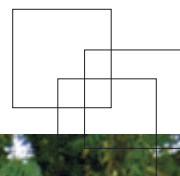




International  
Labour  
Office

# Towards the right to work

**A GUIDEBOOK FOR DESIGNING INNOVATIVE  
PUBLIC EMPLOYMENT PROGRAMMES**



**Guidance note 12**  
**Training and capacity  
development in PEPs**

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## Guidance note 12

### **Training and capacity development in PEPs**

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## Guidance note 12

# Training and capacity development in PEPS



### Objective

*The objective of this note is to expose participants to the training activities most commonly incorporated into public employment programmes<sup>1</sup> (PEPs), in particular the types of training provided to people with different responsibilities within PEPs. This note also discusses how training can play a role in assisting participants to exit the programmes and some of the associated challenges.*

### Training objectives and target groups

Many public employment programmes incorporate training elements. However, the very different objectives of these elements can sometimes cause confusion. The most commonly incorporated training approaches are indicated in the table below.

**Table 1: Common training approaches in public employment programmes**

	Target group	Objective
1	Government officials	Improve programme design and management
2	Local consultants, small contractors, nongovernmental organizations (NGOs), community-based organizations (CBOs)	Build design and implementation capacity Increase sustainability of assets created
3	Participants	Increase programme productivity
4	Participants	Enable participants to exit the programme

<sup>1</sup> M. Lieuw-Kie-Song; K. Philip; M. Tsukamoto; M. Van Imschoot: *Towards the right to work: Innovations in public employment programmes (IPEP)*, ILO Employment Working Paper No. 69 (Geneva, International Labour Organization, 2011).

## Training of government officials

The objective in the training of government officials is to improve the overall management of a programme. A wide range of skills is required to manage PEPS, some of the most important of which are provided below:

- economic/fiscal – make the case for programme budgets and demonstrate economic effectiveness of the programme;
- political/popular – build political support for the programme, and communicate programme impacts, benefits and rights;
- planning and coordination – coordinate programme activities between different ministries, and state and local governments;
- programme management;
- project management including contract management;
- accountability and transparency;
- technical (sector specific) – design and ensure quality of interventions;
- community engagement and mobilization – ensure local participation in fair recruitment, make inputs into the prioritization of activities and identification of projects;
- reporting, monitoring and evaluation – ensure there is capacity to report on activities, collect and analyse reports to improve programme performance and decision-making, and to assess programme impacts and enhance programme design.

If a programme is new, or includes new procedural requirements, training may be given at the beginning of the programme. However, many programmes offer ongoing training for new officials or officials from local government authorities (municipalities, districts, etc.) who may enter the programme, or training that is designed to address specific capacity gaps that have become apparent during the implementation of the programme.

**Box 1: Training of officials**

In the Productive Safety Net Programme (PSNP), there is an ongoing programme to train 6,000 district officers on natural resources management approaches to foster better project selection and design.

The Extended Public Works Programme (EPWP) trained 1,500 local government officials on the management of labour-intensive infrastructure projects in the first year of the programme and has a continuing smaller scale training programme.

The Mahatma Gandhi National Rural Employment Guarantee Scheme (MGNREGA) has hired and is training 12,000 officials to capture monitoring data.




## **Training of implementing agents including local consultants, small contractors, NGOs, and government agencies and communities**

Depending on how the implementation of projects and activities under the PEP is planned, training to build the capacity of implementing agents may also be required. This is especially important if it is anticipated that the programme will grow rapidly and it is assessed that local implementation capacity is weak or has limited experience with the specific types of projects that are envisaged. Where the programme design has to be carried out by local consultants and the works by small local contractors, the training of a pool of new or existing local consultants and contractors has been a common approach in many programmes and the International Labour Organization (ILO) has built up considerable expertise on these types of training programmes. In addition, some programmes have also trained site supervisors and foremen to ensure better work supervision and project productivity. When community contracting is used, the training of local communities is often part of the process.

This type of training does not only relate directly to the implementation of projects, it might also be associated with building capacities connected to other important programme activities. Where the selection of participants is carried out through community structures and processes, training is often critical in ensuring that the selection is in accordance with criteria set by the programme, and meets standards of fairness and transparency. Some programmes may also involve communities in the monitoring of projects through, for instance, social audits. In such circumstances, the training of communities on these processes is decisive. The operation and

maintenance of created assets is another area that needs special attention, particularly to increase project sustainability.

## Box 2: Training of communities



Community Works Programmes (CWPs): training on work planning and execution has enabled communities to play a much bigger role in programme planning and implementation.

MGNREGA: training of community members on social audits has been essential in reducing corruption and maintaining local support for MGNREGA and has often been implemented with the assistance of NGOs in the area.

PSNP: the programme included the training of members of the Community Food Security Task Force on how to select programme participants, which is an important element in achieving good targeting results and also avoiding excessive numbers of appeals by those who feel they may have been unfairly excluded.

## Training of participants to enable them to do the work in the public works programmes

In most public works programmes (PWPs), some training is essential for workers to achieve minimum levels of productivity and/or quality standards. This training largely depends on the nature of the projects and the skill levels of the participants. In its most elementary form, it consists of very short on-the-job training, instructing people how to do very simple work. If task-based payment is used, it may also include training them on the concept of task-based work and payment. However, in some programmes, the work, and thus the training, may be more elaborate and include formal training before or over the course of the project. Some programmes may even require participants to attend training at training institutions prior to working for the programme. For example, gang leaders selected from the community who are in charge of groups of 20 workers. In such instances, participants are sometimes able to also obtain some level of formal certification.



## Training of participants to support them to exit public works programmes

The final range of training aims to equip workers to exit the programme. This may include more advanced technical training based on the work being done in the programme. It may also not be related to the work being done, but be identified by the workers or the local government, taking into account local demand for skills and local economic opportunities, and the circumstances of the beneficiaries.

This type of training is often the most difficult and controversial and is worth discussing in more detail.


## Training and exiting

Some programmes include a training component that aims to provide workers with skills that will enable them to exit the programme and overcome their dependence on it. This is particularly the case in more urban environments. The implicit assumption of this approach is that a lack of skills is the main, or only, impediment to workers being able to find normal employment and that PEP training is able to provide this type of skill.

There are two uncertainties with this approach. The first point is that experience to date shows that this assumption is not correct. In many countries, the situation is much more complex. A lack of investment, security and local infrastructure, as well as depleted natural resources, all contribute to a low demand for labour, even for semi-skilled and skilled labour, and training of PEP workers has limited or no impact on these factors.



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The second point is that if a lack of skills is the main impediment, then a focused demand-driven skills development programme is probably the more appropriate approach, not a PWP. Incorporating training in a PWP may not deliver on the quality and standard of training required. While a PWP may have the advantage of being able to provide valuable practical experience to those who have been trained, there are other interventions that can deliver the desired combination of training and work experience, often more efficiently and effectively than a PWP. Vocational training interventions together with internships, apprenticeships and placement programmes should all be considered as possible alternative interventions.

One of the most difficult issues around the integration of more formalized and certified training is targeting. The targeting for a skills development programme is, in principle, very different from that of a PEP. A skills development intervention that aims to combine training and work experience to exit people into the labour market with a high probability of success would not target the most vulnerable or the poorest. Their criteria would primarily be set around the entry criteria for a specific training intervention and, in all likelihood, they would target the less vulnerable who, with a fairly limited intervention, would be able to succeed. In most circumstances, the most vulnerable would require a much longer term and sustained intervention before they would be able to graduate.

However, given the obvious attraction of combining work with training, many PEPs will continue to try and include components that train participants. Perhaps the most important point about these programmes is that there is usually a very large difference in the scale of the two complementary interventions. Typically, PEPs are able to offer employment to a much larger number of people than is possible with skills or vocational training interventions. The difference is generally about one to two orders of magnitude.<sup>2</sup> This reflects not only the very high cost of training as compared to creating employment, but also the much more sophisticated resources and institutional capacity required to implement training on a large scale. This difference raises questions on the extent to which these interventions are actually part and parcel of the same programme.

Care should be taken, therefore, that programmes do not set unrealistic targets or make unrealistic assumptions of what PWP training can achieve in terms of exiting. While there will be cases of exiting, the rate will typically be very low.

<sup>2</sup> If employment is offered to tens of thousands of people, training is typically only provided to thousands of even hundreds of people. In the example of Kenya provided in Box 3, while about 300,000 youths will be employed on temporary jobs annually, only about 1,200 will be provided with vocational training every year. Under the Extended Public Works Programme, about 500,000 people were provided with work annually, but less than 10,000 were provided with formal technical skills training annually.




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In most contexts, efforts to support participants exiting from public works programmes need to consist of many complementary interventions, such as programmes to:

- increase food and social security
- increase local agricultural productivity
- build households assets
- improve access to health care.

Public works programmes can contribute to many of these, but are not able to address all of them. The Government of Ethiopia has some programmes that are complementary to the PSNP and that aim to build household assets through micro credit. Others aim to increase the agricultural productivity of subsistence farmers.

**Box 3: Combining employment and training in Kenya**

Recently, public employment projects targeting youth have been developed using several approaches, for example, focusing on the creation of job opportunities through public works and providing work experience and skills. Another approach is to combine conditional cash transfers projects with public works projects with the objective of assisting families to earn more cash, to invest in income generating activities and to break the cycle of poverty.

Unemployment has indeed become a huge challenge in many countries hitting youth especially hard. The overall unemployment rate for youth is often double that of the adult rate. In addition, new entrants to the labour market are the ones least likely to find employment in contracting economic conditions.

In the case of Kenya, the main objective is to improve youth employability, as reflected in improved prospects for employment and higher earnings, by providing youth with work experience and skills through the creation of internships and relevant training in the formal and informal sectors. It is planned to pilot approaches to develop private sector internships that provide work experience and employer-designed training for out-of-school youths from 15 to 29-years old who are not working, have at least eight years of schooling and have been out of school for at least a year. These approaches will address the problem of youth who are not building skills at a critical stage of the lifecycle by giving them a chance to acquire skills on the job through work experience and training in training institutions that are closely aligned with the work experience. Such components open up opportunities for further employment, skills development and entrepreneurship, and respond to the issue raised by Kenyan employers who assert that many youths coming out of schools and training centres lack the relevant work experience and competencies needed for employment.

These components will be employer-driven in design and implementation to ensure ownership and commitment. Employers will identify their skill needs and propose a training programme for the selected youth. The project will pay the intern a stipend for up to six months. Thus, the youth will acquire work experience and skills through the private sector and have an opportunity to find a regular job or start their own enterprise. In addition to technical skills, youths will be provided with life skills training. Training providers will develop modular, competency-based skill training for trainees and employers may also provide on-the-job training in their enterprises. The programme will provide internships in the formal and informal sectors.


In regions where both approaches will be available, youth who have worked on public works sites and who meet the entry requirements for the training will be encouraged to apply for training and internships. However, it should be understood from the beginning that it will not be possible to guarantee all workers on public works sites access to these additional training opportunities.

## Training to build capacity

The reinforcement of capacities at different levels presupposes that training capacity can be mobilized quickly to conduct training in specific areas relevant to PEPs. However, training to build capacity is generally on a more manageable scale, as the number of individuals to be trained is usually much lower than the participants in the programme itself. The ILO has gained significant knowledge and experience in the training of small contractors to execute labour-intensive works.



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In many countries, the Organization has helped technical ministries to build capacity in specific sectors, both in technical and managerial areas. For example, in Madagascar, most of the training is provided by the *Centre de Formation HIMO (Haute Intensité de Main d'oeuvre)*. Initially supported by the ILO and funded by the Norwegian Agency for Development Cooperation (NORAD) (2001–2005), the Centre has since become a fully operational, autonomous and self-financing training and reference institution. It has a core group of local professional trainers who have been key in applying the HIMO approach.

International financial institutions and bilateral donors have adopted the employment-intensive approach in many of their regular investment projects. Donor-funded projects, central and decentralized structures are now able to contract qualified small contractors, consulting engineers and technical staff as well as local organizations. In this way, the Centre has also contributed to reinforcing good governance through improved contract management.

In response to recurrent climatic crises in Madagascar (notably, hurricanes and droughts), special public works programmes (SPWPs) have become part of the social protection strategy, which calls on many different actors, such as small contractors to undertake reconstruction or rehabilitation of public assets, and local NGOs for minor labour-intensive works. The purpose is to generate revenue and the means of subsistence through cash-for-work projects targeting vulnerable people who have been victims of natural disasters or other shocks, at the same time as creating useful community works or services. The training provided by the Centre de Formation HIMO, such as hurricane-resistant design and construction of public assets and the management of labour-intensive projects, has ensured that these intermediaries can intervene rapidly and efficiently to provide relief and assist in recovery.

## Further reading

-  International Labour Organization (ILO). *Employment-Intensive Infrastructure Programmes: Capacity building for contracting in the construction Sector*.
-  Lieuw Kie Song, M; Philip, K; Tsukamoto, M; Van Imschoot, M. 2011. *Towards the right to work: Innovations in public employment programmes (IPEP)*, ILO Employment Working Paper No. 69 (Geneva, International Labour Organization).

## Checklist

<b>TRAINING AND CAPACITY DEVELOPMENT</b>	
<b>Respond to the following questions</b>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Has the government raised awareness of key stakeholders on the objectives and different trade-offs in the PEP?	
In which areas do you enhance the capacity of the programme management staff? a) Monitoring and evaluation? b) ICT? c) Financial matters? d) Technical matters ?	
Has training been provided to improve the selection, preparation and supervision of projects? At what level? a) Central government departments? b) Decentralized government departments? c) Municipalities? d) Other agencies?	
Has the capacity of implementing parties (SMEs, community organizations) been enhanced? a) Technical matters? b) Management ?	
To increase the employability of participants, has the trainer considered the effectiveness of “on-the-job training” versus classroom training?	
In delivering training, will it be more effective to work with government institutions or private service providers?	
Has training been developed and carried out with a view to enhancing productivity and ensuring the quality of assets and services?	
Are there training programmes that target poor women, empowering them to improve their livelihoods?	
Has the PEP considered an appropriate “graduation strategy” for beneficiaries from its programme?	
Is there a tracing or tracking system allowing the PEP to determine the effectiveness of its training.	



## Notes



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