

Industry-led Apprenticeship Pilot Project in Bangladesh

Country/Region: Bangladesh, South Asia

Timeframe/Status: Phase 1 (December 2011 – November 2014)

Needs: Bangladesh records a growth in labour force by around 2 million people per year. Most of these are poor, unskilled and poorly educated. Skills development has become an acknowledged priority of the Bangladesh government, but formal skills development programs largely fail to address the needs of the employing industries as well as the employment-seeking population.



Objectives: The overall objective of the project is to increase sustainable employment opportunities for the unskilled and unemployed labor force in the leather industry.

- An apprenticeship model has been introduced and tested in the leather industry and is ready for up-scaling and replication.
- The skills and employability of selected workers in the leather industry has increased.
- Cooperation between key stakeholders in the field of skills development in the leather industry is institutionalized and synergetic.

Target groups: The target group are unemployed, unskilled workers, in particular women, and the participating enterprises in the leather sector.

Focus / Activities: The project is designed as a private-public partnership, where the concerned industry covers the majority of the cost. The overall training duration will be 12 months, with more intensive off-job and on-job training during the initial 3 months. There will also be a TOT programme for teachers, mentors and factory supervisors.

Human and Financial Resources: CHF 1 million by SDC (phase 1). The major funding source (52%) for the training scheme is the leather industry, the implementing partner will make in-kind contributions worth 23% of the training cost.

Results: The expected project outputs are as follows:

- Around 32'000 mostly poor primary school graduates (70% female) are enrolled into a 12-months apprenticeship in the leather and leather goods industry, the majority of whom will long-term employment in the industry thereafter
- Up-to-date curricula and occupational standards for the machine operators in the fields of sewing, finishing/lasting and cutting have been developed and tested by COEL and later approved by the Bangladesh Technical Education Board (BTEB).
- Around 7'000 teachers and factory supervisors are trained in modern methodologies and training approaches.
- Graduate certificates are accredited within the National Technical Vocational Qualification Framework for level 2 or 3.
- The financing model underlying the initiative, in particular the buy-in by leading companies in the leather industry, has been tested and validated.

Implementing agency: The project will be implemented by the Center of Excellence for Leather (COEL). Partners are the International Labour Organisation (ILO) and government bodies in the field of skills development.