



Report of the independent final evaluation of Start and Improve Your Business Project 2006-2008 at the Social Development Centre – Doha - Qatar

<i>Project Number</i>	<i>QAT/05/01M/SDQ</i>
<i>Donors</i>	<i>Qatar Telco: Q-Tel: USD 679,897I;</i>
<i>Implementing Agency</i>	<i>The Social Development Centre – Doha - Qatar</i>
	<i>International Labour Organisation, Regional office for Arab States.(ILO-ROAS)</i>
<i>Period</i>	<i>1st of May.2006 till 29th of February.2008</i>
<i>Location</i>	<i>Doha – Qatar</i>
<i>Type of Evaluation</i>	<i>Independent end of project evaluation</i>
<i>Date of the Report</i>	<i>May 2008</i>

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1. Summary

Project Title:

Setting up of a Small Enterprise Support Unit (SESU) at the Social Development Centre in Qatar (Prodoc); ILO/SDC Start and Improve Your Business Project (Evaluator's Terms of Reference)

QUICK FACTS

Country: Qatar

Final Evaluation:

Evaluation Mission: 25.11.07 - 03.12.07; Draft Evaluation Report: 16.01.08 Final Project report available: 29.04.08; Final Evaluation Report: 14.05.08

Technical Area: Small Enterprise Development

Evaluation Management: Office of the Arab States

Evaluation Team: Mr. Tim Dyce, Asia Pacific Enterprise Training Centre, Sydney.

Project Start: Planned 01.12.05; Actual 01.05.06. **Project End:** Planned 30.10.07; Actual date at time of evaluation: 31.12.07; Extended Final Actual date: 29.02.08

Donor: Qatar Telco: Q-Tel: USD 679,8971; **Project Code:** QAT/05/01M/SDQ

BACKGROUND & CONTENT

Summary of the project purpose, logic and structure:

The State of Qatar in the space of two generations has undergone a swift transition from an economy of herdsmen and fishermen on the edge of the Persian Gulf to one of the giant sources of energy for the world economy. The resource strengths of its natural gas deposits (3rd largest in the

world) now attract expatriate companies that provide jobs for

educated Qataris. The Government is also a source of employment.

The economy as a whole requires increasing numbers of expatriate labourers and service personnel who account now for a majority of the population (around 70%)¹ and are increasingly employed in the private sector. Many come from countries with developed enterprise cultures and act as partners with Qatari citizens in businesses which through a lack of enterprise skills on the part of some of the Qatari owners, are essentially directed by the immigrant entrepreneurs.

To strengthen individual Qataris' control over these partnered businesses, and more especially to enable unemployed and underemployed Qataris who are unlikely to find jobs in the corporate or public sectors, and to enable women who may wish to initiate or join family businesses, the Social Development Centre (SDC), an agency within the Qatar Foundation that supports Qatari families, decided to introduce a Small Enterprise Support Unit (SESU) to

¹ American sources such as the CIA estimate the total population of Qatar in September 2007 to have been 907,229. The rapid increase in migrant population to deal with the construction boom cause percentage estimates to vary. The General Secretariat for Development and Planning in May 2008 said that the population since 2004 had risen by 90% to 1.4 million – refer: Arabian Business.com 15.05.08

provide business skills training and BDS to SMEs.

With technical assistance from the ILO and local funding from Q-Tel the Qatar Telco, the 18 month project would establish the support unit by introducing and adapting the existing Arabic version of the ILO's Start and Improve Your Business (SIYB) programme using a Jordanian SIYB Master Trainer as project CTA. The SDC was treated as the focal point for the programme. The partner organization structure of larger SIYB programmes was not used. Instead a group of "free-lance" SIYB trainers was to be trained who would then work with the SESU. At the end of the project the delivery structure and staff would be integrated into the SDC organization, though oriented towards eventual autonomy and commercial viability.

The focus was on training for Qatari citizens. A limited number of non-Qataris were to be admitted to the course and also selected as trainers. To avoid a "welfare" image and to encourage longer term commercial viability of the scheme the indirect beneficiaries were not identified as unemployed or under-employed but rather the "Qatar business community generally and Qatari men and women who would wish start their own businesses". SIYB training was to be supported by enterprise awareness campaigns to strengthen SDC's advocacy role for SME development.

Present situation of the project

The delivery structure for the SIYB programme is in operation and the foundation laid for delivering other services. The SESU (now called TANMIA for Small and Medium Enterprises) has been established, with capacity to deliver SIYB training using the 8 SIYB trainers certified by the project. Two of these are the specialist

staff persons who now manage the TANMIA (with one administration staff trained by the project) and which, at its wind up, were transferred from the project to the permanent staff of the SDC. The TANMIA is working to a 2008-2012 business plan using an Operations Manual and the Qatar version of the Arabic SIYB materials, prepared by the project. The project advisory committee is reconstituted as an advisory body to the TANMIA.

Some work had begun on project objectives of public awareness of enterprise, and also on a loans scheme for small entrepreneurs, but more is expected on these issues in the five-year plan. Favourable agency reception of the SIYB work has led to interest in other ILO products: Expand Your Business (EYB) -- by the Chamber of Commerce -- and Know About Business (KAB) -- by the Ministry of Education

Purpose, scope and objectives of the evaluation

The evaluation assessed the project at the end of its 18 months duration (subsequent to the evaluation mission, the project was extended for a further two months). The TOR stipulated evaluation on relevance, design, effectiveness, efficiency and sustainability; but (because of the short time frame) not on impact. It was necessary to analyse the project document in some detail, verify (on the data available) progress in achieving the outputs and activities and to assess the viability of future planning.

Methodology of evaluation

The methodology used was:

- 1) To review the objectives of the project document by interviewing the major stakeholders of the project (most of whom had the advantage of overview of the wider Qatar economy and society), and also by interviewing those who designed the project:

Enterprise Specialist, ILO Office for the Arab States, and the General Manager SDC.

2) Assess project outputs and performance through study of available reports, training materials, publicity and evaluation material and through interviews with the CTA, project staff, SIYB trainers (including some who withdrew from the TOT), and a selection of IYB and SYB trainees. The evaluator observed some training sessions.

3) Assess the viability of the programme into the future by reviewing documentation and interviewing the relevant TANMIA SDC and ILO personnel.

Lack of access to some people and documents impeded methodology implementation.

MAIN FINDINGS AND CONCLUSIONS

1) The problem with ambitious or vague benchmarks in a project document is that the evaluation has to spend a lot of time pointing out areas of underachievement when what was actually achieved – in this case, setting up an operating, best-practice, locally-adapted adequately-capacitated SIYB programme in the space effectively of 12 months in a small country with limited SME history --- was truly an excellent piece of work. The stated objective of the project was as a “fully operational support unit for SMEs”. In reality the project’s more limited objective was to adapt and introduce the ILO SIYB Training Programme in Qatar, which it did very well.

2) The project has been successful in its core tasks of:

1. Translating, adapting and using SIYB training materials in the Qatar situation
2. Advertising the course both to trainee-trainers and trainee-

entrepreneurs

3. Recruiting and training a cadre of 8 competent local SIYB trainers (TOT)
4. Completing an initial, if brief, round of SIYB training for entrepreneurs (TOE)
5. Building credibility for SIYB, the SDC and ILO among significant government and corporate agencies in Qatar.

3) The project produced a detailed Operations Manual and a Business Plan though the latter needs a wider sustainability strategy incorporating risk assessment and planning.

4) The project did not achieve its immediate objective of “a fully operational SESU capable to provide independently and effectively non-financial business development and support services to existing national small enterprises and potential entrepreneurs in order to start viable micro and small business ... (and) ... capable of undertaking SME awareness campaigns and have a lobbying role at the macro level”

5) Nor did it achieve its stated target indicator of “at least 10 Qatari women and men trained and certified as ILO/SIYB trainers” SIYB trainers (still less the stated output of “ten to fifteen nationals Qatari trainers”). In addition, the training time required for certification was less than the current international norm. [It should be noted that ILO respects local context when evaluating such requirements: and in the situation of this project it was difficult to see how many more contact hours of training could have been fitted in before the end of the project period.]

6) Limited knowledge of how small businesses operate, led to the trainers failing the initial content test. A top-up

content training was conducted over eleven evening and Saturday morning sessions. This need and the full extent of post-accreditation responsibilities had not been communicated clearly to the trainers. As a result of this and other factors, eleven of the eighteen trainers withdrew (Another had dropped out earlier). The remaining eight trainers passed the examination and were accredited.

8) The project envisaged “enterprise awareness campaigns”. However what was carried out was the more limited, though essential, task of marketing SIYB to potential clients. So it did not achieve its loosely defined target indicator: “A number of advocacy campaigns and marketing tools for SME development and training produced with SDC taking the lead in national promotion”. On the other hand the launch of a comprehensive quality business skills training programme in SIYB, has positioned SDC as an important actor among a small number of business development agencies. Its contact with SIYB trainees makes SDC well positioned to track the needs and obstacles facing Qatari entrepreneurs and bring these to public attention.

9) In marketing to clients, it built a positive image with mainstream clients, but in the time available there were insufficient strategies for reaching clients with lower standards of education.

10) The project also did not achieve the output of “SESU’s capacity to facilitate the provision of small loans to existing entrepreneurs and/or entrepreneurs-to-be, enhanced”. Proposals were put to at least one bank for better financing for SMEs but they were not well prepared nor well received. There are very good (banking) reasons for banks not to fund

SMEs, and these reasons need to be understood and answered with reference to effective overseas models using intermediary agencies and guarantee systems. There was no strategy to support the project in doing this.

In summary, less was achieved than had been expected, but the project responded creatively to the limitations it faced making the best use of its resources to deliver the essential outcome: an in-country operating SIYB programme.

RECOMMENDATIONS AND LESSONS LEARNED

A. THE SIYB QATAR PROJECT

Main Recommendations

1) Sustainability Strategy

The business plan envisages only one scenario of development (two of funding). A 5-year sustainability strategy is recommended, including risk analysis; review of costing and of competition, refinement of target markets, further product development, and design of future governance and HRD systems. The plan needs regular review of its identified key success factors: (retaining project staff, and commitment of trainers).

2) Human Resource Management

The project’s key strength is the team of SIYB trained trainers. The main management task is to maintain and grow that strength which in turn depends on the management strength of the TANMIA staff. The Social Development Centre already recognizes the difference of this activity from its other activities. It needs to continue to plan for TANMIA to be a commercially driven entity with

a sustainable organizational structure and management. The TANMIA has been fortunate in its present staff; but proactive performance review, support and succession planning are recommended.

3) Trainer Training, Organization and Support

Because of confusion of communication and expectations regarding the requirements on free-lance trainers, this issue needs further discussion. It is recommended to set up a regular forum for accredited trainers to agree on and then review trainer responsibilities and support entitlements, among other matters. In the light of the limited amount of training that the existing trainers have done, this forum should not yet be constituted as an SIYB Trainers' Association. Membership eligibility for an Association should include completion of the international standard of training requirements. Extra supervised training should therefore take place at an early stage.

Main Lessons Learned

- 1) Involvement of a local corporate donor (as opposed to an overseas government, national government or international agency donor) injects local ownership, private sector disciplines as well as non-financial inputs such as good reputation and business advice into the donor-project relationship. Q-Tel was a role model in this regard.
- 2) There is potential for ILO enterprise programmes in the Arab States subject to the kind of adaptations (such as emphasis on family enterprises) and partnerships (with a quality organization such as SDC) that were available to this project.

B. THE ILO

Main Recommendation

1) The project has developed new institutional sustainability elements of the SIYB Programme: e.g. the focal-point partner and corporate sector staff acting as free-lance trainers, though the free lance trainers are not the self-employed BDS consultants of the original concept but busy corporate executives who are doing this training in their spare time. To maintain the commitment of these trainers needs a different package of incentives and administrative support from that for self-employed consultants.

Main Lessons Learned

- 1) The limitations of this project were mainly those of setting unrealistic objectives and time frame. Part of the cause for this was the length of time it took for the project to be conceived, promoted, put into proposal form and journey through the levels in the system before getting the go-ahead: 6 years in total and 3 from the time the proposal was put in written form. At some point the resources and time lines were significantly reduced from those of a larger project while retaining the larger rhetoric and objectives. There is room to evaluate procedures to see where bottlenecks occur or where greater flexibility in project design and approval processes would avoid under-resourcing, unnecessary pressures and limited outcomes.
- 2) In small countries that lack an enterprise culture (at least in modern international form) a project to build enterprise culture is obviously going to be affected, by that lack, in the speed and capacity with which the project is built. A key issue is that the kind of people competent to learn from the international CTA and take over the programme, are likely to be found in only a small niche of the local labour market. It is recommended that

assessment of this labour market is part of such project designs

2. Background and Logic

2.1 Background

The project ran from 1 May 2006 to 31 December 2007 and aimed to introduce the SIYB Programme into only the second Arab State to do so, adapting the existing Arabic version of SIYB and tailoring it to the needs of the State of Qatar. This was seen as the foundation service of a newly created small enterprise support unit, based in the Social Development Centre (SDC), the project's counterpart partner and a member of the Qatar Foundation committed to strengthening Qatari families.

The project was funded from within Qatar by the country's Telco: Q-Tel. The CTA was recruited from Jordan. Two training/management staff and one secretary were recruited locally. The project was designed and backstopped by the ILO Enterprise Specialist in the Regional Office for the Arab States; the Manager of the SDC was actively involved; an advisory committee of six stakeholders supported the project.

This project arose out of consultations between the ILO Office for the Arab States Beirut and the Qatari Government during 2004-5 on enterprise and employment creation, following earlier seminars on SME development in 2001².

2.2 The Problem

This project was designed to address the problem of a lack of small business competencies, awareness and services in the rapidly expanding economy of a country where the indigenous population is in the minority, and those with less education and skills are underemployed or without the support to be self-employed. The background to these discussions was the high dependence of the Qatar economy on oil and natural gas and on an immigrant workforce variously estimated as 70-80% of the population.

The problem identified by the Government agencies was the lack of a developed Qatari private sector and the need to assist indigenous Qataris (men, women and young people) to create productive, sustainable and decent employment in the private sector. Between 1999 and 2001, 22,388 Qatari nationals worked in the public sector, and only 386 in the private sector (principally banking and insurance). However the total number of the economically active population (including non-Qataris) was 285,404, 50% of whom worked in the private sector.

The further related problem identified was the lack of private sector competencies: including entrepreneurial and business management skills, coupled with SME access to business finance, relevant technology, export markets, and support services for businesses to start up and become integrated within relevant supply chains. And all this was against a backdrop of a lack of an enterprise culture³. "The idea of choosing

² "The Role of SMEs in the National Economy" May 2001 held in collaboration with the Qatar Chamber of Commerce and Industry; and "Promoting Female Entrepreneurship in Qatar" Nov 2001

³ Enterprise culture is generally defined as a set of attitudes in the community that is supportive of the risk and initiative-taking behavior of individual entrepreneurs who see opportunities, develop business ideas, and mobilize their own and others' resources to create businesses from scratch.

self-employment as a career option is not part of the Qatari culture”⁴. Qatari women in particular were identified as showing interest in creating businesses but being unable to access relevant advisory services.

During the evaluation, a number of those interviewed stressed that there was a problem of Qataris with lower levels of skills including a lack of English and computer literacy who would not find jobs in the large energy industries and associated technology or banking sectors that will continue to boom in Qatar over the next few years. In a small cohesive society this could create inequalities in status, income and the appropriate sense of usefulness and inclusion. This concern was implicit in the preamble to the SIYB Project document.

While this was the considered view of a number of agencies with a good perspective of social and economic changes in Qatar, it was not supported except anecdotally by evidence that these excluded (or “less included”) Qataris were as yet aware of their needs sufficiently to indicate strong demand for such services as the TANMIA was designed to offer. However these agencies and the project were right in saying that, without the development of a modern enterprise culture, such options as an enterprise career would not necessarily occur to these target groups. Hence the intervention was correctly if ambitiously designed to provide not only business support services but also public awareness and advocacy.

2.3 The Solution

2.3.1 The solution proposed by the project to address these problems -- and defined as the project’s development objective -- was the establishment of a national support service infrastructure for the development of small enterprises, described as a body with a “multi-dimensional activity from awareness-raising to establishing the necessary linkages with credit providers and providing the required non-financial support to small enterprises/private initiatives”⁵

2.3.2 The project’s outcome was defined as “a fully operational Small Enterprise Support Unit (SESU) capable to provide, independently and effectively, non-financial business development and support services to existing national small enterprises and potential entrepreneurs in order to start viable micro and small businesses”. This was to be achieved principally by the introduction of the ILO SIYB Programme with its component training packages of Generate Your Business Idea (GYBI), Start Your Business (SYB) and Improve Your Business (IYB).

2.3.3 The indirect beneficiaries were defined as:

- 1) “the Qatar business community in general including businesses that are already operating and Qatari men and women who would like to engage in a private initiative”, and in the long run
- 2) “the population of Qatar as a whole (which) will benefit from a more viable and dynamic contribution to private sector development and employment generation”⁶.

⁴ Project Document 21.06.05 page 2.

⁵ Project Document 21.06.05 page 3

⁶ Project Document 21.06.05 page 6

2.3.4 The direct beneficiaries were defined as:

- 1) the SDC/SESU staff who would be trained:
 - to develop training materials
 - to provide training
 - to provide group-based follow up services
 - to manage awareness raising campaigns
- 2) the Qatari women and men who would become certified ILO/SIYB trainers “upon completion of their training requirements”⁷

2.3.5 The intervention strategy rested on a number of assumptions:

- The early thinking behind the project was that the need for SME development with an emphasis on enterprise culture was a foreseeable priority.
Comment: Awareness of the need for enterprise culture has grown slowly, so the slow grassroots demand for its services was not unexpected.
- The intervention was to build capacity in an existing agency with local credibility and not in a new organization through an autonomous SIYB.
- Comment: The SDC, created by the respected Qatar Foundation with existing services to boost opportunity for less advantaged families⁸, was well suited.
- The intervention was to be holistic: with a range of support services for SMEs primarily non-financial but building on existing financial services; these would be linked to a social marketing campaign to promote enterprise development products and an enterprise culture, and to an advocacy role explaining to government and public opinion the value of Qatari small enterprises and the steps needed to remove obstacles to their development.
Comment: this was an ideal approach and suitable as a long-term vision for perhaps a series of projects but not for a single 18 month project.

2.4 Project Structure

The project counterpart partner was to be the Social Development Centre (SDC), a non-profit organization founded in 1996 to focus on building family stability and self sufficiency, and established as a component of the Qatar Foundation set up and funded by H.H. the Emir of Qatar. It was agreed that SDC would be licensed by the ILO, holder of the SIYB copyright, to print and distribute the material in Qatar. The Jordanian Arabic version of SIYB would be adapted to Qatar, and an international SIYB expert would be the Chief Technical Adviser (CTA). Two Qatari nationals experienced in business training would establish the SESU and trained as SIYB trainers. The CTA was to report to the Training Department of SDC⁹ but would manage the project within an ILO project framework. The project was to be guided and supported by the SDC Director-General (who also co-ordinated with relevant Qatari agencies) and the advisory committee of key stakeholders which she chaired. The Beirut SME specialist (also on the committee) would backstop the project.

⁷ Ibid.

⁸ The SDC had already in 2002 launched a small loans scheme for low income families, but lacked the staff skills to give appropriate support. Only one woman was supported in business by these loans, and it was noted that the Qataris who received the loans employed non-Qataris to run the businesses. The problem still remained of a lack of business skills and attitudes on the part of the Qatari population; hence the need to introduce SIYB.

⁹ This reporting system was later changed to that of the position of Projects and Investment Manager

2.5 Project Funding

In an important development in the funding of ILO projects, all project financing came from within the recipient country mainly from the Qatar Telecom Q-Tel which took a private sector R&D approach: being satisfied that the fundamentals of the project, and track record of the partners was adequate to the introduction of a new BDS product in an important new BDS market. They then let the project get on with its work waiting only to see if it delivered on its essentials, and advanced understanding of both the nature of and market for BDS products in Qatar. In working with the SDC and ILO, Q-Tel acted in the context of corporate social responsibility (CSR) and as a variant of “social entrepreneurship” (pursuing business activity with social as well as economic outcomes). New legislation in Qatar mandating private sector corporates to spend a percentage of their profits on CSR activities, may lead to Q-Tel winding up its involvement, but also to other local donors being available to support the development of further of the TANMIA’s BDS products.

The SDC provided hosting for the project office and carried most overheads. This subsidy affects the viability of SIYB and is addressed in the TANMIA business plan.

2.6 ILO Contribution

The ILO as source of the SIYB content was the main non-financial contributor, providing also a second SIYB Master Trainer for the TOTs. There is no Qatar ILO office so it was principally in the hands of the Enterprise Specialist in ILO Beirut who worked with the General Manager of the SDC to plan the project. The commitment of these two people over time is an important ingredient of the project’s success.

The ILO has moved more recently towards supporting “integrated projects”. The result here has been both fortunate and unfortunate. The foundation of a local SIYB programme was delivered -- in the context of linkages to further BDS, financing supports, and Business Enabling Environment (BEE) advocacy. However, it also placed pressure on the project to deliver in areas outside the core SIYB competencies.

While the Enterprise Specialist gave on-going support to the CTA in his strategic directions, there were areas of “social financing”, “social marketing” and business environment reform advocacy where more support was needed. This is not a criticism of the Office for the Arab States, but more a comment that Enterprise Specialists are under increasing pressure to advise projects, country offices and ILO’s constituent partners across a broad field sometimes without adequate tools. It is questionable whether the HR development of ILO’s field and specialist staff is catching up with these pressures. The alternative of bringing in other ILO expertise (staff specialists or consultants) was not possible within the project budget. Without adequate funding to provide this support, the project was under-resourced for some of its tasks.

There are no trade union partners in Qatar. The Qatar Chamber of Commerce and Industry along with other members of the Advisory Committee (see list) particularly from the Economic Ministries offered overall comment on the project but were given a limited role to do so. The Ministry of Labour was not supportive: complaining both about the need for support from outside Qatar and the time it took to deliver. On that basis the Deputy Minister declined to attend further advisory committee meetings.

2.7 Key events in the project's implementation

1) The project was originally timed to begin on September 1 2005 and conclude on March 30th 2007. It began in fact on May 1st 2006, was planned to conclude on November 30th 2007 but extended to February 2008.

2) Key staff was employed: 1st July 2006 a female Qatari trainer specialist, 1st October 2006 a project secretary, and 1st March 2006 a male Qatari trainer specialist.

3) The advisory committee members were invited in June 2006 but did not meet until January 2007 with later meetings in July, September and December 2007.

4) The SESU/ TANMIA Office equipment was purchased by November 2006, took on its new name (TANMIA for Small and Medium Enterprise) and logo.

5) Awareness activities took place: 4 awareness workshops for 96 graduates of the SDC First Step Programme (38 showed interest in enrolling in training). 12 potential entrepreneurs were interviewed (all showed interest in the training). 1 visit was paid to a factory for industrial tailoring. Visits were made to institutions providing services to SME sector in Qatar. Only 3 Qatari males attended the awareness workshops.

6) The adaptation / production of Training Materials was as follows: GYBI - Generate Your Business Idea (1 manual); SYB - Start Your Business (1 Manual and 1 Business Plan booklet); IYB - Improve Your Business (7 Manuals: Buy Your Business Needs, Control Your Stocks, Control Your Money, Control Your Costs, Market Your Products and Services, Business Planning, and Managing Human Resources and Improving Productivity) plus an SIYB Trainers Guide including monitoring and evaluation, and sessions plans. 25 copies of the SIYB Business Game were purchased.

7) 19 Trainers were trained: 11 Qatari, 8 non-Qatari; 6 women, 13 men. 8 completed the requirements and were certified by ILO in January 2008.

8) No targets were set in the project document for the numbers of entrepreneurs to be trained. Two GYBI seminars had 22 participants (11 men 11 women) (17 Qataris 5 non-Qataris); two SYB seminars: 26 participants (18 women 8 men) (figures for the second seminar: 6 Qataris 2 non-Qataris); Four IYB seminars were held (one in July and three in November) as follows:

- Buying and stock control: 7 participants (3 women and 4 men)
- Control your money: 6 participants (4 women and 2 men)
- Marketing: 5 participants (2 women and 3 men)
- Improving Productivity / Working Conditions: 7 participants (2 women, 5 men)

The total of IYB person-sessions was 25. One participant completed 4 IYB seminars, one completed 3, three completed 2, and the remaining participants completed one seminar each; so the total of IYB participant-persons was 15.

9) Two activities not listed in the project document but listed in the Workplan were: an SIYB Programme Operations Manual developed by November 2007 and a business plan developed as "SIYB Programme marketing strategy" by October 2007.

3. The Evaluation: Purpose, Scope and Clients

3.1 Objective

The objective of the evaluation was to assess whether the project outcomes have been achieved as stipulated in the project document.

3.2 Clients.

The main clients of the evaluation were defined as the ILO Regional Office for the Arab States, the project manager/Chief Technical Advisor, the project counterpart/Social Development Centre and the donor Q-TEL (the Qatar Telco).

3.3 Evaluator

The evaluation was carried out by a sole evaluator from 25 November to 3 December 2007. The evaluator, Mr Tim Dyce, runs a private company, the Asia Pacific Enterprise Training Centre (formerly the Asia Pacific Co-operative Training Centre), with twelve years experience of ILO programmes, is a former ILO Enterprise Specialist in the South Asian Sub-regional Office, and has evaluated four earlier SIYB projects and commented on three others. The evaluator reported to the Evaluation Focal Point of the ILO Office for the Arab States, M. Jean François Klein.

3.4 Evaluation

The evaluation was designated as an end-of-project evaluation and a draft preliminary evaluation was presented to the final advisory committee meeting before the evaluator's departure from Qatar. However as the project was subsequently extended for a further two months, more work was required (for example to evaluate the final report produced in March 2008, which was sent to the evaluator at the end of April).

Since some of the analysis and recommendations of the first draft of the evaluation report were adopted in the Project's own final report the evaluation mission and interim reporting fulfilled some of the function of a (belated) mid-term evaluation. Because of these factors the evaluation focussed on some of the immediate concerns of the project managers at the time, principally the sustainability of the project.

The evaluation was physically based in the TANMIA-SDC office with interview visits within the city of Doha.

It took the form of study of documentation supplied by the project, and interviews with: the three project staff, two of the top management (General Manager and Projects and Investment Department Manager) of the counterpart agency (Social Development Centre), the regional ILO Specialist, six of the SIYB trainers (including one who dropped out after the SIYB course), three of the IYB trainees and three of the GYBI/SYB trainees, six of the stakeholder organizations (five of them members of the project's advisory committee), including the project donor.

A full list of interviewees is attached to this report¹⁰. Thanks are recorded to all who made their time available for these interviews.

¹⁰ Refer page 35

4. Analytical Framework and Evaluation Methodology

4.1 Design

4.1.1 Problem

The problem that the project was designed to remedy was the need to create employment for Qataris outside the public sector or the top end of the private sector and the need to encourage the participation of women in economic activity. While most young Qatari males look to the public sector for employment it will increasingly be less able to provide them. However the small enterprise sector has not been attractive for two reasons: it is dominated by non-Qatari migrants, and it is not seen as an option by young Qataris. Entrepreneurship “is not part of their culture”. A mission carried out by the ILO Beirut Enterprise Specialist in 2004 found that there was no business management training in Qatar¹¹ and other (skills) training was provided free so there was no concept of commercially driven business skills training.

This diagnosis of the problem was based originally on conferences held in the early 2000s and the consultations of the ILO Beirut Enterprise Specialist up to 2004 particularly with what must be regarded as the specialist agency in this field the Social Development Centre which identified¹² a number of constraints in providing business skill support to Qatari nationals in greatest need of employment in the SME sector

- Very basic level of education (often lacking fundamentals of literacy)
- Lack of understanding of cash flow management and of marketing
- Lack of training materials and trainers relevant to this group

Evaluation Comment

1) This diagnosis as to the options for male Qataris, was largely confirmed, in evaluation interviews with stakeholders on the project advisory committee.

2) Information about the demand from women entrepreneurs was more anecdotal. The SDC already carries out a number of programmes including microfinance for women micro-entrepreneurs particularly for less advantaged families. However it is notable that despite having a captive audience (the women’s programme was held in the same building) the project was not able to recruit any of these women to the SIYB course. This may indicate that the SIYB course in its present form is “too advanced” for this client group. The SYB participant women interviewed were from families with already a tradition of doing business.

3) In examining the Qatar SIYB programme the evaluation was led to question whether the Western individualist focus of the SIYB programme is always suitable for a culture where both men and women (and particularly women) operate in all avenues of life, including economic, within a family structure. While the direct transfer of skills needs to address trainees individually, the framework, the promotion, the delivery and the “culture” of SIYB does not have to be so packaged. It would be consistent with the mandate of the SDC if Start and Improve Your Business was

¹¹ By late 2007 five other business management courses were in operation. The competitive strengths and weaknesses of each are analyzed in the TANMA Business Plan 2008-12 page 11

¹² ILO Prodop page 5

adapted to Start and Improve Your Family Business. [One young woman interviewed found the course useful in helping her realize that the person she wanted to go into business in partnership with was not with her husband but her father!]

4) The evaluation also questions whether too much emphasis has been placed on the modernity and novelty of entrepreneurship. Most cultures have some form of entrepreneurship, and Qatar has had a rich history of traders, fisher-folk and pearl fishers. In promoting enterprise culture in Qatar perhaps emphasis on continuity rather than discontinuity with the skills and attitudes of an earlier era might make the self-employment option more attractive to some Qataris.

4.1.2 Solution

The solution to the problem was seen as providing a support unit within an agency (the Social Development Centre) already responding to income generation needs of the less educated and of women from less advantaged families. The support unit would provide a range of non-financial services to small businesses and also promote a supportive environment for small enterprises by advocating for their needs. The foundation service of this unit was to be the Arabic version of the SIYB programme.

The project's Immediate Objective is a "fully operational Small Enterprise Support Unit capable to provide ... non-financial business development and support services to existing national small enterprises and potential entrepreneurs in order to start viable micro and small businesses". "The SESU would also be capable of undertaking SME awareness campaigns and have a lobbying role at the macro level"¹³.

Evaluation Comment

1) The problem with the Project Document is well demonstrated in the way the title of the project differs as it appears respectively in the Terms of Reference for this Evaluation: Setting up of a Small Enterprise Support Unit (SESU) at the Social Development Centre in Qatar and in the Project Document; ILO/SDC Start and Improve Your Business Project.

2) This objective was always going to be beyond the resources of a project with eighteen months' time-lines and a budget of USD 679,897, especially in a country with an indigenous population identified as lacking an enterprise culture and from whom the majority of the both the providers and the beneficiaries of the programme were to be derived (around 20-30-40% of the total population of the country of less than a million¹⁴; the other 60-70% are all migrant workers).

3) The problem about ambitious objectives is that an evaluation has to focus much of the examination on the project's failures to meet objective and outputs. In reality this project achieved a great deal in the very tight time frame of eighteen but effectively twelve months (since it took the first six to find local staff). Without staff in place the CTA, could not begin to build capacity. By the time they were in place, the cycle of high summer heat had begun, followed then by the observance of Ramadan.

¹³ ILO Prodoc SDC Final version 06 2005 page 8

¹⁴ Refer note 1. Population statistics in Qatar vary widely.

4) The target indicators are a mixture of:

A. Specific outputs:

- “Qatari specific SYB and IYB training packages developed in Arabic”
[This was achieved]
- “at least 10 Qatari women and men trained and certified as ILO/SIYB trainers” [This was not achieved but it was specific and attainable]

B. Vague goals difficult to verify and are neither clear indicators nor outputs:

- “SESU established and working on the development and provision of non financial business development services”
[“Working on” could mean activity at any stage of development from planning to widespread delivery. Which non-financial BDS? What level of quality?]
- “A number of advocacy campaigns and marketing tools for SME development and training produced with SDC taking the lead in national promotion”
[How many? What is meant by a campaign? On behalf of what or whom exactly will advocacy be made? Does a campaign have to succeed in anything or just happen? What kind of marketing tools? And what aspects of SME development are they meant to be marketing? What will it look like when SDC is “taking the lead” in national promotion? Ahead of whom will they be taking the lead? How do we measure the lead?].

5) Enterprise Awareness

This vagueness has probably been a factor in the project interpreting “enterprise awareness promotion” as marketing the course to potential clients, and “in depth assessment of the entrepreneurship training and support needs of the indirect beneficiaries” being seen as running awareness workshops or conducting one-on-one training needs analysis interviews with course applicants. However there has also been an advantage in this approach: an intensive marketing campaign which could have created a strong demand for the SIYB product would have been dangerous for long-term credibility if the programme was unable to meet that demand at a sufficient level of quality. So in the actual more limited form in which this activity was carried out, the instincts of the project were probably correct.

6) In-depth Assessment. The vagueness may also have affected the in-depth (how deep is deep?) assessment of training and support needs which in the project document was to be carried out in the first 30 days (but in the workplan was delayed for three months) is intended to lead to the development of the “training materials, systems, tools and methodology” and further to “adjusting the project in terms of outputs, activities and resources”.

7) Further comment

a) The problem here is that while this looks like a demand-driven process, the limited way in which it was used (more to promote to the audiences than to learn from them) makes it seem that it was intended all along to introduce the international SIYB programme anyway.

b) There seems to be pressure on the project design (and also the evaluation process) to present or make assessments against an ideal situation where key stakeholder agencies are identified, rigid analysis is undertaken of the socio-economic context, in-

depth consultation takes place with end users, alternative scenarios are considered and rejected on the basis of sound research and the ILO product is then chosen. But does it ever work like that? There isn't the time or money to go to those lengths; and anyway is there the need? The ILO quite legitimately offers an excellent training programme, key local people (counterpart agencies, ILO social partners, key Ministries and business bodies) have a look at it and like it, a donor (usually external or in this case internal) also likes it, and the decision is made to set up a project. The basic technical quality of the training programme in its integrity is good, and doesn't differ much anywhere round the world. The initial importing of the technical skills takes place over a two to three year time scale process. The partner organization structure ensures diffusion, local adaptation and sustainability. The Master trainer and accreditation processes ensure on-going quality and product improvement against the background of international experience and innovation.

c) The SIYB Qatar Project is a success because it got on with the basic nuts and bolts job of introducing the SIYB programme, now the corner stone of the longer term project to build a Small Enterprise Support Unit. From this point on, it will be the SDC as the local focal point agency that will assess end-beneficiary needs, identify groupings, where further "lower" level or "higher" level adaptation will be needed, and develop further services that will either precede the SIYB programme or follow it.

d) The problem is not that the people designing the project document didn't know what was wanted but rather that the project document has to be written to meet a number of ILO purposes.

- It needs to be a sales brochure for one or several of the ILO product range. So it needs to touch on issues that are current priorities for the donors.
- ILO also needs it to be a quality scientific instrument which positions ILO work within the realm of "international best practice". Here it has to be a detailed and analytic document able to link to the academic and research community and explain how ILO uses its tools to maximum verifiable effect.
- The third need is that of the development practitioner who need a road map to deal with the nuts and bolts of the job they have to do and the tactical and strategic compromises they have to make on the ground.

e) The design of this project was quite clever in one important area. The danger was that courses run by an agency with a "welfare" image would be seen to be only for the poor or needy. "Winners" wouldn't enrol. This was important within the high-tech and commercial achievement aspirations of modern Qatar. Despite some drawbacks in so doing, the project defined the end beneficiaries as the "Qatar business community in general", and "in the long run the population of Qatar" and not as "less advantaged" Qataris population, although the preamble refers to those needs.

f) For the SIYB programme to work on a commercial basis in Qatar it needs to be seen as a mainstream product which is also accessible to those with less education or family wealth (through channels of communication and support that the SDC is well qualified to provide). The evaluation interviews with both trainers and entrepreneurs showed that they did not see the association with the SDC in a negative "welfare" light, indeed this association for some of the trainers appealed to their cultural and religious values because the commercial orientation still took into account helping the less advantaged. If the SDC and TANMIA can maintain this balance of success and

compassion it will ensure a valuable and culturally relevant market difference to other business skills training programmes being offered in Qatar.

h) However one consequence of this is that the outreach to the less educated has not been as highly developed as the preamble to the project document and the rationale of many of the stakeholders indicated. The strategy has been to build the programme first in the mainstream and make it increasingly accessible to the slower streams later.

4.2 Methodology

4.2.1 General Comment:

The evaluation is caught in similar tensions to those of the project document. On the ground, the people whose performance is being evaluated have struggled with the limitations of the local situation, come up against situations not envisaged at the time the project document was written, perhaps, made a few mistakes, and learnt from them. They may look to an evaluation to help put their actions in context, their innovations applauded, their own learning enhanced and their achievements affirmed. The evaluation can focus direction, force examination of some unwelcome truths, advise on strategy, and praise achievement but above all support the motivation to continue. It is better the evaluation sees the glass as half full rather than half empty.

4.2.2 Methodology approach

4.2.1 Interview Stakeholders

The aim was to review the objectives of the project document and the analysis of problem / solution by interviewing the major stakeholders of the project (most of whom had the advantage of overview of the wider Qatar economy and society), and interviewing those who designed the project (the ILO Enterprise Specialist in the Office for the Arab States and the Director of the Social Development Centre and her key managers). Understanding the expectations of the donor was also important. The project stakeholders represented the key agencies concerned with SME development in Qatar. However, representation of women's groups, actual business people rather than just the Chamber's officials, and (in a culture where religion plays an important part and in a project where family life is central) of religious or other cultural leaders could have been involved. A two-tier smaller steering committee with a looser advisory committee might have assisted to broaden the stakeholder involvement.

4.2.2 Assess Documentation / Interview trainees

Assess project outputs and performance through study of available reports, training materials, publicity and evaluation material and through interviews with the CTA, project staff, SIYB trainers (including those who did the TOT training but did not complete it), and a representative selection of IYB and SYB trainees. Most interviews took place at the time of training sessions which allowed observation of the trainers, but limited time for interview. Each interview covered the same set of questions:

For the entrepreneurs

- What was the business the participant either ran or was planning?
- What was the participant's family/education background Qatari or non-Qatari?
- How was the person motivated to take the course?
- How had the person heard about the course?
- What was their experience of the first contact with the SDC?
- What was their experience of the training needs assessment?
- What was their view of the quality and quantity of information provided?
- What was their experience of the training?
- How did they rate the trainers?
- What were the key learnings they had made from the course?

- What was the quality of the follow-up support?
- What were the strengths and weaknesses of the SIYB Course?
- Would they recommend the course to others and on what grounds?
- How did they perceive the course's association with the SDC / ILO?
- What were there plans to put into practice the learning from the course?

For the trainers

- What business or other background did the participant come from?
- What was their family/education background (including Qatari or non-Qatari)?
- How was the person motivated to become a trainer?
- How had the person heard about the TOT course?
- What was their experience of the first contact with the SDC?
- What was their experience of the training needs assessment?
- What was their view of the quality and quantity of information provided?
- What was their experience of the training?
- Which key learnings and obstacles overcome did they take from the course?
- What was the quality of the follow-up support?
- How did they rate the trainers?
- What were the strengths and weaknesses of the SIYB TOT Course?
- Would they recommend the course to others and on what grounds?
- How did they perceive the association of the course with the SDC / ILO?
- What were their immediate to long term plans to conduct SIYB training?
- What improvements are needed in the course? In back up to them as trainers?
- Why had they dropped out of / stayed in the TOT training?

4.3 Limitations

There were some considerable limitations on the evaluation which impeded using the methodology or developing it further:

- Some key documents notably the business plan¹⁵ were not available in English until after the evaluation mission (thanks are due for speedy translation)
- Most documentation was not available until the end of the evaluation period,
- SDC management and the ILO Enterprise Specialist were not available for interview until the very end of the evaluation period
- The donor and a key SDC manager were not available for interview until a few hours before departure at the end of the mission
- Some key events (completion of the training activities and the accreditation of the trainers) took place several weeks after the evaluation mission.
- Feedback on the draft evaluation from ILO EVAL Geneva took six weeks to reach the evaluator, and the final report on the project completed by March 3rd 2008 was not made available to the evaluator until April 29th 2008.

Also the Project Final Report's analysis of the Problems and Constraints, Assessment of Progress, Lessons Learned and Recommendations is taken from the evaluator's

¹⁵ Some elements of the business plan (costing and marketing strategies) were part of the SIYB Operations Manual and were consulted before the end of the mission.

draft report. This confirms the “mid-term” usefulness of an evaluation visit but makes it less easy to evaluate the conclusions the project might have reached on its own.

5. Implementation

5.1 Timing

The project was originally timed to begin on September 1, 2005 and conclude on March 30th 2007. It began in fact on May 1st 2006, and was to conclude on November 30th 2007 with an extension through to February 2008. The Objectives, Outputs and Activities were set out in the Project Document, and in the order which the evaluation is required to follow. The workplan that was prepared for approval by the first meeting of the Advisory Committee re-arranged the order of outputs and activities and it was that order that was followed in the four project progress reports in January 2007 July 2007 and September 2007, and the Project Semi-Final Report in December 2007. After the extension of the project a Final report was published on the 3rd March 2008. Based on these reports, notable events in the 18 months of the project were as follows:

5.2 Staffing Activity

- 1st July 2006 a female Qatari trainer specialist was employed
- 1st October 2006 a project secretary was employed
- 1st March 2006 a male Qatari trainer specialist was employed
- 25 of 36 specialist person/months and 31 of 36 of the secretary's were used.

5.3 Advisory Committee

The invitation to join the Committee was sent out on 12th June 2006 with an indicated likely date for the first meeting in September. Finding a date that suited all members meant the Committee did not meet until 10 January 2007, and then in July, September and December 2007. The final report does not record a 2008 meeting.

5.4 Establishment of Office

- By November 2006 all office equipment was in the SDC office space.
- A new name for the SESU: namely TANMIA for Small and Medium Enterprise (TANMIA is the Arabic word for Development)
- A logo and brand appearance was developed free of charge by FITCH.

5.5 Assessment of training needs

- 4 awareness workshops for 96 graduates of the SDC First Step Programme were held: (38 showed interest in enrolling in training).
- 12 potential entrepreneurs were interviewed all showed interest in the training.
- 1 visit was paid to a factory for industrial tailoring
- Visits were made to institutions providing services to the SME sector in Qatar.
- Only 3 Qatari males attended the awareness workshops
- Focus groups with business members of QCCI were not held because of "difficulties in arranging them"

5.6 Delivery of Training

No targets were set in the project document for the numbers of entrepreneurs to be trained. Two GYBI seminars had 22 participants (11 men 11 women) (17 Qataris 5 non-Qataris); two SYB seminars: 26 participants (18 women 8 men) (figures for the second seminar: 6 Qataris 2 non-Qataris); Four IYB seminars were held (one in July

and three in November) as follows: Buying and stock control: 7 participants (3 women and 4 men); Control your money: 6 participants (4 women and 2 men); Marketing: 5 participants (2 women and 3 men); Improving Productivity / Working Conditions: 7 participants (2 women, 5 men).

The total of IYB person-sessions was 25. But as one completed 4 IYB seminars, another: 3, three: 2; and the rest 1 each, the total IYB participant-persons was 15.

5.7 Training Materials

The following materials were adapted and produced:

- 1) GYBI - Generate Your Business Idea (1 manual); 2) SYB - Start Your Business (1 Manual and 1 Business Plan booklet); 3) IYB - Improve Your Business (7 Manuals: Buy Your Business Needs, Control Your Stocks, Control Your Money, Control Your Costs, Market Your Products and Services, Business Planning, and Managing Human Resources and Improving Productivity). 25 SIYB Business Games were bought.
- 4) SIYB Trainers' Guide including monitoring and evaluation, and sessions plans.

5.8 Trainers

19 Trainers were trained: (11 Qatari, 8 non-Qatari) (6 women, 13 men) of whom 8 completed the certification process requirements and were certified by ILO. The road map for certification set out by the project allowed for 4 hours delivery of GYB training (with a score of over 80) 8 hours delivery of SYB training (with a score of over 80), 6 hours of delivery of IYB training (with a score of over 80), the successful conduct of the SYB business game, and one individual counselling session to check the SYB business plan for SYB trainees or the action plan for IYB trainees. The SIYB Global Co-ordinator at ILO-Geneva while affirming the importance of local context for an SIYB programme to meet standards and the overall correctness of the Qatar process, points out that it is not entirely in line with the approach promoted internationally, in particular the benchmark number of practice sessions as SIYB trainer, one of the most important areas, was reduced in Qatar to a couple of hours.

Each trainer should run a complete GYB, SYB and IYB to be certified and show that they have conducted TNA and follow-up with all their participants. Follow-up should be more than checking a business plan at the end of a course. Most start-up trainees need follow-up business counselling after the start of implementing the business plan.

Overall, this evaluation affirms its conclusion that all that could be done by the project to train and accredit the trainers in the time available was done and the core international requirements were met. However further training by the trainers in coming months to meet the full international criteria should be undertaken.

5.9 Programme Management Guide

This was not in the Project Document but added in the workplan with a starting date of 01.01.07, an original completion date of 30.09.07 and an amended completion date of 15.11.07. In its final form it is titled SIYB Programme Operations Manual

5.10 Business Plan

This activity was not listed in the Project Document but added in the workplan as "Develop the SIYB Programme marketing strategy" with a starting date of 01.09.06 and an original completion date of 31.12.06. Actual completion date was 15.10.07.

6. Project performance

6.1 Summary

The Project Final Report included a log-frame style summary based on an amended version of the original work plan (which was itself derived from the Project Document). It is attached as an appendix to this Evaluation and shows the Project's own assessment of achievement of objectives and outputs and completion of activities. The Evaluation has annotated the Report to give its agreement or disagreement with the Project's assessment and recommends it as a useful summary of this section of the report.

Earlier comments on the limitations imposed on the evaluation by its timing and the lack of timely information are relevant to both the quality and quantity of evidence available to assess performance. Earlier comments on the project design and the problems with which outputs and indicators were defined are also relevant.

6.2 The Evaluation Framework.

The evaluation templates developed by EVAL ILO-Geneva and reflected in the Terms of Reference seek to have some aspects of the project analysed several times in the course of the evaluation report. It is expected for example that the project objective be recorded or critiqued from the point of view of relevance, design, effectiveness as well as being dealt with in the conclusions and recommendations.

What follows are findings on specific issues that the project and/or the evaluator judged to be important and then answers to the framework questions of the TOR. It is not intended to repeat arguments unnecessarily, and it is expected that the reader can reference issues that are treated elsewhere in the evaluation.

6.3 Achievements of this Project

- The Qatar SIYB Programme was operational with 8 trainers from March 2008.
- This programme and associated awareness tools (such as internet presence) and organizational linkages now form the foundation of the Small Enterprise Support Unit (SESU) or TANMIA envisaged as the outcome of the project.
- The Arabic SIYB materials (including Start Your Business and 7 Improve Your Business modules) have been adapted to Qatari conditions through translation and quality graphics work by the staff, trainers, qualified interpreters and professional designers. The materials are now published in black and white.
- Supporting documentation -- enrolment forms, business needs assessment guidelines, interview sheets -- and a highly useful technical manual, the SIYB Programme Operations Manual, are produced and in use.
- Two management personnel are trained as SIYB trainers and co-ordinators of the programme and are now on the staff of the SDC to manage TANMIA.
- Awareness of the SIYB programme and of the need for SME training has begun in the business sector, government, and parts of the wider community.

- Linkages have been established or enhanced between the SDC and major stakeholders in the development of SMEs in Qatar.

6.4 Specific Issues

6.4.1 Workplan

A workplan was developed in accordance with the requirement of the Project Document. It was required to be submitted for approval to the Advisory Committee at its first meeting. For reasons described below the workplan was not submitted. In general there are few differences between the outputs and activities of the project document and that of the workplan. However the workplan is important because its framework rather than that of the project document was that of all future reporting.

Some differences are small:

- Project document: “Conduct ... an in-depth assessment of the entrepreneurship training and support needs of the indirect beneficiaries”
- Workplan: “Conduct an in-depth assessment of the training and support needs of the entrepreneurship”

However the dropping of reference to “the indirect beneficiaries” and replacing it with the vague “entrepreneurship” runs the risk of losing the reminder-focus on the target group identified directly in the project document as:

- 1) “the Qatar business community in general including businesses that are already operating and Qatari men and women who would like to engage in a private initiative”, and in the long run
- 2) “the population of Qatar as a whole (which) will benefit from a more viable and dynamic contribution to private sector development and employment generation”.

The reminder should also focus on what was referred to more indirectly in the project document as (with reference to SDC’s involvement) strengthening families, (as was apparent in interviews as the motivation of many of the trainers) helping the less advantaged, (the rationale for the project in the eyes of Qatari stakeholders interviewed) creating employment for those with less education / motivation who will not get government or corporate jobs and (priorities stated elsewhere in the project document) the needs of women.

A more substantive change between workplan and project document was addition of activities to the Output 1.4 “In order to promote self-employment as a career option for young Qatari men and women and in co-operation with relevant government authorities undertake entrepreneurship awareness campaigns at the level of schools technical institutions, vocation training centres, universities and Ministries in Qatar”.

There were no activities set out in the Project Document to support the output so some were needed. However the activities narrowed the focus of the output without explicitly acknowledging this. The first two activities are listed as “organize publicity events of the SIYB programme activities” and “carry out targeted marketing activities such as visits and awareness workshops to market the SIYB programme for the target groups of the Programme”. The emphasis reinforced the confusion between marketing

a programme and running a social marketing or public awareness campaign leading to an enhanced advocacy role for the SDC.

However the limited nature of the SIYB awareness “campaign” was wise. The SDC took a more long term view with an attitude of “let’s get the training resources ready to respond to demand before whipping up the demand”. The project was also rightly built around the capacities of the CTA whose strengths lay in being a “nuts and bolts” man concerned about building a sound delivery mechanism faithfully reflecting ILO’s best practice while adapting it to what local expertise advised on local priorities. As an outsider he was not necessarily well equipped in such a short space of time to understand the way public or sectoral opinion is developed in Qatar. There was really only time to develop awareness as part of SIYB marketing. Promotional flair and technical thoroughness are not always skill sets found in the same person. Fortunately the CTA’s skill-set was the priority one for the key tasks of the project.

6.4.2 Advisory Committee

The considerable delay in forming the Committee and holding its first meeting (from June 2006 to January 2007) meant that the committee did not carry out its first responsibility of approving the workplan. By the first meeting, the workplan had been in operation for three months (or five if the first draft was being used) having been approved by the SDC and the ILO SME Specialist. The SDC and ILO were right to take the steps they did. However, it should have been an agenda item to present the workplan to the Advisory Committee and minute that the Committee had noted (and preferably concurred with) the earlier approval.

During the evaluation mission some Advisory Committee members indicated unhappiness at the level of communication they received from the project. In particular when the Committee offered advice to the project, the advice was listened to but no feedback given as to whether it was accepted or acted on. The CTA took the view that the Committee was there only to give advice: so there was no accountability from the project to the Committee as if it were a Steering Committee. Three of Advisory Committee members interviewed thought the Advisory Committee role was too limited and it should be a Steering Committee. Some members said they did not pursue a line of questioning or develop suggestions further because they did not feel the advisory role invited them or motivated them to do so.

Evaluation comment:

There is a confusion of role. The CTA is correct that the Committee is defined as advisory. However its first term of reference was to approve a workplan. Approval implies a degree of responsibility for the outcome and presumably some right to be informed about progress sufficient to judge whether the Committee was right to approve that plan or whether changes should still be made to it. Committees of this kind in earlier SIYB projects were called Steering Committees although then too the role was seen as advisory. The Enterprise specialist acknowledged this ambiguity; but wanted to ensure that the project was able to introduce the SIYB programme in its integrity and not be susceptible to well intentioned but perhaps less informed local pressures (a real concern for ILO in some countries). More work may be needed by ILO in handling this ambiguity. Building local ownership is important, and should not be overridden by a concern to protecting the programme from local pressures the key

to which lies in effective chairing, and in representation of ILO interests by the ILO specialist.

The Committee's terms of reference require it to evaluate the project's progress. This implies the right to ask for answers and for further information if enough has not been given. The Committee is a check on the project going in the wrong direction and its members could be seen as responsible if they failed to ask questions or offer warnings at the right time.

The organizations represented on the Committee are the major government and non-government agencies concerned with the development of the SME sector and as such have a "stake" in the success or failure of the project. Appropriate weight needs to be given to their inputs not only for the benefit of the project but also for the commitment the project needs from them in the future. An appropriate sense of ownership without interference is needed.

The evaluation concluded that the Advisory Committee should be retained (as it has been), but reconstituted within a new system for the SDC-TANMIA. Its members should be encouraged to look on TANMIA project experience as useful inputs to wider issues of SME policy in Qatar including those affecting their own agencies. They should receive timely information from TANMIA issues and the SDC and TANMIA need to be proactive in building a sense of team in the Committee.

By the same token Committee members should be expected to meet standards of involvement. They should be the most senior available personnel from SME support agencies. They should agree to be bound by minimum time commitments to the Committee; and they should nominate key staff directly and proactively reporting to them if they themselves cannot ensure sufficiently regular attendance.

6.4.3 In-depth Assessment of Training Needs

The project document lays out this step as a training needs analysis (TNA) to identify the nature of SME training required in the particular circumstances of Qatar, to ensure that the SIYB programme is 1) the correct training package to respond to those circumstances; and 2) adapted appropriately. The project document sees this assessment as researching the wider range of SME needs and therefore TANMIA services, rather than just concentrating on (SIYB) training.

The TNA tools used were "awareness workshops" and individual interviews; there is no report of the findings. From interviewing the CTA and staff, it appears the "in-depth assessment" took the form of promoting business training in general and the SIYB programme in particular. "Assessment" was replaced in the reporting by "Awareness", though that was not successful: none of the people targeted during the assessment enrolled in the course.

A TNA is a form of market research, and if the assessment had been more "in depth", the people finally enrolling for the course might have included more less educated Qataris. In fact, successful recruitment was through newspaper advertisements

The project document stipulated that this assessment be conducted within 30 days of commencement of the project. This seems unrealistic and perhaps diluted the level of “in-depth” that was possible, and so perhaps lessened the perceived importance of this step (it was in fact commenced 60 days and concluded 80 days after the commencement of the project).

The project recorded 7 “entrepreneurship awareness” workshops, principally with stakeholder agencies. In interviews the workshops appeared to be more discussions of the project and marketing of SIYB training. While these are useful hinges on which to hang wider issues of entrepreneurship awareness, they are not the same thing, and more work may need to be done in this field.

6.4.4 Project Staff

It took nine months before the staff were all recruited and had started work. A large number of advertisements and contacts had been used to try to recruit for the second Trainer/Specialist position but Qataris with the right skills and experience were not to be found. In the end an appropriate person was found among those applying for the SIYB trainer position – a retired university administrator with policy and trade experience. An increase in salary had to be made before this person would accept the job.

This drastically held up the project though it is perhaps not surprising given that the project itself was meant to help develop a private sector in areas (SMEs) where there was yet very little activity or awareness. There was unlikely to be much depth in the Qatari private sector to provide people with the right mix of experience to play a leadership position in a project designed to stimulate private sector activity.

6.4.5 Trainers

The Project had some management weaknesses in communication, administration and documentation discipline, most of them minor. However a major issue was that the SIYB trainee trainers were not advised in sufficient detail of the requirements for their accreditation and of their responsibilities once accredited. As a result of this (and some other individual factors not the responsibility of the project), ten of the nineteen original trainers dropped out.

It might have been wise for the information contained in the project’s document Road Map for Certification of SIYB Trainers to have been given to them at the outset of the SIYB training course, and not at the end. In particular the need for trainers to undertake further work (to learn and teach the content of the course rather than in training methodology) caused some uncertainty and distress.

The evaluator accepts that the possible requirements for extra work were explained verbally by the ILO specialist, the CTA, and a visiting SIYB Master Trainer during the SIYB TOT training, but only in general terms. There may also have been a well-intentioned desire not to discourage trainees unused to this kind of training. However, from where they sat, the TOT trainees, having paid a near commercial level fee, expected to receive a certificate after training and what some understood as “some

kind of examination¹⁶”. They further understood that this would entitle them to earn money through teaching, even if for many of them this was not the main motivation. In frank discussion with the evaluator involving five of the trainers it is clear they did not expect to have to do further top up content training to the extent required. The problem was that these requirements had not been put in writing at the outset.

Further difficulties were experienced when trainers were told, again in non-specific terms of their responsibilities as accredited trainers: to market the course, run awareness workshops and carry out individual follow-up. A format of a draft Memorandum of Understanding between the TANMIA and the individual trainer spelt out these responsibilities and was included in the Operations Manual which was at a late stage sent to them for comment, as part of a set of key project documents. Given that they were in effect a set of employment conditions, a different kind of discussion, and if necessary negotiation, should have taken place. The problem arises partly from the success of the project in recruiting trainers who are highly skilled and motivated professionals already holding well remunerated corporate positions. Referring to them as “free lance consultants” (a term derived from countries where SIYB was delivered by individual business consultants) is less appropriate.

The list of responsibilities may need to be revised in the light of the Qatar situation; and the MOU should be presented in draft form to the SIYB trainers for discussions and negotiation. It is in the interests of the SIYB programme in Qatar that it retains the availability of these trainers (and supplementary ones in the future) over a sufficient time period (at least 3 years with the assumption that others will be trained). This should clearly be done without loss of core integrity of the programme but in the interests of further adaptation to the needs of Qatari SMEs. It should also not result in onerous demands on the TANMIA Staff (handling training commitments at the last minute because a trainer has work commitments).

Creating some kind of forum in which the Trainers (again without onerous time requirements) can be consulted on a regular basis, either through the eventual formation of a Trainers Association or representation in an advisory capacity to the SDC. Such steps should be graduated, as the trainers still have to prove themselves.

There is a pattern in many countries of “easy” accreditation, where people sit in lectures and then pick up a “Certificate” to add to their CVs. The SIYB programme sets out to validate a person’s training ability by ensuring “top-up” content training and a careful process of supervised training of entrepreneurs. An opinion was offered by the project that some of those who dropped out were expecting “easy accreditation” no verifying evidence for this was gained by the evaluation. It can be said however that the trainers who did not opt out were not put off by these requirements, and the course is the stronger for it.

6.4.6 Programme Materials and Management Tools

Materials

Interviews with trainers and entrepreneurs raised some areas of adaptation and improvement:

¹⁶ Comment of one of the SIYB Trainers interviewed with agreement of another present.

- Given the high number of small businesses that are involved in importing products for sale or components for processing products, some treatment of the legal financial and administrative steps involved in trading internationally would be useful.
- If some percentage of non-Qataris is going to be involved as beneficiaries then the materials should be available in English.
- Comments were made about clumsy grammar and vocabulary in the Arabic materials. The evaluator is not qualified to comment here, but presumes that such issues have been picked up in feedback to the project from the trainers and other internal reviews since the materials they used were still being tested.
- At least one individual (GYBI SIYB trainee) would have liked to have a guest speaker as a person running a business such as the one he envisaged, as part of the course. This and other similar suggestions could be part of a distinct service offered by the SESU rather than a component of the SIYB training. Video interviews or case studies of successful local entrepreneurs have proved successful awareness tools in other countries, and useful in schools.
- Some individual trainers and trainees were critical of the SIYB programme as being too “low tech”. They seemed to expect the training to be delivered with more cutting edge software, PowerPoint presentations etc. Yet the same trainers and trainees reported that overall they enjoyed the courses, in particular the SIYB Game, and they found the participative rather than lecturing approach helpful. The desired “high-tech” elements therefore may be considered more a matter of image rather than substance. Qataris pride themselves on being internationally competitive and progressive. There was some suggestion that they saw the “African” formats for the SIYB programme as being less forward looking and less appropriate for Qatar. Without diluting the participative approach of the SIYB training, and certainly guarding against making it less accessible to those Qataris who are less familiar with modern high tech communication, it is recommended that appropriate higher tech packaging of some training be considered.

SIYB Programme Operations Manual

This was another activity carried out successfully. It was one of the useful additions to the workplan (Activity 1.10). It was not listed in the Project Document but could have been. The strength of the SIYB programme resides partly in the comprehensive way in which it is presented, the disciplines it imposes within the administrative steps taken to enrol and lead trainees through the course and in particular in the attention given to the training of quality trainers. Competent if not excellent management of all aspects of the programme is therefore core to its impact and future. This is an excellent manual with careful assessment of the market.

Business Plan

This also was a project activity not listed in the Project Document but perhaps should have been. (This project document had a long gestation, meanwhile the importance of the Business Plan as a tool for SIYB sustainability was being recognized in other SIYB Projects). It was partly present in the Workplan (Activity 1.9) as a “SIYB programme marketing strategy”.

In the event, the project is to be commended for seeking to have a comprehensive business plan and not just a marketing strategy. (A Business plan should be driven by

its marketing component, but needs to go much further into the costing, governance, management and HRD objectives and strategies). The evaluation concludes that the business plan needed further development. This is discussed below under the question of programme sustainability.

6.4.7 Targeting beneficiaries

The preamble to the project document and the motivation for many agencies to support the SIYB programme indicates a priority target group of less-educated (presumably “poorer”) Qataris. The association with the SDC obviously reinforces that perception.

However the entrepreneurs attending the Training of Entrepreneurs (ToEs) seem to have been mainly reasonably wealthy or successful people who either already ran a business or were from families that did. The conclusions that can be drawn are:

- A. People who are reasonably advantaged know how to identify and access resources. People who are less advantaged often do not. A different strategy than advertising through mainstream media should be examined.
- B. There is a market amongst the “achievers” in addition to the one amongst the “less achievers”. It is a question for the future of the programme whether these are seen as one general market or two specific markets with different marketing strategies, pricing, venues and means of promotion.

The project document also speaks of targeting women and working through women’s organizations to do so. There does not seem to be a concentrated effort on the part of the project to target women: it was left up to the SDC to divert women from their current programmes to the SIYB programme. There seemed to be no separate strategy designed for women.

The comment was made several times that there are no unemployed in Qatar. The issue then may be one of underemployment or hidden unemployment where people are largely supported by their families but are not encouraged to be creative or increase their income earning potential. There may be a marketing strategy to these people built more around a challenge and an incentive to them to develop their potential, i.e. contributing socially as well as economically by embracing business.

As already noted many Qataris go into business by selecting a non-Qatari worker, sponsoring him and then acting as the silent partner in the business. It is argued that the Qatari often lacks sufficient knowledge to know if the business is running well, if he or she is getting a fair share of the profits, etc. Business training might remedy this. Both of these market areas will require further testing to know their extent and what different strategies are required to reach them.

It may also need a wider community awareness campaign in the importance of Qataris developing their skills through business, and not “getting lazy” and leaving it to non-Qataris to do business for them. While respecting the priority of Qatari needs, it can also be argued that it is in the interests of Qataris that their non-Qatari partners are given business training to improve the return for both partners.

6.4.8 Financing SMEs

The Project report is realistic about lack of progress in encouraging loan finance for entrepreneurs. There may have been a lack of realism in expecting large banks either to sponsor trainee entrepreneurs or to develop a loan programme for SMEs.

The provision of finance in these circumstances is a project in itself and it was not clear that the Project were given access to the ILO tools and models which would have permitted the necessary level of discussion with the banks (e.g. setting up intermediary agencies that the bank can fund but which handle the loans administration themselves; or developing local forms of microfinance).

6.5 Framework Questions

6.5.1 Relevance

- Assess the extent to which the SIYB programme responds to the national needs in Qatar and to the needs of SMEs in particular.

This is an impossible question for an outsider to answer after 9 days in a country, but from all interviews¹⁷ during the evaluation mission including higher level government officials with oversight of the Qatar economy (refer interview list), the Chamber of Commerce and Industry, the small entrepreneurs who had experienced the training, the SIYB programme responds accurately to the national needs in Qatar. Trainers indicated areas of adaptation that they believed were necessary. It is not clear to the evaluation that the needs of SMEs in Qatar are understood fully by the SIYB programme or by anyone else at this stage. Earlier comments on the lack of an in-depth needs assessment are relevant here.

- Review to what extent the SIYB programme in its current design is an adequate response to the need for BDS in Qatar.

The SIYB programme has been introduced into Qatar in a design that is technically sound and comprehensive, and is faithful to the ILO international experience. That is essentially what this project has been about. However there are areas where future adaptation will be desirable (in areas already mentioned: to women, to families, to the less educated, to combinations of Qatari and non-Qatari entrepreneurs), and future extension where the course is combined with other tools, for example to encourage home grown SME value chains linked to major corporates, possible outreach programmes to other Arab countries etc).

- Assess the progress, if any, made in the development of an entrepreneurship awareness and promotion targeting Qatari nationals.

As mentioned the promotion has been successful to what might be described as the middle class market, but limited by the essentially “pilot” nature of promotion during the establishment project phase: i.e. linked to getting customers for the first courses, and preparing the products to a stage when wider marketing is possible. As already cautioned, entrepreneurship awareness and promotion should not be equated to marketing the SIYB training courses. There is work to be done here which will require

¹⁷ With the exception of the Deputy Minister for Labour who was not supportive of external interventions in general and of the transfer of skills involved in this programme.

research: e.g. into entrepreneur awards, producing videos, or even radio or TV soap operas that promote understanding about small businesses. ILO's media and entrepreneurship tools are relevant here.

6.5.2 Effectiveness

- Has the project met its objectives?

Yes, with the qualification made under Design (above)

- Has the project completed the activities laid out in the workplan and produced the expected outputs?

The details necessary to respond to this question are contained in Appendix IV.

- Was the project adequately designed to meet its objectives?

Yes, skilfully so, in identifying the beneficiaries as all Qatari citizens rather than those seen as disadvantaged, and yet still providing motivation -- by identifying with the SDC and the Qatar Foundation -- for those (such as the trainers) who wish to help their fellow citizens (who may be disadvantaged, but without the need to say so!). Some design defects are described in Section 4 and Appendix IV of this report.

- Was the intervention strategy effective?

Yes. A skilled technician was placed in charge of an under-resourced project working with a supportive and skilled counterpart agency and in a short time frame set up the basic machinery of an autonomous SIYB programme recruiting and training an initial group of quality trainers. The involvement of all stakeholders was not completely successful (for which the project is only partially responsible), and there are still issues around the sustainability strategy and business plan which need work to bed down the success so far, but this does not detract from that success.

- Is the project's marketing strategy and activities relevant, adequate and effective?
Has sufficient effort been made in developing the marketing capacity of the SIYB programme?

It is too early to say. Marketing was done well within the strategy that the project adopted and to the best extent possible. Clearly more work needs to be done to reach less advantaged groups and compete with other training programmes¹⁸ but the problems are for the most part identified within the strategy.

6.5.3 Efficiency

- How do the resources invested relate to what has been achieved?

Perhaps the best judge of that was the donor who at the Advisory Committee meeting said he was proud his agency was associated with the project. The SDC invested its resources and social capital in a project which took it into a new commercially driven area, which carried some risks for the agency. The efforts of the ILO through its CTA and the Office for the Arab States were well focussed if limited by resources. There is potential for a good return in future years in further work in the Gulf States, and the promotion of the Decent Work Agenda. It took 6 months to find the local project managers which gave only 12 months to work with the CTA set up the scheme. It is

¹⁸ Refer p. 35

commendable that they did so well in that time frame. The point has been made that there is a limited niche in the labour market for the local staff needed to run such a programme and greater efficiency might result from better understanding this market. Effective coordination of other ILO resources (e.g. social finance) was lacking.

- Were financial, material and human resources been used cost-effectively?

Yes; not surprisingly the project had to overcome some of the environmental hurdles (e.g. lack of enterprise awareness, caution by some government ministries) This meant initially some of the resources were underutilized, but by the end of the project their use had gathered speed and the result has been a good value usage of resources.

6.5.4 Sustainability

a) Scope

The **Business Plan** covers the five year period 2008-2012 and appraises:

- Target groups of the projected market, TANMIA's likely competitors, the training product, its price, delivery location and promotional strategies;
- TANMIA capacity such as organizational structure, and staff job descriptions;
- Costing of the Centre's operations and its sourcing of finance.
- Training schedule for 2008.

The plan projects a full capacity of 21 training seminars (2784 training hours) delivered. It projects this capacity will be reached in the third year (2010) and maintained in the remaining two years (2011 and 2012) The first two years will see a stepped increase in capacity from 65% of maximum (13 training seminars totalling 1792 hours) in 2008 and by a further 20% (delivering 19 training seminars totalling 2288 hours) in 2009 . Capacity will also be maximized through increasing the average number of participants in each training course from 10 (2008-9) to 11 (2010), 12 (2011) and finally 13 (2012). The effect of these stepped increases will be to increase the annual number of participants trained between 2008 and 2012 from 130 to 247.

The plan identifies the assumptions on which the projections are based.

- Retention of project staff (i.e. not the trainers but those in charge of TANMIA operations). They are described as already "capacitated to manage and operate the Centre after handing it over to SDC".
- Retention of the freelance trainers. Clearly any drop in training capacity (even with just one trainer dropping out) will affect negatively the projections regarding course and participant numbers (and also income from their fees)
- TANMIA staff having the requisite delegated authority to respond to changes in training needs
- Support for TANMIA's activities from the various departments of SDC

The evaluation recommends there should be detailed risk analysis (and "disaster: scenarios) of the implications of failure particularly in the first two assumptions.

b) Staff

It is correct that the staff is the memory of TANMIA. In particular the two management staff persons and to a lesser extent the secretarial staff person carry a large part of the human capital resulting from the 18 month investment of ILO, SDC

and Q-Tel intellectual, political, social and financial capital. The Trainers carry complementary human capital, and to a lesser extent the written manuals and materials embody it. All these elements require ongoing nurturing and support.

c) Governance

However it is important to distinguish between the capacity to manage the training courses and the capacity to manage the TANMIA itself. There were some confusions in the project literature as to whether the TANMIA was established at the time the Project was established and effectively the project was the TANMIA, or whether TANMIA commenced at the conclusion of the project.

The project has had the effect of building capacity in the SDC to manage one particular family of tools: the SIYB programme (GYB SYB and IYB). The mandate of TANMIA (as summarized in the Vision and Mission at the head of this business plan, as above) envisages a much wider framework of tools and programmes. The ability to operationalize the SIYB programme is the first management capacity and the one that is important in the immediate future but it should not be confused with the capacity to manage TANMIA in its wider mandate.

This therefore has implications for the capacity requirements of TANMIA staff, which will involve planning for their continued and further training, the possible retention of part-time staff, and the eventual replacement of present staff. Oversight of HRD planning in these areas needs to be part of the responsibility of the SDC senior management.

It also bears on the question of delegation which, in the assumptions, is correctly identified as appropriate authority and flexibility in the preparation, conduct and follow-up of training seminars. It is clear that the senior SDC management should not concern itself with these matters. However it should receive reports on changes in training needs where these hold implications for the overall direction of the TANMIA's business plan. The point is also well made that the support of the various departments of SDC needs to be ensured. SDC senior management will need to ensure a high standard of communication and co-ordination within the SDC Departments and between them and TANMIA. This is especially important given the probability that TANMIA, following a commercial model may have different structural and governance needs to those of the other divisions of SDC.

Effective co-ordination and communication should not be left solely to TANMIA staff though they must understand their role as key players within whatever communication and co-ordination process is established. They should also be proactive in raising any difficulties that are perceived. This flow of communication will most probably depend on a good working relationship between the key manager of SDC with oversight of TANMIA and the key manager of TANMIA and the continued oversight from the General Manager in SDC to ensure that the working relationship continues successfully.

These assumptions should be examined on a regular basis and with as hard-headed a sense of realism as possible. Many business plans, such as this one, correctly identify assumptions but then do nothing to plan for the eventuality that the assumptions are

not met. In other words a risk analysis section needs to be added to the plan and a risk analysis review process designed as part of the management plan. This is something in which the SDC senior management and the Advisory Committee should be involved. Contingency thinking should be done at an early stage for such risks as: withdrawal of a key staff member or one or more of the trainers.

These comments do not imply any view that there are obstacles on the part of SDC to anything other than good management of TANMIA. The evaluation found a very enlightened, proactive, thoughtful, but entrepreneurial approach to the whole project on the part of the General and senior managers of the SDC.

d) Market

The Business Plan's identification of potential entrepreneurs is impressively comprehensive and reflects the understanding of disadvantaged Qataris that clearly flows from the SDC's competencies already developed in its overall operations.

However the distinct needs of Qataris and non-Qataris also needs further exploration, including the balance of ensuring that Qataris receive priority in training opportunities as is their right as sovereign citizens of the country, but also the needs of non-Qataris to receive training for reasons already listed.

The identification of existing entrepreneurs is less comprehensive and although it notes some of the resistances to training, it would be rewarding to do further research into the psychology behind these resistances.

A further breakdown of target entrepreneurs could be useful in areas of individual trades and types of businesses. It may be that there are "embedded" business services being provided to some lines of business and not to others. More defined analysis of these issues may be helpful in prioritizing promotion to particular groups of entrepreneurs. It must be remembered that while development professionals are used to referring to "entrepreneurs"; many people who actually are or will become entrepreneurs, think of themselves as "shop-keepers", or "I.T. service providers" or "motor mechanics"; "entrepreneur" can be a foreign word.

More analysis of the competition is needed as some courses are provided free a significant but not insuperable market disadvantage to TANMIA's fee-based training. During interviews with entrepreneurs and trainers many recognized the advantages of fee-based learning: they feel they are getting something better if they pay for it, and there is a higher likelihood of a trainee group that is better motivated to learn if they have all paid a fee, so the learning environment is better for all including the trainers.

These points are clearly expressed in the Business Plan's treatment of Price (page 14). From the point of view of some of the trainers interviewed, the model adopted by Carnegie Mellon (the main competition training group) of reimbursing fees to trainers after successful completion of the TOT programme is attractive, and may prove a strong competitive factor for TANMIA in recruiting trainers.

e) Pricing

The proposed key pricing strategy is based on the following figures:

1) Costs to entrepreneur trainees:

- 400 rials¹⁹ for the (12 hour usually 2 day) GYBI course
- 2000 rials for the (40 hour usually 5 day) SYB Course
- 900 rials per subject-workshop for the 6 workshops of 12 hours each
- 4000 rials for the 10 day SIYB programme

There is provision for a fee of 400 rials for one TNA and one follow-up visit per SYB and IYB participant. These prices are still below those of competitor programmes.

2) Accredited trainer's fee

- 400 rials per hour for training and follow-up visits and TNA interviews
- 400 rials per hour for supervision fees to TANMIA staff trainers training outside working hours

The feedback from the trainers during interviews was that these are a reasonable balance between competitive remuneration while retaining the social responsibility that goes with involvement with the SDC.

However this costing does not include cost of venue which is seen in the plan as free. It is effectively a subsidy; and this in turn does not deal with the issue of whether the SDC venue is accessible physically and psychologically to all potential participants so that some venues in the future may have to be hired. All such hidden costs should be recorded as subsidies; otherwise TANMIA has a false picture of its finances.

The projected training courses over the next five years based on competitive fees in the current BDS market are estimated to cover around 90% of the direct costs of the SIYB programme, but between only 10% and 14% of total costs i.e. when indirect costs are added in to cover SDC contribution. The project has constructed two scenarios based on subsidies from the SDC (42%) and the existing donor, Q-Tel (58%). At the time of the evaluation mission Q-Tel had responded that it wanted to see the effect of the CSR legislation before committing itself. One implication is that it expects to see TANMIA sourcing funds from other corporations.

f) Core Sustainability Issue

Given that the programme hinges on the quality of the trainers and their ability to deliver the programme in the most effective way possible, the central sustainability issue is one of:

- 1) How can the best trainers be recruited from the particular niches of the labour market where such people are likely to be found?**
- 2) What package of benefits will ensure their ongoing engagement and productivity? (These benefits need to be a mixture of financial, social, psychological, and finally administrative support).**

In the evaluation interviews some trainers flagged that they were not able to do the marketing and administration necessary to set up training events and expected the staff of the TANMIA to carry this out. There was also the suggestion that in emergencies, demands from their corporate managers (dealing with a crisis,

¹⁹ 1 Rial = USD 3.5 Dec 2007

undertaking an overseas business trip at short notice etc) may have to take precedence over commitments to running an SIYB training course, and the trainers who work as TANMIA staff should be ready to step in and take over. Understandably, on the part of the TANMIA staff, there was some fear of how often this might happen

g) Further Sustainability Questions

- To what extent has the SIYB program been firmly rooted in the form of a local structure that can sustain the program once project support has phased out?

It is too early to say; however the foundations are well laid, and with work done on a sustainability strategy (particularly in the human resource area: staff and trainers, and the organizational evolution of TANMIA) there is no reason why the project should not be strong and viable within its business plan time frame.

- Review the relevance, adequacy and clarity of the chosen sustainability strategy
More work needs to be done on a sustainability strategy (which it is argued below is wider than a business plan²⁰).

- Have adequate efforts been made in making the SIYB program sustainable?
Good efforts in the Business Plan but more attention needed²¹.

- Have adequate efforts been made to implement the chosen sustainability strategy?
Yes, though, as indicated above²², the strategy is not yet complete.

- Are the project approach and its results likely to be replicated?
The way the SIYB Programme has been introduced here, and the high quality of the trainers, the materials and many (though not yet all) of the organizational elements established so far offer useful models for expansion of this programme in the Arab States and possibly also in less developed countries for which States such as Qatar and its Foundation may feel empathy.

The donor model is also something to be studied. Q-Tel a successful and major player in the local economy (being the third largest publicly listed company as at end 2006) brought sound private sector disciplines to its donor relationship with the SIYB programme, treating it as a new product with adequate investment and expecting market research, hard-nosed examination of achievement indicators. Such a donor could provide other non-financial supports such as some of its HRD knowledge.

- Are national partners willing to continue with the project? How effectively has the project built national ownership?

National ownership has been high in relation to the counterpart agency, the SDC, and its senior officers deserve congratulation for their courage and hard work in supporting the project. The donor Q-Tel demonstrated a highly professional private sector model of support. Other members of the Advisory Committee varied in their support and there are some lessons to be learned for better using the Advisory Committee structure to build ownership. The Ministry of Labour was the only member

²⁰ Refer page 25

²¹ Ibid

²² Ibid

to appear negative towards the project, though the issue there seemed to be a concern at having to rely on outside assistance to establish the programme.

- What are the major lessons learnt for the global SIYB program with regard to the above issues and for future similar projects in the Arab region?
 1. *The technical strength of the SIYB programme puts it in a class of its own. However perhaps some more work needs to be done to clarify non-negotiable elements -- common globally -- and what are amenable to local adaptation (the interpretation of “free-lance” trainers in this project as against those in Africa for example).*
 2. *Approaches to sustainability may need further refinement, particularly not identifying a sustainability strategy solely with a business plan; or at least adding to a business plan sustainability elements such as risk analysis with guidance to CTAs and SIYB Associations as to how to analyse these. Also, it is wise to design a sustainable governance and management structure that arises from the marketing strategy, not as something separate, and to ensure appropriate HR design including succession planning and job descriptions tailored to the needs of local sustainability.*
 3. *In the Arab context, some examination of family enterprises rather than the SIYB assumption that enterprises are only ever the work of individuals would be useful both for the appearance and the substance of the programme.*
 4. *The potential in Qatar for SMEs as suppliers to the corporates suggests a more direct linkage of the SIYB programme with other ILO tools (such as value chain analysis)*
 5. *The use and role of Advisory Committees needs further examination. There has always been ambivalence here: avoiding local pressures to water down the integrity of the programme as against a desire to give local ownership during the project phase as an element in ongoing sustainability.*
 6. *This project particularly has lessons in how to manage the branding of the SIYB programme.*

6.5.5 Cross-cutting concerns

- Has gender analysis been used in addressing the different needs of men and women in the target group?

To a very limited and rather covert extent but the SDC with its existing programmes is well placed to continue this work. More ILO tools on gender awareness and women’s entrepreneurship are needed, but also a current deficiency in ILO gender work could be addressed in the Arab world: i.e. how men are motivated and supported into entrepreneurship as a legitimate male role at a time when many traditional roles (such as craftsmen, warriors, fishermen, and traditional trading) are in decline.

- Have the project’s benefits accrued equitably to men and women?
Not fully and not yet, but a reasonable start.

7. Conclusions

7.1 General

The project has been remarkably successful after a slow start (caused by difficulty in finding staff) in achieving its objectives within the 20 month time frame (expanded from 18 month) and most of it within the last 9 months (after project staff had been recruited).

The objective of the project has been overstated as a functioning support unit for SMEs when in fact the project had the more limited objective of adapting and introducing the Start and Improve Your Business Training Programme.

The Project has produced a useful Business Plan though there is still need for a wider sustainability strategy

7.2 Project

The project has been particularly successful in its core tasks of:

1. Managing the translation, adaptation and preparation of the training materials for the Qatar situation. These have been produced as follows:
 - GYBI - Generate Your Business Idea (1 manual); SYB - Start Your Business (1 Manual and 1 Business Plan booklet); IYB - Improve Your Business (7 Manuals: Buy Your Business Needs, Control Your Stocks, Control Your Money, Control Your Costs, Market Your Products and Services, Business Planning, and Managing Human Resources and Improving Productivity) were adapted and produced, together with a SIYB Trainers' Guide including monitoring and evaluation, and sessions plans. 25 copies of the SIYB Business Game were purchased.
2. Recruiting and training a cadre of competent local SIYB trainers (TOT)
 - 19 potential trainers were trained: (11 Qatari, 8 non-Qatari) (6 women, 13 men) of whom 8 completed the certification process requirements and were certified by ILO
3. Advertising the course both to trainee-trainers and trainee-entrepreneurs
4. Developing a professional website
5. Completing an initial round of SIYB training for entrepreneurs (TOE) 6) No targets were set in the project document for the numbers of entrepreneurs to be trained. Two GYBI seminars had 22 participants (11 men 11 women) (17 Qataris 5 non-Qataris); two SYB seminars: 26 participants (18 women 8 men) (figures for the second seminar: 6 Qataris 2 non-Qataris); Four IYB seminars:
 - Buying and stock control: 7 participants (3 women and 4 men)
 - Control your money: 6 participants (4 women and 2 men)
 - Marketing: 5 participants (2 women and 3 men)
 - Improving Productivity / Working Conditions: 7 participants (2 women, 5 men)The total of IYB person-sessions was 25. The total of IYB participant-persons was 15.
6. Developing pricing and marketing strategies and building a business plan

7. Developing a useful SIYB Operations Manual
8. Gaining credibility for itself, for the SDC and for the ILO with significant government agencies, the donor agency, and business representative bodies.

The project has had some administrative and communication difficulties in:

1. Recruiting the staff for the Project and therefore for the Small Enterprise Support Unit –SESU (later called TANMIA for small enterprise development).
2. Communicating clearly to the trainee-trainers the requirements of the training course (particularly the full details and contingencies in the accreditation process) and the full extent of post accreditation responsibilities

There are some possible imbalances in the way the project has evolved:

1. marketing SIYB to potential clients rather than creating wider enterprise awareness
2. a lower than desirable priority given to reaching out to women and insufficient strategies for reaching potential clients with lower standards of education
3. slower than desirable progress in developing better financing for SMEs

There is a lack of a fully developed sustainability strategy

However overall, the project has achieved a great deal and to a high standard.

The key individuals: the CTA, SDC General Manager and her senior staff, the ILO Enterprise Specialist and the two TANMIA business specialists should be commended for what amounts to pioneer work in an important socio-economic arena.

The first cadre of trainers are to be commended for their commitment, hard work and the quality of their initial trainings.

The donor Q-Tel, and Advisory Committee members have provided intelligent and useful support for which considerable respect is due.

7.3 Project Design

On balance the project document was well prepared. Because of the long gestation of the project some areas of the document might be written differently today (in reflecting new developments in the SIYB programme for example). The objectives set were ahead of their time. For example the need for awareness of enterprise is now more widespread and has been aided by the timely nature of this project and its success to date.

However the project document carried some ambiguities, which have been analysed earlier, notably:

Identifying the beneficiaries as all Qatari citizens rather than those seen as disadvantaged, and yet still providing motivation -- by identifying with the SDC and the Qatar Foundation -- for those (such as the trainers) who wish to help their fellow citizens (who may be disadvantaged, but don't have to be seen as such). This step was sound as it removed any stigma from the courses and yet encouraged trainers to

volunteer out of altruistic as well as self-directed motives, but it contributed to a less than successful outreach to the “disadvantaged”. Having said that it must be stressed that this strategy is based on building the course on the mainstream and then facilitating access to it from the less educated; and this process is still in train.

The wording of the Project objective as the establishment of a functioning SME support unit was an overstatement as the project was directed to the establishment of the SIYB programme which is only one component (albeit probably the most basic one) of the support needs of SMEs in Qatar. This may have led to the appearance of underachievement of some of the project outputs (e.g. the issue of loan finance) whereas these are things for the future and the essential objective was the installation of a high quality locally adapted SIYB programme.

Confusion between individual TNAs and in-depth assessment of a target population; and between marketing SIYB and social marketing / advocacy has been noted.

The project strategy was effective, and the employment of a competent CTA was crucial to this. The CTA had a basic nuts-and-bolts job to do: installing the SIYB hardware and software in Qatar. He worked within the limitations of resources, time, the local labour market and lack of enterprise culture. He solved problems with practical intuition. His overall performance was excellent.

7.4 ILO

ILO involvement is seen as a positive factor by both entrepreneurs and trainers. The groundwork is laid in a practical way for Qatar, and perhaps later other Gulf States to receive enterprise tools and to understand the concept and practice of Decent Work.

8. Lessons Learned

Most lessons learned are expressed in recommendations below or are otherwise dealt with in the text and in the conclusions. Those that can be highlighted are as follows:

- Some of the women entrepreneurs interviewed in Qatar took up business with the permission of their husbands and relied on male members of their family (of birth or marriage) for technical know-how, business space, and finance. In the Arab context, examination of family enterprises rather than the SIYB assumption that enterprises are the work of individuals would be useful both for appearance and substance of the programme especially in Arab countries.
- The disciplines which prevented trainee trainers acquiring a “certificate for their CV” were correct and need to be continued. At the same time the responsibilities of accredited free lance trainers were seen by many of the trainers (holding full time corporate jobs rather than working as private consultants) as too onerous. This may prove to differ from the needs of SIYB projects hitherto. Clearer communication and negotiation about these requirements were and are necessary, and also the accreditation requirements (particularly extra study and examination) needed to be communicated clearly.

- This project particularly has lessons in how to manage the branding of the SIYB programme.
- A local private sector donor provides a classic example of corporate social responsibility and in addition to the funding itself brings sound private sector disciplines to its donor relationship with the SIYB programme, treating it as a new product with adequate investment and expecting market research, hard-nosed examination of achievement indicators. Such a donor could provide other non-financial supports such as some of its HRD knowledge.

9. Recommendations

9.1 SDC and TANMIA

9.1.1 Outreach

- The downside of identifying the beneficiaries as all Qatari citizens rather than those seen as disadvantaged -- and the priority given to building the course in the mainstream rather than for the disadvantaged -- means work still has to be done to reach out to those potential clients.
- There are areas where future adaptation of the SIYB programme will be desirable (in areas already mentioned: to women, to families, to the less educated, to combinations of Qatari and non-Qatari entrepreneurs), and future extension where the course is combined with other tools, for example to encourage home-grown SME value chains linked to major corporates, possible outreach programmes to other Arab countries etc).
- It should also concentrate on further training needs analysis listening to the obstacles – physical, psychological and financial -- that prevent some potential clients from accessing the SIYB programme in its present format.
- The SDC is on track to build continued economic empowerment for women but the TANMIA needs to improve its gender analysis and increase its outreach to women.

9.1.2 Product Development

- Given the large number of small businesses involved in importing products for sale or components for processing, some treatment of the legal financial and administrative steps involved in trading internationally would be useful.
- If a significant percentage of non-Qataris is going to be involved as beneficiaries then the materials should also be available in English.
- At least one individual (GYBI SIYB trainee) would have liked to have a guest speaker as a person running a business such as the one he envisaged, as part of the course. This and other similar suggestions could be part of a distinct service offered by the SESU rather than a component of the SIYB training.
- Without diluting the participative approach of the SIYB training, and certainly guarding against making it less accessible to those Qataris who are less familiar with modern high tech communication, it is recommended that appropriate higher tech packaging of some training be considered.

9.1.3 Financing SMEs

- The question of finance for SMEs should be addressed as a sub-project. Some greater inventory of the need and present resources (including family financing) that are available in Qatar, and ILO social finance tools and models (e.g. setting up intermediary agencies that the bank can fund but which handle the loans administration themselves; or developing local forms of microfinance etc.) and those of other agencies should be studied in consultation with the Qatar Bank and other stakeholders.

9.1.4 Trainers

- A forum should be created to consult with the accredited trainers on a regular basis (without onerous time requirements), either by eventually forming a trainers' association, or being represented in an advisory capacity to the SDC. Such steps should be graduated, as the trainers still have to prove themselves.
- In the first instance there needs to be consultation over the list of responsibilities that accredited trainers are required to take on given the unique nature of the Qatari "free-lance" trainers' situation. The current MOU should be presented in draft form to the SIYB trainers for discussions and negotiation. Any change in those responsibilities should not result in onerous demands on the TANMIA staff (e.g. "to fill in" when a trainer has other commitments).
- To counteract any disadvantage that the time pressures and the pilot nature of their training may have had on the trainers who currently meet the certification requirements, a free trainer refresher course should be provided. More supervised training experience is definitely needed.
- Because of the confusion of expectations between the project management and the original 19 trainers who attended the TOT, the requirements on "free lance" trainers need to be discussed. It is recommended to set up a regular forum for the accredited trainers to discuss these issues and reach an agreed set of trainer responsibilities and support entitlements. However in the light of the limited amount of training that the existing trainers have done it is recommended that this forum should not yet be constituted as an SIYB Trainers Association. A desirable objective in the medium term but membership requirements of such an association should include completion of the international standard of training requirements: i.e. further training in each SIYB programme with resources available for further Master Trainer supervision for these training events.

9.1.5 Enterprise Awareness

- Enterprise awareness programmes need to be seen in a wider context than promoting SIYB courses. TANMIA should study the most effective ways of creating awareness perhaps in co-operation with other bodies such as the Chamber of Commerce for example through entrepreneur awards, producing videos, or even radio or TV soap operas that promote understanding about small businesses.

9.1.6 Sustainability

- A fuller sustainability strategy needs to be developed: using the Business Plan, further feedback from the SIYB trainers and TANMIA stakeholders, and wider ILO experience on governance of these programmes.
- The current costing does not include cost of venue which is seen as free though is effectively a subsidy; and this does not deal with the issue of whether the SDC venue is accessible physically and psychologically to all potential participants and whether some venues in the future may be hired.
- The distinct needs of Qataris and non-Qataris require further exploration. The priority of ensuring that Qataris receive training opportunities must be retained but also the needs of non-Qataris to receive training, not least to ensure that the businesses that are often run in partnership with Qataris and contribute to individual Qatari's income and standing need to be successful.
- Analysis of the competitor is important not least because of the provision by some of them of free training -- which can lead to a significant market disadvantage to the TANMIA's fee based training.
- From the point of view of the trainers the Carnegie Mellon model of reimbursement of fees after successful completion of the programme is seen as relevant and may prove a strong competitive factor for TANMIA.
- The indirect costs in the Business Plan are seen as "relatively fixed and therefore do not depend on the training activities". But they are costs and should be factored in even if noted as being covered by effective subsidy.
- The assumptions set out at the beginning of the Business Plan should be examined on a regular basis and with as hard-headed a sense of realism as possible. A risk analysis section needs to be added to the business plan and a risk analysis review process designed as part of the management plan.
- The capacity requirements of TANMIA staff both now and as the programme evolves need to be assessed. This involves planning for their continued and further training, the possible retention of part-time staff, and the eventual replacement of present staff. Oversight of HRD planning in these areas needs to be part of the responsibility of the SDC senior management. including consideration of eventual advertisement of the management positions partly to test the relevant niche of the Qatari labour market. The existing donor, and/or other stakeholders with private sector HRD expertise, could be invited to advise on recruitment processes. Further subsidies may be necessary to ensure a competitive salary can be offered to buy in the necessary skills to build the business to a critical mass that will be commercially self-sustaining. Given the commitment in Qatar to corporate social responsibility, possibly arrangements could be investigated with corporate supporters of TANMIA allowing staff to be seconded for periods without loss of salary or career prospects.
- Authority and flexibility in the preparation, conduct and follow-up of training seminars needs to be delegated to the TANMIA management, but senior SDC

management should receive reports on changes in training needs where these hold implications for the overall direction of the TANMIA's business plan.

- Senior SDC management must ensure high standards of communication and co-ordination within SDC Departments and between them and TANMIA. This is important given that TANMIA, following a commercial model may have different structural and governance from other divisions of SDC.
- The future governance needs of TANMIA need to be reviewed, whether this is as an SDC department in its own right, a division of a department or a semi-autonomous body which could become fully autonomous at a later stage²³.

9.2 ILO Regional Office for the Arab States

- An enterprise product with a title such as “Family Enterprises in the Arab States” could package much existing ILO knowledge in a way that is consistent with local cultural norms and not giving the appearance of an imposition of Western individualism. The same approach could assist in encouraging and informing unproductive male members of families to play a role within economic activity which is family or kinship based. The SDC supported by the Qatar Foundation with its mandate and record of supporting families could be a useful counterpart in developing such a product.
- The potential in Qatar for SMEs as suppliers to the huge number of corporates now taking up locations in Doha suggests a more direct linkage of the SIYB programme with ILO tools of value chain analysis.
- The way the SIYB Programme has been introduced here, and the high quality of the trainers, the materials and many (though not yet all) of the organizational elements established so far offer useful models for expansion of this programme in the Arab States and possibly also in less developed countries for which States such as Qatar and its Foundation may feel empathy. Because of the contentious trade union issue in the Gulf States, it is valuable for ILO to be seen as competent and helpful in other matters. So ILO support needs to continue to the fledgling SIYB programme and separate funding with outside expertise for further ILO enterprise tools. The new Qatar legislation requiring companies to exercise corporate social responsibility could also make more funds and corporate expertise available for SME development. There are a number of agencies in Qatar that know they need to do more to foster SMEs but seem to be waiting for someone else to move it along. The SDC with ILO backing could be that someone else. The Chamber of Commerce as an ILO social partner should be encouraged to take a greater role. Work should be done to overcome resistance on the part of the Ministry of Labour, though the good links with the commerce and planning agencies of government should be built on. Separate strategies need to be worked out for each of the players. If SDC can be helped over the next two years to develop

²³ The relation of the Small Firms Association to the Irish Business and Employers Confederation is a relevant model.

and adapt other ILO tools; these could become the basis for outreach programmes to other Arab and Islamic states.

9.3 ILO Employment Enterprise Dept. (SIYB Programme)

9.3.1 Donor

- The donor model in Qatar should be studied further. A successful and major player in the local economy brings sound private sector disciplines to its donor relationship with the SIYB programme and could provide other non-financial supports such as some of its HRD knowledge.

9.3.2 Sustainability

- The issue of free lance trainers and whether the term taken from African experience is applicable in Qatar needs to be examined. This bears on clarifying the SIYB programme's core integrity: non-negotiable elements -- common globally -- and what elements are amenable to local adaptation.
- A further example is the usage of "focal point" and "partner organization". If there is only one "partner organization" as in Qatar which then holds the copyright for SIYB materials, what is its difference from a "focal point"?
- Approaches to sustainability may need further refinement, particularly not identifying a sustainability strategy solely with a business plan; or at least adding to a business plan, sustainability elements such as risk analysis with guidance to CTAs and SIYB Associations on analysing these. It is wise to design a sustainable governance and management structure that arises out of a marketing strategy, not separate from it, and to ensure HR design includes succession planning and job descriptions tailored to local sustainability.

9.3.3 Project Management

- The use and role of Advisory Committees needs further examination. There has always been ambivalence here: avoiding local pressures to water down the integrity of the programme as against a desire to give local ownership during the project phase as an element in ongoing sustainability.

9.3.4 Gender

- A current deficiency in ILO gender work could be addressed in the Arab world: i.e. how men are motivated and supported into entrepreneurship as a legitimate male role at a time when many traditional roles (such as craftsmen, warriors, fishermen, etc) are in decline. As in the outreach to women, the relation to "family enterprises" should also be considered.

10. ANNEXES

ANNEX I: INDIVIDUALS INTERVIEWED²⁴

Social Development Centre

SDC - ILO Project Staff and Advisers

Mr. Samih Jaber, Chief Technical Adviser ILO SDC project TANMIA for small and medium enterprises

Mr. Ali Ahmad Neama, Business Development Trainer Specialist

Ms Hanan Al-Thani Business Training Specialist

Ms Rania Bhikazi, ILO Enterprise Specialist Beirut

SDC Management

Ms. Amal Al Mannai General Manager SDC *Advisory Committee Chair*

Stakeholders

Dr. Khaled Yousef Alderbesti, Director Investment & Trade Promotion Department Ministry of Economy and Commerce *Advisory Committee member*

Mr Naser Al Hmedi Deputy Minister for Labour *Advisory Committee member*

Dr. Saleh M. Alnabit, Director of Economic Planning, General Secretariat for Development Planning

Dr. Khalid S. Abdul Jabbar, Advisor to Chairman, Manager of Project & Studies Department (Acting) Qatar Chamber of Commerce and Industry (QCCI)²⁵

Mr. Aly Hussein Aly Abdullateef Acting Head of Research & Information (QCCI)

Mr. Abdulla Nasser Al-Khalifa Assistant General Manager Assets Department Qatar National Bank *Advisory Committee member*

SIYB Trainer Trainees

Mr. Abdulrahman Hasna

Mr. Rashid Al Kuwwari

Mr. Kefah Salem

Mr. Mahmoud Darwish

Mr. Hussein Al Yazeedi

Mr. Abdullah Yousouf Al Sulaiti (did not continue)

SIYB Entrepreneur Trainees

Ms Amal Al Hamad IYB

Mr Sohail Ali Bahzad IYB

Mr Abdul Aziz Al Khesrawi IYB

Ms Noorah Al Thani GYBI / SYB

Ms Rabea' Ai Emadi GYBI / SYB

²⁴in chronological order of interview within each category

²⁵ QCCI is represented on the Advisory Committee by its Director who was absent overseas at this time

ANNEX II: NOTES ON SUSTAINABILITY

The usual ILO framework for project sustainability is based on three pillars of sustainability:

- technical (how to ensure the ongoing quality of the product including its improvement),
- financial (how to ensure it pays for itself including investment in business overheads such as marketing and product improvement) and
- institutional (what governance and management structure is necessary for ongoing viability).

The ILO SIYB programme already contains elements of sustainability that have grown out of the global experience of the programme including evolving ideas and practices within the international development community relating to the commercial and other sustainability of business development services (BDS) of which clearly business skills training is an important component. Each situation is different and it has been one of the purposes of the TANMIA project to understand the unique characteristics of Qatar and where adaptations or even innovations are necessary.

Technical

Technical sustainability is usually maintained in the SIYB programme through the quality of the materials and the quality of the trainers.

In Qatar the materials have been translated adapted and appropriately designed prior to final production (materials used so far have been in draft form).

A group of trainers has been recruited and trained, slightly less in number than originally envisaged, but a sufficient number if they can be retained and engaged in working on broader measures for the improvement of the programme. Because the trainers are all in full employment some adjustments may need to be made as regards how much they can be involved in quality control, materials development, and project advisory functions.

There are only two Arab-speaking Master Trainers world-wide, and investment may need to be made in bringing these and/or perhaps other Master Trainers to conduct a refresher course at some stage. It would be useful over time to groom one or two trainers as Master Trainers in Qatar. This could become more feasible if the programme was to be exported from Qatar to other parts of the Arab-speaking world.

Financial

Financial sustainability relates to the ability of the programme to cover its costs, and to create surplus sufficient to invest in future development. In the cases where the programme is run by a for-profit company clearly it must also generate profit over and above the covering and costs; where it is run by a not-for-profit, agency it must simply cover costs.

The question is whether the required income is derived solely from the sale of materials and courses or whether some sort of cross subsidy or core subsidy is employed. In the case of outreach to disadvantaged people the subsidy is likely to be fairly large, though accepted practice today is that even the poorest client should be asked to contribute something (e.g. purchase of materials). In part this is reaction against earlier donor funded programmes where everything was provided free and even daily fees were paid to the clients. This clearly created aid dependency and frequently undermined the effectiveness of the training since the client had no reason to take the training seriously.

Institutional

The outcome of the project is the establishment of a Small Enterprise Support Unit (the word Unit was subsequently replaced by the word TANMIA). The project document's preamble envisages a unit within the SDC that offers a variety of support services. However the project itself envisages only one: the SIYB programme.

While the good sense of the strategy is to start with one highly regarded comprehensive service, it leaves confusion as to whether the project can achieve its objective when only one service has been introduced and that to only a rudimentary stage of preparedness. It might be better to state the outcome as an operational SIYB programme. Then, at the conclusion of the project, the SESU commences operations with that one programme (but presumably a plan to introduce further services, working off the management strengths and market research advantages of the programme.)

Given that the Project reported to the ILO (with the staff being employed and paid by the ILO), it is more appropriate to consider the SESU (always intended to be a part of SDC) should commence at the conclusion of the project.

The TAMNIA project has already adopted an institutional structure different from that employed in most SIYB programmes. There has effectively been a step away from the notion of partner organizations (usually a mix of community public and private sector agencies) whose staff are trained as trainers who contract with locally based Master Trainers to train accredit, and update the Partner Organization staff and who together with the master trainers and trainers acting as a professional grouping are represented on the body of an SIYB association which co-ordinates delivery of TOTs and negotiates contracts with donors so that Partner Organizations can subsidise the delivery of the training programme to targeted poor populations.

There is also a place in this model for free lance trainers who usually operate commercially being paid a fee by a PO or other organization to deliver the training. They are also represented on the SIYB Association's board through the general representation of trainers. The Association earns its income through the sale of the materials, through subscriptions from the partner organizations and through an administrative fee levied on the contracts that the Association negotiates with donors.

This model was evolved in Africa and Southern Asia to replace an early institutional model of a focal point usually a single organization such as an employers' body or Chamber of commerce, an NGO or government authority. In the 1980's and early

1990's many of these agencies received donor money and the SIYB programme's technical know-how but delivered the programme only as long as a donor was paying for it. Also ILO was part of a general discussion around the year 2000 about the commercial development of Business Development Services to avoid the unwitting creation of a dependency syndrome in recipients and the lack of sustainability in these BDS interventions.

TANMIA has said it opted for only one partner organization (namely SDC) and a team of trainers who are either employed by the partner organisation or are "free-lance". In fact the TANMIA model has reverted to the earlier focal point structure, since it will not be partnered with the organisation that holds copyright of the materials and is responsible for co-ordinating the technical sustainability of the programme. That organization will be one and the same.

The use of the "free-lance" model seems not wholly accurate. All the Qatari trainers are skilled people already holding down full time jobs: all those interviewed identified the key motivation as not being money but in doing something for other people and because they enjoyed training work. Some indicated that they would do the same work for free, some considered a fee was important and the present fee was inadequate, others thought that the balance was about right.

The one thing that almost all identified as an obstacle was the definition of a trainer's responsibilities as including marketing the programme, including awareness sessions, conducting training needs assessments, follow up services and monitoring and evaluation activities. They regarded these as outside the scope of their other commitments to their full time work, career, and family responsibilities.

These "extra" activities are regarded as part of the "free lance" trainer model, but seem inappropriate for the Qatar situation. In any event, in the evaluator's reading of the present SIYB trainers' intentions they will not carry out functions other than delivering training (and perhaps some follow up support on an individual basis, though this point was not clear).

The evolution of the SIYB Association, Partner Organization and free lance trainer model was designed to institutionalize ownership of the SIYB programme as a separate ILO copyrighted BDS product with the commitment of that institution to the quality control and dissemination of the programme.

The danger is that if the SIYB programme becomes just one among other BDS training packages, a focal point organization, as happened in other countries, may drop the SIYB programme once donor funding runs out, take on another training programme because it has fresh donor funding, or cut corners and deliver a substandard product to the detriment of the brand name both of SIYB and ILO.

Recent developments in using the SIYB programme, for example in China, have allowed more flexibility in shaping institutional sustainability. The concerns of ILO regarding quality control should be taken into account but for the present it would appear that the SDC will operate as a focal point and will employ staff in TANMIA who can manage the delivery of the SIYB programme including training needs analysis and co-ordinating training and follow up services for entrepreneurs and with

available Master Trainers, the further development of existing trainers and recruitment and training of further trainers as required.

ANNEX III

Terms of Reference ILO/SDC Start and Improve Your Business Project QAT/05/01M/SDQ Independent final evaluation

1. Introduction and rationale for evaluation

This independent evaluation will be conducted in the framework of ILO's policies and regulations for project evaluation.

The performance of the project will be reviewed with regards to relevance, design, effectiveness, efficiency, and sustainability. Impact will not be covered as the project has only been running for 18 months which is a very short time frame.

The recommendations and lesson learned of the evaluation will guide the project stakeholders in ensuring a sustainable environment for the project.

For the purpose of this evaluation, the reference to the SIYB programme includes the following ILO training packages: Generate Your Business Idea (GYBI), Start Your Business (SYB) and Improve Your Business (IYB).

2. Background

The problem, which is addressed by the project, is the urgent need for **indigenously driven economic growth in Qatar**, including the creation of productive, sustainable employment opportunities. It is clear that this must be achieved by the development of **the indigenous private sector** whose growth was limited due to many historical and cultural reasons prevailing in Qatar. Therefore, there is a need to find effective ways of supporting the private sector to make it more competitive and better able to grow and provide the employment, which is needed, for nationals.

Consequently the project's development objective is to establish a national support service infrastructure for the development of small enterprises which will contribute to the national economic and social goal of generating decent employment opportunities for the Qatari population (men, women and youth) in the private sector.

The project's outcome is a fully operational Small Enterprise Support Unit (SESU) capable to provide, independently and effectively, non-financial business development and support services to existing national small enterprises and potential entrepreneurs in order to start viable micro and small businesses.

3. Purpose, scope and clients of the evaluation

The objective of the evaluation is to assess whether the project outcomes have been achieved as stipulated in the project document.

The evaluation will seek to accomplish the following on the basis of the documents made available and in-depth discussions with the project staff (both national and international), key partner organizations, project trainees, project resource persons (trainers, consultants), aspiring and existing entrepreneurs assisted, government officials and national donors.

The main clients of the evaluation will be: ILO ROAS, the project manager/CTA, the project counterpart/SDC (also the donor).

Specifically:

- Assess the extent to which the SIYB programme responds to the national needs in Qatar and to the needs of SMEs in particular.
- Review to which extent the SIYB programme in its current design is an adequate response to the need for BDS in Qatar.
- Assess the progress, if any, made in the development of an entrepreneurship awareness and promotion targeting Qatari nationals.
- Assess the effectiveness of the methodologies used in the development and delivery of the SIYB programme in Qatar.
- Review and assess the efforts progress made by local stakeholders in building up a sustainable programme structure.
- Draw conclusions in terms of achievement made and make recommendations for the way forward.

4. Suggested analytical framework

The evaluation will focus on the following issues:

Relevance

- To what the extent are objectives still in keeping with national priorities and needs in Qatar.
- To what extent has the project contributed to ILO's mandate in Qatar?

Design

- How coherent is the project's design, approach, and logic to achieve the planned outcomes.

Effectiveness

- Has the project met its objectives?
- Has the project completed the activities laid out in the workplan and produced the expected outputs?
- Was the project adequately designed to meet its objectives?
- Was the intervention strategy effective?
- Is the project's marketing strategy and activities relevant, adequate and effective? Has sufficient effort been made in developing the marketing capacity of the SIYB programme?

Efficiency

- How do the resources invested relate to what has been achieved?
- Were financial, material and human resources been used cost-effectively?

Sustainability

- To what extent has the SIYB program been firmly rooted in the form of a local structure that can sustain the program once project support has phased out?
- Review the relevance, adequacy and clarity of the chosen sustainability strategy
- Have adequate efforts been made in making the SIYB program sustainable?
- Have adequate efforts been made in implementing the chosen sustainability strategy?
- Are the project approach and its results likely to be replicated?
- Are national partners willing to continue with the project? How effectively has the project built national ownership?
- What are the major lessons learnt for the global SIYB program with regard to the above issues and for future similar projects in the Arab region?

Cross-cutting concerns

- Has gender analysis been used in addressing the different needs of men and women in the target group?
- Have the project's benefits accrued equitably to men and women in the target group?

5. Methodology to be followed

A desk review of project documents and related material (to be prepared in advance by project) will be carried out before the mission.

The evaluation mission will hold direct individual and group interviews with project stakeholders and undertake field visits to meet samples of entrepreneurs, directors of partner organizations, trainers and direct beneficiaries. Interview partners will be selected as to ensure variety of perspectives and triangulation of information.

The consultant will prepare and present a draft review report with initial findings to the Project Advisory Committee in its meeting. This will provide an opportunity for all parties to the Advisory Committee to react to the initial findings, and to provide validation and feedback.

The evaluator will have to submit an evaluation methodology to be approved by the ILO.

- Sources of information

The evaluation consultant will have access to all relevant material from the project office and the ILO SME Specialist in Beirut. To the extent possible, key documentation will be sent to him in advance. The documentation will include the project document, work plans, progress reports and any other relevant documentation.

The CTA in collaboration with the project office will arrange meetings with concerned people such as trainers, trainees, officials from SDC and other SME related stakeholders in advance and according to the methodology chosen by the evaluator.

6. Management arrangements, work plan and time frame

- Composition of the mission and timetable

The evaluation will be carried out by an external evaluator. Interpretation will be available when necessary.

The evaluation will be managed by the regional evaluation person in the RO Beirut with no previous links to the project. The evaluator reports only to the evaluation manager and sends him the draft and final report.

- Findings, conclusions and recommendations

The main findings of the evaluation should be presented at the Advisory Committee meeting on December 3, 2007 in Doha at the end of the evaluation mission with a view to making recommendations on the following:

- What are the major recommendations in terms of design, delivery structure and performance of the project?
- Has the project met its outputs and activities?
- Have sufficient efforts been made in achieving the sustainability of the SIYB programme in Qatar?
- How appropriate is the current design of the SIYB programme vis à vis the needs of local SMEs and Qatari nationals? What improvements, if any, are required?
- Other recommendations the consultant may wish to submit based on the findings.

- Final report

The draft evaluation report will be submitted to the evaluation manager in ILO/RO-Beirut by December 4, 2007. Upon receipt of comments from concerned parties, a final report version should be submitted on December 10, 2007 at the latest.

Structure of the final report:

Cover page with key project and evaluation data

- Summary (according to ILO Evaluation Summary template)
- Brief background of project and its logic
- Purpose, scope and clients of evaluation
- Methodology employed
- Review of implementation
- Findings regarding project performance
- Conclusions
- Recommendations
- Lessons learned
- Annexes, including TOR, persons contacted, etc.