For instance, all the respondents indicated that there is a short-term or long-term business plan, and the majority of them (except for 4) answered that they conducted a certain type of market research relating to skills gaps/demands in recent years. However, the number of respondents that conducted research or reflection of new teaching methodologies declines to almost half of all the institutes (5 institutes did not conduct such research). Several institutes, even though they have conducted market research, have not reflected on the teaching methodologies that correspond to such market demands. The linkage between the market needs of skills and effective teaching methods could be an area that forms a basis for developing the strategic directions of the institutes.

Another survey result that draws attention is the monitoring and evaluation (M&E) system within the institutes. 6 institutes answered that there does not exist an M&E framework within their institutes. The answer to the question on M&E is not necessarily correlated with the aforementioned questions regarding the reflection of market needs and training methodologies; however, a few institutes indicated that they reflected on training methodologies without the existence of an M&E framework, and vice versa. Overall, nearly half of the institutes that answered this set of questions lacked one element or more that is key for determining strategic orientation.

No.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	17
Skills gap research	Yes	Yes	No	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	No	No	Yes	No	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	N/A
Training method research	No	Yes	No	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	No	No	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	No	Yes
M&E system	No	No	No	No	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	No	Yes	Yes	No	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes

When discussing institutional strategy development, one needs to look at the entire business cycle of the organization from research and design through to implementation and evaluation. The survey results show that knowledge and information sharing among the institutes could facilitate the establishment of an effective business model for the institutes, based on the experiences and lessons learned.

Discussion item: How do you identify skills gaps in the local market? Do you need to upgrade teaching methods to fill in the gaps? Does the existence of an M&E framework help the development of institutional strategies, including skills matching and relevant training methods? What experiences and lessons can you share?

4) Collaboration among and with the institutes

The survey asked a question regarding the ongoing and past partnerships with national and international organizations, development finance institutions (DFIs), and development agencies of donor countries. The majority of the institutes answered that they have worked or are working with several ILO Country Offices as well as other UN agencies and DFIs such as World Bank.

In terms of the collaboration between the institutes and the ILO, all the institutes without an exception answered that the re-establishment of a collaboration platform will be beneficial. All the institutes similarly answered that they are interested in an online workshop to reaffirm the collaboration between labour-based training institutions in Africa to identify areas of such collaboration.

An Africa-wide knowledge-sharing platform was initiated in 2009 among some labour-based training institutes with support of the ILO. In November 2015, the ILO supported the organization of a workshop in Addis Ababa, Ethiopia, among 13 labour-based training institutions in Africa, to exchange training/teaching experiences, share insights on capacity building, and respond to new challenges and opportunities. The workshop was concluded with a symbolic signing of the General Agreement of Co-operation (GAC), whose principal objective was to foster collaboration in the promotion of labor-based technologies and related training within the domains of each participating body. However, GAC expired in 2019 following the GAC Section 9 that specifies its duration of 4 years, without follow-ups.

With the new policy environment with new international frameworks and ongoing challenges characterized by but not limited to the COVID-19 pandemic and its devastating impacts, there is a need to rethink the strategic directions and the effective management of the collaborative platform. The ownership of the institutes for a collaborative platform plays a key role in the process.

As an example of such a platform, the biennial Regional Seminar for Labour-Based Practitioners, is a good example that serves as an international platform to facilitate the collaboration among labour-based practitioners in Africa⁷. Originally planned, financed, and managed by the ILO, the Regional Seminar was first held in Tanzania by EIIP practitioners in 1990, with about 20 participants. Now, more than 30 years later, the seminar has evolved into a high-level international platform, organized and financed by participating countries. In 2019, the 18th seminar was held in Tunis, Tunisia, with more than 300 practitioners from 42 countries, including 13 Ministers or their representatives participating to learn from each other through a lively exchange of ideas and experiences. The Seminar not only served as a knowledge sharing platform, but also as a forum that culminates with a Ministerial Declaration⁸.

⁷ For the most recent report from the 18th edition of the Regional Seminar, please visit the following webpages: http://www.ilo.int/global/topics/employment-intensive-investment/news/WCMS_738326/lang-fr/index.htm (French) ; http://www.ilo.int/global/topics/employment-intensive-investment/WCMS_737331/lang-en/index.htm (English). A dedicated website developed by the Tunisian Government is also available here: <http://himo.com.tn/>

⁸ [18th African Regional Seminar for Labour-Based Practitioners: Ministerial Declaration](#)

The 19th edition of the Regional Seminar for Labour-Based Practitioners is expected to be held in Rwanda in 2022. Resource and circumstance permitting, this will be an opportunity to organize a segment within the Seminar, or a back-to-back meeting to reaffirm the collaborative platform among the institutes, with the engagement of the high-level participants.

Discussion point: Do you support the idea of readopting a new General Agreement of Cooperation (GAC) to formalize the network among the institutes? Which areas do you wish to collaborate with the other institutes? Do you consider the Regional Seminar as a good opportunity to reconvene the institutes?