

Vocational Education and Training in El Salvador

Country/Region: El Salvador / Central America

Timeframe/Status: Current project phase III: 2010-2012
(phase I: 2002-2005, phase II: 2006-2009)

Needs: The offer of practical training experience in El Salvador is limited and mainly concentrated in urban centers. Furthermore, trainings are rarely oriented to market needs, so that usually only about one third of the trainees find employment after training.



Objectives: The vocational training systems in El Salvador offer nationwide market-oriented vocational training activities that are mainly accessible for the poorer population. The vocational training systems in El Salvador have improved so that: A) they allow an improved access to the labor market or an independent economic activity for disadvantaged women and men. B) the main actors within the systems, INSAFORP and the private training providers, act market-oriented. C) private vocational training providers are capable of adapting to market requirements. The project aims at reaching a success rate of at least 60%. This means that at least 60% of the participants in training activities find an employment after taking part in a course or achieve a better income through an independent economic activity compared to their income prior to training.

Target groups: 5000 young and disadvantaged women and men (min. 50% women) without income or with a small income of 1 to 2 US\$ per day. Private vocational training providers are capacitated in delivering a qualitatively better offer of vocational training courses. Employers benefit from the training of people in expertise demanded by the market.

Focus / Activities: The services provided by Swisscontact are the following: Development of new modular curricula and teaching materials that are competence- and market-oriented; Training of staff from private vocational training providers in the development of curricula, design of teaching materials, use of media, planning of trainings, youth psychology and use of modern and modular curricula that are competence-oriented; Consultancy and active support through moderators during the establishment of the local working groups for the promotion of vocational training and employment in rural areas; Training of moderators and members of the working groups in the planning of trainings, implementation of local labor market diagnosis, monitoring of training measures, job facilitation and follow-up of trained persons; Assistance in the planning and development of pilot training measures; Active support in the networking of the actors of the vocational training system.

Human and Financial Resources: 7 staff employed (2 international, 5 national)
Budget for phase III: 2'200'000 CHF, half financed by SDC, half by Swisscontact's Development Programme. This budget includes Guatemala phase I and El Salvador phase III.

Results (planned for phase III): The vocational training system in El Salvador offers nationwide vocational training activities that are market oriented and mainly accessible for the poorer population; 60% of the persons trained in the new vocational training activities have sustainably increased their income by at least 100%; At least 5'000 disadvantaged young women and men (min. 50% women) received basic vocational training; 1'500 new micro and small enterprises have been founded; 1'000 new jobs have been created thanks to these new enterprises; 16 new curricula and training materials have been developed based on previous diagnoses of the local labor market; 18 contracts between the local working groups and INSAFORP have been signed; 50 requests from the working groups to INSAFORP for vocational training activities have been executed; A minimum of 12 working groups for the promotion of vocational training and employment in rural areas have been established and are fully working; Cooperation exists between the local leaders and INSAFORP in 18 suburban zones; 12 labor market diagnoses have been conducted by the working groups (1 diagnosis per working group); 320 trainers have been trained in the use of competence-oriented, modular curricula. - 320 trainers have been trained in the preparation and updating of curricula; 320 trainers have been trained in the preparation of educational materials.

Particularities: 1. With the curriculum "Culture of Peace", INSAFORP, Swisscontact and two private training providers are doing an innovative experiment. Nobody questions the relevance of an

education for peace in a country with such a recent and violent history as El Salvador. It is the first time that a curriculum for competence to teach values and attitudes is implemented.

2. The project reached a high impact mainly on women, over 70% of the beneficiaries, since 2004, has been women.

Implementing agency: Swisscontact

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Partners: INSAFORP (Instituto Salvadoreño de Formación Profesional, www.insaforp.org.sv), which is the institution in charge of vocational education and training, private training providers

Special Challenges, Risks, and Opportunities: The Management Committees for Training and Employment/Self-Employment are the main element in the project's structure. It is also the key element for its success or failure. Committees comprise between 8 and 18 members. Most of the members are public functionaries or belong to NGO's, but there are also community leaders and independent persons that worry for the wellness of others. The main function of the management committees is to diagnose opportunities for employment and needs for training. Starting with this diagnosis, they request habilitation courses to INSAFORP. When a course is assigned to a training center, the committee organizes the infrastructure and participants.

The Management Committees constitute thus a link between unemployed persons, companies, INSAFORP, training centers and other governmental entities and entities of the civil society. Currently there are twelve active committees.

Success for the training system depends a lot on the cooperation between INSAFORP and the committees. Through Swisscontact, agents are in charge of creating the committees and accompany them during the first months until they have organized themselves and certain cooperation mechanisms work successfully. Later on, INSAFORP itself needs to play facilitator role. In order to strengthen its work, it trains the committees on topics such as "Negotiation Techniques", "Team Work" and "Leadership and Entrepreneurial Management".

Useful Tools, Documents, Resources: <http://www.swisscontact.org.sv/?cat=9>