



# ILO EVALUATION

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**This evaluation has been conducted according to ILO's evaluation policies and procedures. It has not been professionally edited, but has undergone quality control by the ILO Evaluation Unit.**

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## Acronyms and Abbreviations

Acronyms	Abbreviations
<b>BBDN</b>	Bangladesh Business and Disability Network
<b>BEF</b>	Bangladesh Employers Federation
<b>B-SEP</b>	Bangladesh Skills for Employment & Productivity
<b>BMET</b>	Bureau of Manpower Employment and Training
<b>BTEB</b>	Bangladesh Technical Education Board
<b>CBLM</b>	Competency Based Learning Materials
<b>CBT&amp;A</b>	Competency Based Training and Assessment.
<b>DCM</b>	Data Collection Method
<b>DTE</b>	Directorate of Technical Education
<b>DWCP</b>	Decent Work Country Programme
<b>EU</b>	European Union
<b>ET</b>	Evaluation Team
<b>FGD</b>	Focus Group Discussion
<b>GAC</b>	Global Affairs Canada
<b>ISC</b>	Industry Skills Council
<b>KII</b>	Key Informant Interview
<b>LDC</b>	Least Developed Country
<b>MDG</b>	Millennium Development Goal
<b>NCCWE</b>	National Coordination Committee for Workers Education
<b>NHRDF</b>	National Human Resources Development Fund
<b>NSDC</b>	The National Skills Development Council
<b>NSDCS</b>	The National Skills Development Council Secretariat
<b>NPD</b>	National Project Director
<b>PMCC</b>	Project Monitoring and Coordination Committee
<b>PPP</b>	Public Private Partnership
<b>PSC</b>	Project Steering Committee
<b>PWD</b>	Persons with Disabilities
<b>SCORE</b>	Sustaining Competitive & Responsible Enterprises
<b>SME</b>	Small & Medium Enterprises
<b>SP</b>	Service Providers
<b>TNA</b>	Training Need Assessment
<b>TOR</b>	Terms of Reference
<b>TPP</b>	Technical Project Proposal
<b>TTC</b>	Technical Training Center
<b>TVET</b>	Technical & Vocational Education & Training
<b>TVETR</b>	Technical & Vocational Education & Training Reform

## Executive summary

This report is the result of an independent mid-term evaluation exercise carried out by a team of two consultants during the period July- September 2016. The team evaluated the progress of the Bangladesh Skills for Employment and Productivity (B-SEP) Project, funded by the Government of Canada. The project is being implemented by the International Labour Organization (ILO) in partnership with the Ministry of Education.

The B-SEP project is a follow up to the past ILO implemented TVET Reform Project funded by the European Union (EU) that has helped address some of the critical structural weaknesses in the national skills system. Fundamental to this has been the development of the first ever National Skills Development Policy (NSDP). The B-SEP project, along with other sectoral interventions are in support to the NSDP. B-SEP's fundamental focus is on improving the national enabling environment for industry skills development and the increased employability of young and adult women and men. It targets government agencies and their staff, employers, workers, training institutions, students and trainees with a particular focus on disadvantaged groups in the labour market. B-SEP aims to enhance the market-relevance and effectiveness of the national TVET and Skills Development system, allowing for better quality, more access and an improved capacity to provide and sustain demand driven services.

Skills development at various qualification levels is delivered by 22 ministries, albeit in a fragmented manner. The main public providers of technical vocational education and training (TVET) are the Directorate of Technical Education (DTE) under the Ministry of Education (MOE); the Bureau of Manpower, Employment, and Training (BMET) under the Ministry of Expatriates' Welfare and Overseas Employment; the Ministry of Industries; the Ministry of Youth and Sports; the Ministry of Women and Children Affairs; the Ministry of Social Welfare; and the Ministry of Agriculture. The Bangladesh Technical Education Board (BTEB), also under the MOE, is the apex body responsible for quality assurance through accreditation of training providers, curriculum development, and certification.

Thus, B-SEP operates with a complex administrative, social and political environment focusing on the following four areas :

1. Skills Funding, Planning and Support Services
2. Competency Based Training and Assessment (CBTA) Quality and Relevance
3. Industry Skills Development; and
4. Improved Access to Skills

These interventions are aimed to increase employability of young and adult women and men, with particular focus on the disadvantaged groups. The Project also helps create a better trained and qualified workforce with increased economic opportunities in five target sectors, aimed to contribute to sustainable economic development, poverty reduction, and social inclusion in Bangladesh. The five target sectors are: Agro-Food Processing; Tourism and Hospitality; Pharmaceuticals; Ceramics; and Furniture Manufacturing. In particular, the

project addresses a number of key challenges facing the TVET system on the policy and institutional level.

There are two specific rationale embedded in the mid-term evaluation of the B-SEP project:

- i. to ensure accountability and transparency with regard to the utilization of resources including the funding from the donor, and the resources from ILO and the Government of Bangladesh; and
- ii. to ensure that the lessons derived from the project will feed into strategic decisions regarding design, implementation arrangements and delivery of technical assistance services in accordance with the project plan and design.

The **specific objectives** of the evaluation, as per the TOR are to assess the following, in accordance with the criteria enunciated by OECD/DAC:

- **Relevance** in terms of the extent to which the objectives of the project are consistent with beneficiary's requirement, country needs, global priorities and partners /donors' policies;
- **Efficiency** in terms of whether outputs achieved were reasonable for the resources spent;
- **Effectiveness** in terms of achievement of intended results;
- **Impact** in terms of positive and negative changes produced by the intervention, directly or indirectly, intended or unintended;
- **Sustainability** in terms of the probability that the benefits of the intervention will continue after the end of the project; and
- **Gender** as a cross-cutting issue in terms of how gender equality concerns were integrated throughout project's methodology, data/all deliverables, including in the progress reports.

The evaluation covered all activities undertaken by the project from the start of the project until June 2016, including cross-cutting issues, such as gender, marginalized population and people with disability throughout the methodology, deliverables and the final report of the evaluation.

### **Validity of the project design :**

The Evaluation Team assessed the validity of the project design by reviewing the Logic Model and the narratives on the objectives. The design is somewhat weak in not being able to establish the causal linkage between the broad goal and the immediate objectives of the project. The project document also does not articulate the immediate objectives in clear terms. Thus, the logic model calls for revision to include a SMART<sup>1</sup> Logical Framework to avoid any ambiguity among the implementing partners in determining the project targets and results. Having said so, the fundamental premise of the project, i.e, developing skills and thus

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<sup>1</sup>S=Specific; M=Measurable; A=Attainable/Assignable; R= Realistic; T= Time Bound

creating income generating opportunities for youth, and raising productivity is valid and sound, that features strongly in the project document.

Despite the above weaknesses in the design, the project creatively undertook tasks, delivering expected results based on the rationale and framework of implementation contained in the project document. The project team resorted to a robust, yet flexible approach, while remaining mindful of the broad intent of the project and thus continued to develop the annual work plan and implementation strategies within the fundamental framework of the project.

Also, project's focus on the five sector specific pilot interventions through partners (Ex: technical training institute) could be expanded to other prominent and promising trades, such as Jute, Textile, Imitation Jewelry which are labour intense and of contemporary interest to Bangladesh.

### Relevance and strategic fit

The project enjoys its continued strategic relevance in the context of NSDP, 6<sup>th</sup> Five Year Plan and MDGs (at the time of the project formulation) and Canada's Country Strategy, and in particular with NSDP's major objective mentioned in 3.3 (d) (*Improve access to skills development for various groups of citizens including women and people with disabilities, encourage participation in skills development by industry organizations, employers and workers and improve skills acquisition in communities*). It is also relevant with the Sustainable Development Goals, in particular Goal 4: Quality Education, and Goal 8: Decent Work and Economic Growth. B-SEP is also aligned to the new 7<sup>th</sup> Year Plan of Bangladesh in relation to its pronounced commitment to employment through skills development, higher productivity and promoting quality migrant workers, as well as in relation to gender and support to marginalized population in the domestic work force.

While the fundamental tenets of the project are relevant and the activities are in support of the project's outcomes, the project in the remaining period could exercise flexibility in line with the NSDP - 2011 objectives<sup>2</sup> in accommodating evolving areas of priority sectors beyond the current five. It will be in line with NSDP that calls for establishing more flexible approach in any project design to accommodate responsive delivery mechanism to serve the need of the labour market, individuals and the community at large.

### Project progress and effectiveness

The project is a logical continuation of the predecessor TVETR project, and continues strong policy impact with respect to institutional development and capacity enhancement of its stakeholders, both in the public and private sector domain. One of the policy related contribution by B-SEP is participation in and advice to the ADB-funded Skills for Employment Invested Programme (SEIP) in the development of the concept paper and the framework on the National Human Resource Development Fund (NHRDF) that have been put to discussion widely among the stakeholders.

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<sup>2</sup>National Skills Development Policy -2011; page 3; Objective 3.3(c)

B-SEP serves as a good example of innovation in planning and management actions leading to achievement of targets as per work plan and budget, despite the inherent ambiguity in the project logic model. The Public – Private Partnership (PPP) model has been a unique feature of this project, introduced in a number of areas. A solid example of PPP is the one developed in Panchagar TSC (PTSC), a Government TVET institute under DTE. With the initiative of BSEP project, GEM Jute Ltd. a local jute mill partnered with the PTSC for skills development for the out of school youths of the locality. Similar model has been developed with the Glass and Ceramic Institute, and the Graphic Arts Institute. This unique PPP model can be replicated by all the TVET institutes and that will help employment creation for the out of school unemployed youths with limited efforts.

Similarly, the project's effort in strengthening apprenticeship model in both formal and informal sectors is timely and realistic. B-SEP in partnership with BRAC adopted this model that created job opportunity for more than 80% project beneficiaries who are adolescents and adults (50% female, 10% with disabilities). However, the generic concept of apprenticeship still remains somewhat unclear among many stakeholders in terms of the obligations of the employers and the provisions contained in the Labour Law of Bangladesh.

Professional coordination and cooperation with various ILO projects and other implementing partners is visible, as well as excellent working relationship with the development partners, such as WB, SDC and Canada. B-SEP enjoys the presence of a dedicated and committed team of international and national staff with strong team building and coordination mechanism in place. The facilitation of Steering Committee and Project Management Committee meetings, as well as preparation of high quality reports, as part of its accountability and management obligations is noteworthy.

Despite absence of focus and resources in support of Communication and Knowledge Management activities, the project developed a communication strategy and has undertaken several activities in support of the strategy. The challenge remains in the dissemination of good practices in appropriate language and style, and institutionalizing the overall strategic approach to Communication, Knowledge Management and Organizational Learning through the creation of a dedicated unit for this purpose. Linked to the above is the project's limited initiative, largely stemming from the lack of attention in the project design, in branding skills development as a model of education, poverty alleviation, and alternative to the traditional education system in Bangladesh.

### **Efficiency of resource use**

BSEP represents a good example of Value for Money (economy, efficiency, effectiveness and equity) and judicious use of resources. This is being achieved by its proactive engagement with other projects and programmes in conducting joint and common activities. Examples include co-financing with World Bank's for STEP (Skills and Training Enhancement Project - *To enhance quality and relevance of technical and vocational education and training as a part of meeting the strategic options of the poverty reduction agenda of the government*) and also



assisting the ILO tripartite constituents BEF, NCCWE and MoLE in organization of the “Dhaka Summit on Skills, Employability, and Decent Work 2016” in December, 2016 .

Resource allocation so far made are largely in core areas that includes training, capacity building activities, services of technical advisers, and cost for implementation through partner agencies. The trend of resource allocation signals to the project getting greater momentum as year passes. The project, with support from the ILO Country Office has been making serious efforts in adhering to best practices in procurement consistent with the rules of ILO. The project was meticulous and conscious in its budget projection and thereby delivered what was agreed within the allocated budget. The project also updated the annual plans and corresponding budgets to reflect realistic projection of delivery. The following table shows the summary of project delivery rate since its inception.

### **Effectiveness of management arrangements**

B-SEP has a well demonstrated technically sound and functional management structure in place that balances between International Component leaders and supporting national technical professionals. The two coordination and advisory mechanisms, i.e., Project Steering Committee (PSC) and the Project Management Coordination Committee (PMCC) served as effective platforms with strategic and operational direction. The B-SEP project’s National Project Director’s office (NPD’s office) – the Directorate of Technical Education (DTE) served as the Secretariat to the PSC and PMCC and diligently followed up on the recommendations of PSC and PMCC. There has been conscious effort in separating the functions of the PSC and PMCC, with the former focusing on strategic and policy direction, while the latter focusing on project implementation issues.

As mentioned in the earlier sections, the absence of a dedicated M&E team raises questions in terms of the project’s effectiveness in pursuing organizational learning and dissemination of results across all levels. The effectiveness of management arrangement could be enhanced through the presence of a small but dedicated Knowledge Management and M&E team.

### **Impact**

Early indications do show promise for the project to have a high impact in terms of capacity building in the sector, institutionalizing processes and systems and developing a conducive environment for employment creation through strong government-private sector collaboration. B-SEP’s advocacy and institutional building actions have brought some visible positive changes to the development of the TVET sector as a whole. These relate especially to development of the qualification standards and materials, apprenticeship models, employee-employer engagement through the ISC mechanism, private-public partnership, and gender and social inclusion, within the fold of TVET in Bangladesh. There are also emerging impact on gender, livelihood, and entrepreneurship development among the end beneficiaries at various levels. Tangible impact on livelihood, entrepreneurship development, support to training centers (both public and private), productivity, and good manufacturing practices have started surfacing.

## Sustainability

The evaluation assessed whether the outputs of the project are likely to continue after its termination, financially, institutionally, and in relation to development of partnerships, cooperation, and effectiveness. Early indications show signs of sustainability – social, institutional (systems and processes) and financial as affirmed by most partners across the board.

Given the shortcomings in the design that lends to overwhelmingly broad and open implementation canvas, the project team has diligently attempted to narrow down the focus of the project within the four identified components. However, it would be appropriate for the team to consider realistic and achievable targets while updating the Work Plan periodically.

Evidences so far reveal the prospect for B-SEP to achieve a high degree of sustainability, from social, policy and economic dimensions. Enhanced capacity of partners, and focused, yet flexible approach to implementation would significantly increase sustainability of the project.

### Cross-cutting issues: Gender and People with Disability (PWD)

B-SEP strategically focuses on gender and people with disability integrated within its project document and, it is also creating tangible and appropriate opportunity for them by enhancing their capacity and skills.

The project team, government and implementing partners are proactively pursuing PWD and Gender. Good examples are witnessed in a number of partners' action and commitment. For example, Akhtar Furniture has proactively engaged Women and PWD in its workforce and the example is being also followed by other partners. The BEF has also been promoting Gender and PWD aspect among its members. The project has also supported DTE and BEF to integrate disability systematically in their systems. The project has focused disability integration in both supply and demand sides through system and institution building (BBDN) to promote sustainability of project efforts. Inclusion of other disadvantaged groups (ethnic minorities, religious minorities) need attention. Efforts are underway to address this aspect, piloting first in Jessore, Faridpur and Khulna.

### Conclusion and Recommendations:

The Government of Canada funding was important as it allowed the ILO through the B-SEP project to continue the work built by the earlier EU supported Technical and Vocational Education Reform (TVETR) project, the precursor to BSEP. The TVETR project laid a solid policy ground and created an environment for the B-SEP to contribute to enhancing market-relevance and effectiveness of the national TVET and Skills Development System, allowing for better quality, more access and an improved capacity to provide and sustain demand-driven services.

The following recommendations emanate from the assessment made by the Evaluation Team that need to be followed by the project team, the government and ILO :

**Regarding design:**

1. The project must undertake a quick survey on current market needs together with a rapid re-shaping exercise of incorporating a standard 4x4 LogFrame with quantitative and qualitative SMART targets.
2. Flexibility for including market driven new trades should be considered. A quick current Training Need Assessment (TNA) should be done to realign focus if required.

**Regarding Relevance and strategic fit:**

3. The re-shaped design document could look at areas of alignment with the new SDGs and 7th FYP, and UNDAF.

**Regarding Project progress and effectiveness:**

4. The PPP good practices across all sectors should be replicated and expanded where possible. Apprenticeship model and respective obligations of different stakeholders should be made clear to all parties.
5. B-SEP to play more proactive role in advocating with policy makers to ensure apprenticeship as a mandatory criteria at grass root level. B-SEP should also address branding of TVET/skills, similar to TESDA in the Philippines.
6. B-SEP to consider and contribute to sub-classifying jobs as the polytechnic curriculum is broad and not upto date for employment overseas and within the country.

**Regarding Efficiency of resource use:**

7. The project shall pay more attention to important strategic activities such as Communication, Knowledge Management, M&E and Organizational Learning which remain low with 3.6% allocation so far.
8. Similarly, targeted and results oriented study tours and overall knowledge management activities also need greater attention, both in terms of their strategic positioning in the project and resource allocation.

**Regarding Effectiveness of management arrangements:**

9. A dedicated Knowledge Management M&E Manager needs to be hired with a TOR delineating roles, not just for data entry task but for holistic M&E.

**Regarding Impact:**

10. The project must develop a strategy regarding expansion and replication of good practices.
11. Managing expectation of ISCs and clarity of roles need reiteration, possibly also coupled with workshops and exposure visits.

**Regarding Sustainability:**

- 12.** ISC's ownership need to be strengthened among the private sector employers.
- 13.** Appropriate communication and knowledge sharing practices need be in place in Bangla as first priority and translated as necessary in English.

**Regarding Gender and persons with disabilities:**

- 14.** The proposed M&E Framework / tracking tool needs to centrally incorporate gender disaggregated data for future monitoring and evaluation actions.

## 1. Background and project description

This report documents the main findings and recommendations of an independent mid term evaluation of the Bangladesh Skills for Employment and Productivity (B-SEP) Project, which was carried out during July 2016-September 2016. Funded by the Government of Canada, the project was implemented by the International Labour Organization (ILO) in partnership with the Ministry of Education.

### 1.1 Project background /context

The Project builds on the past ILO implemented TVET Reform Project funded by the European Union (EU) that has helped address many of the structural weaknesses in the national skills system. Fundamental to this has been the development of a new National Skills Development Policy (NSDP) which provides a firm foundation for the future development of skills in Bangladesh. B-SEP now aims to make skills in Bangladesh nationally recognized, accessible to all, higher quality and directly linked to jobs.

Notwithstanding Bangladesh's success stories in social and human dimensions of poverty elimination as part of the MDG achievements, challenges exist in creating employment and income generating opportunities for youth and women (and allowable children) and enhancing their access to employment. Skills development has proven to be very effective to increase employability and income of poor men and women, with documented evidence of sustainable benefits from programmes in Bangladesh. The Government of Bangladesh (GoB) is aware of the importance of unemployment in driving poverty and the main objective of its employment policy is the generation of productive employment by transforming unskilled people into semi-skilled and skilled. The National Skills Development Policy (NSDP), 2011 has been adopted by the Government to that effect.

Skills development at various qualification levels is delivered by 22 ministries, albeit in a fragmented manner. The main public providers of technical vocational education and training (TVET) are the Directorate of Technical Education (DTE) under the Ministry of Education (MOE); the Bureau of Manpower, Employment, and Training (BMET) under the Ministry of Expatriates' Welfare and Overseas Employment; the Ministry of Industries; the Ministry of Youth and Sports; the Ministry of Women and Children Affairs; the Ministry of Social Welfare; and the Ministry of Agriculture. The TVET system comprises short, 360-hour courses and three levels of formal TVET—the secondary school certificate (SSC), vocational (2 years); the higher secondary certificate, vocational (2 years); and diploma (4 years). Entrance to the diploma level in single-skill and polytechnic institutes is from both the general and vocational SSC level. The Bangladesh Technical Education Board, also under the MOE, is the apex body responsible for quality assurance through accreditation of training providers, curriculum development, and certification.

The private sector, in particular the small and medium enterprise (SME) sector is the major source of growth and employment. SMEs in Bangladesh – both those producing directly or indirectly for export markets as well as those focusing on domestic markets – are increasingly being challenged by globalization, structural changes and rising competition. In addition, the

private sector faces a hostile business environment which is characterized by weak economic governance, a high level of bureaucratic barriers and a lack of skilled manpower. This leads to higher costs and low domestic and foreign investment.

The Bangladesh Skills for Employment and Productivity (B-SEP) Project is funded by the Government of Canada (GAC) and is implemented by ILO Dhaka. This five year Project commenced in December 2013 and will end in March 2018. The Financing Agreement between ILO and CIDA (now GAC) covers the five-year period from March 2013 to March 2018. The Project was however officially approved by the Government of Bangladesh in October 2013, and the TPP (Technical Project Proposal – the Government’s parallel document to the Project Document) was approved by the Government in April 2014.

## 1.2 Project description

The B-SEP Project aims to improve the national enabling environment for industry skills development and the increased employability of young and adult women and men. It targets government agencies and their staff, employers, workers, training institutions, students and trainees with a particular focus on disadvantaged groups in the labor market. It aims to enhance the market-relevance and effectiveness of the national TVET and Skills Development system, allowing for better quality, more access and an improved capacity to provide and sustain demand driven services.

It includes enhancing the market-relevance and effectiveness of the national TVET and Skills Development System, allowing for better quality, more access and an improved capacity to provide and sustain demand-driven services. The Project also helps create a better trained and qualified workforce with increased economic opportunities in five target sectors, which will contribute to sustainable economic development, poverty reduction, and social inclusion in Bangladesh. The five target sectors are: Agro-Food Processing; Tourism and Hospitality; Pharmaceuticals; Ceramics; and Furniture Manufacturing. In particular, the project addresses a number of key challenges facing the TVET system on the policy and institutional level.

The Project also aims to create a better trained and qualified workforce with increased economic opportunities in target sectors, which is expected to contribute to sustainable economic development, poverty reduction, and social inclusion in Bangladesh. The initiatives were geared at contributing to the development of a demand-driven TVET sector in Bangladesh. The TVET system needed to address the challenges it is faced with, in order to provide a good basis for economic growth and further social development. Since the TVET Reform process and its initiatives were in their design and initial piloting stage, the challenges at that time were the following:

- The TVET system was still supply-driven and disconnected from the job market;
- The TVET system was yet to be supported by an emerging policy and a consistent regulatory framework that were being developed by the TVETR Project;
- The TVET system was highly centralized and the training Centers were not allowed to take planning and programming decisions – they had little autonomy, suffered from system rigidity and were not flexible enough to revise courses according to changing local needs;

- The TVET system was organized in a traditional school-based way with a rigid and outdated approach to curricula and vocational standards, and a long duration of courses where there was no quality assurance mechanism;
- Teachers' qualifications were not in line with the needs, and there was no teacher training after the acquisition of initial qualifications;
- The system did not serve the underprivileged (rural poor, child laborers, women, informal workers, people with low levels of education) due to its rigidity and high entry barriers;
- There was a lack of labor market information;
- Informal apprenticeships were not regulated and no formal certificates were awarded;
- There was no system for the recognition of existing skills and informal learning to facilitate labor movement.

The Project has four major components:

1. Skills Funding, Planning and Support Services
2. CBTA Quality and Relevance
3. Industry Skills Development; and
4. Improved Access to Skills

Compared with the early days of the TVET Project implementation, TVET and Skills Development have started receiving substantially more interest from the Donors as well as the private sector and government agencies. In 2009, the Asian Development Bank (ADB), together with the Swiss Development Cooperation (SDC) started funding another 56 million US Dollar project in the field of Skills Development – the Skills Development Project (SDP). In 2010, the World Bank launched a 105million US Dollar Skills and Training Enhancement Project (STEP), which was extended in 2015 with additional funding of USD 110 million. Many other donor agencies have expressed their interest in funding TVET or Skills Development - related activities in Bangladesh. In June 2010 and June 2014, the government organized "TVET Week" events, with many workshops and discussions and substantial media coverage with participation of renowned international academics and of many stakeholders from within/outside of Bangladesh. Since September 2010, quarterly meetings of the international Development Partners' Skills Development Working Group (DP SDWG) under the Local Consultative Group (LCG) are held on a regular basis.

### **Key stakeholders**

Following are the key stakeholders in this project:

- Directorate of Technical Education (DTE)
- Bureau of Manpower Employment and Training (BMET)
- Bangladesh Technical Education Board (BTEB)
- The National Skills Development Council (NSDC)
- Employer Organizations, Industry Bodies and Industry Skills Councils
- Workers groups
- National and International NGOs
- Private sector enterprises

## 2. Evaluation objectives and methodology

### 2.1 Objectives and scope of the evaluation

Based on the principles of evaluation, this exercise is the planned, periodic (mid-term), systematic and objective assessment of the quality and value of the B-SEP project.

There are two specific rationale embedded in the mid-term evaluation of the B-SEP project:

- iii. to ensure accountability and transparency with regard to the utilization of resources including the funding from the donor, and the resources from ILO and the Government of Bangladesh; and
- iv. to ensure that the lessons derived from the project will feed into strategic decisions regarding design, implementation arrangements and delivery of technical assistance services in accordance with the project plan and design.

Thus, this evaluation appraises data and information that inform strategic decisions with a view to improving the project in the future. In short, this midterm evaluation aims to assess the continued relevance of an intervention and the progress made towards achieving its planned objectives, and to identify any possible adjustments to improve the project performance. The independent midterm evaluation has been conducted by a team of two independent evaluators and was managed by the ILO Evaluation Manager based in Regional Office for Asia and the Pacific (RO-Bangkok).

The evaluation follows a number of criteria, as per the TOR as described below :

- **Relevance** in terms of the extent to which the objectives of the project are consistent with beneficiary's requirement, country needs, global priorities and partners /donors' policies;
- **Efficiency** in terms of whether outputs achieved were reasonable for the resources spent;
- **Effectiveness** in terms of achievement of intended results;
- **Impact** in terms of positive and negative changes produced by the intervention, directly or indirectly, intended or unintended;
- **Sustainability** in terms of the probability that the benefits of the intervention will continue after the end of the project; and
- **Gender** as a cross-cutting issue in terms of how gender equality concerns were integrated throughout project's methodology, data/all deliverables, including in the progress reports.

The evaluation covers all activities undertaken by the project from the start of the project until June 2016, including cross-cutting issues, such as gender, marginalized population and people with disability throughout the methodology, deliverables and final report of the evaluation.



This implies also involving both men and women in the consultation and evaluation analysis. Moreover the evaluators reviewed data and information that is disaggregated by gender and assessed the relevance and effectiveness of gender-related strategies and outcomes to improve lives of women and men.

## 2.2 Evaluation criteria and questions

As per the TOR, the evaluation questions (EQs) are proposed on the following criteria: *project design, relevance, resource efficiency, effectiveness of project and management, impact and sustainability*. After reviewing the above proposed EQs, ET members in consultation with project ILO staff and other implementing partners, incorporated / included few separate questions as per the table given below. Reason for this change was to bring some important aspects (mostly cross cutting issues) in the analysis, thus removing any possibility of ambiguity and duplication in the probing process.

These new aspects / areas were embedded in the set of other questions to understand their relative contributions to the development of the skills and to realize their subsequent impacts. The ET has classified these under a separate head (Cross-Cutting Themes) to make sure these aspects get proper importance in the ultimate analysis.

**Table 1: Question matrix used for this evaluation**

Criteria	Questions	Stakeholders asked
Design Validity	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Are the planned project design (outcomes, outputs, activities) relevant and realistic to the situation on the ground?</li> <li>Are the timeframe for programme implementation and sequencing of project activities logical and realistic?</li> <li>Do outputs causally link to the intended outcomes that link to broader impact?</li> <li>What are the main strategic components of the programme? How do they contribute and logically link to the planned objectives and development objective?</li> <li>What are the main means of action? Are they appropriate and effective to achieve the planned immediate objectives?</li> <li>Did the design identify risks and key assumption and whether the project has a mitigation strategy taking into account the situation of Bangladesh?</li> <li>Which strategies has the project undertaken to address challenges?</li> <li>How relevant and useful are the indicators and means of verification described in the project document and the M&amp;E matrix for assessing the project's progress, results and impact? Are the means of verification appropriate?</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Project staff including component leaders, CTA</li> <li>Government organizations</li> <li>Donors</li> <li>Implementing partners</li> </ul>

Relevance	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The extent to which the project continued its relevance and responsive to address the issues and the needs of the beneficiaries.</li> <li>To what extent has project made strategic use of coordination and collaboration with other ILO projects (e.g. other skills project, RMG, etc.), other development agencies / on-going initiatives of the GOB to increase its effectiveness and impact?</li> <li>To what extent are the project perceived as an effort by the ILO to support Bangladesh in addressing the skills development in Bangladesh?</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Project staff including component leaders, CTA</li> <li>Government organizations</li> <li>Donors</li> <li>Implementing partners</li> </ul>
Effectiveness	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Has the projects achieved the immediate objectives as per the relevant indicators?</li> <li>How is the project contributing to achieving the goal set by the government of Bangladesh on vocational skills?</li> <li>To what extent has B-SEP contributed in achieving outcomes in BD- DWCP?</li> <li>How have stakeholders including the social partners (employers' organization and workers union) been involved in project implementation?</li> <li>Have the quantity and quality of the outputs produced satisfactory?</li> <li>What were main challenges/constraints/problems and areas in achieving the results?</li> <li>How gender considerations have been mainstreamed throughout the project cycle (design, planning, implementation, M&amp;E), including of implementation partners.</li> <li>Assess the ILO's role in coordinating the stakeholders and implementing partners.</li> <li>To what extent the project has managed the practice of knowledge management and lessons dissemination and visibility effort on project branding.</li> <li>How has the project been responding to the changing situation of the country and/or of the constituents and partners' priorities?</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Project staff including component leaders, CTA,</li> <li>Government organizations</li> <li>Implementing partners</li> </ul>
Resource Efficiency	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Have the project funds and activities been delivered in a timely manner? If not why? What mechanism has been put in place to mitigate the problems?</li> <li>Have resources (funds, human resources, time, expertise etc.) been allocated strategically to achieve the project objectives?</li> <li>How economically have the various inputs been converted into outputs and results?</li> <li>To what extent the project has leveraged resources/collaborated with other projects?</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Project staff including component leaders, CTA</li> <li>Implementing partners</li> </ul>
Management Effectiveness	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Given the size of the project, its complexity and challenges, were the existing management structure and technical capacity sufficient and adequate?</li> <li>Did the project receive adequate political, technical and administrative support from the ILO and its national implementing partners? If not why? How that could be improved?</li> <li>How effective was the monitoring system set up- the role of the PSC and the regular/periodic meetings among project staff and with donors and key partners?</li> <li>How effective is the PSC and the donor management mechanism?</li> <li>How well did the project manage finances? This should include budget forecasts, spending and reporting</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Project staff including component leaders, CTA</li> <li>Government organizations</li> <li>Implementing partners</li> </ul>

Impact	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>How effectively has the project leveraged additional domestic and donor resources, partners and initiatives to be part of the B-SEP project to ensure continued efforts after completion of the project?</li> <li>What are the impacts B-SEP created in beneficiaries' livelihood so far?</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Project staff including component leaders, CTA</li> <li>Government organizations</li> <li>Implementing partners</li> <li>Project beneficiaries</li> </ul>
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>To what extent was the ILO's gender mainstreamed strategy adequately and appropriately included in the project framework?</li> <li>Was a gender analysis included during the initial needs assessment of the project?</li> <li>Do results (effects of activities and outputs) affect women and men differently? If so, why and in which way?</li> <li>Were resources (funds, human resources, time, expertise, etc) allocated strategically to achieve gender-related objectives?</li> <li>Does B-SEP have an M&amp;E system that collects sex disaggregated data and monitor results?</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Project staff including component leaders, CTA</li> <li>Government organizations</li> <li>Donors</li> <li>Implementing partners</li> <li>Project beneficiaries</li> </ul>
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Is project implementation strategy effective enhancing counterpart's capacity?</li> <li>Is sustainability strategy of impact defined clearly at the design stage?</li> <li>Was the capacity of various project's partners taken into account in the project's strategy and means of action?</li> <li>Did the project design adequately plan for an effective participation of governments and social partners (employers' organization and workers union)?</li> <li>Has the project developed a feasible strategy for sustainability of those interventions that held potential to become sustainable? To what extent has this been implemented? And to what extent has it succeeded?</li> <li>How effective and realistic is the exit strategy of the project? Is the project gradually being handed over to national partners? Is the project's knowledge and experience effectively transferred to national partners?</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Project staff including component leaders, CTA</li> <li>Government organizations</li> <li>Implementing partners</li> <li>Project beneficiaries</li> </ul>

## 2.3 Evaluation methodology

The evaluation was conducted by a team of independent consultants (an International Team Leader and a National Team Member). In planning and implementing this evaluation, the Evaluation Team (ET) adhered to two guiding principles: triangulation and stakeholder consultation and engagement. The evaluation team worked closely with the ILO's B-SEP Team to build consensus around the evaluation's scope and process.

The Evaluation Framework below describes the data sources and data collection methods used for gathering and analysis. Conclusions were based on triangulation of evidence from different data collection methods and both primary and secondary data sources.

### *Initial impression from Evaluability assessment*

After one year of implementation, ILO internally conducted an Evaluability assessment in 2014 to understand the clarity of the definition of objectives, including outcomes that can be considered as a major focus of management for results, and appropriateness of indicators to ensure achievement of the established objectives. It was also expected to guide the development of sound and practical approaches for measuring the progress and effectiveness/impact of the programme. The exercise has resulted in a revised *monitoring plan*, and a set of recommendations.

### *Data Collection Methods (DCM)*

Four methods of data collection were employed to conduct the evaluation:

- **Desk Review** of secondary information - project documentation, together with the initial project document, progress reports, technical assessments and reports, project work plan, relevant reports/policy papers.
- **Individual and/or group interviews (KII)** with selected key informants from the project, project partners, key government policy makers and strategic level officials, donor and other stakeholders.
- **Focus group discussions (FGD)** with partner representatives, Industry Skills Councils (ISCs), Employers Forum, Industry Training Institutes, workers trained by the project and master trainers, and co-trainers prepared by the project.
- **Field visit/Observations** to project beneficiaries (PB), target people, partners.

## **2.4 Data analysis**

The Evaluation Team (ET) employed a range of complementary methodologies as indicated in the inception report including use a range of data sources and a range of analytical approaches. Wherever feasible, data have been triangulated to improve data reliability. By combining multiple methods, the ET attempted to overcome the weaknesses, intrinsic biases, and problems that arise from single method.

During the data-gathering phase, key informant interviews, document reviews and site visits led to the identification of specific findings. These findings /observations were triangulated, or cross-checked with each other to arrive at consensus. Data triangulation analysis started at the end of the evaluation analysis phase and involved consolidation of evaluative evidence and identification of key preliminary findings. During the analysis stage, feedback from the stakeholder groups was compared to determine areas of agreement as well as areas of divergence.

## **2.5 Stakeholder involvement, quality control and conflict of interest**

Following matrix shows the strategies taken by ET with regard to the stakeholders' engagement, quality assurance and conflict of interest:

**Table 2: Stakeholder involvement, quality control and conflict of interest**

Issues	Status
<b>Stakeholders involvement</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Equal, meaningful and unbiased opportunities provided to all participating in the evaluation process.</li> <li>• Partners and key stakeholders were involved at key stages of the evaluation and were consulted throughout the evaluation process.</li> <li>• At the end of the field mission, debriefing session were organized to validate preliminary findings, conclusions and recommendations.</li> </ul>
<b>Quality Control</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• ET adhered to the requirements of the UN system evaluation norms and standards and Data Quality Standards (DQS) for Evaluation.</li> <li>• DQS assesses evaluations completed for the agency using seven quality assessment criteria, addressing issues such as the structure and clarity of reporting, design and methodology, and findings and analysis.</li> <li>• ET attempted to ensure that the evaluation met the expectations associated with these criteria. Upon receipt of written comments from the ILO's B-SEP Team about the draft evaluation report, ET will incorporate required information and will fine tune overall evaluation criteria.</li> <li>• After making the necessary changes, the ET will submit the final evaluation report.</li> </ul>
<b>Conflict of Interest</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• ET has any known or potential conflicts of interest that would affect their judgment or ability to provide a credible and independent evaluation.</li> <li>• ET is independent and has no prior involvement with the programming-setting, or design of the ILO B-SEP project.</li> </ul>
<b>Ethical Approach</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The ethical approach by which the evaluation was guided are : <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- committed to produce an evaluation of developmental and practical value</li> <li>- committed to avoid harm to participants</li> <li>- committed to respect cultural norms and values</li> <li>- committed to an inclusive approach ensuring access/participation of women</li> <li>- ensuring participation of respondents free from external pressure</li> <li>- committed to confidentiality and anonymity of participants</li> </ul> </li> </ul>

## 2.6 Evaluation limitations

Similar to any evaluation exercise, this mission has also some typical limitations. Following are some of those issues that were considered by the ET by way of mitigating the risks.

This evaluation is based on a few assumptions. Potential risks / challenges were identified during this process and potential mitigation measures were considered to overcome those. The table below sets out these assumptions and risks, as well as their mitigation strategy:

**Table 3: Evaluation limitations**

Assumptions	Risk	Likelihood (high / med/ low)	Mitigation Strategy
Full range of project related documents is available to ET and is of quality to enable the Evaluators to assess based on - design, relevance, efficiency, effectiveness, impact, and sustainability etc.	Inadequate knowledge & information for the ET that might mislead the analysis	M	Documents provided by the CTA and his team are adequate and comprehensive.
ET is able to interview a range of key stakeholders - ILO team, employers' & workers' representatives, SPs, donors, GO officials.	Selection bias of respondents	M	The respondents were selected in close consultation with ILO
Key stakeholders give their consent to be interviewed and are willing to discuss sensitive evaluation issues	Halo bias	H	<p>To mitigate limitation, ET at the outset provided respondents with confidentiality &amp; anonymity guarantees, conducted interviews in a manner that made respondents comfortable. Initial rapport through ice breaking techniques was adopted between the interviewer and the respondent.</p> <p>FGDs were conducted among peer groups to encourage the expression and development of ideas that may not have been accepted outside of subgroups.</p> <p>ET mitigated these limitations &amp; minimized possible biases through triangulation of <i>methods &amp; data</i>, &amp; consultation with ILO's staff on evaluation's findings.</p>
Given the security restrictions in the country, field visits may not be permitted to remote areas, outside the greater Dhaka territory	Inadequate information & data gathered thus hindering the findings and analyses	H	The ET covered all important sites in and around Dhaka, including outskirt towns of Dhaka (Savar, Gazipur). Data collected were comprehensive enough, and information regarding activities in North West Bangladesh (Panchagarh) was obtained from the project office, through consultation with the project team, and from files.

### 3. Evaluation findings

From the evidences gathered during this evaluation, it appears that the project, notwithstanding the unintended delays in implementation, provided a good value for money, arose significant interest among the DPs, government, and private sector partners in moving forward the key agenda of skills development reforms in Bangladesh. It also contributed to

building a solid ground towards building a cohesive Government-private sector collaboration and shared vision for increased capacity in the government, and common accountability in the area of employment and productivity through a responsive TVET system, eventually aiming at broad development effectiveness results.

The evaluation findings, as below, are organized according to the evaluation criteria stipulated in the TOR: a) validity of the project design, b) relevance and strategic fit, c) project progress and effectiveness, d) efficiency of resource use, (e) effectiveness of management arrangements, (f) impact orientation, (g) gender; and (h) sustainability.

### 3.1 Validity of the project design

*The fundamental premise of the project, i.e., developing skills and thus creating income generating opportunities for youth, and raising productivity is valid and sound, that features strongly in the project document. However, the design, notwithstanding the strong rationale base grounded in the document, does not clearly establish the causal linkage between the broad goal and the immediate objectives of the project. The logic model could be SMART<sup>3</sup> to avoid any ambiguity among the implementing partners in determining the project targets and results.*

- The Project document signed by GOB and ILO paints a strong case for the project intervention toward government priority, in support of the National Skills Development Policy (NSDP). However, the logic model presented in the project document falls short in specifying the immediate objectives and thus articulating the causal relationship between the objectives, outputs and eventual outcomes. The outcome specified in the design document calls for: “A better trained, qualified and competent workforce with increased economic opportunities”. This is a fairly broad outcome and lacks the specificity in terms of measurable indicators and time frame. Having said so, the government approved Technical Assistance Project Proposal (TPP) does go a length in specifying a number of immediate objectives that could well serve the purpose of the ultimate signed project document. The standard ILO and UN Logical Framework is absent in the project document.
- Not all selected sectors for the project created equal accessibility to employment (particularly in case of self employment in Pharmaceuticals and Ceramics) for skilled youths. Also, project’s focus on the five sector specific pilot interventions through partners (Ex: technical training institute) often misses the opportunity of exploring other prominent and promising trades, such as Jute, Textile, Imitation Jewelry which are labour intense and of contemporary interest to Bangladesh.
- The project while implementing employment support services, and career guidance and counseling pilots in a few TVET institutions, keeping the activities limited within the five sectors. TVET Institutions or Polytechnic Institutes traditionally offer courses in 5 – 12 different trades. It is not possible / strategically correct to keep the pilot activities limited to the five trades, alienating other students within the same institutions.

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<sup>3</sup>S=Specific; M=Measurable; A=Attainable/Assignable; R= Realistic; T= Time Bound



- Despite the above weaknesses in the design, the project creatively undertook tasks, delivering expected results based on the rationale and framework of implementation contained in the project document. The project team resorted to a robust, yet flexible approach, while remaining mindful of the broad intent of the project and thus continued to develop the annual work plans and implementation strategies within the fundamental framework of the project. It would be appropriate to reformulate the immediate objectives in a SMART manner.

### 3.2 Relevance and strategic fit

*B-SEP's programme objective is in line with the National Skills Development Policy – 2011, especially with the NSDP's major objective: 'Improve access to skills development for various groups of citizen including women and people with disabilities, encourage participation in skills development by industry organizations employers and workers and improve skills acquisition in communities'<sup>4</sup>.*

- The project enjoys its continued strategic relevance in the context of NSDP, 6<sup>th</sup> Five Year Plan, MDGs (at the time of the project formulation) and Canada's Country Strategy, and in particular with NSDP's major objective mentioned in 3.3 (d) (*Improve access to skills development for various groups of citizens including women and people with disabilities, encourage participation in skills development by industry organizations, employers and workers and improve skills acquisition in communities*). It is also relevant to the Sustainable Development Goals, in particular Goal 4: Quality Education, and Goal 8: Decent Work and Economic Growth. B-SEP is also aligned to the new 7<sup>th</sup> Year Plan of Bangladesh in relation to its pronounced commitment to employment through skills development, higher productivity and promoting quality migrant workers, as well as in relation to gender and support to marginalized population in the domestic work force.
- While the fundamental tenets of the project are relevant and the activities are in support of the project's outcomes, the project in the remaining period could exercise flexibility in line with the NSDP - 2011 objectives<sup>5</sup> in accommodating evolving areas of priority sectors beyond the current five. It will be, thus, in line with NSDP that calls for establishing more flexible approach in any project design to accommodate responsive delivery mechanism to serve the need of the labour market, individuals and the community at large.
- B-SEP supports the Government's goals in strengthening NSDP and establishing the ISC mechanism. Clear support is incorporated in the project for gender and persons with disabilities. The summary activities in the Prodoc define the outputs to increase equitable access for specific groups including nontraditional courses for women in target sectors and specific programmes for PWD in target sectors, as well as support to self employment opportunities, including green jobs<sup>6</sup>.

<sup>4</sup> National Skills Development Policy -2011; page 3; Objective 3.3(d)

<sup>5</sup> National Skills Development Policy -2011; page 3; Objective 3.3(c)

<sup>6</sup> Prodoc; Summary of activities under project results 2) of 2.3; page 26:



### 3.3 Project progress and effectiveness

*At its half-way of implementation, trends show B-SEP is making appreciable progress toward achieving its set target through activities of the four components. Effectiveness of the project is characterized by its strong and effective management process, innovation in the Public-Private partnership models, partnerships with NGOs and private sector entities, and excellent collaboration with the government agencies and development partners.*

- The project is a logical continuation of the predecessor TVETR project, and continues strong policy impact with respect to institutional development and capacity enhancement of its stakeholders, both in the public and private sector domain. One of the policy related contribution by B-SEP is participation in and advice to the ADB-funded Skills for Employment Invested Programme (SEIP) in the development of the concept paper and the framework on the National Human Resource Development Fund (NHRDF) that have been put to discussion widely among the stakeholders.
- B-SEP serves as a good example of innovation in planning and management actions leading to achievement of targets as per work plan and budget, despite the inherent ambiguity in the project logic model, as stated in section 3.1 above. The Public – Private Partnership (PPP) model has been a unique feature of this project, introduced in a number of areas. A solid example of is the following: With the initiative of B-SEP project, the ground-breaking innovation such as implementation of Public-Private Partnerships (PPPs) at the Graphic Arts Institute in Dhaka and at Panchagarh TSC / GEM Jute Ltd. – a local jute mill – have successfully promoted skills development for the youths of the respective localities. This initiative has been picked up for replication by the Ministry of Education, which directed all the TVET institutions under its jurisdiction to identify potential private sector counterparts with which they could establish PPPs in order to help employment creation for the youths, including out of school youths in their respective regions.

In case of GEM Jute ninety percent of the training cost is borne by the industry and ten percent by PTSC through B-SEP support. Training held in the workplace followed a structured curriculum developed jointly by the industry and institute. GEM Jute assures 100 percent job guarantee for the qualified learners and one step higher pay than the existing workers. This is an additional programme for the TVET institution apart from their regular courses held in a factory (out campus) supervised and coordinated by the TVET institution. This unique model can be replicated by all the TVET institutions under other Ministries as well and that will help employment creation for the out of school unemployed youths with limited efforts.

- The project's effort in strengthening apprenticeship model in both formal and informal sectors is timely and realistic. B-SEP in partnership with BRAC adopted this model that created job opportunity for more than 80% project beneficiaries who are adolescents and adults (50% female, 10% with disabilities). However, the generic concept of apprenticeship still remains somewhat unclear among many stakeholders

in terms of the obligations of the employers and the provisions contained in the Labour Law of Bangladesh.

- Professional coordination and cooperation with various ILO projects and other implementing partners is visible, as well as excellent working relationship with the development partners, such as WB, SDC and Canada.
- B-SEP contributes to enhance institutional capacity of partners (DTE, BEF, Private sectors) in terms of setting of rules, standard operating procedures, enhancing research capacities, creating the qualification standards (NTVQF), assessment standards, and innovative productivity enhancement techniques (SCORE initiative).
- B-SEP enjoys the presence of a dedicated and committed team of international and national staff with strong team building and coordination mechanism in place. The facilitation of Steering Committee and Project Management Committee meetings, as well as preparation of high quality reports, as part of its accountability and management obligations is noteworthy.
- Despite absence of focus and resources in the project in support of Communication and Knowledge Management activities, the project developed a robust communication strategy and has undertaken activities in support of the strategy, such as (a) compiling success stories on the website and some of those stories have also featured on ILO's global web-page, (b) almost a dozen of reports in national dailies, (c) video clips, (d) planned Round Table Conference, and (e) approximately six newspaper coverage of the project events. The challenge remains in the dissemination of good practices in appropriate language and style, and institutionalizing the overall strategic approach to Communication, Knowledge Management and Organizational Learning through the creation of a dedicated unit for this purpose. A Project Steering Committee meeting advised that all the communication materials should be developed in Bangla first then if needed may be translated in English.
- Linked to the above is the project's limited initiative, largely stemming from the lack of articulation in the project design, in branding skills development as a model of education, poverty alleviation, and alternative to the traditional education system in Bangladesh.
- The project lacks proactive, ongoing and consistent focus on Monitoring, Evaluation and Learning (MEAL) as an integral part of the project activity.

***Specific cooperation between B-SEP and NSDC Secretariat (NSDCS):*** The ET has reviewed the aspect of collaboration between B-SEP and NSDC given the latter's overarching policy and roles in the TVET sector development and B-SEP's strategic partnership with NSDC over the last several years.

- ILO through earlier TVET Reform project has been supporting establishment and development of this important body (NSDC secretariat) for greater skills coordination in the country.
- Currently NSDC Secretariat is under staffed while awaiting the approval of the NSDC Act. B-SEP through an Implementation Agreement is providing support with four consultants and two support staff, and funds for all planned activities under B-SEP's support to the NSDC office.
- Implementation of National Skills Development Policy-2011 is one of the key tasks of NSDC and B-SEP is providing support for (1) Monitoring implementation of NSDP 1<sup>st</sup> phase action plan; and (2) Development of 2<sup>nd</sup> phase action plan for NSDP involving key line ministries.
- First phase monitoring report has been disseminated through several workshops involving 15 departments from 8 different ministries. The second phase NSDC action development is currently underway involving the remaining line ministries and departments in a larger scale.
- With the project support, a group of 100 TVET teachers were trained on research methodology with a target of developing a group of researchers in TVET in the country. From amongst those trained teachers, a handful of qualified researchers has been selected and given resources by NSDC secretariat to conduct some small research works with government resources. However, the team feels that NSDC, while should be equipped with the necessary knowledge on research needs and basic tools and methodology, the bulk of the research should be left to the external research consultants and institutions. A small Research Unit can be created within the NSDC that will host some young and trained researches who could identify research needs, as well as conduct some basic researches and studies feeding into NSDC led policies and strategies.
- For the first time in Bangladesh, B-SEP project has created a mechanism within the NSDC to coordinate other skills ministries through inter-ministerial meetings and developed a reporting mechanism through G20 Coordination Progress Assessment Format. Rigorous training was imparted to 9 ministries and 14 departments dealing with skills in monitoring and evaluation in 2014 as a part of implementation of Phase I of the NSDC Action Plan. This group of officials have been reactivated and convened by the NSDCS in follow up meetings to assess progress of implementation of NSDP. In 2015, five more ministries have been trained in monitoring and evaluation. Effort has already been launched to support NSDC to engage with other 5ministries in the 2<sup>nd</sup>phase of implementation. Action Plan. Due to B-SEP project, NSDC has now assumed proactive role in coordinating the ISCs and in disability inclusion in skills.

### 3.4 Efficiency of resource use

*The project represents a good example of value for money (economy, efficiency, effectiveness and equity) and judicious use of resources.*

- B-SEP represents a good example of Value for Money (economy, efficiency, effectiveness and equity) and judicious use of resources. This is being achieved by its proactive engagement with other projects and programmes in conducting joint and common activities. Examples include co-financing with World Bank's for STEP (Skills and Training Enhancement Project - *To enhance quality and relevance of technical and vocational education and training as a part of meeting the strategic options of the poverty reduction agenda of the government*) and also assisting the ILO tripartite constituents BEF, NCCWE and MoE in organization of the "Dhaka Summit on Skills, Employability, and Decent Work 2016" in December, 2016.
- Other initiatives such as PPP with Graphic Arts Institute (Government), AFA (Private sector) and BEF (Employers' body) are good examples of efficient resource utilization by B-SEP across diverse range of stakeholders. All these activities are designed in such a way that costs are shared initially and gradually B-SEP's financial support will be overridden by its technical / counseling support.
- Resource allocation so far made are largely in core areas that includes training, capacity building activities, services of technical advisers, and cost for implementation through partner agencies (see Figure below). The trend of resource allocation signals to the project getting greater momentum as year passes.
- The project, with support from the ILO Country Office has been making serious efforts in adhering to best practices in procurement consistent with the rules of ILO. The project was meticulous and conscious in its budget projection and thereby delivered what was agreed within the allocated budget. The project also updated the annual plans and corresponding budgets to reflect realistic projection of delivery. The following table shows the summary of project delivery rate since its inception:

**Table 4: Project expenditure & delivery rate**

Year	Budget	Expenditure	Delivery rate - period	Delivery rate - cumulative	Remarks
2013	55,000	52,388	95%	0.33%	Project operations started on 11 December 2013
2014	2,375,875	1,962,728	83%	13%	
2015	3,465,922	3,073,737	89%	32%	
2016	5,037,093	1,618,727	32%	42%	As of 31 July 2016 Likely to achieve high delivery as year ends
2017	951,382				Budget revision to be processed later in 2016

2018	1,180,106				Budget revision to be processed later in 2016
Total	16,065,378	6,707,579		42%	As of 31 July 2016 Likely to achieve high delivery as project ends

- Attention to important strategic activities such as Communication, Knowledge Management, M&E and Organizational Learning remains low with 3.6% allocation so far (See Figure below). Similarly, targeted and results oriented study tours and overall knowledge management activities also need greater attention, both in terms of their strategic positioning in the project and resource allocation.

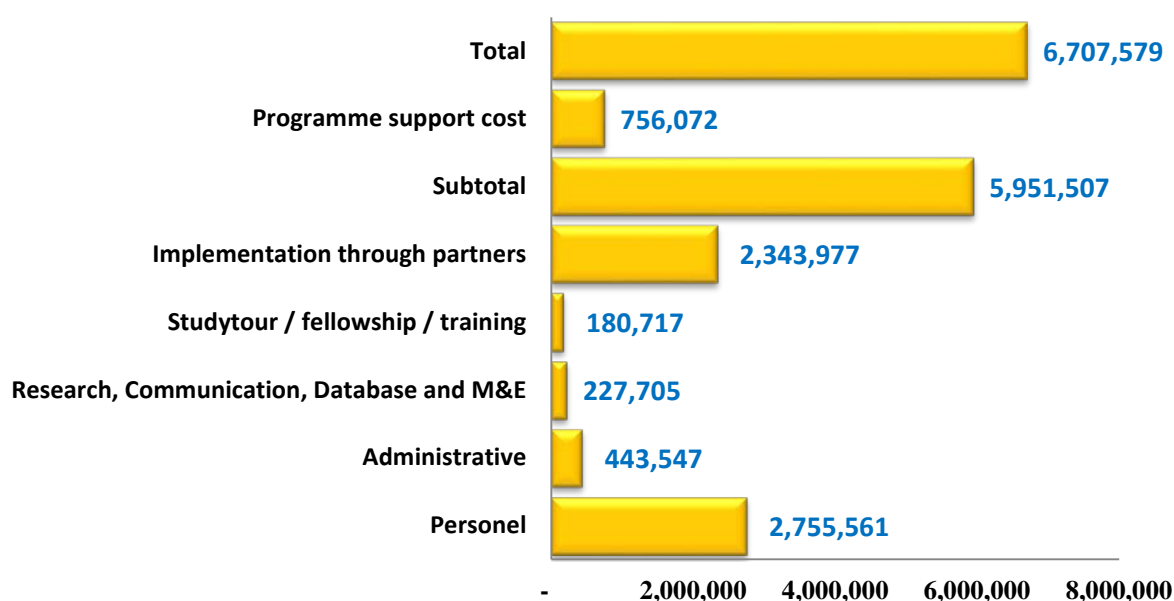


Figure: 1<sup>7</sup> (Graph showing expenditure and delivery rate)

### 3.5 Effectiveness of management arrangements

*The project so far demonstrates strong management arrangements with an effective and competent team of professionals. However, the effectiveness of management arrangement could be enhanced through the presence of a small but dedicated Knowledge Management and M&E team.*

- B-SEP has a well demonstrated technically sound and functional management structure in place that balances between International Component leaders and supporting national technical professionals.
- The two coordination and advisory mechanisms, i.e., Project Steering Committee (PSC) and the Project Management Coordination Committee (PMCC) served as effective platforms with strategic and operational direction. The B-SEP project's National Project Director's office (NPD's office) – the Directorate of Technical Education (DTE) served as the Secretariat to the PSC and PMCC and diligently followed

<sup>7</sup>Source: B-SEP Finance Unit

up on the recommendations of PSC and PMCC. There has been conscious effort in separating the functions of the PSC and PMCC, with the former focusing on strategic and policy direction, while the latter focusing on project implementation issues.

- B-SEP enjoys strong working relationship with its strategic partners based on mutual trust, respect and shared vision. This has been duly acknowledged by all external stakeholders interviewed. Effective in-house management and mentoring by the CTA has been also acknowledged by team.
- Work Plan updating, forecasting and budget revisions are done on a regular basis through an inclusive and consultative process.
- Despite timely actions by B-SEP on administrative and financial matters, ILO's internal bureaucracy often slows down progress much to the displeasure of external stakeholders.
- As mentioned in the earlier sections, the absence of a dedicated M&E team raises questions in terms of the project's effectiveness in pursuing organizational learning and dissemination of results across all levels.

### 3.6 Impact

*While it is a little early to gauge the impact of B-SEP, its advocacy and institutional building actions have brought some visible positive changes to the development of the TVET sector as a whole. This relates especially to development of the qualification standards and materials, apprenticeship models, employee-employer engagement through the ISC mechanism, private-public partnership, and gender and social inclusion, within the fold of TVET in Bangladesh. There are also emerging impact on gender, livelihood, and entrepreneurship development among the end beneficiaries at various levels.*

- B-SEP serves as a significant catalytic undertaking in relation to taking forward the NSDP and strategic decisions that are emerging in the TVET sector, i.e., reforms in NSDC is an example in point.
- The impact of efforts of the project in enhancing institutional capacity is gradually emerging. This includes partners' capacity building in networking, PPP partnership and negotiation skills with potential external partners. As one partners states: "...we now can explore opportunities without support from ILO and we have just completed one negotiation with Indian counterpart Ernst and Young"<sup>8</sup>. Another quote is as follows: "...we can now explain and describe our work and achievements. Thanks to B-SEP for supporting our implementing staffs in enhancing their capacity to run our own show sustainably."<sup>9</sup>
  - Tangible impact on livelihood, entrepreneurship development, support to training centers (both public and private), productivity, and good manufacturing practices start surfacing. "... I always wanted to be an entrepreneur. Being a woman it was not easy

<sup>8</sup>Source: M M Ali Suza; Principal; Graphic Arts Institute

<sup>9</sup>Source: Farooque Ahmed-Secretary General & Jamilur Rahman-Training Coordinator; BEF

*but my determination and continuous support from both Akhtar Furniture and later my association with Akhtar Furniture Academy (working with B-SEP project) I started my own furniture manufacturing and retailing.”<sup>10</sup>*, says a female entrepreneur who started as a mechanic in a non-traditional industry for women (furniture manufacturing) and then later owned her own business.

- The ISC mechanism has helped minimizing gaps between employers and employees which is gradually being appreciated by both parties; however some ambiguity still prevails among many stakeholders about the appropriate role of ISC and the mutual obligations of employers and employees. While there exists a formal Rules of Business for the ISC, it would be worthwhile conducting sensitizing workshops for the ISC stakeholders, in conjunction with the ISC coordination meetings to renew their understanding of the mechanism and help manage their expectations.
- Impact is usually a long-term result and it is highly unlikely not be visible even during the life cycle of the project, let alone in the immediate run. As described above, at this point in time Impact can be assessed through viewing the symptoms of progress in the TVET culture and practices in Bangladesh. Ensuring responsive skills development results is a matter of culture to be built, owned and operated under the leadership of the government in partnership with the private sector and stakeholders within and outside the government. Here external and internal factors play a role also. This project can boast to stand out in many ways for its contribution in establishing a long term institutional arrangement in the key government agencies (DTE, NSDC, BTEB) that will over a period of time inform the stakeholders how good it is progressing in terms of grounding a culture of skills based education in Bangladesh.

### 3.7 Sustainability

*Evidences so far reveal the prospect for B-SEP to achieve a high degree of sustainability, from social, policy and economic dimensions. Enhanced capacity of partners, and focused, yet flexible approach to implementation would significantly increase sustainability of the project.*

- The evaluation assessed whether the outputs of the project are likely to continue after its termination, financially, institutionally, and in relation to development of partnerships, cooperation, and effectiveness. Early indications show signs of sustainability – social, institutional (systems and processes) and financial as affirmed by most partners across the board.
- Given the shortcomings in the design (refer to Section 3.1) that lends to overwhelmingly broad and open implementation canvas; the project team has diligently attempted to narrow down the focus of the project within the four identified components. However, it would be appropriate for the team to consider realistic and achievable targets while updating the Work Plan periodically.

<sup>10</sup>Source: Ms Kaniz Fatema; Proprietor; Mustafi Furniture, Dhaka



- Anecdotal evidences show sustainable results emanating from capacity building endeavors among the partners, although no strong pre-project data / information is readily available. This affirms again the need for a dedicated Knowledge Management and M&E Unit in B-SEP.
- No clear and time bound exit strategy was developed at the outset of the project; however, ongoing capacity building activities for partners are expected to work as sustainable transfer of project (exit) tool which needs to be documented at least a year prior to the closure of the project.
- There are some visible evidences regarding improved environmental compliance (Ex: Bangladesh Employers' Federation's experience in furniture sector), which can be showcased and replicated widely, as a product of inter-agency learning and collaboration. Similarly, green job effort initiated in the Agro food processing sector also serves as solid candidates for replication elsewhere.
- Ultimate sustainability will depend on the government's continued ownership and leadership in carrying forward the TVET reform agenda in Bangladesh, and support the NSDP to the extent possible independently. Evidences from several initiatives of the government, including those in partnership with International Development Finance Institutions (ADB and World Bank) cast no doubt that the government is committed to building a strong skills based education culture in the country.

### 3.8 Cross-cutting issues : Gender and Persons With Disabilities (PWD)

*B-SEP is strategically focusing on gender and persons with disabilities integrated within its project document and, it is also creating tangible and appropriate opportunity for them by enhancing their capacity and skills.*

- Cross cutting themes, especially Gender and PWD are clearly articulated and strategically integrated in the project concept and design.
- The project team, government and implementing partners are proactively pursuing PWD and Gender aspects in Skills Development. Good examples are witnessed in a number of partners' action and commitment. For example, Akhtar Furniture has proactively engaged Women and PWD in its workforce and the example is being also followed by other partners. The BEF has also been promoting Gender and PWD aspect among its members.
- The project has supported DTE and BEF to integrate disability systematically in their systems. The project has focused disability integration in both supply and demand sides through system and institution building (BBDN) to promote sustainability of project efforts.
- Inclusions of other disadvantaged groups (ethnic minorities, religious minorities) need attention. Efforts are underway to address this aspect, piloting first in Jessore, Faridpur and Khulna.





## 4. Conclusions and recommendations

### 4.1. Conclusions

Conclusions have been drawn throughout this report and they are gathered here as a summary of the evaluation.

#### *Overall*

The Government of Canada funding was important as it allowed the ILO through the B-SEP project to continue the work built by the earlier EU supported Technical and Vocational Education and Training Reform (TVETR) project, the precursor to B-SEP. The TVETR project laid a solid policy ground and created an environment for the B-SEP to contribute to enhancing market-relevance and effectiveness of the national TVET and Skills Development System, allowing for better quality, more access and an improved capacity to provide and sustain demand-driven services.

The key contribution of B-SEP so far has been to engage a range of private and public institutions and create a strong awareness building among the stakeholders that TVET is the future answer to increase employability of young and adult women and men, and disadvantaged groups. The Project has been contributing to developing systems and process in the TVET sector, and has been serving as a catalytic agent in creating a better trained and qualified workforce with increased economic opportunities in five target sectors. The project is in its half way of implementation, and thus with the continued support from the government and the private sector, promises severe prospect for further innovations, flexibility and enhanced partnership with the stakeholders. By the time this project ends in 2018, one can remain positively hopeful of its sustainability and some major changes in the overall TVET policy and operational environment.

#### *Validity of the project design: moderately satisfactory*

Notwithstanding some weaknesses in the project design, perhaps triggered by an attempt to balance between the ILO and Canada's project design document, the fundamental premise of the project, i.e., creating income generating opportunities for youth, and raising productivity through skills is valid and sound. The project document is clear in articulating the rationale of the project. However, the logic model is not SMART which may lead to ambiguity among the implementing partners to determine and achieve the project target. Having said so, this challenge has brought about opportunity for the project to design its own course of actions, in a flexible and practical manner.

#### *Relevance and strategic fit: satisfactory*

B-SEP enjoys continued relevance with the National Skills Development Policy – 2011, especially with the NSDP's major objective: *'Improve access to skills development for various groups of citizen including women and people with disabilities, encourage participation in skills development by industry organizations employers and workers and improve skills*

*acquisition in communities*'. At the time of the project formulation, it was highly relevant in the context of the MDGs, and now it has gained renewed relevance with the SDGs, the United Nations Development Assistance Framework (UNDAF), and the new 7<sup>th</sup> Five Year Plan pronouncements.

#### ***Project progress and effectiveness: satisfactory***

At its half-way of implementation, trends show B-SEP is making appreciable progress toward achieving its set targets through activities of the four components. Effectiveness of the project is characterized by its strong and effective management structure and process, innovation in the Public-Private partnership models, partnerships with NGOs and private sector entities, and excellent collaboration with the government agencies and development partners. The project is a logical continuation of the predecessor TVETR project, and continues strong policy impact with respect to institutional development and capacity enhancement of its stakeholders, both in the public and private sector domain. B-SEP serves as a good example of innovation in planning and management actions leading to achievement of targets as per work plan and budget, despite the inherent ambiguity in the project logic model. The project however lacks attention to Knowledge Management, Organizational Learning and Communication through a dedicated Knowledge Management, M&E and Learning Unit, which is a natural demand of a project of this nature and magnitude.

#### ***Efficiency of resource use: satisfactory***

B-SEP represents a good example of Value for Money (economy, efficiency, effectiveness and equity) and judicious use of resources. This is being achieved by its proactive engagement with other projects and programmes in conducting joint and common activities. Resource allocation so far made are largely in core areas that includes training, capacity building activities, services of technical advisers, and cost for implementation through partner agencies. The trend of resource allocation signals to the project getting greater momentum as year passes. The Project was realistic in updating the management plan and the periodic budget that resulted in close to projected delivery at the end of each year.

#### ***Effectiveness of management arrangements: satisfactory***

The project so far demonstrates strong management arrangements with an effective and competent team of professionals. However, the effectiveness of management arrangement could be enhanced through the presence of a small but dedicated Knowledge Management and M&E team. Team cohesiveness was found to be strong, as well as the team's relationship with external stakeholders.

#### ***Impact: moderately satisfactory (at this stage; with a high possibility of impact in the future)***

The impact of efforts of the project in enhancing institutional capacity is gradually emerging. This includes partners' capacity building in networking, PPP partnership and negotiation skills with potential external partners.

While it is a little early to gauge the impact of B-SEP, its advocacy and institutional building actions have brought some visible positive changes to the development of the TVET sector as a whole. This relates especially to development of the qualification standards and materials, apprenticeship models, employee-employer engagement through the ISC mechanism, private-public partnership, and gender and social inclusion, within the fold of TVET in Bangladesh. There are also emerging impact on gender, livelihood, and entrepreneurship development among the end beneficiaries at various levels.

#### *Sustainability: satisfactory*

Evidences so far reveal the prospect for B-SEP to achieve a high degree of sustainability, from social, policy and economic dimensions. Enhanced capacity of partners, and focused, yet flexible approach to implementation would significantly increase sustainability of the project. However, no clear and time bound exit strategy was developed at the outset of the project; ongoing capacity building activities for partners are expected to work as sustainable transfer of project (exit) tool which needs to be documented at least a year prior to the closure of the project. Ultimate sustainability will depend on the government's continued ownership and leadership in carrying forward the TVET agenda in Bangladesh, and support the NSDP to the extent possible independently. Evidences from several initiatives of the government, including those in partnership with International Development Finance Institutions (ADB and World Bank) cast no doubt that the government is committed to building a strong skills based education culture in the country.

#### *Cross-cutting issues: Gender and Persons With Disabilities (PWD): satisfactory*

Cross cutting themes, especially Gender and PWD are clearly articulated and strategically integrated in the project concept and design. The project team, government and implementing partners are proactively pursuing PWD and Gender. Inclusion of other disadvantaged groups (ethnic minorities, religious minorities) needs further attention.

## **4.2 Recommendations**

Based on the overall assessment of the B-SEP project, the following recommendations have been formulated in line with the evaluation criteria.

Legends are also used to indicate the ET's consideration regarding the timeframe in which the recommendation may be considered within short term (S/T) and long term (L/T) perspective in executing. Legends are also provided to indicate the priority (low, medium, high). It is understood that future prioritization of these recommendations should be made by ILO in consultation with tripartite partners, and reviewed as the context changes.

Table 5: Recommendation chart

Recommendation	Timeframe		Priority			Probable implementer	Potential resource implicated
	Short term	Long term	Low	Medium	High		
Validity of the project design							
1. Undertake a quick survey on current market needs together with a rapid re-shaping exercise of the design incorporating a standard 4x4 LogFrame with quantitative and qualitative SMART targets	<div></div>				<div></div>	ILO, BEF, ISC, DTE ILO to lead	Yes
2. Flexibility of including market driven new trades should be considered. A quick current Training Need Assessment (TNA) should be done to realign focus if required	<div></div>				<div></div>	ILO, BEF, ISC, DTE, TTC ILO to lead	Yes
Relevance and strategic fit							
3. The re-shaped design document could look at alignment with new SDGs and 7 <sup>th</sup> FYP, and UNDAF and if required with the proposed TNA.		<div></div>		<div></div>		ILO	No
Project progress and effectiveness							
4. Expand PPP good practices across all sectors. Apprenticeship model and respective obligations of different stakeholders should be made clear to		<div></div>			<div></div>	ILO, ISC ISC to lead	Yes

all parties through a consultative workshop.							
5. B-SEP to play more proactive role in advocating with policy makers to ensure apprenticeship as a mandatory criteria at grass root level, consistent with the Labour Law of Bangladesh. B-SEP to address Branding of skills/TVET, similar to TESDA's work in the Philippines.	■				■	ILO, MOE, ISC, DTE MOE / DTE to lead	No
6. B-SEP to contribute to sub-classifying jobs as the polytechnic curriculum is broad/not upto date for employment overseas and within the country.		■	■			ILO, DTE, MOE DTE to lead	Yes
<b>Efficiency of resource use</b>							
<b>Effectiveness of management arrangements</b>							
7. A dedicated Knowledge Management M&E Manager needs to be hired with a TOR delineating roles, not just for data entry task but for holistic M&E, Learning and Knowledge Management functions (see above in tandem).	■				■	ILO	Yes
<b>Impact</b>							
8. Good piloting lessons to be expanded, and a strategy to be developed along this line		■			■	ILO, ISC ISC to lead	Yes

9. Managing expectation of ISCs and clarity of roles need reiteration, possibly also coupled with seminars, workshops and exposure visits	■				■	ILO	Yes
<b>Sustainability</b>							
10. Appropriate communication and knowledge sharing practices to be in place in Bangla as first priority and translated as necessary in English, in line with the Communication Strategy developed by B-SEP.		■			■	ILO	No
<b>Gender and persons with disabilities</b>							
11. M&E Framework/tracking tool need to centrally incorporate gender disaggregated data for future monitoring and evaluation action	■				■	ILO	No

## 5. Annex

### 5.1 Terms of Reference

#### Independent Midterm Evaluation of the Skills for Employment and Productivity

**Project Title** Bangladesh Skills for Employment and Productivity (B-SEP)

**TC project code** BGD/12/01/CAN

**Donor** Government of Canada (CIDA at the signing of financing Agreement– now Global Affairs Canada (GAC))

**Total approved budget** CAD\$19,500,000

**ILO Administrative unit** ILO Country Office for Bangladesh (CO-Dhaka)

**ILO Technical Units** EMP/SKILLS

**Type of Evaluation** Independent

**Evaluation Manager** Pamornrat Pringsulaka

**TOR preparation date** April 2016

#### Introduction and Rationale for the midterm evaluation

This Terms of Reference (TORs) covers a midterm evaluation of the Bangladesh Skills for Employment and Productivity (B-SEP) Project. The Project is funded by the Government of Canada (GAC) and is implemented by ILO CO-Dhaka. This five year Project started its implementation in December 2013 and will end in March 2018. The Financing Agreement between ILO and CIDA (now GAC) covers the five-year period from March 27, 2013 to March 31, 2018. The Project was however officially approved by the Government of Bangladesh on October 24, 2013, and the TPP (Technical Project Proposal – the Government’s parallel document to the Project Document) was approved by the Government on April 29, 2014.

The Bangladesh Skills for Employment and Productivity (B-SEP) Project aims to improve the national enabling environment for industry skills development and the increase employability of young and adult women and men. It targets government agencies and their staff, employers, workers, training institutions, students and trainees with a particular focus on disadvantaged groups in the labour market. It aims to enhance the market-relevance and effectiveness of the national TVET and Skills Development system, allowing for better quality, more access and an improved capacity to provide and sustain demand driven services. The Project also aims to create a better trained and qualified workforce with increased economic opportunities in target sectors, which will contribute to sustainable economic development, poverty reduction, and social inclusion in Bangladesh.

In accordance with ILO policy governing technical cooperation projects, both midterm and final evaluation of projects of the budget size of USD 5 million and more must undergo dependent evaluations. The midterm evaluation will apply the key criteria of relevance, validity of design, effectiveness, efficiency, gender equality as well as monitoring and evaluation to determine the progress made, lessons learnt, challenges and opportunities to date.

The midterm evaluation aims to assess the continued relevance of an intervention and the progress made towards achieving its planned objectives, and to identify any possible



adjustments to improve the project performance. The independent midterm evaluation will be conducted by a team of independent evaluators and will be managed by the ILO Evaluation Manager based in Regional Office for Asia and the Pacific (RO-Bangkok).

The evaluation manager, who has no prior involvement in the project, prepares this TORs and will subsequently finalize it in a consultative process involving key stakeholders of the Project including the donors. The evaluation will comply with United Nations Evaluation Guidelines (UNEG) Norms and Standards and the ethical safeguards will be followed.

### **Background of the Project**

The Project has built on the ILO TVET Reform Project funded by the European Union (EU). It includes enhances the market-relevance and effectiveness of the national TVET and Skills Development System, allowing for better quality, more access and an improved capacity to provide and sustain demand-driven services. This aimed to increase employability of young and adult women and men, with particular focus on the disadvantaged groups. The Project also helps create a better trained and qualified workforce with increased economic opportunities in 5 target sectors, which will contribute to sustainable economic development, poverty reduction, and social inclusion in Bangladesh. These 5 target sectors are Agro-Food Processing; Tourism and Hospitality; Pharmaceuticals; Ceramics; and Furniture Manufacturing. In particular, the project addresses a number of key challenges facing the VET system on a policy and institutional level.

Bangladesh is a least-developed country (LDC) which achieved an average annual per-capita GDP growth rate of 4.2 % from the year 2000 to the year 2010. Bangladesh attained impressive achievements in social and human dimensions of poverty: Poverty rates fell from 59 % in 1991 to 39 % in 2009. The country expanded gross primary school enrolment from 72 % in 1980 to 99.8% in 2009, and achieved the Millennium Development Goal (MDG) of eliminating gender disparity in primary and secondary education well ahead of the deadline.

The decline in infant and child mortality rate were among the fastest in the developing countries, with the infant mortality rate reducing from 140 in 1972 to 41 in 2008, and the child mortality declining from 95 in 1972 to 54 in 2008. The population growth rate has fallen to 1.5 % per year, which is mainly due to a reduced birth rate, which fell from 6.3 children in 1975 to a mere 2.3 in 2008. The country achieved faster progress in social indicators than most countries at similar income levels, including neighbouring countries like India, Pakistan, Sri Lanka, and Nepal. However, child labour is still widespread, with over seven million economically active children and over one million children involved with hazardous work.

The private sector, in particular the small and medium enterprise (SME) sector is the major source of growth and employment. SMEs in Bangladesh – both those producing directly or indirectly for export markets as well as those focusing on domestic markets – are increasingly being challenged by globalization, structural changes and rising competition.

In addition, the private sector faces a hostile business environment which is characterized by weak economic governance, a high level of bureaucratic barriers and a lack of skilled manpower. This leads to higher costs and low domestic and foreign investment.

In an attempt to help Bangladesh further improve its economic and social indicators, in 2011, the Canadian High Commission in Bangladesh decided to provide support in order to secure continuity of the ongoing initiatives promoted the highly successful ongoing Technical and Vocational Education and Training Reform (TVET Reform, or TVETR) Project funded by the European Union, which was implemented by ILO over a period of 7 years, from 2008 to 2015. The initiatives were geared at contributing to the development of a demand-driven TVET sector in Bangladesh. The TVET system needed to address the challenges it was faced with, in order to provide a good basis for economic growth and further social development. Since the TVET Reform process and its initiatives were in their design and initial piloting stage, the challenges at that time were the following:

- The TVET system was still supply-driven and disconnected from the job market;
- The TVET system was yet to be supported by an emerging policy and a consistent regulatory framework that were being developed by the TVETR Project;
- The TVET system was highly centralized and the training Centers were not allowed to take planning and programming decisions – they had little autonomy, suffered from system rigidity and were not flexible enough to revise courses according to changing local needs;
- The TVET system was organized in a traditional school-based way with a rigid and outdated approach to curricula and vocational standards, and a long duration of courses;
- There was no quality assurance mechanism;
- Teachers' qualifications were not in line with the needs, and there was no teacher training after the acquisition of initial qualifications;
- The system did not serve the underprivileged (rural poor, child laborers, women, informal workers and people with low levels of education) due to its rigidity and high entry barriers;
- There was a lack of labor market information;
- Informal apprenticeships were not regulated and no formal certification was awarded to apprentices;
- There was no system for the recognition of existing skills and informal learning to facilitate labor movement.

All these led to a serious wastage of resources within the whole economy. Following this analysis of ongoing developments within the TVET sector, the Government of Canada decided to provide CAD 19.5 million funding to secure availability of continued technical support for the initiated reform of the TVET system in Bangladesh. Naturally, given the very encouraging early successes obtained by the TVETR Project, the ILO was chosen as implementing agency, along with the relevant government agencies and concerned ministries. The financing agreement with ILO for the B-SEP Project was signed in March 2013, the Project was approved by the Government of Bangladesh in October 2013 and the Project operations started in December same year. The purpose or specific objective of the Project is "*A better trained, qualified and competent workforce with increased economic opportunities*". The Project has four major components, which are as follows:

1. Skills Funding, Planning and Support Services (Outputs 1111, 1112, 1113);
2. CBTA Quality and Relevance (Output 1211);
3. Industry Skills Development (Outputs 1212, 1213); and
4. Improved Access to Skills (Output 1221)

Compared with the early days of the TVET Project implementation, TVET and Skills Development have started receiving substantially more interest on the part of other Donors as well as the private sector and government agencies. In 2009, the Asian Development Bank together and the Swiss Development Cooperation started funding another 56 million US Dollar Project in the field of Skills Development – the Skills Development Project (SDP). In 2010, the World Bank launched a 105million US Dollar Skills and Training Enhancement Project (STEP), which was extended in 2015 with additional funding of USD 110 million. Many other donor agencies have expressed their interest in funding TVET or Skills Development - related activities in Bangladesh. In June 2010 and June 2014, the government organized "TVET Week" events, with many workshops and discussions and substantial media coverage with participation of renowned international academics and of many stakeholders from within and outside of Bangladesh.

Starting with September 2010, quarterly meetings of the international Development Partners' Skills Development Working Group (DP SDWG) have been organized.

As the B-SEP Project is in its 3rd year of implementation, it is time to take stock of what the ILO has achieved so far and where the Project implementation could be improved in order to ensure the achievement of optimum results.

### **Key B-SEP Project Partners**

- Directorate of Technical Education (DTE)
- Bureau of Manpower Employment and Training (BMET)
- Bangladesh Technical Education Board (BTEB)
- The National Skills Development Council (NSDC)
- Employer Organizations, Industry Bodies and Industry Skills Councils
- Workers groups
- National and International NGOs

### **Linkages with other development frameworks: Strategic Development Plan, United Nations Development Assistance Framework (UNDAF) and ILO Decent Work Country Programme (DWCP)**

B-SEP is aligned to national development objectives and intentions developed following the G-20 summit in Seoul (2010) where Bangladesh identified a number of key development and economic growth priorities. B-SEP has been designed not only in response to identified needs but also to complement existing efforts of development partners within Bangladesh.

### **Management set-up**

The Project Organogram below outlines the management and staffing structure for the Project. Project management arrangements are operating at different levels through the Project, involving a Project Steering Committee (PSC); a National Project Director (NPD) counterpart; the ILO Project Team and ILO Administrative, Financial and Technical Backstopping. The Chief Technical Advisor (CTA) reports to the ILO Country Director in Dhaka.

### **Purpose and Scope of the Evaluation**

The main purpose of this evaluation is to assess the continued relevance of the intervention and the progress made towards achieving its planned objectives, to identify any issues, challenges, new opportunities, and to recommend possible adjustments to improve the project performance. At the end of the evaluation, a set of practical recommendations for immediate adoption/application should be made available for the remaining period of the Project.

The objective of the midterm evaluation is to identify where and how Canada and the ILO can optimize their support to the Government of Bangladesh in the field of Technical and Vocational Education and Training, with the aim to help Bangladesh develop a better trained, qualified and competent workforce with increased economic opportunities by creating more employment opportunities and strengthening the capacity to tackle competitive challenges. The midterm evaluation also aims to assess the relevance, efficiency, effectiveness, impact, potential sustainability and progress of implementation of the currently ongoing B-SEP Project; to evaluate the quality of Project implementation so far; and to assess the Project's capacity to respond to the current situation and needs of the country, also in light of other ongoing initiatives in the field of Technical and Vocational Education and Training and Skills Development. At the same time, taking into account the direct link of the Project with policy framework of Bangladesh, the selected experts will be also expected to analyze the relevance and quality of the TVET policy environment in line with international policy recommendations.

The evaluation will focus on, and assess the following:

- To assess the progress made whether the Project is likely to achieve its immediate objectives as well as contributed to the broader context of DWCP and TVET and Skills Development in Bangladesh; also assess the progress made against the Project's immediate objectives, expected outputs, as well as the delivery of quality outputs
- To evaluate to what extent the Project has already had a positive impact on its target groups (DTE, BTEB, BMET, public TVET institutions, polytechnics, private technical schools and centers, NGOs delivering non-certified, short-term training); and on its final beneficiaries (employers' and workers' organizations, the underprivileged, regular TVET students and graduates); and to come up with recommendations, if any, on how to improve
- To evaluate to what extent the ILO has, in implementing the Project, respected the aid effectiveness principles of government ownership, alignment, harmonization, results orientation and mutual accountability; and to come up with recommendations, if any, on how to improve (assess the appropriateness of the results framework and appropriateness of its indicators, targets and the overall M&E practices)
- To evaluate to what extent the ILO interacts with other TVET-related Projects and initiatives in order to avoid overlaps and contradictions; and to come up with recommendations, if any, on how to improve
- To evaluate the management of the Project and Project-internal processes in view of yielding optimum results; in particular the number, qualification and use of staff dedicated to the Project; the Project internal financial management; the coherence of Project documents, Technical and Administrative Provisions and the government's

Technical Project Proposal (TPP); the communication between ILO, government agencies/ministries and other actors; the visibility of the Project and its results-

- To analyze the relevance and quality of the TVET policy environment in Bangladesh in line with international policy recommendations.
- To evaluate whether the Project has ensured appropriate capacity building of its institutional counterparts
- To evaluate how the Project has engaged with the tripartite constituents (Government, employers' and workers' organizations) and the direct beneficiaries
- To assess the internal and external factors that have contributed to the pace and quality of project implementation
- To identify lessons learnt on substantive and project management issues
- To identify the challenges faced during the project implementation and ensuring sustainability of the project achievements
- To recommend the future needs of initiatives in the skill training system development in Bangladesh

The evaluation process will be participatory. Knowledge and information obtained from the evaluation will form possible recommendations for the remaining period of the project. The evaluation also supports public accountability of the ILO.

Clients and users of the evaluation:

- ILO Project office in Dhaka and ILO Country office for Bangladesh (CO-Dhaka)
- Government of Bangladesh
- Workers' and Employers' organizations
- ILO HQ and DWT - New Delhi
- Donor – CIDA (GAC)

### **Scope of the assessment**

The evaluation shall include all activities undertaken by the project from the start to June 2016, and will cover all geographical coverage of the project (including counterparts and beneficiary institutions located both in Dhaka and a number of field locations within the country, which will be identified by evaluators during the initial consultations with stakeholders and Project staff).

The gender dimension should be considered as a cross-cutting concern throughout the methodology, deliverables and final report of the evaluation. In terms of this evaluation, this implies involving both men and women in the consultation, evaluation analysis and evaluation team. Moreover the evaluators should review data and information that is disaggregated by sex and gender and assess the relevance and effectiveness of gender-related strategies and

outcomes to improve lives of women and men. All this information should be accurately included in the inception report and final evaluation report.

### Evaluation Criteria and Questions

The evaluation should address the overall ILO evaluation concerns such as relevance, effectiveness, efficiency and sustainability as defined in the ILO Policy Guidelines for results based evaluation, 2012 ([http://www.ilo.org/eval/Evaluationguidance/WCMS\\_176814/lang-en/index.htm](http://www.ilo.org/eval/Evaluationguidance/WCMS_176814/lang-en/index.htm)). The evaluation will be conducted following UN evaluation standards and norms.

In line with the results-based approach applied by the ILO, the evaluation will focus on identifying and analyzing results through addressing key questions related to the evaluation concerns and the achievement of the immediate objectives of the project using data from the logical framework indicators.

The specific issues and aspects to be addressed in the evaluation will be guided by the preliminary consultations with stakeholders. Other aspects can be added as identified by the evaluation team in accordance with the given purpose and in consultation with the evaluation manager.

The evaluation instrument (as part of inception report) to be prepared by the evaluator will indicate and or modify (in consultation with the evaluation manger), upon completion of the desk review, the selected specific aspects to be addressed in this evaluation. The suggested evaluation criteria and questions are included in Annex 6.2.

### Methodology

ILO's policy guidelines for results-based evaluation (2nd edition) 2012 provides the basic framework; the evaluation will be carried out according to ILO standard policies and procedures. ILO adheres to the United Nations Evaluation Group (UNEG) norms and standards on evaluation as well as to the OECD/DAC evaluation quality standards.

The evaluation will use a combination of methods and the final methodology will be determined by the evaluation team in consultation with the evaluation manager. The detailed methodology will be elaborated by the evaluation team on the basis of this TORs and documented in the Inception Report, which is subject to approval by the evaluation manager.

It is expected that the evaluation will apply mixed methods that draw on both quantitative and qualitative evidence and involve multiple means of analysis. These include but not limited to:

- Desk review of relevant documents related to performance and progress of the Project, including the initial project document, progress reports, monitoring and evaluation plan, in-built project knowledge etc.
- Interviews with the Project team in Bangladesh and with the key staff of other related ILO projects, and ILO staff responsible for technical backstopping of the project in Decent Work Technical Support Team in New Delhi and HQ. An indicative list of persons to interview will be prepared by the Project in consultation with the evaluation manager.

- Interviews with representatives of the Project Steering Committee (PSC) and other key project stakeholders' e.g. tripartite constituents, donors, implementing partners, and direct beneficiaries.
- Field trips to selected districts in which the Project is carrying out activities involving direct beneficiaries for more in-depth reviews at outcomes level of the respective project components. The criteria for selecting the districts will be specified by the evaluation team in the inception report.
- The evaluators will be invited to meetings which may take place during the mission and which may be of relevance to the evaluation (e.g. meetings of the Local Consultative Group on Education's Skills Development Working Group (ELCG SDWG), Development Partners' Skills Development Working Group (DP SDWG), Project Monitoring and Coordination Committee (PMCC) and/or Project Steering Committee (PSC) meetings relevant to the Project. In addition, the evaluators will arrange for meetings themselves with the interlocutors mentioned above. It will be important for the experts to visit a critical number of representatives of the target groups and direct beneficiaries, and to have a good mix of institutions directly benefiting from the Project (e.g. through their involvement with standards development, teacher and student training and assessment, and apprenticeships) and those only indirectly benefiting.
- Stakeholders' validation workshop in Dhaka– upon completion of the field trips, to present the preliminary findings to key stakeholders. Key stakeholders, i.e. the Canadian High Commission, ILO, major implementing government agencies and ministries, i.e. mainly DTE, BTEB, BMET, NSDCS, Ministry of Education and Ministry of Labour and Employment, and other parties funding or intending to fund TVET and Skills Development (i.e. mainly World Bank, Asian Development Bank (ADB), DFID, Canadian (GAC).

The evaluation experts will be invited to meetings which may take place during their assignment and which may be of relevance to their work (e.g. meetings of the Local Consultative Group on Education's Skills Development Working (ELCG SDWG), Development Partners' Skills Development Working Group (DP SDWG), Project Monitoring and Coordination Committee (PMCC) and/or Project Steering Committee (PSC) meetings of the Project. In addition, the experts will arrange for meetings themselves with the interlocutors mentioned above. It will be important for the evaluation experts to visit a critical number of representatives of the target groups and final beneficiaries, and to have a good mix of institutions directly benefiting from the Project (e.g. through their involvement with standards development, teacher and student training and assessment, and apprenticeships) and those only indirectly benefiting.

While the evaluation team can propose changes in the methodology, any such changes should be discussed with and approved by the evaluation manager, and provided that the research and analysis suggests changes and the indicated range of questions are addressed, the purpose maintained and the expected outputs produced at the required quality.

All data should be sex-disaggregated and different needs of women and men and those marginalized groups should be considered throughout the evaluation process. The documents to be reviewed will cover inter alia:

- the original Project Document with Logical Framework matrix and budget
- the Project Document with Logical Framework matrix revised in the result of the

Evaluability Assessment Exercise undertaken at the end of first year of operation in accordance with the established internal ILO procedures-

- the Technical Project Proposal (TPP) prepared by the Government of Bangladesh
- the Project Work Plans for 2014, 2015 and 2016
- the Project Monitoring & Evaluation Plan
- written outputs from the Project - any specialist reports, research studies and other skills Development –related documents and initiatives emerging in the result of the Project
- the Project progress reports, including expenditure reports
- Project documents of the ADB-funded Skills for Employment and Productivity(SEIP)

Programme and the World Bank-funded Skills and Training Enhancement Project (STEP)- minutes of the PSC and PMCC meetings

### **Main deliverables**

The expected outcome of this evaluation is a concise document detailing:

- An analysis of the relevance of the Project Document, and of the strategies applied to implement the Project
  - The overall and specific outcomes and progress towards impact of the project in terms of (a) progress made against indicators of achievement; (b) contribution to the Dewpond broader national processes; and (c) relevance, effectiveness, efficiency and sustainability as defined in the ILO Guidelines for the Preparation of Independent Evaluations of ILO Programs and Projects
  - An evaluation of the programming and administrative processes applied within B-SEP in terms of their conduciveness to the timely delivery of the Project outcomes whether gender is properly mainstreamed in the project cycle, from planning to implementation, to monitoring and evaluation
- Analysis on component-wise achievements of the project outcomes
  - Challenges and way forward on implementation of project activities



## 5.2 List of documents reviewed

Following are the key secondary documents reviewed during the assignment for information and primary understanding of the project.

**Table 6: List of documents**

SI	Title of document	Prepared by	For period
01	Terms of Reference, TOR	ILO	June, 2016
02	Project Document (Prodoc)	ILO	2012
03	Technical Project Proposal (TPP)	MOE, ERD & ILO	2014
04	National Skills Development Policy, NSDP	NSDC, Ministry of Labor & Employment	2011
05	Training Module, CBLM, Tourism & Hospitality Industry Sector	B-SEPILO	2015
06	National Skills Development System In Bangladesh (research document)	TVET R, ILO	2015
07	NTVQF Learning Materials (27)	ILO, BTEB	2013, 2014
08	Progress Reports	ILO B-SEP	2014, 2015, 2016 (upto June)
09	PMCC Minutes	B-SEP, Ministry of Education, DTE	2014 to 2016 (9 meetings)
10	PSC Minutes	B-SEP and Ministry of Education	2014 to 2016 (3 meetings)
11	Work Plans	B-SEP	2014, 2015, 2016
12	Case Studies	ILO, B-SEP and Project Partners	2015, 2016
13	Communication Strategy	B-SEP	2015
14	Gender Strategy	TVET Reform Project	2012
15	PWD Strategy (draft)	B-SEP	2014
16	Competency Standards for Tourism and Furniture Sectors	B-SEP	2014, 2015
17	Human Resources Development Fund Study	B-SEP	2016

### 5.3 List of interviews, meetings and site visits

The following table lists the stakeholders consulted during the process of evaluation :

**Table 7: Stakeholders met and consulted**

Name	Designation	Organization	Contact detail
Srinivas Reddy Cezar Dragutan Kishor Kumar S Manas Bcharyya Francis DeSilva Harpada Das Serajul Islam Md. N.Zaman Tanjel Ahsan Mehbub Ur Khan	Country Director CTA Sr Skills Specialist Skills Specialist Sr Skills Specialist Programme Officer Programme Officer Programme Officer Programme Officer Finance and Admin Officer	ILO- CO ILO, B-SEP	<a href="mailto:dragutan@ilo.org">dragutan@ilo.org</a> <a href="mailto:singhkk@ilo.org">singhkk@ilo.org</a> <a href="mailto:bhattacharyam@ilo.org">bhattacharyam@ilo.org</a> <a href="mailto:desilva@ilo.org">desilva@ilo.org</a> <a href="mailto:harpada@ilo.org">harpada@ilo.org</a> <a href="mailto:serajul@ilo.org">serajul@ilo.org</a> <a href="mailto:nuruzzaman@ilo.org">nuruzzaman@ilo.org</a> <a href="mailto:tanjel@ilo.org">tanjel@ilo.org</a> <a href="mailto:mehbub@ilo.org">mehbub@ilo.org</a>
Khorshed Alam Md. Rezaul Karim  Md. Quamruzzaman	CEO Director  Deputy Director	NSDC Secretariat	<a href="mailto:nsdcsecbd@yahoo.com">nsdcsecbd@yahoo.com</a> <a href="mailto:rezaul134@yahoo.com">rezaul134@yahoo.com</a> 01717063600 <a href="mailto:qzaman40@yahoo.com">qzaman40@yahoo.com</a>
Faouzia Shahnaj Shahnaz Pervin Afsaruddin Humayun Kabir Matiul Karim	Principal Chief Instructor Trainer Assessor Assessor 03 Trainees	Sheikh Fazilatunnes aMujib TTC	<a href="mailto:sfmmttc@gmail.com">sfmmttc@gmail.com</a> +8801915680343 +8801732582888 +8801720106829 +8801715393573
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Anowarul Haque	Coordinator , Training	AFA	01674757980 <a href="mailto:afa.anowarul@gmail.com">afa.anowarul@gmail.com</a>
Kanis Fatema	Proprietor	Muntafi Furniture	01912351384

			muntafi.furniture@yahoo.com
Mr. Mahmud	Ex Chairman	NCCWE	
Mr. Abu Zafar	Chairman	NCCWE	
Tahsinah Ahmed	Director, SDP	BRAC	01730781935 tahsinah.ahmed@brac.net
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Iffat Khan	Deputy Manager, SPD	BRAC	01715933536 iffat.khan@brac.net
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Shahab Uddin	Director	ISC, Tourism & Hospitality	01709633855 <a href="mailto:gm.bwph@gmail.com">gm.bwph@gmail.com</a>
Fakhrul Islam Munshi	President	BAPA	01819221309 info@bapabd.org
Nasimul Islam	CEO	ISCOM	01971029060
Masudur Rahman Khan	Manager Production	Akhtar Furnishers Ltd.	01847004777 masud@akhtargroup.com.bd
Farooq Ahmed	Secretary General	BEF	<a href="mailto:sg@mccibd.org">sg@mccibd.org</a>
Jamilur Rahman	Training Coordinator		<a href="mailto:joha@mccibd.org">joha@mccibd.org</a>
Shaquib Q.	Secretary		<a href="mailto:sq@mccibd.org">sq@mccibd.org</a>
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Dr Skeikh Abu Reza	Director, Planning and Development	DTE	
Md Jahangir Alam	Assistant Director	DTE	
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K M Kamruzzaman	Principal	BACE, Bagerhat	
M M Ali Suza	Principal	Graphic Arts Institute	01733053510
Sayful Haque Siraji	MD	Multier Print & Pack	01613313131
Md Mokhlesur Rahman	Sr. Operations Officer Education Global Practice	The World Bank	01711593184 Mrahman2@worldbank.org
Tashmina Rahman	Consultant Education Global Practice	The World Bank	01738249891 Trahman3@worldbank.org
Shahnaj Parvin	Chief Instructor, House keeping	Sk Fazilatunnesa Mujib W. TTC	01915680343
Md Ali Azam Khan	Jr. Instructor	Bangladesh Institute of Glass and Ceramic	01716132719

**Table 8: Detail of DCM is as follows:**

DCM	Detail / remark	Data analysis
Desk Review	<p>A detailed review of documents related to the Project provides an important line of evidence. The following categories of documents have been included:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Project document – Logframe, Budget, TPP</li> <li>• Agreements (various)</li> <li>• Workplan (initial and revised)</li> <li>• Minutes of the PMCC and PSC meetings</li> <li>• Financial reports</li> <li>• TNA reports</li> <li>• Training modules and agenda for TOT and co-trainers</li> <li>• Evaluability assessment reports</li> <li>• Other relevant documents</li> <li>• Related to progress of B-SEP</li> </ul>	<p>The desk review focused on results achieved so far through an examination of annual reports, assessments, and correspondence.</p>
Individual and/or group interviews (KII)	<p>The KIIs elicited stakeholders' opinions on the relevance, efficiency, effectiveness, results and sustainability of the project results. ET developed a semi-structured interview guides for that. ET made sure that only appropriate questions were asked to the particular stakeholder group.</p> <p>The semi-structured interview guides were shaped by the key evaluation questions. Where appropriate, responses were document and verified. Wherever possible, evaluator triangulated data using a range of data sources. The interviews were conducted face-to-face.</p> <p>The ET consulted with the B-SEP team (particularly Component leaders) following the review of the documents and took assistance from them in identifying and contacting appropriate respondents from all stakeholders and beneficiaries.</p>	<p>A qualitative analysis of the themes emerged from the KIIs were conducted.</p> <p>Analysis was based on criteria of evaluation.</p>
Focus group discussions (FGDs)	<p>FGDs with different stakeholders (implementing partners, trainers, government organizations etc.) focused on the following -</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Training Need Assessment</li> <li>• Loop holes / gaps of ILO training modules and opportunities for improvement</li> <li>• Assessment of master trainers/co-trainers experience, achievements and challenges of conduction of trainings</li> <li>• The level of usage by trainees of knowledge and skills acquired in the day to day work</li> <li>• Main challenges in providing training</li> </ul> <p>FGDs with workers/beneficiaries trained by the project focused on -</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The level of usage by trainees of knowledge and skills acquired in the day to day work</li> <li>• Impact (any unintended impact) on the life of the target communities</li> <li>• Identifying possibilities/needs for improvement (if any) of the trainings and awareness</li> </ul> <p>FGDs with the Industry Skills Council (ISC) focused on :</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Identifying champions of change in policy advocacy</li> </ul>	<p>A qualitative analysis of the themes emerged from the KIIs were conducted.</p> <p>Analysis was based on criteria of evaluation</p>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Ascertain their role in terms of serving as a conduit between the industry and the training providers</li><li>• Identifying possible areas of focus with regard to ISC’s role and the need for strengthening its capacity</li></ul>	
Field visit	Several field trips to Dhaka and surroundings were made to meet key informants from the Project and other stakeholders at the field level. ET also got a chance to talk to end beneficiaries	Case study and triangulation were considered.

Table 9: Following schedule / plan was executed to carry out the evaluation process–

DCM	Type of partners interviewed						
	Project staff - ILO	GoB	Donors	Private sector entities	Workers/ Trainees/	Service Providers – trainers	Field Visit Dhaka & Surrounding
KII	8	12	5	5	2	2	7
FGD	0	5	0	0	8	6	4
Case Study	0	0	0	2	1	1	0 Case studies have been derived from field visits
Total	10	18	5	6	13	8	12

**Table 10: Activity and achievement summary of the four components<sup>11</sup>**

Major Activities	Achievement	Sustainability	Remarks
<b>Component 1</b>			
<b>Skills Funding</b>	Innovative models of Skills Funding have been introduced in Graphic Arts Institute, Panchagarh TSC and Narayanganj TSC as pilots. The donor (Government of Canada) and Govt. high officials visited and appreciated the PPP initiative.	Due to strong private sector interest generated, the models are sustainable.  Inspired by the success of the B-SEP pilot Ministry of Education, Government of Bangladesh scaled up this initiative and invited the Principals of TVET institutes to find a private partner each and develop industry-institute linkages.	PPP in TVET is a pioneering initiative in Bangladesh by the B-SEP project.
	The concept paper and the framework papers on the National Human Resource Development Fund (NHRDF) have been developed by the project and have been put to discussion widely among the stakeholders in order to promote informed consultations and engagements of the wider skills community in the drafting of NHRDF.	The NHRDF documents have been shared with the SEIP project and NSDCS, who are active in setting up the NHRDF. Both SEIP project and NSDCS have been intensely engaged by the B-SEP project in the consultation process on NHRDF. This is a national initiative and hence sustainable.	With B-SEP project initiative NHRDF has assumed a national character with widespread ownership of the Fund by the skills community of Bangladesh (Government, private partners, workers and NGOs). Without B-SEP intervention the NHRDF would have remained a Fund created by the SEIP project like many other Funds, which have remained a 'Fund' operated by the Municipality or a 'Fund' operated by the Ministry of Expatriate Welfare and Overseas Employment.

<sup>11</sup>Source: Project Office; B-SEP, ILO

**Strengthening  
skills planning,  
monitoring and  
evaluation  
systems**

NSDC Secretariat, which is the premier Government agency for skills planning, monitoring and evaluation system has been strengthened by the B-SEP project by supporting its leadership to coordinate other skills ministries to monitor implementation and evaluation of National Skill Development Policy. Operationally, B-SEP started supporting development of NSDCS work plan and its implementation through provision of logistics, human resource and technical advice. B-SEP has strengthened NSDCS to coordinate other donors and development partners in skills through leadership in Skill Development Working Group meetings as co-chair. Earlier, ILO TVET reform project had developed, along with the NSDP, an Action Plan for implementation of the Policy. As a perusal, for the first time in Bangladesh, B-SEP project has created a mechanism within the NSDCS to coordinate other skills ministries through inter-ministerial meetings and developed a reporting mechanism through G20 Coordination Progress Assessment Format. Rigorous training was imparted to 9 skill ministries and 14 departments dealing with skills in monitoring and evaluation in 2014 as a part of implementation of Phase I of the NSDC Action Plan. This group of officials have been reactivated and convened by the NSDCS in follow up meetings to assess progress of implementation of NSDP. In 2015, five more ministries have been trained in monitoring and evaluation. Effort has already been launched to support NSDCS to engage with other skill ministries in the second phase of implementation of NSDC Action Plan. Due to B-SEP project, NSDCS has now assumed proactive role in coordinating the ISCs and in disability inclusion in skills. B-SEP project is sustaining these initiatives and following up on progress.

Judging by the activities like number and range of initiatives taken, workshops held, outreach activities launched and implemented and research publications brought out, NSDCS is on a rising curve, which signifies that NSDCS is growing in strength. Some of the activities, for which the project is willing to extend financial support is now being funded by the NSDCS from its own budget. These are indications of potential sustainability of the institutional strengthening that is taking place.

Prior to B-SEP project, TVET reforms project of the ILO had supported NSDCS with infrastructure and developed National Skill Development Policy to provide a framework for the NSDC to operate. These were adopted by the Government and NSDC is headed by the PM. ILO had also assisted to draft NSDC Act.

So far B-SEP project has been the only project supporting the NSDC and strengthened it considerably in skills coordination, donor-coordination (in the area of skills), skills funding, social marketing of TVET and skills research. The project has supported NSDCS with infrastructure, human resource and technical guidance. Without the intervention of the B-SEP project, NSDCS would not have achieved this height. Impressed by the prominence gained by the NSDCS, many donors, including the STEP and SEIP project are now following the footsteps of the B-SEP project and have started supporting NSDCS in those activities in which B-SEP has shown viability of operation.

	<p>A significant accomplishment has been made in engaging NSDCS in skills data and research. B-SEP project started with strong advocacy to persuade NSDCS to engage in skills research. NSDCS was engaged in 2015, in Skill Providers' Survey and TVET Census. In addition, NSDCS sponsored two research studies (one on agriculture sector and the other on RMG) in 2015 out of its revenue budget and has sponsored two other research studies in skills in 2016 supported by the B-SEP project. With the support of B-SEP project, NSDCS, for the first time in Bangladesh, developed a research group of 100 researchers through training organized in 2016. NSDCS is also engaging these trained researchers to develop their research skills as well as number of research in TVET funded by the NSDCS from its Government revenue budget. A culture of skills research is being created by the B-SEP project in Bangladesh for the first time.</p>		
<p><b>Support services Employment services supported and enhanced through pilots in target sectors</b></p>	<p>In order to introduce a system of labour market intermediation and job matching in the TVET segment and to prepare the TVET students to systematically adapt itself to a modernized mechanism of efficient talent allocation B-SEP project undertook a scoping research study to understand the recruitment behavior of the TVET graduate employers and the way TVET students engage into job-search. The findings of the study went as inputs into the design of pilots that B-SEP project launched to provide Employment Support Services including job matching and career guidance for the TVET students in order to facilitate school to work transition. Employment support services are being piloted in Bangladesh Glass &amp; Ceramic Institute and Panchagarh TSC. The job placement and career guidance activities are gaining momentum with more and more clients using the</p>	<p>The teachers and the students have been mainstreamed as partners in the operation and management of the Employment support services and industry has been partnered in the initiative. The ownership of the Job placement and career guidance cell by the TVET institute teachers and staffs bring in elements of sustainability in the model. Effort is on to ensure that industry sees value in this initiative. Companies are included in the advisory committee and are invited at job fairs and seminars; they are also addressing such functions as speakers. It is believed that such initiatives, if sustained over a period will provide sustainability to this endeavor.</p>	<p>There was no structured job intermediation for the TVET graduates in Bangladesh. Career Guidance was absent in the public TVET institutions. For the first time in Bangladesh, B-SEP project has introduced job placement and career guidance at the level of TVET institutes as a system.</p>



<b>Social marketing of TVET launched</b>	services. Job placement and career guidance cell have been set up in the BIG&C and Panchagarh TSC with necessary infrastructure and logistics. Contract has been initiated with three more TSCs to expand Employment Support Services in the TVET institutes.		
	Social marketing of TVET is being implemented by the B-SEP project through the network of TVET institutes at decentralized locations. Selected TVET principals have been trained in how to launch social marketing campaign. Panchagarh district, as a backward district in the remoteness of north Bengal with declining enrolment and high drop-outs in the Technical School and College, was identified as a candidate for social marketing of TVET. With the permission from the Government, B-SEP project collaborated with Panchagarh TSC to launch a social marketing campaign of TVET in Panchagarh in 2015, which resulted in increase in enrolment in the PTSC. B-SEP also collaborated with the NSDCS for continuing social marketing activities. B-SEP is also planning to continue social marketing of TVET among the Principals of the TVET institutes so that the campaign can spread through-out the country through the TVET institutions at the district and Upazilla level.	B-SEP project has succeeded in mainstreaming social marketing as an ongoing activity in the NSDCS work plan. Currently, STEP project is also supporting NSDCS in social marketing of TVET.	A strong point of social marketing strategy adopted by the B-SEP project is that it is not treating social marketing as an act to be implemented by a project or by NSDCS from the capital Dhaka. B-SEP is trying to build capacity of the TVET Principals and staffs to launch social marketing so that a decentralized plan of action is feasible. Another specialist of the B-SEP approach is in the content of social marketing campaign. Through social marketing campaign, B-SEP project is trying to popularize NSDP and NTVQF creating thereby a consciousness of quality assurance in TVET rather than only TVET by itself.

**Component 2:****Activity 1211.100: Strengthen quality assurance regulatory arrangements for CBTA**

<p><b>Provide Technical Assistance to upgrade the facilities of the NTVQF Cell of BTEB</b></p>	<p>10 Computer, 10 Workstations, 1 Photocopier, Digital Camera, Digital Duplicating Machine, 2 Printers provided to the NTVQ Cell of BTEB</p>	<p>Sustainability:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Strengthened the capacity of the NTVQ Cell of BTEB with modern equipment and facilities;</li> <li>NTVQ Cell is the permanent set up of the BTEB. So capacity building this Cell will enhance the delivery of the expected output from this cell in the coming days.</li> </ul> <p>Challenges: Recruitment of manpower as per organization structure of the NTVQ Cell of BTEB. There are 50 positions created for this Cell in 2012. Only 10 staff is in place to run this Cell.</p>
<p><b>Train BTEB Officials to improve the capacity of the NTVQ Cell</b></p>	<p>15 BTEB Officials trained in CBT&amp;A, Competency-Standards development, Assessment Tools development and Competency-Based Learning Materials development</p>	<p>Sustainability:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>15 regular staff trained to work in the newly established NTVQF system. So they will continue to serve the BTEB to implement the new system.</li> </ul> <p>Challenges;</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Project targets to train 50 new Officials of BTEB. BTEB could not recruit the new staff. As a result it is delayed to achieve the target.</li> </ul>
<p><b>Build capacity of key stakeholders through experience sharing on best practices for implementation of international recognition of NTVQF</b></p>	<p>15 Principals, 20 Workers Union Leaders, 80 Industry partners and government officials oriented on National Skills Quality Assurance System, CSs development and implementation of NTVQ programmes.</p>	
<p><b>Activity - 1211.200 : Develop NTVQF qualifications, standards and curricula for priority occupations</b></p>		
<p><b>Development of Standards</b> <b>Target: 20 Competency Standards (CSs) in 5 industry sectors namely: Agro-Food, Ceramics, Furniture, Pharmaceuticals and Tourism and Hospitality sector will be developed under this activity.</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>5 Industry Skills Councils namely: Agro-Food, Ceramics, Furniture, Pharmaceuticals and Tourism and Hospitality (T&amp;H) sectors identified 20 priority occupations;</li> </ul>	<p>Sustainability:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Government approved the National Skills Development Policy and NTVQ training programme is one of the main component of the NSDP;</li> <li>Taken initiative regarding migration of existing programmes into NTVQ programmes;</li> </ul>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 8 Competency Standards, 14 Course Accreditation Documents (CADs) developed for the Furniture and T&amp;H sectors;</li> <li>• 8 Technical Subcommittees (TCs) formed and 48 members of the TCs trained on Competency-Based Training to build the capacity of local experts on development of the CSs and CADs;</li> <li>• 16 workshops/meetings organized to develop the 8 CSs and 30 CADs;</li> <li>• 8 Standard and Curriculum Development Committee (SCDC) formed to review the CSs and CADs developed for the T&amp;H and Furniture sectors;</li> <li>• Request for Proposal invited to develop 12 CSs and 44 CADs for the Agro-Food, Furniture, Ceramic and T&amp;H sectors.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• BTEB owned the NTVQ programmes as mainstream training programs;</li> <li>• NSDC approved Action Plan to implement NSDP</li> <li>• Line Ministries, Department and BTEB completed 1<sup>st</sup> Phase of Action plan and drafted the 2<sup>nd</sup> Phase Action Plan;</li> </ul> <p>Challenges:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Upgrading the capacity of TVET Institutions</li> <li>• Lack of strategic role of the government to implement the NTVQ programme as a main stream Vocational Education and Training;</li> <li>• Lack of coordination among the development partners/financer regarding implementation of NTVQ programmes;</li> <li>• Lack of participation of private sectors/employers in implementing NSDP and NTVQ programmes</li> </ul>
<p><b>Approval of Standards</b>  <b>Target: 20 Standards in 5 sectors</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 2 Validation Workshops organized consisting members from the Government, TVET Providers, Employers and Workers to validate and disseminate the CSs developed for the Furniture and T&amp;H sectors to the wider community of the relevant industries and employers.</li> <li>• ISC s endorsed 8 CSs and 30 CADs for the Furniture and T&amp;H sectors.</li> <li>• BTEB approved the 8 CSs and 30 CADs for the Furniture and T&amp;H sector</li> </ul>	<p>Sustainability:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• ISCs and employers endorsed the training programmes and reduced the gap between supply and demand of skills to develop skills workforce</li> <li>• BTEB owned the training programmes</li> </ul> <p>Challenges:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Nationwide replication of NTVQ training programmes</li> </ul> <p>Shortage trainers and assessor in the respective trades</p>
<p><b>Develop Competency-Based Learning Materials (CBLMs)</b>  <b>Target:</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Trained 20 Local Experts on Tourism and Hospitality on CBLMs development;</li> <li>• Developed 20 CBLMs of NTVQ Level 1 and 2 for the T&amp;H sector.</li> <li>• Invited Request for Proposal to develop 20 CBLMs for the furniture sector and 9 CBLMs for the Tourism and Hospitality sector.</li> </ul>	<p>Sustainability:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Trained 20 Local Trainers and Industry Experts on CBLM development so that they can contribute to the development of CBLMs without assistance from International Consultant;</li> </ul> <p>Challenges:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• All trained experts could not manage the time to contribute to the development of CBLMs</li> </ul>

<b>Develop Assessment Tools and Trainee Record Books</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Trained 20 Local Experts to develop Assessment Tools for the T&amp;H sector.</li> <li>• 4 Assessment Tools developed for the Tourism and Hospitality sector</li> <li>• 4 Trainees Record Books (TRBs) developed for NTVQ Level1 for the Tourism and Hospitality sector</li> </ul>	<p>Sustainability:</p> <p>Trained 20 Local Trainers and Industry Experts on Assessment Tools development so that they can contribute and they contributed to development of 4 Assessment Tools for the Tourism and Hospitality sector.</p>
<b>Pilot testing of Standards</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 10 pilot Institutions for the T&amp;H and 8 pilot institutions for the Furniture sector selected to deliver the NTVQ training programmes;</li> <li>• Upgraded the Facilities and equipment of 10 TVET Institutions under T&amp;H sector;</li> <li>• 10 TVET institutions certified as Registered Training Organizations (RTOs) to deliver NTVQ training programmes under T&amp;H sector;</li> <li>• 15 NTVQ programmes delivered in 10 RTOs under T&amp;H sector;</li> <li>• 300 Market Entrants trained and assessed in 15 programs.</li> </ul>	<p>Sustainability:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Project developed 10 Registered Training Organizations (RTOs) with well-equip laboratory facilities to deliver NTVQ training programmes and these institutions</li> <li>• Trained and certify the trainers and assessors for each of the trade so that they can run the programme without further assistance of the project</li> </ul> <p>Challenges:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Government intervention and financing need for the public training institutions.</li> <li>• Private providers must attract the job seekers with gainful employment;</li> </ul>
<b>Regular Implementation of Standards</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Facilities and equipment of 10 TVET Institutions upgraded</li> <li>• 12 TVET Institutions registered with BTEB as Registration of Training Organizations (RTO)</li> </ul>	
<b>Activity 1211.300: Strengthen the capacity of managers, trainers and assessors to implement CBTA in target sectors</b>		
<b>Training TVET Institutions' Managers</b>	25 TVET Managers trained in Leadership and Management Development Programme	<p>Sustainability:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• TVET Institutions managers are the permanent employee of the Government and Private Training Institutions</li> </ul>
<b>Training TVET Trainers and Industry Assessors in CBT&amp;A</b>	125 TVET Trainers and Industry Assessors Trained on NC-IV CBT&A in TVET	

<b>Training of TVET Trainers and Industry Assessors on Technical Skills</b>	92 TVET Trainers Trained on NC-IV CBT&A in TVET	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• TVET Trainers are currently delivering the NTVQ programmes in 10 RTOs</li><li>• Industry Assessors are engaged to assess the trainees of NTVQ programmes.</li></ul>
<b>Training of Competency-Based Learning Materials (CBLMs) Developer</b>	20 TVET Trainers and Industry Expert trained on CBLM development	
<b>Training Assessment Tools designers</b>	18 TVET Trainers and Industry Expert trained on Assessment Tools design	
<b>Training of Trainers on Technical Skills</b>	64 TVET Trainers and Industry Assessors Trained on Technical Skills e.g. Cooking, Housekeeping, Food and Beverage Servicing and Tour Guiding	

<b>Component 3</b>		
<b>1212.100 : Increase the demand for and utilization of skills in the target sectors</b>		
<b>Sensitization workshops/activities for new sectors and institutions on skills reform agenda</b>	ILO is playing key role to implement skills reform agenda. Support NSDC Secretariat and BEF to organize ISC coordination meeting on regular basis	BEF recognizes ISCs as umbrella organization for sector wise skills development. BEF is organizing quarterly coordination meeting with all 12 ISCs on regular basis
<b>Conduct training on implementation of ILO entrepreneurship and productivity development tools - SCORE for managers and employees of selected enterprises (selected by ISCs)</b>	Local enterprises (4) are implementing the SCORE programmes (Brothers Furniture, Rani Food Ltd., Apex Pharma, and Royal Park Hotel),	Enterprises are introducing SCORE as their main productivity tool since the programme shows significant improvement in productivity.
<b>Identify priority occupations in the 5 sectors</b>	All five ISCs selected priority occupations for programme trial.	ISC Agro Food and Tourism & Hospitality sectors are working with other donors

<b>Activity 1212.200 : Expand the nature and scope of industry training and workplace learning in target sectors</b>
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<p><b>implementation of ILO entrepreneurship and productivity development tools - SIYB (IYB (Improve Your Business) / EYB (Expand Y B/ GYB (Generate Y B))</b></p>	<p>SIYB Association Bangladesh formed (16 members) in 2016 and activated Govt. and private entrepreneurship related are introducing SIYB modules Roll out of (SIYB) is continuing jointly by the project and EU funded “inspire Project”</p> <p>16 SIYB Trainers trained by International Master Trainers and in turn over 200 beneficiaries trained by local SIYB trainers</p>	<p>The association signed agreement with Plan International and Coco Cola, Concern Universal, Dhaka Chamber of Commerce (proposed) to conduct entrepreneurship training programme. Bangladesh Bank Training Academy has offered office space for SIYB Bangladesh to operate from.</p> <p>Joint proposal between Inspired Project of EU and SIYB Bangladesh is drafted to conduct a professional Diploma in Entrepreneurship based on ILO’s SIYB modules at the Bangladesh Bank Training Academy (BBTA). Holding discussions with BBTA to establish a Centre of Excellence on Entrepreneurship Development at the Bangladesh Bank Training Academy.</p>
<p><b>Support DTE to implement Know About Business (KAB) training programme in TVET institutes</b></p>	<p>DTE and BTEB management, principals of major TVET institutes are oriented on KAB modules by international KAB trainer</p>	<p>BTEB will incorporate and customize KAB modules in the existing entrepreneur and business development modules of BTEB</p>
<p><b>Activity 1212.300: Establish &amp; support ISCs and other improved links between industry and the skills system in target sectors</b></p>		
<p><b>Establish 3 New ISCs and strengthen 2 existing ISC</b></p>	<p>All 5 ISC established and registered (ISC Pharmaceuticals registration process is in final stage). All five ISCs selected priority occupations for program trial.</p>	<p>NSDC secretariat is coordinating with all ISCs to develop ISC business plan. Based on the business plan, NSDC will allocate fund for ISCs.</p>
<p><b>Build capacity of ISCs by engaging them to perform as per established ISC mandates</b></p>	<p>ISCs are organizing events/workshops related to skills development. ISCs are developing business plan, negotiate with other donors for sector wise skills development planning (ISC Agro Food received fund from SDC, Dutch Fund, ISC T&amp;H negotiating with SEIP project etc.)</p>	<p>Most of the ISCs are getting support by other donors supported skills project (Work Bank, ADB, SDC etc.)</p>
<p><b>Support ISCs to build strategic partnership with TVET institute to establish and promote CBT&amp;A socialization</b></p>	<p>Established linkages between industry and TVET institutes to develop demand driven skill workers ISCs are working closely working with BTEB to develop competency standards, learning material development, nominate industry assessors etc. (ISC Furniture and</p>	<p>CBT&amp;A based training programme trial (by component 2) in TVET institutes are implementing in close collaboration with ISCs.</p>

	Tourism and Hospitality sectors worked with BTEB TO develop CS, CBLMs).	
<b>Activity 1213.100: Strengthen formal apprenticeships in the target sectors</b>		
<i>Conducted a baseline study on informal apprenticeships in the priority sectors</i>	Based on the study, developed and implemented Sector-wise Informal Apprenticeship pilots in priority sectors	
<i>Implement Informal apprenticeship programme in target sectors</i>	Total 100 apprentices in informal sector trained Established an implementation agreement with BACE (Local NGOs) to train 1000 apprentices in informal sector following CBTA methodology by 2016	Develop the capacity of local NGOs to implement informal apprenticeship training programme. Per unit cost reduced (USD 285 to 205) since local NGO has developed capacity.
<i>support Rangamati Hill District Council (RHDC) to implement Informal Apprenticeship program</i>	Rangamati Hill District Council (RHDC) is motivated to introduce this model to train tribal youth in hill district. The B-SEP project will support A2i project under prime minister's office will develop the capacity of local govt. to introduce this model at upazila level to train 1200 apprentices	Capacity of Govt. institutes will be develop to implement this model
<b>Activity 1213.300: Establish, support and promote systems for the recognition of prior learning in target sectors and for overseas employment</b>		
<i>Develop of Recognition of Prior Learning (RPL) operations guidelines to certify industry workers</i>	RPL operations guidelines developed and approved by BTEB All stakeholders/service providers are organizing RPL assessment based on the guidelines.	BTEB is organizing RPL assessment for industry workers with other donors support on regular basis  All Registered Training Organizations (RTOs) by BTEB can organize RPL assessment
<i>Support BTEB accredited assessment centers to assess 1,000 industry workers, including migrant workers, for certification on NTVQF</i>	Established contract with BTEB accredited assessment centers (Dhaka Polytechnic institute and UCEP Bangladesh) to assess 560 industry workers, including migrant workers, for certification on NTVQF through RPL	Develop the capacity of RPL Assessment centers to organize assessment for industry workers.
<b>Component 4</b>		

**1221.100 : Design & deliver and pilot non-traditional courses for women in target sectors**
**Identification of partner organizations for initiating skills training in non-traditional occupations**

Five partner organizations were identified to implement NTVQ courses for non-traditional occupations for women, including persons with disabilities, in nine occupations of Agro-food Processing, Furniture and Tourism & Hospitality sectors

Out of 5, 4 organizations are qualified to scale-up skills training programmes from August 2016

Remark: Only few skills training institutes have capacity to train disadvantaged groups in NTVQ courses on a scale; It is necessary to make criteria of disadvantaged groups (especially poor women) more flexible and broad based; Intensive orientation/ training needed to TVET institutions on gender equality

**405 women to be trained**

353 (including 25 persons with disabilities and 16 male) trained; 321 of them got employment in industries

375 women & men (including persons with disabilities) to be trained in second phase by December 2016

Remark: Mobilize disadvantaged women for some of the non-traditional occupations in Tourism & Hospitality and most occupations of Furniture sectors is very challenging for skills training; Find jobs for women and persons with disabilities (trained with our support) in B-SEP's sectors is also difficult

**Skills training courses in Dhaka Polytechnic Institute**

Skills training courses in Dhaka Polytechnic Institute on (i) Baking and (ii) Food Processing and Quality Control for 40 persons (women, men and persons with disabilities) are going on.

At least 80% of them to be employed in the relevant industries, after completion of training

**Mainstreaming gender equality in relevant ministries/ departments providing skills training**

Supported NSDC Secretariat in organizing two workshops with DWA & DYD on 'National Strategy for Promotion of Gender Equality in TVET' as a means to identify gender gaps in policies, programmes and budget of the ministry for mainstreaming gender equality in the

DWA & DYD will promote gender equality in their policies, programmes, planning, budgeting and monitoring



	planning, budgeting and monitoring systems, and identify measures to address those gaps; also, organized four gender working group meetings to formalize gender working group as an Advisory Group of NSDC, and to further strengthen by including new members	
<b>Activity 1221.200 : Design &amp; deliver specific programmes for people with disabilities in target sectors</b>		
<b><i>Mainstreaming disability inclusion in relevant ministries/departments providing skills training</i></b>	Organized a workshop with DSS and other stakeholders to disseminate the 'National Strategy for Inclusion of Persons with Disabilities in Skills Development' as a means to identify disability gaps in policies, programmes and budget of the ministry for mainstreaming disability inclusion in the planning, budgeting and monitoring systems, and identify measures to address those gaps. Also, organized a disability working group meeting to formalize disability working group as an Advisory Group of NSDC, and to further strengthen it by co-opting new members.	DSS will promote disability inclusion in their policies, programmes, planning, budgeting and monitoring.
<b><i>Developing capacity of partner organizations on disability inclusion</i></b>	The Project provided training to 28 staff of 7 partner organizations on disability inclusion.	Partner organizations will ensure disability inclusion, accessibility and reasonable accommodation.
<b><i>Ensure 5% quota for disabled people in the TVET institutions</i></b>	As proposed by ILO, Ministry of Education (MoE) issued an office order on 24 May 2015 announcing 5% quota for admission of the disabled people in the public/private Polytechnic Institutes and TSCs.	<div>The public/ private polytechnic institutes, TSCs &amp; training centres will implement 5% reservation for disabled students.</div> <div>It is too hard to find disability organizations providing training in B-SEP sectors; Availability of persons with disabilities for skills training in B-SEP sectors</div>

<b>Setting up Disability Inclusion Advisory Group at DTE</b>	As per ILO's suggestion, DTE set up a Disability Inclusion Advisory Group for guiding its TVET institutions on disability inclusion issues.	The members will be meeting quarterly and providing guidance to its TVET institutions on disability inclusion issues	
<b>Establishing Bangladesh Business and Disability Network (BBDN)</b>	The Project organized two workshops with the employers of different sectors, and the main outcome was establishing a Bangladesh Business and Disability Network (BBDN) to help make the industries more disability inclusive and workplaces more diverse and accessible.	Initially BBDN members/ task force will be meeting bi-monthly.	
<b>Job placement of trainees with disabilities in Tourism industries</b>	B-SEP organized three workshops, one being a very high profile graced by the Minister, with Tourism and Hospitality sector and got commitments from the employers for employing skilled persons with disabilities	The Tourism industries will employ skilled trainees with disabilities	Intensive orientation/ training needed for employers on disability inclusion
<b>Guidelines on disability inclusion in TVET institutions and industries/employment</b>	Two separate guidelines on disability inclusion in (i) TVET institutions and (ii) industries/employment developed by ILO.	The guidelines will be printed, published and disseminated to the relevant TVET institutions and employers/industries	
<b>ToT on disability inclusion for the vice principals &amp; chief instructors of DTE</b>	CDD, engaged by the Project, started conducting ToT on disability inclusion for about 120 vice principals & chief instructors of the TVET institutions of DTE.	Follow-up training will be held in November 2016, and the TVET institutions will be implementing disability inclusion.	
<b>Activity 1221.300: Design &amp; deliver programs to promote and support self-employment opportunities, including green jobs, in the target sectors</b>			

<b>Identification of partner organizations for initiating self-employment programmes</b>	<p>Four (04) potential partner organizations were identified to initiate self-employment programmes for the disadvantaged women and men, including persons with disabilities.</p>	<p>Out of 4, 1 organization is qualified to scale-up self-employment programme from August 2016</p>	<p>It is necessitated to take capacity building measures (guidelines, training, integrating disability in the work plans) on disability and gender for employers and TVET institutions</p>
<b>240 participants to be trained</b>	<p>164 (including 46 persons with disabilities and 76 male) trained and eventually 91 started their own businesses</p>	<p>300 women &amp; men (including persons with disabilities) to be trained for self-employment by December 2016</p>	
<b>Developing capacity of partner organizations on CB-TREE methodology and entrepreneurship development</b>	<p>B-SEP trained 23 managers and Trainers of partner organizations on the methodology of community based training for economic empowerment (CB-TREE) and entrepreneurship development.</p>	<p>Partner organizations will ensure development of capacity of the beneficiaries on CB-TREE methodology and entrepreneurship development</p>	

5.4 Agenda of stakeholder workshop

Bangladesh Skills for Employment and Productivity (B-SEP) Project  
ILO Country Office for Bangladesh

Briefing session on Mid-Term Evaluation of the B-SEP Project  
Venue: Conference Room, ILO Skills Programme Office

Table 11 : Stakeholders workshop schedule and agenda

Time	Agenda
09.45	Registration
10.00	Welcome Address: Mr. Cezar Dragutan, CTA, B-SEP Project
10.10	Purpose of the Mid-term Review: Dr. M A Khan, International Consultant
10.20	Primary findings and possible recommendations: Dr M A Khan
11.00	Open Discussion and Feedback
12.00	Wrap up; Mr. Cezar Dragutan, CTA

## 5.5 Good Practices and Lessons Learnt

### Case -1:ILO Lesson Learned : *Apprenticeship programme – a change maker*

**Project Title:** Bangladesh Skills for Employment and Productivity (B-SEP)

**Project TC/SYMBOL:** BGD/12/01/CAN

**Name of Evaluator:** Dr. M Amanullah Khan (Team Leader); S M HasanIqbal (Consultant)

**Date:** Jul-Sep, 2016

The following lesson learned has been identified during the course of the evaluation.

LL Element	Text
<b>Brief description of lesson learned</b>	B-SEP's orderly steps in institutionalizing Apprenticeship programme with the Private Sector entities through dialogues, and demonstration of potential results can bring dividends to both the employers and employees. Most important is that the Apprenticeship programme, if properly structured can result in higher productivity, employability of quality personnel and generate interest on skills and TVET in the communities.
<b>Context and any related preconditions</b>	A family from Sirajgonj comprising 5 members where the only earning member father suddenly got ill and left the family with deeper financial crisis. The burden to earn bread for the family came on the shoulder of the eldest son Saiful. There was nothing for a grade IV boy in their locality. One of his neighbors advised him to try his luck in Dhaka – a city of opportunity and money – he was given an impression. Desperate, he decided to explore his luck in the capital. He contacted one of his fellow villagers who was working in a RMG factory in Gazipur and asked for his support. Finally he came to Dhaka and in a couple of days his fellow villager brought him a news that a food manufacturing company Rani Food was looking for some apprentices for one of their new initiatives in cooperation with ILO where apprentices will receive some stipend for a brief period of time. He did not think twice but decided to go for it knowing not much about Rani Food and not of course about ILO. The only driving force for him was that money for survival. This programme eventually gave Saiful a full time job, and gradual progression in his career/
<b>Targeted users / Beneficiaries</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The apprenticeship programme targeted school dropout youths – men and women.</li> </ul>
<b>Challenges /negative lessons – Causal factors</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The apprenticeship programme in order to be fully institutionalized needs continuous advocacy with the private sector</li> <li>Government's Labour Law in the apprenticeship area needs wider publicity among the prospective employers, channeled through the Employers Federation</li> </ul>
<b>Success / Positive Issues - Causal factors</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Gradual advocacy and consultation with employers can yield the much needed results that brings a win-win condition for both employers and employees.</li> <li>Partnership building on a tripartite basis following a shared understanding and vision– Government, Employers and Employees brings positive outcome.</li> </ul>
<b>ILO Administrative Issues</b>	ILO invested international and local consultants in implementing the apprenticeship programme and also shared costs with the implementing partner Rani Food.

## Case -2: ILO Good Practice: *SCORE Project enhanced overall efficiency: Rani Food*

**Project Title:** Bangladesh Skills for Employment and Productivity (B-SEP)

**Project TC/SYMBOL:** BGD/12/01/CAN

**Name of Evaluator:** Dr. M Amanullah Khan (Team Leader); S M Hasan Iqbal (Consultant)**Date:** Jul-Sep, 2016

The following emerging good practice has been identified during the course of the evaluation.

### GP Element Text

<b>Brief summary of the good practice</b>	Innovation and demonstration of evidences of good practices and results have no alternative. Together with this is the need to persistently engage in dialogues with stakeholders as change management is a difficult and time consuming process. That is what ILO did through its B-SEP SCORE program at Rani Food Company.
<b>Relevant conditions and Context: limitations or advice in terms of applicability and replicability</b>	<p>“We were a bit reluctant at the beginning of this project. Our belief was that we were doing great. We were yes producing a lot and to be very honest we were also making money but we the company management were not very much aware of compliance, good practices those can make our company further efficient and competitive in the market. Naturally as the top management were not that aware so we could not expect much from the workers. Therefore the factory floor, inventory etc. were messy and the motivational level of all human resource was also low”.</p> <p>“The B-SEP programme proved us wrong and convinced us that we can go much beyond we can think of. Now we are getting tangible result. How can we resist our temptation to continue this Good Practice introduced by SCORE project; we are getting benefits out of that and now we will continue without ILO support. We will gradually replicate this good practice in our other manufacturing concerns. This is probably the most economic way to become competitive and sustainable in the long run” - GM, Rani Food.</p>
<b>Establish a clear cause-effect relationship</b>	Traditional management practice is often a barrier in affecting change management. A third eye can help to realize the fact that improvement is a continuous process and by introducing all good practices including increasing management –workers interactions; raising awareness; introducing QC tools; improving conditions related to compliance etc. can enhance management responsibility. This is exactly what the SCORE programme did in cooperation with Rani Food Ltd. After a few months, they started getting benefits to make the company more competitive and cost effective in operations. Thanks to ILO SCORE programme for supporting for this initiative. ILO’s good images in the market along with the confidence level of their deployed experts during demonstration / pilot convinced Rani food company management to adopt changes.
<b>Indicate measurable impact and targeted beneficiaries</b>	<p>Targeted beneficiaries were primarily workers and supervisors but later the company also got tangible benefits.</p> <p>Record says that from July 2015 to February 2016 the % of final defect reduced from 2.22% to 1.2%; efficiency increased from 75% to 85%; on time delivery success increased from 85% to 95%; energy consumption per unit of production reduced from 381 kWh to 340 kWh; absenteeism reduced from 10.8% to 5%; accident registered during this period reduced from 4 to 1.</p>

<b>Potential for replication and by whom</b>	This B-SEP intervention is highly potential for replication and any manufacturing organization running at less than 75% efficiency can adopt this good practice to make significant improvements in 6 to 12 months. The management buys in for this is critically important.
<b>Upward links to higher ILO Goals</b>	Progressing with SCORE good practices and improved compliance will certainly lead to the ILO's strategic direction for Better work place interventions, empowering workers and increasing cooperation between management and workers for a much healthy working atmosphere where the business will run safely and profitably. This will eventually create the pathway for workers and supervisors to grow in their own companies (sustainable jobs to address poverty).
<b>Other documents</b>	The detail table 13 shows the trend of progress at Rani Food.

**Table 12 : A gradual improvement in factory efficiency: pre & post SCORE situation at Rani**

Indicator	2015						2016	
	July	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec	Jan	Feb
<b>In line defect rate,%</b>	0.01	0.008	0.19	0.029	0.027	0.019	0.02	0.015
<b>End line defect rate , %</b>	2.22	1.47	2.6	1.49	1.4	1.25	1.25	1.2
<b>Efficiency, %</b>	75	80	85	88	90	85	85	85
<b>On time delivery, %</b>	85	90	95	93	95	96	95	95
<b>Energy use unit prod. KWH</b>	381	373	347	352	345	35	345	340
<b>Absenteeism, %</b>	10.8	5	2.58	7	3.67	5.55	6.5	5
<b>Labour TO, %</b>	2.6	14	5.11	18	12.54	10.48	10.50	8.50
<b>Accident registered, #</b>	4	3	4	1	1	0	2	1

### Case -3: ILO Good Practice: *Impact of SCORE project - +ve: Brothers Furniture*

**Project Title:** Bangladesh Skills for Employment and Productivity (B-SEP)

**Project TC/SYMBOL:** BGD/12/01/CAN

**Name of Evaluator:** Dr. M Amanullah Khan (Team Leader); S M Hasan Iqbal (Consultant)**Date:** Jul-Sep, 2016

The following emerging good practice has been identified during the course of the evaluation.

#### GP Element Text

<b>Brief summary of the good practice</b>	<p>B-SEP (ILO) in partnership with Brothers Furniture conducted training / demo on implementation of ILO entrepreneurship and productivity development tools – SCORE (Sustaining Competitive &amp; Responsible Enterprises) for its managers and employees. This SCORE program encourages the enterprises to become competitive and responsible in doing businesses.</p> <p>This programme requires a comprehensive analysis of the manufacturing process to find out the primary loop holes / inefficiencies from the production process and then prioritizes the short term (low hanging fruits) and long term objectives to make the enterprises competitive and responsible (socially and environmentally). Then engaging in dialogues persistently with the management and workers to make it happen. ILO had to take some sort of risk in assuring tangible results to make the management convinced to go for it.</p>
<b>Relevant conditions and Context: limitations or advice in terms of applicability and replicability</b>	<p>Brothers Furniture (BF) is a growing manufacturing entity in the furniture sector in Bangladesh. Though they are one of the front liners in the sector but due to more and more new comers and challenges from them made BF bit concerned about their market share and dominance. Being the member of the BEF, they came in contact with B-SEP project as BEF has been working as one of the implementing partners for ILO. BF was looking for something quick but result oriented to excel further and sustain the lead in the market. B-SEP experts gave them the idea to become cost effective using the SCORE program. BF had at that time a lot of scopes for improvements – including participative management, inventory management, housekeeping, efficient use of resources including HR, machine maintenance etc. They were not sure what to do to improve from this state of the production facilities. ILO experts diagnosed their production facilities and recommended some interventions in a very structured way.</p>
<b>Establish a clear cause-effect relationship</b>	<p>If the top management has vision and they are open to new ideas then it is always easy to make significant changes. That is exactly what happened in BF. The Managing Director of BF himself wanted to expedite his progress and he trusted on ILO's capabilities and guidance. SCORE introduced there in parallel to Apprenticeship program. BF though believed that they were not completely ready for apprenticeship program but the whole unit adopted SCORE program brilliantly under the supervision of ILO.</p> <p>SCORE introduced good practices and enterprise culture in welcoming the workers participation in development project; raising awareness of the potential benefits; improving compliance issues etc. After few months BF started getting benefits out of that and they committed to the continuation of this good project. The management and workers became surprised to see the quick results from these low hanging fruits right from improved housekeeping, better inventory control, and better solutions came from workers to many long lasting technical issues made BF a more competitive and cost effective manufacturer.</p>



<b>Indicate measurable impact and targeted beneficiaries</b>	<p>Primary target wereworkers and supervisors but at the same time the company also got tangible benefits from SCORE project.</p> <p>A pre and post analysis of the SCORE project shows that BF has made noticeable progress in many areas particularly in establishing enterprise improvement team (EIT), better housekeeping, sharing information, utilizing resources including energy, HR, machines, waste etc.</p> <p>In other areas such as quality assurance, customer handling, workers welfare includes safety and hygiene etc. BF made good progresses. In most of the cases the pre SCORE era shows the practice was not existing or much unstructured (if any). On the other hand the post era reveals that those are organized and in practice by all concerned right from the top management to the basic level workers.</p>
<b>Potential for replication and by whom</b>	<p>Any enterprise can introduce SCORE as their main productivity tool since the programme shows significant improvement in productivity.</p> <p>The basic requirement for this to replicate is the willingness of the top management and their vision to achieve to achieve something great. Any enterprise that wants to be competitive and efficient and cost effective than its competitors with minimum possible investment then this ILO intervention is the key tool.</p>
<b>Upward links to higher ILO Goals</b>	<p>Progressing with SCORE / good practices / improved compliance etc. will certainly lead to the ILO's strategic direction for Better work place interventions, empowering workers and increasing cooperation between management and workers for a much healthy working atmosphere where the business will run safely and profitably. This will eventually create the pathway for workers and supervisors to grow in their own companies (sustainable jobs to address poverty).</p>
<b>Other documents</b>	<p>The detail table 14 shows the trend of progress at Brothers Furniture.</p>

Table 13 : A study between pre and post SCORE improvements at BF factory premises

Improvement areas	Indicators	Baseline	End line
<b>Section 1 : Objective: Driving change in your enterprise</b>			
<b>Enterprise Improvement Team (EIT)</b>	Workers and managers jointly discuss to improve the enterprise's operations	Yes No	Yes No
	Active EIT	Yes No	Yes No
	Number of meetings per month	NA	4
	Minutes are available and filed	NA	Yes
	Number of implemented projects	NA	17
<b>Section 2 - Objective: Involving everybody through 5S</b>			
<b>5SHousekeeping practices</b>	Workers feel responsible to keep their work areas clean and organized (observation)	Workers hardly know about 5S and they don't feel responsible to clean & organize their work areas	All workers know about 5S and applying them routinely. Now workplace becomes organized, clean and safe
	Application of company - wide 5S	Yes No	Yes No
	Active 5S team(s)	Yes No	Yes No
	Existence of before and after pictures	Yes No. Isolated initiative from managers was seen but workers' participation and continued commitment was NOT evident	Yes No
<b>Section 3 - Objective: Communication in your enterprise</b>			
<b>Information sharing</b>	Up to date company information is regularly and freely shared with employees (observation)	Information sharing using all likely channels was inadequate or minimal	All notices board are renovated and maintained on a regular basis. Now updated information is being shared among all
	Worker - manager meetings	Yes No	Yes No

	Daily / weekly line meetings	Yes No	Yes No
	Bulletin boards or newsletter	There are No Bulletin boards or newsletter	Bulletin boards are mostly in placed
<b>Employee suggestion scheme</b>	There is a culture that encourages employees to freely share their ideas	Information dissemination through Notice Board is evident but most of the notice boards are unorganized, unclean, and not updated	Notice Boards are organized, clean, and updated
	Existence of employee suggestion scheme	A 6 monthly development Plan is formulated where development activities of different departments are evident, 313 development activities are listed in it to complete them within the period July to Dec 2015. This is NOT a proper employee suggestion scheme.	Existence of employee Suggestion scheme is established.
	Cost savings due to employee suggestions	Yes No	Yes No. Estimation:600-700 per month by utilizing Multiboring machine
<b>Section 4 - Objective: Fair HR policies for better workforce management</b>			
<b>HR policies and guidelines</b>	HR policies and practices are in line with national and international labour laws	HR policy was not duly approved by the concern authority and updated	HR policy was duly approved by the concern authority and updated
	Existence of HR policies	Yes No	Yes No
	Existence of job descriptions	Yes Not completely	Yes No
<b>Better HR practices</b>	HR practices recognize people as a key enterprise asset	HR practices do not recognize people as a key enterprise asset	Now HR practices recognize people as a key enterprise asset
	Overtime is tracked	Yes No	Yes No
	Absenteeism is tracked	Yes No	Yes No
	Labour turnover is tracked	Yes Not completely	Yes No
	Grievances are tracked	Yes No	Yes No

	An updated training plan is available	Yes No	Yes No
<b>Section 5 - Objective: Enhancing productivity</b>			
<b>Resource utilization</b>	The enterprise is aware of its productivity and has plans to improve its output to input ratio	No plan is formulated to improve its output to input ratio	Plan is evident to improve its output to input ratio
	Production plans are shared with workers	YesNo	Yes No
	The company is aware of the 07 common wastes	Yes No	Yes No
	Action plans are in place to reduce the 07 common wastes	Yes No	Yes No
	Workers are aware of waste statistics	Yes No	Yes No
<b>Machine maintenance</b>	Machines are regularly checked to prevent failure	Yes No	Yes No
	Records of breakdowns are maintained	YesNo	Yes No
	Existence of a machine maintenance system	YesNo TPM label was not tagged with any machine after maintenance work. A schedule was found where most of the machines do not have scheduled dates and actual dates for total preventive maintenance.	Yes No TPM label was tagged after maintenance. A schedule was evident for total preventive maintenance
<b>Section 6 - Objective: Measuring workplace improvements</b>			
<b>Key performance indicators</b>	The enterprise tracks improvements and can provide reliable data	Company tracks KPIs and able to provide trustworthy data	Company tracks KPIs and able to provide trustworthy data
	The enterprises documents long / short term goals / objectives	Yes No	Yes No
	Performance is displayed	Yes No	Yes No

	Workers are aware of performance	Yes No	Yes No
<b>Section 7 - Objective: Quality first</b>			
<b>Customer orientation and procedures</b>	The enterprise knows its customers' expectations and has high levels of customer retention	Company knows its customers' wants and needs in the market but no evidence of high level of retention rate	Company knows its customers' wants and needs not only in local market but also in foreign market
	Regular customer surveys done	Yes No	Yes No
	Existence of a Quality policy	Yes No	Yes No
	SOPs on quality are documented and displayed	Yes No	Yes No
<b>Measuring and sharing quality data</b>	The enterprise tracks KPIs on product and production quality	YesNo	Yes No
	The enterprise shares quality performance data (tables, graphs, etc.) with all employees	The company shares quality performance data like histogram, control charts, different graphs, in a monthly meeting with managers & senior leaders only. Workers' are not shared with quality performance data & analysis.	The company shares quality performance data like histogram, control charts, different graphs, in a monthly meeting with managers senior leaders and workers
<b>Defects reduction</b>	Causes of defects are analyzed and dealt with systematically	Causes of defects are analyzed and dealt with occasionally. Systematic, thorough and continuous analysis is not evident in case of reduction defects.	Causes of defects are analyzed and dealt with on a regular basis. Systematic, thorough and continuous analysis is evident in case of reduction defects
<b>Section 8 - Objective: Safety and health at work – a platform for productivity</b>			
<b>Reduction of accidents</b>	Worker health and safety is a key concern for the enterprise (observation)	Throughout the company it was evident that workers health and safety issues were not addressed adequately	Workers health and safety issues were addressed but there is no policy. HR has a plan to formulate a policy on OHS by 2015
	Existence of worker - manager OSH committee	Yes No	Yes No
	Existence of an OSH policy	Yes No	Yes No

	Number of accidents and near misses are tracked	Yes No	Yes No
	First aid is available and accessible	Yes No	Yes No
	Fire, electrical and chemical safety is adequately addressed	Yes No	Yes No
	Machine guards are in place and secure	Yes No	Yes No
<b>Improving worker welfare</b>	Working conditions are above average and contribute to staff satisfaction	Working conditions are average and below average in terms of safety which add staff disappointment	Working conditions are above average and contribute to staff satisfaction
	Employee satisfaction is tracked	Yes No	Yes No
	Drinking water and lunch area is provided	Yes No	Yes No
	Clean toilets are maintained	Yes No	Yes No
	Lockers and rest area provided	Yes No	Yes No
<b>Section 9 - Objective: Productivity through cleaner production</b>			
<b>Waste management</b>	The enterprise continually explores ways to reduce material wastage , water and energy consumption	One good initiative was evident in the company that recycles the sawdust and wood chips into fire wood by installing a Fire Wood processing machine	Now wood pieces are used to make prototype of new furniture design
	Time and staff are allocated to implement cleaner production strategies	Yes No	Yes No
	List the resources the enterprise re uses and / or re - cycles	Yes Not completely	Yes No
	Estimated cost savings due to CP initiatives in last 03 months	Approximately BDT 1,200 0/month This project has been running from June 2015 onwards	Now approximately BDT 1,5000/month

**Case -4:ILO Lesson Learned : *My dream comes true – “I am now an entrepreneur”:*  
*Kanis Fatema; Proprietor – Muntafi Furniture***

**Project Title:** Bangladesh Skills for Employment and Productivity (B-SEP)

**Project TC/SYMBOL:** BGD/12/01/CAN

**Name of Evaluator:**Dr. M Amanullah Khan (Team Leader); S M Hasan Iqbal (Consultant)

**Date:** Jul-Sep, 2016

The following lesson learned has been identified during the course of the evaluation.

LL Element	Text
<b>Brief description of lesson learned</b>	Targeted support to private sector enterprises and constant attention to relationship building with non-traditional partners through dialogues and showcasing of evidences of best practices is essential. Also, barriers in engaging women in non-traditional trades can be overcome through motivating the employers and employees alike, and creating enabling environments for learning and entrepreneurship development.
<b>Context and any related preconditions</b>	<p><i>“I was not like other traditional women of Bangladesh. Since my childhood, I had a dream; I wanted to have my own world of business”.</i> This is how Kanis Fatema described her current status and remembered the struggle she had gone through at the beginning to find her way out.</p> <p>Somehow she believed that she would engage herself in some manufacturing endeavor; but was not sure which way to go about. She got admitted in a diploma programme in Mechanical Engineering. After graduation she did not get much trouble in finding a job - interestingly Akhtar Furniture offered her a floor supervisor position. She just thought this would give her the opportunity to learn the trade; so she took the challenge. She was doing great in her workplace and learnt a lot of techno - management in running a business. She was burning inside for not being able to start her own show. She was not very confident at that point and somehow her gut feelings said that she is missing something.</p>
<b>Targeted users / Beneficiaries</b>	<p>Incidentally ILO initiated a project on apprenticeship in collaboration with AFA (Akhtar Furniture Academy). The apprenticeship programme targeted school dropout youths – men and women and to some extent the people with disability.</p> <p>Seeing her performance and dedication in the production floor, Akhtar Furniture top management brought her into the project as a trainer and for that she got ToT training to train fresh apprentices. She taught the new comers and also got the opportunity to master her skills in furniture manufacturing technology. Her management skills together with this technical knowhow gave her new hopes and aspiration to open her own business.</p>
<b>Challenges /negative lessons - Causal factors</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Furniture making is a non-traditional area for women in Bangladesh. The case described is a one off deviation from the traditional path. However, showcasing this among potential women for career building and entrepreneurship has not happened sufficiently.</li> </ul>

<b>Success / Positive Issues - Causal factors</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Kanis primarily resorted to contract manufacturing agreement with a derelict SME to supply her products. As she learnt business management practices and also gained insights into manufacturing technology, she started to design her own product in addition to developing the production planning and efficient production practices in that SME floor. Immediately she got response from a few buyers and that encouraged her a lot. That was the start and now she has a big retail outlet, procuring from 4-5 vendors and recently bought a pick up van for distributing her merchandizes to replace the traditional rickshaw van. She is also in the process of establishing her own manufacturing unit to give better services to the clients. She has now 26 staff working at her Muntafi Retail Furniture outlet which she wants to extend gradually. Kanis also helped through her manufacturing contract, create employment opportunities for nearly 40 workmen in the derelict SME.</li> <li>• Enabling environment now exists for a partnership between employers, potential women trainees and ILO in promoting non-traditional opportunities for women.</li> </ul>
<b>ILO Administrative Issues</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• ILO often faces requests from partner Private sector entities for financial cost sharing at a larger scale which is limited under the project's current modality of cooperation.</li> </ul>



