

Skills Development Project (SDP)

Country/Region: Bangladesh / Asia

Timeframe/Status: Current phase I: July 2008 – June 2013
(NB: project has started at the end of January 2010 only)

Needs: The current formal TVET system lacks linkage to the labor market. The outputs of the TVET system do not meet the needs of the employers in at least three areas:

(i) Insufficient number of qualified graduates, (ii) Irrelevant occupations where programs are offered, (iii) Insufficient competencies for employment and self-employment. The majority of TVET teachers lack methodology training and practical skills, and have no industrial experience. In addition, TVET institutions have poor infrastructure such as lack of adequate classrooms, workshops, and teaching and training materials. The formal TVET system provides limited opportunities to the primary target beneficiaries of the National Poverty Reduction Strategy. Successful completion of class (or grade) 8 is required for entry into formal TVET programs in the secondary school certificate (vocational) and thus excludes the majority of the poor. In order to address the shortcomings of the current TVET system, the Government of Bangladesh has decided to reform it and to introduce Competency Based Training (CBT). The SDP is one of 3 large projects contributing to this effort. The other 2 projects are the EC funded (Grant) TVET Reform Project implemented by ILO and the STEP (Skills Training for Enhanced Performance) project funded (Loan) by the WB.



Objectives: The primary objective of the project is to support the Government's poverty reduction strategy by improving access and enhancing the capacity of the TVET system. This will contribute to socio-economic growth and demand-driven and good quality TVET for more Bangladeshis, including the poor and disadvantaged. The specific objectives of the project are: (i) To enhance relevance and access of TVET programs; (ii) To improve capacity for good quality TVET delivery; (iii) To increase delivery of relevant skill training with special emphasis to the poor, women and disadvantaged groups; (iv) To improve the competency of workers in special thrust sectors like Ready Made Garment, Construction, Light Engineering and the Informal Sector. The relevancy of TVET to the labor market and good quality TVET delivery shall be achieved through the introduction of Competency Based Training (CBT).

Target groups: 68'000 (count till project end) students, unemployed and underemployed, school dropouts, women, adults particularly from poverty and / or hard-to-reach areas. However, intermediate beneficiaries receiving support (infrastructure, training etc.) will be organizations and their staff of Directorate of Technical Education (DTE), Bangladesh Technical Education Board (BTEB), Bureau of Manpower, Employment and Training (BMET), Regional Directorates of Technical Education, Institutions with Multi Purpose Workshops, Technical Training Centers, Secondary Schools Vocational Streams SSC (Voc), and Industry Sector Working Committees (SWC).

Focus / Activities: Swisscontact provides consultancy services to the project. Consultancy services cover: (i) Development of processes, tools, materials, (ii) Training of staff of the Project Implementation Unit (PIU) and project partners; (iii) Assisting staff of the PIU and the project partners in implementing project activities; and (iv) Reporting to project activities.

Human and Financial Resources: 20 staff employed: (6 international consultants, 10 national consultants, Senior Project Officer, Administrative Assistant, Computer Operator, Office Assistant)

Budget for current phase I: USD 66'670'000, financed by the ADB (USD 50 Million-Loan), SDC (USD 6 Million-Grant), Government of Bangladesh (USD 10.67 Million).

Results: From January till end December 2010 the following results have been achieved:

Enhanced Relevance and Access of TVET Programs: Roles and functions of industrial Sector Working Committees (SWC) finalized; Four Sector Working Committees were formed: Light Engineering, Construction, RMG and Informal Sector; 40 key occupations were tentatively selected by the SWCs; 5 years research and development plan was drafted.

Improved Capacity for good TVET delivery: Assessment of training needs of TVET Teachers was completed; In-service teacher training plan was completed; Training materials for TOT were prepared; 3 TOTs (90 participants, 40 selected to become master teachers) were conducted; 2 workshops on -

Competency Based Training were conducted for 50 no of government official and 51 Sector Working Committees; Surveys of the existing teacher training centers (VTTI, TTTC) were carried out and 5-years development plans drafted; A 1st draft of the 3-years Program Improvement Plan (PIP) under the Program Development Fund (PDF) was prepared; Selection criteria for TVET institutions to be supported under the PIP were drafted; The operations manual for the PDF was finalized and approved by the Project Steering Committee; The PDF was announced to public, private and association run TVET institutes for short listing.

Increased Delivery of Relevant Skill Training: The operational manual for Market Responsive Training Fund (MRTF) was finalized and approved by the Project Steering Committee; The MRTF prequalification sheet was finalized and the tender was floated among TVET providers; A operation plan for the 40 Multi Purpose Workshops for remote areas was developed incorporating Distance Learning; The social marketing plan for TVET promotion was developed and promotion activities held.

Particularities: Procurement plans were revised and prepared (infrastructure, civil, goods, equipments, services, foreign training) and submitted to ADB for approval; Guidelines for fund disbursement and accounting were issued; Revision of the Development Project Proforma (DPP) is under process; Completing establishment of PIU and deployment of consultants is ongoing; The Project Monitoring and Evaluation Plan was finalized; Report Produced by the consultants: 1 Inception Report, 11 monthly progress reports, 4 quarterly progress reports, 2 half-yearly progress reports, 1 yearly progress report.

Public Awareness Campaign: Social marketing plan developed; 15 News Releases issued, 7 Posters created, songs and movies produced; TVET awareness week and campaigns conducted; SDP website launched.

Implementing agency: The Skills Development Project is implemented by Directorate of Technical Education under Ministry of education, People's Republic of Bangladesh. The project is supported by a pool of international and local consultants provided by a consortium consisting of Swisscontact (lead) in association with GTZ-IS and Maxwell Stamp Bangladesh.

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Special Challenges, Risks, and Opportunities:

Challenges: Delayed project start without adjustment of project goals; Weak institutional capacity on Government level (BTEB, DTE, etc) to implement the project and absorb project input; Shortage of staff at the Project Implementation Unit and delays in consultant replacement and extension; Slow and lengthy approval procedures by ADB and the government.

Risk: Gross underperformance of the project and re-evaluation of the loan by ADB.

Opportunity: Reform of the TVET sector to meaningfully contribute to the socio-economic development of the country and poverty alleviation.

Useful Tools, Documents, Resources: <http://www.swisscontact.org.bd/inner.php?Title=11>

<http://www.sdp.gov.bd/>